

INDIVIDUALS  
ENGAGING IN  
SOCIETY

*CitizenshipFoundation*

# Understanding **Citizenship** Teacher's Resource 1

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 **HODDER**  
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## Learning

### Focus

The units in this section support the following areas of the Key Stage 3 Programme of Study:

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4 a, b, c, g

### Themes

- What are schools for?
- School rules

*The two units in this section are designed to give students an opportunity to reflect upon and to discuss a number of questions about the purpose of education and how schools are run.*

Key questions raised include:

- Why do we go to school?
- Why does truancy occur?
- How should truancy be dealt with?
- What should schools be trying to do?
- What are fair and reasonable rules?
- What are the rights and responsibilities of students and teachers?

Other educational issues raised elsewhere in the series are as follows:

**Book 1 Bullying:** the duty of the school, pages 30–33.

**Book 2 Changing lives:** sex education, pages 10–13.

**Book 2 Offending behaviour:** vandalism in school, pages 38–41.

**Book 3 What is politics?:** racism in school, pages 34–35.

**Book 3 Human rights today:** human rights in school, pages 64–65.

## What are schools for?

## Answers and guidance

*This unit looks at the function or purpose of schools from the perspective of truancy and home education, by asking 'What exactly do truants and children educated at home miss by not attending mainstream school?'*

### No school today pp4–5

*This topic raises questions about the causes of truancy and the measures that may be taken to deal with it.*

**Q1 p5** Students should be able to recognise that Gemma will have made very little progress in most subjects – particularly maths. She is also at risk of becoming socially isolated, and is likely to obtain few, if any, qualifications before she leaves school. In general, children who truant are also more likely to become involved in criminal or anti-social behaviour.

However, the text does not paint an entirely negative picture of Gemma's capabilities. She is clearly resourceful and highly literate, especially in view of her attendance record. She is not without friends – and wishes eventually to continue her education at art school.

**Q2 p5** Students may suggest that the original reason for Gemma's truancy could be some kind of underlying fear, deepened by the effects of continued and extensive absences. Children may also truant because they are being bullied or because they see themselves as being unable to keep up and maintain progress in school. In this case, Gemma does not appear to be a victim of bullying.

It may be also argued that some children truant from school because they find that the work is not sufficiently interesting or that the way in which the school is organised is not conducive to learning.

**Q3 p5** Some students may argue that still further action should be taken against Gemma's parents, although others may question the value of imposing a larger fine or prison sentence.

Students may also suggest that greater efforts should be made by the school to engage and involve Gemma. This could be one-to-one support either at school or at home.

**Q4 p5** Currently schools, local authorities and the police have a number of powers to combat truancy. A police officer who finds a child in a public place has the power to take the child back to school if the officer believes that the child is absent from school without a good cause. In some areas this power is used by the police and local authorities in the form of high-visibility truancy patrols, looking for and stopping children who are not in school during school hours.

As indicated in the Pupil's Book text, some local authorities also bring prosecutions against parents of children who truant, although this is normally a last resort after all other ways have been tried to get the children back to school.

Some schools now have a text alert system in which a text or phone message is sent to parents within 45 minutes if a child is absent from class.

Other methods used to reduce truancy include issuing medals for good attendance (the London Borough of Kingston), and giving students with 100 per cent attendance the chance to win a DVD player (Accrington, Lancashire). In parts of the US, children at school are tagged, so that teachers and parents can know where they are at any given time (although this measure has been challenged as an infringement of a young person's privacy and dignity). In Philadelphia, a scheme has been introduced to pay parents from the local community to catch children out of school. You may like to discuss the suitability of some of these measures.

In addition to this, students may wish to discuss the responsibility of the government and schools to make the curriculum more interesting and relevant to young people. Should the government use its power to make the education system more flexible in recognising wide variations in student needs and competences?

### Home time pp6–7

*This topic examines the subject of home education in relation to the value and purpose of school.*

**Q1 p7** The advantages of being educated at home are likely to include greater personal attention, greater flexibility over how and when to work, and an absence of bullying and other school-related stresses.

Disadvantages are likely to be fewer facilities, less subject choice, being taught generally by someone who is a non-specialist, and much less social contact.

**Q2 p7** In answering this question, students weigh up the strengths and weaknesses of mainstream and home education.

Further information about home education in the UK is available from Education Otherwise, <http://www.education-otherwise.org> and Home Education, <http://www.home-education.org.uk>.

**Q3 p7** The decision to educate Lydia at home was probably taken by her parents when Lydia was only four years of age. Unlike Gemma, Lydia has never been to school, and her entire formal education has been undertaken by her father.

Lydia has received more specialist attention than Gemma, and Lydia's education may have been more focused on her needs.

Unlike Lydia, Gemma has played truant (although not while she was in primary school). Both girls have been subject to official scrutiny and both are, to some extent, deviating from the norm. Gemma and her parents have been subject to official sanctions, which Lydia and her father have managed to escape. (However, parents who wish to educate their children at home may also face opposition from their local authority.)

**Q4 p7** To answer this question, students need to be familiar with the wording of the law that allows children to be educated at home, and they need to have some understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of home and mainstream education.

### The way we were pp8–9

*This topic looks at the significance of education in modern industrial societies.*

**Q1 p8** Students' answers to this question may include references to the following details. Relatively few children attended school 100 years ago compared with today. The kind of school a child attended depended a great deal on their social background (although the richest children would probably be taught at home). Children's attendance at school, as the text

indicates, was generally over a much shorter period in their life than is customary today, and lessons tended to be given in a more didactic style.

Children were taught predominantly by women, who were assisted by pupil teachers, the so-called 'monitorial system'. Although schools were generally smaller than today, classes were often larger with work undertaken in a regimented fashion. In some subjects, boys and girls were taught separately.

The curriculum in many schools 100 years ago was not significantly narrower than it is today (in terms of subjects taught). There was considerable emphasis on reading, writing and arithmetic – but the timetable also included history, geography, physical and religious education, some aspects of science, and technical subjects, including woodwork, cookery and needlework. It also included, in some cases, citizenship – although the content and methodology of this and many other subjects was very different from today.

Further information on Victorian schools is often available in local museums and libraries, many with websites, such as the Chiltern Open Air Museum, <http://www.coam.org.uk>. You may also be interested in contacting the British Schools Museum at Hitchin in Hertfordshire, [www.hitchinbritishschools.org.uk](http://www.hitchinbritishschools.org.uk).

**Q2 p8** The **Further activity** on pages 6–8 of this Teacher's Resource may help students answer this question.

**Q3 p9** Students may suggest that the benefits of children not starting school until they are seven include a longer childhood and a reduction in education costs. The drawbacks, however, may be lower levels of numeracy and literacy amongst children and a delay in returning to work for the parent mainly responsible for the care for the child.

This question may prompt further discussion on whether schools place too much pressure on children to achieve at an early age – and if they do, why this occurs.

**Q4 p9** Government politicians state that the reason for requiring young people to remain in education or training until they are 18 is to ensure that as many as possible enter work with the appropriate qualifications and training.

Announcing the proposed legislation in 2007, the Schools Secretary, Ed Balls, said that the new age limit would be enforced by a 'robust regime' of support and penalties including spot fines and court action.

Similar moves have been undertaken in other countries. In Canada, for example, legislation has been introduced to prevent someone under the age of 18 from applying for a driving licence unless they are at school or in training. A person who is habitually absent from school may have their driving licence suspended.

If time is available, you may wish to widen the discussion to ask about the kind of curriculum that should be available in schools

to accommodate these changes, particularly for older students in Year 10 and above. Questions that might arise here include:

- What kind of curriculum should be offered to young people, aged 16–18?
- Should schools offer more activities outside the normal curriculum?
- Should a more practical curriculum be introduced in schools even earlier than this?
- Is there an argument for lowering, rather than raising the school-leaving age?

### What are schools for?

### Further activity

*An exercise designed to help students think about the purpose of education in schools.*

#### **Preparation**

Print out pages 7 and 8 of this Teacher's Resource and cut into cards, with enough sets for students to work in small groups of three or four.

#### **Organisation**

1. Explain to students that you would like them to look at this question: 'What are schools for?' Get students to sit in small groups of three or four. Give each group a set of cards on **What are schools for?** If necessary, go through and clarify the wording on each one.
2. Ask students to look at each card, and to set aside those with which they disagree.
3. Now ask them to identify and select those that most accurately describe their views. (There are also two blank cards available for students to add their own suggestions.)
4. Ask a number of groups to outline their selection and explain the reasons for their choice.
5. You may wish to move the discussion on to ways in which these aims might be achieved, asking the question 'How do you make schools the places that you would like them to be?'

The cards provided on page 8 on **Improving our education** may help to stimulate ideas. Again, students can sort or rank these suggestions and add further ideas of their own.

## What are schools for?

<p><b>Help for parents</b></p> <p>Schools should help parents to educate their children</p>	<p><b>A basic standard of education</b></p> <p>Schools should give all children and young people a basic standard of education</p>
<p><b>Help with thinking</b></p> <p>To teach children to think</p>	<p><b>Employment for teachers</b></p> <p>To provide employment for teachers, administrators, cleaners and other staff</p>
<p><b>A trained and educated workforce</b></p> <p>To provide the country with a trained and educated workforce</p>	<p><b>Keeping children out of trouble</b></p> <p>To keep children out of trouble and off the streets</p>
<p><b>New knowledge and understanding</b></p> <p>To give children knowledge and understanding that is not available at home, in the community or at work</p>	<p><b>Good qualifications and a job</b></p> <p>To provide children and young people with qualifications that will help them to find a good job</p>
<p><b>Training future leaders</b></p> <p>To train and select the leaders of the future</p>	<p><b>Preparing for life ahead</b></p> <p>To prepare children for their life ahead, when they grow up</p>
<p><b>Happiness</b></p> <p>To make children and young people happy</p>	<p><b>Good exam grades</b></p> <p>To make sure that children do as well as possible in exams</p>

Improving our education

Change the size of the school	Change class sizes
Fewer tests and examinations	Stronger punishments
No school uniform	Better facilities in school
Offer a wider choice of subjects for students to take	Have separate schools for boys and girls
Change the timing of the school day or school year	Pay more attention to discipline and good behaviour
Involve students more in the lessons	Give students more responsibility
Be stricter on those who misbehave	Give students more say in the way in which the school is run
Give parents more say in the way in which the school is run	Change the amount of time people are required to be in school

*This unit looks at questions of fairness, justice and responsibility in school – as applied to both students and teachers.*

### **Speaking out pp10–11**

*This topic is based on a case in which Year 10 students complained about the quality of teaching that they were receiving and the way in which the matter was dealt with by all sides.*

*The topic is designed to help students discuss the balance between individual rights and responsibilities, and the lengths to which students may reasonably go in making a protest.*

**Q1 p10** Students may suggest a number of alternative measures that the four pupils could have taken. These include:

- raising the matter first with senior staff or governors
- asking their parents to do the same
- raising the matter with the school council (if the school had one).

Students may also suggest that the girls could have organised a petition to present to the head or undertaken some kind of demonstration or other action.

You may like to go through all these suggestions with students, identifying their various strengths and weaknesses.

**Q2 p10** This is clearly a difficult situation for the head teacher. It would seem important for her to take a number of steps, including:

- consulting with senior staff and governors
- checking whether the girls had any reasonable grounds for complaint
- talking to the girls themselves
- contacting the girls' parents
- deciding on an appropriate strategy
- preparing a public statement for use, if required
- looking to see whether any immediate measures can be taken to deal with the girls' concerns.

Students may suggest that the head teacher's main priority should be to do what she can to deal with the problem raised by the girls. They may also recognise that the story was likely to generate a lot of bad publicity for the school – at a local and possibly national level.

**Q3 p11** Most students will probably feel that Sarah was quite right to refuse to apologise for what she and her friends did, if she continues to believe that her actions were appropriate. Students may also argue that it is wrong for someone to be forced to apologise for something against their will.

There is also a further underlying question here of what Sarah should be apologising for. Is it for:

- complaining about the quality of the teaching she received?
- the manner in which she and her friends made their complaint?
- the impact of going to the press on the reputation of the school?

**Q4 p11** If students are critical of the head's reaction, encourage them to explain why, and to offer an alternative strategy. Arguably, the head could have placed much greater emphasis on talking to the four students and finding a way either to meet their concerns, or to indicate that their complaints were groundless or unreasonable.

**Q5 p11** The head seems to have given Sarah only two choices: to apologise or to remain defiant. Many people would argue that this was a probably a mistake, and that Sarah should have been given at least one more alternative through which the conflict could have been resolved.

Suspension or some other form of punishment is obviously an option for the head – but arguably she should have known that this was likely to aggravate, rather than calm down, the situation. Perhaps further discussions with Sarah and her parents would have produced a more effective outcome.

**Q6 p11** Few people would agree that students should *never* criticise their school in public. Most would probably say that public criticism of this kind should be discouraged, and that the school authorities, parents and students have a responsibility to recognise and deal with difficult issues before they become a major problem.

### Fair enough pp12–13

*This topic raises questions of fairness and reasonableness in both drawing up and implementing school rules. The questions and activity Mrs Dolman's day provide an opportunity for students to discuss rules in their own school.*

**Q1 p12** The rules for Prissick School:

- apply to both children and parents
- apply in and out of school
- require all children to be fined for unauthorised absences
- require children to go to church on Sunday
- impose strict responsibilities on parents
- apply more to children's personal and moral behaviour than to the day-to-day running of the school
- place a high value on organised religion.

**Q2 p12** Ask students to explain why the rules they selected were fair/unfair. For what reasons were certain rules unfair?

**Q3 p12** This is an extension of the previous question. Would students accept any of the rules that extend beyond the school into the children's personal and family life?

**Q4 p13** There may be certain sections of this agreement that students would like to change. Is the wording sufficiently clear?

Is it ambiguous? Is the *balance* of the statements correct? Should any of the group have more or fewer obligations?

**Q5 p13** This question raises issues of consultation, participation and information.

Today schools are required to have a behaviour policy outlining the range of punishments that may be used. Schools must consult staff, parents, governors and a sample of students about this, and the head must explain the policy to each of these groups at least once a year.

**Q6 p13** This question deliberately applies to teachers and schools *in general*, but clearly comments and discussion may easily draw on students' experiences in their own school.

It may help students to answer this question if they give their answers in the form 'teachers should always...'. Here you would expect phrases such as:

- be consistent
- listen to both sides
- avoid sarcasm
- be fair
- avoid shouting
- give you a chance to explain
- explain what they are doing, etc.

**Q7 p13** Students may suggest that a fair school rule is one that:

- is reasonable
- applies equally to all groups, and does not disadvantage one particular group
- is in proportion to the problem that it is designed to deal with
- can be reasonably justified
- is beneficial to the school as a whole.

### Tuesday morning break pp14–15

*This topic is based on a real case that took place in a school in the late 1960s. It highlights a school's responsibility for the care and welfare of students, but also raises questions about the responsibility of students for their own and other people's actions. It may also be used to introduce the ideas of civil law and compensation to students, and to illustrate how the law and courts are used in dealing with disputes. A more active and extended approach to this case is given in the **Further activity** on page 12 of this Teacher's Resource.*

**Q1 p15** The court decided that by his action in trying to conceal the elastic in the waste bin, Mr Evans indicated that he was aware of the possibility that the length of rubber could be found and misused in some way by a pupil. By coiling the elastic and placing it at the bottom of the bin, Mr Evans was trying to minimise the likelihood of this happening.

There is a question surrounding whether Mark and Scott, in particular, were old enough to realise the potential dangers of what they were doing. In this case, the court decided that they were not. In a more recent case (1988) involving a play sword

fight with plastic rulers between two 15-year-old girls, judges decided on appeal that the magnitude of risk could not have been appreciated by an ordinary child of that age.

**Q2 p15** Potential dangers exist in sports and games, school trips, and certain practical activities in subjects like science, food technology, and design and technology. There are 'accidental' risks in the playground and moving about the school, plus dangers from bullying both in and travelling to and from school.

### Tuesday morning break

### Further activity

*An investigation into an accident that occurred in school, designed to encourage students to examine questions of responsibility.*

#### **Preparation**

Print out page 13 of this Teacher's Resource and cut into cards. One set of cards will be required for each small group of students.

#### **Organisation**

1. Divide the class into small groups of 2–4 students, and explain that each group represents the senior management team or a small group of senior staff in school.
2. Give each small group of students a set of cards to share out between them. Each person then reads aloud the information on their card.
3. Tell students that an incident has taken place in school, and that it is their job to try to work out a) who was involved, and b) exactly what happened on the morning in question. Give students 5–10 minutes to work this out, and then draw the class back together again.
4. Ask students now to tell the story of what took place, perhaps asking each small group to explain one section of the story.
5. As a whole group activity, ask students to identify all those who had some degree of responsibility. List these names on the board, and ask them to rank or indicate degrees of responsibility. (You may prefer to do this as a small group exercise, with students sorting/ranking the names of the individuals and organisations involved.)
6. After discussing their answers and views, you may then like to refer students to the main text, pages 14–15 of the Pupil's Book, and explain how the matter was eventually dealt with by the court.
7. You may like to explain to students that one of the key pieces of evidence, as far as the court was concerned, was Mr Evans' decision to wind the elastic into a small coil and place it at the bottom of the waste bin. This, the court decided, indicated that Mr Evans realised that there was a possibility that students might find the elastic and play with it, and attempted to minimise the chances of this happening by carefully placing it out of sight at the bottom of the bin.

## Tuesday morning break

### **Scott (aged 14) and Mark (aged 15)**

We were just talking and hanging around by the tuck shop when we saw a piece of elastic hanging over the edge of the waste bin like a big worm.

We took it out and pulled it to see how far it would stretch. I (Scott) tried to tie Mark up with it, but he ran off. I hung onto my end, but Mark's end flew off and caught Sean in the eye.

### **Ashley (aged 11)**

I dropped something in the bin at the start of break and noticed the elastic coiled up at the bottom. I took it out and played around with it for a bit, then threw it back in the bin and went off with my friends.

### **Sean (aged 15)**

I was standing by the tuck shop at break eating some biscuits that I'd just bought. I was not paying much attention, but I did see Scott and Mark fooling around. Suddenly I got hit across the face and my eye really hurt. It turns out it was the elastic that Scott and Mark had been playing with.

I had to go to hospital. My eye has been badly damaged and there is a chance I may lose my sight.

### **Phil Harvey and Pat Robbins**

We were on duty, Tuesday morning first break. It took a long time to clear Year 7 out of the English rooms. We couldn't check the outside areas until the end of break. We've had problems with this group before. They're a difficult bunch. We didn't see the incident in question.

### **Robert Evans**

The students from gym club had just left the sports hall on Monday afternoon. It was about 5p.m. and I was just packing everything away when I noticed that one of the small trampolines needed repairing. The elastic holding the centre part of the trampoline to the frame was beginning to fray.

I decided to do the repair straight away. I took some spare elastic from the store and cut a three-metre length, which I fitted to the trampoline.

I cleared everything up in the store, locked my office and the sports hall, and walked over to the staff room in the main building. I wound the elastic up and placed it at the bottom of one of the wastepaper bins in the covered area opposite the tuck shop.