PSHCE Policy

Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education

St Mary's Church of England VA School, Saffron Walden

'Let your light shine… as you grow', (inspired by Matthew 5: 15-16)

Our vision is: 'We nurture our pupils to be the best they can be in every way - in an inclusive and supportive environment, rooted in Christian teachings.'

1. Context

This policy supports a whole school approach to PSHCE and Citizenship (PSHCE) in the curriculum, and throughout the life of the school and its community. It is consistent with current legislative frameworks and non-statutory guidance.

1.1 Statutory Status of Relationships Education and Health Education

This policy reflects the Department for Education's statutory guidance: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (July 2025). The updated guidance will be implemented from 1 September 2026; the school will adopt any changes required by that guidance and aims to align provision ahead of that date where practical."

1.2 Wider Context

Our approach to the teaching of PSHCE supports our duties relating to Keeping Children Safe in Education, Equality Act 2010, SEND, promoting fundamental British Values and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development. It also supports us in meeting the standards set out by Ofsted in relation to 'Behaviour and Attitudes' and 'Personal Development'.

1.2.2 Duty to Promote Wellbeing

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a requirement on schools to promote pupils' wellbeing (as defined in the Children Act 2004) as well as their academic achievement. It also includes a duty to support community cohesion. We are committed to promoting the health and wellbeing of children and of the whole school community, and fully recognise the significant connection between wellbeing and learning. PSHCE is a significant part of our response to these duties.

1.2.3 National Curriculum

The National Curriculum states that all schools must provide a curriculum that is broadly based, balanced and meets the needs of all pupils. It must also:

'promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.'

1.2.4 Healthy Schools

We are committed to developing a 'Healthy School' climate and culture. This means that we place teaching and learning in the wider context of our approach to:

- Leadership, organisation and management and the management of change
- Inclusive policy development
- The school ethos, culture, environment, SMSC development, and positive relationships throughout the school
- Learning and teaching, curriculum planning and resourcing
- Giving children a voice
- Provision of and signposting to support services for children
- Staff health and wellbeing and their continuing professional development (CPD)
- Partnership with parents/carers, the local community, external agencies and volunteers to support pupil health and wellbeing
- Assessing, recording, monitoring and celebrating outcomes.

1.3 Our beliefs about PSHCE

We believe that PSHCE has the power to enhance the health and wellbeing of all children, their families and the whole school community. It has a positive influence on the ethos, learning and relationships throughout the school. It is central to our values and to achieving our school's aims.

PSHCE helps children to develop the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes they need to live confident, healthy, independent lives, now and in the future, as individuals, citizens, workers and parents. It is embedded within wider learning to ensure that children learn to develop resilience and healthy relationship skills, which they will practise and see enacted in the school environment.

1.4 Defining PSHCE

We will use 'Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education' (PSHCE) as an umbrella term for all aspects of practice and learning in our school associated with wellbeing and health. A significant part of our PSHCE provision will be accessed through the planned, taught curriculum. Our PSHCE curriculum is supported by whole school strategies and enrichment activities.

Many aspects of our PSHCE provision are statutory from Sept 2020, as part of Relationships Education and Health Education. However, there are other areas which we consider important for our children e.g. Road Safety. These areas are not statutory, but we will teach them in the wider context of our PSHCE provision to meet the needs of our children.

We do not seek to teach Relationships Education and Health Education as separate subjects, but integrated through the topics we cover in our broader PSHCE programme.

1.5 Intent of our PSHCE Curriculum

Our aims for PSHCE are:

- To embed a PSHCE and RSE curriculum which develops learning and results in the acquisition of knowledge and skills which enables children to access the wider curriculum and to prepare children for adulthood and to be a global citizen.
- We will use the PSHCE Cambridge Scheme and Zones of Regulation so that children are given the opportunities to explore and challenge a range of values, attitudes, beliefs, rights and responsibilities.
- Children will have opportunities to create personal understanding.
- Monitoring, assessment and skills progression will enable children to develop a range of skills and strategies to live a healthy, safe, fulfilling and responsible balanced lifestyle.

2. Implementing Policy

2.1 School Aims and Values

This PSHCE policy is set within the wider context of the school's aims and values, which include the following:

- We value the way in which all children are unique, and our curriculum promotes respect for the views of each individual child, as well as for people of all cultures.
- We value the spiritual and moral development of each person, as well as their intellectual and physical growth.
- We value the importance of each person in our community. We organise our curriculum so that we promote co-operation and understanding between all members of our community.
- We value the rights enjoyed by each person in our society. We respect each child in our school for who they are and we treat them with fairness and honesty. We aim to enable each person to be successful, and we provide equal opportunities for all the children in our school.
- We value our environment and aim, through our curriculum, to teach respect for our world, and how we should care for it for future generations, as well as our own.

2.2 Aims of our PSHCE Policy

The aim of our PSHCE Policy is to ensure quality and consistency in our approach to all aspects of PSHCE in our school. This includes our whole school approach to promoting health and wellbeing, as well as the curriculum.

The policy aims to:

- explain the central role PSHCE plays in the life of the school and in children's learning, within the context of national and local guidance
- provide guidance to members of staff in all roles about their responsibilities in relation to PSHCE
- ensure that the entire school community understands the role of PSHCE in the ethos of the school
- ensure a consistent approach to planning and delivering PSHCE
- ensure that children receive an entitlement curriculum with progression and a high-quality experience of teaching and learning
- ensure that staff have the knowledge, understanding and skills to deliver the PSHCE curriculum
- promote partnership work with parents/carers to support children's learning and development in PSHCE, health and wellbeing
- support children's involvement in reviewing and developing work related to PSHCE and Healthy Schools
- enable the assessment of children's learning in line with local and national guidance
- ensure continuing development as a healthy school
- provide guidance about the criteria for selecting and using high quality resources
- provide guidance to help ensure the quality of methodology and approaches to teaching and learning in PSHCE
- support the PSHCE coordinator in monitoring, reviewing and developing practice.

2.3 Related Policies

This policy acts as an overarching policy for theme-specific policies and guidance in the following areas: Anti-bullying, E-Safety, RSE. These policies include more detailed explanation of how these themes will be delivered.

It is also linked to and is delivered in the context of the following policies: Relationships Education, Behaviour, Safeguarding, Anti-bullying, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development, SEN/Inclusion, Equality and Diversity, Health and Safety, E-safety, Science.

2.4 Implementing Our PSHCE Curriculum

The school curriculum will focus on 6 main areas: Citizenship; Economic Wellbeing; Life education (RSE); Myself and my relationships; Healthier and safer lifestyles, Managing risks.

The Cambridgeshire PSHCE service scheme of work includes opportunities to link British Values, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural key skills in to the curriculum.

Children have access to key knowledge, language and meaning in order to understand PSHCE and to use across the wider curriculum.

Class books in each classroom enable staff and children to use teaching PSHCE through the use of the creative curriculum and make links between subjects to reinforce British values, morality, citizenship, mental health and wellbeing.

PSHCE question boxes are available in every classroom so that children can ask questions and discuss topics that are relevant to them.

Whole school assemblies to make a links to PSCHE through RE.

Topic and focus weeks will immerse children in an area of learning to embed their understanding, knowledge and skills.

Teachers will have appropriate resources to deliver resource rich learning experiences.

In class children and adults will use the key vocabulary and methods from the Zones of Regulation and monitor their emotions using the colours to express their feelings.

2.5 Inclusion, Equality and Diversity

We promote the needs and interests of all pupils, inclusive of gender, culture, ability and aptitude. Our approaches to teaching and learning take into account the ability, age, readiness and cultural backgrounds of the children to ensure that all can access the PSHCE curriculum.

In relation to those with special educational needs, we will review our PSHCE programme to ensure that appropriate provision is made. When working with children with additional needs we consider:

- their level of vulnerability
- their need to develop assertiveness and their sense of self
- the need to involve all staff and carers in policy development, planning and training
- the need for a range of approaches to teaching and learning
- sources of support for pupils.

We will adapt content, teaching methods and materials so that RSE/Health and PSHCE are accessible to pupils with SEND. This includes differentiated resources, bespoke small-group sessions, coordination with SENCO and families, and using communication aids or social stories where appropriate. Accessibility decisions will be recorded in individual plans where necessary.

In relation to ethnicity, religion and cultural diversity, we value the different backgrounds of our children and, in acknowledging and exploring different views and beliefs, seek to promote respect and understanding.

We are particularly aware of our duties under the Equalities Act and will ensure that all children with protected characteristics, or whose family members may have protected characteristics, see themselves reflected in our PSHCE provision. We will achieve this by careful selection of teaching resources, case studies and children's fiction.

The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

We recognise that PSHCE is a prime location for proactive teaching of skills relating to empathy, acceptance and respect for diversity.

We promote social learning and expect our pupils to show a high regard for the needs of others. PSHCE is an important vehicle for addressing both cultural and gender issues and for promoting equal opportunities and access for all.

2.6 Confidentiality and Safeguarding

The delivery of high quality PSHCE supports us in delivering our statutory duties relating to Safeguarding. We recognise that many areas of PSHCE will prompt children to reflect on their own families, relationships and personal experiences. We know that, for some children, this will highlight disparities which may cause them to seek help from trusted adults in school.

Staff will build safe learning environments through the creation of Ground Rules specific to PSHCE. Staff will use distancing techniques such as puppets, case studies and children's fiction to make direct talk about home circumstances less likely in a whole class teaching situation.

Adults will ensure that children understand what adults (and their peers) may and may not keep confidential.

If visitors are working in a classroom or other teaching situation, they will follow the school's policies/guidance on confidentiality and on safeguarding, and other relevant school policies.

All staff are aware of the Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures and will report disclosures or concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.

This policy should be read alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education (updated Sep 2025). The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has lead responsibility for handling disclosures arising from PSHCE lessons and will work with curriculum leads to ensure safeguarding-related content and referrals are handled in line with KCSIE.

3. Involving the Whole School Community

3.1 Working with Staff

Support and training will be made available to all staff as appropriate. This includes allocating time at staff meetings to introduce new areas of work and to review the effectiveness of the approaches used. Whole staff training is used where there are development needs for the whole staff. Individual staff members are offered training opportunities to enable them to fulfil their roles.

We recognise that PSHCE and wellbeing are relevant to members of staff in all roles, and we ensure training and support is accessible for all staff. Some training opportunities may be organised for all staff.

Staff members are informed about the location and content of policies that apply throughout the school.

The coordinator is entitled to receive training in their role. This supports them to lead on the development of the school's policy and practice and to monitor its implementation. This practice includes the curriculum and approaches to teaching and learning, as well as whole school approaches to promoting health and wellbeing. They also take responsibility for supporting other members of staff in their work relating to PSHCE, which may include ensuring appropriate training opportunities.

3.2 Engaging with Pupils

If PSHCE is to be effective, we understand that it must meet the needs of pupils. Also, we recognise that if pupils are fully engaged in areas of work, they will build ownership and self-efficacy in these areas, leading to more positive outcomes.

- We will seek opportunities to discuss children's views about the content of their PSHCE lessons within our planned themes.
- We will engage children in areas of whole school development such as healthy lifestyles work so that their learning does not only take place in classroom settings.
- We will utilise school council/class council/whole school assemblies to engage with children on key areas of whole school development.

3.3 Working with Governors

The designated Governor responsible for Personal Development and Wellbeing, who is also part of the Curriculum, Safeguarding and Inclusion (CSI) Committee, works closely with and in support of the PSHCE Leads.

When aspects of PSHCE appear in whole school development planning, a governor will be assigned to reflect on, monitor and review the work as appropriate.

The governing body, as a whole, plays an active role in monitoring, reviewing and developing the policy and its implementation in school.

3.4 Communicating with Parents/Carers

We recognise the key role that parents/carers fulfil in supporting their children through their personal development and the emotional and physical aspects of growing up. Therefore, we seek to work in partnership with parents and carers when planning and delivering PSHCE. We encourage this partnership by:

- informing parents/carers by email and school the website of forthcoming PSHCE topics
- informing parents/carers about aspects of the PSHCE curriculum through leaflets/newsletter e.g. road safety tips, information about anti-bullying, healthy eating tips
- providing supportive information about parent/carers' roles in PSHCE and how they can develop protective factors with their children
- including out of school learning/family learning opportunities within our curriculum for PSHCE, and encouraging children to share at home their learning about all aspects of PSHCE
- inviting parents/carers to discuss their views and concerns about PSHCE.
- special events that include parent workshops to develop their skills and knowledge in the home.

Parents and carers will be given access to this policy on request. It is also available on the school website.

The school consults parents and carers when reviewing the RSE policy. Parents will be notified in advance of significant changes to curriculum content and can view specific lesson materials on request or via the school website.

3.5 RSE Policy and Parental Rights

The school has a written RSE policy that sets out content, sequence, staff responsibilities and any external providers. A copy is available on request and on the school website. Where the school teaches sex education (beyond the science curriculum), parents have the legal right to request that their child be withdrawn from that sex education in primary school; headteachers must grant such requests for primary pupils. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education or Health Education, nor from statutory science curriculum content (including puberty). Parents who wish to request withdrawal should raise this in writing with the headteacher and will be offered a meeting to discuss the request.

3.6 Working with External Agencies and the Wider Community

Where appropriate we use visits and visitors from outside agencies or members of the community to support the PSHCE programme. This is an enrichment of our programme and not a substitute for our core provision which is based upon the strong relationships between teachers and pupils.

When visitors are used to support the PSHCE programme, the school's policy on Educational Visits is followed. External trips and residential visits make a significant contribution to children's personal development. When planning such visits, we use opportunities to promote children's learning in relevant areas of the PSHCE curriculum (for example, relationship skills, group work skills, communication skills, healthy lifestyles, managing risk, safety).

Our partnership with the local community is a significant part of school life, and we recognise and value its contribution to the PSHCE programme. Many of our links with the community enable us to practise active Citizenship.

We include a range of opportunities for community involvement and activities, such as:

- links with the church
- charity fundraising
- school clubs
- citizenship / 'important people' visits
- links with local services
- community use of school premises
- SCARF life education visits annually

4. Curriculum Organisation

The DfE guidance for Relationships Education and Health Education require that the curriculum is organised in such a way that:

- 'Effective teaching ...will ensure the core knowledge is broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly to pupils, in a carefully sequenced way within a planned programme of lessons.'

- 'Opportunities to practise applying and embedding new knowledge so that it can be used confidently and skilfully in real life situations.'

We recognise the increased importance of PSHCE within our timetable, now that Relationships Education and Health Education have become statutory. We will ensure that it has equal status with other foundation subjects in the curriculum.

Children receive their entitlement for learning in PSHCE through a progressive, spiral curriculum. Our PSHCE programme is delivered through a variety of opportunities for children of all ages, including:

- designated lessons in PSHCE
- subjects across the curriculum, e.g. science, literacy, RE, Art & Design Technology
- enrichment weeks/days, e.g. Anti-bullying week
- visitors e.g. road safety, SCARF life education
- residential and day visits
- assemblies on our school's values
- small group interventions, e.g. social skills groups, wellbeing and mental health sessions

We recognise that PSHCE is best taught by adults who know our children well. PSHCE will primarily be taught by the class teacher, supported by other members of staff where appropriate.

4.1 Teaching Methodologies

In order to address the 'active learning triangle' of knowledge, skills and attitudes, a wide range of methodology is used in teaching the PSHCE curriculum. The focus is on interactive learning, and approaches include: Circle Time, whole class discussion, social skills games and activities, working in pairs/groups, drama and role play, use of puppets, use of story and picture books and use of technology. Many of these approaches also act as distancing techniques, enabling children to discuss issues without discussing personal experience.

Many of the methodologies we use in PSHCE will also be employed in other areas of the curriculum to further develop communication, group work and debating skills.

We provide further guidance on these and other approaches in the Teaching Guidance documents from the Primary Personal Development Programme. This is available to staff in the staff shared drive.

Staff new to teaching PSHCE will be supported to build their knowledge of different methodologies and strategies.

Ground Rules

PSHCE is taught in a safe, non-judgemental environment where adults and children are confident that they will be respected. Teachers and children together develop ground rules, which ensure that every child feels safe and is able to learn in a supportive and caring environment.

Answering Questions

We acknowledge that sensitive issues will arise in PSHCE, as children will naturally share information and ask questions. When spontaneous discussion arises, it will be guided in a way that reflects the stated school aims and curriculum content for PSHCE. If a member of staff is uncertain about the answer to a question, or indeed whether they should answer it, they will seek guidance from the PSHCE leader. Questions may be referred to parents/carers if it is not appropriate to answer them in school. We may use a 'Question box', where questions may be asked anonymously.

When answering questions, we ensure that sharing personal information by adults, pupils or their families is discouraged. Where a question or comment from a pupil in the classroom indicates the possibility of abuse or risk of harm, teachers will pass this information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), in line with school policy and procedures.

4.2 Curriculum Materials and Resources

We use primarily the Cambridgeshire Primary Personal Development Programme and the resources recommended within it when planning and delivering PSHCE. We also use The Zones of Regulation to inform our teaching.

We will avoid a 'resource-led' approach to delivering PSHCE, instead focusing on the needs of the children and our planned learning objectives. We will carefully select resources which meet these objectives. We will evaluate teacher resources before using them.

When PSHCE-related resources are being used within other subject areas the same criteria are applied. This also applies to online resources, such as the use of websites and presentations.

We will use children's books, both fiction and non-fiction, extensively within our PSHCE programme. The same selection criteria apply, and teachers will always read and assess the books before using them to ensure they are appropriate for the planned work. They will also consider the needs and circumstances of individual children in the class when reading texts.

The RSE/PSHCE coordinator will monitor sequence and quality of lessons through curriculum maps, learning walks, sampling of work and pupil voice. The policy will set out how teachers respond to questions outside the planned curriculum: teachers will use agreed approaches (ground rules, offer to speak privately, refer to DSL where appropriate) and will avoid providing personal opinions.

4.3 Assessment, Recording, Reporting

We assess children's learning in PSHCE in line with approaches used in the rest of the curriculum. Children's learning is planned using learning objectives which are explained to the children. Teachers draw on their observation of children's learning and children's self-assessment to arrive at their overall assessments.

We record children's work in PSHCE in a class book with photos and result of group discussion, the children's topic books, teacher records of work completed.

Teacher assessment is used to provide an overview of the child's learning within a unit of work, and to assess whether the child is working at the expected level, working towards or working at greater depth.

We will use the tools for children's self-assessment where appropriate. Children are supported to participate in this process appropriately for their age and ability.

5. Monitoring the Impact

5.1 The Process for Development and Review

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with all staff, parents/carers, children, governors and Cambridgeshire Primary Personal Development Programme.

We are committed to the ongoing development of PSHCE in our school. We will use the following indicators to monitor and evaluate our progress:

- A co-ordinated and consistent approach to curriculum delivery has been adopted.
- A flexible approach to delivering PSHCE that responds to children's needs (identified through consultation, research or observation) is in place.
- Children are receiving an entitlement curriculum for PSHCE in line with statutory requirements and the Cambridgeshire Personal Development Programme.
- There are clearly identified learning objectives for all PSHCE activities.
- Opportunities for cross-curricular approaches are being used where appropriate.
- The impact of training for staff and governors is evaluated.
- Policy and practice is reviewed regularly and involves staff, governors and, where appropriate, children.
- Opportunities are provided for parents/carers and members of our community to consider the purpose and nature of our PSHCE, for example, through parent/carer consultation and survey.
- A variety of methods are employed to communicate the key points of the policy and curriculum to the community.
- Our website reflects our provision in PSHCE.

The impact of our curriculum will be demonstrated in school where:

- Children will demonstrate and apply the school behaviour policy focussing on effort, respect and keeping safe.
- Children will demonstrate and apply British values of democracy, tolerance, mutual respect, rule of law and liberty.

- Children will demonstrate a healthy outlook towards school – attendance will be in-line with national statistics.
- Children will make good progress and will be responsible, respectful, active citizens who contribute positively to society.
- Children will identify and manage their emotions independently. This emotional literacy will transfer to life outside of school, where parents and children use a common language to discuss their emotions.

The PSHCE leader – Louise Robinson and Jodie Tagg are responsible for overseeing and reviewing this policy.

The Policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or sooner if there are significant changes or circumstances necessitate a review.

The next review will take place by September 2027.

5.2 Location and Dissemination

This policy document is freely available on request to the entire school community.

A copy of the policy can be found on the school website (Key and Statutory Information (Policies) and in the staff shared drive.