

Circle of Life Award FAQs



What is social action?

Social action is 'practical action in the service of others to create positive change'. It is about individuals and communities working together to achieve a change or benefit in society or to resist an unwanted change.

This could be through:

- **Raising awareness** - such as lobbying individuals in a position of power, starting a petition, informing general public to bring about a change in behaviour.
- **Fundraising** - for and supporting charities who are concerned about same issue as them
- **Taking practical action/volunteering** - to change things e.g. plant flowers, set up a club for local people, pick up litter
- **Social enterprise** - creating a business to tackle a social issue or need, and reinvesting the profits back in to the business or the local community.

Is social action new?

Schools have always had a strong history of running community outreach projects. Sometimes this has been part of a curriculum-delivered active citizenship programme and sometimes through extra-curricular provision led by a Charities Coordinator.

Who can we help?

You can help any cause or address any social or environmental issue your team wishes to choose. Although you may want to choose a national or global issue, you will need to think about how you can influence change on a local scale in your community. (Also see our tips for effective social action.)

What are the benefits of social action?

Young people benefit through the knowledge, skills and practical experiences they gain while working on a project. This has a positive impact on their character, sense of well-being, employability and even academic results.

Schools benefit by stimulating a school-wide ethos of active citizenship, inspiring and motivating their peers and even staff. Teachers learn about how to support social action, which encourages whole-school SMSC (Spiritual Moral Social Cultural) learning and thus a broad and balanced curriculum. It is also an opportunity to develop new or deeper links with your local community.



The **community** benefits by developing more empathetic and compassionate citizens with a sense of agency to address issues in their community. It can create safer communities with better local representation and increase voter turnout. Any money raised for charities or awareness campaigns help inform people about hidden problems and change attitudes.

What does Ofsted say about social action?

Youth social action is gaining increased attention from many education and policy leaders, including Ofsted. It is valued because it benefits the young person by developing key employability skills such as resilience, problem solving, communication, teamwork and project management. It also benefits Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural (SMSC) learning through the personal development and quality of education strands.

How does the project link to the curriculum?

Social action links to Citizenship curriculum, the living in the wider world section of the PSHE suggested Programme of Study and also the new Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education. It also supports delivery of fundamental British values (fBv), values-based education (VBE), SMSC development and Social Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL), which improve children's physical, social and emotional well-being and bolsters academic achievements.

Circle of Life Award project delivery

Can schools for children with additional needs participate in this award?

The Circle of Life Award is available to all schools across primary and secondary phases. The project is designed to be flexible so you can dip in and out and customise the social action resources and help guide projects appropriate to your learners.

What is involved?

Register on the website and access all the resources for free. The Circle of Life Award resources are broken down into three phases, to reflect the steps the young people will go through when planning their social action project. You should complete sessions 1A to 3B in order. Sessions 'A' are teacher-led, and 'B' sessions are student-led (but you will need to be present to support). Each session should last approximately 50 minutes. Schedule up to 6 sessions together and allow time for the project to take place. Download the ['how to' guide](#) for more information.

Can I see a sample of the resources without committing?

You can access all the resources for free by completing [this form](#). You will also gain access to all the support materials.



How long does the project last?

Your Circle of Life Award project can last for as long as your students wish to dedicate to it. It will be dependent on the social issue and the supportive project that the pupils decide to address.

We would recommend 6-12 hours to ensure the educational value is drawn out – of which there are six hours of support materials available.

What are the financial implications?

None. It's entirely free, but depending on your project you might need some limited resources to further your projects aims. For example, access to a computer and a printer to make posters.

What are the benefits highlighted by schools that have taken part?

The Circle of Life Award recognises your school's commitment to creating a fairer and more inclusive world through young people's action. It can bring the whole school together as a community with a common purpose. Students develop a sense of teamwork and confidence that they can carry forward with them. On registering for the resources you can also view some case studies online.

Is there a big impact on teachers' workload?

It is a commitment – we're not going to lie. However, after receiving feedback from schools during the pilot phase, we have simplified the resources and made them lighter touch. You can put as much time into it as you want and the Award process is designed to be non-rigorous and easy to complete.

Curricular or extra-curricular delivery. Do both work?

Schools have used the resources in curriculum time as well as with extra-curricular groups/opportunities - the choice is yours depending on capacity and interest. Here's our 'how to' guide to help you with your decision.

We have been supporting social action in **primary schools** for more than 15 years. We believe that primary schools have an advantage in their cross-curricular delivery so aspects of geography, history, PSHE and English can all benefit during the research, planning and delivery phases. You might use this project as an active dimension to a project you are already planning/running.

In **secondary schools** you can also connect delivery against Citizenship, English or other timetabled subjects (dependent on the nature of the project). Schools have also run projects during tutor time or with extra-curricular groups of self-selecting students. Possible groups for inclusion are schools council, pupil voice, gifted and talented, charities and eco-groups.



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Are the sessions more practical or would they take the form of a lesson?

There are project phases that lend themselves well to classroom delivery – namely the aspirations and planning phases, but the implementation phase will require a more practical approach which could sit outside of lesson time.

The delivery framework and resources are flexible so you can strictly follow the resources, adapt or ignore them. They are provided to you for free, but you will know best how to motivate and engage your learners.

Is in-school support offered?

Unfortunately, we are unable to perform site visits at this stage, but we are happy to jump on the phone to talk things through.

The Circle Of Life Award

Where can my school apply?

To apply, go to this website: www.lionkingeducation.co.uk/circle-of-life-award/application

Does my school have to apply for the Circle of Life Award?

You don't have to, but it gives external recognition to your participants following the closure of their projects.

How long does the Awards application process take?

This should take as little as 30 minutes to complete the online form. The application form can be completed by a teacher or by one of the participating students in a secondary school.

Is there a deadline to complete projects or apply for the Award?

No. Once you have downloaded the resources you can work on the project and apply for the Circle of Life Award whenever your school's project has finished. Over 600 schools across the UK have signed up already, and many are planning on running activities with several terms' notice to secure curriculum time.

What happens after your Award application is submitted?

Once the submission is received and has been reviewed, your school will receive your Circle of Life Award in recognition of your school's commitment to creating a fairer and more inclusive world through youth-led social action. The Disney team will post your school certificate and email you a copy of the Circle of Life Award digital badge should you wish to use it on your website and on print collateral. Please allow 30 days for processing.

Best of luck with your Circle of Life Award!