
RECLAIM EDUCATION

The Case Against PSHE

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Commissioned by



On behalf of



The first time I realised that something wasn't right and that just perhaps schools were not the places where we dropped off our kids for them to learn the three R's and make lifelong friends, was one evening a few years ago when my eldest son was heading off to bed and I asked for a usual goodnight hug, only to be greeted with "You need my consent for that!"

I asked him who had told him that his dad needed consent for a hug and he said "They taught it to us at school."

Anyway, suffice to say I got my hug and off he went to bed. But this got me curious. I wrote to the school and asked about this concept of "consent" and they informed me that it was part of PSHE and RSE and that they were teaching the children about it. They also informed me they were having a fairly tough time as one clever child was already playing the system and was repeating at lunch that he didn't consent to eating Broccoli!

All sounds pretty harmless.

But I began to dig. And far from the lighthearted misunderstandings of consent I found that within the hours devoted to PSHE and RSE each week whilst we thought our kids were improving their spelling and arithmetic, much more sinister things were taking place.

I approached my youngest sons school and asked for lesson plans. Which I was given. I am lucky, many parents are denied access to these, and I was horrified. My young son was being taught that girls and boys can be born in the wrong body, that skin colour privilege was real and the banging drum of Diversity, equity and inclusion sounded loudly throughout the "so called" curriculum. There is in fact no standardised curriculum for what can only be described as the brain washing and indoctrination of children.

I am a father. The best interests of children are in the overwhelming majority of cases left to parents and the family to safeguard. My children are children, they are not young recruits to a political ideology.

I will leave the details of what concerns me so much to those with far greater minds, detail, examples and understanding of what schools have become in 2023 Britain.

Every single parent should be concerned.

It is time to reclaim education.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Laurence Fox', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Laurence Fox, Leader of the Reclaim Party

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Tutto nello Stato, niente al di fuori dello Stato, nulla contro lo Stato.

Benito Mussolini (circa 1925)

Give me a girl at an impressionable age and she is mine for life.

**Miss Jean Brodie, fictional supporter of Benito Mussolini, in
Muriel Spark's novel *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (1961)**

He let out an amazing truth. For a very long period before the time of Our Ford, and even for some generations afterwards, erotic play between children had been regarded as abnormal (there was a roar of laughter); and not only abnormal, actually immoral (no!): and had therefore been rigorously suppressed.

“We had Elementary Sex for the first forty minutes,” she answered. “But now it’s switched over to Elementary Class Consciousness.”

“For you must remember that in those days of gross viviparous reproduction, children were always brought up by their parents and not in State Conditioning Centres.”

“Once upon a time”, the Director began, [...] there was a little boy called Reuben Rabinovitch. Reuben was the child of Polish-speaking parents”. The Director interrupted himself. “You know what Polish is, I suppose?”

- *“A dead language.”*
- *“And ‘parent’?”*

“Humans used to be [...] Well, they used to be viviparous” [...] “the parents were the father and the mother”. The smut that was really science fell with a crash into the boys’ eye-avoiding silence. “Mother”, he repeated loudly, rubbing in the science [...] “These [...] are unpleasant facts; I know it. But, then, most historical facts are unpleasant”.

Extracts from the novel *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley (1932)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 1 of this report explains the terminology used in the report. Section 2 gives a brief overview of the complex history of PSHE, as British sex and relationship education policy became harmonised within an international educational system using the so-called ‘Whole Child Approach’. This approach focuses on child development and training beyond the areas traditionally covered in school curricula. Section 3 argues that in spite of its well-meaning objectives, PSHE as practiced in British schools today is negatively impacting children’s mental and physical health, increasing children’s vulnerability to social, sexual, and political exploitation. PSHE is providing mechanisms through which third sector groups actively promote harmful political ideologies in schools, in breach of the fundamental rights of children and their families. Section 4 explores the legal meaning of ‘political indoctrination’ in English law and argues that democracies must exercise eternal vigilance to protect young people from political indoctrination by both state and corporate institutions, drawing on lessons from history – in particular the history of twentieth-century totalitarianism. Section 5 provides case studies illustrating the way children are being taught physically and psychologically harmful ideologies in the name of Relationships and Sex education (RSE), including the idea that their healthy bodies may be ‘wrong’. Section 6 focuses on sexually inappropriate messaging that children are receiving at school through PSHE, some of which may meet the criminal threshold for child sex abuse.

Sections 7-9 make the case that PSHE is both legally and socially untenable in 21st century Britain. PSHE encourages discrimination against teachers, children and parents who hold ‘the wrong views’, in breach of UK equality law; and engages fundamental human rights such as the right to respect for private and family life, the right to freedom of thought, belief and religion, and the right to freedom of expression (Articles 8, 9 and 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights). PSHE undermines social cohesion and may be exacerbating racial, religious, and cultural tensions in our society, encouraging unhealthy resentment of the education system and a profound breakdown of trust between schools, parents and wider communities. Section 10 concludes that PSHE and RSE, currently mandated as school subjects, must go; and that the private sphere should reclaim teaching on relationships from Government control and the third sector.

WHAT IS PSHE?

Terminology

PSHE **PSHE education** is an umbrella term. It stands for Personal, Social, Health and Economic education. PSHE became statutory in September 2020 under the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and is compulsory in independent schools.

RSE **Relationships and Sex Education** is compulsory in secondary schools.

Relationships Education is compulsory in primary schools.

Health

Education **Health Education** (both mental and physical) is compulsory in all schools except independent schools.

Parental

right of

withdrawal Parents may automatically withdraw their children from **Sex Education**, but not **Relationships** or **Health Education**.

Parents have the right to request the withdrawal of their child from those parts of **RSE** which deal with **Sex Education**, up until three terms before they turn 16.

Hereafter, **PSHE is used broadly to refer to the statutory remit whereby schools are required to teach lessons about sex, health, personal life and relationships to children from Key Stages 1-5 (ages 5 – 18).¹*

¹ See the 2019 Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers, paras. 3-4; and the Children and Social Work Act 2017, sections 34-35.

The ‘Whole Child Approach’

A Brief History of PSHE

Many features of PSHE have been imported to Britain from the United States and reflect a series of attempts to harmonise British sex and relationship education policy with the US system.

The story begins in North America in 1968, when faculty members at the *Child Study Center* (based at Yale University), under the supervision of one Dr James Comer, invented something called the ‘Whole Child Approach’ (WCA).

Aimed at tackling problems faced by children from low-income backgrounds, WCA was initially tested in two (predominantly African American) US elementary schools. Within two decades, WCA became the broad template for a new US educational management system based on a holistic approach to child development, with the Rockefeller Foundation granting a five-year, \$15 million grant to aid national replication of the programme in 1990.²

The philosophy underpinning WCA downplays the importance of academic achievement, measured through conventional testing systems. Instead, it focuses on preparing children for the world beyond school. As a model, it has paved the way for an international vision of child development-centred education in which the school becomes the authoritative source of information about everything: from health, financial and lifestyle decisions, to participation in public life and employment.

WCA-driven initiatives – described as ‘engagement’ or ‘inclusion’ programmes and using phrases such as ‘community’ and ‘culture’ – partner schools with ‘stakeholders’ that enter school premises as educational providers, consultants and mentors. These stakeholders are presented as experts in child learning and development. Effectively appointed by the state in

² Fred C. Lunenburg, “The Comer School Development Program: Improving Education for Low-Income Students”, in the *National Forum of Multicultural Issues Journal* (Vol. 8), No. 1 (2011), p. 3.

the role of qualified and caring adults, the role of the stakeholders is to administrate children's lives independently of preferences and values determined by the child's family or community. Within the WCA worldview, stakeholders become as significant in a child's life as parents – potentially *more so*. As WCA has entrenched itself as the bedrock of child welfare and educational policy, education consultancies have transformed into an enormous growth industry, operating predominantly through the so-called 'third sector'.³ Third sector consultancies are now the primary source of (pseudo-scientific) expertise on child supervision, welfare, and development. The choices and decisions of a child's parents, carers, wider family or community can now be easily dismissed or authoritatively overridden through the influence of the third sector. From WCA has emerged a statist model seeking 'total' control of education, competing initially with the private sphere, before moving to exclude the private sphere altogether from influencing a child's development. Traditionally, the child's family and home life has been considered beyond the jurisdiction of the school. Today, in place of any personal or cultural worldviews, the child is presented with a 'WCA ethos' or value system reflecting the overlapping interests of the public and corporate sectors. The third sector is instrumental in moulding that alternative ethos and PSHE is the mechanism by which that public-corporate ethos is delivered to children in schools.⁴

The blueprint for WCA in operation is the US-based *Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning* (CASEL). CASEL has been the chief system leading the growing 'nonprofit' movement to make WCA an integral part of education across the world. Building networks and initiatives since the mid-1990s, CASEL has been a key player in strengthening the role of the third sector in education, bestowing historically unprecedented powers upon so-called stakeholders, able, with the support of state and corporate entities, to bypass the

³ 'Third sector organisations' is a term used to describe the range of organisations that are neither public sector nor private sector. It includes voluntary and community organisations (both registered charities and other organisations such as associations, self-help groups and community groups), social enterprises, mutuals and co-operatives. This is the working definition of the third sector taken from the UK's National Audit Office. See <https://www.nao.org.uk/successful-commissioning/introduction/what-are-civil-society-organisations-and-their-benefits-for-commissioners/>

⁴ See for example the US NGO, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) and its resources for "the whole child" at <https://www.ascd.org/whole-child>, including the ASCD Whole Child *Action Plan Guide*, which focuses explicitly on how schools can garner the "involvement of stakeholders". The full document can be downloaded at <https://library.ascd.org/m/1f2720c1c2296a94/original/ASCD-Whole-Child-Action-Plan-Guide.pdf>.

authority of parents, teachers, and, in some cases, the authority of domestic laws which uphold the rights of parents as primary decision makers in the lives of their children.⁵

The WCA template, developed in the United States (and globally through organisations such as UNESCO and the WHO), was imported to the UK in the form of Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) in the 1990s-2000s – although we do see informal shifts in British teaching policy emphasising ‘the whole child’ as early as the 1960s.⁶

A key component of PSHE in the UK was published in 1999, under the acronym SRE, which stands for Sex *and* Relationships Education. The coordinating conjunctive clause – ‘*and Relationships*’ – is a crucial consideration. By means of this additional clause, SRE expressly commits to two important facets of the WCA template:

- (i) Education is ‘*more than*’ academic achievement; and
- (ii) Sex education is ‘*more than*’ biology.

The addition of the new subject – *and Relationships* – revises the traditional understanding of sex education (concerned primarily with biological reproduction). It marks the formal transformation of educational policy in the UK. The publication of the first SRE framework in 1999 accompanied the announcement of the Labour Government’s ten year *Teenage Pregnancy Strategy*, ostensibly aimed at reducing the rate of teenage pregnancy through various local implementations of the strategy. It also preceded the repeal of Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988, which forbade the *promotion* of homosexuality (by teaching or by publishing material) in schools. Section 28 was removed in Scotland in 2000, and England and Wales in 2003 – by which time it had become a well-publicised gay civil rights issue on the hard left of politics. From the moment Section 28 passed into law, in 1988, ‘the clause’ (as Section 28 was known) became the basis of activist campaigns to repeal the law, while at

⁵ <https://casel.org/about-us/our-history/>

⁶ The public school notion of pastoral care in Britain became the basis for new national conversations about ‘the whole child’, and from the 1960s-1980s, it was increasingly assumed by schools (on an informal basis) that parents were no longer solely responsible for the child’s welfare and that schools should be directly involved in the social and personal lives of children outside of school. See Ben Willis and Claire Wolstenholme, ‘Personal Social Health and Economic (PSHE) Education under the coalition government’ (Research report January 2016), Centre for Education and Inclusion Research Sheffield Institute of Education Sheffield Hallam University, <https://shura.shu.ac.uk/11504/1/Wolstenholme%20-%20PSHE%20report%20.pdf> at p.7.

the same time building a political case for schools to promote and validate alternative lifestyles and sexualities. As we will see, the use of PSHE today to *promote* political ideologies in schools has become contentious (and we say untenable).⁷ The current situation is a result of the political climate in Britain from the 1980s onwards, when there were clearly opportunities for political activists, behind the ‘fig leaves’ of social justice causes (supporting pregnant teenagers and combatting prejudice against homosexuality in schools), to seize responsibility for the development of future SRE frameworks in the UK for the purposes of discreetly disseminating and promoting extreme political ideologies without any meaningful public consultation in the process.⁸

In the year 2000, the UK Government published SRE guidance for teachers, headteachers and governing bodies to be deployed in maintained schools, academies and free schools.⁹ The 2000 guidance contributed to the remit of the new PSHE framework, which was to help pupils to “deal with difficult moral and social questions” and develop “the skills and understanding they need to live confident, healthy and independent lives”.¹⁰ This remit included training children in new and approved approaches to morality, intimacy, sexuality and hygiene. By 2012, this ever-expanding remit was justified as necessary to combat the ubiquitous use of smart phones by minors, on the grounds that technology was giving children unprecedented access to sexually explicit materials.¹¹ By 2014, PSHE was increasingly being framed as the ‘solution’ to building social cohesion in Britain, in the wake of large-scale immigration from Muslim countries. This gave third-sector groups a new role as self-appointed experts in UK equality law, and many started using the recently passed Equality Act 2010 as the legal framework for PSHE – some groups playing fast and loose with the wording of the Equality Act in order to justify their own political agendas. In 2015,

⁷ See section 8 of this report.

⁸ Useful timelines on the history of Section 28 and the early evolution of SRE are provided by the Sex Education Forum, which has been a major policy influencer on sex education in schools since 1987; and *The Guardian* (political blog). See <https://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/about/our-history-30-years-campaigning>; and <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/homeaffairs/page/0,11026,875944,00.html>.

⁹ Department for Education and Employment, “Sex and Relationship Education Guidance” (July 2000), at <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20130403224457/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DfES-0116-2000%20SRE.pdf>

¹⁰ Page 3 of the July 2000 Guidance.

¹¹ Big Talk Education, “A History of Sex Education in the UK (September 2020), <https://www.bigtalkeducation.co.uk/rse-information-and-support-for-schools/sre-rse-history/>

the UK Government decided that the status of SRE across different kinds of schools was unsatisfactory and needed to be clarified by the Department for Education, which would then “communicate this message clearly to schools”.¹² This led to Draft Statutory Guidance on RSE being published in 2018 and finalised in June 2019. On 1 September 2020, RSE became statutory.

The case supporting PSHE as a required (statutory) subject is set out in the PSHE Association’s December 2017 document, *A curriculum for life The case for statutory Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education*.¹³

A curriculum for life was drafted before the Government made RSE (within PSHE) a statutory requirement of key stage 1-5 learning across all schools. It argues that without PSHE (including RSE), children will be less prepared for life and work in a changing world: they will be less safe, less healthy and have fewer life chances. PSHE and RSE are, according to the document, “popular with parents” and “necessary”.

*[W]hen delivered by trained teachers in line with best practice, this ‘curriculum for life’ [...] helps children and young people to protect themselves and others both online and offline, improves their physical and emotional health, and develops character, resilience, academic attainment and employment prospects, with the greatest benefits experienced by the most disadvantaged pupils.*¹⁴

A curriculum for life is full of platitudes that are clearly intended to inspire confidence in the new subject. PSHE is presented as ‘the answer’ when it comes to reducing risk-taking behaviours such as drug and alcohol addiction, poor eating, and exercise habits. Proper health guidance, it is claimed, will lead to better life chances and higher levels of academic success.¹⁵ The document takes pains to point out that senior police chiefs and expert bodies

¹² Department for Education Government Response: *Life lessons: PSHE and SRE in schools* (July 2015), p. 9. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/446038/50742_Cm_9121_Web.pdf

¹³ <https://pshe-association.org.uk/evidence-and-research/a-curriculum-for-life-case-statutory-pshe-education>

¹⁴ *A curriculum for life. The case for statutory PSHE education* (Executive Summary), p. 3

¹⁵ *A curriculum for life*, pp. 8; 10.

such as The National Crime Agency’s Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre have advocated for PSHE on the grounds that teaching pupils about “consent and healthy relationships” can actively “prevent sexual exploitation”.¹⁶ *A curriculum for life* also asserts that there is growing evidence that PSHE education promotes “emotional health” and “positive mental health” through frank and open discussion of issues affecting mental wellbeing, thereby “reducing mental health stigma”.¹⁷

¹⁶ *A curriculum for life*, p. 7.

¹⁷ *A curriculum for life*, p. 9.

So, What's the Problem with PSHE?

The problem is that while there is little to no evidence that PSHE in schools is meeting the noble objectives laid down in *A curriculum for life*, there is plenty of evidence that it is negatively impacting children's health and well-being, and increasing children's vulnerability to social, sexual, and political exploitation.

The authors of *A curriculum for life* clearly recognise that PSHE contains inherent dangers from a child safeguarding perspective if “poorly taught”. That is why they advocate giving the subject statutory status, arguing that legislative backing will guarantee that teachers are properly trained and given the requisite expertise and experience to ensure PSHE does not go badly wrong.

*While there is strong evidence of the potential positive impact of high-quality PSHE teaching on pupils' mental health, there is also clear evidence of the dangers of poorly taught lessons on the subject. There are particular risks in relation to lessons on eating disorders and self-harm which, when taught by inexperienced or untrained teachers, could prove 'instructive' to vulnerable pupils [...] Due to its non-statutory status, responsibility for teaching PSHE education is often given to untrained, unprepared and inexperienced teachers, potentially putting vulnerable pupils at risk.*¹⁸

However, statutory status has not served to prepare and ground “inexperienced” teachers in the roll out and delivery of effective PSHE programmes. Rather, PSHE has been outsourced to wholly unaccountable third-party sector organisations, whose competence for overseeing UK child development, *en masse*, is questionable. As the PSHE Association has itself acknowledged with regards to teacher training:

¹⁸ *A curriculum for life*, p. 9. Emphasis in underline added.

A good PSHE teacher can deal with the most challenging issues in a balanced, effective way. Anyone teaching PSHE should therefore be equipped with at least the fundamentals of safe, effective practice. They should have the confidence and ability to design their own lessons, tailored to the needs of their pupils, drawing if necessary, on trusted sources of support, but not relying solely on external providers or off-the-shelf materials – some of which are of questionable quality.¹⁹

Against this advice, most British schools rely almost entirely on external providers for PSHE teaching and materials. This development has meant that political actors (with their own commercial interests and lobbying campaigns) have effectively taken over provisions for our children's emotional care and well-being at school without any effective safeguarding mechanisms or proper scrutiny of third-sector motives and agendas.

Perhaps the best example of how statutory PSHE and RSE have gone badly wrong is the third sector's promotion in schools of radical political ideas such as *gender ideology*, which teaches children that you can be born in the 'wrong body', or that your body is not an accurate reflection of who you intrinsically are 'on the inside'.

Under the cover of PSHE, it has become an essential life lesson to know that biological sex is something a child can reject or change. Biology is taught as different from one's 'gender identity', which is vaguely described as an inner feeling. Biological sex is not equivalent to gender identity: the latter supersedes the former (there is a hierarchy). Biological sex is not presented as important or having any positive value. The child's best self, true self, superior self – is in the mind, which is able to transcend the material reality of the body. This is magical thinking. In being taught about their own and others' 'gender identity', children learn that being born male or female and being comfortable with that material reality is boring and *passé*. In this ideology, biology and the body are treated as 'traps', from which a child can – and should – escape.

Gender ideology is a recipe for child self-harm simply on the grounds that it encourages (sometimes very) young children to see their healthy bodies as 'wrong' and sources of

¹⁹ <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/110976/pdf/>. Emphasis in underline added.

unhappiness. Subtle techniques of coercive persuasion abound across PSHE curricula, through which the child is moved to regard their ‘gender identity’ as the ultimate expression of who they are, making them different, special, and unique. PSHE teaching content tends to avoid any suggestion that boys have any characteristics in common with other boys, or that girls might share physical attributes or common experiences. Puberty is amorphous and non-sex-specific, described in terms of unpleasant ‘sproutings’ that emerge from one generic adolescent body. This not only lends force to the scientifically incorrect view that human beings are not a sexually dimorphic species but bolsters a negative and psychologically harmful view of puberty as uncomfortable, distressing and mortifying. By indoctrinating children to develop a mortal terror of puberty, the idea that it is ‘OK’ to *pause* or *block* puberty is justified. Through PSHE, the third sector can effectively provide a gateway for children to a niche market in puberty-blocking drugs and chest binders which stunt adolescent growth with innumerable medical complications. In RSE materials provided to secondary schools by Swindon Council in 2022 (The Swindon Programme), children are recommended to “alter or change physical sex characteristics in order to better express [their] inner gender identity” – through “removal of the breasts, augmentation of the chest, or alteration or reconstruction of the genitals”.²⁰ “Gender neutral terms” are to be used “when possible”.²¹ Sex-specific language in relation to body parts is abolished. The child is taught disgust at the idea of two sexes, learning to see himself or herself as beyond the binary of sex. The Swindon Programme provides links to various videos for pubescent children (at ages 12-13 years old), including a cartoon entitled *Range of Gender Identities*. In the cartoon, an exciting salad with romaine, kale, avocado, cucumber, shishito peppers and four types of cheese, sprinkled with Italian balsamic vinegar, is compared to salads in the awful bygone days when there were only two (unsavoury) ingredients: “a rock-hard wedge of iceberg lettuce and a stinky old dried-up tomato”. The cartoon then depicts a group of children explaining to an older man (presumably a grandparent) that “Alex”, for example, “doesn’t define *themselves* as boy or girl”. Grandpa asks: “What else is there?” The youth instruct the old man as to the politically correct ideological position, one child stating: “Back in your day most people understood the world in terms of *just* boys and girls. But now we know gender is more complex than that.” The old man – presented as hopelessly out of touch and ridiculous

²⁰ Swindon Borough Council Programme for RSE (2022), p.240.

²¹ Swindon Borough Council Programme for RSE (2022), p. 67.

– asks “doesn’t it just boil down to whether you have a *haw haw* (making a hole with his fingers) or a *hee hee* (pointing with his finger)?” He is once again educated by the children: “when you’re born, your sex is assigned in a medical way, but your sex listed on your birth certificate may not necessarily match your gender identity”.²² There are as many gender identities as in the tasty salad. Nobody eats the horrible kind of salad anymore. The messaging is clear: being a boy or a girl from birth is something akin to eating disgusting food. This is taught to children as ‘science’, sometimes using pagan or pseudo-religious imagery. In materials used by The Swindon Programme, “Gender Identity” is depicted as the Sun (God?). Spinning around the Sun in the “Gender Galaxy” are all the different gender identity planets: *transgender, agender, genderqueer, 3rd gender, cisgender, genderfluid, non-binary, neutrois, trans and androgenous*. In a different (much smaller galaxy), light years apart from the Gender Galaxy in space and time, is an insignificant sun in the “Assigned Sex” galaxy, around which three sad little planets spin: *male, female, intersex*. The image appears to have been taken from a third-sector organisation called Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights.²³

Teachers, pupils and parents must demonstrate allegiance to gender ideology by using unnatural and compelled forms of speech. Boys are to be called “*people with penises*”. Girls are to be called “*people who menstruate*”. “*Chest tissue*” is to be used instead of “breasts”, because “*trans and non-binary people may feel negatively towards their breasts*”. His and her pronouns are replaced with “*their*” – “whenever appropriate”.²⁴

Nothing in the Swindon Programme materials (which run to over 500 pages and are highly typical of third-sector-led PSBE educational materials) addresses the brutal fact that the mutilation of the healthy body and rejection of the healthy body does *harm*.

²²*Range of Gender Identities* is advertised at p. 135 of the Swindon RSE Programme and was produced by Advocates for Youth and Amaze.org; these are Washington-based third sector organisations in the US that use “digital media to provide young adolescents around the globe with medically accurate, age-appropriate, affirming, and honest sex education they can access directly online—regardless of where they live or what school they attend”. <https://amaze.org/what-is-amaze/>. See the full video here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i83VQIaDIQw>.

²³ Swindon Borough Council Programme for RSE (2022), p. 242.

²⁴ Swindon RSE Programme, p.67.

Nothing in any PSHE materials reviewed for this report addresses the fact that for many, many, many (most) people, gender ideology and its deranged ‘wrong body’ thesis constitutes an amoral and illegal assault on a child’s health, emotional stability and bodily integrity. For some, including this US physician and whistleblower interviewed for *City Journal* in June 2023, gender ideology strips children of their very humanity.

One of the things I’ve been thinking about is what puberty blockers do to children. This medication is called a “gonadotropin releasing hormone agonist” and it comes in the form of monthly injections or an implant. And because it simulates the activity of this hormone, it shuts down the activity of the hypothalamus. The hypothalamus is this almond-sized structure in your brain, it’s one of the most primal structures we have, and it controls all the other hormonal structures in your body—your sexual development, your emotions, your fight-or-flight response, everything. But it shouldn’t be described in such cold physiological terms because your hypothalamus is not just a hormone factory. It’s this system that allows you to stand in awe of the beauty of a sunset, or to hear the sounds of orchestral music and to stop whatever you’re doing and want to listen. And I always think that if someone were to ask me, Where is it that you would look for the divine spark in each individual? I would say that it would be somewhere “beneath the inner chamber,” which is the Greek derivation of the term hypothalamus. To shut down that system is to shut down what makes us human.²⁵

There is simply zero concern for child safeguarding in the PSHE provider sector in respect of gender ideology. If a parent or teacher tries to raise concerns (e.g. by identifying the risks that come with medically trying to change sex, or the risks of adopting an identity that might lead to an unnecessary or harmful medical pathway) they will face accusations of bigotry. If they try to launch a legal action, they will face accusations of bigotry. If they fail to use the compelled speech of gender ideology, they will face accusations of bigotry. Their jobs will be threatened. Their relationship with the children in their care will come under strain. PSHE materials make clear that *any concern* about gender ideology is ‘transphobic bullying’. The grassroots child safeguarding organization Safe Schools Alliance²⁶ has reported that third

²⁵ Christopher F. Rufo, “Thrown to the Wolves. A physician reveals the nightmare of transgender ideology in a major children’s hospital”, *City Journal* (21 June 2023), <https://www.city-journal.org/article/transgender-ideology-and-the-corruption-of-medicine>

²⁶ <https://safeschoolsallianceuk.net/who-we-are/>

sector organisations – sponsored by the national PSHE Association,²⁷ and with robust funding from the Government Equalities Office to tackle “homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in schools” – are equating safeguarding concerns with bullying in resources provided across the board: to schools, other education providers, foster care agencies, leaving care teams, children’s homes, and parents and carers.²⁸ When, in October 2020, a high court Judicial Review was brought to examine whether health clinics such as the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust could administer hormone treatments to under 16’s who identify as transgender (without parental consent), the children’s charities Barnardo’s, the NSPCC, the National Children’s Bureau and The Children’s Society released a joint statement emphasising their support for, and celebration of, “all children and young people who are trans, non-binary, gender non-conforming, or exploring their gender identity”, and the importance of listening to children and complying with their demands. Any teacher, parent or family member who asks questions or raises concerns is treated, at best, like the old man in the *Gender Identities* cartoon: i.e. hopelessly out of touch and ridiculous. At worst, they are treated like bigots, denying children agency over their own lives and driving them to suicide.

On matters of health treatment all children have the right to be listened to independently and have their wishes taken seriously – this includes children and young people who identify as trans and who may be undergoing hormone treatment therapy.

Many trans children and young people feel lonely and isolated due to a lack of support, understanding, and acceptance. Denying them agency has the potential to compound this and can put them at high risk of mental illness and emotional distress, potentially affecting their long-term future.²⁹

²⁷ <https://pshe-association.org.uk/>

²⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/lgbt-history-month-new-government-support-for-lgbt-groups>

²⁹ <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/news/our-news/joint-statement-barnardos-nsppcc-national-childrens-bureau-and-childrens-society-about>

PSHE recodifies standard safeguarding practices as forms of emotional violence towards children: in other words, bullying. Wanting a child to stay healthy in a healthy body is negatively characterised as denying children the opportunity to ‘transition’ or failing to affirm a child’s ‘independent’ decision (to reject their healthy body). In this way, PSHE contributes to driving a wedge between children and their families. It could even be regarded as one of the main objectives of PSHE as taught in Britain today.

Another example of how statutory PSHE and RSE have gone badly wrong is in the hyper-sexualisation of children, with complete disregard for whether sexually explicit materials are age appropriate, necessary or lawful. The hyper-sexualisation and political indoctrination of children are further dealt with by means of case studies in sections 5-7 of this report (below).

PSHE as Political Indoctrination

PSHE programmes rest on the basic assumption that schools are no longer places where children aspire to academic excellence in traditional subjects (as the old song has it: *history, geography, biology...*).

PSHE does not focus on practical life skills and forms of knowledge that might give children true independence, including economic and emotional self-sufficiency as adults. Instead, PSHE transforms the school into a place of uniform messaging to children that promotes certain lifestyles, behaviours, cultural attitudes, and political views over others. This is indoctrination, according to section 406(1)(b) of the Education Act 1996. Political indoctrination was defined during legal submissions made in the case of *Dimmock v Secretary of State for Education and Skills*.³⁰ Both the 1996 Act and the *Dimmock* case are key references for defining political indoctrination in *The Independent School Standards Guidance for independent schools* (2019), which states that indoctrination is to be understood as the promotion of “partisan political views”; and “the best synonym” for “partisan” is “one-sided”.

Drawing from the judgment in [Dimmock], in deciding whether the promotion of a political view is partisan, the factors that could be taken into account include:

- a. superficial treatment of the subject matter, typified by portraying factual or philosophical premises as being self-evident, with insufficient explanation and without any indication that they may be the subject of legitimate controversy*
- b. the misleading use of data; misrepresentations and half-truths*

³⁰ *Dimmock v Secretary of State for Education and Skills* (now Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families) [2007] EWHC 2288 (Admin).

c. deployment of material in such a way as to prevent pupils meaningfully testing its veracity and forming an independent understanding as to how reliable it is

d. the exaltation of protagonists and their motives coupled with the demonisation of opponents and their motives

e. whether a particular view is advocated as being the ‘right’ view which must be adopted because otherwise certain presupposed consequences follow.³¹

Political views are defined in the 2019 Government guidance as “views expressed with a political purpose”: i.e. expressed in support of actions to be taken “either directly or indirectly”:

- to further the interests of a particular political party; or
- to procure changes to the laws of this or another country; or
- to procure the reversal of government policy or of particular decisions of governmental authorities in this or another country.³²

PSHE meets many of the criteria for political indoctrination as set down in the 2019 Government guidance cited above. Providers have appointed themselves masters of *how children should collectively think*, regardless of what information children might receive outside school or what specific needs they may have as individuals. As a series of recommendations for life, PSHE is sold as an ethos, a political manifesto, and a set of guidelines for how children should understand the world – and these are imposed as necessary ‘truths’. Why has this happened?

³¹ The Independent School Standards Guidance for independent schools (April 2019), pp. 23-24. See https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/800615/Independent_School_Standards- Guidance_070519.pdf.

³² See footnote 31 above.

The history of Nazism, Maoism and Soviet Communism has taught us that power-hungry regimes are hugely assisted in expanding the jurisdiction and control of the state by politicising children at the earliest possible age and severing the child's relationship with alternative sources of authority (e.g. within the family).³³

The lessons of these histories urge a perpetual vigilance, in even the most democratic of societies. Any attempt by state or corporate institutions to inculcate loyalty to an ideology in the young must be scrutinised and called out.

If it is accepted that PSHE is an exercise in political indoctrination, then it works by inculcating in children the extremely powerful idea that they do not come to school *with an* identity, but *to learn a new identity*. Even a British Caribbean or mixed-race child who comes to school to learn that “black lives matter”, or that being black or brown is wonderful or special, is not coming to school to have their actual identity celebrated, but is in fact learning an artificial, abstract identity: *blackness* or *brownness*. The new identity is totally divorced from the child's material and historical reality. Abstractions of colour (black, brown, white) have nothing to do with the cultural complexity of each child's family, community, or faith – whether as West Indians of a certain generation, South Asians of a certain generation, or any other cultural and historical mix across the different ethnicities, religions and family generations that make up the diverse families and households populating modern Britain today.

Gender ideology is more radical still. It teaches *every child*, irrespective of race, culture or religion, a view of the human body as a cage from which one must be freed. (This is a recipe for social conflict as we explore later in the report.³⁴) Gender ideology promotes a view of the ‘inner mind’ through which the child can embrace their *new identity*. The child learns at school to *leave behind* the old body, and with it, the old identity with which they have grown up. Any sense of belonging and the cultural traditions in which they were raised is erased.

³³ See for example the online exhibition, “A is for Adolf: Teaching German Children Nazi Values”, The Wiener Holocaust Library, <https://wienerholocaustlibrary.org/exhibition/a-is-for-adolf-teaching-german-children-nazi-values-2/>; as well as Bin Xu, *Chairman Mao's Children. Generation and the Politics of Memory in China*, Cambridge University Press 2021; and Robert W. Clawson, “Political Socialization of Children in the USSR”, *Political Science Quarterly*, Oxford University Press, Vol. 88, No. 4 (December 1973), pp. 684-712.

³⁴ See section 9 below.

Gender ideology, taught as a school subject, is not unlike studying gothic literature. It introduces the child to “strange or frightening events that take place in mysterious places”. It teaches the child to accept instability as the norm (along with the anxiety that accompanies instability). The child learns to reject comfort in one’s old identity or sense of belonging. In the gothic genre, this is known as *the uncanny*.³⁵ The child is taught to focus on the human body, “and all the ways that it can be distorted or exaggerated”; in the gothic genre, this is known as *the grotesque*. The child is encouraged to accept “dread and apprehension at the possibility of something frightening” (*terror*) and to normalise feelings of “shock and repulsion when seeing the frightening thing” (*horror*).³⁶

The child comes to accept that reality is not as it seems (a classic gothic trope), through assuming performative attitudes and poses normally reserved for *adult* theatre (cabaret, burlesque, drag). Learning is – in fact – an institutionalised process of *unlearning* one’s old identity. The child is recreated as a blank slate, allowing new, controversial or unpopular ideas about the world to gain traction in the child’s mind. The child is absorbed into a *new family*.

The pedagogical approach of PSHE and the authority it hands over to the third sector have created endless golden opportunities for bad faith actors and power-hungry collectivists. Through control of PSHE, there is no need for activists to engage in some messy revolutionary seizure of state power ‘the old way’ (through armed insurrection). Young people can become means to any number of cynical political ends – without a bullet fired.

Children are not the property of the state, nor of any global governance group. They are, as a matter of objective biological fact, born into complex webs of deep, social, cultural, emotional and biological or genetic bonds that exist independently of political regimes and the whims of state policy. The idea that each individual child’s birthright is up for grabs – to be remoulded and instrumentalised in the service of a political movement or state ideology – is the legacy of a deeply discredited strand of 20th century socialist thought, which saw mass

³⁵ *Das Unheimliche* in Freud’s own German language.

³⁶ “Literary Terms: Gothic, Grotesque, and The Uncanny”, *The Master’s Review* (Blog), <https://mastersreview.com/literary-terms-gothic-grotesque-and-the-uncanny/>.

education as a chance to inculcate a socialist philosophy in children early on, while removing the paternalistic influence of irritating obstacles (such as parents).

The socialist playwright and polemicist, George Bernard Shaw, in a little known 1928 essay entitled “Children and Socialism”, opens with a somewhat hysterical diatribe against parents, describing parental rights as “old Roman rights”, rights which (Shaw hoped) state schools and other institutions would erode over time.

IN the case of young children we have gone far in our interference with the old Roman rights of parents. For nine mortal years the child is taken out of its parents' hands for most of the day, and thus made a State school child instead of a private family child. The records of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children are still sickening enough to show how necessary it is to protect children against their parents; but the bad cases are scarce, and show that it is now difficult for the worst sort of parent to evade for long the school attendance officer, the teacher, and the police.

In his essay, Shaw leaps, without any explanation, from the argument that some parents are cruel to their children – to the necessity of imposing socialism (what Shaw calls “the social creed”) upon *all* children through education.

The social creed must be imposed on us when we are children; for it is like riding, or reading music at sight: it can never become a second nature to those who try to learn it as adults; and the social creed, to be really effective, must be a second nature to us. It is quite easy to give people a second nature, however unnatural, if you catch them early enough. There is no belief, however grotesque and even villainous, that cannot be made a part of human nature if it is inculcated in childhood and not contradicted in the child's hearing.³⁷

However, even for state socialists this approach is impractical because families persist in spite of any prevailing anti-family ideology or political *Zeitgeist*. This, sooner or later, even

³⁷ George Bernard Shaw, “Socialism and Children” (1928), published in *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism, Capitalism, Sovietism and Fascism*, Pelican Books, 1937.

the most ardent social engineer must concede. Even Stalin recognised the error of adopting a state collectivisation policy in respect of Soviet children. By 1936, according to historian Wendy Goldman, “social experimentation had given way to increasingly conservative solutions aimed at strengthening family ties”.³⁸ Socialist attempts to abolish the family failed not only in Soviet Russia, but also in 1960s Cuba under Castro once it became apparent that children and society suffer under totalitarian statist models of ‘welfare’ or ‘care’. Policies which seek to deprive a child of the financial, practical, domestic and emotional supports which are provided by families (at little or no cost to the state) – and policies which seek to undermine the family with political rhetoric – always result in bankrupt institutions, supposedly funded by the state (with the money always mysteriously syphoned off elsewhere), abandoning children of the most vulnerable kind to wolves in sheep’s clothing, whilst parents who wish to protect their children are left voiceless, marginalised and utterly powerless. One anonymised parent, whose daughter with Autism Spectrum Disorder left the family home after being encouraged to ‘become a boy’ and adopt different pronouns by her school (without the knowledge or consent of the mother and against the recommendations of a therapist specialist in ASD), has stated that she (the mother) developed signs of trauma after her daughter moved away, including lack of sleep, depression, and suicidal thoughts.

I feel like my daughter is dead, but I don’t know where her grave is.

The wolf in sheep’s clothing operates through the charity – or third sector, providing schools with scripts from which young people are indoctrinated in PSHE mindsets. As charities, third sector groups claim to be working towards the “advancement of education” or “the advancement of health” or “the advancement of human rights” or “equality and diversity”³⁹, operating with the blessing of wider membership associations such as the PSHE Association or Government bodies (such as the Equalities Office or the Department for Education). Commercial enterprises profit exponentially from selling PSHE materials to schools, while at the same time being supported by funding from the unassuming taxpayer (usually on the back

³⁸ Wendy Goldman - Women, *The State & Revolution. Soviet Family Police & Social Life, 1917-1936*, Cambridge University Press 2010, p.2.

³⁹ See section 3(1)(b), (d) and (h) of the Charities Act 2011.

of some Government policy initiative or action plan aimed at improving lives for minorities).⁴⁰

The PSHE industry is not subject to any regulation or scrutiny. The commercial interests of third sector groups that pose as charities allow such groups to rely on commercial secrecy protections in law, thereby denying parents and third parties access to materials used in PSHE lessons. In one example, well documented in the UK media, a mother who asked to see PSHE lesson content, which had been taught to her 15-year-old daughter, was told she could neither access the lesson plan and accompanying materials, nor know the identity of the provider; nor could she be informed of who had taught her daughter the lesson. Among other things, the 15-year-old had reported to her mother that she had been taught that *heteronormativity* was not a good thing (i.e. the expectation that sexual relations between men and women are the norm), and that she should learn to embrace *sex positivity* (i.e. not display negative attitudes to any manifestation of sexual behaviour on the part of others). The parent looked up the provider's website, only to find it contained live links to a private company linked to one of the individual members of the provider association – a website advertising sex toys, pornography and anal masturbation techniques. Attempts by the parent to raise the case with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and the Department for Education were met with a uniform response. Parents wishing to view PSHE materials must agree to specific restrictions: limited and supervised viewing of the materials *on school premises* and for a brief period only. The parent is effectively being forced to sign a non-disclosure agreement and to acknowledge the supremacy of school and provider over parental authority. This system prevents materials from being entered into a formal complaint hearing, thus bypassing the system of correction for state funded mistakes.⁴¹

Transparency and accountability regarding teaching content is swiftly becoming a thing of the past. In PSHE/RSE, physical textbooks, as older generations once knew them, are retreating from use – replaced by PowerPoint slides and handouts that rarely come within parental purview. Information about what a child is learning in PSHE lessons, and from

⁴⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lgbt-action-plan-2018-improving-the-lives-of-lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender-people>

⁴¹ For an account of this case and to view links to the media coverage it generated, see the Twitter handle, No Secret Lesson Plans in UK Schools @NoSecretLessons
<https://twitter.com/NoSecretLessons/status/1584899747852259328?cxt=HHwWgMC4tY372P4rAAAA>

whom, has become digitally controlled and protected data, creating a highly secretive educational climate. Little, save the child's recollections of what he or she is willing to share, is ever brought into the home. The worlds of home and school life have become parallel universes: "non-overlapping *magisteria*".⁴²

The French postmodern philosopher, Michel Foucault, described the objective of all pedagogy as "the specific sexuality of children".⁴³ Possessed of an intense libidinal interest in children's sexuality, Foucault knew of what he wrote when he argued that it is through discussions with children about sexuality and the body that adults can best hope to control a child's understanding of the world, including control of how children learn to understand and speak about their most intimate experiences, and to what identities, behaviours, lifestyles and opinions they should aspire.

The third sector relentlessly engages younger and younger children in deeper and deeper conversations about sex, sexuality, politics, and the body. Through these conversations, children are taught to unlearn who they are; reject their bodies, families, and the culture into which they were born; and embrace new identities, fantasies, which are literally 'sold' to them at school. Words like *boy, girl, male, female, family, mother, father, parent*, including cultural designations for members of the extended family, such as *chachi* or *maasi* ('aunty' in Hindi) or *khāl* (an 'uncle' in Arabic, which can mean also the uncle of one's parent and is also a term of endearment for any male in the family or community) – are increasingly alien and inappropriate in a school PSHE setting, whereas trusted adults engaging children in sexual fantasy, erotic games, escapism, nihilism, meaningless language, unpleasant emotions (revulsion, despair, confusion, alienation, terror, and horror) becomes an increasingly hygienic, normal and appropriate phenomenon in a classroom setting.

With each passing year, the third sector churns out instructions to schools to play bizarre sexual games with children during PSHE lessons. The games use traditionally child-friendly narrative techniques: simple language, bright colours, colouring books, word searches, cartoons. Through these techniques, the classroom is transformed into a surrogate 'family

⁴² "Non-overlapping *magisteria*" is the phrase coined by palaeontologist Stephen Jay Gould to express the view that science and religion represent different domains that cannot be approached using the same method or similar methods.

⁴³ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (Volume 1) pub. 1978, Vintage Books edition 1990, p. 116.

space', in which privacy is effectively abolished and sexual (and other) boundaries are erased. This kind of pedagogy, which might be named 'deadly play', starts at ever younger and younger ages. Children who are practically toddlers are increasingly encouraged to indulge in sexual experiments with their bodies and their identities. Seemingly joyous and frivolous, deadly play initiates children into a dangerous (brave new) world, in which the real and the familiar must be rejected in favour of the new 'gender identity', which sets out to expressly deny material reality. The child's growing body and natal sex, its home life, and familial identity – are targeted much as an enemy is targeted in a war zone: as hostile forces to be defeated. The child is led to believe that he or she is not really living, but always playing a game. And children are taught that it is they who make the decisions at each stage of the game (when this could not be further from the truth).

Case Study: School X

Take the following deadly game taken from a set of resources used by a primary school in East Anglia. This particular game is designed for Year 1 pupils (aged 5-6 years). The game is provided by an entity named *Educator Solutions* and the corresponding lesson plan and other resources are accompanied by the following disclaimer in small print:

*For use in purchasing school only.
Not to be copied or otherwise distributed.*

The game invites teachers to play ‘Simon Says’ with the children, in which children are asked to do an action that corresponds with a spoken body part. If the teacher calls out “Toes!”, the children should touch their toes. “Arms!”, and the children should reach for the stars. “Penis!” or “Vulva!”, and the children should spin on the spot (if they have a penis or a vulva). Children are then asked, by way of concluding the game, to tell the teacher whether they think the penis is a boy’s private part or the vulva is a girl’s body part.

With the game now afoot, these very young tots can progress, as in Huxley’s dystopian novel *Brave New World* – from lessons in ‘erotic play’ to ‘class consciousness’.

In another game, children are given a bunting flag and are asked to use the flag to express their “*unique differences*” (again, this is Year 1 of primary school). They must draw symbols of their special and unique identity on the flag. The seemingly harmless message of this deadly game is to have the children celebrate difference, but in the current climate of British identity politics, the game’s real message could not be clearer – and it is twofold:

- (i) The child’s identity is something “unique”, which the child fashions for itself independently of any family or home influences.
- (ii) The child’s identity is expressed as an adult *political* identity, via a banner or a flag.

On go the games. On and on. At 6-7 years old (Year 2), the children are learning to play “comfortable” versus “uncomfortable”, learning to discuss types of physical touching and contact and “how to respond”. Again, the children are asked to adorn a celebratory cup with decorations to “reaffirm how brilliant their special uniqueness is”. They are taught (aged 6) that “being different” is a “decision” as part of an activity entitled “Deciding to be different”. If a little girl “decides” she doesn’t like having long hair, but is scared to ask the hairdressers to cut it for fear of being teased for looking like a boy, she should understand that nobody tells 6-year olds what to do.

The child is in control of every part of their body – from hair to toe. There are no parents in these fantasy salons, where 6-year olds make hair appointments and negotiate hairstyles with professional hairdressers. No parents are even expected to accompany the child to get her hair cut. Like the London child tourist attraction, *Kidzania*, PSHE sets up a parallel universe in which children exist in isolation as autonomous, sovereign beings, exercising agency and choice in exactly the same way as adults.⁴⁴ The language of PSHE classes is unapologetically seductive: “there has never been and will never be” a person as “special and unique” as you.

PSHE acknowledges no protective boundaries around the child, no parent’s watchful eye is admitted. It is the child and the child alone who is arbiter of who may enter his or her “safe space” and who may access his or her body.

Year 2s learn about different types of touching: some touching feels “nice depending on who is doing it” and “where on your body you are being touched”. Some touching is “not safe”. “[H]ow comfortable we feel to be touched depends on the mood we are in”. Year 2s (aged 6-7 years) are instructed to learn “the working agreement”, according to which a child can say “no” to “any type of touching”.

In front of a “naked child picture”, children barely past toddling are asked to watch their teacher move their hand over the image of the naked child, and hold up red or green hand signs to indicate whether they would be comfortable for a parent, stranger, teacher, or friend

⁴⁴ *Kidzania* is a fantasy theme park for children in London, a scaled city in which “kids rule” and get to take on the social roles of adults, having “the freedom to be whoever they want” <https://kidzania.co.uk/>

to touch that part of the body. The child is being asked to let an adult teacher know that he or she is comfortable being touched by means of a code. Grooming.

At 7-8 years (Year 3), children are taught “self-esteem”, which includes giving themselves “positive self-talk”, and awarding themselves complimentary certificates, stating “I am special because...”. They do this as part of a so-called “paperchain of aspiration”. They make pledges to be “tolerant” and “compassionate” to those with whom they have a relationship (at 7 years old). They are introduced to the human body with three words: “penis”, “vulva” and “hygiene” – with teachers instructed to be mindful of those children who are “intersex”, “gender questioning”, and “transgender” (at 7-8 years).

Children are reminded that their little bodies are “brilliantly unique”. They are asked to look at each other’s noses to compare and contrast them, after which the teacher reads out a series of statements, to which children must stand and move places if the statement is true for them. “I have a nose!” “I have a penis!” “I have a vulva!” “I am tall!” “I have two ears!”.

In the deadly game “Teacher Says”, children are, upon instruction, to beat their chests like a gorilla, rub their tummies as if they are hungry, and “stand up if you have a penis or a vulva”.

In lessons on “gender”, children are supposed to explore whether they truly feel like a boy or a girl. Some people, the children are told, are “*born* like a boy (with a penis)”, but “*feel* like a girl”; others are “*born* like a girl (with a vulva)”, but “*feel* like a boy”. Others still “*don’t feel like a girl or a boy*”.

The deadly gibberish comes with signposting instructions, so that children can be directed to specific adults in the school to discuss gender identity and ask questions about it if they are confused (!).

The lesson plans at no point mention parents as sources of information, clarification or support. In any case, since the lesson content is protected by commercial secrecy clauses, no parents would be able to access them. The assumption is that PSHE deals with subjects that are to be kept secret from parents. Ironically and sinisterly, in a safeguarding lesson plan on “secrets” provided to Year 3s, a secret is defined negatively (in contrast to “a surprise”) as “*something that is not meant to be shared*”.

“Touching” returns for a fresh season in Year 3, and the children are asked to learn about various sensations, achieved by physically touching different substances such as sand, jelly, slime, feathers, and washing-up liquid. They are asked to lay out body parts they are happy for others to touch and those they are not happy to be touched. Crucially, touching is repeatedly reinforced as only wrong if it does not make the child feel comfortable, happy or good about themselves.

...even if someone has touched you before and you have been comfortable for them to, if you become uncomfortable it is important that you tell them you do not want them to touch you this time

A 6-year-old child is responsible for deciding which adults may touch him – and how they touch him.

Children have to explain to their classmates and to their teacher the difference between

*“uncomfortable touch”,
“uncomfortable but safe touch”, and
“uncomfortable and unsafe touch”.*

They are 7 years old.

In Year 4 (8-9 years old), the idea that it is the uncomfortable touch that is the indicator of a problem surfaces again through a practical exercise called “Touching hands”, in which the children learn to discern discomfort from comfortable touch. They are asked to describe the sensation of discomfort through an exercise that involves their being forced to write with their non-dominant hand. Comfortable touching is implicitly OK.

The common tactic evident across the age groups for PSHE, as taught at School X, is to lump commonplace questions or statements in amongst shocking, age-inappropriate or highly contentious questions or statements.⁴⁵ For example, Year 4s will be asked a question about

⁴⁵ By ‘shocking’, ‘age-inappropriate’ or ‘highly contentious’ is meant from the perspective of the majority.

their favourite colour, followed by a question asking them what their gender is, or what is their “external identity”, as opposed to their “internal identity”. The casual tossing in of a colour question among the gender identity questions serves to normalise the latter. As a tactic, it enables a seemingly frank and honest discussion about difference, using the analogy of colour. That there are many beautiful colours on a spectrum allows the conversation to merge seamlessly into how many beautiful genders there are, introducing the concept of ‘internal identity’ with the children.

This tactic is ubiquitous in PSHE materials and is no doubt one explanation for why schools have become hotbeds of social contagion, with more and more adolescents seeking to reject the external fact of puberty, along with the natural emergence of the adult birth sex that accompanies puberty, choosing instead to embrace fantasy internal identities as ‘trans’ or ‘non-binary’.⁴⁶

Often it is the most vulnerable adolescents that fall prey to the subliminal message: *your body is wrong*. Large numbers of young people (in particular girls) who are currently identifying out of their natal sex and seeking to ‘transition’ suffer from significant comorbid mental health disorders or have neurocognitive difficulties such as ADHD or Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), or have a history of trauma.⁴⁷ As the safeguarding organisation *TransgenderTrend* has reported, 76% of referees to The Tavistock & Portman Gender Identity Service (GIDS) are adolescent girls, with 48% having been diagnosed of, or showing traits of Autism.⁴⁸ Many adolescents who are vulnerable to the seductions of transgenderism will also be same-sex attracted, since gender identity is used as a pseudo-scientific and pseudo-pedagogical diagnostic tool to teach children that any gender-non conforming behaviour (such as a girl liking ‘boy things’ and vice versa) is an indicator of being born in the ‘wrong’ body.

⁴⁶ As reported by Sanchez Manning in the *Daily Mail* in April 2022, nearly one in every 15 pupils at a leading secondary school identifies as trans or non-binary, see <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10746771/Nearly-one-15-pupils-leading-secondary-school-identify-trans-non-binary.html>.

⁴⁷ Stephen B. Levine, E. Abbruzzese & Julia W. Mason (2022) Reconsidering Informed Consent for Trans-Identified Children, Adolescents, and Young Adults, *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 48:7, 706-727, DOI: [10.1080/0092623X.2022.2046221](https://doi.org/10.1080/0092623X.2022.2046221)

⁴⁸ “Autism and Gender Identity”, *TransgenderTrend*, <https://www.transgendertrend.com/autism-gender-identity-introduction/#sdfootnote1sym>

Being ‘born in the wrong body’ implies that the two sexes are not biological and material realities. Instead, sex is redefined using outdated gender stereotypes, such as ‘girls play with dolls’ (not boys) and ‘boys play football’ (not girls). Teaching ‘wrong body’ ideology is therefore not only a form of political indoctrination but is both factually incorrect and straightforwardly sexist: girls frequently excel at football; many boys enjoy playing with dolls. In reality, there is a great deal of flexibility and personal choice involved in determining what sort of activities a boy or a girl might enjoy. As *TransgenderTrend* has pointed out, so-called gender non-conforming behaviour in young children is an indicator of precisely nothing, although in *some* cases, it may be predictive of a homosexual identity later in life.⁴⁹

Teaching ‘wrong body’ ideology is the most radical and harmful educational policy the world may have ever witnessed. And this idea comes packaged among a plethora of suggestions that puberty is oppressive. Year 4s at School X are told about erections that are “unwanted”; breast growth that is “painful”, “lumpy”, and “uncomfortable”. Skin is spotty. Vaginas emit sticky discharge. Hair grows under arms and in other unexpected places and the Adam’s apple “sticks out”. Weight gain and periods are added to list upon list of physical changes which children are asked to select for as “the hardest physical change to cope with”. Teen relationships are labelled potentially “unhealthy”, “unsafe” or “difficult to manage”. Every peer is potentially being bullied or bullying another. Bullying is ubiquitous. “Boy” and “girl” private body parts are starting points for discussion about “intersex” and “transgender” conditions, whereby children learn that some people are both boys and girls, neither boys nor girls, or who have boy parts but are in fact girls and vice versa. Speaking to “someone” about these issues is always with reference to a “trusted adult” rather than a parent. The parent on the PSHE landscape is an abstract figure who, having been excluded from the PSHE classroom, exists only as a shadowy figure from the past, to be forgotten or ignored as the Reborn Child embraces the future Brave New World.

⁴⁹ “Is Your Child Transgender, Gay, or Neither?” *TransgenderTrend*, <https://www.transgendertrend.com/child-transgender-gay-neither/>

*Hyper-sexualisation
and
Social Transition*

Hyper-sexualisation

At the same time as children are taught to be alienated from their bodies under PSHE regimes of instruction, we are also witnessing a focus – bordering on obsession – with child masturbation, using ‘teaching materials’ that are increasingly graphic and unsettling. The Swindon Programme contains multiple references to masturbation as a set of diverse practices, to be *taught* to children (often of unspecified age groups), and which are always ‘OK’.

In a video titled “Females and Masturbation”, produced by the US third sector group Amaze Org (whose resources are frequently cited in The Swindon Programme), cartoon children are depicted sexually stimulating themselves to the accompanying instructions: “there are no wrong or right ways to masturbate”; and “no matter what rumours you may have heard there are no negative effects from masturbation”.

If a person finds they are masturbating so frequently that it gets in the way of their normal daily routine, they should talk to a trusted adult.

In one scenario from the video, children are shown a child from the neck up seeming to masturbate (from the discernible movements of her only partly visible arms and from the expressions of arousal on her face), but as the camera pulls back to show the full picture, the child is in fact stroking a dog.⁵⁰ A girl is shown masturbating using gestures that imply she has a penis.

In School X (a primary school), we saw in the resources summarised in the previous section a fixation with ‘touching’. Touching is a subjective action that the child will, as sole decision

⁵⁰ The Swindon Programme, p. 468. Video: “Females and Masturbation”, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Q7VzPaFOJw>

maker in the scenario, approve or disapprove based on whether the child decides the touching is 'comfortable'. Touching is subjective; it relates to an internal state of mind. Are you, the child, comfortable or uncomfortable with the touching? Comfort is indistinguishable from sexual arousal. Likewise, uncomfortable touching is always presented within an implicit sexual narrative. There is no non-sexual context for regular touching. There is no non-sexual intimate care shown to the child. No parent touching a child as part of routine activities such as bathing or reassuring a child when putting him or her to bed. Comfortable and uncomfortable touching are simply varieties of sexual sensation and encounter. Comfortable touching is good (sex). Uncomfortable touching is bad (sex). So the following activities *could* be taught as bad touching to a child: a child being held by her mother or father in a way the child doesn't like; a child's hand, for example, being firmly grasped when crossing a road; lifting a reluctant child into a bath they do not want; changing a child's underclothes when soiled. Through PSHE, the child is empowered to draw the line between what is bad and good, while at the same time taught confusion over the difference between sensation, touching, intimacy, and arousal. Confusion, in other words, between sexual touching and all touching.

As soon as the child reaches secondary school, the theme of 'touching' is replaced immediately with that of 'masturbation'. Touching becomes a means of obtaining sexual pleasure whilst alone, or in the company of *other masturbators*, who are also touching themselves.

The child is told repeatedly that as a sovereign individual, masturbatory sexual pleasure is yet another game ("playing with yourself").⁵¹ The child has complete control over the game as the sole player. Just as gender ideology teaches the benefits of escaping from the material, sexed body, *Relationships* and Sex Education teaches the benefits of sex without any relationships whatever: solitary sex games.

In a recent press expose in the *Daily Mail* of materials used in multiple secondary schools up and down the country, even pre-pubescent children are being taught that "pleasurable sensations" may be achieved by touching one's own genitals, and that babies as young as 1 yr

⁵¹ In the Swindon Programme video, "Females and Masturbation", the image presented is of a child playing chess with herself.

old do this. Girls of 12 years are invited to pinch and stroke their clitorises to orgasm. Children of both sexes are encouraged to try masturbation if they have not already done so. Where there is an implied sexual exchange between two persons in the form of oral, vaginal or anal sex, it is presented, not as an exchange between two persons, but rather as a means by which the individual seeks or receives pleasure whilst in the company of another (“mutual masturbation”).⁵²

Putting to one side the question of age inappropriateness, more perplexing questions arise. Why does PSHE place such emphasis on masturbation in particular? And why should masturbation be taught in school in any event?

The *Daily Mail* article reveals resources from a lesson plan for children aged nine, in which a boy and a girl are depicted masturbating separately: the boy is in the middle of ejaculating; the girl is touching herself whilst closing her eyes and opening her mouth. The charities cited as “providers” of these resources are The Sex Education Forum⁵³, Brook⁵⁴, and Coram Life Education.⁵⁵ Defending the PSHE materials described in the article, two teachers were approached by the *Daily Mail*, and they insisted that techniques of masturbation were providing children with the necessary support to “navigate relationships safely and empower them to protect themselves against potential abuse”; and that schools “have a role outside of family and religious groups” to teach sex and relationships “informed by science”.

There is nothing scientific about rubbing one’s clitoris. Nor is there any inherent science in the following statement (taken from materials directly pictured in the article):

People of all ages masturbate and its ok for anyone to do or not do at any point in their life.

The idea that such statements are “informed by science” is absurd. It provides no explanation as to why children should be *taught to masturbate* by adult teachers – or indeed by anyone

⁵² <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12189041/Twelve-year-olds-taught-anal-sex-school-nine-year-olds-told-masturbate.html>

⁵³ <https://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/>

⁵⁴ <https://www.brook.org.uk/>

⁵⁵ <https://www.coramlifeeducation.org.uk/scarf>

else (inside or outside the family). Nor is it clear how schools teaching masturbation as a set of techniques (sometimes to the very young) protects them from abuse.

PSHE undoubtedly hyper-sexualises kids, but it is worse than that. Teaching a child to masturbate could meet the criminal threshold of child sex abuse.⁵⁶ But PSHE masks the criminal implications of teaching explicit sexual content to children beneath a veneer of medically respectable scientific language. Just as some nineteenth-century doctors used their professional expertise and scientific authority to permit themselves to ‘treat’ so-called ‘hysterical’ women by masturbating them to orgasm, so modern PSHE teaching content adopts a voice of forensic medical authority to ‘explain’ graphic and extreme sex acts to children in the manner of a ‘how to’ scientific manual.

In The Swindon Programme, for example, the anus is described, in matter of fact terms, as both a biological body part (an opening to the rectum; a canal that connects to the bowels; the faecal exit route) and “*an area that has many nerve endings*” and, for women, “the perineum [...] *can increase sexual arousal*”.⁵⁷ Anal sex and oral sex involving the anus is just another sexual activity. Like any casual snack, it is listed on a “menu”. Risks to young people of infection from oral/anal sex are dealt with by means of recommendations to use condoms or dental dams which are *flavoured*.⁵⁸ In respect of penetration, there is no reference to any risk of anal or vaginal tearing. The only reference to “tearing” of any kind in the 500+ page document is to the risk of accidentally “tearing” a condom with your fingernails when inebriated!⁵⁹ Detailed instructions are provided on how to make one’s own dental “dam” out of a flavoured condom to “prevent the spread of STIs during oral sex” when “licking” the vulva or anus, concluding cheerfully with “*And that’s it! you now have a highly effective dental dam*”.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ See section 8 below.

⁵⁷ The Swindon Programme, p. 440.

⁵⁸ At p. 427 of The Swindon Programme, sex is presented as options “on the menu”, including “mutual masturbation” and “oral sex with a flavoured condom or dam”.

⁵⁹ The Swindon Programme, p. 159.

⁶⁰ The Swindon Programme, p. 306.

PSHE teaches all children to view sex – including masturbation and any sexual interaction with others – as a series of abstract acts in isolation. Sex acts are devoid of social context. There is no wariness of oral sex or anal sex, other than regarding the risk of infection to the participants. No regard for the fact that oral and anal sex, in history and across many cultures, are acts which communicate a sexual-social hierarchy: the submissive giver of blow jobs or the passive receiver of anal penetration may be perceived (before or after the act) as degraded by it. In some circumstances, a person's youth or lower social status (for example a young person in social care) might be assumed to be incapable of objecting to such submissive acts where a person with authority is concerned. These issues are complex and all sexual exchange raises complex moral and social questions that are also highly culturally contextual. Of course, every young person will have to navigate the adult sexual world at some point and there is no point pretending there is a perfect way for this to happen. But for all its obsession with diversity and the unique differences that make each child special, PSHE glosses over the simple fact that each child will come to the adult sexual world *by their own route*. In PSHE, sex is rolled out to all children in precisely the same manner and no sex act is problematic or wrong, *unless the child has not consented*. As we have seen, each child is taught that he or she takes the executive decision on what feels comfortable versus uncomfortable at a younger and younger age – nowadays before children can possibly or fully comprehend the enormity of what is being asked of them.

In PSHE world, sex acts are presented uniformly to young people as delicacies up for grabs on a tasty menu. The unspoken contract of PSHE lessons is that the young person will want to try all of them. This is the underlying pedagogy which is promoted to all young people, regardless of the individual young person's background, personality, proclivity and inclinations; regardless of whether he or she understands the implications of entering into a particular sex act; regardless of whether the young person is able to experience sexual arousal or sexual gratification from the sex act; or whether he or she *should be* experimenting in this way (in the circumstances); regardless of whether he or she is mature enough to navigate such an experience without negative psychological and physical consequences.

What is more, and this is rarely raised in the discussions about PSHE, there is no place in PSHE for the introverted child, the gentle child, or the non-precocious child. There is no expectation that some young people will grow into adults who will reject sexual promiscuity and any attendant risky behaviours and attitudes. The child 'not yet ready' is forced to look at

slides about masturbation. The child who may never want to sexually experiment, and is not prone to it, learns to view his or her bodily orifices as sensitive points of pleasure and potential areas of penetration. As this happens, avenues of possibility for a different life well lived are radically closed off – forever. Whether PSHE providers like it or not, there are persons for whom masturbation, oral sex, anal sex, sex toys, promiscuity, fetish culture, the consumption of pornography, the practice of autogynophilia, or indulgence in paraphilias and sexual transgression are not obvious, desirable or valid lifestyle choices. There are persons for whom sexual arousal and gratification will never take priority over other aspects of their life and human relationships. There are children who *will* benefit from slow sexual development, and whose relationships with their family and with the world *will* benefit from the child’s prolonged sexual innocence. Teaching sexual precocity to all and any age group as if it were a norm and a given is akin to forcing children to adopt the aggressive pursuit of sexual pleasure as though all children are to become streetwise child sex workers. This is done with no regard for a child’s personal circumstances and needs and is sexual abuse. It has and will continue to psychologically damage many children (and their families) for life.

In the dystopian future of his novel, *Brave New World*, Aldous Huxley depicts a surveillance state that teaches children to engage in “erotic play”. For Huxley, this kind of pedagogy was a way to purge the young mind of his or her own identity, as part of a broader revolutionary transformation. The revolution depicted in *Brave New World* is not one of economic relations (as Marx taught), but a revolution in the “souls *and flesh* of human beings”. In the revolutionary society, children’s bodies become “common sexual property”. Huxley saw the promulgation of ideas about child sexuality as a scheme of state control, “enabling government managers to assign any given individual to his or her proper place in the social and economic hierarchy”. Presented as individual freedom (and Huxley argued that sexual freedom is always promoted as economic and political freedom diminishes), humans are moulded and rendered suggestible through “infant conditioning”, which is at the same time always a sexual conditioning – in the form of “charming” and “rudimentary” sexual games.⁶¹

⁶¹ Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*, Vintage 2014, pp. xlv, xlviii, xlix.

Social Transition

PSHE teaching content overwhelmingly promotes the myth that one can be ‘born in the wrong body’. This myth encourages healthy children to reject puberty as physically and mentally distressing and serves a lucrative medical industry specialising in ‘wrong body’ hormonal treatments and surgery. In Britain, the most notorious provider of such treatments is the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust’s *Gender Identity Development Service* (GIDS), “for children and young people, and their families, who experience difficulties in the development of their gender identity”.⁶² The ‘pausing’ of puberty through the use of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones is justified on the grounds that it gives children ‘time to think’, whilst giving the distressed child ‘relief’ from the natural maturation process. In practice, what such hormonal treatments do is lock children into a damaging psychological state of self-infantilisation and reality denial, with no other recourse but to continue on a medical pathway premised on the need for the child to reject entirely their body, their birth sex and the identity they had ‘before transitioning’. There are objective horrors that come with a child taking a social and/or medical pathway to gender transition. The removal of a boy’s penis for example. Call it what you will. Or the method of ‘phalloplasty’: the creation of a ‘neophallus’, involving “grafting the arm for skin, fat, nerves, arteries and veins then wrapping it round a tube to construct a pseudo-penis”, with often reported ‘side-effects’ such as pain, bleeding and tissue damage, “as well as disfigured and non-functional phalluses”.⁶³ Call *that* what you will. In UK criminal law it is called female genital mutilation and under section 1(1) of the FGM Act 2003, “It is a criminal offence to “excise, infibulate or otherwise mutilate” the whole or any part of a girl's labia majora, labia minora or clitoris.”⁶⁴

PSHE contributes to hubris among gender identity development surgeons and other medical professionals who believe they hold powers above the social consensus and above the law – including the halting of puberty and the changing of natural bodily functions into their

⁶² <https://tavistockandportman.nhs.uk/care-and-treatment/our-clinical-services/gender-identity-development-service-gids/>

⁶³ Madeleine Kearns, “The grim reality of gender reassignment”, *The Spectator* (13 November 2021), <https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/the-grim-reality-of-gender-reassignment/>

⁶⁴ <https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/female-genital-mutilation>

opposite. Such hubris should be regarded as an easy pathway, not to individual child liberation, but towards what must, in due course, be regarded as crimes against humanity.

The story of GIDS has come under a great deal of public scrutiny, including the superb expose entitled *Time to Think* by Hannah Barnes, in which she chronicles the medical scandals involving children that have resulted from GIDS' prioritisation of political ideology over ethical clinical practice.⁶⁵ Through such exposes, which are currently hitting the headlines of the British press on an almost daily basis, it is becoming clear to the general public that the medical gender transitioning of children is inherently harmful. It can therefore only be concluded that if PSHE is a vehicle through which medical transition is promoted, then PSHE must be inherently harmful as well – on the most basic of child safeguarding principles. As the United States Holocaust Encyclopaedia entry on the Nazi physician, Joseph Mengele, states, it is important to remember that Nazi medical experiments on human subjects were conducted “within the norms of German science under the Nazi regime”, and that Mengele’s crimes “represent the extreme danger posed by science when it is conducted in the service of an ideology that denies the rights, dignity, and even humanity of certain groups of people”.⁶⁶

Children are a group of people whose rights, dignity and humanity are being denied under the gender regime. No apology is made here for the comparison with Nazi medicine.

That said, while the medical risks of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones and/or surgery have been well highlighted, little is said about non-medical *social transition practices*, such as ‘social affirmation’ of a child’s new gender identity; or, in the case of girls, chest binding to prevent the development of healthy breasts.

Social transitioning practices are often considered innocuous or harmless, since they seem no different from the kind of personal experimentation with appearance and identity that we expect from healthy adolescents (such as dying one’s hair, getting a piercing, or listening to subcultural genres of music). These practices are assumed to be another world away from

⁶⁵ Hannah Barnes, *Time to Think: The Inside Story of the Collapse of the Tavistock's Gender Service for Children*, Swift Press 2023.

⁶⁶ <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/josef-mengele>

taking medical, physiologic or hormone treatments to alter the physical body. But what is now being labelled *social transition* is far from harmless.⁶⁷ Within the framework of gender ideology, as promoted in PSHE lessons, a change of hairstyle, name, pronoun or dress code has become something historically unprecedented: it has become the child's *alter ego*. The child is initiated through rituals of social transition into a new gender identity which comes at the expense of everything which came before. The old name bestowed upon a child by their parents, for example, becomes – chillingly – a *dead name*.

Social transition and gender affirmation “may appear harmless”, writes the group *TransgenderTrend*, and may be welcomed as “a beneficial approach that can relieve gender dysphoria symptoms in children”.

*However, it is currently unclear what the long-term psychological effects will be for children who undergo social transitions for some or all of their childhood and how this impacts on the development of their sense of self.*⁶⁸

Social transition is the outcome – in part – of the PSHE mindset which has become entrenched in British schools, and which encourages dissociative disorders in children under the banner of promoting each child's special uniqueness.

The child learns to reject his or her material body and embrace alienation. He or she adopts a stance of aloofness from others and the surrounding world. He or she forgets key information required in order to properly organise or structure reality and create meaning. He or she normalises feelings of uncertainty and confusion as natural symptoms that come with being trapped in ‘the wrong body’. He or she may even politicise those symptoms as evidence of oppression in a discriminatory society that has not yet learned to accept the ‘truth’ that they are transgender or non-binary. And because it is simply not possible to change sex, the child's dissociative disorder will cause them to experience multiple distinct identities, which, in some cases, may result in their exhibiting an inability to feel or express physical pain.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ “Gender Affirmation and Social Transition”, *TransgenderTrend*, <https://www.transgendertrend.com/social-transition-and-chest-binding/>

⁶⁸ “Gender Affirmation and Social Transition”.

⁶⁹ <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/dissociative-disorders/>

The promotion of social transition is both trauma-inducing and extremely likely to exacerbate any existing symptoms of post-traumatic stress in a child. Equally vulnerable are children with comorbid mental health disorders and neurocognitive difficulties, whose conditions and effective treatments for those conditions may be disregarded in the hunt for a child's 'authentic' gender identity. Young people who have been bullied or abused, who are depressed or who are prone to self-harm (through practices such as cutting, anorexia, and binge eating), or who have developed online addictions (such as gaming, gambling, and consuming or participating in pornography) are vulnerable to developing dissociative disorders. By encouraging them to socially transition, PSHE is contributing to unhappy children's already low self-esteem, as well as undermining efforts by concerned parents, teachers, or friends to recognise and address existing problems.

Cat Gate

On 19th June 2023, at the time this document was being prepared for publication, the British press caught wind of a story breaking on social media (*TikTok*), which then proceeded to make the headlines.⁷⁰

A 13-year old (Year 8) attending a secondary school (Rye College) in East Sussex had apparently informed her teachers and peers that she identified as, and therefore was, a cat. It is not clear that this actually happened. But if it did, some of you might be thinking, it is hardly surprising. A child's insistence that he or she is no longer human is not an implausible outcome in an educational climate informed by the radical philosophy of most PSHE teaching. PSHE divorces children's minds from their bodies and prioritises abstract physical sex acts over social and interactive human relationships. Why, then, should a child not reject his or her own species and identify as a cat?

Whether or not the girl in question did, or did not, aspire to become a cat – that is not strictly what grabbed the media headlines in this case. Rather, it was the teacher's response to two

⁷⁰ <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12211691/EXCLUSIVE-Mother-Year-8-pupil-scolded-gender-proud-her.html>

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/teacher-cat-despicable-b2361573.html>

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1782821/Mum-school-girl-identify-cat-kangaroo-comment>

<https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/teacher-despicable-student-classmate-cat-mum-hit-back/>

<https://www.theweek.co.uk/news/education/961351/the-cat-self-identity-row-gripping-an-east-sussex-school>

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/uk-world-news/teen-girl-who-identifies-cat-27810580>

<https://www.skynews.com.au/opinion/paul-murray/student-praised-for-standing-up-to-teacher-defending-girl-identifying-as-a-cat/video/612f424277578a052166548b7f78d6ac>

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/06/18/pupil-teacher-despicable-identifying-cat-transgender/>

<https://nypost.com/2023/06/19/student-called-despicable-by-teacher-after-questioning-peer-who-identifies-as-a-cat/>

young girls in the same class who mocked gender identity, calling it “ridiculous”. (This all took place during a PSHE lesson entitled Life Education.)

The teacher, recorded by the two girls secretly using their phones, becomes irate when the girls laugh at the entire philosophy underpinning PSHE. In the recorded scenario that follows, we see in the teacher’s reaction the true totalitarian nature of education under the PSHE regime. The kind, joyful, and celebratory tone of *everyone is unique and special* evaporates. The colours fade from bright – to dark and menacing. The innocent games played with the *caring trusted adult* morph into bloody civil war...

- “How dare you!”, rages the teacher...

One of the girls replies: “if someone identifies as a cat then they are genuinely unwell”. The teacher, slowly now, unsure of herself, mumbles indistinctly “*you ... are questioning ... their identity*”.

It’s not posed as a question but a taboo.

The girls then declare that there are only girls and boys, and that boys have penises and girls have vaginas. Now the teacher responds with a question, albeit a rhetorical one:

- “*Where did you get this idea that there are only two genders?*”

The girls reply that it happens to be their opinion, adding that it happens to be most people’s opinion, but “nobody says anything because then all this happens”.

The teacher returns to statement mode: “*It is not an opinion*”. The teacher then tells the girls they are “*despicable*”.

When one of the girls mentions calling her *mother* (that smutty word), because she would agree with her, the teacher snaps. “*That’s sad!*”.

The teacher then threatens to report the girls, relocate them to another school, and sign them up for “*re-education*”.

The teacher's stance – her incandescent anger – reveals the *real* PSHE: the raw institutional power behind the gentle messaging that everyone is brilliant and accepted.

No longer camouflaged by colourful cartoons and games, the true gothic horror of the PSHE script is revealed. It runs something like this:

- *Gender is not linked to the parts that you were born with. Gender is how you identify.*
- *You are the property of this school, and I do not want to hear about what your parents think – do NOT mention, or refer to, your mother!!*
- *Everyone has the right to be different; to be who they want to be; but, if you disagree with me, you will be sent off to be re-educated so that you do not question what I am saying to you ever again.*
- *Kindness and acceptance are the ultimate virtues and if you do not accept what I tell you in the name of those virtues you are despicable and sad and you must be isolated from the others until you learn how this game – THE REAL GAME – is played.*

Cat Gate provides the perfect illustration of why PSHE in our schools is no longer tenable. It is untenable for compelling legal and social reasons.

*PSHE is Legally Untenable:
The Bad Law Project's Position Statement*

Child Safeguarding

In failing to deal with the spread of gender identity politics in schools, children have been put at an increased risk of harm – including self-harm. Responsibility for this oversight lies not only with the schools themselves, but with the third sector. Organisations use charity status to assert their authority and expertise over schools and have monopolised control over PSHE teaching and content. By means of an organisational third-sector takeover of PSHE, a group of niche academics have successfully institutionalised controversial ideas about ‘healthy’ sexuality and ‘normal’ child development, demanding that ‘gender identity’, ‘wrong body’ myths, medical and social transition practices, and hypersexuality be taught and inculcated in children as young as 4 years old (i.e. Reception class at the primary school level).

Responsibility for foreseeable harms to children as a result of PSHE must also lie with the Department for Education, which actively signposts political lobbying organisations and private companies posing as charities that promote social and medical gender transition among young people. This is in breach of fundamental child safeguarding principles as outlined in the Department's 2022 Statutory Guidance For Schools and Colleges, *Keeping children safe in education*.⁷¹ The document applies, in its entirety, to all schools and all children up to the age of 18 years, making it clear what individuals, organisations and agencies must and should do to keep children safe. The guidance seeks to emphasise that effective safeguarding is achieved by putting children at the centre of the system and by every individual and agency playing their full part and taking prompt action when a child is foreseeably at risk of harm.

⁷¹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1101454/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2022.pdf

Where there is incompetence in child safeguarding by public authorities, including the Department for Education, there is liability in negligence. The Bad Law Project's position is that while public authorities are not generally assumed to be liable for harms caused by 'omissions' (or failures to act) – given the growing concerns of many parents who have lost their children to gender transition, and who have been entirely excluded from the consultation process in respect of PSHE content, there is compelling grounds for legal action against the Department for Education on the grounds that it has failed to uphold its duty of care rooted in its public law powers. There is legal precedent and scholarship which can be read to support that claim.⁷²

A new draft Bill has been prepared for submission to Parliament by the Reclaim Party's Andrew Bridgen MP, entitled the Schools (Gender and Parental Rights) Bill (2003). In that Bill, it is proposed that the encouragement or promotion of social transitioning practises is prohibited at law. This is the first time the term 'social transition practices' has been defined and codified in a legal setting and the Bill takes care to acknowledge the links between social and medical transition (as a single pathway), and the physical and psychological risks attendant on both forms of transition. Social transition practices include (but are not limited to):

- the use of pronouns to refer to an identity or sex other than the child's natal or birth sex;
- the adoption of a name to signify rejection of the child's natal or birth sex;
- practices by which a child rejects their natal or birth sex by means of self-harm, including:
 - cutting;
 - mutilation of healthy body parts (including chest or breast binding);

⁷² See Tom Cornford, "The Negligence Liability of Public Authorities for Omissions", in *The Cambridge Law Journal* (March 2023), published by Cambridge University Press at <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/cambridge-law-journal/article/abs/negligence-liability-of-public-authorities-for-omissions/BDD6A6E0E92DBBB90238179C3624F833>

- preparing for the mutilation of healthy body parts (including preparing for chest or breast binding);
- preparing for the removal of (or celebrating the future removal of) healthy body parts;
- taking or preparing to take medication to pause puberty;
- taking or preparing to take cross-sex hormones.

The Bill was drafted by *The Bad Law Project* on the basis of a group litigation action brought by parents (in planning stage at the time of writing) against the Department for Education in England and Wales. The Bill forms a supplementary appendix to this report. The case against the Department for Education is supported by *The Bad Law Project*⁷³ and its sister initiative, Reclaim Education.⁷⁴

The parent-litigants in the prospective case against the Department for Education are representative of families across the UK whose children have been encouraged at school to socially or medically transition, at considerable cost to the children’s mental and physical well-being, as well as to that of their families. The parents are seeking to bring a joint claim in negligence against the Department for Education for actively promoting *gender ideology* in schools and failing to act on the foreseeable harms caused by *gender ideology*. Indeed, the case would seek to properly define *gender ideology* in law.

As stated above, gender ideology rejects material and biological reality in favour of an inner feeling called ‘gender identity’. Proponents of gender ideology simply do not accept the biological reality and immutability of sex and threaten those who do – often with violence or with losing their jobs (as demonstrated by Maya Forstater in her famous 2020 employment tribunal).⁷⁵ Gender ideology teaches that sexual differences are not important – and can be

⁷³ <https://www.badlawproject.com/>

⁷⁴ <https://www.badlawproject.com/bad-education>

⁷⁵ The Claimant, Maya Forstater, claimed a belief that “biological sex is real, important, immutable and not to be conflated with gender identity”. See the Employment Appeal Tribunal judgment of *Maya Forstater v CGD Europe and Others*: UKEAT/0105/20/JOJ, para. 1, at

changed (or ignored) at will, without any risk to the person undergoing transition. It tries to insinuate, by means of relentless propaganda driven through the education system, that anyone who does not sign up to the ideology is motivated by hatred and bigotry towards ‘trans’ and ‘non-binary’ children. Gender ideology has been endorsed time and time again by the Department for Education in the form of instructions to all schools to teach gender identity as if it were a legally protected category under the Equality Act 2010, while funding third-sector gender lobby groups, such as *Stonewall*, *Mermaids* or *Educate and Celebrate*, to advance this ideology in schools.⁷⁶

This approach embraces falsehoods on multiple levels. There is no credible scientific evidence that children are ‘trans’ or ‘non-binary’; there is no evidence that one is ‘assigned sex at birth’ or that a baby can be ‘born in the wrong body’. No person can simply change sex without serious consequences – consequences never elaborated upon in PSHE teaching content. Therefore, the promotion of gender ideology to children and young people is objectively harmful and a safeguarding risk.

In the climate fostered by the mandate that schools teach RSE under the influence of an anarchic and unregulated third sector, schools have become desensitized to these profound safeguarding risks, and gender ideology is promoted through the encouragement of social and medical transition. The culturally insensitive (and relentless) promotion of sexual promiscuity, transgression and adventure as ‘normal sex’, or ‘safer sex’, or ‘better sex’, exposes children to sexually inappropriate messaging and to sexual exploitation. Parents with questions and concerns have found that schools are unresponsive or choose to double down on the necessity of including materials which engage safeguarding concerns.

Parents who have spoken with *The Bad Law Project* have shared incredibly similar stories. Many of their children have undergone social and/or medical transition and have been encouraged to do so at school – often without the knowledge or consent of the family. Two case studies are reproduced here by way of example.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/60c1cce1d3bf7f4bd9814e39/Maya_Forstater_v_CGD_Europe_and_others_UKEAT0105_20_JOJ.pdf

⁷⁶ See Lottie Moore, *Asleep at the Wheel. An Examination of Gender and Safeguarding in Schools*, Policy Exchange Report 2023, pp. 71-72; and Jo-Anne Nadler, *Show, Tell and Leave Nothing to the imagination: How critical social justice is undermining British schooling*, Civitas Report 2023, p.8.

Case Study A

A, an autistic 16 year-old girl with no previous history of gender dysphoria, attends an independent school. A was bullied and isolated at school for being a lesbian and suddenly developed an interest in breast binding. The school encouraged A to socially transition without seeking involvement or input from her mother. No input was sought from any independent medical practitioner on the part of the school, even though the mother had obtained clinical advice from the Tavistock clinic advising the school against social transition due to safeguarding concerns and A's underlying medical condition (including type 1 diabetes), which could exacerbate health risks were she to be given cross-sex hormones.

A's mother raised concerns with the school about a teacher who had 'pushed' A to socially and medically transition. A's mother raised a complaint with the independent school inspectorate, as well as requesting details of RSE teaching materials from the school (which the school refused to provide). In response to her written concerns, the Department for Education informed A's mother that the Department had *no powers to intervene* in individual complaints. The evidence is overwhelming that the school in question had chosen to promote gender ideology through literature provided by third-sector political lobbying groups, and furthermore had a high number of children identifying as transgender.

A's mother is now fighting to stop her daughter from pursuing a medical pathway to transition involving drugs that could rob her of her fertility and sexual function, as well as causing other irreversible changes.

Case Study B

B is now at university but identified as 'trans' after having been socially transitioned at school. B's parents were informed by the school that B had changed his name to reflect his new identity. The family were instructed by the school to use different pronouns for B. The parents believed at the time that they had a *legal* obligation to use different pronouns for B, which is most certainly not the case. B's transition has resulted in psychologically traumatic episodes affecting the entire family, including B's younger sibling who does not fully comprehend what has happened to her brother. B has expressed the clear view that the school, especially through PSHE, encouraged B to adopt a different gender identity.

After months, even years, of raising concerns, many parents in the situation of the parents of A and B have been forced to consider legal action against the Department for Education because other avenues through which they have pursued their complaints have proved fruitless. The parents' case is the position of *The Bad Law Project*, and it is this. The Department should have acted on its own safeguarding commitments and taken preventative measures so that schools understand the risks of indoctrinating children in gender ideology and encouraging social transition practices.

Political Indoctrination

The parents – as prospective claimants in the case against the Department for Education – are seeking an undertaking of commitment from the Department to remedy the monopoly that the third sector has over teaching and teaching resources. They want schools and educational providers to be held to account where the law has been repeatedly breached and harm has been done to young people in educational settings.

On this point, the parents' case against the Department for Education is that it has categorically failed not only to act on parents' safeguarding concerns, but to prevent political indoctrination in schools. This is in breach of sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996, which read as follows (emphasis in underline added):

Section 406(1) Political Indoctrination

The local authority, governing body and head teacher shall forbid—

(a) the pursuit of partisan political activities by any of those registered pupils at a maintained school who are junior pupils, and

(b) the promotion of partisan political views—

in the teaching of any subject in the school, or in the teaching of any aspect of a curriculum provided in the school.

Section 407(1) Duty to secure balanced treatment of political issues

The local education authority, governing body and head teacher shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils while they are—

(a) in attendance at a maintained school, or

(b) taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organised for registered pupils at the school by or on behalf of the school,

they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

The promotion of partisan political views is prohibited in schools under section 406(1) of the Education Act 1996. That is the legal status quo. Yet the bulk of PSHE teaching content shamelessly promotes gender ideology in breach of current law. For gender ideology to be taught impartially, it would need to be *presented*, rather than *promoted*, alongside alternative views presented equally, with “fair and dispassionate balance”.⁷⁷

The Bad Law Project’s proposed Schools (Gender and Parental Rights) Bill (2003) reinforces existing legal provisions set down in the Education Act 1996 and principles of good case law so that local authorities, governing bodies and head teachers of schools may confidently prohibit the promotion of gender ideology.

Discrimination and Compelled Speech

As the recent and extraordinary case of *Cat Gate* shows, there are unlawful and discriminatory elements in the way that PSHE is being taught, including coercion of young people to adopt political stances and make political statements, under threat of sanction if they do not.

⁷⁷ *Dimmock v Secretary of State for Education and Skills* (now Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families) [2007] EWHC 2288 (Admin). See also section 4 above.

Through the foresight of the two Year 8 girls in the Rye College (*Cat*) case, who recorded their PSHE lesson and shared it with their parents and the world, we now have concrete evidence that pupils are being forced by schools to accept gender ideology. In *Cat Gate*, the two pupils were called “despicable” and their parents’ views were called “sad”, and they were threatened with re-education and relocation to a different school for manifesting their belief that you cannot change sex (or species).

Arguably, the teacher was discriminating against the girls by treating them less favourably than other pupils *because of* their belief. Arguably, the teacher was harassing the girls by engaging in unwanted conduct, related to the girls’ beliefs, with the purpose or effect of violating their dignity and/or creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Both discrimination and harassment on grounds of protected philosophical belief are unlawful under the Equality Act 2010.⁷⁸ Maya Forstater’s employment tribunal has secured the relevant legal precedent here. Post *Forstater*, the belief that “biological sex is real, important, immutable and not to be conflated with gender identity” is a protected philosophical belief under the 2010 Act.

The potentially unlawful treatment of the girls in *Cat Gate* amounts at the same time to compelling the girls’ speech, which is also unlawful (at common law). The doctrine of compelled speech is the forcing of a person to hold or express a political opinion with which he does not agree.

In the case of *Lee v Ashers Baking Company Ltd*,⁷⁹ Baroness (Lady) Hale established, on the basis of US First Amendment doctrine, that English common law recognises a right against compelled speech: *people should not be required to voice views that they do not hold*.

In the *Ashers* case, the owners of a bakery had been required, on pain of liability in damages, to supply a cake with the message *Support Gay Marriage* – and Lady Hale found for the bakers, on the grounds that the message supported:

⁷⁸ Sections 13(1) and 26(1) Equality Act 2010.

⁷⁹ *Lee v Ashers Baking Company Ltd & Ors* (Northern Ireland) (Rev 1) [2018] UKSC 49 (10 October 2018).

*a cause in which many believe, but a cause in which the owners most definitely and sincerely did not.*⁸⁰

In *Ashers*, it was held that it was not discrimination against gay people for the bakers to refuse to supply the cake in question. The bakers' refusal was protected as part of their right to freedom of expression: they did not have to accept or promote the message on the cake. Supplying the cake was seen to be tacit acceptance of the message, which made the bakers uncomfortable. It was the bakers' objection to *the message*, not to serving the customer, that was protected in *Ashers*. The bakers would have objected to the same message irrespective of whether the customer requesting the cake was gay or straight. By way of a theoretical example of the principle upheld in *Ashers*, consider this. An anti-racist baker refuses to bake a cake with the N* word. It doesn't matter whether the customer is black or white, or what their racial politics are, or why they want the cake to display the N* word. The baker does not want to use or endorse the N* word. They cannot, at law, be forced to.

By the same token, a schoolchild cannot be forced to state that there are more than two genders at school.

A schoolchild's parent cannot be forced to ensure that gender ideology is endorsed within the home.

A schoolchild cannot be encouraged to report her parents to the school if the parents do not hold the view endorsed by the school.

A schoolchild cannot be singled out for less favourable treatment because of the child's or the parents' belief that there are two sexes – or because the child or the parents do not believe that there are more than two genders.

⁸⁰ See Jacob Rowbottom, "Cakes, Gay Marriage and the Right against Compelled Speech", published for the UK Constitutional Law Group (16 October 2018), at <https://ukconstitutionallaw.org/2018/10/16/jacob-rowbottom-cakes-gay-marriage-and-the-right-against-compelled-speech/>

A schoolchild cannot be subject to ridicule or suffer any unwanted conduct at school, where that conduct relates to the child's belief, or their family's belief, or their family's religious belief (e.g. the belief that there are only two sexes).

That is current law under the Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998, and at common law.

To be fair to the schoolteacher in *Cat Gate*, the lesson to be learned is not that some teachers have 'gone rogue' and are running around classrooms of England and Wales breaking the law with abandon. The lesson of *Cat Gate* is that the teacher thought she was acting lawfully in promoting gender ideology. Presumably, the teacher had been trained in 'equality, diversity and inclusion' by some third-sector consultancy group. This is a dreadful state of affairs: a teacher who thinks she is implementing RSE lawfully has been led not only to misunderstand the law, but also to break it. She may yet face legal action from the parents of the two girls.

Following the chain of responsibility upwards, the ultimate responsibility for what happened in *Cat Gate* lies not with the individual teacher, but with the schools, the local authorities and the Department for Education for allowing political lobby groups with dubious educational credentials to use schools as the breeding ground for seeding their pernicious ideologies, and for creating an open instruction in their statutory guidance that invites this action.

Criminal liability of PSHE teaching content providers

PSHE and mandated RSE teaching content is legally untenable because it may well fall within breach of criminal laws on child sexual offences.

As charted briefly above, PSHE materials include discussions with often very young, primary and secondary schoolchildren about sexual arousal, sexual stimulation, sexual pleasure, touching and being touched. The following two legal considerations in respect of criminal breaches towards children of a sexually offensive nature are posited below (with no further comment), by way of providing the basis for future legal actions. Schools, educational authorities and PSHE providers are hereby put on notice that there is strict liability for some sexual offences committed against a child. Some PSHE activities, in the guise of robust sex education, may meet the criminal threshold (additional emphasis in underline).

1. The NSPCC definition of non-contact child sexual abuse.

Such abuse involves activities where there is no physical contact, and includes the following (with the most relevant parts underlined):

- Flashing at a child;
- Encouraging or forcing a child to watch or hear sexual acts;
- Not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others;
- Making a child masturbate (while others watch);
- Persuading a child to make, view or distribute child abuse images (such as performing sexual acts over the internet, sexting or showing pornography to a child);
- Making, viewing or distributing child abuse images;
- Allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images;
- Meeting a child following grooming with the intent of abusing them (even if abuse did not take place);
- Sexually exploiting a child for money, power or status (child sexual exploitation).⁸¹

2. Sexual Offences Act 2003. Section 8(1) provides that the offence of *causing or inciting a child under 13 to engage in sexual activity* is committed if –

⁸¹ <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-sexual-abuse>

- (a) [a person] intentionally causes or incites another person (B) to engage in an activity,
- (b) the activity is sexual, and
- (c) B is under 13.

Section 11(1) of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 provides that the offence of *engaging in sexual activity in the presence of a child* is committed if –

- (a) [a person] intentionally engages in an activity,
- (b) the activity is sexual,
- (c) for the purpose of obtaining sexual gratification, he engages in it—
 - (i) when another person (B) is present or is in a place from which A can be observed, and
 - (ii) knowing or believing that B is aware, or intending that B should be aware, that he is engaging in it, and
- (d) either—
 - (i) B is under 16 and A does not reasonably believe that B is 16 or over, or
 - (ii) B is under 13.

Section 12(1) of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 sets down the offence of *causing a child to watch a sexual act*, where a person aged 18 or over

- (d) for the purpose of obtaining sexual gratification, [the person] intentionally causes another person (B) to watch a third person

engaging in an activity, or to look at an image of any person
engaging in an activity,

(e) the activity is sexual, and

(f) either—

(i) B is under 16 and A does not reasonably believe that B is 16 or
over, or

(ii) B is under 13.

*PSHE is Socially Untenable:
The Bad Law Project's Position Statement*

PSHE as practiced in the UK today has profound implications for the schooling of children from religious or faith-based communities. It has the same profound implications for the schooling of children from secular or socially conservative families who do not and cannot on conscience accept the contentious notion of 'gender identity', taught by promoters of gender ideology within the third sector.

It is the position of *The Bad Law Project* and *Reclaim Education* that PSHE was rolled out in a blanket fashion. No due attention has been paid to the inevitable cultural sensitivities arising where gender ideology and the hyper-sexualisation of children are taught as core components of RSE (Relationship and Sex Education).

The untenable nature of RSE and PSHE lies not only in its shaky legal foundations, but in its capacity to stoke division and exacerbate existing social and cultural conflicts in the UK (ethnic, racial, class, religious, etc.). At the time of writing, it is reported that over 300 Muslim children are being kept off school as part of parental protests about "age-inappropriate sex education teaching" in a Manchester primary school, with parents stating they have "lost trust" in the school's leadership "because of what they perceive to be a lack of consultation", including parents being "prevented from organising meetings with venues cancelling at the last minute under pressure from local authorities".⁸²

Forcing children and parents to abandon their personal, cultural or religious identities for a niche form of contentious identity politics can only undermine social cohesion in the long term. Divisions in society will, in turn, give power-hungry policy makers and legislators the

⁸² "Hundreds of Muslim kids kept off Manchester school in protest at sex education teaching", published in Muslim news site *5 Pillars* on 26 June 2023, see <https://5pillarsuk.com/2023/06/26/hundreds-of-muslim-kids-kept-off-manchester-school-in-protest-at-sex-education-teaching/>

grounds for justifying disproportionate state intervention in the name of restoring cohesion and better managing social and cultural integration.⁸³

PSHE sends a strong message that those who do not bend the knee to one political philosophy are somehow upsetting the ‘law of the universe’ – and this clumsy and unwieldy assumption – as we saw in *Cat Gate* – is resulting in diverse families and communities having PSHE ‘dumped’ on them, without giving them the opportunity to contribute their own views to the debate, to raise concerns, or to ask questions. There is zero accountability in respect of PSHE content providers. Without proper dialogue and consultation with families and community representatives, resentment against PSHE (and the education system in general) will continue to rise.⁸⁴

The socially untenable nature of PSHE is not an easy reality to face. Nonetheless, it is an objective, demographic, and sociological fact that the UK is a diverse society and is not agreed on the parameters and definitions of love, acceptance, tolerance, kindness, hygiene, consent, personal space, comfort, sexual conduct, marriage, politics, morality, the family, and personal ethics.

Human beings as they grow up, and if they raise children of their own, learn to navigate the complex and sensitive areas of relationships and sexuality organically – through reliance on their own support networks and with recourse to the personal and cultural values they have inherited through birth, upbringing, and life experience.

Each household has its own ethos; and that ethos is not to be determined (and cannot be determined) by Government or state institutions. The reason we have criminal laws against child abuse, as well as child protection and safeguarding laws,⁸⁵ is so that in the sad event

⁸³ See e.g. the observations of Carl R Trueman in his piece, “Prohibiting Prayer in Australia”, *First Things Journal of Religion and Public Life* (8 February 2021), <https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2021/02/prohibiting-prayer-in-australia>.

⁸⁴ See for example the 2019 Birmingham Schools row, in which some Muslim parents of children from five Birmingham schools claimed LGBT messaging at school was in conflict with their children’s faith. *BBC*, “LGBT lessons row: More Birmingham schools stop classes”, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-47613578>

⁸⁵ The Children Act 1989, section 1(1) [The] child’s welfare shall be the court’s paramount consideration.

that an adult in a position of authority harms a child, or seeks to harm a child, there are robust mechanisms for securing that child's safety and wellbeing.

But the entry of PSHE into our schools marks a new chapter in the history of the UK, whereby it is assumed that most families are dysfunctional and incompetent when it comes to supporting their children through complex and ever-changing life circumstances. *What do parents know?* is the attitude of the third sector, which has appointed itself – through the schools – as the moral corrective to what they decide are 'erroneous', 'regressive' or 'politically incorrect' ideas that children are subjected to at home. This is an abuse of the child's right (and the family's right) to hold beliefs independently of the state.

PSHE also amounts to the quasi-criminalisation of large faith communities who do not and cannot accept gender ideology as a matter of doctrinal integrity.

Britain's diverse ethnicities and cultures are intertwined with a diversity of religious faiths. In a 2013 Report by David Owen, commissioned as part of the UK Government's Foresight Project,⁸⁶ it was concluded that for Asian and Black people, family is the most important aspect of identity; religion is the second most important.⁸⁷ In other words, Britain is a multifaith society *because* it is a multicultural one. And if, as the secularists claim, "the notion that a state-promoted religion is required to uphold a sense of national cohesion is clearly anachronistic in a multi- and non-faith democratic society," then it is also true that a *secular state religion* cannot possibly maintain national cohesion in a multi- and non-faith democratic society.⁸⁸

PSHE operates on the presumption of the educator's moral superiority over both the child and the child's family – and this is akin to a secular state religion imposed without consideration for the religious and secular beliefs children are exposed to at home. On the issue of a person's gender identity, or whether a person can change sex, for example, many secular households will reject these ideas on the basis of their atheism and faith in rational humanist

⁸⁶ David Owen, "Future Identities: Changing identities in the UK – the next 10 years", UK Government Office for Science (*Foresight Project*) 2013.

⁸⁷ Owen, "Future Identities", p. 15

⁸⁸ "Separating Church and State: The Case for Disestablishment", *The National Secular Society* 2017, p. 7.

principles, derived from scientific knowledge. Parents in religious households may reject such ideas as unhealthy spiritual forces. Muslims, Jews and Christians may feel spiritually under attack from the secular establishment, ‘coming for their children’. Religious faith communities generally operate in multicultural societies on a ‘live and let live’ basis; yet they are unlikely to accept a ‘different view’ from the school if they feel personally under attack by the holders of that view. Then there are doctrinal considerations. For Catholics in particular, there is something very unsettling about gender ideology, because it teaches that a thing can change its fundamental nature, which is exclusively reserved for the divine.⁸⁹ In all three Abrahamic religions, there are two sexes – Man and Woman – and they are made in the image of God. Thus, gender ideology is utterly incompatible with these widespread religious worldviews.

UK human rights law acknowledges the right to religious freedom under Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Under the terms of Article 9 (2), the legitimate aims which can be used to justify interference in an individual’s manifestation of their religion or beliefs are exhaustive and restrictive, reflecting the Convention’s commitment to religious pluralism as “one of the foundations of a democratic society”. The State “*cannot dictate what a person believes or take coercive steps to make him change his beliefs*”.⁹⁰

In countries around the world and throughout history, the criminalisation or marginalisation of religious faith communities accompanies the growth of deeply repressive statist, or totalitarian, regimes. In the USSR in the 1920s and 1930s, religious people were considered “unconditional enemies”.⁹¹ More recently, the Chinese Communist Party’s repressive treatment of the Uighur Muslim communities has received international condemnation – not least in the UK.⁹²

⁸⁹ The doctrine of ‘transubstantiation’ – the transformation of the sacramental wine and bread into the actual blood and body of Christ.

⁹⁰ Strasbourg Court (ECtHR): *Nolan and K. v Russia* (Application no. 2512/04), at para. 73.

⁹¹ Oksana Beznosova, “The Ukrainian Evangelicals under Pressure from the NKVD, 1928–1939”, *Ethnic and Religious Minorities in Stalin’s Soviet Union New Dimensions of Research*, Andrej Kotljarchuk Olle Sundström, eds., p. 173.

⁹² “UK accuses China of ‘gross’ human rights abuses against Uighurs”, *BBC News* (19 July 2020), <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-53463403>

PSHE and RSE, preaching gender ideology and sexual precocity as received wisdom, are undermining efforts in the UK to establish a consensual basis for national unity and social cohesion. The continuing development of an ideologically oppressive education system will only further seed distrust and resentment among large swathes of the British populace, culminating – inevitably – in unpredictable and unruly forms of radicalization.⁹³

⁹³ The rationale given initially by the UK Government for establishing its Prevent campaigns and guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales>

Conclusion

It is the simple conclusion of this document that PSHE cannot be reformed to address the most fundamental of facts (which PSHE providers continue to ignore): namely state policy does not rear children, families and human beings do.

Reclaim Education's proposal is simple and three-fold:

1. PSHE and RSE should no longer be mandated as school subjects – and this must apply across the entirety of the primary and secondary school sectors.
2. Any third-party provider seeking to commercially profit from selling teaching resources to schools must be regulated such that the materials used in schools for teaching purposes are published and openly accessible.
3. Any lessons dealing with sex, health and relationships must come accompanied by an express parental right of withdrawal.

We conclude with the sage observations of the parental campaigner and founder of the campaign, *No Secret Lessons*, Clare Page:

*You can question the premise of teaching 'Relationships' altogether. We need to try and work out: are our teachers and our civil servants better than us – the public – at relationships? Do they have knowledge about relationships we don't? Why are they any better? It's not a science, and I don't know that anyone can be more of an expert in relationships than anyone else. We might want to talk about manners, or we might want to talk about the treatment of people, we certainly perhaps want to talk about the law on consent. But actually running relationships is something the private sphere should ask back from Government.*⁹⁴

⁹⁴ What's Being Taught in Our Schools? *The Bad Law Show*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rCN-tTfYyWE&t=3471s>, at 1hr:01m:40s.

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