



BIRKENHEAD SCHOOL

Personal, Social and Health Education Policy (PSHE)

This policy covers the School's approach to the delivery of Personal, Social, Health and Economic education through both designated time within the timetable and opportunities within individual subjects to develop subject specific SMSC opportunities. There is a separate policy for RSE (Relationships and Sexual Education). This policy also covers the Promotion of British Values policy along with the policy for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy.

Keeping safe, making a positive contribution to their communities and being healthy are central to our students' lifelong development. PSHE is delivered to Key Stages 3, 4 and 5, through a weekly PSRHE lesson, primarily delivered by form tutors, through work in other curriculum subjects' lesson time, through the 'Beyond the Curriculum' lessons and through a wide range of activities such as Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. Students gain practical knowledge and skills to help them live healthily and deal with the spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues they face as they approach adulthood.

PHSE gives students opportunities to reflect on their experiences and how they are developing. It helps them to understand and manage responsibly a wider range of relationships as they mature, and to show respect for the diversity of, and differences between, people. It also develops students' well-being and self-esteem, encouraging belief in their ability to succeed and enabling them to take responsibility for their learning and future choice of courses and career.

Aims and Objectives

The School's aims and objectives for our students, which the PHSE curriculum supports, are for students:

- To be able to think and act for themselves
- To acquire and develop personal qualities and values
- To understand what makes for good relationships with others
- To develop good relationships with other members of the school and wider community
- To know and understand what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and how this can be achieved in their own life

- To be aware of safety issues with regards to modern technology as well as in the world around them and understand how to avoid becoming a victim of cybercrime in any form
- To have respect for others and their environment
- To be independent and responsible members of the school community
- To be positive and active members of a democratic and multicultural society, recognizing the British Values that underpin our society
- To develop self-confidence and self-esteem, and make informed choices regarding personal and social issues
- To acquire social independence and competence brought about by an enquiring mind
- To be aware of finance and how budgets work
- To cover the statutory Relationships and Sex Education curriculum set by the Department for Education

In the course of PHSE education lessons, students may indicate that they are vulnerable or at risk. It is important to ensure that the school's safeguarding policy is adhered to at all times. Disclosures made during PSHE/RSE sessions or workshops will be handled in the same way as explained in the safeguarding policy. All teachers receive training on this.

Throughout the programme we will promote the needs and interests of all students, irrespective of gender, culture, ability or aptitude, by ensuring we provide an inclusive curriculum.

Our programme promotes the School's values including actively promoting the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Implementation

All staff deliver PHSE within the academic hidden curriculum through their everyday teaching, such as local environmental issues in Geography, or ethics and morality in Religious Studies.

All students receive a designated weekly PSRHE lesson. These lessons follow the PSRHE curriculum, available separately, and are coordinated by the School's Head of PSRHE. All students participate in annual workshops delivered by outside agencies. The schedule for workshops is coordinated by the PSHE Coordinator and is available separately.

We encourage students to take part in a range of practical activities that promote active citizenship, e.g., charity fundraising, the planning of special events or involvement in Community activities such as the service modules of the Duke of Edinburgh.

Assessment

Teachers assess students' work in PHSE by making informal judgements as they observe them during lessons and by looking through the work undertaken. Review sessions will allow students to reflect on their learning and allow form tutors to evaluate how students have progressed towards the intended learning outcomes.

Role of PSHE Coordinator

The PSHE Coordinator will:

- raise awareness amongst all staff of their contribution to the students' personal and social development and agree the overall aims, objectives and priorities
- create the PSRHE curriculum for all Year groups, including workshops
- establish a shared view of best practice
- lead policy development and review as this need arises
- agree the main priorities for the students' personal and social development and identify the major opportunities for meeting these priorities across the curriculum, adapting to the needs of the cohort as appropriate
- provide appropriate support and training for staff
- monitor and evaluate the programme, including the use of outside agencies, and students' responses to the programme
- carry out a continuous process of review and development of the programme as part of the cycle of school improvement

The DfE have reinforced the need “to create and enforce a clear and rigorous expectation on all schools to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.”

At Birkenhead School these values are reinforced regularly and in the following ways:

Democracy

Democracy is reinforced through the house system, student council and prefect system. Students are nominated to hold positions of responsibility. Usually the older students will manage this and an atmosphere of mutual respect and co-operation is encouraged. Students are encouraged to apply for positions of responsibility, and these positions are voted on by the students and staff. The Headmaster holds regular meetings with the Heads of School and expects to discuss issues which concern the students. In PSHE the issues around voting and the value of democracy is emphasised and the history of the emergence of our democracy is taught in KS3 history lessons.

The Rule of Law

Expectations of good behaviour are very high at Birkenhead School. The importance of Laws, whether they be those that govern the class, the school, or the country, are consistently reinforced throughout regular school days, as well as when dealing with expectations of good behaviour through school assemblies. Students are taught the value and reasons behind laws, that govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken through.

Individual Liberty

Within school, students are actively encouraged to make choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. As a school we educate and provide boundaries for students to make choices safely, through the provision of a safe environment and empowering education. Students are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and advise how to exercise these safely, for example through our Duke of Edinburgh activities. Whether it be through choice of challenge, of how they record, or participate in our numerous co-curricular clubs and opportunities, students are given the freedom to make choices.

Mutual Respect

Mutual Respect is at the core of our School. Part of our school ethos and behaviour policy has revolved around Core Values such as 'Respect', and students have been part of discussions and assemblies related to what this means and how it is shown. Behaviour is modelled by all staff in school and high expectations are placed upon students. This is reiterated through our classrooms and co-curricular activities.

Tolerance of those of Different Faiths and Beliefs

This is achieved through several mediums. Our aim is that all students have an enhanced understanding of their place in a culturally diverse society and to create as many opportunities as possible for them to experience such diversity. In RS lessons, 6 world religions are studied as well as ethical and secular viewpoints. Assemblies have many diverse themes common to all religions such as respect for faith and for each other. Members of different faiths or religions are encouraged to share their knowledge to enhance learning within classes and the school. In the tutor programme students are encouraged to reflect upon the value of all faiths and beliefs. Various department hosts and co-ordinates trips and exchanges between different countries, allowing students to embrace cultural and religious diversity.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education helps children develop personal qualities, which are valued in a civilised society: for example, thoughtfulness, honesty, respect for difference, moral principles, independence, and self-respect. These qualities are also valued in our School community and we seek to enable children to develop these qualities across the curriculum and throughout school life. They are linked closely to our school values and aims.

We place particular emphasis on helping students:

- Develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem, self-confidence and emotional maturity
- Develop an appreciation of religious, philosophical and non-materialistic aspects of life
- Develop an understanding and acceptance of different types of families and relationships
- Develop a sense of right and wrong and a respect for good conduct, moral and ethical values
- To accept responsibility for their behaviour
- To contribute to society through helping in the community or fundraising
- Understand and respect other faiths and cultures
- Develop a political and economic awareness
- Provide a balanced and open presentation of all political views

School Aims

To further the education (academic, social, moral and physical) of students attending Birkenhead School (including Birkenhead Preparatory School) in accordance with Christian principles by:

- providing an open and happy community in which endeavour and achievement flourish
- offering a well-proven route to academic success, seeking to enable students to realise their potential and prepare them for later life
- creating a caring and structured environment in which students grow in self-confidence and enjoy many opportunities for teamwork and personal development
- setting high standards for itself and for its students, not just academic but also personal standards of integrity, self-discipline, compassion and respect for others.

Spiritual

Beliefs, religious or otherwise, which inform students' perspective on life and their interest in, and respect of, different people's feelings and values. A sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them, including the intangible. Use of imagination and creativity in their learning and willingness to reflect on their experiences. Students should then:

- Have respect for themselves and for others
- Have an awareness of their own and others' beliefs, feelings, and values
- Develop a set of values, principles and beliefs, which may or may not be religious, which inform their perspective on life and their patterns of behaviour
- Be able to articulate their feelings and justify them through discussion, debate, and presentations to others
- Be able to discuss topics such as discrimination, injustice and bullying
- Acquire the skills to be self-reliant and work independently or in a team
- Be willing to take responsibility for their own actions
- Develop an increasing ability to reflect, and to learn from this reflection.
- Be able to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence

Moral

The ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong and a readiness to apply this understanding in their own lives. Understanding of the consequences of their actions. Interest in investigating and offering reasoned views about moral and ethical issues.

Students should then:

- Have the ability to distinguish right from wrong
- Be able to think through the consequences of their own and others' actions
- Be able to understand the impact that their own actions can have on others
- Have respect for others
- Have a willingness and the confidence to express their views on ethical issues and personal values
- Play a part in developing the school's code of behaviour
- Enable students to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England
- At all times actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

Social

Use of a range of social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with students from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. Willingness to participate in a variety of social settings, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively. Interest in, and understanding of, the way communities and societies function at a variety of levels.

Students should then:

- Show respect for people, living things, property and the environment
- Work effectively and respectfully with other students
- Share their own views and opinions with others in a positive way
- Willingly and happily participate in activities
- Take part in democratic processes available to them
- Behave in an appropriate and sensitive way
- Develop the ability to work and live alongside those from different cultures and beliefs
- Reflect on their own contribution to society
- Have an understanding of political and ethical issues.

Cultural

Understanding and having an appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage including the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and respect and tolerance for those of different, or no faith. Willingness to participate in, and respond to, for example, artistic, musical, sporting, mathematical, technological, scientific and cultural opportunities. Interest in exploring, understanding of, and respect for, cultural diversity and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socioeconomic groups in the local, national and global communities.

Students should then:

- Be able to appreciate cultural diversity
- Be able to respect other people as set out in the 2010 Equalities Act
- Understand and respect other people's values and beliefs
- Be tolerant of people with different cultural, religious, and non-religious beliefs and be able to interact with them.

- Be able to acquire a broad general knowledge of a respect for public institutions and services in England

Aims of SMSC:

- Being reflective about beliefs, values and more profound aspects of human experience, use their imagination and creativity, and develop curiosity in their learning.
- Developing and applying an understanding of right and wrong in their school life and life outside school.
- Taking part in a range of activities requiring social skills.
- Developing an awareness of, and respect towards, diversity in relation to, for example, gender, race, religion and belief, culture, sexual orientation, and disability. Gaining a well-informed understanding of the options and challenges facing them as they move through the school and on to the next stage of their education and training. Overcoming barriers to their learning. Responding positively to a range of artistic, sporting and other cultural opportunities, provided by the school, including for example developing an appreciation of theatre, music and literature.
- Developing the skills and attitudes to enable them to participate fully and positively in democratic, modern Britain.
- Understanding and appreciating the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life.

How the School contributes to SMSC:

Spiritual

We:

- Value students' questions and encourage them to think through their ideas and concerns
- Recognise that teachers act as role models
- Ensure that in the school environment every child may reach their potential regardless of gender, race, disability, or other equalities issues
- Help students to be aware of their potential and support them to achieve it
- Provide opportunities for spiritual development through learning outside the classroom, e.g. drama, music, art, visits to museums
- Encourage students to explore and critically analyse what interests and inspires themselves and others
- Encourage students to reflect and learn from reflection
- Encourage individual endeavour and celebrate achievement and success, both within and outside the classroom e.g. through drama, sports, music and competitions
- Provide opportunities for students to develop leadership skills and challenge so they can take care of themselves and others, and develop self-reliance.

Moral

We:

- Provide a clear framework of values and behaviours which is promoted consistently throughout the school

- Give students opportunities across the curriculum to explore and develop moral concepts and values, such as right and wrong, justice and the law, personal rights and responsibilities
- Reward good insight and behaviour
- Teach students about the importance of being a good citizen
- Provide students with a knowledge of public institutions and services
- Discuss in an informed and balanced way breaches of agreed moral codes where they arise, and their impact on society and themselves;
- Discuss moral issues by studying e.g. literature and in assemblies

Social

We:

- Foster a sense of community
- Encourage students to work co-operatively
- Encourage students to work in different group activities
- Encourage students to take responsibility for their actions, for example, respect for property, care of the environment, and developing codes of behaviour
- Encourage students to mix with students from different areas/cultures/faith
- Help students to develop personal qualities which are valued in society, for example, thoughtfulness, honesty, respect for difference and sound moral principles
- Provide opportunities for participating in different communities – for example, religious, cultural, local and global e.g. Nepal
- Provide opportunities for students to exercise leadership and responsibility
- Ensure that through lessons and other formal and informal settings opportunities are provided for students to demonstrate initiative, develop their interests and organise activities for themselves and others

Cultural

We:

- Teach students about the importance of being a good citizen, respecting the fundamental British values of democracy
- Ensure that students are aware of their rights and the rights of others as human beings
- Provide positive and effective links with the world of work e.g. work shadowing, work experience, and visits from professionals, and the wider community e.g. school visits
- Provide opportunities for students to discuss political and ethical issues.
- Provide opportunities for students to meet and interact with people from other cultures
- Provide opportunities for students to participate in literature, drama, music, art, crafts and other cultural events
- Provide opportunities for students to link with children from other cultures e.g. pen friend (MFL)
- Develop partnerships with outside agencies and individuals to extend students' cultural awareness e.g. foreign exchanges

The Contribution of English

English contributes to our students' SMSC development through:

- Developing confidence and expertise in language, which is an important aspect of individual and social identity.
- Enabling students to understand and engage with the feelings and values embodied in high quality poetry, fiction, drama, film and television.
- Developing students' awareness of moral and social issues in fiction, journalism, magazines, radio, television and film.
- Helping students to understand how language changes over time, the influences on spoken and written language and social attitudes to the use of language.

The Contribution of Mathematics

Mathematics contributes to our students' SMSC development through:

- Spiritual development: through helping students obtain an insight into the infinite, and through explaining the underlying mathematical principles behind natural forms and patterns.
- Moral development: helping students recognise how logical reasoning can be used to consider the consequences of particular decisions and choices and helping them learn the value of mathematical truth.
- Social development: through helping students work together productively on complex mathematical tasks and helping them see that the result is often better than any of them could achieve separately.
- Cultural development: through helping students appreciate that mathematical thought contributes to the development of our culture and is becoming increasingly central to our highly technological future, and through recognising that mathematicians from many cultures have contributed to the development of modern day mathematics.

The Contribution of Science

Science contributes to our students' SMSC development through:

- Encouraging students to reflect on the wonder of the natural world.
- Awareness of the ways that Science and Technology can affect society and the environment.
- Consideration of the moral dilemmas that can result in scientific developments.
- Showing respect for differing opinions, on creation for example.
- Co-operation in practical activity.
- Raising awareness that scientific developments are the product of many.

The Contribution of Information Communication Technology

ICT contributes to our students' SMSC development through:

- Preparing the students for the challenges of living and learning in a technologically enriched, increasingly interconnected world.
- Making clear the guidelines about the ethical use of the internet and digital communication.
- Acknowledging advances in technology and appreciation for human achievement.

The Contribution of History

History contributes to our students' SMSC development through:

- Looking at the creation and evolution of British society.
- Enabling students to reflect on key moral issues such as slavery and the holocaust.
- Showing an awareness of the moral implications of the actions of historical figures.

The Contribution of Geography

Geography contributes to our students' SMSC development through:

- Opportunities for reflection on the creation of earth and its' origins, future and diversity.
- Reflection on the fairness of the distribution of the earth's resources and issues surrounding climate change.
- A study of people and physical geography gives our students the chance to reflect on the social and cultural characteristics of society.

The Contribution of Modern Foreign Languages

Modern Foreign Languages contributes to our students' SMSC development through:

- Gaining insights into the way of life, cultural traditions, moral and social developments of other people.
- Social skills are developed through group activities and communication exercises.
- Listening skills are improved through oral/aural work.

The Contribution of Religious Education

RE makes a distinctive and substantial contribution to the delivery of SMSC:

- Students learn about beliefs, values and the concept of spirituality
- Students develop their sense of morality by considering religious interpretations of morality and ethics.
- RE reflects on the significance of religious teaching in their own lives.
- Develops respect for the right of others to hold beliefs different from their own.
- Shows an understanding of the influence of religion on society.
- Fosters appreciation and understanding of different cultures, religions and traditions.

The Contribution of Art

Art contributes to our students' SMSC development through:

- Art lessons develop students' aesthetic appreciation.
- In turn, Art evokes feelings of 'awe' and 'wonder'.
- Giving students the chance to reflect on nature, their environment and surroundings.
- Studying artists with a spiritual or religious theme, issues raised by artists which concerns ethical issues, such as War paintings.

The Contribution of Design and Technology

Design and Technology makes a contribution to students' SMSC development through:

- Reflecting on products and inventions, the diversity of materials and ways in which design can improve the quality of our lives.
- Awareness of the moral dilemmas created by technological advances.
- How different cultures have contributed to technology.
- Opportunities to work as a team, recognising others strengths, sharing equipment.

The Contribution of Music

Music contributes to our students' SMSC development through:

- Teaching that encourages students to be open to the music of other cultures.
- Discussing and reflecting upon a range of personal experiences (own performance) and observed experiences (trips, concerts and peer performances).
- Lead students to appreciate aesthetic order, beauty and on occasion ambiguity, for example through listening activities, where possible beyond their common experience.
- Looking at the way music can change moods and behaviour.
- Offer a range of high quality off-timetable music enrichment activities, for example access to individual instrumental/vocal/theory lessons with specialist peripatetic teachers.

The Contribution of Physical Education

Students SMSC development is actively promoted through PE by:

- Activities involving co-operation, teamwork, competition, rules, self-discipline and fair play.
- Exploring the sports and traditions of a variety of cultures.
- Individual activities that provide the opportunity for self-reflection, awareness and challenge.

The contribution of co-curricular activities

We deliver SMSC through a variety of ways beyond the curriculum:

- Student Leadership by Prefects and Heads of School
- The peer and academic mentor programme
- Through our global links with Nepal and South Africa
- Our extensive co-curricular programme
- School drama productions

Monitoring and Implementation of the Policy

- Provision for SMSC is monitored and reviewed by the SLT and teachers.
- Regular discussions are held at staff meetings.
- Staff share classroom work and practice.
- The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all staff.
- A visitors' log monitors the content of all providers and is checked by the Deputy Head.
- SSMT conduct lesson observations each week to ensure there is no partisan political content being delivered, further enhanced by work scrutinies.
- The School actively discourages the expression of political, religious or sexual bias and staff are reminded to express balanced views in their teaching.

Graham Murdoch 24th September 2025

To be reviewed September 2026