

## **Teachers advocate for youth social activism outside the classroom**

*National Citizen Service (NCS) pilots new social action framework to empower teachers and students*

New research has revealed two thirds of teachers believe students should have time out of the classroom to campaign and raise awareness for issues they care about.

In a week where its expected thousands of students will take part in global climate strikes, National Citizen Service (NCS) is piloting an innovative new scheme to satisfy students and teachers.

A survey of more than 3,000 teachers by NCS found 67% want to see their pupils taking part in social activism.

One in five teachers also claim they've had students ditch school in favour of taking part in social action. This is despite safeguarding concerns making it impossible for schools to support.

In response to the findings, NCS, the country's flagship extra-curricular programme for 16 and 17-year-olds, is trialling a new one-day social action framework for use at over 6,000 schools across the country.

On the day, students will have the opportunity to take time away from the traditional curriculum for a more hands-on experience. They will be supported by local influencers and organisations who will run workshops where the students will learn more about how to make their voices heard and inspire change.

The day culminates in students being asked to create a campaign to raise awareness and find a solution for an issue that they care about.

The Archer Academy in Finchley London is the first school to pilot the new framework, head teacher Lucy Harrison said, "I'm incredibly proud of the students here at The Archer Academy, they have a belief that they can make a difference. Days like today create the opportunity for them to explore their passions and understand the many ways they can make themselves heard and make a genuine impact in the local community."

"Young people are passionate about many issues, including the environment, racism and mental health, they have important opinions and we must help them voice their views," said Sean Costello, Head of Schools Engagement, NCS and a former Deputy Headteacher.

"If we don't provide a channel for young people to make their voices heard how can we expect them to sustain that interest into adulthood and play a part in their communities?"

"NCS already provides young people with a route to channel their passion for social action and this new pilot is an extension of that."

On the day the students will also be joined by youth social activist Ellen Jones, award-winning campaigner for LGBTQ+ issues, mental health and autism who said;

“You just need to look at the number of powerful youth voices out there now to see what an impact young people can make. Equipping them with the information on the many ways they can affect change and more importantly the confidence to take their campaigns public is nothing but a positive step forward for our communities.”

**End**

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Interviews are available with Ellen Jones and a member of the NCS Education Team

### **About NCS**

NCS is a government backed programme established in 2011 to help build a more cohesive, mobile and engaged society. By bringing together young people from different backgrounds for a unique shared experience, NCS helps them to become better individuals, and in turn better citizens.

NCS is open to 16 and 17 year-olds across England and Northern Ireland. The two to four week programme, which takes place in school holidays, includes outdoor team-building exercises, a residential for participants to learn ‘life skills’, a community-based social action project and an end of programme celebration event.

To date:

- Almost 600,000 young people have taken part
- Twelve and a half million hours of community action have been completed
- For every £1 spent, NCS’ 2016 summer programme delivered between £1.15 and £2.42 of benefits back to society

It costs participants just £50 or less to take part in NCS and bursaries are available on a case by case basis. Support is provided for young people with additional needs.

To find out more visit [NCSyes.co.uk](http://NCSyes.co.uk).

Visit NCS social media platforms on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#)

### **About NCS Trust**

National Citizen Service Trust is a not-for-profit organisation incorporated by Royal Charter and established to shape, support, champion and lead a thriving National Citizen Service.

National Citizen Service Trust is registered in England and Wales with Royal Charter Body number RC000894. Our registered office is at The Pembroke Building, Kensington Village, Avonmore Road, London, W14 8DG.

To learn more about NCS Trust visit them on [LinkedIn](#)