



MEADOW PARK SCHOOL

PSHE & SMSC

October 2023

PSHE Policy incorporating Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural Education SMSC

Introduction

This policy has been informed by such documents as:

- Promoting Fundamental British Values through SMSC, November 2014:
 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-fundamental-british-values-through-smsc>
- The National Curriculum Programme of Study for Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education, QCA 2007:
 - <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk/>
- DfE guidance document regarding PSHE, 2020
- The Big Picture of The Curriculum, QCA, 2008
- PSHE at Key Stages 1-5: guidance on assessment, recording and reporting:
 - <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/programme-study-pshe-education-key-stages-1%E2%80%935>
- Briefing by PSHE Subject Association on 'Drop-down' or Off Timetable Days, 2008
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework, April 2021
- Ofsted Chief Inspector Speech, July 2019:
 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/amanda-spielman-at-stonewall>
- DfE Guidance document regarding Citizenship, 2013
- Introduction to the National Healthy Schools Programme – NHSP, 2007:
 - www.healthyschools.gov.uk
- Aspects of Learning for Secondary Schools – SEAL, DfES 2007:
 - www.teachernet.gov.uk/SEAL
- DfE Guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023:
 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
- PSHE Association:
 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Meadow Park - Context

Meadow Park is a mixed 11-18 comprehensive with approximately 830 students on roll. It serves a suburban area of South Coventry. A large percentage of the students come from a variety of social-economic and ethnic backgrounds. There is no particular religious affiliation. The PSHE curriculum is designed to respond to these backgrounds and the attitudes/freedoms/opportunities for our students.

Aims of PSHE Curriculum

Learning and undertaking activities in PSHE education contribute to achievement of the curriculum aims for all young people to become:

- successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve
- confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

In the new curriculum guidance, PSHE education assumes greater importance and prominence than previously. PSHE - personal, social, health and economic education is described in two new interrelated statutory programmes of study for Key Stages 3-5. From 2020, it will include Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and health education.

PSHE education is at the heart of the new revised curriculum with its emphasis on personal development, the acquisition of personal, learning and thinking skills. It incorporates a cross-curricular dimension such as healthy lifestyles, identity and cultural diversity and sustainable futures and the global dimension. PSHE education builds on drug education, financial education, sex and relationship education and the importance of physical activity and diet for a healthy lifestyle. The active promotion of British Values is also an essential part of SMSC.

PSHE education also makes a major contribution to the statutory responsibilities on schools to:

- promote children and young people's wellbeing
- achieve the whole curriculum aims
- promote community cohesion
- provide CEIAG, RSE and Health Education.
- actively promote British Values and SMSC

Rationale for PSHE Education

Personal wellbeing helps young people embrace change, feel positive about who they are and enjoy healthy, safe, responsible and fulfilled lives. Through active learning opportunities students recognise and manage risk, take increasing responsibility for themselves, their choices and behaviours and make positive contributions to their families, schools and communities. As students they learn to recognise, develop and communicate their qualities, skills and attitudes, they build knowledge, confidence and self-esteem and make the most of their abilities. As they explore similarities and differences between people and discuss social and moral dilemmas, they learn to deal with challenges and accommodate diversity in all its forms. The world is full of complex and sometimes conflicting values. Personal wellbeing helps students explore this complexity and reflect on and clarify their own values and attitudes. They identify and articulate feelings and emotions, learn to manage new or difficult situations positively and form and maintain effective relationships with a wide range of people. Personal wellbeing makes a major contribution to the promotion of personal development.

Education for economic wellbeing and financial capability aims to equip students with the knowledge, skills and attributes to make the most of changing opportunities in learning and work. Through their learning and experiences inside and outside school, students begin to understand the nature of the world of work, the diversity and function of business, and its contribution to national prosperity. They develop as questioning and informed consumers and learn to manage their money and finances effectively.

Education for economic wellbeing and financial capability improves motivation and progression by helping students see the relevance of what they learn in school to their future lives. It expands their horizons for action by challenging stereotyping, discrimination and other cultural and social barriers to choice. It helps students to aim high. Students build a positive and realistic view of their needs and capabilities so that they can make effective learning plans, decisions and transitions for the future. They become aware of changing career

opportunities and develop the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions about which learning programmes to take.

PSHE also has some freedom from curriculum constraints, as schools have a considerable amount of choice regarding the topics of learning which can compose a balance PSHE programme of study. The rationale behind choosing topics will be based on local needs as well as addressing the national context e.g. financial literacy and the cost of living. The PSHE curriculum at Meadow Park is reviewed annually and is designed, with consultation, to provide the most effective and engaging way to deal with local and national issues and trends, so they can demonstrate the core aims detailed within this policy.

The PSHE Education Curriculum

1. Provision

The delivery and reflection of PSHE education within Meadow Park can be found in the following strands of the curriculum and school ethos:

- Curriculum time in KS3
- KS4 through Core RE/PSHE
- KS5 Life Skills/PSHE
- Curriculum areas where appropriate, such as teaching in RE, Science, Drama, History, Geography, PE, Food and Nutrition, IT, etc.
- PSHE Mentor programme
- Whole school activities and assemblies linked to Anti-Bullying Week, British Values Week, Black History Month, and E- Safety awareness, etc.
- specific projects – i.e. Mentor/College activities, Work Experience
- through involvement in the life of the school and wider community – i.e. student leadership,
- through pastoral care and guidance.
- Appropriate visits/visitors

At Meadow Park we stress the shared commonality between many aspects of Citizenship and PSHE. There is overlap; however, discrete areas of both subjects are intended to be kept separate, to reflect different learning outcomes and teaching methodologies.

2. Teaching Methods and Learning Approaches

PSHE demands up to date knowledge and dynamic delivery. Our aim is for all lessons/activities to be challenging and thought provoking, responding to the new Ofsted framework and above all being relevant to the needs of the learners. All teachers are encouraged to develop a repertoire of flexible, active learning methods and to respond to the demands of the learners in lessons – a prescriptive approach in PSHE is not always desired. Effective teaching and learning approaches used at Meadow Park include:

- effective starting and ending strategies
- high order questioning skills
- climate building and ground rules
- agenda setting
- working together
- values clarification
- information gathering and sharing
- problem solving
- understanding another point of view
- working with feelings and imagination
- reflection, review and evaluation

- drama and role-play
- use of theatre in education
- discussion and debate.

3. Feedback, Recording and Reporting

While there are no formal assessments in PSHE, there are two broad areas where teachers assess student progress:

- Students' knowledge and understanding. For example, information on healthy and unhealthy relationships, mental and physical health awareness, etc.
- How well students can use their knowledge and understanding in developing skills and attitudes, for example, through participating in discussions, group tasks and activities, resolving conflict, making decisions and promoting positive relationships.

We aim to improve learning by providing effective feedback to students, actively involving students in their own learning. This has an impact on the motivation and self-esteem of students, both of which are crucial influences on learning and students being able to assess themselves and understand how to improve.

In PSHE, teachers are encouraged to collect evidence of learning to make a judgement about students' progress. This evidence might include:

- draw and write a concept
- mind-mapping
- display of a community action project, such as at parent's evening
- presentations
- observation of a group discussion or group task
- photographs, films or even video made on a mobile phone
- web page or blog
- role play
- campaigning letters, emails or press releases
- silent debate - where students write down their arguments/opinions
- written evidence and extended writing.

Promoting British Values

Meadow Park promotes Fundamental British Values and principles which all those living in the UK should respect and support. These values are reflected in the responsibilities, rights and privileges of being a British citizen or permanent resident of the UK. They are based on history and traditions and are protected by law, customs and expectations. There is no place in British society for extremism or intolerance.

The fundamental principles of British life that we promote at Meadow Park include:

- Democracy
- The Rule of Law
- Individual Liberty
- Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Participation in community life

British Values and Religious Education

At Meadow Park we encourage our students through our programmes of study to engage with, and reflect upon their own religious or non-religious beliefs. We also promote the learning about and from other religious, cultural and philosophical positions with an emphasis on respect and tolerance for other views different to

our own. Students are supported to think critically about the impact of truth claims on the lives of others, and its impact or potential impact upon their own lives and the fundamental British values that we promote.

Religious education at Meadow Park has the wider aim of actively promoting modern British values which include: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

These values are explored, expressed and promoted through the religious education programme of study, often explicitly:

- Democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty. These fundamental British values are explored in a number of units in Key Stage 3 and 4. Key Stage 3 includes: 'Big Questions – Why do we have free will?' (Year 7); Key Stage 4 includes: Rights and Responsibilities Core RE; GCSE units Crime and Punishment
- Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. These fundamental British values are explored in many units including (but not exclusively):
 - Year 7: 'Introduction to RE', 'Islam in the Modern World'? 'Religions of India',
 - Year 8: 'Sikhism in the 21st Century'
 - Key Stage 4 Core RE: 'Rights and Responsibilities' 'What are British Values?'
 - Key Stage 4, GCSE units are from both a Christian and Sikh perspective, and includes varying views found within both world religions on key issues such as Marriage and the family, medical ethics and war and peace.

Role of the PSHE Co-ordinator

The co-ordinator will be responsible for:

1. Policy development- working with LT to develop a:
 - PSHE education policy (and those regarding RSE, Bullying and Drugs Awareness)
 - PSHE education development plan (within the wider Humanities Faculty)
 - Devising workable systems for assessing, recording and reporting
 - Devising mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.
2. Curriculum planning-including:
 - drawing up a scheme of core provision for Key Stages 3 and 4
 - identifying where there may be opportunities for PSHE learning in other subjects, i.e. Yr7 Humanities, Yr9 Drama.
3. Managing learning and teaching-including:
 - selecting, deploying, and updating resources
 - managing the PSHE education budget
 - building/supporting a PSHE education team (within the wider Humanities Faculty)
 - co-ordinating assessment, recording and reporting
4. Liaising/communicating with:
 - LT
 - subject departments/faculties
 - Heads of Year/College Leaders
 - LA
 - external agencies
5. Training and support for:
 - all staff timetabled to deliver the subject, if required

- other colleagues within school upon request

6. Monitoring and evaluation-including:

- reviewing delivery of the PSHE education programme
- contributing to the school improvement plan
- preparing for inspection and school self-evaluation.

At present these roles are fulfilled by Leader of RE and PSHE, Meadow Park.

Inclusion

This school policy has given careful consideration to the seven equality strands - race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, disability and sexuality, REGARDS. This is to ensure that PSHE education is provided for in a sensitive and nonjudgmental way that will enable all young people, staff and the wider school community to feel valued and included in effective policy and practices. In order to achieve this, we regularly reflect upon specific needs of particular groups in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, ability and special educational needs as PSHE is renewed and updated.

Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in learning from real-life experience. Teachers will be prepared to handle personal issues arising from the work, to deal sensitively with, and to follow up appropriately, disclosures made in a group or individual setting. Issues that we address that are likely to be sensitive and controversial because they have a political, social or personal impact or deal with values and beliefs include: family lifestyles and values, physical and medical issues, financial issues, bullying and bereavement.

Teachers will take all reasonable, practical steps to ensure that, where political or controversial issues are brought to students' attention, they are offered a balanced presentation or opposing views. Teachers will adopt strategies which seek to avoid bias on their part and will teach students how to recognise bias and evaluate evidence. Teachers will seek to establish a classroom climate in which all students are free from any fear of expressing reasonable points of view that contradict those held either by their class teachers or their peers.

All teachers have to read **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023** provided by the safeguarding team. This document highlights areas that staff need to be aware of, particularly in response to rising concerns over peer-on-peer abuse.

Confidentiality

School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a student for help. Staff must make this clear to students. Child protection procedures must be followed when any disclosures are made.

Where it is clear that a student would benefit from the involvement of a third party, staff should seek consent of the student to do so. If appropriate, staff might inform the third party together with the student. Unless clearly inappropriate, students will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/guardian.

An underlying principle in supporting students in our school is that all students are listened to sensitively and objectively. Although the school cannot guarantee confidentiality students will be informed of national and local helplines, if appropriate, where confidentiality can be maintained.

Use of Community Based Agencies

Outside agencies and speakers may be involved in inputting to PSHE education lessons and as points of referral as support services for students. Meadow Park will prioritise developing links with organisations which

still can add value to the experiences of our students, such as the Fire Service. Individual support for students (i.e. School Nurse, Caddy etc) is made through PLC staff.

National Healthy Schools

At Meadow Park we recognise the National Healthy Schools Programme as an effective vehicle to promote PSHE education which offers an integrated whole school approach, set alongside nationally agreed criteria, looking at health and wellbeing issues in their wider sense. We are now an accredited Healthy School.

SMSC

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development is crucial for individual students and it is crucial for society as a whole. Most teachers would see it as the heart of what education is all about - helping students grow and develop as people. Meadow Park's statutory obligation is to provide a curriculum which:

- a) promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at the school
- b) Actively promotes British Values
- c) prepares such students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.'

SMSC development remains as a whole school issue, but with particular links within PSHE. Whether talking about the family, teenage pregnancy, the misuse of drugs, ethics in business or politics, football hooliganism, Community Cohesion, homophobia, the promotion of good race relations, the consequences of social disadvantage, a failure to vote at elections, or the host of other issues – it is clear that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimension of these issues should be raised.

Partnership with parents and carers

The role of Meadow Park, in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development its students is central to our core values and principles. However, it is realised that we need to work in partnership with parents and carers, who will play their part in encouraging and supporting what we are striving to do. There is a real sense then in which Meadow Park is engaged in a partnership with parents and they will play a significant part in the development of these values in their children.

The contribution of the wider community and, in some cases the involvement in a particular faith community and in all cases the involvement with society at large will also contribute in various ways to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Spiritual Development

Spiritual development relates to that aspect of inner life through which students acquire insights into their personal experience which are of enduring worth. It is characterised by reflection, the attribution of meaning to experience, and valuing a non-material dimension to life. Spiritual is not synonymous with religious; all areas of the curriculum may contribute to students' spiritual development.' Our aims are expressed as:

- A willingness to reflect on and appreciate their own faith and spirituality
- A recognition of the right of others to hold their own views and respect for those who have different beliefs and customs
- A willingness to look beyond materialism
- A willingness to reflect on and think critically about their experiences, responses and choices
- A willingness to reflect on and appreciate works of literacy, artistic or musical merit
- A willingness to ask and explore 'ultimate questions'
- A growing ability to cope with the times of suffering which human life naturally presents: anxiety, stress, unhappiness, illness, divorce and death

Moral Development

Moral development is concerned with a student's knowledge, understanding, intentions, attitudes and behaviour in relation to what is 'right' and 'wrong'. Moral development then is concerned with fundamental judgements and precepts about how people should behave and act and reasons for such behaviour. The intention at Meadow Park is that students, as they develop a sense of morality, will be invited to explore moral and ethical matters and acquire value systems which are their own. We work to emphasise an understanding that students' behaviour and actions should be derived from a moral set of beliefs and values and should correspond to the ethos and code of conduct of the school.

On a more personal level, teachers have a significant responsibility for moral education. They inevitably define, for their students, standards of behaviour in the classroom and around the College and act as role models. They engage students in thinking about their responsibilities when issues arise, such as keeping promises, telling the truth, or dealing with unfairness and injustice. Our aims are expressed as:

- A developing sense of self-discipline and responsibility not only for their own actions, but for their responsibilities to others enabling students to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England.
- A developing awareness of, and pride in, their own unique gifts, talents and privileges, and a parallel rejection of all forms of prejudiced perception of others on the basis of class, race, sex, religion or nationality.
- An appreciation of the importance of honesty, truthfulness and the development of personal integrity.
- A sensitivity to the feelings, needs and rights of others as well as encouraging respect for other people.
- A growing disposition towards generosity, rather than selfishness, by helping those less fortunate or weaker than ourselves.
- An appreciation of the importance of being kind to others and a clear rejection of unkindness, cruelty or bullying.
- A developing of a mature sense of self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.
- A developing respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.

Social Development

Social development is about young people working effectively with each other and participating successfully in the community as a whole. It is about the development of the skills and personal qualities necessary for living and working together. It is about functioning effectively in a multi-racial, multi-cultural society. It involves growth in knowledge and understanding of society in all its aspects. This includes understanding people as well as understanding society's institutions, structures and characteristics, economic and political principles and organisations, roles and responsibilities and life as a citizen, parent or worker in a community. It also involves the development of the inter-personal skills necessary for successful relationships. As such there are obvious links with Citizenship and PSHE.

The quality of our relationships defines the kind of people we are and, ultimately, the kind of world we live in. Our capacity to participate effectively in social life is crucial to our well-being and that of the communities we belong to. These communities are defined not only by the spaces we live in but also by the prevailing ideals and values and by the codes and structures for living together. Our aims are expressed as:

- To provide opportunities for students to work in groups and in pairs to experience a variety of social roles.

- To provide opportunities for students to experience working co-operatively in partnership, and contributing positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely.
- To provide opportunities for students to exercise leadership and responsibility and show initiative.
- To provide opportunities for students to learn to respond to the initiatives of others, and what it means to share a common purpose.
- To provide opportunities for students to be involved in a decision-making process which involves democratic participation, i.e. student council.

Cultural Development

Cultural development is about students' understanding their own culture and other cultures in their town, region and in the country as a whole. It is about understanding cultures represented in Europe and elsewhere in the world. It is about understanding and feeling comfortable in a variety of cultures and being able to operate in the emerging world culture of shared experiences provided by television, travel and the internet. It is about understanding that cultures are always changing, and coping with change.

Students need to understand their own culture, and also the issues of Globalization and the "global village". Culture embraces customs, history, geography, icons and images, artefacts, music, painting, sculpture, dance and technology as well as the spoken word and written literature. Our aims are expressed as:

- To provide students with the knowledge of the nature and roots of their own cultural traditions and practices, including historical, social, religious, aesthetic, ethnic or political and also of the key features of other major cultural groups within their own society. This includes enabling students to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England.
- To develop an understanding of the diversity of religious, social, aesthetic, ethnic and political traditions and practices within their society, promoting tolerance between different cultural traditions by enabling students to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures.
- To encourage a personal participation in a range of cultural activities.

Promoting Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

SMSC should, and does happen across the whole experience at Meadow Park – in lessons, mentor activities, learning conversations, trips and visits, socialising, Baraza etc. The following list is not exhaustive but illustrates the range of opportunities which happen which can promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- Through the taught curriculum across all subject areas
- Vocational work including work experience
- Educational visits
- Visitors to the school, and their contribution to the curriculum
- Assemblies
- The Mentor System
- Mentoring
- Primary links
- Community links
- Rewards and sanctions
- Student Leadership and Student Voice
- Extra - curricular clubs and activities
- Charity work
- Role models and example of all staff

- The School Ethos and Rules

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

It is accepted that there are no correct definitions of these terms and that there are no easily definable criteria to measure the success of any policy which aims to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our students. Personal development can be an unpredictable and long-term phenomenon, and the effects of even the most sensitive moral instruction or spiritual reflection may be different from what is hoped for. There also may be a wide divergence between a person's stated beliefs and values, and their behaviour and relationships. What is hoped however is that through whole school developments, and reflection on Schemes of Work and the opportunities provided for within the curriculum and College system, that SMSC is reflected upon and evaluated, and that school development issues and plans reflect this important strand within the education of our students.

Appendices/Additional Information

PSHE Education and the use of 'drop down or off-timetable days'

'The success of whole school focus days is limited because they do not connect with students' prior experiences or meet their needs and there is no effective follow-up. They have the potential to enrich programmes, but not to replace them'. *Personal, social and health education in secondary schools* Ofsted, 2005.

In respect of 'off-timetable' days, these should be considered as PSHE enhancement days and not a substitute for timetabled PSHE sessions. Such themed days are usually well received by the students, but students do not always remember much of their learning from the day; at Meadow Park it is felt that PSHE should be considered as any other subject – i.e. timetabled, assessed, and delivered (where possible) by specialists.

Answering Difficult Questions

Teachers are careful to ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes do not influence the teaching of PSHE. To this end ground rules have been agreed to provide a common values framework within which to teach. There are clear parameters as to what will be taught in whole class setting and what will be dealt with on an individual basis.

Ground Rules and Distancing Techniques

- No one, teacher or student, should be expected to answer a personal question.
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion.
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.

Dealing with Questions

- Teachers should establish clear parameters about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting. Teachers should set the tone by speaking in a matter-of-fact way and ensuring that students discuss issues in a way which is of a desired level of maturity.
- Teachers should not be drawn into providing more information than is appropriate to the age of the student. They should use their judgment and if questions are not appropriate for a lesson, they may respond to the student individually.
- If a teacher is concerned that a student is at risk of abuse then usual child protection procedures followed.

Guidance on the teaching of potentially sensitive and controversial issues

Handling sensitive and controversial issues

Learning from real life experience is central to the development of social, emotional and behavioural skills. Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise. Students should not be sheltered from such issues, through them they can develop an important range of skills, including listening, accepting other points of view, arguing a case, dealing with conflict and dealing with difficult feelings. Teachers/ practitioners need to be prepared however to handle personal issues arising from the work, to deal sensitively with, and follow-up appropriately, disclosures made in a group or individual setting, and to know what to do in the case of a potential child protection issue. This will involve being clear about issues of confidentiality.

Issues that are likely to be sensitive or controversial are those that have a political, social or personal impact and arouse strong feelings. Those which deal with values and beliefs are also potentially sensitive or controversial. Issues likely to be sensitive or controversial include:

- family and lifestyle values
- physical and medical issues
- law and order
- financial issues
- unemployment
- environmental issues
- bullying

However, almost any issue can prove sensitive to specific individuals, whether they are adults or students.

It is important to establish a classroom climate in which students can express a point of view that may differ from those held either by their teachers/practitioners or their peers. Ground rules will need to include being able to listen to and learn from the experiences of others, showing sensitivity to diversity of experience and lifestyle, respecting others' rights and taking care not to put each other down.

Teachers/practitioners need to be ready to:

- judge when to allow students to discuss issues confidentially in groups and when to support by listening into those group discussions
- ensure that students have access to balanced information and differing views with which they can then clarify their own opinions and views, including contributions made by visitors to the classroom
- decide how far they are prepared to express their own views, bearing in mind that they are in an influential position and that have to work within the framework of the school's values
- ensure they take due care of the needs of individuals in the class when tackling issues of a controversial nature – know your group, and their background.

Ensuring balance

There is a need for balance when discussing sensitive or controversial issues and teachers/practitioners can seek to avoid bias by using the measures outlined below. However, the need for balance should not be regarded as inhibiting a clear stand against racism and other forms of discrimination. Our common values require that there are behaviours we should not tolerate, for example racism, bullying, including homophobic bullying, and cruelty are never acceptable in any form and should be challenged.

Teachers/practitioners should seek to avoid bias by:

- trying to highlight a particular selection of facts or items of evidence in a way that gives it a greater importance than other equally relevant information
- actively encouraging students to offer alternative or contradictory interpretations of information, for example of facial expressions, conventions of deference or politeness
- making clear that they are not the sole authority of matters of fact or opinion

- helping students to distinguish opinions and value judgements from facts
- opening up opportunities for all students to contribute their views to a discussion, avoiding any implication by their choice of respondents
- challenging a consensus of opinion that emerges too easily.

Confidentiality

Students occasionally make personal disclosures, either in class or to individual teachers/practitioners. For example, they may disclose that they or their friends or relatives are using drugs, that they are engaging in illegal activity or that they have been abused. As there are many circumstances through which teachers/practitioners may come to possess sensitive information about students, a school policy about confidentiality should be developed to provide guidance for all. The following issues should be covered:

- Making sure that all staff, students and their parents/carers are aware of the policy and how it works in practice.
- Encouraging students to talk to their parents and carers and giving them support to do so.
- Ensuring that students know that teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- Reassuring students that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed and then supported as appropriate.
- Making sure that students are aware of confidential sources of support.
- Using ground rules in lessons.

Schools must be absolutely clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities. A clear and explicit confidentiality policy should ensure good practice which both students and parents/carers understand.

It is only the most exceptional circumstances that schools should be in the position of having to handle information without parental knowledge. Where younger students are involved this will be grounds for serious concern and child protection issues should be addressed.

In lessons teachers/practitioners should establish from the beginning that there is no pressure to disclose personal experiences if children are not comfortable to do so. Equally, if children wish to discuss something personal and important to them, it is entirely appropriate for them to approach an adult individually to do so.

PSHE & SMSC

Date reviewed:
Next review date:

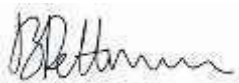
October 2023
October 2025

Approved by Governors:

November 2023

Signed:

Signed:



Bernadette Pettman
Headteacher



David Kershaw
Chair of Governors