



**First Thought
Independent School**

FIRST THOUGHT CARE SERVICES

PSHE Policy

2026-2027

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Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations (2014)
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2021) 'Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education'
- DfE (2025) 'Relationships and Sex Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025' (KCSIE)

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy

Roles and Responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Ensuring the school's PSHE Policy is implemented effectively.
- Ensuring that the PSHE Policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds or protected characteristics.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Knowing, understanding, and acting within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.
- Showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others, recognising differences and respecting cultural diversity within contemporary Britain.
- Upholding fundamental British values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Ensuring a broad, structured and coherent curriculum entitlement which sets out the knowledge, skills and values that will be taught.
- Ensuring that PSHE teaching is underpinned by high levels of subject expertise and approaches which respect the distinct nature of the subject.
- Facilitating the day-to-day implementation and management of the PSHE Policy.
- Reviewing the PSHE Policy annually.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy, as outlined in the school's Complaints Policy.

The PSHE leader (who is also the RSE leader) is responsible for:

- Leading, managing and developing the school's provision in the subject area.
- Promoting and implementing the school's Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy at all times.
- Promoting and safeguarding the welfare of all pupils at all times.
- Liaising with other staff and professional agencies to devise a suitable scheme of work to ensure the PSHE curriculum is comprehensive and extensive.
- Ensuring the curriculum is inclusive and enables all pupils to achieve their full potential.
- Acting as a positive role model for all pupils and staff members.

Aims and Structure of the PSHE Curriculum

The school will seek to use PSHE to:

- Equip pupils with the necessary skills to be as independent as possible in selfcare and personal hygiene.
- Develop pupils' communication skills in order to meet their daily needs, ask for help and share their feelings and views.
- Prepare pupils for life by acquiring the knowledge and skills to manage successful friendships and relationships.
- Prepare pupils to be able to keep themselves safe in a variety of environments including their personal and online safety.
- Teach early life skills, particularly in road safety and Food Technology.
- Provide opportunities to access a range of local community facilities and try new activities with support.
- Equip pupils with the understanding to be successful and happy in their families and as members of society.
- Teach pupils the knowledge and skills to lead healthy lives both physically and mentally.
- Reduce barriers in pupils' social and emotional development that may hinder their ability to be part of a group, be able to learn or make good progress in their education.
- Develop pupils' ability to be resilient and confident, particularly in dealing with transitions and change, whether in or out of school.
- Ensure that all pupils have an understanding and confidence in their own identity, family and community. Plus, an understanding that all people have similarities and differences but are equal.
- Build, where appropriate, on the statutory content outlined in curriculum guidance documents on drug education, financial education, Relationship and Sex Education, the importance of physical activity and diet for a healthy lifestyle.

The school recognises that PSHE is a compulsory subject for independent schools according to paragraph 2(2)(d)(i)-(ii). It is also a statutory requirement to teach much of PSHE education via the statutory content – often referred to as RSHE – covering Relationships and Sex Education at key stages 1 and 2.

The PSHE subject leader will work closely with their colleagues in these curriculum areas and ensure that content is planned and taught in line with the Relationships and Sex Education Policy.

The school's PSHE curriculum will also cover economic wellbeing and careers and enterprise education.

PSHE complements several other curriculum subjects; therefore, where appropriate, the school will look for opportunities to make links between the subjects and integrate teaching.

Curriculum organisation

PSHE education will address both pupils' current experiences and preparation for their future. The programme of study will therefore provide a spiral curriculum to develop knowledge, skills and attributes, where prior learning is revisited, reinforced and extended year on year.

Through effective organisation and delivery of PSHE, the school will ensure that:

- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of a manageable size.
- The required content is communicated to pupils clearly, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned scheme of work.
- Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations.

The PSHE programme will be delivered by appropriately trained members of staff through a variety of opportunities including:

- Designated PSHE time as part of a spiral curriculum
- Circle time

- Use of external agencies and services
- School ethos
- Small group work
- Cross-curricular links
- Assemblies
- Enrichment days or weeks
- Residential trips

The school will use direct teaching via timetabled lessons to teach PSHE. Pupils will be taught PSHE through a range of teaching and learning styles, including active techniques such as discussion and group work. Pupils' opinions and questions, unless inappropriate, will be responded to respectfully by teachers.

PSHE lessons will be tailored to the pupils being taught, with consideration of:

- Pupils' ability.
- Pupils' age.
- Pupils' current knowledge on and readiness to learn about the topic being covered.
- Pupils' cultural backgrounds.
- Pupils with EAL.
- Pupils special educational needs and communication abilities.

The school will deliver Relationships and Sex Education as part of its timetabled PSHE programme, with due regard to the school's Relationships and Sex Education Policy.

Outside Agencies and External Programmes

At times the school will use external agencies either to support individual pupils or to teach specific skills. These programmes often are part of the Relationships and Sex Education curriculum and may include:

- "Clever Never Goes" – Teaching pupils to recognise when someone is asking them to go alone with them and what they should do to check whether this is okay.
- "PANTS" - A NSPCC programme that teaches about personal safety and the private parts of the body.
- "Speak out, Stay Safe" – A NSPCC programme that teaches about personal safety, boundaries including what abuse is and what to do if it happens to them.

Parents & carers are always informed about the content of these programmes if being used. At times external specialist agencies will work with individual pupils. They will use their specialist knowledge to support the school and family with specific difficulties.

Programme of Study

The programme of study sets out learning opportunities for each pathway at the school – informal and semi-formal. We will use the PSHE Association's Programme for Pupils with SEND. All pupils access PSHE and this aims to be needs-led whilst gaining coverage across these core themes:

- **Self-Awareness** (Me, who I am, my likes, dislikes, strengths and interests)
- **Self-care, Support and Safety** (Looking after myself and keeping safe; aspects of Relationships and Sex Education.)
- **Managing Feelings** (Understanding feelings, and that how I feel and how others feel affects choices and behaviour, aspects of Relationships and Sex Education)
- **Changing and Growing** (How I and others are changing; new opportunities and responsibilities; aspects of Relationships and Sex Education)

- **Healthy Lifestyles** (Being and keeping healthy, physically and mentally)
- **The World I Live In** (Living confidently in the wider world)

Pupils on the informal path will be expected to access the following progression stages:

- Encountering - effective engagement in the learning process
- Foundation – underpinning learning

Pupils on the semi-formal part will be expected to access the following progression stages within this curriculum:

- Encountering - effective engagement in the learning process
- Foundation – underpinning learning
- Core – fundamental elements

Pupils on the semi-formal part will be expected to access the following progression stages within this curriculum:

- Encountering - effective engagement in the learning process
- Foundation – underpinning learning
- Core – fundamental elements

An overview of the programme of study by year group for each pathway is presented on our curriculum plans in Appendix 1.

Relationships and Sex Education is delivered in line with statutory requirements and carefully planned to be age-appropriate and sensitive to pupils' needs. Details are in the Relationships and Sex Education Policy.

Pupils also develop skills and attributes such as resilience, self-esteem, risk management, team-working, and critical thinking to prepare them for modern life in Britain.

There is a focus at both Key Stages on the development of skills and attributes such as resilience, self-esteem, risk-management, team-working and critical thinking. Pupils are prepared for life, learning how to become responsible citizens, how to manage their money well and make sound financial decisions from a young age. They learn how to keep themselves safe and well.

Assessment

The school will set the same high expectations of the quality of pupils' work in PSHE as for other areas of the curriculum. A strong PSHE curriculum will be developed to build on the knowledge pupils have previously acquired, including from other subjects, with regular feedback on their progress.

Lessons will be planned to ensure pupils of differing abilities are suitably challenged. Teaching will be assessed to identify where pupils need extra support or intervention.

Pupils' knowledge and understanding will be assessed through formative assessment methods such as tests, written assignments, discussion groups and quizzes in order to monitor progress.

Equality and Accessibility

We ensure that PSHE lessons actively promote equality, diversity, and inclusion, supporting pupils to develop an understanding and respect for others. Lessons include discussions around the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010, which are:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Marriage and civil partnership.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

Pupils are taught the importance of respect, tolerance, and anti-discrimination. Lessons also address how to recognise and challenge prejudice, promoting an ethos of inclusion and equality.

The school will consider the backgrounds, gender, age range and needs of its pupils and determine whether it is necessary to put in place additional support for some pupils based on their protected characteristics. The school will design the PSHE curriculum to be inclusive of all pupils. The school will be aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to their characteristics, e.g. having SEND or being LGBTQ+.

Teachers will understand that they may need to liaise with the SENCO and adapt their planning or work to appropriately deliver the curriculum to pupils.

Where there is a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the needs of pupils at different developmental stages, the school will ensure the teaching remains sensitive, age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate, and is delivered with reference to the law.

Safeguarding

The school recognises the role it plays in preventative education and will ensure that pupils are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.

The school will implement a whole-school approach to PSHE that prepares pupils for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny, misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and sexual violence and harassment.

Teaching will be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual pupils, including pupils who are victims of abuse and pupils specific special educational needs.

Confidentiality within the classroom will be an important component of PSHE, and teachers will be expected to respect the confidentiality of their pupils as far as is possible.

Due to the nature of the matters discussed in PSHE, there may be a higher likelihood for safeguarding concerns to arise or be disclosed by pupils. In line with the school's Safeguarding Policy, all staff will be aware of the indicators and risks of a range of safeguarding issues, including child-on-child abuse, and will follow the appropriate procedures should a safeguarding concern be disclosed.

PSHE teachers will encourage pupils to discuss the issues raised in the lesson with a member of staff if they wish to do so. Pupils will also be made aware of how to raise concerns or make reports about potential safeguarding issues, and how reports will be handled. This also includes concerns and reports about a friend or peer. The DSL or deputy DSL will be involved in the development of safeguarding-related elements of the PSHE curriculum.

Monitoring and Review

The overall quality of the PSHE curriculum is monitored and reviewed by the PSHE leader, and the Headteacher. Individual pupil progress is reviewed via IEP targets and progress towards long term goals in the pupils EHCPs. Progress is clearly written in the Annual Review of the EHCP and the end of year report.

Pupils are expected to develop knowledge and skills in being able to:

- Communicate their likes, dislikes, emotions and views to the best of their ability.
- Recognise and respond appropriately to the feelings and views of others.
- Be independent in self-care, hygiene and daily tasks as far as possible.
- Know the elements of friendship and be able to form them.
- Be able to take part in appropriate games, play and leisure activities.
- Know about and follow simple habits and rules that keep them personally safe.
- Know about and follow simple safety rules for specific environments e.g. road safety, kitchen safety.
- Have some understanding of their own identity, their family and community.

- Be able to put into practice simple activities for keeping healthy.
- Understand who can help them in different environments and how to ask for help.
- Be able to show respect and kindness to all, whether different or similar to them.

This policy will be reviewed by the headteacher and PSHE leader on an annual basis. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all staff and other relevant parties.

APPENDIX 1: PSHE CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Informal Pathway

Year Group	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Year 1	Focus: Exploring Self and Emotions Activities: Respond to sensory cues about self (e.g. mirrors, name call), explore happy/sad expressions, engage with images or props showing likes/dislikes.	Focus: Turn-Taking and Joint Play Activities: Participate in parallel play, watch and respond to adult turn-taking, engage with props for sharing	Focus: Staying Safe with Support Activities: Explore safe/unsafe through object exploration, notice reaction to “stop” or “no” cues, follow adult away from hazard.
Year 2	Focus: Recognising Kindness and Unkindness Activities: Watch adults model kind behaviour, notice facial expressions, respond to sound or gesture cues about being upset.	Focus: Playing Alongside Others Activities: Sit near peers, use sensory materials together, respond to peer names, engage with adults in pairs.	Focus: Body Awareness and Boundaries Activities: Respond to touch cues with support, engage in sensory body mapping (e.g., lotion play), react to ‘my space’ visuals.
Year 3	Focus: Familiar Routines and Roles Activities: Engage in preferred Activities, respond to prompts during class jobs or shared routines, show interest in own achievements.	Focus: Exploring Social Games Activities: Join adult-led games involving repetition, action songs, or touch and sound-based interaction.	Focus: Exploring Change Through Routine Activities: Anticipate daily transitions, explore sensory props for new events, engage with visual timetables and now/next boards.
Year 4	Focus: Expressing Feelings with Support Activities: Use symbols or vocalisations to show feelings, respond to visual prompts about emotions, explore calming and alerting activities.	Focus: Recognising Others' Feelings Activities: Watch others' reactions, notice when someone is sad/happy, explore matching feeling symbols to expressions.	Focus: Simple Self-Care Routines Activities: Participate in hand washing, teeth brushing songs, snack choices, or dressing cues with physical prompting.
Year 5	Focus: Reacting to Change and Difference Activities: Explore different textures, sounds, routines, and people; react to changes in simple environments with support.	Focus: Simple Cooperation Activities: Follow a peer in simple movement games, respond to musical cues as a group, show awareness of joint tasks.	Focus: Exploring Privacy with Support Activities: Explore 'my space' activities, use symbols for toilet/changing time, respond to adult support with clothing tasks.
Year 6	Focus: Knowing Trusted Adults	Focus: Class Belonging and Roles	Focus: Preparing for Familiar Transitions

	Activities: Recognise familiar adults through sound, sight or touch; engage in sensory greetings; respond to adult cues during play or transitions.	Activities: Participate in group circle, respond to group routines, help pass items or join in class jobs with adult modelling.	Activities: Visit new spaces with support, use 'All About Me' objects/books, repeat goodbye routines and respond to reassurance cues.
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Semi-Formal Pathway

Year Group	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Year 1	Focus: Things I'm Good At & Kindness Activities: Name things we enjoy and are good at, explore happy feelings, recognise kind and unkind actions using pictures and play.	Focus: Taking Turns & Friendships Activities: Join in simple games, learn turn-taking, explore what it means to be a friend.	Focus: Keeping Safe and Asking for Help Activities: Learn what is safe/unsafe, practise asking for help using symbols, identify safe adults.
Year 2	Focus: Feelings and Personal Strengths Activities: Identify things that make us happy, talk about how we feel when others are kind or unkind, learn how to ask for help.	Focus: Helping and Including Others Activities: Recognise helpful behaviours, practise including others, identify trusted adults to talk to.	Focus: Online Safety and Boundaries Activities: Talk about screen time, practise asking before sharing, use role-play to act out safe online behaviour.
Year 3	Focus: Strengths, Teasing & Emotions Activities: Describe strengths in and out of school, recognise teasing and how it feels, begin identifying safe responses.	Focus: Friendship Challenges & Help-Seeking Activities: Discuss what makes a good friend, respond to unkindness, learn who to ask for help.	Focus: Personal Space & Consent Basics Activities: Explore public/private behaviours, understand body boundaries, practise using 'yes' and 'no'.
Year 4	Focus: Personal Qualities and Bullying Activities: Explore unique talents, name hurtful behaviour and exclusion, use role-play to practise safe and respectful responses.	Focus: Conflict & Resolution Activities: Use visuals to practise solving disagreements, discuss fair/unfair, practise asking for support.	Focus: Growing and Changing Activities: Recognise that people change as they grow, explore appropriate language for the body, discuss who to talk to with questions.
Year 5	Focus: Managing Feelings & Prejudice Activities: Reflect on personal goals, explain why bullying is wrong, explore prejudice and how to challenge it.	Focus: Peer Pressure & Assertiveness Activities: Explore peer influence, role-play saying 'no', develop scripts for tricky situations.	Focus: Privacy, Consent and Digital Safety Activities: Revisit safe/unsafe touch and contact, discuss digital sharing rules, explore how to ask for/withhold consent.
Year 6	Focus: Aspiration & Resilience Activities: Set personal goals, understand how to respond to discrimination, practise seeking help and offering peer support.	Focus: Changing Relationships & Support Activities: Reflect on changing friendships, identify trusted networks, practise communication strategies for transitions.	Focus: Independence and Responsibility Activities: Discuss decision-making and independence, practise respectful boundaries, prepare personal safety plans for transitions.

Formal Pathway

Year Group	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Year 1	Focus: Things I'm Good At & Kindness Activities: Name things we enjoy and are good at, explore happy feelings, recognise kind and unkind actions using pictures and play.	Focus: Taking Turns & Friendships Activities: Join in simple games, learn turn-taking, explore what it means to be a friend.	Focus: Keeping Safe and Asking for Help Activities: Learn what is safe/unsafe, practise asking for help using symbols, identify safe adults.
Year 2	Focus: Feelings and Personal Strengths Activities: Identify things that make us happy, talk about how we feel when others are kind or unkind, learn how to ask for help.	Focus: Helping and Including Others Activities: Recognise helpful behaviours, practise including others, identify trusted adults to talk to.	Focus: Online Safety and Boundaries Activities: Talk about screen time, practise asking before sharing, use role-play to act out safe online behaviour.
Year 3	Focus: Strengths, Teasing & Emotions Activities: Describe strengths in and out of school, recognise teasing and how it feels, begin identifying safe responses.	Focus: Friendship Challenges & Help-Seeking Activities: Discuss what makes a good friend, respond to unkindness, learn who to ask for help.	Focus: Personal Space & Consent Basics Activities: Explore public/private behaviours, understand body boundaries, practise using 'yes' and 'no'.
Year 4	Focus: Personal Qualities and Bullying Activities: Explore unique talents, name hurtful behaviour and exclusion, use role-play to practise safe and respectful responses.	Focus: Conflict & Resolution Activities: Use visuals to practise solving disagreements, discuss fair/unfair, practise asking for support.	Focus: Growing and Changing Activities: Recognise that people change as they grow, explore appropriate language for the body, discuss who to talk to with questions.
Year 5	Focus: Managing Feelings & Prejudice Activities: Reflect on personal goals, explain why bullying is wrong, explore prejudice and how to challenge it.	Focus: Peer Pressure & Assertiveness Activities: Explore peer influence, role-play saying 'no', develop scripts for tricky situations.	Focus: Privacy, Consent and Digital Safety Activities: Revisit safe/unsafe touch and contact, discuss digital sharing rules, explore how to ask for/withhold consent.
Year 6	Focus: Aspiration & Resilience	Focus: Changing Relationships & Support	Focus: Independence and Responsibility

	Activities: Set personal goals, understand how to respond to discrimination, practise seeking help and offering peer support.	Activities: Reflect on changing friendships, identify trusted networks, practise communication strategies for transitions.	Activities: Discuss decision-making and independence, practise respectful boundaries, prepare personal safety plans for transitions.
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