

## **Briefing for the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee on petition [PE2077](#): Update Curriculum for Excellence to remove Personal and Social Education (PSE) from secondary schools, lodged by Thomas A Ross**

### **Brief overview of issues raised by the petition**

This petition seeks to remove Personal and Social Education from the curriculum in secondary schools.

### **Personal and Social Education and Health and Wellbeing in the Curriculum**

Personal and Social Education (PSE) is one of the ways in which schools support the health and wellbeing curriculum in schools.

PSE is a specific timetabled lesson which can cover: aspects of planning for choices and changes, substance misuse, relationships, sexual health and parenthood, in addition to aspects of physical activity, sport and health.

There are six areas of the health and wellbeing curriculum.

- Mental, Emotional, Social and Physical Wellbeing;
- Planning for Choices and Changes;
- Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport;
- Food and Health;
- Substance Misuse; and,
- Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP).

Health and Wellbeing is a key area of Curriculum for Excellence and is one of the three curriculum areas considered to be the responsibility of all practitioners (the other two are literacy and numeracy). CfE however is a broad and non-prescriptive framework and how schools would deliver education in these areas is to a large degree a matter for local authorities or schools. There is further guidance in some of these areas, such as statutory guidance on RSHP. PSE may also include other areas of learning, such as financial literacy.

The [Scottish Government's 2017 Mental Health Strategy](#) included the ambition that every child and young person should have appropriate access to

emotional and mental wellbeing support in school. Following the strategy, the Scottish Government [undertook a review of PSE](#). This found that PSE/health and wellbeing was undervalued in teaching and learning in schools, and it needed to be improved, particularly in upper secondary.

The review included recommendations on how to improve PSE or learning around health and wellbeing. One of the recommendations of is that there should be increased opportunities for children and young people to be involved in designing their PSE/HWB programmes.

Ned Sharratt  
SPICe Researcher

18/01/2024

The purpose of this briefing is to provide a brief overview of issues raised by the petition. SPICe research specialists are not able to discuss the content of petition briefings with petitioners or other members of the public. However, if you have any comments on any petition briefing you can email us at [spice@parliament.scot](mailto:spice@parliament.scot)

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in petition briefings is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware however that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

Published by the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe), an office of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP