

Active citizenship – examples of action

The best forms of active citizenship involve responsible action that builds a sense of political agency. This is an entitlement for all students. The examples below are all based on real projects that schools have organised.

Raising awareness

Organising projects

Making presentations

Using social media

School community

Students run a poster campaign across the school to promote the importance of school council elections.

Students set up and run a recycling project in their school and contribute to reducing the school’s carbon footprint.*

Students make a presentation to head of departments about how changes to teaching could improve their learning.

Students submit their views on the school to their school council via a comments page on the school council’s website.

Local community

Students send out a joint press release to local newspapers calling on the council to improve the safety of a road crossing near their school.

Students write and publish a community magazine that deals with both serious and fun issues. It is distributed to schools and youth clubs in the area.*

Students invite their local councillors to a set up a ‘school surgery’ so they can express their views on local issues, e.g. street lighting around the school.

Students work in small groups and use their phone cameras to take photos or make a short film about how to stay safe on the streets. They share this with their class as part of a local investigation.

National community

Students write to national newspapers about their views on the conflict in Syria. Five letters are subsequently published.

Students investigate the voting age and reasons for and against lowering it to 16. They then contribute to a national consultation on the issue.

Students invite their MP to a special citizenship assembly. They share their learning, make a case and advocate their viewpoints on a range of issues.

Students organise a campaign to stop the deportation of a fellow student who is an asylum seeker. They seek the support of the local community through an online petition.

Global community

Students debate in class which topics relating to world debt and poverty they should investigate further.

Students organise a mini-enterprise Fairtrade products sale during lunch and break times.*

Students investigate the role of the UN in conflict situations and write a letter to the media, their MP or those in positions of influence about their thoughts.

Students investigate forced migration and people trafficking and set up a social media conversation to discuss the challenge of helping migrants fleeing from conflict and poverty.

* These actions may be logistically difficult to offer as an entitlement for all students. They can be developed as team projects involving different roles, eg. all students could investigate the issues, some produce communications such as posters about Fairtrade, and a smaller number could then sell Fairtrade products during breaks.