

## Two Page Briefing for MPs: Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (Statutory Requirement) Bill 2014-15, 2nd Reading 24 October 2014

### Long title of the Bill:

*A Bill to require the Secretary of State to provide that Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) be a statutory requirement for all state funded schools; for PSHE to include Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) and education on ending violence against women and girls; to provide for initial and continuing teacher education and guidance on best practice for delivering and inspecting PSHE and SRE education; and for connected purposes.*

Context: The current position is untenable. Ofsted's most recent PSHE report, entitled 'Not yet good enough', found that teaching required improvement in 40% of schools. Lack of statutory status means the training and support isn't there. On SRE the last statutory SRE Guidance was produced 14 years ago, before the mass use of mobile phones to access the internet and the rise of social media.

The Campaign: Supporters of statutory PSHE and SRE are seeking to get as many MPs as possible to make a public commitment on Twitter to back the principle of the Bill in the run up to the 2nd Reading date. Lack of Parliamentary time may mean the Bill won't be reached but we can use it to demonstrate the huge support for statutory PSHE. Schools Minister and the Secretary of State are engaged and they need to hear that there is big and broad support for action. We have to get this in all the Parties' Manifestos for 2015 and wide backbench support is critical for this.

**For the above purposes Caroline Lucas is asking MPs to sign up to the broad principle in the long title of the Bill via the hashtag #PSHEBill.**

Wide Support: Teachers and Heads want statutory PSHE. There is strong backing from unions: NAHT, ATL, NUT. Parents want PSHE. 88% of the parents of school-aged pupils want age-appropriate SRE to be taught in schools. Members of UK Youth Parliament want PSHE. The Telegraph has run Wonder Women's campaign for better sex education. Girlguiding's Girls Matter Campaign is calling for compulsory PSHE. Mumsnet, National Children's Bureau, Stonewall, EAW Coalition, Everyday Sexism, amongst many others are all backing the Bill.

Safeguarding: The NSPCC has showed that girls and boys are gleaning distorted and inaccurate information about sex and relationships via online porn, 'sexting', the pressure to document their lives and relationships online and chat rooms. Childline found 60% of 13-18 year olds had been asked to share a sexual image or video of themselves.

Violence against women and girls: 1 in 3 girls say they experience 'groping' or unwanted sexual touching at school. In the light of Rotherham and other scandals, as well as the Government's historic child sex abuse inquiry, all children should be taught about respectful relationships.

Young LGBTIQ people: Homophobic language and bullying remains common in schools. LGBTIQ young people need information and support to help them deal with intimidation and isolation.

Huge Potential: PSHE has the potential to aid academic success<sup>2</sup> and employability<sup>3</sup>. All children deserve a curriculum that promotes resilience, physical and mental health, life skills and that teaches about equality.

### Yet this potential is unfulfilled:

- Lack of teacher training: Echoing the Ofsted findings, a PSHE Association survey of 40 local authority leads suggests 52% of teachers are not adequately trained in PSHE.
- Statutory status is key: as a non-statutory, non-examined subject with a low priority in the Ofsted framework, there is virtually no coverage of PSHE in teacher training; in school PSHE teachers are not given the curriculum time or training they need.
- Supporting not dictating to schools: Statutory PSHE and SRE is not prescribing the detail of lessons. It is giving all children the same entitlement to good quality provision, giving all

schools freedom to meet individual needs, and giving all staff the support, training and curriculum time they need.

#### Rebuttals:

Isn't this a job for Parents? This is about partnership. YouGov/PSHE Association found 90% of parents believe that schools should teach about mental health and emotional well-being. Working with parents is critical. Where parents are engaged, they want PSHE in school next to traditional subjects.

**Age appropriateness?** Good quality PSHE and SRE is always age appropriate. Children's questions about growing up need to be answered honestly, using language and explanations appropriate for their age and maturity to avoid unnecessary mystery, confusion, embarrassment and shame.

SRE is part of the solution to concerns about sexualisation. The evidence<sup>1</sup> shows quality PSHE and SRE delays sexual activity for young people and reduces teen pregnancy. Good PSHE would help young people make sensible choices.

For younger children, SRE is about learning that their body belongs to them and to respect boundaries - their own and other people's. This lays the foundations for understanding consent. PSHE and SRE is needed in Primary schools to help children develop the language and confidence they need to describe unwanted behaviour, as well as to know where to go for help.

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#### References:

1 SRE delays sexual activity for young people and reduces teenage pregnancy:

o [http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/494585/sef\\_doessrework\\_2010.pdf](http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/494585/sef_doessrework_2010.pdf)

2 PSHE has the potential to aid academic success<sup>2</sup>

o <http://www.bmj.com/content/348/bmj.g3078>

o [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x/abstract;jsessionid=78ECE3419192E8C8CEF35A0C4823196C.f03t04?deniedAccessCustomisedMessage=&userIsAuthenticated=false)

[8624.2010.01564.x/abstract;jsessionid=78ECE3419192E8C8CEF35A0C4823196C.f03t04?deniedAccessCustomisedMessage=&userIsAuthenticated=false](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x/abstract;jsessionid=78ECE3419192E8C8CEF35A0C4823196C.f03t04?deniedAccessCustomisedMessage=&userIsAuthenticated=false)

o [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/182419/DFE-RR097.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/182419/DFE-RR097.pdf)

3 PSHE has the potential to aid employability

o [http://www.demos.co.uk/files/The\\_Forgotten\\_Half\\_-\\_web.pdf?1300105344%E2%80%99](http://www.demos.co.uk/files/The_Forgotten_Half_-_web.pdf?1300105344%E2%80%99)

o [http://www.cbi.org.uk/media/2119176/education\\_and\\_skills\\_survey\\_2013.pdf](http://www.cbi.org.uk/media/2119176/education_and_skills_survey_2013.pdf)

o <http://www.britishchambers.org.uk/policy-maker/policy-reports-and-publications/the-bcc-skills-and-employment-manifesto.html>

4 Ofsted want improvement

o <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/not-yet-good-enough-personal-social-health-and-economic-education-schools>