

Title: Editorial Citizen Power

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Pull Out Quote 1: We can see whenever we tune into the news how important Citizenship education is, how much knowledge teachers of Citizenship are required to have, and how many pedagogies they need to utilise.

POQ2: We all need to remember that citizen power is a force for change

Article Begins:

Citizen power is featured in the interim curriculum and assessment review, this speaks the language of Citizenship education, especially when calling for a sustained democracy. We can see whenever we tune into the news how important Citizenship education is, how expansive the knowledge requirement of that Citizenship are required to have, and how many pedagogies they are expected to utilise. This issue of the journal highlights the power of citizens to make change through engagement with powerful topics and resources. The interim curriculum review sets out its ambitions for the new national curriculum and Citizenship, in particular active citizenship provides a powerful vehicle to ensure that learning is situated within local, national, and global contexts (Ambition 3, DfE, 2024). The knowledge and skills that young people learn through Citizenship education, for example learning about climate justice, political participation and critical media literacy are taught through the lens of their local communities as well as through national and global arenas. Young people do not just learn about the world but how to prepare for future life and work (Ambition 4, DfE 2024).

We hope that this edition will be a valuable reference point and offer an opportunity to reflect and stir up a renewed focus on the power of citizens. Power is a multifaceted concept, one that is central to Citizenship education, children and young people need to learn about power structures in their local and global contexts. Citizens need to learn about the power which is exerted and used to influence behaviour and life both on and offline. We all need to remember that citizen power is a force for change, and this is critical in a world of increasingly polarised views and authoritarian control. A world that needs significant positive change to deal with global issues that affect local communities, like poverty, trade-wars, AI or more intrinsic values and ethics.

When faced with a cacophony of information about political and societal change it is important for teachers and educators to re-centre, and review what works, and what we do. What are the overarching big questions to frame conversations around Citizenship education in the classroom. What do we want students to think about, take away and utilise in their own lives and the lives of their communities. How do we want young people to shape the future? How do we want to encourage their political engagement?

It is clear that young people do have citizen power. What better case study to show off in classrooms, than the response from Prime Minister Starmer to the Liaison Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> April, from the question raised by Youth Parliament? Resulting in a solid commitment to votes at 16 and a Prime Minister that values Citizenship education.

We hope that all of the pieces in this issue of the journal enable you to think about the role of Citizen Power in your curriculum. Do use this journal with Issue 49: Active Citizenship and Social Action. A resource we wish to spotlight in this issue is ACT's Active Citizenship Handbook (page 17) co-constructed by ACT colleagues, teachers and researchers to sharing reflections on how to build community student-led projects in schools.

We thank you for your contribution, ongoing commitment and support of Citizenship education. Remember what you do is exceptionally valuable for Citizen Power.

As ever if you would like to contribute to writing, sharing resources with others or other involvements in ACT. Just get in touch: [info@teachingcitizenship.org.uk](mailto:info@teachingcitizenship.org.uk)