



Christian Values in Education

Education Matters

ISSUE 22.3

(March 2022)

Welcome to this latest edition of CViE *Education Matters*, for March 2022. *Education Matters* is designed to provide parents and those interested in education with current “snippets” of information that might be of help in understanding and dealing with educational issues.

In this edition we cover the following:

EDUCATION

- House Of Commons Library Research Briefings
 - Regulating online harms
 - Physical education, physical activity and sport in schools
 - Special Educational Needs: support in England
 - Reform of the Higher Education System

POLITICS

- Speaking out in Parliament
- Political impartiality in schools
- The American School in London

TECHNOLOGY

- 5 Digital trends that threaten children in 2022
- ParentShield - The Child-Safe Mobile Network

We would also bring your attention to recent posts on the CViE website:

[Abortion: The impact on lives \(Part 2\)](#)

[CViE Update – March 2022](#)

[Asking the right questions on gender identity in education](#)

[GAMBLING: The Dangers](#)

Click [here](#) for all CViE blog posts.

On behalf of the CViE trustees –

With Christian regards,
Michael

(M Ridout, Chair CViE)

EDUCATION

There have been a number of House of Commons Library Research Briefings published in recent weeks which may be of interest to parents and those involved in education. In view of the number of documents, we have not provided any more detail than a short summary.

Regulating online harms

This Briefing looks at the Government's plans to regulate harmful online content. Although these developments are to be welcomed in controlling access to pornography and other undesirable material, there has been concern as to the impact legislation might have on free speech. This is considered further elsewhere in this *Education Matters*. The research briefing can be found by [clicking here](#). The Christian Institute have very helpfully produced an accessible webpage explaining how the Government's changes to its Online Safety Bill do not go far enough in protecting freedom of speech. The webpage can be viewed by [clicking here](#).

Physical education, physical activity and sport in schools

This Briefing provides information on the provision of physical education and sport in schools, including National Curriculum requirements, funding, school games, and regulations relating to school playing fields. PE is a compulsory subject under the National Curriculum at all key stages (National Curriculum programmes of study outline what should be taught at each key stage). Local authority maintained schools are required to follow the National Curriculum, academies and free schools do not have to follow it but are required to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes the physical development of pupils. The Briefing can be found by [clicking here](#).

Special Educational Needs: support in England

This Briefing sets out the system of support for children and young people in England aged 0-25 with special educational needs (SEN). The Research Briefing can be found by [clicking here](#).

Reform of the Higher Education System

On 24 February 2022, the Government concluded its review of post-18 education and funding. It announced several reforms to higher education and the student finance system in England, and launched consultations on related policy proposals, including the lifelong loan entitlement. The Department for Education have announced two consultations on the higher education system. The first will focus on how to ensure young people are encouraged to pursue the right path for them, and receive a fair

deal for their investment if they choose to go to university. The second relates to the plans to support students to study, training, retraining or upscale at any stage throughout their lives through flexible modular courses. The press release relating to these announcements can be found by [clicking here](#). The House of Commons Library have also published a Research Briefing on this subject and this can be found by [clicking here](#).

Making decisions post-16 regarding careers and/or further and higher education is a big step, especially in light of the costs involved in higher education and concerns over value for money in the way the courses are taught and delivered. The CViE booklet "Choosing a Career" was recently re-published in response to many new challenges that young people face as they consider their careers. It is also noted that "sadly, difficulties continue to increase while Biblical principles remain constantly under attack". Copies of the booklet can be obtained by emailing enquiries@cvie.org.uk or downloading by [clicking here](#).

POLITICS

Speaking out in Parliament

CViE has in previous editions of *Education Matters* brought to your attention how Miriam Cates, MP for Penistone and Stocksbridge, has spoken out in Parliament regarding RSE and also the dangers of the LGBT and 'trans' agendas and their ideologies. We have written to Miriam Cates to support her in the stand that she has made for biblical principles and are delighted to have received an email recently thanking us for our support. Recently MP Cates has questioned the Minister for Schools, Robin Walker, on the content that schools have been using in RSE, some of which encourages young people to 'change gender'. A copy of the video of the questioning (she is a qualified science teacher) and responses that were offered can be viewed by [clicking here](#).

Although we can be despondent about what takes place in the Houses of Parliament, let us not forget that the Lord does raise up those who stand fast for the truth - such as Miriam Cates (her determination and doggedness are on view and commendable) and others - and pray that the Lord will uphold them in being faithful to His Word.

Political impartiality in schools

In February 2022, the Department for Education (DfE) published a guidance document "[Political impartiality in schools](#)". This guidance explains existing legal requirements relating to political impartiality. It summarises key things for schools to consider when teaching politics and political issues in a broad and balanced curriculum. It summarises relevant aspects of the law in relation to remaining impartial and avoiding partisan activity. Alongside this document, the DfE have published a pamphlet "[What you need to know about political impartiality in schools](#)"

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which provides an outline the teachers and staff. The pamphlet acknowledges the duty of teachers to honour each “pupils’ ability to form their own views and opinions” and to take seriously “concerns from parents, carers and others about political impartiality [are] always treated seriously and handled with sensitivity.”

The Coalition for Marriage (C4M) have very helpfully developed this further and produced a detailed analysis of the guidance document which covers a number of points that have particular relevance to Christian parents around areas such as LGBT month and campaign groups in schools such as Stonewall, Proud Trust and Mermaids. The analysis can be found by [clicking here](#) and we would encourage you to read this document to increase your awareness of the obligations placed on schools to help equip you when raising matters of concern. In addition, C4M produced a video “Rainbow Day advice for parents and teachers”, in which Tony Rucinski (Director of Supporter Strategy, C4M) interviews John Denning (Education Officer, Christian Institute) about how the “Political impartiality in schools” guidance impacts on the teaching of ideologies that may be in conflict with the biblical views of parents. The interview draws on the C4M analysis referred to above and can be accessed by [clicking here](#).

(In a similar vein, CViE are organising a Meet-up, “State Education – Making your views known” on Friday, 6 May 2022 that will be an opportunity to share experiences and consider ways of approaching schools where parents have a concern over material being taught to the children. Further details can be found [here](#) on the CViE Events page).

The American School in London

The Times recently published an article (Saturday, 12 March 2022) regarding The American School in London (ASL) “described as Britain’s “wokest” school”. The ASL (based in St. John’s Wood, London) is a day school charging fees up to £32,650. We highlight this as it exposes the dangers of the over-emphasis on ‘political’ issues at the expense of the curriculum within the education setting. The article reported that “... parents were informed of changes to policies, including on ‘diversity, equity and inclusion’”, and the school was accused of teaching pupils “critical race theory”. In November 2021, a complaint was made, on behalf of a group of parents, to the Department for Education regarding the situation at the school. The outcome of this was an OFSTED inspection in December 2021 that resulted in the ASL being downgraded from ‘Outstanding’ in March 2018 to ‘Requires Improvement’. The OFSTED report, published in March 2022, described how different characteristics promoted by the Equalities Act 2010, apart from in Music, “In other areas of the curriculum, the approach is not as balanced. This is particularly where teaching places more emphasis on the school’s social justice programme than on the acquisition of specific subject-content. In lower-school social studies, pupils spend much time repeatedly considering identity (including analysing their own characteristics) rather than learning, for example, geographical knowledge”. In

addition, it was reported that “The middle-school humanities curriculum, which includes English, also leads to a focus on social issues rather than subject knowledge and skills. This means that some pupils felt underprepared for high school”.

The report observed, “While recognising the importance of promoting equalities, a significant minority of parents and pupils told inspectors that a culture has developed where alternative opinions are not felt welcome. In some classrooms, teaching has not allowed for questioning or for the balanced presentation of opposing views. Leaders and trustees should ensure that teaching does not preclude tolerance of those with different views, particularly where specific partisan or political views are presented”.

It will be interesting to see how OFSTED will use the DfE guidance on “Political impartiality in schools” when making inspections in the future. The OFSTED report can be found by [clicking here](#) and the article in the Times by [clicking here](#).

TECHNOLOGY

5 Digital trends that threaten children in 2022

This post by Chris McKenna on the Protect Young Eyes website was written earlier in the year to highlight five digital trends that could target and exploit children in 2022. These threats revolve around increasing interaction between users of the Internet, especially in the area of gaming. The author also identified that although the Internet has allowed people to have a voice, one of the most troubling aspects of digital spaces is when moderation and community guidelines fail at preventing harmful content from being shared which may, in turn, lead to increased anxiety, trauma and uncertain behaviour among children and teens.

Another development, the ‘Metaverse’, has potentially dangerous consequences. The Metaverse is a digital world that allows virtual user engagement by mixing social networking, online gaming, augmented reality, virtual reality, and cryptocurrency. The Metaverse, which provides access to leisure and initiatives, including the ability to work, is described as a virtual world of the future. A recent article on the Christian Institute website exposed the dangers that this development places in the way of children leaving them exposed to sexual material, grooming and other threats to their well-being, the article can be read by [clicking here](#). Other dangers identified were the “darkening” of digital ownership, whereby not knowing who owns a digital space can allow the conduct in the digital space to be uncontrolled. Although technology may be a difficult area to keep up with, we would recommend reading this article to provide an awareness is what is happening in the digital world and why we need to be watchful. The article can be found by [clicking here](#).

CViE would be pleased to hear from anyone who may have experience and/or thought of the areas covered by this article, so that these can be shared

anonymously with our readership to help their understanding and equip them in protecting the children. Please feel free to email us on enquiries@cvie.org.uk

([Protect Young Eyes](#) is an American based website designed to help families, schools, and churches create safer digital environments. There is a range of materials on the website that may well be of help to parents in this digital age.)

ParentShield - The Child-Safe Mobile Network

CViE have been made aware of ParentShield which is (from their website) a mobile network “designed for children from the ground up, and has many features that can’t be found on any other network. Unlike Parental control software that controls a phone, you control the network, to make sure those using the phone are safe”. More details can be found by [clicking here](#).

CViE have not tested this product but is bringing it to your attention without making a recommendation. However, we are aware of the challenges that parents face in controlling the use of mobile phones so this may be a help in bringing the peace of mind that is needed. We would be pleased to hear from anyone who has experience of ParentShield so we can share this anonymously in future issues of *Education Matters*.

NOTE: Although we make every effort to ensure these links mentioned are accurate, up-to-date and relevant, CViE cannot take responsibility for content and pages maintained by external providers.

CALENDAR

School calendar and 'Awareness Days'

Due to the proliferation of events and ‘celebrations’ that are part of the school calendar - often imposed upon schools - CViE has taken the opportunity to try to identify what events might take place in schools to alert parents so that they can ask the question “what is covered in the events that happen within school and what this means for their children?”

CViE would take this opportunity to highlight forthcoming events that may be of interest:

APRIL

Stress Awareness Month	April
International Children's Book Day	April 2
International Day of Conscience	April 5
World Health Day	April 7
Ramadan	April 12 - May 12
Easter Sunday	April 17

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Earth Day 2022	April 22
AKA International Mother Earth Day	
St. George's Day	April 23
World Immunization Week	April 24

Parents could ask the school for a calendar of events and what is being covered, and it would be interesting to know whether schools are forthcoming with this information. Please feel free to contact us regarding any points in this section at enquiries@cvie.org.uk.

CViE are pleased to be offering, if the Lord will, our first 2 Online 'Meet-Ups':

Monday, April 4 Home Education – Staying the Course (details [here](#))

Friday, May 6 State Education – Making Your Views Known (details [here](#))

FINALLY

As we move to the end of the spring term, do pray for those who are, in whatever capacity, involved in education.

Do pray for the CViE Trustees and Tim Wills (Business and Development Manager) as we seek the Lord's will for the Charity and that the Lord will continue to supply our need in "equipping Christians to stand fast on the Word of God in education today".