



F/T: 0300 244 4000
E: dfmcse@gov.scot

James Dornan MSP
Convenor
Education and Skills Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Our ref: Personal and Social Education
30 July 2017

J. Swinney,

Thank you for your letter of 23 May 2017 and the Education and Skills Committee report on Personal and Social Education.

I agree that this is an important area of work covering a range of issues and I have considered the Committee's report on its findings and recommendations carefully. The attached Annex A provides a detailed response to the Committee's recommendations.

As the Committee will be aware the Scottish Government has committed to undertaking a review of Personal and Social Education (PSE) as one of its actions in the new ten year Mental Health Strategy 2017 – 2027. The PSE review will include examining the role of pastoral guidance and the provision of counselling services for children and young people in local authority schools.

I appreciate that the scope of this review and associated timescales will be of interest to Committee members and I have provided more detail on this in Annex B.

I hope that this information is helpful and I look forward to working with the Committee in the new Parliamentary session.

JOHN SWINNEY

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATIONS ON PERSONAL AND SOCIAL EDUCATION**

Report Reference	Education and Skills Committee Recommendation	Scottish Government Response
Paragraphs 18 - 20	The delivery of Personal and Social Education (PSE) should be reviewed across all types of schools cross Scotland.	<p>Agree.</p> <p>The Scottish Government has committed to undertaking a review of PSE as part of its Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027. This will include examining how PSE is delivered in local authority early years settings, special schools, primary schools and secondary schools.</p>
Paragraph 21	<p>The PSE review should assess the extent to which schools are aware of and take steps to comply with existing statutory duties requiring them to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health promoting including in relation to mental health prevention, recognition and support; and • Public sector duties compliant in making provision for people who identify with protected characteristics, tackling prejudice and promoting understanding of people of different groups. 	<p>Health promotion is a wide topic which goes beyond the subjects taught within PSE.</p> <p>The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007 places health promotion at the heart of a school's activities and details a number of duties on local authorities including the promotion of school meals and the consideration of sustainable development guidance when providing food and drink.</p> <p>Dedicated health and nutrition inspectors from Education Scotland monitor compliance with these duties</p> <p>The importance of this area is recognised - the Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2008 which set strict nutritional standards for all food and drink served in schools are currently under review by the Scottish Government to take account of scientific changes since their introduction.</p> <p>The Scottish Government's PSE review will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How schools are health promoting in terms of how positive mental health is encouraged, how issues are identified and, where they are needed, how counselling services are delivered for children and young people in schools and how effective this is. • The extent to which equalities issues taught in PSE, teach children and young people about prejudice and promote an understanding of different groups of people.

Report Reference	Education and Skills Committee Recommendation	Scottish Government Response
<p>Paragraphs 22-25</p>	<p>The Committee is concerned that the importance of health and wellbeing as one of three priorities alongside numeracy and literacy is not reflected or consistent across schools.</p> <p>The Committee seeks an acknowledgement from the Scottish Government that despite health and wellbeing being given equal priority, this is not always the case in practice locally.</p> <p>The Committee also considers that the Scottish Government should ensure positive outcomes for all our young people if the review recommended finds clear evidence of children and young people not receiving the level of PSE that is expected from education authorities.</p>	<p>The PSE review will examine how PSE is delivered across a wide range of education provision in Scotland.</p> <p>The Scottish Government agrees that learning experiences should support the achievement of positive outcomes for all young people.</p> <p>The Statement for Practitioners from the Chief Inspector of Education, August 2016 identified ensuring the best possible progression in health and wellbeing, together with literacy and numeracy as one of the key priorities for CfE. It encouraged practitioners to prioritise health and wellbeing across the curriculum to ensure that all learners make the best possible progress. It also highlighted an increased focus on health and wellbeing as part of The National Improvement Framework to close the poverty-related attainment gap.</p> <p>The health and wellbeing benchmarks are designed to provide consistency and coherence and progression. Education Scotland is providing support to LA's and schools through Career-Long Professional Learning (CLPL) sessions to support staff in establishments develop a better understanding of the benchmarks, illustrate how to use the benchmarks to ensure a more consistent approach and share practice. Examples of innovative practice will be published on the National Improvement Hub.</p> <p>The H&W thematic review conducted in 2014 identified that H&W in establishments is valued and viewed as a priority and is seen as a key driver in reducing inequality and increasing achievement.</p>
<p>Paragraph 26</p>	<p>The Committee supports the principle of the establishment of a working group by the Scottish Government to consider the issues raised by the Time for Inclusive Education (TIE) campaign and seeks assurances on the extent of the remit and timescales for the working group's programme.</p>	<p>The Scottish Government welcomes the Committee's support for its new LGBTI Inclusive Education Working Group.</p> <p>Details of the Working Group including its remit can be found at: http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/Schools/HLivi/sex-education/LGBTIWG</p>
<p>Paragraphs 27 - 28</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that all PSE programmes should include an element of co-design to ensure that young people explore issues of importance to them and are engaged in the learning process.</p> <p>The Committee highlights that particular themes were raised by students as being currently under-catered for, such as financial planning and citizenship and recommends that these topics be</p>	<p>Agree.</p> <p>Learner engagement is important. Currently all schools are encouraged to develop the curriculum to suit their local context and meet the needs of children and young people.</p> <p>It is good practice for schools to consult with children and young people and respond to their views appropriately, to ensure this meets the needs of all children and young people in</p>

	highlighted as possible options for students as part of co-design processes	<p>the school or educational setting. The Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood statutory guidance issued in 2014 highlights this good practice.</p> <p>http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/12/8526/</p> <p>As part of considering learner engagement, the PSE review will explore if co-design of PSE course content is offered to pupils.</p>
Paragraph 29	The Committee recommends that PSE should involve external contributors with the relevant specialism where beneficial and possible.	<p>Agree.</p> <p>Schools can provide an enhanced learning experience for children and young people through the careful use of external specialists as part of a planned learning experience.</p>

Report Reference	Education and Skills Committee Recommendation	Scottish Government Response
Paragraph 30	<p>The Committee asks the Scottish Government what action it has taken in light of the 2013 recommendations by the Health and Sport Committee, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure central guidance or inspections place a sufficient emphasis on age appropriate learning. • That education authorities engage with this issue and encourage change at nursery and school level where appropriate. 	<p>The Scottish Government agrees that PSE programmes should be appropriate for the pupil's age and stage of learning.</p> <p>The PSE review will scrutinise this.</p> <p>Since the Health and Sport Committee's report a number of significant actions have taken place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2014 the Scottish Government issued new statutory guidance on the "Conduct of Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood Education in Schools". This guidance was issued under S.56 of the Standards in Schools Act 2000 and replaced the earlier guidance, "Conduct of Sex Education in Scottish Schools 2001". • In 2016 the Scottish Government launched its "Pregnancy and Parenthood in Young People Strategy". • On 3 July 2017, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, on behalf of a national partnership of agencies including Local Authorities, NHS Boards, Education Scotland and Scottish Government, launched the commissioning process to develop a new web-based learning and teaching resource for relationships, sexual health and parenthood education. This will be made available to all schools across Scotland. <p>This new web based learning and teaching resource will be developed in line with the 3-18 model set out in Curriculum for Excellence, and both content and methodologies will be appropriate to the age and stage at every level.</p>

THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT REVIEW OF PERSONAL AND SOCIAL EDUCATION
--

Proposed Scope of the Review

The Review will go forward in three phases and it is expected to be completed by the end of 2018.

Phase 1 – Communications, PSE teaching resources study, school review preparation

Phase 2 - Thematic review of delivery of PSE in schools across Scotland:

A review of delivery of PSE in schools will be undertaken by Education Scotland. This review is proposing to visit to 20 secondary schools, 20 primary schools, 10 early learning and care centres, and 5 special schools with good geographical spread across Scotland.

It will explore and evaluate:

- The content of PSE programmes for children and young people from 3 to 18 years in Scottish schools and early learning centres;
- How these programmes are delivered and the quality of learning, achievement and progression;
- The effectiveness of the provision of the universal support entitlement and staged intervention for social, emotional and behavioural support;
- The effectiveness of pastoral guidance (including the roles of class teachers and pastoral care/guidance teachers) in supporting children and young people;
- In terms of health promotion, how positive mental health is encouraged, how issues are identified and, where they are needed, the extent specific counselling services are available for children and young people in schools, how these are delivered and their effectiveness;
- How the issue of sexual consent is taught within relationships, sexual health and parenthood from early learning through all stages of school education;
- How learner engagement and co-design of PSE programmes is taken forward in schools; and
- The extent to which equalities issues taught in PSE, teach children and young people about prejudice and promote an understanding of different groups of people.

Phase 3 – Analysis of findings and development of recommendations