

## **Request for Representations**

**Launch Date 21 July 2011  
Respond by 30 November 2011**

### **Review of Personal, Social, Health and Economics (PSHE) Education**

The Government said in the Schools White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, that it would conduct an internal review to determine how to support schools to improve the quality of teaching of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, including giving teachers the flexibility to use their judgement about how best to deliver PSHE education

This request for representations seeks your views on the core body of knowledge that pupils need to learn through PSHE education teaching and ways to improve the quality of teaching.

## **Review of Personal, Social, Health and Economics (PSHE) Education**

### **Request for representations**

**To** Schools, pupils, parents and associations and groups interested in PSHE Education

**Issued** 21 July 2011

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the PSHE review you can contact the public enquiry unit on:

**Enquiries**

**To** Telephone: 0370 000 2288

e-mail: [PSHEEducation.review@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:PSHEEducation.review@education.gsi.gov.uk)

### **Contact Details**

If your enquiry is related to the Department for Education e-consultation website or the process for submitting representations you can contact the Consultation Unit by e-mail: [consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk) or by telephone: 0370 000 2288.

## **1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Existing Evidence**

A number of aspects of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education are already well documented through research. The subject has also been the subject of recent reviews, including that of Sir Alasdair Macdonald and the 2007 review of the secondary curriculum. The first stage of the PSHE education review will bring together this existing evidence and identify gaps.

### **1.2 What the review is looking for**

The Department is open to receiving further evidence on elements already included in PSHE education as well as any additional areas you feel should be included.

The Department is also keen to gather examples of good practice in the teaching of PSHE education.

## 2 Evidence needed

### 2.1 **Please supply up-to-date evidence to answer any or all of the questions in the review. You may want to answer only those questions most relevant to you:**

Question 1. What do you consider the core outcomes PSHE education should achieve and what areas of basic core knowledge and awareness should pupils be expected to acquire at school through PSHE education?

Question 2. Have you got any evidence that demonstrates why a) existing elements and b) new elements should be part of the PSHE education curriculum?

Your answer should provide a summary of the evidence and where appropriate contain the title, author and publication date of research.

Question 3. Which elements of PSHE education, if any, should be made statutory (in addition to sex education) within the basic curriculum?

Question 4. Are the national, non-statutory frameworks and programmes of study an effective way of defining content?

Question 5. How can schools better decide for themselves what more pupils need to know, in consultation with parents and others locally?

Question 6. How do you think the statutory guidance on sex and relationships education could be simplified, especially in relation to a) strengthening the priority given to teaching about relationships, b) the importance of positive parenting and c) teaching young people about sexual consent?

Question 7. Have you got any examples of case studies that show particular best practice in teaching PSHE education and achieving the outcomes we want for PSHE education?

Your answer should be evidence based and provide details of real-life case studies

Question 8. How can PSHE education be improved using levers proposed in the Schools White Paper, such as Teaching Schools, or through alternative methods of improving quality, such as the use of experienced external agencies (public, private and voluntary), to support schools?

Question 9. Have you got any examples of good practice in assessing and tracking pupils' progress in PSHE education?

Your answer should be evidence based and provide details of real-life case studies

Question 10. How might schools define and account for PSHE education's outcomes to pupils, parents and local people?

### 3 Background

3.1 The Government said in the Schools White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, that it would conduct an internal review to determine how to support schools to improve the quality of teaching of PSHE education, including giving teachers the flexibility to use their judgement about how best to deliver PSHE education.

3.2 PSHE education comprises a number of topics and is also taught as a subject in its own right. Although schools have been teaching PSHE education for many years, it was introduced in its current form in September 2008 with non-statutory programmes of study at Key Stages 3 and 4 (secondary age group). These programmes of study set out the concepts, skills, processes and opportunities that pupils should learn or experience by age 16, covering:

- Personal well-being: including sex and relationships; drugs, alcohol and tobacco; emotional health and well-being; nutrition; physical activity; and safety; and
- Economic well-being and financial capability: including personal finance; work-related learning; and careers.

There are also non-statutory PSHE education frameworks for Key Stages 1 and 2 (primary age group), which include many of the topics listed above, taught in an age-appropriate way.

3.3 PSHE education itself does not have any statutory basis and is not part of the National Curriculum, which means that schools are not required to follow the frameworks or programmes of study at either primary or secondary stages. Some compulsory subjects<sup>1</sup> are sometimes taught as part of PSHE education:

- Sex education: secondary schools must provide sex education, having regard to guidance from the Secretary of State<sup>2</sup>. The Government does not intend to change this legislation or parents' right of withdrawal;

- Careers education: secondary schools must currently provide careers education. The Government's Education Bill currently before Parliament seeks to remove this duty and instead introduce a new duty on schools to secure access to independent and impartial careers advice;
- Work-related learning: secondary schools must also currently provide work-related learning at Key Stage 4. Following the Government's acceptance of Professor Wolf's recommendation, this duty will be removed, subject to Parliament's agreement. The Department will seek to achieve this in 2012.

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1 - These subjects are part of the basic curriculum rather than the National Curriculum. They are compulsory for maintained schools, but the Department does not prescribe national programmes of study or attainment targets.

2 - 'Sex and Relationships Education Guidance', DfEE July 2000

- 3.4 In addition, there are elements within the statutory National Curriculum which some schools teach as part of PSHE education (at both primary and secondary stages). These include, for example in National Curriculum science, life processes and the reproductive cycle, and the effects of diet, drugs and disease.

## 4 Reasons for reviewing PSHE education

- 4.1 The Government has set out in the Schools White Paper its aims for education and for the school curriculum. It envisages schools and teachers taking greater control over, and accountability for, what is taught in schools and how it is taught, and using their professional skills to provide the best education for all pupils. The Government can help by removing unnecessary curricular detail, and by reducing unnecessary prescription, bureaucracy and central control throughout the system. PSHE education needs to reflect, and fit within, this approach.
- 4.2 The Government is already reviewing the National Curriculum, so that it reflects the body of essential knowledge in core subjects and takes up less teaching time in schools. This will allow schools the space to provide a rounded education, including PSHE education.

- 4.3 There is much of value that children need to learn and experience which sits outside the National Curriculum. Children can benefit enormously from PSHE education. Good PSHE education supports young people to make safe and informed choices. It can help tackle public health issues such as substance misuse and support young people with the financial decisions they must make. There needs to be room in the life of the school for an exploration of wider social issues which contribute to the well-being and engagement of all pupils. It should be for teachers, not government, to design the lessons and the experiences which will engage pupils. Different schools may want to cover different life skills, reflecting their pupils' interests and local circumstances.
- 4.4 In a report published in 2010<sup>3</sup> Ofsted found that PSHE education (provision, teaching and pupils' achievement) was good or outstanding in more than three-quarters of the schools visited, and that it had been improving for six years. Inspectors reported many areas of good practice, such as pupils' positive attitudes and the use of external agencies. Inspectors also identified issues: weaker areas of provision, such as education on sex and relationships, drugs, mental health, and financial capability teachers with insufficient subject knowledge in about a quarter of lessons; ineffective assessment and tracking of pupils' progress in about half of schools; and too few schools consulting or involving parents.

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3 - 'Personal, social, health and economic education in schools', Ofsted, July 2010

## **5 Remit of the review**

### **5.1 *Content of PSHE education***

The review will:

- a. consider the core outcomes which we expect PSHE education to achieve and the core of knowledge and awareness that the Government should expect pupils to acquire at school;
- b. look at whether the national, non-statutory frameworks and programmes of study are an effective way of defining content;
- c. explore how schools can better decide for themselves what more pupils need to know, in consultation with parents and others locally;

d. consider whether elements of PSHE education should be made statutory within the basic curriculum ;

e. consider how to simplify the statutory guidance on sex and relationships education, including strengthening the priority given to: teaching about relationships; to the importance of positive parenting; and to teaching young people about sexual consent.

The Government has already ruled out making PSHE education as a whole a statutory subject within the National Curriculum. It will only propose making new elements of PSHE education statutory if there is clear evidence of the benefit to pupils of doing so and if, within the National Curriculum review's consideration of the overall statutory burden on schools, it is practical to do so. The Government has no plans to change the law on sex education or parents' right to withdraw their child from sex education.

## 5.2 **Quality of PSHE education**

Building on Ofsted's findings, the review will:

a. draw together evidence on improving the teaching of PSHE education, and ways of disseminating good practice

b. identify evidence-based interventions that are proven to get good results in achieving the outcomes we want from PSHE education and ways of promoting them;

c. consider how PSHE education could be improved using levers proposed in the Schools White Paper, such as Teaching Schools;

d. explore alternative methods of improving quality, including the use of experienced external agencies (public, private and voluntary) to support schools;

e. look at good practice in assessing and tracking pupils' progress in PSHE education; and

f. consider how schools might define and account for PSHE education's outcomes to pupils, parents and local people.

5.3 In addition to the PSHE education review, the Department is working with the Office for National Statistics on the development of national well-being indicators, including the possibility of a child well-being indicator.

## 6 Process for the review

- 6.1 The review began on 21 July. It will be managed internally by the Department for Education and report to the Secretary of State for Education.
- 6.2 The Department will review existing national and international research evidence, and will also take representations from a cross section of interested and representative organisations, experts and individuals. A summary of the evidence considered in the review and of representations made to the review will be published. This will ensure that the review is transparent, rooted in evidence and that it proposes practical measures.
- 6.3 The review will take into account the emerging findings from phase 1 of the National Curriculum review to ensure that curriculum policy is joined up and reflects the Government's aims to reduce prescription and give teachers freedoms to design a curriculum that best meets the needs of their pupils.
- 6.4 After the review of PSHE education, the Secretary of State will publish proposals for public consultation.
- 6.5 In the meantime, schools should continue to provide PSHE education and should feel free to innovate and improve their teaching, for example in response to Ofsted's findings in 2010. The Department encourages schools or external agencies that are planning or working on PSHE education projects to continue them, so that they can be considered in the review, and not to delay their project until the conclusion of the review.

## 7 How To Respond

- 7.1 Responses can be completed online at [www.education.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations)

by emailing [PSHEEducation.review@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:PSHEEducation.review@education.gsi.gov.uk) or by downloading a response form which should be completed and sent to:

DfE  
Consultation Unit  
Area 1C , Castle View House  
East Lane, Runcorn  
Cheshire, WA7 2GJ.

Thank you for taking the time to provide evidence to this review. Please return your completed form by 30 November 2011.

## **8 Additional Copies**

- 8.1 Additional copies are available electronically and can be downloaded from the Department for Education e-consultation website at:  
<http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations>

## **9 Plans for making results public**

- 9.1 The Department will publish a summary of the research it has reviewed, a list of the organisations responding with additional evidence and an analysis of the responses received.