

## Summary Research Report 1: Introduction to TEESAEC

### Funder:

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### TEESAEC project staff at CCHRE:

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### Project overview:

TEESAEC is a transnational project with seven partner universities and research institutes in Austria, Estonia, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the UK. The project investigates students' conceptions and political knowledge of the European Union and their understandings of their roles and identities as EU citizens. The project aims to identify the knowledge and skills necessary for students to fulfil their role as active European and cosmopolitan citizens. A set of Web-based teaching materials are being developed and tested to support teachers in their role as European Citizenship educators. University researchers are working in partnership with teachers from local schools.

### UK research sites

#### Local Schools working in partnership with the UK team:

##### School A: North Yorkshire

School A is located in a small historic [market](#) and [spa town](#) in [North Yorkshire](#), with a population of approximately 15,000. It is a mixed comprehensive school, catering to students aged 11-18. It has a population of 1,700 students, the majority of whom are white British and middle class. The area is relatively advantaged and, as a result, the proportion of students eligible for free school meals is very low (3.3%). Very few students come from minority ethnic groups (2.8%) or are at an early stage of learning English (0.5%). The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also below average. It has been a Technology School since 1998 and a Training School since 2001. In September 2005, the school was recognised by the Department for Education and Skills (DFES) to be a High Performing School, enabling the school to gain a third specialism – Business and Enterprise.

Achievement levels and results are higher than the national average. Compared with Local Authority and national benchmarks, students at Key Stage 3 (age group 11-14) are well above the average, especially in English. Key Stage 4 (age group 14-16) results have also been consistently higher than the national average point score per student and in the percentage of students achieving five or more A\*- C grades at GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education). At Key Stage 5 (age group 16+), sixth form standards are above the national average. The OFSTED (school inspection agency for England) report graded the school as 'good' – point 2 on a scale of 1-4 (1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, 4 is inadequate). See Table 1 for a profile of all three research school's achievement levels and the amount of support for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

Pupils' views on improving their experiences have been expressed through school council meetings, questionnaires, surveys and personal contact with teachers. One view that emerged was that students wanted more meaningful Citizenship teaching. Subsequently, a

head of Citizenship teaching was appointed and all students at Key Stage 4 now take the short course Citizenship GCSE.

Citizenship is viewed as an important subject by teachers and pupils. The way Citizenship classes are structured is that each citizenship teacher teaches a segment of the course to different classes of pupils. In other words, students rotate around different teachers. With one teacher, students take 6 lessons on the EU, then with another they take 6 classes on Britishness, with another 6 classes on charity work, with another 6 classes on British law and the legal system, and with another 6 lessons on human rights.

Table 1: Comparison of the three schools' student population, achievement levels and students with Special Educational Needs

School	A	B	C
Total Student Population	1700	1751	1125
% achieving 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE	74	64	65
% of students with SEN attracting additional funding	3.9	13.1	6.3

### **School B, West Yorkshire**

School B is a comprehensive school for students aged 11-19 with a science college specialist status since 2003. It has a population of 1751 full-time students. It also provides opportunities for people of all ages and for the wider local community.

The school is located in an area that has been undergoing considerable regeneration since the closure of the coal mines some 20 years ago. According to the 2006 OFSTED report, students experience high levels of social deprivation and the percentage of students entitled to free school meals is higher than the national average. The school community is predominantly white British and no students were recorded as having English as an additional language.<sup>1</sup> The number of students identified as having specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly above average. Students enter the college with below average levels of attainment (see Table 1).

### **School C, Leeds, West Yorkshire**

School C is a mixed comprehensive secondary school for pupils aged 11-18. According to the most recent OFSTED inspection report (October 2008) there are 1125 pupils on roll (900 secondary school and 225 sixth form), so it is larger than most secondary schools. The school was awarded specialist status in 2003 (Business and Enterprise).

It is situated in a relatively affluent area, but there are pockets of social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of students entitled to a free school meal is slightly above average. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is growing and is over twice the national average. A high number of students do not speak English as their first

<sup>1</sup> Since this inspection report was completed the school has admitted a number of students from Poland and elsewhere in Eastern Europe. The presence of these newcomers, in a previously apparently homogeneous community was one of the reasons cited by the school as important in joining the TEESAEC project.

language. The proportion of students with a statement of special educational need is above average, but the overall proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average (see Table 1).

**Partner institutions:**

1) Department of Political Science, Institute for Social Science and European Studies, University of Education, Karlsruhe, Germany

Project staff: Prof. Georg Weisseno (Project Coordinator) and Valentin Eck (Research Officer)

2) Institute for International and Social Studies, Tallinn University, Estonia

Project staff: Professor Dr. Raivo Vetik and Marti Taru (Research Officer)

3) Department of Political Science, University of Leiden, Netherlands

Project Staff: Professor Dr. Henk Dekker and Sanne Rijkhoff (Research Officer)

4) Institute for Political Science, University of Innsbruck, Austria

Project Staff: Professor Dr. Reinhold Gärtner and Dr. Bernhard Natter

5) Institute for Research and Development, University of Education FHNW, Switzerland

Project Staff: Professor Dr. Béatrice Ziegler and Dr. Yvonne Leimgruber

6) Institute for Teaching and Learning, University of Education Zentralschweiz, Switzerland

Project Staff: Professor Dr. Volker Reinhardt and Cand. MA Gina Aschwanden

**Project outcome**

As well as research reports which follow, an important planned outcome of the TEESAEC project is the development of a Webquest internet resource toolkit for schools etc.