

PREPARING TOMORROW'S PEOPLE: THE NEW CHALLENGES OF CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION FOR INVOLVING SCOTTISH PUPILS AND TEACHERS IN PARTICIPATIVE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the recent cultural and political changes that have led to the renewed interest in citizenship education in schools. The implications of New Labour's 'Third Way' politics are examined in relation to new priorities for Scottish schools set out by Learning and Teaching Scotland, and the implications for school democratisation are explored. Drawing upon qualitative research in progress in a small sample of Scottish schools, the article explores evidence of pupil and staff participation in school decision-making processes. This evidence is measured against the continuing existence of school hierarchical and bureaucratic procedures. The article opens up new questions about the democratisation of school systems in the pursuit of education for active citizenship, in the drive to prepare young people and their teachers for a world with new and complex challenges.

INTRODUCTION

Scottish schools currently face the demanding task of attempting to equip young people for active citizenship in a rapidly changing community. Globalisation, technological advancement and the increasingly complex sets of roles that people must adopt have been set against political and cultural shifts in attitudes and values. Schools carry a heavy burden of responsibility for making sure that their practices allow pupils to become aware of their potential for participation and feel suitably empowered to engage in participative approaches to decision-making in a future Scottish society.

NEW TURNING POINTS IN THE CITIZENSHIP DEBATE

It could be argued that citizenship education currently stands at a crossroads in the development of our political and educational culture. Potter (2002) attributes this to a range of factors. Firstly, the realisation that young people are increasingly displaying apathy towards politics and the democratic process is crucial. Secondly, the increasing threat of terrorism following the assault on the twin towers of the World Trade Center on 11 September 2001 has meant a global re-assessment of what democracy actually means in terms of economic and cultural imperatives. Thirdly, the loss of social capital and weakening of community values during the 1990s have been directly associated with many young people's disaffection with democratic processes. And finally, the changing ideologies of political parties and general societal disaffection with politicians has also called for a re-think of ideas and priorities (Potter, 2002).

In the early part of the 21st Century, the essence of what it means to prepare young people for active citizenship has become a critical educational debate. Citizenship education has now become a statutory part of the English national curriculum, and new recommendations in Scotland are increasing the focus on citizenship as a curricular and cross-curricular component of the 5–14 national guidelines. However, many schools' attempts to translate principles into practice are still in their infancy due to teachers' uncertainty about the way to proceed (Davies and Evans, 2002).

Citizenship education is by no means a new idea, and can be dated back to the education system of ancient Greece. Carr (1991) refers to Plato's view of the relationship between educational and social philosophy, while Dewey (1916, p.8) also talks of his vision of education as including a 'social necessity'. But there can be no doubt that views about the nature and purpose of citizenship education have evolved and developed considerably during the past 10-15 years. Potter (2002) argues that, until the mid- to late-1980s, the general view in and out of schools was of the need for the *good* citizen who enjoyed state provision benefits in return for which he 'obeyed the law, paid his taxes and, if necessary, performed military service' (p.18). However, the growing realisation that we live in an age where young people are more inclined to vote for the winner of national television programmes such as *'Big Brother'* than they are to vote in local or national elections, has moved the political debate on to one that focuses more on the creation of the *active* citizen (Mills, 2002).

It seems, then, that there are many changes in society in recent years that have dictated a shift of emphasis in the way that schools may conceptualise citizenship education. Increased political apathy, weakening community values and the need to re-consider democratic priorities in the wake of globalisation and terrorism have all given new meaning to the term 'citizenship'. Although there is a long history of connecting educational and social priorities, there is now a greater urgency for pupils to be made aware of their civic responsibilities and potential to participate in community and global affairs.

PRIORITIES FOR CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

The re-emergence and increased public concern about citizenship in educational discourse in recent years has been set against the backdrop of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. Indeed, Hart refers to Kohlberg's broad vision for promoting the young person's voice:

'The adolescent's values, explorations and declarations must be listened to, acknowledged, constructively criticised and debated and encouraged if he is to develop and attend to the evolving voice of universal principles within himself.' (Kohlberg, in Hart, 2002, p.252)

This focus on the rights of the child and the accompanying emphasis on the need for individual responsibility and active participation has resulted in new priorities for schools in their pursuit of modern civic values. Cogan (in Cogan and Derricott, 2000) classifies the essential ingredients of education for active citizenship under 5 categories:

- A sense of identity
- Enjoyment of certain rights
- Fulfilment of corresponding obligations
- A degree of interest and involvement in public affairs
- An acceptance of basic societal values

Cogan stresses the need for multinational dimensions to pupils' awareness of identity, along with equal emphasis on the pursuit of duty and individual rights, a commitment to participation and the promotion of values such as trust, respect and co-operation (Cogan and Derricott, 2000).

Here we see the emergence of many new priorities for schools to address, resulting directly from the changes occurring in wider society in recent years. Children's sense

of identity must now, more than ever, be set against a diverse multicultural backdrop. The need for rights must be framed against the need for responsibility and duty on a global scale, and children must be encouraged to be active in society but still hang on to moral and ethical principles. It is fair to say that teachers' work in this area is to be challenging, as they strive to prepare pupils for adult life.

CHANGING POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES

The changing pattern in educational priorities inherent within the citizenship agenda has perhaps emerged from the impact of wider changes and developments in political ideology. Loxley and Thomas (2001) document the emergence of the New Right as a dominant political force during the 1970s and 1980s, with its emphasis on an 'individualistic and meritocratic set of principles' (p.293). They examine the dual strands inherent within these politics – namely, neo-liberalism and new-conservatism. The emphasis on the assertive and acquisitive individualism within the former strand mixed with the accent on nationhood, duty, family and tradition within the latter created a juxtaposition of ideas (Loxley and Thomas, 2001).

It has perhaps been one of the key drives of New Labour policies to graft inclusive and socially-oriented outcomes on to the ideology of the New Right (Loxley and Thomas, 2001). Communitarianism represents an attempt to create a route between old socialist ideals with more recent neo-liberal individualism, regarding community members as having rights as individuals but also obligations to society (Lawson, 2001). Potter (2002) traces the departure from neo-liberalism into the New Labour programme described by Tony Blair as the 'Third Way'. He cites several underlying democratic values within Third Way politics which serve to unite a commitment to equality and inclusion with individual autonomy. These values include autonomy of action, no rights without responsibilities, no authority without democracy, cosmopolitan pluralism and philosophical conservatism (Potter, 2002). Loxley and Thomas (2001) discuss the complex role for education in its attempt to reflect these conflicting values and move towards the dual aims of 'economic restoration' combined with 'cultural and moral regeneration' (p.297).

Reflecting upon recent political developments and their implications for schools, it is easy to see how shifting ideologies have influenced educational policy and practice. The New Right perspective of individualism merged with duty and tradition has evolved into the New Left ideology of communitarian and collectivist values. The principles of 'Third Way' politics seem to encourage previous themes such as autonomy, rights, authority and community to continue, but with modern socialist values attached. Autonomy must now be mixed with action, rights with responsibility, authority with democracy and community with cosmopolitan and culturally diverse perspectives. Once again, schools are cited as agents of change for developing educational vision that reflects these new political and cultural paradigms.

THE CRICK REPORT AND BEYOND

The publication of the Crick Report could be regarded as a major step towards recognising the importance of shared moral values in education. This report, released in 1998, places an equal emphasis on social responsibility, community involvement and political literacy (QCA, 1998). Pupils should become socially and morally responsible towards those in authority and each other, actively involved in the concerns of the community and aware of how to make themselves effective in public life through appropriate knowledge, skills and values (Potter, 2002).

In Scotland, recommendations for practice have been transmitted via Learning And Teaching Scotland in their paper '*Education For Citizenship In Scotland – A Paper For Discussion And Development*'. Here, the overall goal is identified as

developing capability for ‘thoughtful and responsible participation in political, economic, social and cultural life’ (LT Scotland, 2002, p.7). They identify this capability as being rooted in knowledge and understanding, whereby pupils become aware of contemporary and global issues, the rights and responsibilities underpinning different societies, an awareness of decision-making processes and the meaning of global interdependence (LT Scotland, 2002). In addition, pupils should develop certain skills and competences, such as the ability to work independently and co-operatively, respond to other people’s ideas constructively, contribute to discussion and debate and persevere in the face of setbacks and conflict (LT Scotland, 2002). Finally, pupils must demonstrate certain values and dispositions, such as the development of informed and reasoned opinions about issues, the ability to express views and opinions that are not their own and to demonstrate an understanding of and respect for cultural and community diversity (LT Scotland, 2002).

LT Scotland also highlights the need for pupils to find expression for these key ingredients of capable and active citizenship through ‘creative and enterprising approaches to issues and problems’ (p.7). They describe this as giving pupils the opportunity to make ‘thoughtful and imaginative decisions and being enterprising in one’s approach to participation in society’ (LT Scotland, 2002, p.10).

It would seem, then, that the priorities of modern citizenship education in Scotland lie within three main areas. Pupils are expected to have knowledge of their own rights, how to exercise them and an awareness of the diverse social background in which they live. They should also have the skills to take action both independently and with others, and to contribute informed opinions to discussion and debate. Inherent within all of this activity will be respect and care for self and others. The vehicle for expression of the key aspects of citizenship capability is identified as pupils’ ability to participate in creative and enterprising approaches to issues and problems. Allowing pupils to participate in school decision-making is clearly seen as a means of creating an active community involvement in later adult life. It is clear that schools have an obligation to encourage democratic values and this gives rise to a new question – to what extent do current organisational patterns in schools encourage or restrain this practice?

THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTICIPATION AND DISSENT

There are many ways in which school systems may work against their own perceived aims of democratisation. Osler and Starkey (1996, p.21) refer to the dangers of the ‘authoritarian school’, where pupils’ views are ignored and there is poor communication, over-strict rules and lack of pupil choice. They refer to the need for a ‘thinking, feeling and doing’ model of citizenship, which combines the requirements of ‘knowledge of human rights, a felt sense of identity and the action skills to claim a place in society’ (Osler and Starkey, 1996, p.85). Yet there can be no doubt that the culture in many schools is still to teach children to become accustomed to a life of discipline and authority (Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Faulks, 1998).

Oliver and Heater (1994) raise an important consideration when they ask us to consider how teachers should handle intolerance in the classroom. Surely an important element of citizenship education is that of social criticism and activism, while suppressing pupils’ opinions may be contradicting the principles of democratic freedom (Oliver and Heater, 1994). Indeed, it must be argued that the democratic right of free *consent* also implies the right of free *dissent* (CCLA, 2002). And yet, evidence from the USA tells us that intolerance of dissent against patriotism is growing since the atrocities of 11 September 2001. Holt (2002) criticises this trend and re-iterates the need for children to be free to question and contradict current perspectives and political approaches in order to encourage the freedoms of open society.

The creation of national guidelines, testing procedures and target-setting in

schools has undoubtedly created a prescriptive approach to teaching and a lack of opportunity for teachers to make decisions. Schwarz (1988) cites Tim Brighouse, Oxfordshire's chief education officer for ten years, as the leading spokesman against 1980s Thatcherite plans for more prescriptive forms of education. Brighouse saw the best hope for the future in better-informed teachers who would avoid teaching 'narrowly' to the programmes prescribed and laid down for them (Schwarz, 1988, p.63). However, it is clear that education is still bound by national curricula and target-setting, and Scottish education is no exception. It is becoming increasingly difficult for our teachers to openly oppose the principles inherent within 5–14 national guidelines or even to avoid the prescribed use of teaching packs created by local authority advisers or headteachers. Johnstone and Munn (1992) also note the absence of open meetings between headteachers and staff and raise questions about the possible fear of open discussion in school and of dissent among teaching staff.

Drawing upon small-scale research designed to judge the feasibility of citizenship education projects in school, Davies and Evans (2002, p.70) found an 'overwhelmingly positive response' among school staff. However, although these teachers saw the benefit of such education to pupils and to school communities, very few saw *themselves* as benefiting from it directly. Some teachers commented that, although the citizenship agenda should ideally promote staff and pupil decision-making, schools still typically tend to be 'top-down authoritarian places' (Davies and Evans, 2002, p.74).

The importance of the school ethos or the 'hidden' curriculum cannot be overstated in the pursuit of authentic democratic participation for both pupils and staff. The ethos of a school is reflected in the nature of relationships between all members of its community and the extent to which pupils *and* staff are valued. Oliver and Heater (1994, p.157) describe a school as a 'micro-social or political community'; if orders and instructions are given without the opportunity to participate in decision-making then this must surely leave a school as a bad purveyor of citizenship values (Oliver and Heater, 1994). And yet, it would seem that this practice can and does occur. In an action research study into school ethos and participatory approaches among staff and pupils, Carter (2002, p.32) found that 'some staff described themselves in terms more in keeping with involuntary ventriloquists than autonomous, thinking professionals.'

There are many issues to consider here as the debate about citizenship education and the democratisation of schools continues. There is evidence that schools can still be authoritarian in their style of management, and that pupils' views and opinions may not always be encouraged. And yet, dealing with dissent is a vital skill for teachers to learn if they are to encourage open participation and democratic values in pupils and in each other. Even where a participatory school ethos does exist, it may serve only to include pupils but not staff. Although the essence of democratic freedom suggests the need for dissent as well as consent among all community members, school staff may be discouraged from making decisions or deviating from prescribed and directed practice. All of this evidence raises new questions about the extent to which pupils and staff are currently involved in school decision-making in our Scottish schools as a vehicle for promoting greater engagement with democratic processes.

THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As part of a national project examining the characteristics of enterprising schools in Scotland, the links between enterprise and citizenship are being explored on the grounds that there are common values between the two areas. Ten of the schools in the project have been selected as representing a range of current awareness of and commitment to the practice of citizenship by staff and pupils. These ten schools, from several Scottish local authorities, are thus diverse and have provided the

author with case studies for examining the extent to which pupils and staff currently experience opportunities for active participation and decision-making in schools. The research aims to gather qualitative data to explore school staff's views, ideas and opinions on the meaning of a 'participatory school ethos' and how promoting this ethos may be preparing pupils and teachers for active citizenship. The study is exploratory by nature, seeking to ask questions and use the analysis of specific statements and themes to search for meaning and assess phenomena in a new light (Robson, 1993; Cresswell, 1998).

The sample has been chosen to be representative of all primary education settings, and includes two Roman Catholic schools, a mix of schools from inner-city and rural backgrounds and one from an area with a high proportion of ethnic minority families. In addition, the schools are located in a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. The use of semi-structured interviews with ten headteachers and eighteen classroom teachers from these schools has allowed some initial examination of the extent to which our schools may be providing a platform to encourage responsible and active participation and influence, or whether they may be stifling it through well-established and entrenched models of organisation. In addition, it has allowed the author to uncover the extent to which flatter hierarchical models are used not only with pupils but also with teachers through generic approaches to democratic participation.

HEADTEACHERS' VIEWS ON PUPIL PARTICIPATION

One initiative which seems to reflect the growing recognition of the need for pupils to be involved in decision-making is the establishment of pupil councils, and this is often cited by headteachers as an example of how they encourage a participating school ethos. During interviews with headteachers, the author has found that many of these pupil councils now hold representatives from primary one to primary seven classes. The work of the councils seem wide and varied, and this small sample of headteachers appear to view this as a good vehicle for encouraging pupil initiative and autonomy:

'One pupil council set up their own shop and would order things like notepads and rulers... they sit and work out how they are going to raise funds for the playground or how we are going to develop the school further.'

'The pupil council has given them the confidence to come and say, "this is something we should be looking at" and to give ideas.'

Some headteachers talk about consulting pupil councils about curriculum development initiatives from the local education authorities, about anti-bullying initiatives and fund-raising activities. Others see it as a good forum for children to raise matters that they regard as unfair within the running of the school. One headteacher even sees it as an important vehicle for consulting with pupils about teaching styles and classroom organisation:

'Sometimes I will ask them to consider a particular item within their class for my benefit, to get feedback from the children... they have minutes and can remind me about items that I may not have asked about.'

Some heads feel that they extend this use of participative and democratic decision-making across the whole school, welcoming new ideas and opinions from pupils who are not on the school council:

'We have children coming and saying, "can the four of us make a crossword up to sell to everybody for 10 pence and we're going to put the money into the guide dogs for the blind" ...'

‘They’ll come and say, “can we make a magazine and the money will be for such and such”...’.

However, other comments indicate that the process of devolved decision-making should be left to a cross-section of pupils in the school:

‘If they’re a school captain or on the committee then they’re the ones that should be taking the lead.’

There has been much discussion among these headteachers about the way in which pupils in their schools are encouraged to contribute to their own local community initiatives. In one case, the starting point for this has been to investigate how local voluntary groups operate and to then mirror this approach through their own fund-raising for initiatives such as the local home for Alzheimer’s patients. Others encourage children to write to local groups and participate in existing projects. One headteacher has summed up the effects that this type of work has had on children and what she hopes to achieve in the long-term:

‘What I hope to gain is that these children will become participating members of their community... to get involved, to get on to community councils, to actually vote in local and national elections and become politically aware.’

This research data indicates that the use of pupil councils and committees are allowing younger children the chance to take responsibility and have a say in the running and organisation of schools. Many headteachers see this as a way of involving pupils in the ongoing decision-making processes of the school, while others go further by allowing children to create their own agendas and even to give feedback about teaching, organisation and the way that they would like the school to be improved and developed. However, what is still unclear is how these committees are elected, and the extent to which other children who are not involved in pupil councils may be given the same chance to voice their opinions and concerns. In some cases, headteachers appear to operate an ‘open door’ policy where all pupils have their say and where spontaneity of ideas is welcomed and encouraged. However, others appear to restrict the generation of ideas to certain groups of children who are specially ‘elected’. What is clear, though, is the commitment of headteachers to involve pupils in community affairs and some appear to have a clear vision about the worth of these activities in the preparation of pupils for political interest and literacy.

CLASSROOM TEACHERS’ VIEWS ON PUPIL PARTICIPATION

Comments from classroom teachers in the same sample of schools also provide evidence that pupils are encouraged to participate in decision-making at a class or even a whole-school level. During discussions with these teachers, many have also referred to pupil councils as a useful vehicle:

‘I think generally the things we’ve done in the school have got the children involved... things are brought up at the school council meetings and then our assemblies as well... all these things contribute because you know they are encouraged to take part in the different things in the school.’

Some teachers refer to ongoing enterprise education projects in class as a useful vehicle for promoting pupil autonomy and responsibility:

‘I think enterprise... it’s something that the children decide to do and it comes from their ideas.’

‘They did it all, they presented it, they voted in their chairperson, treasurer etc. They had their finance and dealt with lots of money... They had a logo which they chose.’

‘The kids came up with the idea that they could interview teachers and children in other classes and find out if they wanted anything put in the newspaper... they set about producing it themselves.’

Several teachers describe their school ethos as one that is supportive of children’s ideas and opinions, and feel that they are making progress in their quest to relinquish teacher control and enhance pupil autonomy:

‘They’re not afraid to come up with ideas and approach teachers and talk about things. They’ll make suggestions about changes and most of them are full of good ideas.’

‘I think it’s about letting go of the reins a bit as a teacher. I feel sometimes it’s difficult for us to give the children real responsibility but I feel I’m getting closer to that now.’

One teacher has talked about her struggle to adapt to the role of facilitator and to allow children the chance to take more responsibility:

‘Sometimes I have to deliberately stop myself and let them do it. We have our in-class jokes about “I must stop organising it, it’s up to you to organise”...’.

Interviews have illustrated that there is a feeling among some teaching staff that the opportunity to hand over responsibility to pupils is one that some may still find difficult. One teacher refers to her colleagues’ fear of allowing the children to take control and show initiative, while another talks about the views of some teachers who want children to simply ‘sit and do as they are told.’ Others, however, appear keen to encourage *more* responsibility among pupils and make them less reliant on teacher support:

‘I’d like them to take responsibility for their own decision-making... they’re always seeking my approval and I would like them to seek each other’s approval.’

It is clear, then, that classroom teachers in this diverse sample of schools appear generally enthusiastic about giving pupils the opportunity to create and manage projects themselves and to come forward with new ideas that will be valued and welcomed. Most staff seem to confirm the headteachers’ view of the school as supportive and welcoming of pupil initiative. However, there is evidence that some teachers are still adjusting to the role of facilitator and find it difficult to relinquish control and authority in their dealings with children. Some teachers appear to fear the idea of losing control, while others welcome the opportunity to provide more democratic processes and allow greater degrees of pupil autonomy and peer support.

EVIDENCE OF TEACHER PARTICIPATION

In this small-scale study of Scottish schools, it appears that many headteachers and staff value democratic participation among pupils which often stretches beyond the confines of experiential forms of classroom learning towards the promotion of autonomy of action and consultation with pupils in the running of the school. However, perhaps we need to examine how this pedagogy may impact upon teachers themselves: in short, what is it like to be a teacher in a school that encourages democratic participation among pupils?

Reflecting on observed practice within these focus schools provides some useful illustrations. For example, the author’s discussions with one headteacher indicates her strong commitment towards involving staff in decision-making and encouraging

ownership as one of the key strengths of the school. However, subsequent discussions with teaching staff have provided conflicting evidence; although highly committed to the work of the school, some staff have indicated that pupils are consulted more often than teachers. In another school, there is considerable evidence that one teacher is very committed towards introducing new initiatives but yearns for more opportunity to do so in a supportive and encouraging climate. This teacher has spoken openly about her ambition to promote enterprise and citizenship education within the school, and her frustration at the lack of support from colleagues to do so. Her particular frustration with bureaucratic procedures and the feeling that the senior management team sees her enthusiasm as threatening to them has led to a stifling of her motivation at times.

Other examples of practice provide illustrations of what it may be like to teach in schools that claim to be promoting exemplary practice in citizenship education among pupils. In one sample school, a teacher demonstrates a strong commitment towards promoting enterprise education in her own classroom but feels unable to influence colleagues to follow suit. Although she is given time out of class to work on school development planning, her tasks are clearly devised and monitored by the headteacher, with little scope for autonomous decision-making. In another school setting, the headteacher openly admits that her style of leadership has become more authoritarian following the recent McCrone report on teachers' pay and conditions in Scottish schools. The report, which recommends a maximum 35 hour working week for teachers, appears to have compelled this particular headteacher to direct teachers' use of time for continuing professional development much more closely than before.

In another school within the sample, there is considerable evidence that the young headteacher and staff work well together and share a positive and rewarding team spirit. Here, the headteacher appears to present herself as an open manager in every respect and encourages staff to participate in all decisions. Her view is that the relationship between headteachers and staff should be the same as the one between teacher and pupils, driven by mutual respect and consultation. Teachers speak openly about the welcoming and united ethos in the school and demonstrate clear evidence that they take a team-approach to all school decision-making.

These more spontaneous and informal discussions with teachers have provided some indicative data about the extent and nature of their own involvement in the school decision-making process. On the one hand, there are some examples of shared practice between headteachers and teachers which give the impression of a flat hierarchical approach where staff are given the same access to decision-making as pupils. On the other, there are examples of innovative and ambitious teachers who are becoming frustrated by the inability of senior management teams to recognise their strengths and permit them to make the decisions they are capable of. In the middle somewhere are the other examples, where the headteacher appears committed to the consultation process, but the staff have different opinions.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This paper has outlined many cultural and political changes over the last decade that have resulted in a reassessment of what it means to be a capable citizen in the 21st century. It has been argued that a re-awakening of the need for community values and democratic awareness among young people has led to a change in focus from the conceptualisation of the 'good' citizen to the 'active' citizen. The introduction of citizenship education as a key cross-curricular focus in Scottish national guidelines has been documented. It has been argued that much of the guidance for this pedagogy has emerged from the principles underpinning 'Third Way' politics and that this has resulted in an equal emphasis on civic rights and obligations and a new focus on

democratic participation within a pluralist society. Schools now face the demanding task of preparing pupils to become both competitive and civic-minded.

It is clear that much of the preparation for citizenship capability in Scotland is to be channelled through encouraging participative and enterprising approaches to issues and problems. The creation of a participating school ethos must be the basis for this, and full democratisation of schools must also involve staff as well as pupils. However, recent literature indicates that many schools may in fact be suppressing opportunities for full and inclusive participation through traditional hierarchies and authoritarian values. Although dissent is an important element of a democratic community, there is evidence to suggest that many teachers and pupils are discouraged from questioning policy and practice and from participating in decisions. The interview data presented within this paper provides some positive examples of practice in Scottish schools, where pupils are openly encouraged to participate in school and community affairs. In many cases this participation is centred around isolated groups of pupils who may work on pupil councils or committees, whereas in other instances participation is invited from all members of the student group. Further discursive data from teachers within this diverse sample of schools has indicated a great variation in the extent to which they themselves are encouraged to participate wholeheartedly in the management and decision-making processes of the school. Although there is evidence of good practice in this area, it would appear that not every school permits the same access to decision-making in teachers as it does publicly to pupils.

These illustrations provide a starting-point for examining the extent to which schools may be addressing the key priorities of education for active citizenship through existing practice. Osler and Starkey (1996) argue that schools may provide a 'minimal' approach to citizenship education, where individuals are made aware of their rights and develop a felt sense of identity. However, they argue that a 'maximal' approach is needed in order to promote active participation and the competence to engage in cultural and community development and change. This paper has raised new questions about the democratisation of schools, including the extent to which schools encourage a participating ethos among staff and pupils which includes the opportunity for decision-making and dissent. New research must examine pupils' personal views about pupil councils and committees and the extent to which schools nurture or suppress active participation. It must also examine teachers' views in a wider and more systematic sense. In short, research must seek to examine how many of our Scottish schools are close to eclipsing a maximal approach to citizenship education, where their practices truly reflect an exemplary model of a fully participating democratic community, and how many are still addressing the structural and cultural minimum that may prepare their pupils and their teachers for today but not for tomorrow.

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