

EXPECTATIONS

At the end of this unit

most children:

recognise and describe some of the main characteristics of their local community, and that it has changed over time. They talk with different people in the local community about what the place was like in the past and how it compares with the present. They know what they like and dislike about the place and make suggestions for improvements. They understand that local democracy is organised through the local council, and they know some of the council's services and activities. They know that the local councillors are chosen to represent the views of the community and understand that councillors have a responsibility to listen to the views of the electorate. They begin to recognise that there are different levels of government, including local government and national government. They work in groups to investigate and discuss issues and communicate their findings to others. They contribute to discussions and debates.

some children have not made so much progress and:

know some of the main features of their local community. They know there is a local council and understand that local councillors are chosen to make decisions on behalf of the community. They communicate ideas for improving the locality to others and contribute to discussions.

some children have progressed further and:

recognise and describe some of the main characteristics of their local community. They know some reasons why the place is located where it is and can say how it has changed over time. They talk with different people in the local community about what the place was like in the past and how it compares with the present. They identify their own views on what they like and dislike about the place and develop ideas and suggestions for improvements. They know how local democracy is organised and understand the role of the local council. They know some of the council's services and activities, and that local councillors are chosen to represent the views of the community. They understand that councillors have a responsibility to listen to the views of the electorate on issues that concern them and recognise the importance of voting. They begin to recognise that there are different levels of government and can relate what happens in local government to what happens in national government. They work in groups to investigate and discuss issues and communicate their findings to others. They draw on their own knowledge and understanding when contributing to discussions and debate.

Unit 10 Local democracy for young citizens

ABOUT THE UNIT

In this unit, children learn about their local community and the local council, and find out how local democracy works and how they can contribute. They explore what constitutes the local community, and discover some of the significant factors that have contributed to its development over time. Children learn about local democracy and the roles of the local councillors, council and mayor, through enquiry and research, visitor exercises, outside visits, preparing and presenting speeches, and presenting their own points of view in discussions and debates. They begin to appreciate how the role of the local council differs from that of the national government. Where possible, children take part in a debate in the local council chamber on a topic of local interest. They learn the importance of discussing issues that concern them, and relate this experience to their discussion of issues in circle time, the class council and the school council.

The sections in this unit could be used in a different order. For example, preparing for and making a visit to the council chamber at the beginning of the unit could provide a context for the other activities.

The unit builds on the experience and skills developed through circle time and class discussions. It links with unit 1 'Taking part – developing skills of communication and participation' and unit 8 'How do rules and laws affect me?'. The activities can also be linked with English and with local studies work in geography and history. Some of these links are indicated in the 'Points to note' section.

WHERE THE UNIT FITS IN

This unit addresses the following aspects of the non-statutory framework for PSHE and citizenship at key stage 2:

1a, 1e

Preparing to play an active role as citizens

Pupils should be taught:

2a to research, discuss and debate topical issues, problems and events

2e to reflect on spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, using imagination to understand other people's experiences

2g what democracy is, and about the basic institutions that support it locally and nationally

2k to explore how the media present information

4a

5a, 5b, 5c, 5e, 5f, 5h, 5i

VOCABULARY

Through the activities in this unit, children will be able to understand, use and spell correctly words relating to:

- the locality, *eg place, location, map, feature*
- local and national democracy, *eg councils, councillors, mayor, Members of Parliament, voting, debate, elections*

RESOURCES

Resources include:

- local study – maps, plans and information from the local history society, local branch of the Geographical Association, the local studies section of the library, newspaper archives
- local government – council promotional material, council offices and mayor's parlour, the council's website
- *Primary School Councils Toolkit*, a training pack for teachers and key stage 2 pupils available from School Councils UK

Many groups and organisations produce online resources that are relevant to citizenship. QCA has not printed these website addresses as it recognises that they can and do change, often at short notice. So that we can monitor and maintain a reliable and useful resource, the website addresses of the following organisations can be accessed through the key stage 1 and 2 citizenship scheme of work site at www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes

- Ordnance Survey (has an online 'get-a-map' service, which allows you to find a map using an address or postcode. You can also view old maps of the same location)
- BBC News Vote 2001

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES

LEARNING OUTCOMES

POINTS TO NOTE

CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN

CHILDREN

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

- about their local community and how it has changed over time
 - why the place is located where it is, and about people who have contributed to its development
 - to work together to pose questions and undertake research
 - to communicate their findings to others
 - to discuss the local area with a range of different people in the school and local community
 - what the place is like today and what it might be like in the future
- Give the children a range of resources so that they can explore, in groups, what the local place is like and what some significant features of its location are, *eg copies of old and new maps; photographs, pictures and documents from the local studies centre or local newspaper archives; internet resources*. Ask questions to prompt them, *eg What is the place like? Why did it develop where it did? What features can you identify that contributed to the location (major route, port, ford or bridge across a river, raw materials, military garrison, etc)?* Ask the children to list some features that help to identify the place today, *eg famous football team, a key industry, a landmark or historic event, a railway station, scenic countryside, a well-known river or building*.
 - Where is the place? Ask the children to locate the place on maps at a range of scales. Then ask them to locate the place in the context of the region, county, country, Europe, the world. Talk about scale. The children could mark on a base map the key physical and human features of the locality, *eg woodland, parks, rivers, railway, major roads, post office, the school*. Ask them where the local council chamber is located (the council may be in a different place from where the children live) and to mark it on their map.
 - What can old documents tell us about the place, *eg Are there any charters conferring market, borough, or city status? If so, when and by whom was this conferred? Does the local council have a coat of arms? What do the symbols on it mean, and what is the motto? Do any important local people have a coat of arms?* The children could draw a coat of arms for their own families, representing their interests, employment and leisure activities.
 - Extension activity: Use a range of historical sources to find out more about the locality in the past and present, *eg discuss what a charter is, what it might look like, what it might contain and who might have signed one; look at original or facsimile charters and discuss the purpose and use of seals; write charters conferring rights on the children at the school and seal them with wax*.
 - Ask the children to explore what their community is like today and how it has changed over time. They could compare old maps with current maps and study photographic and newspaper archives. Ask the children to work in pairs to devise questions for interviews with older people in the school and community. They could practise asking questions before their meeting, *eg Did they go to school in the area? Where? What was it like? What job did they do? What did they do in their spare time? How did they travel about? What is the biggest change in the community from when they were young? What would they like to change today?*
 - After the interviews, ask the children to reflect on what they have learnt about where they live, *eg What do they like? What do they dislike? What would they like to change?* Discuss what the community may look like in the future – in 5, 10, 25, 50 years' time. What would they want for their community, what could they do to bring about positive change, and who might help them? Introduce the role of the local elected councillors and council.

REPRESENTING YOU, ME AND US

- who represents people in the community and how the representatives are chosen
 - about the parish, town, city or county council – its role and organisation
 - about what councillors do, including how they make decisions, and about the role of the mayor
 - about the role of MPs in representing local people in Parliament
- How are we represented in local government? Ask the children to look up 'electorate' in the dictionary and to discuss, in pairs, what they think it means. The pairs share their findings with the class.
 - Ask the children who their local councillors are and who their local MP is. Tell the class about them and how they represent people, their different roles locally and nationally, and that everyone who is eligible can vote for who they think should represent them. From their knowledge and what they have investigated, the children make a class list of what they think local councillors do and what services the council provides. Introduce the idea of council tax as a way to pay for services. The children could research how the council tax is spent on the community's behalf.
 - As a visitor exercise, invite a local parish or ward councillor to the school to answer children's questions about what councillors do and how the council is organised and managed, how they make decisions, and how young people can be involved.
 - Discuss the role of the mayor, *eg in ceremonies, the regalia and symbols of office*. Is the local mayor elected? Refer to a story or a children's TV programme in which a mayor has a role. Ask the children to use local newspapers and other media to find out about the frequency of council meetings and about any decisions the council has made recently. Compare how the local council discusses issues and makes decisions with how this is done at school, *eg by the class or school council*. How are young people involved in the local council's decision-making?
- describe some key features of a place and some of the reasons for its development in that location
 - use a range of sources of information to find out about their local community
 - collaborate with others as they investigate
 - communicate their findings to others
 - talk with various adults in the local community about the community in the past and present
 - reflect on what they know about the local area and identify their likes and dislikes
 - suggest ideas for improving the local community
- describe some aspects of local democracy, referring to the role of the local council and elections
 - know what councillors do, how they are chosen, and how they make decisions for and on behalf of the communities they represent
 - know about council services and functions
 - know who their local councillors are
 - know that MPs represent people in Parliament and that this is where national issues are discussed and voted on
- There are opportunities in this section to link with local studies work in geography and history.
 - Link with geography: 1a–e, 2a–g, 3a–g in the key stage 2 programme of study; unit 6 'Investigating our local area', unit 8 'Improving the environment', unit 20 'Local traffic – an environmental issue' in the scheme of work.
 - Maps of the area, including historical Ordnance Survey maps, may be available from the local library. The Ordnance Survey has an online 'get-a-map' service where you can find a current or historical map using an address or postcode.
 - It is useful to prepare a selection of historical sources before the activity for the children to refer to. Local history societies, newspaper archives, public records offices, museums and libraries may be able to help, and many towns have local studies centres. There may also be local history websites containing information about local issues.
 - Interviews with older members of the school and local community provide valuable experiences for both the children and the residents to share ideas and opinions. Visits to the school should take place in accordance with the school's policy. Guidance on the use of visitors is in the *Teacher's guide*.
 - Link with history: 7 in the key stage 2 programme of study.
 - Link with English: En2 R 3d, 3e in the key stage 2 programme of study.
- The activities in this section can be linked with unit 1 'Taking part – developing skills of communication and participation' and unit 8 'How do rules and laws affect me?'
 - Information on the electoral register, local councillors and MPs can be obtained from local post offices and libraries. Information on the 2001 general election and votes cast is on the BBC News Vote 2001 website. The local press is usually a good source of information on councillors and the mayor's official engagements.
 - Many council offices can provide information. The local council's website will have useful information, *eg on council tax and what it is spent on*, that could be printed off in advance. Some council websites have a children's section; if they don't, the children could suggest what a children's section might include and how young people could be consulted on local decisions and policies.
 - The local newspaper may be able to provide access to its picture library.
 - Information on the use of visitors is in the *Teacher's guide*.
 - Link with history: teaching about democracy and power at different times in the past will link with the activities in this section.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES

LEARNING OUTCOMES

POINTS TO NOTE

CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN

CHILDREN

A VISIT TO THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

- to research, discuss and debate a topical issue
 - to present a case for or against an issue in public and to vote on it
- Before the visit, identify a topical local issue or concern – where possible, draw on the children's investigations in the first activity into what their community is like. Research the issue as a class. In circle time, class council or school council, the children offer different opinions, discuss the arguments and prepare a motion for a debate.
 - The children prepare arguments for and against the motion. As a rehearsal for the visit to the council chamber, they present their arguments to other classes and then vote on the motion, either by a show of hands or a secret ballot. Declare the result.
 - Invite a local councillor or the mayor to chair the debate in the council chamber. Where possible, the children should make use of the councillors' public address and electronic voting systems. If possible, record the event with digital cameras or a camcorder.

- research, discuss and debate an issue, separating fact from fiction and truth from polemic
- participate in a real 'here and now' experience of the democratic process that will reinforce their knowledge and understanding of local democracy and the institutions that support it

- This section could be linked with unit 11 'In the media – what's the news?'.
- This activity may be undertaken by one class, all classes in a year group or in collaboration with other schools. Contact your local council offices to find out about the possibilities. Children could be involved in writing to the council. Many of the most accessible issues for young children are those concerned with visible changes to the local settlement or environment. Most councils have an officer or administrator who will be able to arrange a visit to the council house, council chamber or mayor's parlour. It is always a good idea for the teacher to visit in advance. If the council chamber is unavailable or too distant, a mock chamber could be created in the school hall.
- The motion should be proposed and seconded, then the chairperson calls on the children, acting as members, to speak for and against the motion. Ensure that all children have the opportunity to contribute. The chairperson draws the debate to a close by summarising the key arguments, and invites the children to cast their vote. The result is then declared.
- Link with geography: 1d, 3e, 5b, 6d, 6e in the key stage 2 programme of study.
- Link with English: En1 S&L 1e in the key stage 2 programme of study.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT LOCAL DEMOCRACY?

- to reflect on their participation and experiences
 - to evaluate their speech and reflect on its effectiveness
 - to discuss and share what they have learnt with their peers and others in the school community
- After the debate in the last activity, the children should have the opportunity to ask questions and tour the council house, visiting the mayor's parlour.
 - On their return to school, the children should have the opportunity to reflect on what they learnt, how they performed and how they felt. They relate their experience and discuss ideas in circle time, the class council or the school council. Encourage them to think about how they can continue to contribute ideas to their school and local community, *eg by presenting individual written work or a class newspaper or report to the year group, the whole school or parents; by making a display in the classroom, elsewhere in the school or at the council chamber; by creating their own local councillor manifesto, with a slogan and key policies, to persuade other children to vote for them, followed by a mock election.* This work could be linked with the work of the class council or school council.

- contribute ideas and opinions to a discussion and listen to the views of others
- reflect on their participation and share what they have learnt from taking part in a debate
- suggest ways in which they could continue to contribute to their school and local community

- Information on school councils is available from School Councils UK. Its *Primary School Councils Toolkit* is a training pack for teachers and key stage 2 pupils.
- Link with English: En1 S&L 1f in the key stage 2 programme of study.
- Link with geography: 1d, 1e, 5b in the key stage 2 programme of study; unit 8 'Improving the environment' in the scheme of work.