

# **Craig Ormerod Associates Ltd.**

## **Subject Overview: Citizenship (KS4)**

GCSE Citizenship is an opt-in KS4 subject. Its principle aim is to encourage pupils to consider their role as global citizens and to think critically - but proactively - about the politicised environment in which we operate. This in turn assists pupils in playing a more active part in public and democratic life, ideally as more informed and capable citizens. The course allows for the group or individual to develop the skills needed to analyse and comment on four distinct themes:

- Living together in the UK
- Democracy at work in the UK
- Law and Justice
- Power and Influence – The UK's Relationship with the Rest of the World

The course focuses on the importance of active citizenship so that students can engage with topics they feel passionately about, whilst at the same time acquiring fundamental skills in research, investigation, problem solving, advocacy and campaigning. Pupils are able to reflect on current events more objectively and, in doing so, gain a deeper understanding of the political and democratic discourses impacting on modern society. The aims and objectives of GCSE Citizenship are:

- To understand the principles of parliamentary democracy and how they are applied within the UK, how the government executes its mandate and how non-democratic systems of government operate outside of the UK
- To understand the relationship between the state and its citizens, as well as the rights, responsibilities and duties of individuals living and working in the UK
- To understand the rule of law and its application in society, how laws are shaped and enforced and how the justice system operates in the UK
- To understand the nature of taxes, how they are used by the government and how national economic and financial policies affect individual members of society
- To be able to explain key citizenship concepts including democracy, government, justice, equality, rights, responsibilities, participation, community, identity and diversity
- To be able to think critically about a wide range of political, social, economic and ethical issues within regional and global contexts
- To be able to formulate meaningful citizenship enquiries and, in doing so, critically evaluate and interpret contrasting sources of evidence

The overarching question posed by the AQA specification is: How can citizens make a difference? Within this broad framework are four discreet units of work, each of which is divided into four sub-sections. Each sub-section concludes with a summary question designed to encourage pupils to

think critically about how they can make a positive difference. These summary questions help pupils to frame their learning within the wider, real-time application of citizenship skills. Each unit also requires that pupils demonstrate the skills they have acquired and are able to explain the related processes with regards to current events. The four units of work are:

### **Life in Modern Britain**

This unit focuses on the structure and dynamics of contemporary Britain, what it means to be British and the role of the media in influencing Britain's world identity. Key questions include:

- What are the principles and values that underpin British society?
- What do we mean by *identity*?
- What are the roles of the media and the free press?
- What is Britain's involvement in key international organisations?
- How can British citizens make their voice heard?

### **Rights and Responsibilities**

This unit looks at the nature of laws, rights and responsibilities within the UK, as well as touching on more global aspects of international law and the treaties and agreements by which the UK abides. Key questions include:

- Why does a society depend on laws and which are the most important?
- What are an individual's rights and responsibilities within the legal system?
- How has the law evolved over time?
- How does the law protect the individual and deal with criminal behaviour?
- What are universal human rights and how are they protected?
- What can individuals do to affect change within the legal system?

### **Politics and Participation**

This unit aims to give students a thorough understanding of the political process, as well as the skills and knowledge essential to conflict resolution, creating positive change and placing the empowered citizen at the heart of our society. Key questions include:

- Where does political power reside in the UK and how is it controlled?
- What powers do local and devolved governments possess and how can one participate?
- Who wields the most political power: Parliament, the government or the citizen?
- How do other nations govern themselves?
- How can individuals bring about political change?

### **Active Citizenship**

This is a problem-solving unit designed to help pupils adopt a logical and systematic approach to affecting positive change around them. This procedure consists of the following steps:

1. Identifying a problem
2. Carrying out initial research
3. Creating an action plan
4. Executing the action plan

5. Assessing the impact of one's actions
6. Evaluation

The outcomes of these four units of work align with the AQA Citizenship specification. End points are also used as a revision tool for pupils, since they can determine which units require the most revision and, within them, which sub-sections need the most attention.

The curriculum incorporates aspects of traditional British values, the rule of law, respect and tolerance, individual liberty and democracy. It also helps to nurture the social, moral, spiritual and cultural characteristics of our pupils. We believe that the quality of our provision in these areas reflects the importance we place on them.

More generally, the Citizenship GCSE course also has cross-curricular links with other subjects, specifically Maths and English; pupils are indirectly developing their literacy, numeracy and communication skills through their various research endeavours. Pupils are introduced to subject-specific vocabulary banks comprising twelve Tier 2 and twelve Tier 3 words per unit of work, which are embedded within pupils' learning. Students will develop the vocabulary and confidence needed to articulate their thoughts and feelings in a safe, trusting, respectful environment. There are also links with Religious Studies, as Citizenship openly promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our young people in preparation for their journey into adulthood.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

A range of teaching strategies are employed to help pupils develop their skills and knowledge through the following activities:

- Class discussion
- Individual research
- Learning simulations
- Role play
- Thought experiments
- Group investigation
- Structured debate
- Reflective practice

Units of work are approached from a variety of viewpoints and belief systems so that each pupil is able to arrive at their own informed conclusions. By comparing their findings to the views of others, pupils are encouraged to maintain an open mind throughout the process. Extreme views of any kind on any topic are always challenged and monitored carefully; one of Citizenship's chief goals is to help pupils develop a thorough working knowledge of society's core values and how they are applied.

At the start of each unit pupils are encouraged to identify their relative areas of strength and weakness so that a targeted approach to learning can be adopted. At the end of each unit, pupils are given the opportunity to self and peer-assess their work in order to assess their level of understanding. Feedback is subsequently provided and forms the basis for pupils' working grades. Since no Citizenship data exists for pupils prior to Year 9, target grades are the same as for pupils' English GCSE exam. Baseline assessments are completed at the end of each unit, during which pupils are asked to complete a selection of GCSE past papers. These are assessed formatively and summatively against established success criteria. Pupils' increasing levels of understanding are

monitored using academic trackers across all areas of study, and take the form of red (novice), amber (developing) and green (secure) markers, depending on their level of mastery.

## **IMPACT**

The underlying impact of GCSE Citizenship aligns with our whole-service mission to prepare pupils for the next stage of their lives, as well as promoting personal development and resilience. Our hope is that pupils will go on to apply the values they have learned, such as democracy, tolerance, mindfulness and mutual respect, throughout their adult lives.

Our pupils are encouraged to participate in a wide range of activities across and beyond the curriculum, and to contribute fully both within the service and the local community. In doing so, every pupil learns to work with others, recognise their own worth and become increasingly responsible for their own personal development. Pupils also reflect on their own unique life experiences to help them assess their own progress, as well as preparing them to tackle the many obstacles that invariably arise throughout adulthood and within the workplace.

Pupils will graduate from the course with a sound knowledge of the core political and social institutions that underpin our society, as well as the rights, responsibilities and duties common to everyone living in the UK. Pupils will have learned to recognise and respect our diversity, our common humanity and our shared ambitions, allowing them to go on to form positive, fulfilling relationships in the future.