

## Personal and Social Education

Personal and Social Education should not just be thought about in terms of coverage of topics nor should it be thought about as something which only happens in a class entitled 'PSE'. Personal and Social Education as it is currently conceived and 'delivered' in Scottish schools is often arid, deemed to be not relevant by young people and 'delivered' often by the least experienced members of staff with often minimal support or guidance in its delivery. This has led to PSE being regarded by staff and pupils alike as low status and something not to be taken seriously. Whilst staff are often well meaning, it is often tokenistic in approach and focussing upon 'what should be covered' at the expense of what understanding, skills, attributes and dispositions we would wish to develop in children and young people through a PSE programme which permeates the whole school and is not seen to be confined to a PSE class will do nothing to redress this problem. I therefore consider that you are addressing the wrong question and need to think much more deeply about what you would wish a PSE programme to achieve. I also consider that approaches, other than whole class teaching should be considered. For some children with specific needs, small group work led by a caring and skilled adult can provide the facilitating environment to help to develop all of the above such that what is learned can be transferable to wider contexts of their lives. Therefore, I would conclude that what is required is a radical rethink of how we understand PSE.

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