

PSHE Policy



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Responsible Person: Hayley Winstanley

Introduction

The promotion of Fundamental British Values (FBV) is an integral part of PSHE and supports the whole school ethos. We focus on these values through the School's continued emphasis on the growth of the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development. SMSC is embedded into our Schemes of Work but is also reinforced through many opportunities within the curriculum. The integration of SMSC is also a prerequisite for meeting the requirements of the Independent School's Teaching Standards - Part 2. For further information about how SMSC is actively promoted, please refer to our separate 'SMSC British Values Policy'.

This policy covers our school's approach to Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education for pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. At our school, PSHE education is a planned programme of learning through which pupils acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to manage their lives now and in the future. We recognise that our pupils have experienced significant trauma which affects their learning and development, and our approaches are adapted accordingly through trauma-informed practice.

Aims and Objectives

The PSHE curriculum aims to make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development, their behaviour and safety. In addition, the learning provided by the whole-school and curriculum PSHE provision is essential to the safeguarding of all our pupils. The PSHE core themes of Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World are embedded within the curriculum and links learning to economic and cultural difference and helps to promote the Fundamental British Values of mutual respect, service, leadership, character, empathy and tolerance.

By ensuring that PSHE is a central aspect of each pupil's learning experience, we aim to enable children to:

- know and understand what constitutes a healthy lifestyle
- be aware of safety issues
- understand friendships and relationships with others
- have respect for others
- be independent and responsible members of the school community
- be positive and active members of a global community
- develop self-confidence and self-esteem, and make informed choices regarding personal and social issues
- develop understanding of their own bodies and changes
- aspire to economic wellbeing
- develop emotional literacy, self-regulation strategies, and build resilience

Equality Act Compliance

Schools are required to comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Under the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because

of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics). Schools must also make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages and be mindful of the SEND code of practice when planning for these subjects.

Our PSHE programme promotes equality and diversity, celebrates difference, and ensures no pupil is disadvantaged by their individual circumstances, learning needs, or protected characteristics.

PSHE Education Leadership

Roles and Responsibilities

PSHE education is led by Nicola Etherington (Head of PSHE), who works closely with our therapeutic team and teaching staff to ensure effective delivery across all year groups. The programme is taught by trained staff who understand our pupils' SEMH needs and adapt their teaching accordingly. Strategic oversight is provided by Karen Holmes (Senior Leadership Team).

The Head of PSHE is responsible for:

- Updating and evaluating the curriculum content
- Ensuring curriculum content is shared with all relevant staff
- Providing ongoing support and guidance for staff, especially for sensitive topics
- Curriculum planning and adaptation
- Monitoring provision and pupil engagement
- Liaising with parents about the PSHE programme

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Creating safe, supportive learning environments
- Delivering content in accessible ways using trauma-informed approaches
- Maintaining appropriate records
- Identifying when pupils need additional support
- Establishing clear parameters for discussion using ground rules

Staff Training and Support

All staff teaching PSHE receive initial training on the curriculum and statutory requirements, with additional training on supporting pupils with SEMH needs. This includes understanding trauma-informed approaches, managing sensitive topics, and supporting emotional regulation. Staff receive ongoing professional development through the PSHE Association and internal training programmes.

Regular supervision and support is provided to all PSHE teachers, recognising that working with SEMH pupils can be emotionally demanding. This ensures staff wellbeing and maintains high-quality provision.

External Contributors

We use external contributors to enhance our PSHE programme when their expertise adds value to planned learning. Organisations delivering sessions around PSHE will be pre-approved and made aware of our safeguarding procedures. All visitors receive comprehensive briefing about our pupils' needs and work alongside our staff who remain responsible for pupil support and behaviour management. All materials are reviewed in advance.

Engaging with Parents/Carers and Students

We are committed to working with parents and carers. Parents and carers are informed about the policy through parental consultation, and the policy is available to view on the school website.

We communicate with parents and carers daily in person through staff when picking up and dropping off students and through students' learning managers, where any concerns or worries can be discussed. We offer support and encourage discussion of topics at home by contacting parents/carers or parents/carers contacting school to discuss any concerns or difficulties that the students may be having and directing to or providing resources that can enable discussions/support at home.

If a parent or carer has questions about our PSHE provision they can contact the Head of PSHE by phone on 07539426396 or email nicola.etherington@morethaned.co.uk or by contacting the school 01302 957433.

If parents/carers would like to view PSHE curriculum materials, they can contact the school or the Head of PSHE.

Student Voice

Students have been involved in the creation of the PSHE curriculum using student voice and regular feedback from lessons, which share their views and opinions. Students' needs will continue to be met by making sure that the PSHE curriculum is relevant to their particular needs, taking into consideration their individual circumstances and background.

To achieve this the school's approach to PSHE will take account of:

- Ethnic and Cultural Diversity
- Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Special Educational Needs

Key priorities identified by pupils include feeling safe in lessons, having clear routines, and learning practical skills for managing emotions and relationships.

The PSHE Curriculum

Structure and Framework

The PSHE Curriculum is planned and developed upon the three recommended core themes from the PSHE Association:

Health and Wellbeing encompasses statutory Health Education including mental wellbeing, internet safety and harms, physical health and fitness, healthy eating, drugs, alcohol and tobacco education, health and prevention, basic first aid, and the changing adolescent body including puberty and menstruation. Following the 2025 guidance updates, we include teaching about grief, loss and bereavement.

Relationships delivers statutory Relationships Education at primary level and Relationships and Sex Education at secondary level. This includes families and people who care for me, caring friendships, respectful relationships including consent, online relationships, being safe including recognising abuse, and intimate and sexual relationships at secondary level. We teach correct terminology for body parts as recommended in the 2025 guidance.

Living in the Wider World covers essential non-statutory content including economic wellbeing and financial capability, careers education and aspiration, personal safety including fire, water, road and rail safety, rights and responsibilities, British Values, and environmental awareness.

Structure of Teaching

In the classroom, the delivery of PSHE lies with the student's teacher/staff member. The content delivered is planned in a sensitive manner to ensure that it remains factual, unbiased and inclusive. Wherever possible, a degree of flexibility is built into lessons to allow staff to adapt content and delivery to suit the specific needs of their students, remaining sensitive to any particular needs of individuals.

The PSHE Curriculum continues to be regularly reviewed to ensure that its coverage remains up to date, meeting the teaching and learning requirements of the pupils. Whilst there is a planned PSHE curriculum, there may be occasions when the order of coverage needs to shift, to adapt to the needs of the ever-changing world (e.g. extraordinary events like the COVID-19 Pandemic, where a particular emphasis was made on supporting pupil mental and emotional health).

Resources

The PSHE curriculum is available to staff through the whole school curriculum map and lesson plans are shared to staff the week prior to teaching by the Head of PSHE. As noted earlier, lessons are under constant review to ensure it responds to the needs of individuals or responds to events of national significance.

Age-Appropriate Delivery

Content is delivered at age-appropriate levels whilst recognising that our pupils' emotional and social development may differ from typical expectations. We ensure dignity and respect by using age-appropriate materials whilst differentiating teaching methods to support individual learning needs. Our trauma-informed approach means we are particularly sensitive to topics that might be challenging for pupils with adverse childhood experiences.

Spiral Curriculum Approach

Our curriculum follows a spiral model, revisiting key concepts regularly with increasing depth. This approach particularly benefits our pupils who may need additional reinforcement and repetition. Each topic builds on prior learning whilst allowing for different starting points and progression rates.

Teaching and Learning

The PSHE curriculum is delivered using the PSHE Association framework, which is taught through one dedicated 30-minute timetabled lesson per week and is delivered on a one-to-one basis or in small groups where possible. The PSHE delivered for each year group is age appropriate and are supported by additional sessions delivered through Focus Friday, internal visitors, external visits and work experience for years 10 and 11.

Lessons include a range of teaching strategies and materials designed to support students in their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum topics. Topics will be handled sensitively and within a framework of equality in the classroom. While personal views are respected, all PSHE issues are taught without bias. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that students are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect others who may have a different opinion.

Creating Safe Learning Environments

Staff will establish clear parameters of appropriate discussion using ground rules, including the use of detachment tools that remove any requirement to think/speak personally through using scenarios, encouraging phrases like "Someone might think that...", 'What if...?' questions. These create a respectful atmosphere where pupils feel safe to participate and learn. The physical environment is organised to minimise distractions and provide calm spaces when needed.

Handling Questions

We believe it is important that pupils should have opportunities to have their questions answered in a sensitive and informative way. Students will not be directed to find out answers online, unless through a carefully selected and pre-approved organisation or resource. Due to the nature of the topics, questions posed by students do not have to be answered by staff immediately. Staff will use their professional judgement in deciding whether it is appropriate to answer a question, and whether it best answered immediately or at a later time. Staff are required to refer to the Designated Safeguarding Team if a question or comment gives rise to a concern about a child's welfare.

Trauma-Informed Approach

As a Trauma Informed school, staff are also aware that some topics may trigger an emotional response in some students, and they may present with expressive behaviours. Staff will use their judgement to respond appropriately. The Senior Leadership Team will audit the topic coverage and give guidance to staff where students may need to be sensitively given the option to withdraw. Through the PSHE lessons students will regularly be signposted to specialist organisations, helplines, trained school staff and trusted adults.

Assessment and Evaluation

Our school uses a range of methods to assess and report on student progress and development:

- Recognition of achievement and personal progress
- Formative assessments where appropriate
- ISI inspections

- Self-evaluation and discussion
- Reporting annually to parents

We assess student learning by making judgements of their level of understanding as observed during lessons and in their individual contributions to wider school life. We also want to assess student wellbeing and raise individual self-esteem.

The achievement of each student will be reported to parents each year in their annual report.

We will not have formal examinations in PSHE – as such the assessments made on achievements will be positive and reflect the student's individual development and understanding throughout the year.

Monitoring and Review

The Head of PSHE will review this policy annually and more often when legislation and guidance changes and monitor its implementation and effectiveness. The Senior Leadership Team and Head of PSHE will regularly monitor and review the implementation of the PSHE curriculum.

Safeguarding

Staff are aware that effective PSHE, which brings an understanding of what is and is not appropriate in a relationship, lifestyle or community, can lead to the disclosure of a child protection issue.

All staff read the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) document annually, attend regular safeguarding training and know to adhere to the school's safeguarding policy if a disclosure is made: not offering complete confidentiality and ensuring the Designated Safeguarding Team (DSL) is informed of any safeguarding concerns.

PSHE education plays a crucial role in keeping our pupils safe. The curriculum explicitly teaches pupils to recognise risks, understand their rights, know how to seek help, and develop protective behaviours. Staff are trained to recognise that our pupils may be particularly vulnerable and ensure safeguarding themes are woven throughout the programme.

Organisations delivering sessions around PSHE will be pre-approved and will be made aware of our safeguarding procedures.

Appendix 1

The policy has been developed with due regard to the following statutory guidance and advice for schools

- [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#) (statutory guidance)
- [Behaviour in schools - GOV.UK](#) (advice for schools, including advice for appropriate behaviour between pupils)
- [Equality Act 2010: advice for schools - GOV.UK](#)
- [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK](#) (Statutory guidance)
- [Mental health and behaviour in schools - GOV.UK](#) (advice for schools)
- [Preventing bullying - GOV.UK](#) (advice for schools, including advice on cyberbullying)
- [Guidance | EHRC](#) (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts)
- [Promoting fundamental British values through SMSC - GOV.UK](#) (guidance for maintained schools on promoting basic important British values as part of pupil's social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC))
- [Character education framework - GOV.UK](#) (non-statutory guidance to schools on character education and development)
- [Citizenship programmes of study for key stages 1 and 2 - GOV.UK](#) (non-statutory programme of study and attainment for citizenship at key stages 1 and 2)
- [National curriculum in England: citizenship programmes of study - GOV.UK](#) (statutory programme of study and attainment for citizenship at key stage 3 and 4)
- [SHEU: The Schools and Students Health Education Unit | Surveys, publishing and research for education and health](#)
- [PSHE Association | Charity and membership body for PSHE education](#)