



Merchant Taylors'
School

PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education) Policy (MTGS)

Policy owner:	Curriculum Leader for PSHE and Assistant Head Pastoral
Type of policy:	Regulatory
Regulatory Body:	Department for Education / Independent Schools Inspectorate
Relevant Legislation / Guidance:	(Independent School Standards) Regulations 2019
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Linked Policies:	Safeguarding Policy RSE policy Pastoral Policy

This policy has been reviewed with reference to the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers, June 2019 (updated September 2021). The guidance should be read in conjunction with:

- Alternative Provision (statutory guidance) (updated June 2016)
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (advice for schools, including advice for appropriate behaviour between pupils) (Updated October 2022)
- Equality Act 2010 and schools (January 2022)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory guidance) (September 2023)
- Creating a PSHE education policy for your school (September 2018)
- Writing your school's relationships and sex education (RSE) policy (September 2023)
- Respectful School Communities: Self Review and Signposting Tool (a tool to support a whole school approach that promotes respect and discipline)
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (advice for schools) (November 2018)
- National Citizen Service guidance for schools (November 2017)
- Ofsted Review – Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges (June 2021)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (advice for schools, including advice on cyberbullying) (July 2017)
- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools (guidance for maintained schools on promoting basic important British values as part of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) (November 2014)
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance) (Updated April 2020)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools (advice for schools) (updated September 2021)
- SMSC requirements for independent schools (guidance for independent schools on how they should support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development). (April 2019)
- ISI Commentary on the Regulatory Requirements September 2022

The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts).

Introduction

Personal, Social, Health and Careers Education (PSHE) is the intentional promotion of the personal, social, health and careers development of pupils through the whole curriculum and the whole school experience. Well-being is at the core of all we do and through PSHE we aim to develop children whose



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positive physical and emotional self, character, interests and passions enable them to grow up optimistically, hopeful and well prepared for the immediate and wider world. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on and clarify their own values and attitudes and to feel confident in exploring a range of sometimes conflicting attitudes and values. PSHE education helps pupils to build their confidence, resilience and self-esteem, and to identify and manage risk (including online), make informed choices and understand what influences their decisions. Fundamental to this is the ability to understand differences and to accept change, manage emotions and to communicate constructively in a variety of contexts.

We use the DfE description of character, 'as a set of traits, attributes and behaviours, such as: perseverance, resilience and grit; confidence and optimism; motivation, drive and ambition; neighbourliness and community spirit; tolerance and respect; honesty, integrity and dignity; conscientiousness, curiosity and focus', to form the basis of our PSHE curriculum.

Care is taken to ensure that the School meets the requirement to promote British values and to provide economic education, as is appropriate to the age of the pupils. As well as being taught in PSHE lessons, British values are taught in school assemblies – for the entire school and at the various House assemblies. Our PSHE programme also aims to develop respect for other people, with particular regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Throughout the School children will be taught the appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding through opportunities to:

- develop a sense of responsibility
- feel positive about themselves
- make real choices and decisions
- meet and talk with people
- develop relationships through work and play
- consider social and moral dilemmas that they come across.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

PSHE is taught in a safe, non-judgemental environment where adults and children are confident that they will be respected. We promote the needs and interests of all pupils. Our approaches to teaching and learning take into account the ability, age, readiness and cultural backgrounds of the children to ensure that all can access the full PSHE provision. Teachers and children together develop and establish ground rules in place, which ensure that every pupil feels safe and is able to learn in a supportive and caring environment. These cover in particular, the asking and answering of personal questions and strategies for checking or accessing information.

Due to the range of teaching and learning methods in PSHE lessons, all pupils, regardless of their physical or academic disabilities, will be able to participate fully in this subject. The abilities of pupils are taken into account when planning activities and written and practical work may be differentiated and modified

accordingly. In relation to those with special educational needs, we will review our PSHE programme to ensure that provision is made for those with additional needs.

Due to our ever-expanding wider provision of PSHE, along with our broad and balanced curriculum, there are overlaps with other subjects, for example ICT, Science and PE. Therefore, flexibility in the timetable needs to be accounted for as objectives for PSHE education will be met outside of the allocated timetable slot. Flexibility in the timetable is also important to allow us to respond to local/national/global events that may occur and allow us to respond to any such event in an age-appropriate way.

Answering Questions

We acknowledge that sensitive and potentially difficult issues will arise in PSHE, as pupils will naturally share information and ask questions. When spontaneous discussion arises, it is guided in a way that reflects the stated school aims and curriculum content for PSHE. As a first principle, we answer questions relating to the taught, planned curriculum for that age group (or younger) to the whole class. We answer questions relating to areas beyond the taught, planned curriculum for that age group, in a sensitive and age-appropriate way, only to the pupil or pupils who have asked the question. If a member of staff is uncertain about the answer to a question, or indeed whether they should answer it, they will seek guidance from the Head of PSHE. Questions may be referred to parents/carers if it is not appropriate to answer them in school. We may use a 'Question box', where questions may be asked anonymously. When answering questions, we ensure that sharing personal information by adults, pupils or their families is discouraged. Where a question or comment from a pupil in the classroom indicates the possibility of abuse or risk of harm, teachers will pass this information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with school policy and procedures

Confidentiality

The nature of PSHE means that pupils may disclose personal information that staff will respond to appropriately. Where there is a risk to the safety of the pupil, we will follow the procedures outlined in other policies such as Safeguarding and Child Protection, Promoting Positive Behaviour and Health and Safety. Any information disclosed to a staff member or other responsible adult, which causes concern about the child's safety, will be communicated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible, in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. If visitors are working in a classroom or other teaching situation, they will follow the school's guidance on confidentiality and on safeguarding, and other relevant school policies.

The Place of PSHE in the Curriculum

MTGS Senior School (Y7-13)

The curriculum at MTGS has been carefully analysed to ensure that the PSHE topics identified by the PSHE Association and the DfE statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, RSE and Health Education 2019 are taught. Please see standalone policy.



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A comprehensive assembly programme includes assemblies on age appropriate PSHE topics such as British Values, mental health awareness, online safety and antibullying. We mark national events such as Remembrance Day and celebrate the diversity of our community through interfaith activities.

The Head and wider senior leadership team take a lead in the delivery of key PSHE messages in assemblies such as equality, antiracism, respect and growth mindsets. Students have the opportunity to connect with older students in assemblies led by Sixth Form students.

Where appropriate we use visitors from outside agencies or members of the community to support the PSHE programme. This is an enrichment of our programme and not a substitute for our core provision which is based upon the strong relationships between teachers and pupils. When visitors are used to support the PSHE programme, the school carries out its responsibilities for due diligence, carrying out appropriate checks and ensuring that the visitor's ethos aligns with that of the school.

PSHE topics may also be covered in a variety of lessons and use a range of resources and teaching methods. The focus is on interactive learning, and approaches include: whole class discussion, social skills games and activities, working in pairs/groups, brainstorming, drama and role play and use of technology. Many of these approaches also act as distancing techniques, enabling pupils to discuss issues without discussing personal experience.

We also organise an extensive Parent Seminar programme on topics such as Online Safety, Adolescent issues, Wellbeing and Good Mental Health, along with staff training. Our peer mentoring system is such that some topics are presented by peer mentors, for example, Year 10 girls present to Year 7 girls about study skills and Year 11 girls to Year 9 pupils about option choices.

In KS3, girls follow a PSHE programme during a dedicated PSHE lesson taught by a PSHE teacher. Many topics will also be covered through Science specifications. There are additional visits from outside speakers in Years 7 – 9. Sixth Form Mental Health Ambassadors also contribute to the delivery of form time follow up sessions, under the guidance of the Deputy Head, Pastoral (Senior Designated Lead for Mental Health), the Head of PSHCE, and the relevant House Head.

The core topics covered in Years 7-11 cover: Relationships and Sex Education; Living Beyond School; Health and Wellbeing; Staying Safe Online and Offline; Rights, Responsibilities & British Values; and Celebrating Diversity & Equality. Each year follows an age appropriate curriculum, following the guidance from the PSHE Association.

In the Sixth Form, a dedicated Lecture Slot is used to discuss topics within the Sixth Form PSHE programme of study. The topics covered are tailored to the individual needs of the cohort and may vary from year to year. However, the topics covered in the Sixth Form will always include: Study Skills, Money Management, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), including abuse in relationships, Self- Confidence, the importance of sleep, wellness and preparing for independent living.

Throughout PSHE sessions, pupils are made aware of matters such as 'grooming', fabricated illness, radicalisation and FGM and what they should do if they are concerned about themselves or anyone else who may be vulnerable. All staff are aware of their obligations under the statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

Assessment, Reporting and Recording

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. Its purpose is to highlight success and achievement as well as identifying areas of weakness, which can then be used to inform planning of future work. For each Unit of Work students have an Assessment for Learning Booklet, which they complete throughout the unit. They also complete a self-assessment task which covers the skills and knowledge gained, reflection, advice and related risks.

Assessment in PSHE may take many forms: observing drama or role-play tasks, marking written or artistic work, topic quizzes, interpreting understanding from participation and input during discussion, looking for the demonstration of cooperative or communication skills during paired or group situations etc. Pupils do not pass or fail within this subject; whilst they are not graded as in other curriculum subjects. However, parents will be informed of their child's progress in this subject via the normal school reporting process. In addition to this, pupils are given the opportunity to reflect on their own learning and personal experiences. Form tutors comment on each pupil's personal and social development. Their progress is tracked through the use of the end of puzzle outcomes and teacher assessment through the Jigsaw tool in the Junior School.

Health and Safety Concerns

Please refer to the School Health and Safety and Curriculum Policies.

- Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy
- Antibullying Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the Assistant Pastoral (DSL) and the Deputy DSL is the Assistant Head (Operations).

The Senior Designated Head of House team is Kerri Taws (Minerva), Natalie Houghton (Gaia) and Vicki Mee (Thalia).

The Mental Health and Wellbeing of our pupils and staff is a priority for MTGS. The school offers the services of three qualified counsellors. Staff have access to the School's Health Assured Scheme as well as the opportunity to seek advice from the Counselling team.



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