

# Key principles for statutory PSHE

**The PSHE Association has developed a set of recommended principles to apply to statutory PSHE to ensure high standards of rigour, balance and parent and community involvement.**

In campaigning for statutory status for PSHE education, we and our partners are calling for:

- An entitlement which applies to all school pupils at key stages 1-4 in all state schools, whether they are academies or maintained schools
- A duty on all state schools which gives PSHE parity of status with existing statutory subjects and which applies to the whole of the subject, not any single component of it

Best practice dictates that this provision should be:

- **Designed and delivered by teachers to meet their pupils' and community's needs:** this should include early consultation with parents and community leaders, and teaching which is in line with the ethos of the school. Any statutory provision must recognise the need for schools with a religious character to teach the subject in the context of the school's foundation, while ensuring that lessons reflect a reasonable range of religious, cultural and other perspectives.
- **Taught by teachers who have had training in the subject:** this means ensuring the subject is a key part of all initial teacher education routes and that there are high-quality CPD opportunities available for existing teachers.
- **Informed by a range of best practice models:** expert bodies and teacher unions should be consulted, taking full account of the need for sustainable workloads for teachers. The emphasis should be on improving quality of provision without increasing the burden on teachers or, necessarily, the number of teaching hours each week in every school (acknowledging that some schools give PSHE education time on the curriculum, but because teachers are not trained, the lessons are not as effective as they could be).
- **Taught in regular timetabled lessons:** providing an opportunity for developmental learning, with clear cross-curricular links made with other subjects as part of a curriculum planned by the school. Curriculum content should be determined by schools using best practice guidance, local data and assessment of pupil need in consultation with pupils, parents and community leaders. This localised approach, based on pupil need, parental consultation and the professional judgement of schools, is preferable to a rigid curriculum set nationally.
- **Balanced, factually-accurate and appropriate lessons:** learning in PSHE education should be balanced, factually accurate, always cover the law and a range of views and beliefs on a given issue, while being appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils and respectful of their religious and cultural backgrounds.
- **Avoid a 'parade of topics' approach:** teaching resources produced by the PSHE Association under a Department for Education character education grant recommend that schools should focus on the key skills and characteristics they want pupils to develop..

As set out above, it is critical that parents are involved when a school's PSHE curriculum is being developed. While there is widespread consensus amongst parents, governors and parent-teacher associations about the need for PSHE education, it is understandable that parents will want to ensure that a school's programme is appropriate for their children. Ofsted has found no evidence of inappropriate teaching, but we should not be complacent and statutory duties to ensure that schools engage parents as they develop their PSHE programme should be maintained. Statutory status for PSHE education could be supported by enhanced statutory guidance for schools relating to parental involvement and more frequent monitoring of provision by Ofsted.