Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Policy

The Abbey School, Reading

Reviewed by:	Deputy Head SS and Assistant Head JS	September 2025
Ratified by:	Whole School Leadership Committee and Governor Audit	September 2025
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17 Kendrick Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 5DZ
Tel: 0118 987 2256 - **Email:** schooloffice@theabbey.co.uk
www.theabbey.co.uk
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1. Introduction

The intention of this policy is to provide clear guidance for all staff and parents/guardians and to define The Abbey School's approach to Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) and Citizenship Education.

The policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it is in line with current Government guidance and legislation. This policy takes account of:

- Education Act, 2002
- Children and Social Work Act, 2017
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, 2019
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025
- Equality Act, 2010

2. Aims

The Abbey School is committed to facilitating excellent teaching and learning through three simple values: **Courageous**. **Honest**. **Kind**. These values lie at the heart of our approach to the planning and delivery of our PSHE curriculum.

Student wellbeing is our priority. We want every student to reach their full potential and mature into a balanced, resilient and caring individual. PSHE education helps students to develop the knowledge and skills they need to thrive as individuals, family members and members of society. From making responsible decisions about alcohol to succeeding in their first job, PSHE education helps students to manage many of the most critical opportunities, challenges and responsibilities they will face growing up.

Our holistic approach to learning ensures that we place equal importance on academic achievement, intellectual agility and emotional wellbeing, and that each student's journey is an experience shared by the whole learning family – from students themselves, to teachers, parents/guardians, extended family and staff. Our self-regulating culture encourages each student to develop a sense of responsibility for her own wellbeing, and that of others.

The principle aims of PSHE education at The Abbey are:

- To support students to develop self-esteem and self-knowledge as part of their Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural (SMSC) development
- To teach students how to keep themselves and each other safe and healthy
- To learn to positively manage their academic, personal, and social lives now and in the future
- To learn to have safe, fulfilling relationships (please see RSHE policy for more information)
- To make responsible, balanced decisions for their future careers
- To be confident in managing challenges and periods of change
- To learn to see different perspectives and work empathetically with others
- To develop understanding of British Values and Protected Characteristics

3. Statutory requirements

Our PSHE programme includes the following statutory elements, based on the 2019 guidance: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, 2019.

- Relationships Education (Junior School): This focuses on topics like families, friendships, online safety, personal space and boundaries.

- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) (Senior School): This covers healthy relationships, consent, sexual health, and safety, including online safety.

- Health Education: This covers mental and physical health, including topics such as sleep, healthy eating, and basic first aid.

Please see the RSHE policy for further information.

4. Curriculum

PSHE education is not planned in isolation and is most effective where links are made with other relevant subjects such as Science, Computer Science, and Religious Education (Junior School) or Philosophy and Theology (Senior School).

Lessons may also link to values and qualities from the Abbey Learner Profile. as well as responding to what is going on in the world around us in the form of discussions about current affairs and National Awareness Days.

Much of the key learning of PSHE skills is inherent in what we do and takes place in and outside the classroom: teamwork, self-esteem, responsibility, resilience and making choices.

Across the Whole School, PSHE education is taught through a spiral programme which sees themes revisited whilst increasing the challenge, broadening the scope, and deepening students' thinking. Our programme of study is based on three core themes:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Relationships
- Living in the Wider World

Junior School

At the Junior School, teaching staff refer to the Outcomes and Expectations document, which covers the expected personal and social skills for students in each year group. The PSHE Association Programme of Study underpins our current outcomes and expectations and can be found here. PSHE objectives are also integrated into other curriculum areas where relevant.

Most importantly, form teachers take the requirements of their class into consideration and respond to their current needs rather than sticking resolutely to a plan. When issues arise, PSHE lessons should be used to deal with them.

In Early Years Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) is one of the three prime areas of learning and is woven into all aspects of our Early Years curriculum. From Years 1-6, discrete PSHE lessons take place for 35 minutes once a week. There is flexibility within year groups as to how to use this allocation, for example by combining two sessions into a block of an hour, depending on the topic being covered or matters arising in the classroom.

In the Junior School we follow and adapt a scheme called Jigsaw where all year groups work on the same theme at the same time. This means that each theme can be launched with a whole-school assembly and learning can be celebrated by the whole school in a meaningful way. The different themes are:

- Being Me In My World
- Celebrating Difference (including anti-bullying)
- Dreams and Goals
- Healthy Me
- Relationships
- Changing Me (including puberty and human reproduction)

The Jigsaw Programme offers us a comprehensive, carefully thought-through scheme of work, which brings consistency, and progression to our children's learning in this vital curriculum area.

Overview of the themes
Being Me In My World: This theme sets the foundation for the year and focuses on building self-identity, self-esteem, and a strong sense of belonging in the classroom and school community. It encourages children to recognise their role within the class and beyond, helping them build relationships, understand their responsibilities, and respect others.
Celebrating Difference: Children explore the concepts of diversity, empathy, and inclusivity. They learn to celebrate both their similarities and differences, building respect for a wide range of people, cultures, and perspectives. This theme also addresses bullying and the importance of standing up for what is right.
Dreams and Goals: This theme fosters goal-setting, perseverance, and the development of a growth mindset. It helps children reflect on their future aspirations, set achievable goals, and understand the steps needed to reach them. It also teaches children how to deal with disappointment and challenges they face along the way.
Healthy Me: This theme focuses on children's mental health, physical wellbeing, and developing healthy habits that will serve them throughout their lives. It teaches children how to make good choices, manage their emotions, and build resilience in the face of life's challenges.
Relationships: This theme focuses on healthy relationships, communication skills, and personal boundaries. It teaches children how to form respectful relationships with peers and adults and how to recognize and maintain boundaries in various contexts, including friendships, family, and online.
Changing Me: This theme is designed to help children understand the changes they experience as they grow. It tackles topics like puberty, emotional growth, self-esteem, and transitioning into adolescence. It also prepares them for the physical, emotional, and social changes they will face in the coming years. Each year group thinks about looking ahead, moving year groups or the transition to secondary school.

Senior School

All Senior School students have a Skills for Life lesson on a Wednesday morning.

Content is selected to ensure opportunities to develop knowledge and skill through a programme that is relevant to the ethos of the school and the needs of our students. Some sessions are delivered in partnership with Reading School, a local boys school.

The below curriculum overview is not exhaustive and should be used alongside the Senior School PSHE scheme of work.

Theme	Curriculum content	Skills
Health and wellbeing	**Healthy lifestyles**: nutrition, sleep, exercise, alcohol, nicotine, vaping and drugs, puberty, women's health, sexual health **Personal safety**: road, rail and water safety, First Aid, assessing risky situations, safety at festivals, public transport **Wellbeing**: mindfulness, managing change and stress, bereavement, supporting others	The following skills are embedded in PSHE planning: 1. **Resilience**: The ability to bounce back from challenges and manage change 2. **Self-esteem**: A positive view of yourself 3. **Risk management**: Understanding and assessing potential dangers 4. **Teamwork**: Working effectively with others 5. **Critical thinking**: Evaluating information and making informed decisions 6. **Self-reflection**: Examining your own thoughts and actions 7. **Goal setting**: Setting and working towards personal goals 8. **Seeking help**: Knowing when and how to ask for support
Relationships	**Family and friends**: making new friends, different types of family, managing conflict **Romantic relationships**: consent and boundaries, communication, healthy and unhealthy relationships, abusive relationships, coercive control, impact of pornography on relationships, grooming, honour-based violence	
Living in the wider world	**Citizenship**, **diversity and inclusion**: introduction to parliament and the law, human rights, Protected Characteristics **Financial education**: budgeting, spending, saving, renting your first property **Careers and skills development**: see Careers Policy **Digital life**: online safety, friendships online, online dating, online scams, fake news, ethical and safe use of AI	

5. Monitoring, Assessment and Record Keeping

The delivery of PSHE is monitored by the PSHE coordinator at the Junior School, and the Head of PSHE at the Senior School. This is done through regular Learning Walks, lesson observations, scrutiny of planning, student evaluations and monitoring of learning logs at the Junior School.

The model of assessment generally used in our PSHE lessons is ipsative assessment, which compares where a pupil is at the end of a lesson or series of lessons against where they were before the lesson(s). So the benchmark against which progress is measured is the pupil's own starting point.

PSHE lesson plans and activities consider students' starting points and differing levels of knowledge and understanding; often this prior learning is more complex than we might assume. Determining prior knowledge as part of a baseline assessment, enables teachers to make more effective judgments about students' development and progression in learning.

Students are helped to make connections between the learning they do in PSHE lessons and their current and future 'real life' experiences. The skill of critical reflection is therefore at the heart of assessment for learning in PSHE education. The use of scenarios and discussion-based activities supports this.

Whole School

- Learning Walks
- Lesson observations
- Scrutiny of planning
- Student evaluations and feedback
- Comments on individual students may be recorded on CPOMS

Junior School

- Students are given opportunities to reflect on their learning through discussion.
- Form teachers use a learning log to record anything of note in each lesson as well as any relevant discussion arising in other curriculum areas.
- Comments made on reports and in Parents' Evenings will link to attributes of the ALP (Abbey Learner Profile) and the LAE (Learning Awareness and Engagement).
- In the Early Years, observations are recorded
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, PSED is included in reports as one of the six learning areas alongside the form tutor comment.
- Foundation Stage Profiles for PSED are used to inform Key Stage 1 staff to ensure achievement of Early Learning Goals.

Senior School

- Impact is measured by discussion in lessons and classwork activities. Examples include cloze activities, written answers, role plays and 'agony aunt' tasks.
- AfL techniques are included on lesson plans. Examples include peer discussion and feedback, class surveys and reflection questions, with teachers using knowledge of their class to choose the most appropriate.
- Skills are included on lesson plans. (see section 4 - Curriculum)
- Some year groups use a reflective journal on Google Classroom.
- Visits from external speakers are recorded using the Unifrog platform.

6. Inclusion & Equal Opportunities

The PSHE programme is delivered in line with the school's Equal Opportunities policy within an atmosphere of mutual respect. The whole school community supports an approach which ensures that no individual will be discriminated against on grounds of gender, race, disability, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.

Resources selected to support the programme will be free from cultural bias wherever possible and will avoid gender, race, disability or sexual orientation stereotyping. The programme will be sensitive to the needs of all students in the school. We aim to celebrate differences and challenge gender stereotypes.

The nature of PSHE and PSED means that it should be accessible to all students. The teaching and learning is structured to accommodate differences in ability and maturity.

7. Roles and responsibilities

Junior School PSHE coordinator	Has an overview of the programme across the Junior School and liaises with the Head of Learning and Teaching, the Safeguarding Lead, the EDI coordinator and the Head of Science.
Junior School form teachers	Deliver weekly lessons, covering objectives from the Outcomes and Expectations document, as well as responding to the needs of the class.
Junior School Head of Science	Plans the Sex Education lessons for Upper II (Y5) and Lower III (Y6) liaising with the PSHE coordinator and form tutors who lead follow-up discussions linked to emotional wellbeing.
Senior School Head of PSHE	Has an overview of the programme across the Senior School, including where PSHE topics are covered in other curriculum areas. Ensures that the spiral curriculum offers appropriate development and challenge when topics are revisited and that statutory requirements are met.
Senior School Assistant Directors of Lower/Upper School and Sixth Form	Responsible for planning the programme for their allocated year group, ensuring that resources are relevant, up to date and age appropriate.
Senior School form tutors	Deliver the weekly Skills for Life lesson using the resources provided by the relevant Assistant Director.