



DOWNHAM MARKET
ACADEMY

Personal Social & Health Education Policy

July 2021

Policy Context & Rationale

This policy covers our school's approach to delivering a PSHE programme which develops the knowledge, skills and attributes that young people need to keep themselves healthy and safe, and prepared for life and work.

PSHE education is delivered primarily through the form time PSHE programme and is heavily supported by the curriculums of other departments at school (including Science, English, Drama, History, Geography, and Religious Studies). Age-group specific PSHE (relationships education and health education) are delivered through the addition of enrichment programmes in the form of 'drop down days'.

The responsibility for the PSHE programme lies with the PSHE line manager but is planned and managed on a daily basis by the PSHE Co-ordinator(s).

This policy was produced in 2020 by Sarah Welch (PSHE Trust Co-Ordinator) through consultation with the Head of School, Safeguarding Lead and the Director of Curriculum as well as parents, governors and the Student Council.

This policy will be reviewed biennially by the PSHE Trust Co-ordinator and Line Manager to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of pupils, staff and parents and that it is in line with current Department for Education advice and guidance.

Policy Availability

Parents and carers will be informed about the policy through the school website. The policy is available at all times on the school website. If you require a copy of this policy which meets a particular accessibility need, please contact the school reception.

Policy Aims & Objectives

Downham Market Academy is a place where realising the academic potential and developing the emotional and social intelligence of each student is the highest priority. We are a welcoming and happy community where students and staff are respectful towards each other and the environment. We have the highest expectations of ourselves and of others and we are always striving to support each other to do better.

Our ethos is a set of shared values that the whole community is proud to contribute to. At Downham Market Academy, we all:

- Demonstrate a can do attitude
- Make visitors feel welcome
- Aspire to meet our potential by valuing learning and achievement
- Ensure we take pride in our appearance
- Treat others with respect
- Have respect for the environment and our neighbours
- Own our actions and take responsibility for them
- Support others by working together

This policy fulfils our school ethos of realising the potential of each student by ensuring that they develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to keep themselves healthy and safe, and

prepared for life and work. Well-delivered PSHE programmes have an impact on both academic and non-academic outcomes for pupils, particularly the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

Our PSHE curriculum aims to develop skills and attributes such as resilience, self-esteem, risk-management, team working and critical thinking in the context of three core themes: health and wellbeing, relationships, and living in the wider world (including economic wellbeing and aspects of careers education).

Our school curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, schools' statutory duties outlined in the Education Act 2002 and the Academies Act 2010, and is essential to Ofsted judgements in relation to personal development, behaviour, welfare and safeguarding. From September 2020, health education, relationships education and sex & relationships education is also required as per the statutory guidance from the Department for Education.

These aims are consistent with, and so reinforce, the ethos and general aims of the school and the **protected characteristics** named under the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation).

The Equality Act 2010 placed duties on schools not just to address prejudice based bullying but also to prevent it happening, and in doing so to keep protected characteristic groups safe.

PSHE Curriculum

The PSHE curriculum is one which we are very proud of. Topics taught within PSHE allow for reflection and are often very thought provoking. Students explore PSHE through balanced, factually-accurate and appropriate lessons. We cover the law and a range of views and beliefs on a given issue while being appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils and respectful of their religious and cultural backgrounds.

Our PSHE programme is taught through 3 key themes: **Health & Wellbeing, Relationships** and **Living in the Wider World**. The key areas of study within each theme are listed below.

Health and Wellbeing

- Positive self-concept
- Positive mental health & emotional wellbeing
- Healthy lifestyles & health-related decisions
- Drugs, alcohol & tobacco
- Managing risk & personal safety
- Puberty, sexual health & fertility

Relationships

- Positive relationships
- Relationship values
- Sexuality
- Forming & maintaining respectful relationships
- Consent
- Contraception & sexual health protection
- Parenthood

- Bullying abuse & discrimination
- Social influences

Living in the Wider World

- Learning skills
- Choices & pathways
- Work & career
- Employment rights & responsibilities
- Financial choices
- Media literacy & digital resilience

To see the full curriculum, please visit the PSHE curriculum page on the website.

Creating a Safe & Supportive Learning Environment

PSHE education works within pupils' real life experiences and it is therefore essential to establish a safe learning environment. We create this safe and supportive learning environment by discussing clear 'ground rules' at the beginning of each session (or series of sessions). We also adhere to the school's safeguarding & child protection policy [*see school website for details*] if pupils indicate that they may be vulnerable and/or at risk.

Entitlement & Equality of Opportunity

As per the school's equality statement [*see school website for details*], classroom practice and teaching approaches promote the needs and interests of all pupils, irrespective of gender, sexuality, faith, culture, ability, maturity or personal circumstance. Our curriculum has been designed specifically to take into account pupils' ability, age, readiness and cultural backgrounds at each stage of learning to ensure accessibility to all pupils.

Our PSHE programme is used as a way to address diversity issues both within school and in the wider community and to ensure equality. By promoting diversity & inclusion, we expect all pupils to actively consider the needs of others.

We recognise the right for all pupils to have access to PSHE education learning which meets their needs. We will ensure that pupils with SEND receive equal access to PSHE following the same curriculum to their peers. Careful consideration is given and differentiation needs identified by those delivering sessions with support from our SEND department. In some cases, the content or delivery of the lesson may be adapted to suit the needs of the learners. Where learning support assistants are available, they will be tasked to work with students identified as most in need.

We will not exclude access to PSHE for any pupil by removing them from PSHE lessons, as these aspects of personal and social development are as important to all pupils as their academic achievement. For this reason, attendance at drop down days will be monitored and, should a student miss a drop down day, they will be issued with a student-led version of the topic covered to be completed in their own time.

Right to withdrawal from Sex Education

Full PSHE education provision should be accessible to every pupil, although parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from some aspects of the programme. Our school adheres to the Department for Education Statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education mandatory curriculum which comes into effect in September 2020.

As per the statutory guidance, parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from Sex Education delivered as part of the PSHE programme. There is however no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education, nor is there a right to withdraw from topics taught within the Science National Curriculum. This includes the mechanics of sexual intercourse, which are covered in the Science National Curriculum and therefore form a compulsory part of a child's education.

A thorough review of PSHE content taught has been undertaken with a focus group of teaching staff (2020). In order to meet the new government guidelines regarding Health Education and Relationships Education, some topics will unavoidably include elements of Sex Education in order to contextualise the topic (e.g. sexual health and consent). However, parents can request that their child is withdrawn from sessions discussing sex and pleasure which are taught in late KS4, via the consultation process described below.

Making a request to withdraw a child from Sex Education

In order to request withdrawal of their child from a particular element of the PSHE curriculum, parents must contact the school directly via letter outlining the specific aspect of the course from which they wish to withdraw their child. Upon receipt of this letter, parents (and, where appropriate, the child) will be invited in to discuss their request with either the Head of School or a Deputy to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum; the benefits of receiving this important education; and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child (including any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher). The school will document this process to ensure a record is kept.

In the event of withdrawal, unless there are exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parents' request, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However there may be exceptional circumstances where the head teacher and SENCO take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.

Also in the event of withdrawal, the PSHE Co-ordinator(s) will provide parents with materials in order to deliver the teaching to their child at home. During any period of withdrawal, the school has a duty to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful PSHE education.

Teaching & Learning

Principles & Methodology

PSHE education will consider pupils' starting points. Pupils will bring differing levels of knowledge and understanding to any issue explored through PSHE education. We will determine pupils' prior knowledge/starting points by reviewing both current national trends and more local needs.

The programme will be taught through a range of teaching methods, including discussion, scenarios and approved videos. PSHE teachers will not attempt to scare or shock young people into making healthy choices and instead encourage them to make these decisions themselves based on fact and discussion.

Teaching will encourage pupils to make connections between the learning they receive 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. Elements of the PSHE programme will be made clear in other subjects to ensure students can identify cross-curricular links.

Planning

Planning is undertaken by the PSHE Co-ordinator(s) and has involved extensive reviews of the Department of Education statutory guidance and the PSHE Association guidance, regular meetings with external organisations (e.g. the local police force) and governor consultation. Student and staff feedback is regularly taken into account in order to ensure that the programme provided meets the changing needs of students at the school.

Timetabling

The school teaches its PSHE provision primarily through a combination of a 5 year tutor time programme and timetabled year group-specific drop down days. Both the tutor time programme and the drop down day programme are built on the idea of spiral learning, building on the knowledge of students as they progress through their time at secondary school.

The PSHE provision at school is also enriched by a range of assemblies, events, lecture series, careers education programmes, information stands from visiting organisations amongst others. Topics covered in PSHE may be revisited within other subject curriculums and taught through a different lens (e.g. the Science National Curriculum teaches about drugs).

Assessment

Assessing progress within PSHE is difficult as much of PSHE education encourages self-reflection and is designed to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes students need to keep themselves healthy and safe, and prepared for life and work. Monitoring and measuring this is therefore undertaken through non-assessed approaches. Students will not receive a grade or written feedback on their progress.

Teaching Responsibility & Staff Training

The PSHE programme will be led by the PSHE Co-ordinator(s) supported by the PSHE Trust Co-ordinator.

PSHE will be taught by all form tutors as part of the PSHE lessons during form time. Materials for these sessions are predominantly sourced from Creative Education or written internally by either the PSHE Co-ordinator(s) or, where areas of expertise are required, other staff. Training for all form tutors and co-tutors is provided annually.

Monitoring of PSHE teaching in tutor time is undertaken by Heads of House and is an integral part of the annual appraisal review for all teaching staff.

The PSHE Co-ordinator(s) is responsible for leading the Relationships, Sex and Health Education provision as well as a range of other topics considered best taught in year groups through focussed enrichment programmes in the form of 'drop down days' instead of through tutor time.

As part of drop down days, a small group of internally-trained staff will be used to run workshops complemented by use of external speakers/providers to bring expertise to enrich pupil's learning including:

- Police Force
- Fire Brigade
- Emergency Services
- British Red Cross & other first aid trained specialists
- Local services

When using external speakers/providers to deliver aspects of our PSHE programme, the PSHE Co-ordinator(s) will always manage this learning, ensuring that learning objectives and outcomes have been agreed with the visitor in advance, and that any input from visitors is part of a planned, developmental programme rather than a substitute for it. A teacher will always be present to manage the learning, and to ensure that the learning environment is safe.

Involving Parents & Carers

The PSHE policy will be launched via ParentMail; the Head of School's blog and made available on the school website. Immediately following the launch, parents are invited to contact the school to discuss any aspects of the policy with members of the senior leadership team.

The school website has been updated to provide a wealth of materials available to parents to explore with their children. This will be updated regularly by the PSHE Co-ordinator(s) to include materials and guidance provided by external organisations. Information can also be found in the PSHE folders on Teams – updated regularly.

For those who choose to withdraw their child from sex education, the school is committed to providing parents with the resources they require to ensure the child receives the missed learning. Responsibility for ensuring this missed learning is received falls to the parent. Learning will be checked through informal methods (see above).

Links to other school policies

The PSHE policy complements our existing school policies which can be found on the school website.