



## Young People's Report

***“Your say on diversity issues and the National Curriculum Review”***



Young people at the NCB/Young NCB consultation day held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 06

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## Thank You!

I would like to thank all the young people who gave up their time either by taking part in the consultation day or completing the online survey.

Personal note from Keith Ajegbo – Head of the review:

*"I am very grateful for your contribution to this review so far. Your early engagement in the process has been crucial in helping us frame the rest of our work with other people and groups. I and my team intend to return to you when we come to think about our recommendations to the Department for Education and Skills."*

Also, a special thank-you to the parents/carers who supported some of the young people in coming to the consultation day as without them they would not have been able to be involved in the day.

When the word we is used in this report it means:

National Children's Bureau (NCB) and Young NCB (YNCB)

## Why did we ask for your views?

The government office for the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) asked if we could help them to get young people's views and opinions on how diversity issues are covered across the national curriculum and if modern British cultural and social history should be included in the citizenship curriculum or somewhere else in the curriculum.

## What did we do to make sure we spoke directly with young people and also have a wider number of responses?

We decided to hold a consultation day that would allow us to have direct discussions with young people on the issues of diversity and the national curriculum. We made the day fun and engaging so young people who came would want to talk with us and share their views

and opinions. On the consultation day eleven young people came along and they made the day a success by their efforts and contributions.

To get a larger number of young people's views we designed an online survey that linked with the questions used on the consultation day. We sent out the survey link electronically to all of our YNCB members and young people from partner organisations that have links with YNCB. 100 young people completed the online survey within a week and this shows the importance young people feel about what we were covering.

## What did we ask?

The question we asked on the consultation day and with the online survey included

1. What cultures are represented in your school?
2. How important is it that you learn about things, which relate to your identity? Why is this so?
3. In which subjects is 'culture' taught at your school? How is it taught?
4. How does it improve your understanding of others if you do learn about different cultures?
5. If culture was to be taught effectively at your school, what training would be needed for teachers to develop the necessary knowledge and skills to do this well?

## What did young people tell us?

The messages that we passed onto the **DfES** from what young people told us were:

***"Some young people view culture as an integral part of them as a person. So if you understand their culture you will be able to understand them as a person."***

Having a subject on modern British cultural and social history should be part of the citizenship curriculum or alternatively a

programme should be developed that would engage and increase young people's understanding on that subject and give greater importance to it. ***"Important to learn about each other to understand why different races do or believe certain concepts."***

Time should be dedicated to making sure subjects which look at culture do it better and in more detail. This will give young people plenty of opportunity to learn how it fits in with that subject and the importance of it.

***"PSHE/citizenship is a time to talk with your mates and is a free lesson."***

***"Teachers give you handouts in PSHE and then get on with something else themselves."***

Both young people and teachers do not take the PSHE/Citizenship lessons seriously enough. Young people told us that the lesson needs to have better monitoring and testing similar to what happens with other curriculum subjects (making it a GCSE). This will increase its value and importance to young people and your teachers.

***"Culture or something that looks at this, like citizenship, should be a core GCSE - that would raise its importance."***

Greater coverage of youth culture, its influence and impact on young people is needed within existing subjects and that any new subject or programme looking at culture should cover current youth culture. This would make young people feel more involved and would increase their interest in learning more about the whole subject.

***"Youth culture is more real to us, we see it around us all the time and it effects us everyday."***

Practical and real life experiences of cultures need to be part of any existing and new subject looking at culture and diversity to make it more engaging and interesting for young people. This should include things like culturally specific trips, food, music and hearing from a person who lives and breathes that culture and would discuss and debate it with young people.

***"If people came and spoke about their culture and religion, it would be far more interesting as you can ask them how they feel and what things they find difficult."***

***"You should be able to experience culture, like taste food, learn about cultural heritage, customs - through participating in them."***

Communities need to focus on working with young people and supporting them to learn and understand their role within the local and wider community. Young people were very clear that communities that work well together have common objectives and goals. Local community meetings and projects need to think

about how to involve young people so they are able to influence and be part of the future direction of the community.

*"There should be more events organised amongst communities, there should be something set out to work towards and then people can join together to work on it and have something they can enjoy and more importantly enjoy together."*

*"Festivals, carnivals, everyone getting together and dancing and realising they are not so different after all."*

## What did we do with what young people told us?

What young people told us at the consultation day and via the online survey was pulled together into a detailed report. This report has been passed to the government office of the **DfES**. The report will help them make decisions on how diversity issues are covered within the national curriculum and if modern British cultural and social history needs to be included in citizenship or elsewhere in the curriculum.

## What Next?

The **DfES** are going to use the detailed report on the consultation day and the online survey to help them with their decision-making on diversity issues and the national curriculum.

Written by: David Curtis – Young NCB Coordinator