



### What is Public Legal Education?

*“PLE provides people with awareness, knowledge and understanding of rights and legal issues, together with the confidence and skills they need to deal with disputes and gain access to justice... It helps people recognise when they may need support, what sort of advice is available, and how to go about getting it. PLE has a further key role in helping citizens to better understand everyday life issues, making better decisions and anticipating and avoiding problems.”<sup>1</sup>*

### PLE in the curriculum

PLE is embedded within the National Curriculum, where it appears as part of the statutory subject of [citizenship](#). PLE also forms a key part of the [SMSC](#) for schools and the rule of law appears as one of the [fundamental British Values](#) that all schools must promote. For specific information about how each individual SmartLaw resource meets the following areas of the curriculum please refer to our [curriculum mapping guide](#).

### Citizenship

<b>Main aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Develop a sound knowledge and understanding of the rule of law and the justice system in our society and how laws are shaped and enforced.</li><li>■ Are equipped with the skills to think critically and debate political questions.</li></ul>
<b>Key Stage 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The development of the political system of democratic government in the United Kingdom, including the roles of citizens, Parliament and the monarch.</li><li>■ The operation of Parliament, including voting and elections, and the role of political parties.</li><li>■ The precious liberties enjoyed by the citizens of the United Kingdom.</li><li>■ The nature of rules and laws and the justice system, including the role of the police and the operation of courts and tribunals.</li></ul>
<b>Key Stage 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Parliamentary democracy and the key elements of the constitution of the United Kingdom, including the power of government, the role of citizens and Parliament in holding those in power to account, and the different roles of the executive, legislature and judiciary and a free press.</li><li>■ Human rights and international law.</li><li>■ The legal system in the UK, different sources of law and how the law helps society deal with complex problems.</li><li>■ Diverse national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding.</li></ul>

<sup>1</sup> [As defined by the Public Legal Education & Support Taskforce \(PLEAS\)](#)



### RSE and Health Education

<b>Families</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ What marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.</li><li>■ The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.</li></ul>
<b>Respectful relationships including friendships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.</li><li>■ The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.</li></ul>
<b>The law</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ It is important for young people to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This will help young people to know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships. There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions. Pupils should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught.</li></ul>

### SMSC

<b>Social</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Acceptance and engagement with the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; they develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.</li></ul>
<b>Moral</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong and to readily apply this understanding in their own lives, recognise legal boundaries and, in so doing, respect the civil and criminal law of England.</li></ul>
<b>Cultural</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Knowledge of Britain's democratic parliamentary system and its central role in shaping our history and values, and in continuing to develop Britain.</li></ul>



### Fundamental British Values

**Schools should promote the fundamental British values of:**

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

**Students should develop the following as a result of schools promoting fundamental British values:**

- An understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process.
- An appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their well-being and safety.
- An understanding that there is a separation of power between the executive and the judiciary, and that while some public bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account through Parliament, others such as the courts maintain independence.
- An understanding that the freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law.
- An acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour.
- An understanding of the importance of identifying and combating discrimination.