WINDERMERE SCHOOL
FOUNDED 1863

PSHE Policy – Senior School

Author: Head of Life Skills– Senior School

Reviewer: SLT– Senior School

Approval Body: Board of Governors

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Linked Policies:

- Statutory RSE Policy
- Prep School PSHE Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- SEND Policy

Availability

This policy is available on the School website, the staff shared area and a printed copy is available upon request from the School Office.

Purpose and Ethos

This policy outlines how Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) supports Windermere School's ethos and aims to ensure every pupil:

- Discovers their identity and potential.
- Receives a broad, balanced, and enriching education.
- Experiences a strong sense of community and belonging.

This policy applies to all senior pupils and is a key part of our curriculum. We view our curriculum as the complete learning experience, covering everything from classroom lessons to daily activities and opportunities. The aim is to help every pupil make great progress and reach their full potential.

A successful school is built on a coherent curriculum that integrates teaching, learning, and assessment, all while prioritising pupil wellbeing.

Aims of PSHE

The aims of our PSHE programme are to equip pupils with the essential knowledge, skills, and attributes they need to thrive as individuals, family members, and citizens. Our curriculum is designed to:

- Help pupils develop the attributes needed to manage their lives now and in the future, while actively promoting fundamental British values.
- Educate pupils on how to stay healthy and safe, preparing them for life and work in modern Britain.
- Provide a safe and supportive environment for sensitive discussions.
- Prepare pupils for puberty, giving them an age-appropriate understanding of sexual development, health, and hygiene.
- Cultivate feelings of self-respect, confidence, and empathy.
- Foster a positive and respectful culture around sexuality and relationships.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe their bodies and emotions.
- Emphasise that healthy relationships are a vital part of overall wellbeing.

As pupils progress through school, our PSHE (Life Skills) sessions are designed to help them become thoughtful and responsible citizens. They will learn to respect diverse perspectives, consider the rights of others, and evaluate the consequences of their decisions. The lessons are designed around a 'Watch', 'Discuss', 'Do' pedagogy which emphasises discussion-based learning. This approach helps pupils develop the confidence and skills needed to articulate their thoughts on various topics, both in and outside of school. These sessions provide a safe space for pupils to clarify their own opinions through discussions with their peers and knowledgeable adults.

A key part of our Life Skills approach is to empower pupils to make positive, life-enhancing choices. We guide them in adopting a healthy attitude toward general wellbeing, fitness, nutrition, and self-image. As they face important decisions about issues such as alcohol, drug use, smoking, sexual health, relationships, and their future careers, the Life Skills programme helps them navigate these choices by considering a range of possibilities. We also foster a strong sense of belonging and community, encouraging pupils to develop their charitable sensibilities. This is demonstrated through initiatives like our annual Christmas shoe box appeal and fundraising on Jeans for Genes Day.

Ultimately, our Life Skills curriculum promotes the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of pupils, fully preparing them for the opportunities and experiences of life.

We recognise the vital role that parents and carers play in a child's education, particularly regarding sex, relationships, and personal development. We are committed to working in partnership with parents, carers, and pupils, consulting them on the content of our Life Skills programme. We also collaborate with relevant health and education professionals to ensure a comprehensive approach.

Statutory Framework

Our PSHE policy aligns with the statutory guidance from the Department for Education and meets the Independent School Standards. PSHE principles are integrated throughout our school's daily operations. They are not only taught explicitly but are also embedded within the curriculum, subject schemes of work, planned learning opportunities, and the positive behaviours expected of everyone in our school community.

Policy Development Process

- Review: The Head of Life Skills reviews statutory guidance and best practice.
- Drafting: Aligned with current legislation and Independent School Regulations.
- Consultation: Parents, carers, and pupils are consulted annually.
- Ratification: Approved by Windermere SLT and the Board of Governors.
- Review: Annually, or sooner if legislation and statutory requirements change.

Curriculum Overview

Our PSHE curriculum is designed around several core themes, ensuring pupils develop holistically and are well-prepared for life's challenges and opportunities.

Wellbeing

This theme focuses on nurturing pupils' overall physical and mental health, promoting resilience and a positive outlook.

- Mental health and wellbeing: Understanding emotional health, managing stress, and seeking support.
- Physical health and fitness: Promoting active lifestyles and the benefits of exercise.
- Healthy eating: Making informed choices about nutrition.
- Health and prevention: Understanding common health issues and preventative measures.
- Drugs, alcohol, and tobacco: Education on risks and making responsible choices.
- Basic mental and physical first aid: Essential life skills for emergencies.
- Developing self-knowledge and the ability to manage emotions: Building emotional intelligence and self-regulation.

Body Awareness

This theme helps pupils understand their changing bodies, sexual development, and the importance of personal hygiene and self-care.

- Changing adolescent bodies: Understanding the physical changes during puberty.
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health: Age-appropriate education on safe practices and respectful boundaries.
- Self-concept, body image, and self-esteem: Developing a healthy perception of oneself and positive self-worth.

Transition

This theme supports pupils through significant life changes, helping them adapt to new environments and stages.

- Settling into secondary school: Strategies for a smooth and successful transition to a new educational setting.

Community

This theme fosters a strong sense of belonging, responsibility, and an understanding of wider societal and global issues.

- Citizenship: Developing an understanding of how to contribute positively to society, including awareness of charitable work.
- Topics in the news and current world affairs: Encouraging critical thinking about contemporary events.
- Awareness of global issues: Understanding broader global challenges and interconnectedness.
- Employment rights and responsibilities: Understanding rights and duties in the workplace, contributing to society.

Independence, Aspirations & Money

This theme equips pupils with the knowledge and skills needed for future career paths, financial literacy, and personal autonomy.

- Work, careers, choices and pathways: Exploring different career options and educational routes.
- Financial choices: Understanding banking, saving, credit, and loans.

Identity & Relationships

This theme explores personal identity, the nature of healthy relationships, and navigating social interactions, both in person and online.

- Families: Understanding different family structures and their importance.
- Respectful relationships: Developing skills for positive friendships and understanding relationship values.
- Relationships online and the media: Navigating digital interactions and media influence safely and respectfully.
- Being safe including consent: Understanding personal boundaries and the importance of consent in all interactions.
- Bullying, abuse and discrimination: Recognising, preventing, and responding to these issues.
- Internet safety and harms: Understanding online risks and safe internet practices.

Our curriculum is spiral in design, ensuring progressive learning tailored to age, needs, and maturity.

Delivery

Our Life Skills programme is delivered through a blended approach that combines dedicated lesson time with integrated learning across the curriculum. This ensures pupils receive comprehensive and consistent PSHE education.

Delivery Methods

Discrete Lessons: All pupils receive dedicated Life Skills lessons in a two week cycle, taught by a select team of teachers. This is complemented by additional weekly tutor sessions. Our tutoring system allows for small group discussions of some topics, where pupils often feel happier to talk about things that our worrying them, or to carry forward more general discussions that have come out of Life Skills lessons. Furthermore, our Life Talk sessions provide opportunities to address key themes and reinforce PSHE messages school-wide.

To enhance the curriculum, we sometimes bring in outside experts, such as health professionals or specialist speakers or PCSOs, to lead discussions and workshops.

Curriculum Integration

We embed PSHE principles and topics throughout the wider curriculum. For example:

- English Literature lessons may explore social issues.
- Biology, Physical Education, and Physical Wellbeing lessons cover aspects of health.
- History and Religious Studies incorporate elements of citizenship.
- Maths lessons address various financial topics.
- Reflections and Events: We supplement our in-house delivery with centrally organised school reflections.
- In the News – We have opportunities to discuss current events during tutor sessions.
- Wellbeing meetings are used by the Head of Lower and Middle School to discuss social issues.
- Careers is overseen by the teacher i/c of the Careers programme, working alongside the Life Skills staff and the relevant Heads of Section. PE, F+N, Science, Business, and ToK / PPS staff all assist with aspects of the Life Skills programme.

Please see the Careers Guidance Policy (2e) for further details.

Careers Education

Formal Careers education starts in Year 7, and links to our clear focus on individual pathways for each pupil. This Careers education is focused on helping each pupil to know their own strengths and weaknesses, and to help them see how their interests can be taken forward into their career. Some aspects of the Careers programme run within the aspirations and money theme of the Life Skills curriculum.

Sixth Form Curriculum Overview

Our Sixth Form curriculum is designed around several core themes, ensuring pupils develop holistically and are well-prepared for life's challenges and opportunities.

Relationships

- Relationship values: what kind of person do I want to be for and with others?
- Healthy family functioning: sharing with others
- Managing changing relationships: managing intimate relationships, maintaining old and developing new relationships
- Improving or ending relationships
- Consent and unhealthy relationships: deepening your understanding of consent
- Beyond consent – attuning to our needs and those of others
- Sexual assault and violence
- The power of the internet
- Earning respect, avoiding danger, pressure on young people to join gangs
- Sexism and online cultures

Wellbeing

- Knowing your rights – sexual and reproductive rights
- Online wellbeing – bias and extremism
- Responsible use of social media
- Media influence – identities and relationships
- Conversations about mental health
- Mental wellbeing
- Alcohol and drug misuse – parties and nights out

Independence

- Safety and first aid: personal safety – travelling in the UK and abroad, revising basic skills and deepening understanding
- Making choices about health and health prevention
- Making choices with friends and online: creating influence and volunteering

Aspiration and Money

- Making the most of the money we have
- How do people start their own business or charity?
- Careers in a global economy
- How to budget and save money
- What should I expect when I go to work?
- Finding work, interviews and reputation

Transition

- Moving out and moving to university: what next? Thinking about the future and leaving home, staying healthy

Identity

- Identities and inclusion: exploring discrimination and inclusion
- Exploring identities critically: norms, values and behaviour

Community

- Appreciating diversity
- Identity and power dynamics: exploring privilege

Body Awareness

- Connecting with body and emotions mindfully
- Looking after your body – healthy food and exercise
- Sexual health – condoms and stealthing
- Parenthood and fertility – discussing contraception and accessing emergency contraception
- Developing sexuality and readiness for sex
- Consent

Out of age (when necessary)

- Relationships at school with peers and staff
- Consent
- Additional safeguarding training
- Following the school rules
- Recognising the difference is age
- School rules and the law as an adult
- Measures to stay safe - boundaries with younger pupils.

Sixth Form Delivery

Our Sixth Form Life Skills programme is delivered through a blended approach that combines dedicated reflection and tutor time with integrated learning across the curriculum.

Roles and Responsibilities

Deputy Head and Head of Life Skills:

- Oversees implementation and evaluation.
- Ensures high standards of delivery and accessibility for all pupils, including those with SEND.
- Provides clear information for parents and carers.

Teaching Staff:

- Deliver PSHE (Life Skills) sensitively and inclusively.
- Model positive attitudes and respectful dialogue.
- Monitor pupil progress and engagement through baseline activities, topic assessments and record effort grades.
- Provide impartial, balanced information.
- Signpost pupils to external support services.

Pupils:

- Engage actively and respectfully in Life Skills.
- Consider and respect differing viewpoints.

Inclusion and SEND

Life Skills is accessible to all pupils. Differentiated teaching, learning support, and assistive technology ensure inclusion. For pupils with specific needs, provision is tailored in line with the SEND Policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The Senior Team and Head of Life Skills monitor teaching through learning walks, lesson observations and curriculum reviews.
- Pupil progress is tracked through the school's internal assessment systems.
- Feedback from pupils, staff, and parents informs annual policy updates.

This policy supports Windermere School's commitment to developing well-rounded, informed, and resilient young people, prepared to contribute positively to society.

SMSC education is embedded across the curriculum, not confined to Life Skills lessons. Our annual SMSC audit identifies specific instances of this teaching. *Please see Statement concerning Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development for further details.*

RE/RSHE teaching does not just take place within Life Skills lessons. The annual RSHE audit highlights where it is taught within the wider curriculum, e.g. through novels in English, relationships education or through some aspects of sex education within Biology. Please see the RSE Policy for further details.