

Community Cohesion

A project in Bradford LEA to enhance the citizenship curriculum so that it addresses equality issues directly and enables pupils to explore their sense of identity and community

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This paper was contributed in 2004 to the RAISE Project. There is background information about the project at www.insted.co.uk/raise.html.

Context and problem

The summer of 2001 saw two major events in Bradford. First there were what have come to be known as 'disturbances in our northern towns', of which Bradford was one. Second, there was the publication of *Community Pride not Prejudice*—the review, chaired by Sir Herman Ouseley, of race relations in Bradford. In commissioning this work, Bradford Vision, the local strategic partnership, sought to address some key issues in promoting community cohesion and race equality.

It came as no surprise to many teachers and educationists that the first of the recommendations identified the role of the school and the curriculum in providing a key part of the solution. It said that Bradford should engage in: Revising, improving and advancing the citizenship component of the National Curriculum that covers diversity, differences, rights and responsibilities, particularly with regard to behaviour and respect for others irrespective of background, appearance, characteristics, social circumstances or status.

It is interesting to reflect that this recommendation was published before citizenship had become a statutory requirement of the secondary school curriculum. The expected outcomes of this recommendation, listed in *Community Pride not Prejudice*, include:

- ❑ reduced racial tension in schools and communities
- ❑ reduced levels of racial harassment
- ❑ increased participation in cultural and events
- ❑ amongst young people
- ❑ higher levels of awareness about the District's cultures and religions.

It is also questionable whether Bradford needs an 'enhanced curriculum' more than anywhere else in England and Wales. It is essential that all pupils—everywhere—are able to develop informed and reflective views on racism, diversity and human rights, and to understand the impact of prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping of minority groups within our society.

Nevertheless, the staff of Education Bradford was given the task of developing a citizenship curriculum, which the LEA calls it the 'Enhanced Citizenship Curriculum

for Bradford schools'. Its early outcomes are outlined in this case study. It makes no specific reference to Islamophobia, which is a particular form of racism and prejudice that needs to be addressed and which may well lie at the heart of the problems facing Bradford and other similar northern towns.

Those involved in this work in Bradford do not believe that it can provide quick solutions: the aim is that, as this curriculum becomes embedded in schools, racism will decrease, and respect and understanding increase. None of these changes can be easily measured and there will be no quantitative data to substantiate the work. Nonetheless, there is a firm conviction that this work can and will impact on pupils and their attitudes, values and behaviour, and that it will, albeit indirectly, contribute to the raising of pupils' attainment. This will be achieved through an affirmation of pupils' identities and the communities from which they come, alongside a commitment to race equality based on a recognition that all human beings are equal and that all racist behaviour is intolerable.

The demographic picture

The population of Bradford, according to the 2001 census, was 467,665. More than 60% of Bradford Metropolitan District is rural. As well as the inner city and suburbia, it includes small prosperous towns and a range of villages and hamlets. The census data on ethnicity show that more than 78% of Bradford's population is White and that the largest single of ethnic minority group is of Pakistani origin (14.5%). This compares with 1.4% of the country as a whole.

Bradford's percentage of young people is higher than the national average (23.4% are under 16 and 5.6% are between 16 and 19.) About 30% of Bradford's school population is minority ethnic: 23.9% are of Pakistani origin; 2.7% Indian; 1.1% Bangladeshi; and 0.9% Black or Black British. One of the issues raised in Lord Ouseley's report is the polarisation of Bradford communities, which is reflected in our schools: few schools could be described as multi-cultural; rather, they serve mono-cultural populations of Muslim or White pupils. The twin phenomena of 'White flight' and the movement of Hindus and Sikhs out of the Bradford District towards neighbouring authorities leave many Bradford schools with skewed populations.

Pupils' Achievement

One interesting phenomenon in secondary schools in Bradford is that pupils' attainment in Religious Studies (RS) and Religious Education (RE) at GCSE is consistently higher than in other subjects. In 2002, 54% of pupils taking RS (full course) and 41% of pupils doing RE (short course) gained grades in the A*—C range. This compares with Bradford's average of 35.6% A*—C for five subjects. These statistics refer to a sizeable number of pupils in the cohort. Eighteen schools entered 34% of their cohort for RS and fourteen schools entered 54% for RE giving significance to this area of pupils' achievement. (These percentages do not take account of independent schools in Bradford.)

The reasons for this phenomenon need further research but tentative explanations include:

- pupils' use of prior knowledge and learning

- ❑ pupils' enjoyment and success in a curriculum area which draws directly on their background
- ❑ the majority of Bradford schools enter pupils for GCSE courses that include the study of Islam and Christianity
- ❑ teachers who are informed about and positive towards the pupils' religions
- ❑ effective teaching and learning
- ❑ a commitment from many schools' senior management teams and Education Bradford to the subject area as a key component of pupils' education and its role in promoting community cohesion.

Such explanations also support the introduction of an enhanced citizenship curriculum that enables all pupils to explore their sense of identity and community, in the context of Bradford as a multifaith and multicultural area.

The Story

Part 1: Developing working principles

The development of the Enhanced Citizenship Curriculum for Bradford schools was divided into stages, based on phases within the schools system. It was felt that the urgent task was to address the secondary curriculum since September 2002—the date for the introduction of citizenship as a statutory part of the secondary curriculum—was fast approaching. The government's 'light touch' orders gave schools great freedom in determining how, and by whom, citizenship would be taught. The Bradford citizenship curriculum had to be relevant and appropriate for Bradford schools, in which the organisation of citizenship curricula ranged from discrete lessons taught by a specialist, designated team to a mix of discrete lessons and extra-curricular and cross-curricular provision. The following sequence of developments was agreed:

- ❑ discrete citizenship at Key Stage 3
- ❑ cross- and extra-curricular citizenship for the secondary school as a whole
- ❑ discrete citizenship at Key Stage 4
- ❑ primary and post-16 citizenship curricula

It was considered essential to involve a range of teachers and officers in the work and therefore different groups have been responsible for developing each part. The first group had the most important task because they established working principles and practices. These principles included:

- ❑ a determination that the Enhanced Citizenship Curriculum should be seen within the context of the whole school community and its ethos
- ❑ anti-racist education cannot belong solely to citizenship, PSHE and RE. It must permeate the whole curriculum and be reflected in the vision, values and practices of the whole school
- ❑ the recognition that enhanced citizenship is inseparable from values and attitudes, and that all teachers and pupils will have to reflect on this as part of the educational process
- ❑ a commitment to producing a 'do-able' curriculum that would increase teachers' confidence and competence

- ❑ a sound theoretical framework of teaching and learning that would be active, interesting, relevant, participative and democratic so that pupils would share ownership of their learning and assessment procedures.

Part 2: The attainment target

The second task undertaken by this group was work on the attainment target. The programmes of study for citizenship (DfEE, 1999) include

- ❑ 'the diversity of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the UK and the need for mutual respect and understanding' (Key Stage 3)
- ❑ 'the origins and implications of the diverse...identities' (Key Stage 4)

There appeared to be an extraordinary omission: there is no explicit mention of race related issues as part of the attainment target for either key stage. Since this is the key statutory requirement, it was decided to enhance the DfEE attainment target to address learning about race equality. Thus:

Key Stage 3

- ❑ understand key concepts including identity, community, diversity, equality, justice, prejudice, race, racism and stereotyping
- ❑ understand the background to diversity and demographic change in local, national and global contexts
- ❑ understand and demonstrate respect for diversity, knowing the origins, beliefs and values of different sections of the community
- ❑ understand that social cohesion can be subject to many influences, including socio-economic factors
- ❑ demonstrate their understanding of commonality as well as difference within local, national, international and global contexts
- ❑ possess skills in listening and conflict resolution
- ❑ articulate their vision of, and their contribution to, Bradford in the future

Key Stage 4

- ❑ understand key concepts including discrimination, racism, social and economic justice, and cohesion
- ❑ have a comprehensive understanding of and respect for diversity
- ❑ identify what unites as well as divides groups of people
- ❑ have the ability to engage in informed debate about living in a multi-cultural society
- ❑ understand that the world is a global community
- ❑ possess skills in conflict resolution, negotiation and evaluation
- ❑ articulate their vision of, and their contribution to, Bradford in the future (This was felt to be the single most important aspect of Bradford's Enhanced Citizenship curriculum).

Part 3: Developing the Enhanced Citizenship Curriculum

Work began with the discrete teaching of citizenship at Key Stage 3. There were two aspects to this work:

- ❑ the provision of a recommended structure for the study units to help ensure progression and continuity
- ❑ the creation of study units that are appropriate for Bradford schools

The recommended structure for the Enhanced Key Stage 3 Citizenship Curriculum (below) gives the study units produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and seven new study units devised in and for Bradford (asterisked).

Year 7: exploring pupils' needs as they enter secondary school and their identities and their local community

- ❑ Introductory Unit: Citizenship—what's it all about?
- ❑ Responsibilities, Rights and Rules
- ❑ Crime and its causes
- ❑ Identity and community in Bradford
- ❑ Local democracy
- ❑ Leisure and sport in the local community

Year 8: looking further afield and examining the diversity from a national perspective.

Stereotyping is one of the key themes in Year 8, for example the ways in which the media might stereotype groups within society, the ways in which older people might stereotype the young, as well as racial and religious stereotyping. The topics are:

- ❑ Crime and the youth justice system
- ❑ Diversity in Great Britain
- ❑ Government, Elections and Voting
- ❑ The significance of the media in society

Year 9: moving to a global perspective and focusing on human rights.

Also included are animal rights, partly as a means of exploring a political or moral issue and thus developing pupils' skills in listening, negotiating, talking, analysing, reflecting and evaluating.

- ❑ What are human rights?
- ❑ The global community
- ❑ Leisure and sport in the local community
- ❑ How the law protects animals – a local-to-global study
- ❑ Review unit: assessing progress and recognising achievement
- ❑ at the end of Key Stage 3.

Three key themes permeate the Enhanced Citizenship Curriculum:

- ❑ identity and community
- ❑ diversity and cohesion
- ❑ respect and understanding

The appendix gives examples of recommended learning activities and other suggestions for teachers.

It is recognised that some of these issues are complex and controversial and will make considerable demands on the professional skills of teachers: they are hard questions to address with pupils in Bradford schools and cannot be avoided. Research into the teaching of Judaism (Short and Carrington 1995) has shown that simply learning about other people's religions and cultures will not necessarily affect the stereotypes and misconceptions that pupils bring with them to lessons. Some pupils come to school with deep racial prejudices that need to be challenged and all

pupils should be helped to develop informed opinions, based on evidence and critical analysis. The values of both teachers and pupils will have to face scrutiny as some of these difficult questions are addressed: it is only in classrooms where pupils are prepared to listen and to challenge each other's views that controversial issues can be explored in an acceptable way.

We are presented here with a possible conundrum: racism cannot be overcome by stifling discussion yet the expression of racist views cannot be tolerated. This presents a real difficulty for teachers and the answer can only lie in creating an ethos in which knowledge and understanding are developed through enquiry and communication—the key requirements of the Citizenship Programme of Study (DfEE 1999, 6).

In the provision of support for cross- and extra-curricular citizenship, it was realised that many kinds of activities can promote race equality: examples of good practice were gathered from schools and posted on the website. One example was the use of judo to raise pupils' awareness and self-discipline, which are necessary skills in relationships and conflict resolution. Another is of a secondary school that involved pupils in the creation of its race equality policy and its subsequent implementation.

For the discrete teaching of Citizenship at Key Stage 4, work began on teaching the Holocaust. A new working group was convened, which decided to produce a discrete set of lesson plans, with supporting resources. Because pupils acquire some knowledge of the Holocaust through the Key Stage 3 history curriculum, the chosen focus was 'citizenship' themes—namely, antisemitism and racism through the eyes of four groups of citizens: the victims, the perpetrators, the bystanders and the heroes. A series of lessons explores each of these groups in relation to the Holocaust and to racism today in Bradford and Britain as a whole. Pupils are encouraged to engage in their own research and develop work on each of these themes, based on questions that enable a deeper exploration of the causes and consequences of racist behaviour.

Some teachers in Bradford consider the Holocaust to be a difficult subject to approach with Muslim pupils. Antisemitic literature appears in Bradford, as it does elsewhere, and is too readily given credence: through informed engagement, students might challenge the basis and provenance of such material, and reflect on their own values and attitudes. Racism takes many forms and none is acceptable. In the next stage of developing the curriculum, links between racism and genocide will be highlighted.

The final aspect of the current work is on Islamophobia and how it can be addressed through the citizenship curriculum at Key Stage 4. This involves collaboration with the Islamic Society of Britain and teachers from nine Bradford secondary schools.

Many views, one landscape

A range of other initiatives complement the Enhanced Citizenship Curriculum for Bradford. One is the Schools Linking Project that brings together primary pupils from different backgrounds—in a neutral environment and over a sustained period—to engage in joint curriculum projects. Two schools, for example, have done some extremely valuable and interesting work together through drama, based at Cartwright Hall Art Gallery. Another is an RE and Citizenship project, in

collaboration with the Professional Council for RE and involving three other Local Education Authorities, which will enable secondary pupils to engage in dialogue (including through e-mail) on issues within Christianity and Islam. The pupils will also engage in dialogue with their parents and grandparents to develop their own 'story' and explore their sense of identity and community: they will then be able to share those stories with pupils from very different backgrounds and situations from their own.

There is no limit to the work that can and should be done in promoting inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue. It will be at the heart of community cohesion. The slogan for Bradford's Capital of Culture 2008 bid was 'Many views, one landscape' and that sums up neatly what Bradford is aiming for in citizenship education: to recognise that all are part of one landscape and that each of us has a story, a role, a place and a vision for the future of this community within multicultural Britain.

Consultation

In addition to the teachers and officers working on the materials, a management group—consisting of officers from relevant areas such as Personal Social and Health Education and from Bradford's Interfaith Education Centre—has overseen its development. Critical comment on the Enhanced Citizenship Curriculum was sought at every stage of its development:

- ❑ The QCA, viewing an early batch of materials, gave enthusiastic support and encouragement
- ❑ There was endorsement of the work from a member of Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI)
- ❑ Coordinators of both citizenship and religious education commented on the materials at various stages of their development
- ❑ Community perspectives and some useful suggestions came from a specially convened meeting of the Standing Advisory Council for RE.
- ❑ SACRE is an existing, cross-community organisation, encompassing members of all the main religious communities in Bradford, teachers and local councillors. Its role is to advise the LEA on RE and related matters.
- ❑ The Education Policy Partnership, which oversees education in the public-private partnership in Bradford, approved the use of the curriculum, while raising valid and important questions about support for staff in dealing with such complex and controversial areas of the curriculum.
- ❑ The Student SACRE raised the most serious reservations. Their main concern was around the issues of 'identity': what this meant and why it had been given such prominence.
- ❑ The Student SACRE comprises sixth formers drawn from across schools and communities. Although not a statutory body, it was convened to advise the LEA on RE and related matters.

Identity and community inevitably lie at the heart of citizenship education as young people try to work out their own values, attitudes and behaviour in our society. Who each of us is, and what each of us believes and values underpins all engagement with, and debate about, how we all live—socially, morally, economically and politically. This includes teachers as well as pupils. One of the aims of the work, especially the Key Stage 3 discrete materials, was to reinforce

the fact that we all have multiple identities, that 'it's OK' to be whatever we are and that we are all multi-faceted and interconnected in our relationships and our lives. Our identity can be based on a wide variety of factors including religion, ethnicity, culture, nationality, role, employment and family relationships. Each of us will prioritise and perhaps change our identities, depending on our circumstances. Our identity is inseparable from our communities. It came as something of a surprise that sixth form students were uncomfortable with this emphasis.

The problem was to do with identity and, in particular, 'British' identity being seen as the acid test of their worth and their acceptance in British society. It was, to put it crudely, the Norman Tebbit test of where identity and allegiance lie. There were fears about pupils being put in classroom situations where they might feel vulnerable or might be misunderstood. Would they be criticised, overtly or tacitly, for saying that they put their 'Muslim' identity before their 'British' identity? They were both—and wanted to be accepted as such. This was linked to stating their ethnicity on census and other official forms in case, in some undefined but feared way, such declarations might be used against them. For the White adults involved, it was deeply disturbing to realise the discomfort and anxiety of these young students, born and bred in Britain.

The Enhanced Citizenship Curriculum has not been changed as a result of this consultation—at least, not yet. It does emphasise the importance of teachers dealing sensitively with difficult questions, enabling pupils to show respect for difference and recognising that we are all diverse and, in some way, all from minority communities. The students' fears also confirm the uneasy relationship many of our ethnic minority pupils still have with society as a whole as they seek to accommodate competing claims on them and to find a coherent identity. This cannot be an easy process to conduct with integrity, given its huge complexity and given that they are still young.

A second set of concerns have been about who is included in the curriculum. It is true, for example, that 'Sikh' or 'African-Caribbean' are not to be found. It is also true that the curriculum is not about Islam or Judaism. The study units that address the local, national and global picture in terms of race, human rights and demographic change do so from a general perspective, rather than the particular study of one or more communities. Bradford, like so many industrial cities, has seen waves of migrant workers arriving and settling and making their contributions to the life and richness of the community as a whole. This curriculum is about the whole of that phenomenon and about the receiving community. There was no intention to omit any or to focus solely on the few. One of the consequences of the community consultation with SACRE was the decision to include work on Islamophobia. It may well be that other specific communities will be the focus on future work.

A third set of criticisms have been voiced by groups working on other antiracism projects in the area and they are based around a view that the Enhanced Citizenship Curriculum does not address 'race' as explicitly as it ought and that it should have made a more direct attack on and deconstruction of 'race'. In some respects this is a fair comment but it may be more a question of perception than reality. The intention of the working groups has been to promote a firm antiracist

stance and to enable pupils to explore a wide range of related issues in an atmosphere of mutual respect and challenge.

This means that the focus of the work must be based on learning, research and reflection. Neither professing platitudes nor exchanging ignorance is an acceptable activity in a classroom: the acquisition of knowledge and understanding is to be gained through the skills of enquiry and research, communication and engagement; these are required by the national orders for citizenship education. At the same time, the range of initiatives in antiracist education is encouraging. This is only one part of the answer to the challenges that face Bradford in promoting community cohesion.

Evaluation

There is no clearly demonstrable, causal connection between the development of citizenship education and the raising of attainment. There are, however, ways in which the Enhanced Citizenship Curriculum can make an important contribution to schools improvement and the raising of attainment in Bradford. The first is through raising pupils' self-esteem by affirming their identity and the communities from which they come. All teachers know how important it is that pupils feel confident and have high aspirations. That is partly based on the pupil's worth being recognised by others—and that means showing esteem and respect.

In turn, esteem and respect can only be shown if they come from real understanding of the pupils' background, religion and culture. Teachers have to engage in a learning process about their pupils in order to be able to value them and their identity as part of the requirements of these study units. Closely linked to this is the recognition that Britain is a 'community of communities' (Richardson 2001, 53) and has never been a single, homogeneous community. By exploring the diversity that exists now, we affirm the right of all communities to be a valued, different, distinctive and accepted part of the community as a whole.

The second, is that by overtly and demonstrably promoting race equality and challenging prejudice and stereotypes, teachers show all children that they are of equal worth and value. This has to be mirrored throughout the school and this curriculum will only be successful if it is part of a whole school approach to tackling racism and discrimination, in short, to enforcing the standards set out in Learning for All. From the composition of the governing body to the use of a wide range of curriculum content drawn from different cultures and religions, schools have to demonstrate to pupils that they and their backgrounds are valued.

This Enhanced Citizenship Curriculum shows some of the ways in which citizenship education can contribute to this but it is only a part of the whole: it is the responsibility of the senior management team and the governing body to ensure that schools are visibly antiracist and determined to promote race equality throughout the life and work of the school. The learning environment that the school provides has to be safe and secure for all pupils, emotionally as well as physically: the Enhanced Citizenship Curriculum can be a major factor in enabling schools to achieve that. In such an environment, children's learning will also be enhanced.

A third way in which attainment can be raised by this initiative is through teachers' professional development as they engage with these issues, both in planning and in teaching. One of the real professional challenges of this curriculum, and indeed of citizenship as a whole, is that it requires teachers to 'lower their guard' and to engage in the learning and exploration process with their pupils as fellow human beings. There are many times when the teachers will not know the answers because the questions are too complex. The confidence to say 'I don't know' has to exist in teachers' hearts so that pupils too can recognise that they do not need to know all the answers. None of us can ever know all there is to know about cultures and religions, not least because there is so much diversity within, as well between, different groups. An openness to learning and a willingness to ask questions are essential for teachers if they are to engage successfully with the issues that are raised by this citizenship curriculum.

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APPENDIX: EXAMPLES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

In the Year 7 study unit Identity and Community in Bradford to enable pupils to explore their identities and develop their understanding of multiple identities and diversity, we suggest that teachers should:

In pairs, pupils discuss their names and what they say about them. What do their names mean?

Use circle time to explore and discuss the different groups to which they belong. How do they describe themselves? Where are they from? What are they like? What do they like doing? What are they good at? What are their beliefs? How do they describe themselves to other people—at school, to friends, on their passports, abroad. What do they have in common? What differences do they have?

Ask them to draw 'My network' with themselves in the middle and all the people of influence in their lives around them. Explore these networks in the context of choices and control. We can't choose our parents or siblings – we can choose our friends. What is the basis of these relationships? Talk about ways in which conflicts can arise within the network. How do we resolve them? Do we resolve them

differently with our friends and our siblings? Explore different ways of resolving conflicts and why it is important to do that.

Stimulate discussion by getting pupils to bring in special objects that are representative of something about their own identities. Can they produce—perhaps using ICT—an emblem to represent their identities, e.g. religious identities? Create a class display showing their similarities and differences.

Pupils prioritise their identities - cultural, ethnic, national, regional and religious. Which are the most important to them? Can they offer any reasons to explain their priorities? Which identities do pupils share?

Similarly, when asking pupils to address questions about their local community, What is my local community like? We recommend the following teaching activities: Use interviews, photos, the local library, newspapers and community organisations to research local communities. What do we mean by 'community' and 'communities'? Where are their boundaries? Do we belong to more than one community? What is in the local community?

What would you like to change about your local community? Can you do anything about it?

Why do people live in the Bradford District? Why have people migrated here from other places or countries? When? Explore the history of migration to Bradford. Where have people come from? Emphasise the fact that people have been coming to this area for a long time, including Jews, Ukrainians, Irish and others. What is the composition of the community population? What was/is the experience of people arriving in Bradford? Use personal stories/speakers/video recordings to illustrate people's experiences. Can pupils create an anthology of people's stories—including perhaps examples from their own families—to share with the class?

How did/does the host community respond to changes in the population? Key areas include housing, employment and schools. Explore 'racism' including 'unintentional racism'. What is prejudice? What are its causes? How can it be dealt with? What would a racially just and fair society look like?

What are the benefits of living in a multi-ethnic community? Responses may include the sharing of culture, art, music, food etc. as well as realising the contributions minority groups can make to local employment, working in hospitals, raising money for charity etc. Are there differences between the older generation and young people's attitudes to multi-cultural living?

In 2002 Bradford made a bid to become Capital of Culture. Prepare a presentation, including visual images, to convince people in your area/community that Bradford could win such a bid.

What vision do pupils have for the Bradford District in the future? What principles will it put into practice? What can they do to contribute to it?

The Year 8 unit on *Diversity in Great Britain* asks pupils to examine national patterns of emigration and immigration. What conclusions can be drawn from the

statistics? Why do people migrate? Push and pull factors. Link to Human Rights and freedom to travel.

Examine issues around nationality, immigration control and current debates about refugees and asylum seekers. What is good about life in Britain that makes people want to come here? What has happened in Britain's history that makes people from other countries have a strong identity with this country? Why do people settle in particular geographical areas?

Examine areas of British life that connect with diversity: food, music, clothes, language, and sport. Find out about individuals from different sections of the community who have made a significant impact on British life. Use ICT to make a presentation to the rest of the class.

Consider the options for a multi-cultural society: assimilation (immigrants are expected to behave in the same way as the indigenous population); integration (the differences between people cease to be significant); separation (such as Apartheid); repatriation; and what could be termed 'community cohesion' when there is a recognition of difference as well as similarity and the ability to live harmoniously.

What would the outcome of each of these options be, in terms of people's lives and well-being, the economy, employment patterns, culture, sport, food?