Citizenship’s role in outstanding schools

A subject in its own right
There has been a GCSE Citizenship studies since 2002 and an A Level since 2008. There are additional qualifications in aspects of financial capability that link directly to the Citizenship Programme of Study. The GCSE is one of the ‘Best 8’ GCSE subjects by which a school’s performance can be judged.

At the heart of the school and community
The new Citizenship curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils acquire a sound knowledge of democracy, understand the law and justice systems in our society and are equipped with the skills to think critically and plan for future needs. It should prepare them to take their place in society as responsible citizens.

Citizenship pedagogy builds motivation and engagement
Citizenship puts pupils at the heart of learning and the life of the school. It equips pupils with skills to explore authentic issues that matter to them and affect them; it fosters keen awareness in democracy and prepares them with knowledge and understanding to play a full and active part in society.

Implements standards
A study of ‘participative schools’, concluded that they achieved higher GCSE results and lower numbers of exclusion. A school in south east London achieved a 33% improvement in GCSE results after adopting Citizenship as a whole school initiative.

Supports the ‘Rights Respecting School’ approach
Citizenship has rights at its heart. Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states ‘All children have a right to have a say in decisions that affect them’. Citizenship provides pupils with the skills, knowledge and understanding to have this say. Research shows that pupil’s feel most intellectually engaged when they have a say in their learning.

Can be inspected like any other school activity or aspect
Ofsted published its latest survey of schools in 2013 called Citizenship Consolidated. This reported on the state of Citizenship in schools and signposts how Ofsted can inspect the provision of high quality Citizenship.

Contributes to wider school and community policy
Citizenship directly contributes to National Citizens Service, SMSC and cohesive communities.

A statutory school subject
which has a programme of study in KS3 and 4 and requires specialist teachers

A subject with a distinct pedagogy
characterised by pupil voice, active learning and assessment and community engagement

A subject across the whole school
with the potential to transform the school ethos and place the school in the heart of its community