

# INTERACT

## WP 3 The intercultural dimension of education for democratic citizenship in England 1980 - 2005

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### **Objectives**

- to identify, summarise and contextualise the main official documents from England relating to education for democratic citizenship.
- to critically analyse these documents to determine the extent to which they incorporate an intercultural dimension.

### **Methodology**

1. We identified and assembled those national policy documents for England from the period 1980-2005, relating to formal education in schools, which are relevant to citizenship education and to multicultural education.
2. We summarised and contextualised the documents.
3. We critically examined the documents for evidence of awareness of and inclusion of an intercultural dimension.

### **Contextual background**

Until the 1990s, Education in England was a national service, locally administered. Responsibility for the curriculum lay with Local Education Authorities (LEAs). Insofar as there was any standardisation of the curriculum for secondary education it was through the system of formal examinations at age 16 and 18, administered by boards linked to universities. The one subject that was compulsory for all state schools was religious education.

In the 1970s and 1980s curriculum development was influenced by a variety of groups, projects and official reports, but there was no mechanism to ensure that any particular initiative was disseminated at national level. A number of voluntary groups promoted development education and human rights education in the curriculum (Starkey, 1994) and others supported political education and citizenship education.

The term 'intercultural education' is rarely used in Britain, except by those who have been involved in European programmes. However, during the 1970s, the presence of increasing numbers of visible ethnic minority students in schools stimulated LEAs to put in place *multicultural* support services including advisers for multicultural education. Multicultural education policies were produced at local level by the largest LEA, Inner London (ILEA) in 1977 and a semi-rural area, Berkshire, in 1979. In the 1980s such policies were developed and implemented in a number of LEAs and they benefited from the availability of *Section 11 funding* provided by the Home Office (interior ministry) for language support for ethnic minorities from the so-called New Commonwealth (e.g. Pakistan, Bangladesh, India). The scope of this funding was extended in 1993 to cover support for all ethnic minority students at risk of underachieving (Osler, 1997). It was replaced in 1998 by the *Ethnic Minority*

*Achievement Grant* (EMAG) administered by the education ministry (see Tikly *et al.*, 2005).

Initially, policy responses to increasing ethnic diversity in schools were framed in terms of the achievement (or rather the apparent underachievement) of minority students, particularly those of Afro-Caribbean heritage. The **Rampton Report** (1981) was framed in these terms, although it acknowledged the impact of racism as a barrier to achievement. This report's direct successor, the **Swann Report** (1985) recommended promoting a multicultural and global perspective in teaching materials and extending opportunities for *political* (i.e. citizenship) education. Importantly the report stressed that these issues should be addressed in all contexts and be given particular emphasis in predominantly or all-white areas. However, there was no mechanism to enforce the recommendations of these reports.

The promotion of multicultural education and varieties of political education, including human rights education, mostly found support in urban LEAs controlled by Labour and these initiatives came under fierce attacks from Conservative government ministers and their supporters in political and academic circles. These attacks were widely disseminated in the press. The Conservative government decided to curtail the freedom to develop local policies and initiatives. It abolished ILEA and nationalised the curriculum.

The Education Reform Act (ERA) (1988) ended the decentralised system of responsibility for the curriculum and examinations. It set up the National Curriculum Council (NCC) and the School Examination and Assessment Council (SEAC). The NCC introduced a compulsory national curriculum for 5 – 16-year-olds divided into four Key Stages. This national curriculum was based on programmes of study defined by groups of experts in three core and seven foundation subjects. It was gradually introduced from 1990.

Alongside this prescribed curriculum was a recommended but voluntary approach of cross-curricular themes. One of these themes was citizenship, and official guidance was set out in **Curriculum Guidance 8: Education for Citizenship** (1990). A group of experts met to produce similar guidance for multicultural education, but their report was never published because of political pressure from the government (1993). Indeed, by 1992 teachers in training were no longer required to consider the principles of multicultural education (1993). A non-governmental organisation filled the gap by producing *Equality assurance in schools: quality, identity, society. A handbook for action planning and school effectiveness* (1993) as detailed guidance for schools and student teachers.

The first review of the national curriculum, implemented in 1995, reduced the amount of prescribed study over all subjects and removed references to cross-curricular themes such as citizenship.

The election of a New Labour government in 1997, following 18 years of Conservative administration, produced a number of education initiatives based on new priorities. Responsibility for the curriculum and examinations was transferred to a new body the Qualifications and Assessment Authority (QCA). New standards for teachers in training were issued by the Teacher Training Agency and then revised as **Qualifying to teach: professional standards for Qualified Teacher Status and requirements for initial teacher training** (2003).

An advisory committee chaired by Professor Bernard Crick was set up with the remit of producing a rationale for the inclusion of citizenship as a compulsory subject in the

national curriculum and guidelines for its implementation. The report **Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools** (1998) led directly to the publication of **Programmes of Study for Citizenship** (1999). These were accompanied by detailed guidance for teachers called **Schemes of Work** (2001, 2002).

An important contextual development was the publication of the **Stephen Lawrence Inquiry** (1999) and the Government's response (1999). The report raised the issue of 'institutionalised racism' in public life and proposed an educational response. The Government required the school inspection system, OFSTED, to take account of race equality in its new **Inspection Framework** introduced in 2000. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000) also placed a legal obligation on public authorities, including schools, to promote race equality (Osler & Morrison, 2000 and 2002; Osler & Starkey, 2002).

There has been no overall review of the national curriculum with respect to ensuring a multicultural or intercultural dimension. The Runnymede Trust did, however, produce a comprehensive report *The Future of Multi-ethnic Britain* (2000) containing analysis and recommendations for education.

## **Critical analysis of the documents**

### **Swann Report (1985)**

The report envisaged Britain as a 'society which is both multi-racial and culturally diverse'. In this plural democracy education would play a key role in helping all young people to live together respecting each other's communities.

The report had a positive effect in that it encouraged LEAs to produce policies for multicultural or antiracist education, and by 1988 two thirds of LEAs had such policies. However, the political climate was very hostile to suggestions that Britain had become and should remain a multicultural society, and the Government took no action to promote the implementation of the report's recommendations.

### **Curriculum Guidance 8: Education for Citizenship (1990)**

This guidance was produced following a report of an all-party parliamentary commission on citizenship education (1990). It follows the Swan Report in explicitly recognising Britain as a 'multicultural, multiethnic, multifait and multilingual society'. It suggests that a programme of study for citizenship might include human rights instruments and specifies the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the European Convention on Human Rights (1950) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). However, the formulation is very weak and the development of cross-curricular themes took place in a minority of schools, before being abandoned in 1995.

### **Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools (1998)**

#### **Programmes of Study for citizenship (1999)**

#### **Schemes of Work (2001, 2002)**

*Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools*, often referred to as the Crick Report, paved the way for the most important innovation in the first national curriculum produced under Labour in 2000 namely the introduction of citizenship as a formal curriculum subject compulsory in all schools from ages 5 – 16. The report's declared intention is to change the political culture of Britain by revitalising democracy through active citizenship.

The report is structured in three parts: a rationale and definition; recommendations; practical suggestions on how the introduction of this new subject was to be implemented. This included an outline programme of study that was subsequently modified before formal publication so as to include a global dimension and specific references to human rights, though without specifying any human rights instruments.

The process of formulating policy on education for citizenship has been described by the professional officer to the committee. The shortcomings of the Crick report and the programmes of study with respect to a multicultural perspective have been analysed in a number of studies (Osler, 2000; Osler & Starkey, 2000, 2002, 2006).

### **Qualifying to teach: professional standards for Qualified Teacher Status and requirements for initial teacher training (2003).**

In order to qualify as a teacher, students must demonstrate that they have met national standards. However, there is very little explicit expectation that teachers will be prepared to make a contribution to promoting race equality and preparing students for life in a multicultural society. The standards are formulated in such a way as to imply such aims, but avoid stating them. For instance the first standard is: [teachers] have high expectations of all pupils; respect their social, cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic backgrounds; and are committed to raising their educational achievement.

In practice very little attention is given in teacher education to education for citizenship and to ensuring that students have a multicultural perspective. Rather than develop systematic training in multicultural education, the TTA preferred to invest money in a website.

### **Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (1999)**

### **Home Secretary's Action Plan (1999)**

### **OFSTED Inspection Framework 2000 (2000)**

Stephen Lawrence was a young black man murdered in 1993 by a gang of white youths. The investigation of this crime was extremely ineffectual and pressure from the family and supporters led the Government to commission a report on the implications of this inability of the State to provide justice to a black family. The report identified the pervasive influence of 'institutional racism' in the Metropolitan Police. However, its recommendations included the need for schools to develop strategies to prevent and address racism (recommendation 69). In its response to the report, the Government gave the responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this recommendation to OFSTED, the school inspection service. OFSTED responded by introducing a new inspection framework, but research commissioned by the Commission for Racial Equality clearly demonstrated that the leadership of OFSTED had no commitment to carrying out this task (Osler & Morrison, 2000). There followed an important political struggle, informed by the research, which resulted in the Chief Inspector being forced to resign.

## **Conclusion**

A common feature of most of the chosen documents is their permissive nature. Race equality and multiculturalism are rarely explicitly addressed. Rather they are implied as an 'absent presence'. Teachers, schools and LEAs wishing to develop a multicultural approach or promote human rights education can find indications of support for their initiative. However, there is very little by way of obligation to address issues of racism or ensure that teaching materials truly reflect a diverse society. Whilst the curriculum

has been centralised and citizenship introduced as an entitlement, there has been no review of the curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of a multicultural Britain. The extensive body of good practice that was developed in the 1980s and the experienced practitioners able to implement it, have not been nurtured. There is very little systematic training or support from official funding for initiatives to train newly qualifying or serving teachers for their role in developing Britain as a multicultural society, as envisaged in the Swan Report of 1985.

In looking to the future, the importance of school leadership must be emphasised, as the educational system, other than the prescription of the curriculum, is largely decentralised to school level (Osler & Starkey, 2005; Osler 2006).

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