

# Hints & Wrinkles

## Young people in schools learn about relationships from sessions with EXPLORE

After years of focussing on the academic achievements of UK schools, people are now turning to thoughts of what else a school can teach: behaviour, character, social awareness – in an acronym, PSHE. This subject, or range of topics, has existed for years. Until now, however, it has not been obligatory in schools, and it has generally been poorly resourced and staffed.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education reviewed the matter last Autumn, and in February recommended a smart turnaround. They concluded PSHE should be mandatory; teachers should be trained and resourced to teach it; each school should consult its governors and parents to decide on the content; and Ofsted should monitor the result.

**EXPLORE** is a locally-based educational charity, and was invited to testify before

the Standing Committee. **EXPLORE** said that to help young people cope in later life, they must above all be able to handle relationships, a point reflected in the Committee's recommendation that the acronym SRE – Sex and Relationship Education should be reordered RSE, to give prominence to relationships.

In March, Ofsted started to identify more of the best examples in the country for good PSHE teaching: Notre Dame in Plymouth, John Henry Newman in Stevenage, Christ the King College Lewisham. This confirms the knowledge that Catholic schools have been champions of best practice in PSHE for years. The video included in the website of **EXPLORE** is from a Catholic school, too: Bishop Challoner's in Basingstoke: see [theexplorexperience.co.uk](http://theexplorexperience.co.uk)

Oddly enough, none of Ofsted's best examples include words like love or

commitment. That scale of omission is like Hamlet without the prince. **EXPLORE** was founded 20 years ago to correct this kind of omission. Young people around Y10 say they want to learn how relationships and marriages last over time. The examples given by **EXPLORE** show how love and commitment can work in practice: they mean that good tolerance, forgiveness and management can be present and do help overcome most setbacks.

Students are enthralled by the depth and openness of such discussions. **EXPLORE** works to give something so valuable and appreciated from its members' own knowledge and asks that more of us join on this journey.

For further details see the advertisement on the inside of the front cover to this issue of *PP*.