



HOUSE OF LORDS

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28 February 2022

Robin Walker MP
Minister of State (Minister for School Standards)
Department for Education

By email

Dear Robin,

We were most grateful for your evidence before the Liaison Committee on Thursday 10 February as part of the follow-up inquiry on the Citizenship and Civic Engagement Committee's 2018 report.

As you may recall from our discussion, there was some ambiguity regarding the manner in which Ofsted assess citizenship during their inspections. Ofsted have since written to the Committee to clarify their position (this letter has now been published on our website and we have appended it to this letter for your information.) In their letter they have confirmed the following:

"While inspectors could undertake a 'deep dive' into citizenship, they are unlikely to do so, except on rare occasions, because they take full account of citizenship on every inspection as part of the personal development judgement we evaluate citizenship largely within the personal development judgement."

The Committee are deeply concerned to hear that Ofsted is declining to undertake deep dives into citizenship education. Its status as a curriculum subject means that it should be assessed via the quality education criteria, not personal development. In effect, Ofsted's practices are leading to citizenship being assessed by incorrect and inappropriate means. During the evidence session you confirmed that deep dives should be undertaken for citizenship and said that you would be happy to discuss this further at your next meeting with Her Majesty's Chief Inspector which we understand is due to take place on 15 March.¹ We would be most grateful to hear about the outcome of this discussion, following the meeting.

¹ Oral evidence taken before the Liaison Committee, 10 February 2022 (Session 2021-2022) [Q 30](#) (Robin Walker MP)

In their correspondence, Ofsted also stated that:

"The personal development judgement focuses on the areas of citizenship that have been identified as the most significant."

Can the Minister confirm on whose behalf Ofsted is speaking in the above statement and what evidence has been cited in coming to that judgement?

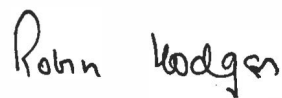
Furthermore, Ofsted stated that they are due to conduct a review of personal development and that this will include a review of citizenship education. The Committee would like to reiterate its position that the delivery of citizenship education needs to be reviewed on the premise as its status as a curriculum subject, reviewing citizenship solely through the prism of personal development is insufficient.

Thank you once again for your engagement with this inquiry and we look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



Lord Gardiner of Kimble
Senior Deputy Speaker
Chair of the Liaison Committee
House of Lords



Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbots
Former Chair
Citizenship and Civic Engagement Committee
House of Lords