Engaging with the National Curriculum

A starting point for older person’s organisations wanting to work across generations within schools
Acknowledgement

This booklet has been written by Tracey Berridge, Intergenerational Development Officer, Age Concern England, to promote Age Concern’s commitment to intergenerational practice.

April 2009

Age Concern England (charity number 261794) has merged with Help the Aged (charity number 272786) to form Age UK, a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England: registered office address 207–221 Pentonville Road, London, N1 9UZ, company number 6825798, registered charity number 1128267. Age Concern and Help the Aged are brands of Age UK. The three national Age Concerns in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales have also merged with Help the Aged in these nations to form three registered charities: Age Scotland, Age NI, Age Cymru.
Introduction

Older people can be a big asset to their schools and communities. Their knowledge, skills and life experience make them perfect candidates to enhance younger people’s learning, as well as providing interaction and extra support by bringing school curriculum to life. Working alongside an older volunteer can provide a valuable experience in a young person’s life, especially if they suffer from low self-esteem or are without an older role model at home.

Intergenerational initiatives can promote greater understanding and respect between generations, complementing the National Curriculum and enabling schools to extend their reach into the wider community.

This booklet has been designed to introduce just some of the ways that an older person’s organisation can add value in schools. Please be aware that educational initiatives change frequently and this booklet should provide only a starting point. The back page of the booklet suggests websites to keep your knowledge in this area up to date.

Engaging with the National Curriculum is intended to build upon information provided in the Age Concern series of intergenerational resources. Other booklets can be found by accessing the resources area on www.ageconcern.org.uk/intergenerational. Page 5 profiles how the booklets can be used together.

Green text throughout the booklet suggests possible intergenerational projects that can complement an educational initiative. A list of possible intergenerational projects can be found within the Age Concern booklet Together we can make it happen and inspiration can be sought through Age Concern’s intergenerational weblink.

We hope this booklet will provide ideas on how intergenerational activities can complement the curriculum being delivered within schools in your area.

The ActivAge Unit
How can an intergenerational approach add value to school initiatives?

Older people and younger people have valuable contributions to make to society. Generations have different types of knowledge and experience which should complement each other. An intergenerational approach brings generations together in a purposeful and mutually beneficial way, involving them in activities which promote greater understanding and respect.

The National Curriculum was introduced in England, Wales and Northern Ireland as a nationwide curriculum for primary and secondary state schools following the Education Reform Act 1988. The purpose of the National Curriculum was to ensure that certain basic material was covered by all pupils.

Intergenerational approaches can support schools in delivering National Curriculum objectives. Intergenerational projects encompass a range of activities and initiatives that provide innovative, interesting and creative opportunities for students. The key element of an intergenerational approach is to add value to an activity by providing opportunities for older and younger participants to work and learn together in mutually beneficial ways.

Intergenerational activities can be classified into three functions:

- **One generation supporting another** – for example: literacy projects, mentoring, befriending, reminiscence, technology and communications, sports and craft, language schemes, parental skills.

- **Generations learning together** – for example: philosophy, drama, visual arts, music workshops.

- **Generations working together to address a community issue** – for example: community gardens, citizenship conferences, topical debates.
Age Concern
intergenerational resources

Age Concern provides a selection of booklets to assist you in the development of an intergenerational approach.

**Together we can make it happen**
An introduction to Intergenerational Practice and the value of using an intergenerational approach. Profiles the benefits of an intergenerational approach and suggests possible projects.

**Adding value by joining generations**
For organisations that are new to intergenerational activity who wish to start up a project of their own. A good practice practical guide to setting up your own project.

**The value of working with older volunteers**
A booklet for schools or youth organisations looking to work intergenerationally with older volunteers. It highlights good practice in supporting older volunteers within a youth setting.

**Getting the most out of intergenerational volunteering**
Aimed at older volunteers starting intergenerational placements. An introduction to volunteering good practice, child safeguarding and working with younger people.

**Every older person matters**
A booklet for younger people, looking at the issues that affect older people today. The booklet introduces the experiences of older people and suggests ways that younger people can get involved.

To download the resources mentioned above visit www.ageconcern.org.uk/intergenerational or order resources through the ActivAge Unit 020 8765 7231 or aau@ace.org.uk
Education in the United Kingdom

Education in the United Kingdom is devolved with England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales having separate systems under separate governments.

The UK Government is responsible for education in England with the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families and the Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills leading initiatives. Funding of state schools is the responsibility of Local Education Authorities. The Northern Ireland Executive are responsible for education in Northern Ireland, though responsibility at a local level is administered by five Education and Library Boards. The Scottish Government is responsible for education in Scotland with the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning leading. The Welsh Assembly Government is responsible for education in Wales.

Maintained schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland follow the National Curriculum. Independent schools do not need to follow any set curriculum, as long as they are providing a reasonable standard of education. In addition, in Wales all students must learn Welsh.

Scotland does not have a prescribed National Curriculum, though schools are expected to follow national guidelines. Learning and Teaching Scotland has a key role in helping schools improve the curriculum they offer.

Within schools following the National Curriculum format, the school year usually begins in September. Education is compulsory for all children from the year after they turn 5 to the year they turn 16. As a young person moves through schooling, they will move through various Key Stages. Key Stages run according to age and set the knowledge expected of a student at each age.

This booklet focuses on schools using the National Curriculum model.
# National Curriculum Key Stages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Key Stage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year One</td>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>Infant or Primary</td>
<td>Key Stage 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Two</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Three</td>
<td>7-8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Four</td>
<td>8-9</td>
<td>Junior or Primary</td>
<td>Key Stage 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Five</td>
<td>9-10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Six</td>
<td>10-11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Seven</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td></td>
<td>Key Stage 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Eight</td>
<td>12-13</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Nine</td>
<td>13-14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Ten</td>
<td>14-15</td>
<td></td>
<td>Key Stage 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Eleven</td>
<td>15-16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Twelve</td>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>Secondary or Sixth Form College</td>
<td>Key Stage 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Thirteen</td>
<td>17-18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
National educational initiatives

Some initiatives underpin a young person’s education and well-being. Alongside the National Curriculum, Every Child Matters and Extended schooling aim to command positive outcomes for young people.

Every Child Matters

Every Child Matters: Change for Children, was launched in 2003 by the UK Government to ensure positive well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19. The Government’s aim is for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to:

- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic well-being.

This means that all organisations involved with providing services to children (including voluntary groups) will work together, to protect children and young people from harm and help them achieve what they want in life. Local authorities work with their partners through children’s trusts. Schools have a commitment to base their provision on Every Child Matters criteria. Intergenerational projects can be an innovative way to help schools deliver this criteria.
Extended schools

Schools work with their local authority (usually through the extended schools adviser), pupils, parents, the local community and local providers to deliver integrated services. Extended schools can include a variety of activities such as study support, special interest clubs, volunteering and business and enterprise activities. Community access to facilities including adult learning, ICT and sports facilities are suggested ways for schools to extend their reach. Intergenerational projects can help schools extend their commitment to learning and engaging with local communities even further.
Primary school

Primary schools generally cater for children aged from 4 to 11 (Reception to Year Six). Primary schools are often subdivided into infant schools for children from four to seven and junior schools for ages 7 to 11.

Primary schools will typically enrol a two form entry of 30 children per class a year (approximately 60 children per year). In traditional primary schools a class will be led by a class teacher who will deliver a majority of the curriculum.

During primary schooling, children will generally follow the National Curriculum corresponding to Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The table below demonstrates the age breakdown.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Key Stage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>Infant or Primary</td>
<td>Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year One</td>
<td>5-6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Key Stage 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Two</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Three</td>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>Junior or Primary</td>
<td>Key Stage 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Four</td>
<td>8-9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Five</td>
<td>9-10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Six</td>
<td>10-11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Primary school opportunities

Subject curriculum

Currently the National Curriculum in primary schools is subject based. Compulsory National Curriculum subjects are: English, Maths, Science, Design and Technology, Information and Communication Technology (ICT/computers), History, Geography, Art and design, Music, Physical Education and Religious Studies. Schools are measured against their delivery of these subject areas, as well as the key skills of Literacy and Numeracy.

Intergenerational project opportunities: literacy and reading, reminiscence, technology and communications, sports and craft, language schemes, philosophy, drama workshops, visual arts, music workshops, citizenship conferences, topical debates.

Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL)

Primary SEAL provides a whole-curriculum framework and resource to develop pupils' social and emotional skills. It focuses on five key areas of learning: self-awareness, empathy, managing feelings, motivation and social skills. Developing skills in these areas is likely to help reduce bullying. SEAL helps schools to meet many of the requirements of the non-statutory Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) framework and to acquire National Healthy School status through its contribution to promoting emotional health and well-being.

Intergenerational project opportunities: mentoring and befriending, health and well-being, reminiscence, philosophy, drama workshops, visual arts, music workshops, citizenship conferences, topical debates.
School assemblies

Many primary schools organise assemblies, generally in the morning, to bring children together as a whole. Assemblies provide opportunities for worship as well as community focused and moral themes.

**Intergenerational project opportunities:** reminiscence, philosophy, drama workshops, visual arts, music workshops, citizenship conferences, topical debates.

Transition from primary to secondary school

The transition from primary to secondary school is a big issue for schools and young people. Older volunteers can help support young people in this process, creating stability and opening communication to explore the idea of change and coping with change.

**Intergenerational project opportunities:** mentoring and befriending.
Secondary school

In England and Wales, secondary school is for children from the ages of 11 to 16 (or 18). Secondary school incorporates Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 of the National Curriculum (Year Seven to Year Eleven) and can also include Sixth Form. After 16, compulsory education ends, and young people can decide whether to continue their studies further, either at school or Sixth Form College, or enter the world of work.

Secondary schools are large institutions. They typically enrol a six form entry of 30 students per class year (approximately 180 students per year). Traditionally, students are assigned a form class with a form teacher who supervises the students development. The school day is timetabled into lessons. Lessons are taught by specialist teachers.

The table below lists the equivalent secondary school year systems used in the United Kingdom:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Key Stage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year Seven</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Key Stage 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Eight</td>
<td>12-13</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Key Stage 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Nine</td>
<td>13-14</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Key Stage 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Ten</td>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Key Stage 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Eleven</td>
<td>15-16</td>
<td>Secondary or Sixth Form</td>
<td>Key Stage 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Twelve</td>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>Secondary or Sixth Form</td>
<td>Key Stage 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Thirteen</td>
<td>17-18</td>
<td>Secondary or Sixth Form</td>
<td>Key Stage 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Secondary school opportunities

Secondary education in the United Kingdom is going through a development, to be completed by 2011. The new curriculum give schools greater flexibility to tailor learning to student needs as there is less prescribed subject content in the new programmes of study. The new framework will recognise the school curriculum as the entire planned learning experience, including activities that take place outside of the classroom.

Subject curriculum

Key Stages 3 and 4 cover a selection of the following subjects: Art and design, Citizenship, Design and technology, English, Geography, History, ICT, Mathematics, Modern Foreign Languages, Music, Physical Education, Science and Religious Education. Subjects can provide a range of intergenerational opportunities. Below are detailed some of the most obvious fits:

- **Citizenship**: a statutory subject at Key Stages 3 and 4, education for citizenship equips young people with the knowledge, skills and understanding to play an effective role in public life. Citizenship addresses issues relating to social justice, human rights, community cohesion and global interdependence, and encourages pupils to challenge injustice, inequalities and discrimination.

  Citizenship curriculum suggest that schools should work with community partners to encourage further opportunities.

**Intergenerational project opportunities**: reminiscence, technology and communications, philosophy, citizenship conferences, topical debates.
History: Pupils find out about the history of their community, Britain, Europe and the world. It encourages mutual understanding of the historic origins of our ethnic and cultural diversity, and helps pupils become confident and questioning individuals.

Intergenerational project opportunities: reminiscence, topical debates.

Community Cohesion

Schools have a duty to promote community cohesion and from September 2008 Ofsted have been required to inspect and report on the contributions made in this area. In addition to valuing individual members of the school and ensuring that pupils find out about the wide range of groups and cultures represented in society. Schools should work with and use resources in the local community.

Intergenerational project opportunities: mentoring and befriending, reminiscence, technology and communications, philosophy, drama workshops, visual arts, music workshops, community gardens, citizenship conferences, topical debates.

Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS): PLTS provide a framework for describing the qualities and skills needed for success in learning and life. The framework comprises six groups of skills for students: independent enquirers, creative thinkers, reflective learners, team workers, self-managers and effective participants.

Intergenerational project opportunities: mentoring and befriending, reminiscence, technology and communications, sports and craft, philosophy, drama workshops, visual arts, music workshops, community gardens, citizenship conferences, topical debates.
Cross-curriculum dimensions

To achieve the aims of the new curriculum, young people are encouraged to experience opportunities and understand themselves and the world in which they live.

Cross-curriculum dimensions provide important areas of learning that help young people make sense of the world and give education relevance and authenticity. They are designed to reflect the major ideas and challenges that face individuals and society.

Cross-curriculum dimensions include: identity and cultural diversity, healthy lifestyles, community participation, enterprise, global dimension and sustainable development, technology and the media, creativity and critical thinking.

- **Identity and cultural diversity:** Learning about identity and cultural diversity can help young people to live and work together in diverse communities and learn more about the country in which they are growing up. It can also help them develop their identity and sense of belonging which are fundamental to personal well-being and the achievements of a flourishing and cohesive society.

  **Intergenerational project opportunities:** mentoring and befriending, health and well-being, reminiscence, philosophy, citizenship conferences, topical debates.

- **Community participation:** Active participation in the life of the school and the wider community helps young people to develop a sense of purpose and belonging, so that they feel able to make a difference in their own lives and to the communities in which they live.

  **Intergenerational project opportunities:** mentoring and befriending, health and well-being, technology and communications, sports and craft, community gardens, citizenship conferences, topical debates.
Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL)

Secondary SEAL is based upon the same basic principles as Primary SEAL. It’s a whole-school approach to promoting social and emotional skills that aims to involve all members of the school and all aspects of school life.

**Intergenerational project opportunities:** mentoring and befriending, health and well-being, reminiscence, philosophy, drama workshops, visual arts, music workshops, citizenship conferences, topical debates.

**Enrichment curriculum**

Some schools create enrichment opportunities for their students. Enrichment can be a set regular time each week or take the format of a designated week/day each year. During this time pupils have the opportunity to try new things, learn new skills, visit new places and challenge themselves individually and in groups. Students usually self select from the activities on offer.

**Intergenerational project opportunities:** literacy and reading, mentoring and befriending, health and well-being, reminiscence, technology and communications, sports and craft, language schemes, philosophy, drama workshops, visual arts, music workshops, community gardens, citizenship conferences, topical debates.
Useful websites

www.curriculum.qca.org.uk
The National Curriculum (hosted by QCA)

The site details the National Curriculum throughout the Key Stages.

www.qca.org.uk
Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)

The QCA body maintains and develops the national curriculum and associated assessments, tests and examinations.

www.everychildmatters.gov.uk
Every Child Matters

The site outlines the Every Child Matters framework.
The site also provides information for young people and parents.

www.teachernet.gov.uk
TeacherNet

TeacherNet has been developed by the Department for Children, Schools and Families as a resource to support the education profession. The site provides lots of practical information and ideas on delivering school objectives.

www.ageconcern.org.uk
www.ageconcern.org.uk/intergenerational
Age Concern England

The ActivAge Unit within Age Concern England has been dedicated to supporting Intergenerational Practice for over a decade. As a commitment to Intergenerational Practice, we host an Intergenerational Network and provide resources relating to intergenerational approaches.

Thank you to the above organisations for informing the content of this booklet.
Age Concern is the UK’s largest organisation working for and with older people to enable them to make more of life. In England, we are a federation of over 400 independent charities which share the same name, values and standards.

We believe that ageing is a normal part of life, and that later life should be fulfilling, enjoyable and productive. We enable older people by providing services and grants, researching their needs and opinions, influencing government and media, and through other innovative and dynamic projects.

Every day we provide vital services, information and support to thousands of older people – of all ages and backgrounds.

Age Concern also works with many older people from disadvantaged or marginalised groups, such as those living in rural areas or black and minority ethnic elders.

The four national Age Concerns in the UK have joined together with Help the Aged to form new national charities dedicated to improving the lives of older people.