



ST PAUL'S SCHOOL
Juniors

PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) Education Policy

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Applicable	SPJ		

This policy is available on the Handbook page of the School Intranet and policies page of the School website and can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required; such requests can be made by email to: policyquery@stpaulsschool.org.uk

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1. **PSHE education leadership**

This policy complements, and should be read in conjunction with, the following policies:

- SPJ Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy
- SPJ Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Policy
- SPJ Safeguarding Policy
- SPJ How Pupils at SPJ Learn about Keeping Safe

This policy will be reviewed by the Head of PSHE annually or at any time determined by the release of new guidance or statutory requirements from the DfE.

1.1 Definitions aims and rationale

This policy covers the School's approach to Personal, Social, Health and Economic education at St Paul's Juniors (SPJ) from Lower First (Year 3) through to Upper Third (Year 8). At SPJ, PSHE education plays an important role in the character education and personal development of pupils from the moment they join us right the way through to when they leave.

PSHE education directly contributes to the School's vision: to nurture a generation of Paulines that will make a positive contribution to the world, ensuring that St Paul's School is a place where every person, regardless of their identity, can find success whilst being their most authentic self. PSHE education at SPJ is central to the School Development Plan (2023-26), and the objectives set out in Section 3 and Section 4. Our bespoke spiral curriculum, which develops pupils' SMSC education, relationships and health education and careers education, provides opportunities for pupils to explore their own identity and develop empathy for a diverse range of experiences. Our provision is dynamic: it is reviewed regularly by subject specialists, the pastoral team, pupils and parents. The PSHE curriculum aims to be proactive in safeguarding pupils in an age-appropriate way as well as responsive in addressing emerging issues.

Our PSHE education programme is underpinned by the School's character traits of kindness, respect, integrity, humility and resilience. These character traits play a crucial role in setting and maintaining standards for behaviour and conduct in all aspects of school life, and the PSHE education programme supports and enhances SPJ character education. For example, PSHE education aims to promote the importance of self-esteem and resilience, as well as the capacity to empathise with others.

This policy and the PSHE curriculum have been produced with reference to DfE and PSHE Association guidance, particularly 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' (updated September 2021). This policy also considers the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

The DfE published further draft Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education guidance for consultation in May 2024. Although not statutory from September 2024, this policy considers the direction of travel suggested in this draft guidance.

1.2 Roles, responsibilities and staff training

Whilst PSHE at SPJ is taught in the main by the Head of PSHE, First Year lessons are taught by form tutors and a small number of classes in other year groups are taught by teachers from other subject areas. Insofar as possible, teachers opt-in to teach PSHE.

Teachers responsible for teaching PSHE receive training through INSET at the start of each term delivered by the Head of PSHE. These sessions provide a forum for staff to discuss upcoming topics and resources, consider possible questions from pupils and share best practice. Alongside formal meetings each term, informal meetings with individual members of staff take place on an ad-hoc basis. Staff teaching RSE also have the option to complete relevant training through external programmes such as NSPCC's Talk Relationships. At a whole school level we use external contributors to deliver CPD on the place of RSE in the wider curriculum, and broader themes of diversity and inclusion.

1.3 Engaging parents and other stakeholders

Parents and carers are informed about the PSHE programme through termly newsletters written by the Head of PSHE in which the content of the term's curriculum is shared. We offer support and encourage ongoing discussion of PSHE topics by providing parents with a list of relevant resources designed specifically for discussions at home. These resources are varied and diverse in nature and aim to meet the needs of all children, regardless of background. Parents and carers are also invited to attend a range of webinars hosted by Dr Kathy Weston, founder of Tooled Up Education. These evidence-informed sessions provide insight and guidance on all aspects of parenting, education and family life.

In all relevant communication, parents and carers are signposted to this policy and other relevant policies, which are available on the PSHE curriculum page of the School's website.

In addition to termly newsletters for all parents, the Head of PSHE hosts webinars for Upper Second, Lower Third and Upper Third parents and carers prior to teaching Relationships Education or Relationships and Sex Education. These webinars set out the content of the lessons with reference to relevant sections of DfE guidance. The rationale for teaching RSE at these points is communicated in line with the School's values and the aims and ethos of PSHE. The crucial role of parents is also communicated, and parents and carers are guided to engage in conversations at home to support PSHE teaching in school. Parents and carers can access lesson resources on request via the Head of PSHE and will be invited to meet in-person to discuss any queries or concerns in more detail.

1.4 Policy Links and Review Date

Parent voice is sought via a questionnaire at the end of each academic year, the result of which informs adaptations to the curriculum for the following year. Additionally, every two years, parents are invited to an online consultation about the RSE policy – this most recently took place in 2024/25. The next consultation is due to take place in 2026/27.

Pupils are involved in the design of the PSHE curriculum through regular pupil voice surveys for Third Year pupils in particular. In 2024/25, pupils identified these as the areas they most wanted PSHE lessons to cover: online safety, in particular navigating language and 'trends' on social media; dealing with rejection; careers guidance.

2. PSHE education and curriculum design

2.1 Curriculum planning

The aim of our PSHE education curriculum is that pupils will:

- *know and understand the importance of:*

mutual respect and tolerance, individual liberty, the rule of law and democracy as underpinning what it means to be a British citizen;

taking care of one's own physical and mental health, as well as looking out for others;

acting with integrity and humility;

critically assessing information on and offline for validity and reliability;

seeking support from a trustworthy source.

- *be able to:*

articulate their values and beliefs about a range of contemporary issues relating to personal, social, health and economic education;

actively listen to the views of others and respond respectfully;

identify risks and make judgements about how to act in a way that keeps them safe, both now and in the future;

know who to go to for help and support if they are struggling.

2.2 PSHE Curriculum Map

The PSHE curriculum is a spiral curriculum meaning that at all Key Stages pupils explore key ideas, concepts and issues relating to citizenship, inclusion and diversity, relationships, physical and mental health and safety, and future planning and careers. A full curriculum map can be seen below.

We ensure the curriculum is broad and balanced by drawing upon resources from a range of sources including the PSHE Association, NSPCC, Childline and various government backed initiatives. We regularly review the curriculum as well as individual units of work and single lessons to ensure not only that they meet the needs of our pupils, but also that they contain relevant and up-to-date information and data and share a diverse range of views and ideas.

Our curriculum is age-appropriate at all stages. Whilst we recognise that our pupils are academically able, often working far above average for their age, emotional development is age and stage dependent. All resources are quality assured by subject specialists in line with statutory requirements around safeguarding (KCSIE 2023). Department for Education guidance on Relationships and Sex Education as well as subject-specific research endorsed by the PSHE Association is used in conjunction with local authority data and pupil, parent and staff voice to maintain this.

An overview of the topics taught can be seen in Appendix A.

2.3 Assessment and evaluation

We allocate dedicated curriculum time to PSHE education in all year groups, provision which continues throughout SPS. Our PSHE education takes place as weekly 35 minute lessons. In the Lower First and Upper First Years, PSHE lessons are taught by the class teacher using centralised lessons. This ensures that pupils see PSHE as a safe environment to discuss views and share feelings from the start of their SPJ journey. Starting in the Lower Second Year, and as is the case across the curriculum, lessons are taught by subject specialists, and PSHE is no exception. Insofar as possible, PSHE is taught by teachers who opt-in to teach the subject; whilst it might not be their primary subject, all PSHE teachers receive training and CPD and have, in most cases, been teaching the subject for a number of years.

Knowledge and understanding in PSHE is assessed in a variety of ways, albeit in ways that may be slightly different to in other subjects. For some topics particularly in L3 and U3, we use baseline assessment activities to find out pupils' prior knowledge and understanding, particularly when there is a new intake of pupils, as well as ahead of teaching certain topics, such as RSE topics. These assessments are often in the form of multiple-choice quizzes, which provide data across individual classes and entire cohorts. Over time, we assess changes in pupils' knowledge and understanding year on year. For some units/topics, baseline assessments are more informal, taking the form of mindmaps or small-group discussions. Teachers will gauge starting points during these activities and adjust upcoming lessons as necessary. Following endpoint assessments, our teachers are encouraged to review class results and identify persistent and common gaps in knowledge and address these before moving on to a new unit of work.

In addition to baseline and end point assessments, teachers use formative assessment in every lesson to gauge pupils' levels of understanding and there is flexibility within the curriculum to give teachers more time on topics as necessary, as well as to take time answering questions from pupils.

When using external speakers to deliver aspects of our PSHE programme to pupils, we ensure that their values and ethos are in line with the School Development Plan, for example that they reflect our aims for promoting diversity and inclusion. We select visitors using a robust vetting process, taking into account the reputation of the individual/company both publicly and amongst other schools, and we request resources ahead of delivery for quality assurance and safeguarding purposes. We embed learning from external speakers into the PSHE curriculum by aligning workshops and talks with taught topics in the spiral curriculum. Rather than being a standalone event, visiting speakers enhance the taught curriculum and we devote time in subsequent PSHE lessons to encourage meaningful reflection. We monitor and evaluate our choice of visitors using pupil voice and staff voice after the talk/workshop has taken place.

We evaluate our curriculum annually, drawing upon information from pupil and staff voice, as well as feedback from parents and carers. Pupils are invited to give feedback as part of formalised endpoint assessments, as well as through a broader pupil voice survey during the second half of the summer term. We act on this feedback by triangulating it with changes to local and national safeguarding needs, as well as the changing needs of each cohort; this may occasionally result in making changes to the content of the curriculum.

3. PSHE Teaching and Learning

3.1 Assessment for learning

PSHE is taught through a range of teaching methods and relies on establishing a safe learning environment, effective teaching and learning, reflection, evaluation and assessment and creating effective partnerships. All lessons are standardised across each cohort to ensure that all pupils receive the same standard of teaching. All resources are planned by the Head of PSHE. Class teachers are encouraged to adapt resources where necessary to meet the needs of their class, for example by ensuring that the pedagogical approach makes the content accessible for all.

Our lessons develop knowledge, skills and attributes through a mix of sharing facts and statistics, discussing varying opinions and viewpoints and applying knowledge and opinions to diverse scenarios. We use distancing techniques to ensure that pupils are considering relevant scenarios in an age-appropriate and depersonalised way. Scenarios will always refer to named, fictional individuals that pupils can relate to, and who are 'a similar age to you at a school a bit like this one'. This helps pupils develop empathy towards the character and consider their genuine views about the situation and how they might respond, whilst avoiding pupils feeling exposed, victimised, humiliated or at risk. Teachers will check the names used in a resource prior to using to make sure names are not shared by pupils in the class (or, where necessary, year group).

PSHE lessons avoid inducing shock or shame by ensuring the content of all lessons is age-appropriate and based on factual information. Research shows that attempts to scare or shock young people into making a healthy choice rarely work and can indeed 'backfire' by inadvertently creating excitement, curiosity or even status among pupils who accept the risk. This does not mean that potential consequences of the lifestyle choice should not be made clear, but we know that balance is important. For example, young people frequently overestimate how often their peers take part in risky behaviours and feel that they are the 'odd ones out' if they do not do the same. The School believes it is important that pupils are reassured that most young people make positive, healthy lifestyle choices. We ensure that lessons, including those on risky behaviours, remain positive in tone by focusing on healthy lifestyle choices and decision-making and making clear that there are always support mechanisms available for those who need or want support.

We help pupils make connections between their learning and 'real life' behaviours by making clear the links to other areas of the curriculum as well as current affairs. We promote help-seeking by regularly reminding pupils of the support available in school (Form Tutor, Head of Year, Pastoral Deputy Head) as well as any age-appropriate external sources of support, such as Childline.

PSHE lessons support pupils in developing personal values through regular opportunities for reflection on their own perspective and ideas. Through paired and whole class discussion, pupils' values begin to emerge and develop over time. Within lessons we regularly use activities that invite pupils to apply their values to scenarios that reflect 'real life' experiences. This enables them to practise assessing situations and communicating assertively in order to act in a way that upholds their personal values.

The information we provide in PSHE is accurate and up to date; the curriculum and content of lessons is regularly reviewed in line with changes made to statutory content via the PSHE Association and other relevant forums.

3.2 Establishing a safe learning environment

We create a safe and supportive learning environment by devoting the first lesson of the academic year to creating a class code of conduct. In this lesson, teachers share with pupils an overview of the curriculum and facilitates the class in developing guidelines and boundaries that will ensure a safe and effective environment for everyone. This code of conduct serves as the 'ground rules' for PSHE lessons for that class and will be referred to throughout the year, particularly at the start of new units or when discussing particularly sensitive topics.

We ensure that where pupils indicate that they may be vulnerable and at risk, they get appropriate support by liaising with their Form Tutor, Head of Year, the Deputy Head Pastoral and their parents to provide necessary support in a timely and effective manner.

Teaching takes into account the age, ability, readiness, and cultural backgrounds of children to ensure that all can fully access PSHE education provision.

3.3 Responding to questions and managing disclosures

Pupils' questions are usually answered by the teacher during the lesson to ensure pupils have factual information about the topic being taught. Teachers use their discretion and may answer questions 1:1 if they pose a safeguarding concern or are likely to cause discomfort for other pupils. We allow pupils to raise anonymous questions through the use of an anonymous question box found in all PSHE classrooms. Pupils are free to ask questions via this mechanism as directed by the teacher during a specific lesson or at the end of a specific topic. If a safeguarding issue is raised through an anonymous question, teachers respond in a timely manner to ensure the safety of pupils. For example, teachers may decide to not answer the question in front of the class and instead will ask pupils whose questions have not been answered to stay at the end of the lesson to discuss 1:1. In such instances, the teacher is supported in following the usual safeguarding procedure.

One of the ground rules set at the start of the year will be around personal questions – it is made clear that it is not appropriate for pupils to ask personal questions of each other or the teacher and that the teacher will not answer personal questions. Again, the teacher can work out who has asked an inappropriate question and follow the behaviour policy to sanction the behaviour if necessary.

We support staff to answer questions by editing schemes of work with pupils' FAQs and informally meeting to discuss anonymous questions that have been raised. Teachers understand that they can 'park' questions they do not know the answer to, in order to seek guidance from the Head of PSHE or the safeguarding team as appropriate.

If a pupil makes a disclosure, we will take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of all pupils, and as soon as is appropriate will follow the usual safeguarding procedure. If a pupil makes a disclosure to an external visitor, they must make the member of staff responsible for the visitor aware as soon as possible. This member of staff will then follow the usual safeguarding procedure.

3.4 Assessment

We demonstrate high expectations for our pupils through providing regular verbal feedback to pupils' written work in booklets and/or weekly reflection documents. Pupils are encouraged to review and improve their work in response to this feedback.

We determine pupils' prior knowledge in a variety of ways depending on the topic. We will use multiple choice quizzes to assess knowledge and understanding about statutory content, such as RSE topics, which provide data about individual classes and entire cohorts. We assess pupils' learning and progression by comparing this data with that gathered using the same quiz at the end of a unit to ensure we have addressed gaps in learning.

For topics that do not require a quiz of key knowledge, we will use mind maps, scenario-based questions and advice columns to get a sense of pupils' levels of confidence engaging with a particular topic or issue. We evidence pupils' learning and progression by returning to these activities at the end of a unit for pupils to add new knowledge or add to their beliefs and opinions as a result of the learning that has taken place. As our spiral curriculum revisits key topics and concepts year-on-year, we can see pupils' understanding progress over time.

Whilst teachers do not formally mark book work in PSHE, pupils are encouraged to regularly self-assess and teachers provide regular verbal feedback for pupils' verbal contributions to small group and whole class discussions. Teachers also provide written feedback every term to pupils' online reflections, which they respond to.

There are no end-of-year tests in PSHE and attainment grades are not given, although effort grades are awarded alongside other subjects.

4. Appendix

Note: The curriculum maps are accurate at the time of reviewing this policy. Occasionally lessons will be added and schemes will be adapted to meet the needs of pupils. The most up to date version of the curriculum will be held on the department intranet page that parents can view on request at any point.

The most updated version of the PSHE curriculum can be found on the School's website [here](#).

Form time sessions are used to cover careers education in Lower Third and Upper Third Years:

Lower Third Year	Upper Third Year
Careers education 1. What is a career? 2. What careers am I interested in? 3. Careers of the future 4. Skills for enterprise and employment	Careers education 1. Careers 2. Careers of the future 3. GCSE options 4. Post 16 choices