

Written evidence submitted by Kashmire Hawker (BYC051)

Main Points

- Guidelines developed for all teenagers using social media
- A cross party agreed section of the National Curriculum, which addresses Body Image issues should be implemented as soon as possible
- Teaching to vulnerable groups should be instated instantly

Groups affected by body image issues

The number of groups who get perceived by fellow citizens are wide ranging and concerningly ever growing. As a Young Man who when just 8 in 2006 – who underwent testing for anorexia (of which for myself came back negative), I know perceptions can affect and hit anyone.

With 1.6 Million people across the UK affected by an eating disorder – of which 14-25 Year Olds are most affected (Source: The Priory Group - <http://www.priorygroup.com/eating-disorders/statistics>), it can be felt that the understanding of that group has been severely lacking.

I don't want anyone going through the experiences that others have had to endure and thus, it would be imperative of Education to teach all (more detail below)

The internet, social media and messaging

Social Media has played a major part in most people's lives since its spectacular rise to prominence since 2004.

It's negatives however can be demonstrated through many media reports and study's within the past several years, with one piece of research published in May (Source: National Citizen Service via Sky News - <http://news.sky.com/story/teenage-body-fears-influenced-by-social-media-report-10862251>) stating "More than half of teenagers have felt or do feel insecure about their appearance" – as well as "Nearly half of girls have tried to lose weight by the age of 17 and a third of boys have felt under pressure to be muscly."

Therefore, it seems imperative that there should be guidelines developed for all teenagers using social media regarding comments and views on body image, as to see this be stated in modern day society surely puts many groups in vast danger of risking their health.

Education

From what I have experienced or seen whilst going through the educational years, it is felt to be that the things have been non-existent. The only thing which has been developed within the time I have been within Education is a recent set of Teaching Guidance (Source: <https://www.berealcampaign.co.uk/assets/filemanager/documents/8121.pdf>)

It is crucial that a cross party agreed section of the National Curriculum, which addresses Body Image issues should be implemented as soon as possible – as from experience of PSHE within Secondary School, only references came from Sex and Relationship Education.

Specifically, and from looking at the above link, the teaching to vulnerable groups (as referred to on Page 41) should be instated as soon as possible so that understanding can as wide ranging and long lasting.