

PSHEE & SMSC Education Policy



Should be read in conjunction with Promotion of British Values and Prevention of Radicalisation Policy and Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE)

UPDATED BY	DATE OF ISSUE	NEXT REVIEW DATE
Head of PSHEE and Senior Deputy Head, Pastoral	September 2026	September 2027

At South Hampstead High School, we are committed to educating the *whole pupil*. The health, happiness, and well-being of every individual are considered in all lessons, activities, and aspects of school life. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) is delivered in a variety of ways across the curriculum and through co-curricular activities. Pupils are encouraged to see personal development not as a stand-alone weekly lesson, but as a continuous theme running throughout their time in school and beyond.

Objectives of the PSHEE Programme

We aim to:

1. **Promote personal growth** – Develop pupils’ self-awareness, self-esteem, confidence, ambition, and happiness.
2. **Build resilience** – Equip pupils with the skills to face life’s challenges and the confidence to seek help when needed.
3. **Support informed choices** – Provide the knowledge to make sound decisions in areas such as:
 - Physical and mental health
 - Physical and online safety
 - Healthy relationships
 - Financial literacy
 - Understanding the legal and political systems of the UK
4. **Encourage critical thinking** – Empower pupils to think deeply and independently about complex issues without obvious “right” answers.
5. **Foster curiosity** – Encourage pupils to ask questions, research, and seek accurate information to guide decision-making.
6. **Develop moral values** – Help pupils form their own moral codes, understand consequences, and consider the impact of their actions and those of others.
7. **Promote active citizenship** – Inspire pupils to uphold **Fundamental British Values**, respect the rights and freedoms of others, and take responsibility for contributing to a fair and just society

The PSHEE programme is delivered primarily through weekly lessons on the timetable. In KS3, lessons are 70 minutes per week with a focus on building knowledge. In KS4, pupils are taught in 35-minute lessons each week and are encouraged to further develop their thoughts and views. KS5, teaching occurs via form times, assemblies and the speaker programme. All PSHEE lessons are taught by PSHEE staff, Heads of Year and teachers who have a particular interest in supporting students outside the academic curriculum and who work together and are trained to deliver the PSHEE programme effectively.

Visiting speakers and external organisations are engaged, where appropriate, to deliver content and run workshops on specific topics. This helps to enrich the programme for students by providing them with messages from a range of perspectives, while drawing on the specialised knowledge and expertise of individuals and institutions who focus on these areas.

Collaboration with our neighbouring boys’ school, UCS, takes place in years 7-10, covering a variety of topics including healthy lifestyles, empathy drug education and consent.

PSHEE lessons use a variety of teaching methods, including individual and group work, presentations, role plays, and quizzes. Relevant, up-to-date videos are used to assist with learning and can help facilitate discussions on sensitive issues and present information in an accessible and memorable format. There is a great deal of information to share with students, much of which may be new to them. Wherever possible, lessons are designed to encourage students to reflect independently and collaboratively, explore their own views, and consider how they can apply their understanding effectively.

Pupils are given resources and worksheets via Google Classroom. Although writing is kept to a minimum, pupils record their knowledge, thoughts and ideas on a variety of worksheets.

The right learning environment

PSHEE lessons often address topics that may be sensitive, controversial, or connected to aspects of students’ personal lives that are not known to the teacher or their peers. For this reason, it is essential to create a secure

and supportive classroom environment. Students must feel confident that their thoughts and feelings will be respected, and that they can share their opinions without fear of negative reactions.

Teachers regularly remind students of the agreed **ground rules** for classroom discussions:

- Treat all classmates with respect.
- Keep personal information shared in the lesson confidential.
- Accept that others may have different opinions without passing judgment.
- Never “out” another student or disclose something they have not chosen to share.
- No student should feel pressured by the teacher or their peers to share personal information they are uncomfortable revealing.

When planning and leading PSHEE lessons, teachers should consider:

- Which topics are more appropriate for private discussion between individuals or small groups, and which should be addressed in a whole-class setting.
- The degree to which they share their own views, taking into account the moral implications and the importance of remaining impartial.
- Ensuring students receive accurate, balanced information to help them form their own informed opinions.

Guidance on handling sensitive and controversial issues

The law relating to teaching controversial issues is contained in the Education Act 1996. Section 406 requires school governing bodies, Head Teachers and local authorities to forbid the promotion of partisan political views and to forbid the pursuit of partisan political activities by students under 12. Section 407 requires them to take all reasonably practicable steps to make sure that where political or controversial issues are brought to students’ attention, a balanced presentation of opposing views is offered. If anyone thinks that a school is not complying with these requirements, they can make a formal complaint using the complaints procedure.

Sensitive and controversial topics are an inevitable part of PSHEE. Students should not be shielded from these discussions; engaging with them allows pupils to develop key skills such as active listening, respecting differing viewpoints, constructing reasoned arguments, managing conflict, and distinguishing between fact and opinion. Such topics also offer valuable opportunities to recognise bias by critically evaluating evidence and considering the perspectives of others.

While teachers must present a balanced range of perspectives, this does not mean avoiding a clear stance on issues such as racism, homophobia, other forms of discrimination, extremist views, or advocacy of violence. In all PSHEE lessons, as in the wider curriculum, teaching should be firmly grounded in the school’s values, and topics should be explored within that ethical framework.

Guidance on confidentiality

Students may sometimes make personal disclosures, either during a lesson or in a private conversation with a teacher. These could include, for example, information that they or someone they know is using drugs, involved in illegal activity, or has experienced abuse. In all such cases, the school’s **Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures** must be followed.

If a disclosure is made in front of the class, it may be necessary to address the group or specific individuals to reinforce the importance of respecting the student’s confidentiality. This helps to prevent rumours, protect the students’ privacy, and ensure they do not feel scrutinised or judged by their peers.

Syllabus

There is an overarching scheme of work, setting out the topics covered and in which year group. This acts as a framework within which the Head of PSHEE plans, in conjunction with the Head of Year, the more detailed lesson plans for the year group. (The overarching SoW is included here; the detailed SoWs, by year group, are on the school network.) Both documents are treated as working documents, continually updated and refined to reflect pupil and parent feedback, current trends, and recent events. As pupils’ needs and the environment around them continue to evolve, it is essential that PSHEE schemes of work are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure the best possible provision for pupils, both now and in the future.

Year group schemes of work include detailed lesson guidance, with the Head of Year circulating a lesson plan ahead of each lesson. Teachers are encouraged to follow the plan closely to ensure consistency of delivery across the year group, while still being afforded the autonomy to adapt their approach to suit their own teaching style and the specific needs of their pupils. The slides provided should not be used exclusively. Instead, they should serve as a backdrop for learning, used flexibly to support and enhance a dynamic and interactive lesson.

Many themes in PSHEE are learned and explored through work done in academic subjects. Examples are included in Appendix A. The PSHEE learning done in academic subjects is not incidental; it forms a vital and integral part in the whole-school approach to PSHEE, and is reviewed regularly, alongside the PSHEE curriculum.

Monitoring the effectiveness of PSHEE (including RSE outlined below)

The PSHEE programme is regularly reviewed to ensure it remains relevant and responsive to students' needs. This review process includes staff feedback on individual lessons, pupil voice and assessment, as well as communication with parents via School Post. As a result, the curriculum is continuously evolving and developing to reflect the needs of the school community.

Quality of delivery is maintained through learning walks and teacher observations, which also help identify any staff training requirements. After each lesson, staff have the opportunity to provide feedback, which informs the review and planning of the programme for the following academic year.

Assessment is integral to the RSE programme and focuses on understanding what pupils have learned and what areas may need further development. This takes place throughout lessons in a variety of formats to measure individual learning and progress. Tools used include:

- Baseline and exit questions
- Mind maps
- Quizzes
- 'I can' statements
- End-of-term knowledge checkers (Google Forms)

Pupils' work is stored in Google Classroom. The Head of PSHEE collates and analyses all feedback and assessment data to determine whether specific topics need to be revisited or clarified—particularly in relation to factual and legal content. This information plays a crucial role in shaping the programme for the following year.

The impact and effectiveness of PSHEE is also effectively measured through careful monitoring of:

- The general behaviour and attitudes of students
- Bullying and other behaviour data
- Safeguarding and welfare data
- Regular, informal feedback on and evaluation of the programme by tutors and pupils
- School Council and other pupils focus groups
- Pupil participation in co-curricular and community-based activities

Continuity of provision between the Junior and Senior Schools

The PSHEE co-ordinator in the Junior School and the Head of PSHEE in the Senior School meet regularly to review the scheme of work, ensuring continuity and progression between the two schools and developing a spiral curriculum. In addition, the coordinators discuss any common issues or trends emerging in specific year groups and adapt the scheme of work to address the needs of all girls in both the Junior and Senior schools.

With new intake of pupils in Years 3 and 7, certain objectives are revisited to ensure that all pupils have the knowledge and understanding of the topics covered. E.g. NSPCC PANTS lessons are revisited in Year 3 and Puberty is taught in Years 5 and revisited in Year 7.

Topic	Year Groups covered KS2/KS3/KS4
Relationships	
Different types of families and features and characteristics of healthy family life	6, 7, 10, 11
Importance of friendships, what makes a good friendship and that friendships can change over time	5, 7, 10
Consent, boundaries in relation to physical situations	5, 7- 11
Cyber bullying	6, 7, 8, 10(mobile phone behaviour)
Sexuality and gender	6, 8 - 10
Health and Wellbeing	
Puberty	4, 5, 7 - 9
Healthy Eating	5, 7 - 9
Sleep and Exercise	5, 7 - 10
Medicine, Alcohol, Drugs – more detail in Year 8 about drugs – increasing knowledge and the ability to make healthy choices in relation to drugs, smoking and vaping	6, 7 - 11
Mental Health 7 – what good mental health looks like, ways to stay positive, how mental health can change, what we do when things go wrong (stress bucket) 5 – importance of taking care of mental health, recognising warning signs and how to seek support (trusted adults), strategies to support mental health and importance of help and support	5, 7- 11
Growth Mindset/Positive Perspectives	5, 6, 7 - 11
Self-esteem, self worth and body image	5, 6, 7 - 11
Transitions, exams, study habits 6 – transition to Senior School 7 & 8 – time management, revision and study skills	6, 7 - 11
Living in the Wider World	
Money	5, 7 - 11
Mobile phones, digital awareness, internet safety	5, 6, 7 - 11
Diversity and discrimination	5, 6, 7 - 10
Jobs and careers	6, 7 - 11

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Education

At South Hampstead High School, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development is a whole-school responsibility. While many aspects of SMSC are addressed directly in PSHEE, they are also embedded throughout the wider life of the school — in academic lessons, assemblies, co-curricular activities, and the day-to-day ethos of the community. Democratic participation, self-reflection, moral understanding, and respect for diversity are woven into all that we do.

Our aim is to equip pupils with the awareness, values, and skills to take a confident, well-informed role in society, interact positively with others, and uphold a strong personal moral framework. Staff are expected to model these values and integrate them into their teaching and interactions with students.

We actively welcome and champion diversity through events, assemblies, and the work of our visible and engaged Diversity and Inclusion Council. Respectful debate is central to our culture, with pupils encouraged to engage constructively with views different from their own. Debating is a popular co-curricular activity, and demonstrations of respectful debate are regularly showcased across the school.

Opportunities for SMSC Development

The PSHEE programmes give pupils the opportunity to explore a range of values, beliefs, and societal issues. Through discussions of topical, political, spiritual, moral, social, and cultural themes, students develop:

- Empathy and the ability to understand others' perspectives
- Reasoning skills, valuing truth and evidence in forming opinions

- Skills in decision-making, valuing freedom, fairness, and responsible choice

Spiritual Development

We foster spiritual growth by promoting awareness and understanding of different beliefs, values, and identities.

- All students study Philosophy and Religion at Key Stage 3, many continuing into Key Stage 4.
- PSHEE supports self-knowledge through exploration of identity, belonging, and commitment to others.
- We provide opportunities for enrichment outside the classroom through drama, music, art, museum visits, and guest speakers.
- Pupils are encouraged to explore and reflect on what inspires them, developing a sense of self-awareness.
- Leadership opportunities help pupils build self-reliance and responsibility for themselves and others.

The Philosophy and Religion department plays a key role in fostering respect for all faiths and beliefs. Pupils learn about and from world religions, with an emphasis on understanding and respecting differences without compromising personal beliefs.

Our diverse community is reflected in student-led initiatives such as:

- **Jewish Society (JSoc)** – welcoming to all students, hosting regular speakers from across the Jewish community.
- **Support for Muslim pupils** – including provision of a prayer room during Ramadan and teacher awareness of fasting.
- Celebrations of religious and cultural diversity through events led by pupils, ensuring relevance and authenticity.

Moral Development

We encourage pupils to critically engage with concepts of right and wrong, justice, fairness, and responsibility.

- A clear framework of school values is promoted and modelled consistently by staff.
- Across the curriculum — particularly in PSHEE, Philosophy and Religion, History, English, and Latin — pupils explore moral concepts and civic responsibility.
- Pupils learn about good citizenship through role models, visiting speakers, and service opportunities.
- Breaches of moral codes, including Fundamental British Values, are discussed openly and constructively.
- Annual democratic processes, such as class representative elections, provide real experiences of participation in governance.
- Consistent application of school rules reinforces respect, responsibility, and the principle of living within the law.

Social Development

Pupils are supported in developing the skills to participate fully and positively in society.

- We nurture a sense of community and encourage cooperative work in diverse groupings.
- Pupils are taught to take responsibility for their actions, respect property, and care for others.
- Perspective-taking is encouraged, especially when resolving conflict.
- Personal qualities such as thoughtfulness, honesty, respect for difference, and integrity are actively promoted.

4. Cultural Development

We help pupils understand their place in different cultural groups and appreciate the diversity of modern society.

- Pupils learn about the British democratic system, Fundamental British Values, and global political contrasts.
- Political and ethical debates are encouraged.
- Opportunities to experience and celebrate different cultures are embedded throughout the year.
- Engagement with literature, drama, music, art, and other cultural forms is encouraged.
- Links with the wider community and the world of work — including work experience and professional visitors — enrich pupils' understanding of society.

Whole-School Commitment to Diversity

Themes relevant to SMSC are explored across the curriculum, particularly in History and Philosophy and Religion. The school actively celebrates the range of cultures within our community through events such as **Culture Week**, where pupils and staff share traditions, festivals, and experiences in a spirit of celebration and mutual respect.

Sources of guidance for this policy:

ISI Handbook 2024

DfE Guidance on Mental Health & Behaviour in Schools 2018

DfE Guidance on Promoting Fundamental British Values 2014

DfE Guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education 2025

Prevent Duty Guidance 2023

PSHEE Association

Appendix A: PSHEE, RSE & SMSC themes explored through academic curriculum work

Year Group	Relationships	Health & wellbeing	Living in the wider world
7	Sexuality & gender – “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” Traditional values and individualism (English)	Healthy Lifestyles (PE)	Roman citizenship & the role of women in society (Latin)
		Reproduction (Biology)	Roman Justice System – compared to British (Latin)
		Miscarriages (Biology)	Slavery and Freedom (Latin)
			Slavery in the 20 th / 21 st centuries (Latin)
		How the ear works, earloss or damage (Physics)	Attitudes towards women throughout history, inc: • Mary I and Elizabeth I • Suffragettes in the 20th century (History)
			Development of law, limits on absolute power and the role of the rule of law as a restraint on kings – Magna Carta (History)
			Politics and international affairs (History)
			Festivals and places of worship (P&R)
			The Earth’s atmosphere - the greenhouse effect, enhanced greenhouse effect and air pollution. (Chemistry)
8	Sexuality and gender Traditional expectations and individualism “Romeo & Juliet” or ‘Much Ado About Nothing’ (English)	Healthy Lifestyles (PE)	Roman and British education systems (Latin)
		Drugs (Biology)	Roman politics and elections (Latin)
		Diet (Biology from 2026)	Arrival of the Romans in Britain – multiculturalism, trade and immigration (Latin)
		Breathing rate & pulse rate (Biology)	Revolt of Boudica (Latin)
		Smoking & Alcohol (Biology)	Attitudes towards women throughout history, inc: • Mary I and Elizabeth I • Suffragettes in the 20th century (History)
		Historical attitudes towards mental health (History)	Development of law, limits on absolute power and the importance of the rule of law as a restraint on kings – The English Civil War (History)
		Physical health, healthy eating and lifestyle (French)	How the British parliamentary system works (History)
		Healthy lifestyles (Mandarin)	Politics and international affairs (History)
			Dilemmas around generating our electricity sustainably and with little environmental impact (Physics)
			Study of three world religions (Christianity, Islam and Hinduism) (P&R)

			Contemporary ethical issues - wealth and poverty, capital punishment, human use of animals (P&R)
			Rates of reaction - how factors affecting the rate of a reaction can be manipulated to reduce the amount of energy required for industrial chemical processes to be profitable (Chemistry)
			Think global act local project covering global recycling + circular Vs linear economies. (D+E)
9	Marriage and relationships 'Macbeth' (English)	Healthy Lifestyles (PE)	Prejudice and Discrimination(P&R)
		Discussion on the nature and cause of suffering/unsatisfactoriness through Buddhist philosophy (P&R)	Genocide and religious responses to the Holocaust (P&R)
			Study of three world religions (Buddhism, Sikhism, Judaism) (P&R)
			Multicultural society in Roman Alexandria: trade (Latin)
			Contrasting religious beliefs (Latin)
			Multiculturalism in Roman Britain (Latin)
			Roman Army (Latin)
			Attitudes towards women throughout history, inc: • Mary I and Elizabeth I • Suffragettes in the 20th century (History)
			Women getting the right to vote (History)
			Non-democratic systems and the pressure for reform – Russian Revolution (History)
			Politics and international affairs (History)
			Financial History, eg. Wall Street Crash (History)
			Dilemmas around generating our electricity sustainably and with little environmental impact (Physics)
			Risks of mains electricity and safety features in plugs and homes (Physics)
			Metals and the reactivity series - different methods used to extract useful metals from their ores to minimise the environmental impacts of processes like electrolysis and quarrying. (Chemistry)
			Biomimicry unit focussed on responding to UN global development goals.
10	Sexuality & gender – 'Pride and Prejudice'' (English)	Contraception - whether religions agree (P&R)	
	Bullying (French)	Assisted fertility (P&R)	Gender Roles (P&R)
	Relationships - family and friends (Mandarin)		Ethical issues relating to organ donation and transplants (Biology)
	Religious attitudes to sexuality, marriage and the family (P&R)		Ethical issues relating to embryo screening, IVF, cloning and vaccination (Biology)
		Healthy Lifestyles (PE)	Environmental ethics and laws re genetically modified organisms, pollution and environmental destruction (Biology)
		Sex Determination (Biology)	Roman Army (Latin)
		Abortion (Biology)	The Jews and the Romans (Latin)
		Phineas Gage – mental health (Biology)	Slavery and Freedom (Latin)
		Benign & malignant tumours (Biology)	The rule of law and foundations of democracy (Classical Greek)

		Breathing rate & pulse rate (Biology)	Freedom of speech – Socrates and The Death of Socrates (Classical Greek)
		Alcohol and effect on synapses (Biology)	Non-democratic systems and the pressure for reform – Nazi Germany, Soviet control of Eastern Europe and collapse of Soviet Union (History)
		Physical health, healthy eating and lifestyle (French)	Human Rights – Nazi Germany (History)
		Diseases inc eye conditions, diabetes, malaria, genetic conditions (Biology)	Politics and international affairs (History)
		Health risks around UV, X rays, alpha, beta, gamma radiation (Physics)	Democracy, law and human rights – ‘Macbeth’ (English)
		Physical health, healthy eating and lifestyle (Mandarin)	Democracy, law and human rights – ‘A View From The Bridge’ (English)
			Dilemmas around uses of nuclear Physics like medical treatment, nuclear fusion, nuclear fission and around uses of EM waves (Physics)
			The Atmosphere and pollution - the source and consequences of atmospheric pollutants from the combustion of fossil fuels (Chemistry)
			Percentage yield and atom economy - maximising the efficiency of industrial chemical reactions (Chemistry)
11	Sexuality & gender – ‘A Streetcar Named Desire’ (English)	Healthy Lifestyles (PE)	Ethical issues relating to organ donation and transplants (Biology)
	Gender Issues and Equality (French)	Circulatory System conditions (Biology)	Ethical issues relating to embryo screening, IVF, cloning and vaccination (Biology)
		Microbial infections and vaccinations (Biology)	Environmental ethics and laws re genetically modified organisms, pollution and environmental destruction (Biology)
		Mental Health and ill-health (French)	Non-democratic systems and the pressure for reform – Nazi Germany, Soviet control of Eastern Europe and collapse of Soviet Union (History)
		Physical health, healthy eating and lifestyle (French)	Human Rights – Nazi Germany (History)
		Drugs and alcohol – tied in with health topic (French)	Politics and international affairs (History)
		Physical health, healthy eating and lifestyle. Drugs and alcohol (Mandarin)	Democracy, law and human rights – ‘Macbeth’ (English)
		Abortion (P&R)	Democracy, law and human rights – ‘A View From The Bridge’ (English)
		Euthanasia (P&R)	Road safety and designing safer cars (Physics)
			Hydrogen fuel cells - the advantages and disadvantages of this technology (Chemistry)
			Biofuels - a comparison with crude oil-derived fuels (Chemistry)
			Using resources - life cycle assessments, recycling and carbon footprints (Chemistry)
			Crime & Punishment (P&R)
			Equilibria - how conditions can be managed to reduce energy cost and increase the yield of important precursor chemicals like ammonia, and how fertilisers are evaluated

			to make the best choice for agricultural processes (Chemistry)
		Alcohols - the consequences of ethanol consumption and dangers of consuming other alcohols (Chemistry)	
12	Polyamorous relationships (P&R)	Abortion (P&R)	Animal experimentation (P&R)
	Homosexuality (P&R)	Euthanasia (P&R)	Nuclear weapons (P&R)
	Relationships through the lens of Women in Literature.(English)	Healthy Lifestyles (PE)	Trade in the British Empire (History)
	Relationships through the lens of American Literature 1880-194 (English)	Diseases (Biology)	Politics and international affairs (History)
	Attachment- familial and romance. The impact of deprivation and privation. (Psychology)	Clinical Psychology & Mental Health: OCD/ Depression/ Phobias (Psychology)	British Political institutions and organisations (Politics)
			Freedom of expressions and media (French)
			Politics and international affairs (French)
			Road safety and designing safer cars (Physics)
			Haloalkanes - the issues with release of chlorofluorocarbons and the ozone layer and the propagation of free radical generation (Chemistry)
13	Relationships topic (Psychology)	Healthy Lifestyles (PE)	Trade in the British Empire (History)
		Health risks around UV, X rays, alpha, beta, gamma radiation, medical physics (Physics)	Politics and international affairs (History)
		Genetic diseases (Biology)	Global Politics and international relations (Politics)
		Schizophrenia (Psychology)	Politics and international affairs (French)
			Dilemmas around uses of nuclear Physics like medical treatment, nuclear fusion, nuclear fission (Physics)
			Forensic (Psychology) - criminal behaviour- what leads to it and how can it be tackled?
			Transition metals as catalysts - the benefits of catalysis in industrial processes (Chemistry)
			Whether the UK should still be considered a Christian country. (P&R)
			Societal developments and their impact on Christian belief/practice (immigration, feminism, science). (P&R)
			Issues of wealth and Latin American Liberation Theology (P&R)