



ST BENEDICT'S SCHOOL
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PSHE Policy (incorporating RSE) – Senior School

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1 PSHE Education in the Context of St Benedict's

The PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) Programme supports the school's objective to help pupils learn and achieve to the best of their ability and to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. The school delivers a programme which gives pupils the knowledge and skills they need to make positive decisions regarding their physical and mental wellbeing and the relationships that they make with other people.

During their time at St Benedict's, we want our students to learn to be resilient individuals able to find happiness whatever life throws at them. We want them to be moral, caring and thoughtful members of our Benedictine community and the wider world. We want them to have the information to help them stay healthy in both mind and body and to have the understanding and confidence to prosper when they leave us.

The programme of study incorporates the themes and skills as set out in the PSHE Association's guidance. The three core themes are set out by the Association as: Health and Wellbeing, Relationships, and Living in the Wider World. They are addressed by the school under the four PSHE headings of Personal, Social, Health and Economic topics as set out below. The programme seeks to develop students' intrapersonal, interpersonal and enquiry skills. Fundamental British values are promoted and students are encouraged to regard people of all faiths, races and cultures with respect and tolerance. While our PSHE lessons are taught within the ethos of a tolerant Catholic and Benedictine school, we ensure that the personal beliefs of our staff do not prevent them from providing a balanced approach to the topics being taught.

All parents and students have access to the contents of PSHE lessons through the Firefly portal and are encouraged to discuss issues raised in these lessons with their children. There is consultation about the content of the PSHE programme with students via the school council, parents through the Society of Parents and Friends (SPF) and teachers through termly pastoral meetings of heads of year with their tutors.

2 Statutory Requirements

PSHE is linked closely to other cross-curricular policies, which can be consulted for more information on the school website, including: Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, Child Protection and Safeguarding. Guidance for Independent Schools on delivering PSHE can be found in Independent School Standards guidance. In line with [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2022\)](#), staff are aware of their Prevent duty. Where applicable, pupils discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism, and how to challenge extremist ideas. The programme also incorporates RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) as set out in the government's statutory guidance.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

Governors and Senior Leaders

Direction of the PSHE programme is delegated to the Head of PSHE and the Senior Deputy Head. They provide resources, support and training for staff so that they are familiar up to date with relevant PSHE and RSE guidance and feel comfortable taking PSHE lessons and answering questions

from the students. This is why PSHE classes are led by form tutors, so that students are being taught by the teachers who know them best. For certain topics we do ask experts to lead classes from either our own staff or outside the school.

The PSHE programme is reviewed annually by the PSHE Coordinator, the Senior Deputy Head and the Heads of Year to ensure that it remains relevant to the students and that our staff have the best possible resources.

Teaching Staff

Staff understand the importance of giving, as much as possible, an objective and balanced approach to topics taught whatever their personal beliefs or attitudes.

Staff attend PSHE/RSE training and ensure that they are up to date with school policy and curriculum requirements regarding PSHE and RSE. Training also includes dealing with the difficult questions that can arise in PSHE. They should contact their Head of Year or the Head of PSHE if they need any additional support with this.

Staff encourage their students to come to them with any concerns raised in PSHE in the same way as any other pastoral concern that might arise. This is helped by the fact that PSHE is taught in form groups. As with any other lessons, the different abilities and SEN needs of students in the group are considered in lesson planning.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend PSHE lessons as with any other timetabled lessons. The only exceptions to this are if parents request students miss a particular lesson on a pastoral reason for personal reasons (for instance, a student with an eating disorder missing a lesson on that topic).

Parents

Parents have access to all the PSHE lesson content through the Firefly portal and we encourage them to engage with their children about topics as they arise and discuss them at home. As ever, if issues arise that parents wish to discuss with a teacher they should contact their child's Form Tutor in the first instance.

4 Organisation and Delivery of the PSHE Programme

The Head of PSHE, along with the Senior Deputy Head and Heads of Year, are responsible for writing the programme and for organising its delivery. PSHE is delivered by form tutors in a timetabled weekly session on Wednesday Period 4. A number of these sessions are delivered by internal and external speakers or agencies to provide a more specialist input where deemed helpful and to enhance the experience of the pupils. St. Benedict's is greatly assisted by partnership working with a variety of agencies including the Metropolitan Police, Ealing Magistrates, Childnet, Transport for London and the Ten Ten Company amongst others. Whilst ever mindful of Safeguarding issues and the Prevent Duty, we are committed to inviting visitors into school and such planned learning experiences are designed to address specified learning objectives.

Additionally, for all years, elements of PSHE are taught through other subjects. This is most easily

seen for Citizenship within Geography and History and Health Education in Biology. However, opportunities exist in all subjects – through the subject itself, but also through the manner of the teaching and learning and the relationships and behaviour encouraged and indeed exemplified by the subject teacher.

PSHE is also addressed through assemblies, form periods, the behaviour policy and day-to-day interaction among pupils and between pupils and staff. A unique element of the PSHE curriculum at St Benedict's is our PSHE 2 programme. Every week a new lesson is written in response to events in our community or the wider world. PSHE2 lessons have included looking at the American election, the impact of Brexit, Children's Mental Health Week, and presentations created by our own 6th formers on subjects like Animal Welfare and the medical significance of Microbiomes. Parents are also able to access these lessons on the Firefly portal so that conversations on these topics can continue at home. The PSHE Programme plays an essential role in our school to ensure that pupils are prepared to play a full part in society.

5 Key Themes in PSHE

PERSONAL

- Staying safe, including understanding safeguarding
- Sex and Relationships (SRE)
- Resilience and growth mindset
- Citizenship/British values (democracy, the rule of law, mutual respect, and tolerance)/ anti-extremism. (The government document [Promoting fundamental British values is here](#))
- Positive approaches to schoolwork
- Avoiding alcohol and substance misuse
- Understanding the world around us (including 'fake news') and the environment

SOCIAL

- Positive social relationships
- Positive personal relationships
- Anti-bullying, both physical and online
- E-safety, including use of social media
- Tolerance and social equality¹ ([advice from the Equality and Human Rights Commission is here](#))

HEALTH

- Physical health and wellbeing including sleep
- Mental health and wellbeing including addiction (for instance gaming, gambling as well as drugs, smoking etc.)

¹ Particular regard is given to the understanding of equal rights under the terms of the Equality Act (2010) and the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

- Healthy eating and exercise

ECONOMIC

- Personal finances
- Vocational guidance – subject and university choices
- Careers advice

6 Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation

Methods of assessment are based on observation and pupil input. Pupils are also given opportunities to peer and self-assess their work. Where PSHE matters are delivered in other subjects, written work will be assessed in line with the relevant department's policy.

The Head of PSHE is responsible for monitoring the programme and identifying areas for development each year. Specific topics and timings of their delivery are discussed with Heads of Division and Heads of Department where appropriate. Individual sessions are evaluated through informal discussion with colleagues delivering or supervising and these inform any necessary amendments or additions. There is also discussion of the PSHE course with students through the school council and annual surveys, and also with parents through the Society of Parents and Friends

Evaluation of outside agencies is also undertaken in the shape of evaluation forms completed by the Head of PSHE, supervising staff or pupils. The Head of PSHE is also responsible for ensuring that the programme is appropriately resourced and manages the departmental budget.

PSHE is assessed through a termly test on the Firefly portal and an optional piece of writing which decides the winner of the PSHE prize in each year group.

7 Sensitive Issues and Safeguarding

St. Benedict's is aware of the sensitive nature of some of the topic areas within the subject. These include RSE, terminal illnesses, bereavement, marriage break-up, drug and alcohol abuse and financial issues. Colleagues are asked to be sensitive when dealing with any of these issues and to keep in mind any background information provided by colleagues and the School Nurse in particular. We hope to provide a safe and supportive school community where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. As ever, staff will be clear that any issue that is potentially a safeguarding issue will not be treated confidentially.

As part of the course, each year students are all reminded of what to do and who to go to should they have any safeguarding concerns about anyone either inside or outside school.

RSE lessons provide a good background for talking openly and freely about the diversity of personal, social and sexual preferences. Prejudiced views will be challenged, and equality promoted. Any bullying that relates to sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation will be dealt with swiftly and seriously according to our school policy which can be found on the school website.

8 Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

As part of the PSHE programme, St Benedict's incorporates RSE at a level that is appropriate to the age and development of the students and in keeping with our Catholic and Benedictine ethos.

RSE aims to provide lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about teaching sex, sexuality and sexual health in a way that is fully understood and effectively retained by pupils in our care. It is also about teaching what it is to be in a caring, stable and mutually supportive relationship with another person, and how to control and understand feelings that come with being in a relationship.

We are involved in relationships and sex education precisely because of our Christian beliefs about God and about the human person. The belief in the unique dignity of the human person made in the image and likeness of God underpins the approach to all education in a Catholic school. Our approach to RSE therefore is rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching of the human person and presented in a positive framework of Christian ideals.

RSE will outline the importance of marriage for family life and the raising of children, as well as highlighting the role of marriage and other stable relationships as building blocks for community and society. It also teaches what the law says about relationships and sex so that students clearly understand what the law does and does not allow, for instance, the age of consent.

St Benedict's would like to emphasise that by providing comprehensive RSE we continue to promote Catholic teachings as a school and are not encouraging pupils to become sexually active at a young age. The aim of this policy is to ensure that the right provision is in place so that pupils may have all the background knowledge they need to make informed decisions and responsible choices as they grow up. All RSE at St Benedict's is in accordance with the Church's moral teaching and the guidance of the national Catholic Education Service.

Through the provision outlined in this policy we also aim to raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence, trying to develop communication and assertiveness skills that can help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see in the media.

All RSE will be in accordance with the Church's moral teaching. It will emphasise the central importance of marriage and the family whilst acknowledging that all pupils have a fundamental right to have their life respected whatever household they come from. We will teach pupils to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, physical and mental abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them. This includes teaching pupils about LGBT as part of all students' understanding of sex and relationships in modern British society. We want our pupils to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle, teach them to care for and respect their bodies and provide them with all the right tools that will enable them to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their school years and after.

Withdrawal from RSE

St Benedict's has the PSHE scheme of work available to all parents on the Firefly portal along with resources for each lesson. It is a statutory right of parents or carers to withdraw the children in their

care from sex education lessons that make up part of PSHE. We will write to parents in advance of sex education lessons in the PSHE programme, and, if parents want to withdraw their child, they should email or write to to the Senior Deputy Head to discuss this. We are required to keep a record of students withdrawn from sex education lessons. We would, of course, hope that all our students will be allowed to access all the RSE and part of the PSHE programme.