



The Poplar Adolescent Unit
Therapeutic Education Department

PSHE POLICY

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Review Date

November 2025

Poplar Adolescent Unit PSHE Policy

Background

This policy document has been produced using the PSHE Association Guidance 2021. The PSHE Association is the national subject association for Personal, Social, Health and Economic Educators.

The PSHE Association believes that an effective PSHE education will support the development of 'Character' which we see as a set of skills and attributes that will enable young people to confidently face life challenges and opportunities now and in a fast changing future. We summarise these as personal, interpersonal and social effectiveness, risk management, self-awareness, values, resilience and effectiveness in a wider community.

The PSHE programme is taught alongside Drug Education, Sex and Relationship Education, and Career Education.

Children's early personal, social and health experiences occur in the home where initial attitudes and behaviour are formed; However, if their development is to progress satisfactorily it needs to be well supported and whilst parents have the major part to play, the role of the school and the teacher are vital in providing the necessary learning experiences to enable students to acquire and demonstrate the qualities needed for coping with a complex and ever changing world. Personal, Social and Health Development are intrinsic to the nature of education and as such it is something to which all teachers have a contribution to make and from which no teacher can distance themselves.

Aims and Definition

Personal, Social and Health development aims to provide students with a range of learning experiences which will enable them to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes to behave with consideration, tolerance and responsibility in the present whilst it prepares them for an informed, responsible and active involvement in family, social, economic and civic life. We wish to enhance our students' personal development so that not only can they function effectively in a group but also that they can become fulfilled and happy as individuals. As such this definition is inherent in the school's curriculum policy document.

The ethos of PSHE is closely related to and part of the development of the ethos of the school. It is part of the 'Hidden Curriculum', the key teacher work as well as an important part of the curriculum.

Aims of the PSHE curriculum

To reinforce and give meaning to the school's policies such as equal opportunities and bullying.

To promote self-esteem, a sense of purpose and the acquisition of personal values amongst our students.

To emphasise the importance of, and respect for, the beliefs and cultures of others.

To provide knowledge and understanding that promotes active and constructive citizenship.

To encourage students to think for themselves, make valid judgements and acquire the skills that will equip them for society and work in the 21st century.

To encourage independent learning amongst our students and to take increased responsibility for organising their own studies.

To provide a broad and relevant curriculum designed to enable our students to achieve awareness of both themselves and others.

Content

The PSHE course has a number of elements in place to develop many attributes that we desire in the students who are growing up in our communities. These include improving confidence, the acceptance of responsibility, healthy bodies and minds and developing honesty.

These skills, the knowledge and understanding outlined are achieved through experiencing and discussing current issues as well as existing practice. This includes:

- Health Education including diet, hygiene, driver safety, rail safety, bike safety, cancer, smoking, managing health, first aid and emergency treatment, Drug and Alcohol awareness
- Sex and Relationships
- Taking responsibility.
- Managing money.
- Understanding we have differences and to respect them.
- Stages of emotion – loss of family, divorce, new family members.
- Types of discrimination, bullying, racism, prejudice and how to challenge them.

The `Hidden Curriculum`

The school ethos, the way in which relationships are structured will contribute important elements to the development of a student's knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. The quality of the physical environment and how members of the school (students and staff, both teaching and non-teaching) react to each other send strong positive messages.

Method

Many of the personal and social skills we are hoping to develop can only be learnt experientially. They are developed by giving students certain kinds of experiences, by placing them in situations which offer the opportunity to gain knowledge, practise skills and examine and evaluate attitudes. It is thus particularly appropriate to choose from as wide a range of teaching and learning styles so all students can access the curriculum and make full use of these experiences both in the classroom, with teachers and visiting speakers and on visits, then it follows that teaching and learning styles would generally be student centred rather than teacher focused.

Therefore, most teaching and learning concerned with a student's PSHE will place the teacher in a facilitating role.

Delivery of PSHE

The PSHE programme is embedded throughout the curriculum and occurs discreetly in most lessons. Visiting sports specialists are booked for Wednesday mornings, Speakers on Thursday mornings and community visits are scheduled for a Thursday afternoon in general, with a group-based lesson taking place on a Wednesday afternoon.

How is PSHE monitored and evaluated?

- There is the opportunity for teaching staff to discuss and feedback to the coordinator.
- Visiting speakers are observed by the coordinator.
- Students evaluate the visiting speakers and trips through Poplar Press and this feeds in to future planning and the head teachers report.
- Discussions with the Head teacher will take place regularly.

How will the work be assessed?

In PSHE, there are 2 broad areas for assessment:

- a. Student knowledge and understanding, for example, understanding on health, understanding of procedures including health and safety;
- b. How students can apply 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.

Assessment in PSHE should not imply that students are failing as people or citizens. It should not be a judgement on the worth, personality or value of an individual child or their family. All students have the opportunity to complete ASDAN units in PSHE, Sex and Relationships, Beliefs and Values, Financial Capability.

The Aim of Drug Education

Drug education is a major component of drug prevention. Drug prevention aims to: minimise the number of young people engaging in drug use; delay the age of onset of first use; reduce the harm caused by drugs; and enable those who have concerns about drugs to seek help.

The aim of drug education is to provide opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding about drugs and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, relating this to their own and others' actions.

Drug education is an important aspect of the curriculum for all schools. It should:

increase pupils' knowledge and understanding and clarify misconceptions about:

- The short- and long-term effects and risks of drugs - the rules and laws relating to drugs
- The impact of drugs on individuals, families and communities
- The prevalence and acceptability of drug use among peers
- The complex moral, social, emotional and political issues surrounding drugs

develop pupils' personal and social skills to make informed decisions and keep themselves safe and healthy, including:

- Assessing, avoiding and managing risk
- communicating effectively
- resisting pressures
- finding information, help and advice
- devising problem-solving and coping strategies
- developing self-awareness and self-esteem

enable pupils to explore their own and other peoples' attitudes towards drugs, drug use and drug users, including challenging stereotypes, and exploring media and social influences.

All schools need to set realistic aims for their drug education which include the above and which are consistent with the values and ethos of the school and the laws of society, as well

as appropriate to the age and maturity of pupils. We have built a strong working relationship with EPYDAS who regularly visit us and lead sessions to meet our aims.

The aims of Sex and Relationship Education

Aims

- To provide understanding of relationships, adolescence, sexual health, sexuality and the process of human reproduction.
- To offer opportunities for the acquisition of understanding and attitudes which prepare students to use that knowledge in a responsible and healthy manner.
- To ensure that the young people have the ability to accept their own and others' sexuality in a positive way and to enjoy relationships based on mutual respect and responsibility, free from abuse.
- To encourage the youngsters to appreciate the value of family life, marriage and the responsibilities of parenthood.
- To enable youngsters to recognise the implications of their sexual behaviour – physically, emotionally, morally and to accept that both sexes must behave responsibly.
- To develop skills, including self-confidence and assertiveness, to help youngsters resist pressures towards irresponsible sexual behaviour.

This will be delivered through:

- The unit group programme.
- The ASDAN Key Steps and various subjects as identified in our PSHE policy.
- The Poplar Adolescent Unit (Education) ethos.
- Sex education sessions through PSHE lessons.
- Whole unit pathways in partnership with outside agencies to provide services for YP for such issues as contraception and STIs.

Principles

- Sex education is an integral part of the learning process and should be available to all students whilst on the unit. It should encourage exploration of values and moral issues, consideration of sexuality and personal relationships; with the development of communication and decision making skills.
- Contentious issues such as HIV/AIDS, homosexuality, abortion, contraception etc. should be presented in a broad and balanced way free from sensationalism and personal bias.

We recognise that:

- Youngsters will come from a variety of backgrounds, some of which may make this subject both distressing and difficult.
- Equally, some backgrounds may not mirror the values or experiences expressed in the range of programmes.

- Staff need to be sensitive to the needs of all youngsters, taking account of their differing stages of maturity and protecting their sensibilities.
- Information should be presented objectively, sensitively, within a framework of values, showing due regard to law on sexual behaviour and acknowledging moral, religious and ethical issues.
- Youngsters should be encouraged to develop skills of self-restraint, dignity, respect for self and others, responsibility and sensitivity towards other's needs and views.
- Stress will be placed on the process of human reproduction as being part of a loving relationship.
- Teasing on sexual matters will not be tolerated.
- Intense relationships are not permitted on the unit.

Equal Opportunities

- All youngsters will have access to the Sex Education programme subject to parental rights to withdraw their child.
- This policy is in line with the Local Authority's policies and procedures on Equality and Diversity. The Unit's Disability and Equality Policy states its commitment to,

'Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.'

**Reviewed: October 2021, Kathy Johns
PSHE Co-ordinator**