

Parent and carer guide to Citizenship

Understanding society, rights, responsibilities and active participation

Briefly

Real adult life Learning connects to decisions, services, rights, community life and participation.	Student voice Students are supported to express views, make choices and listen to others.	Practical learning Teach → Practise → Apply → Evidence.	Flexible routes Content, support and any units or qualifications are selected around the learner.
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What is Citizenship at Syon Manor College?

Citizenship is more than learning facts about government. Students learn how society works, how laws and public services affect everyday life, what rights and responsibilities mean, and how they can participate in their college, community and wider society. The subject also develops communication, critical thinking, confidence and decision-making.

What students may learn about

Democracy and elections How democratic processes work, Parliament and elections, voting, student voice and taking part in decisions.	Law, justice and rights Rules and laws, courts and legal help, rights, responsibilities, civil liberties, discrimination and respectful challenge.
Public services and community Local government, libraries, transport, health and emergency services, volunteering, community projects and social action.	Media and misinformation Checking sources, asking for evidence, comparing viewpoints, recognising misinformation and participating responsibly online.
Money, economy and adult life Consumer choices, taxation/public spending at an appropriate level, using services, forms, travel and practical decision-making.	Global and active citizenship Global issues, international organisations, campaigns, sustainability, advocacy and ways to contribute to society.

Citizenship and PSHE: connected, but different

Citizenship Focuses on participation in society, democracy, law, rights and responsibilities, public services, community, social action and media literacy.
PSHE Focuses more directly on personal health, relationships, wellbeing, safety, identity, emotional development and personal decision-making. Where topics overlap, staff plan different learning outcomes so the subjects do not simply repeat one another.

How learning is taught

Reconnect Review prior learning and starting point	Teach Explicitly teach one manageable idea	Practise Rehearse communication or practical skills	Apply Use learning in a realistic context	Extend Visits, guests or projects where useful	Review Evidence progress and agree next steps
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Practical activities can include mock elections, community visits, asking questions of guest speakers, using public services, completing forms, checking a news source, planning a purchase, contributing to a project or presenting an idea. Communication may be through speech, writing, symbols, AAC, gestures, recorded messages or supported choice.

A personalised level of challenge

Citizenship pathways are not fixed labels. Staff choose the safest and most ambitious appropriate level for each topic using the student's functional understanding, communication, independence, vulnerability, EHCP outcomes and PLGs.

Teaching pathway	What this means for the student
Recognising and Responding	Recognise people, places, services, simple rights and rules, communicate needs and choices, and practise safe responses with structured support.
Applying and Choosing	Apply rules to familiar situations, explain choices, take part in decisions, solve predictable problems and use services with support.
Analysing and Managing	Analyse rights, law, influence and consequences, compare sources, advocate, plan action and transfer learning to more complex situations.

What parents and carers can expect

Citizenship is age-respectful, practical and autism-informed. Students are supported to communicate their own views, listen to different perspectives and participate meaningfully. Staff use clear language, visual supports, processing time and real-life materials, and progress is linked to relevant PLGs and Preparation for Adulthood outcomes.