



HOLMEWOOD HOUSE SCHOOL

'Kindness, aspiration & self-belief'

PSHE POLICY

Policy Holder	Assistant Head, Pastoral
Date Approved	February 2026
Approval	SLT
Date for next review	February 2027

INTRODUCTION

At Holmewood House, we deliver a bespoke PSHE curriculum. From EYFS and up to the end of Year 8, our students follow our My Heart, My Mind, My World curriculum. For the rest of this policy, PSHE and RSE will be referred to in the language used at Holmewood House: My Heart, My Mind, My World (MHMMMWW)

Despite being non-statutory, we feel it is paramount that we provide children with the skills and knowledge that they need throughout their time at school and beyond. In doing so, we meet the requirement of The Education Act, 2002 which requires all school to teach a curriculum which is “broadly based, balanced and meetings the needs of the pupils”, and in promoting the “spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society”.

At Holmewood House, this policy runs in conjunction with our Relationships and Sex Education Policy ('RSE Policy') in accordance with statutory requirements (references: DfE 2020, Equality Act 2010, and Independent School Standards and Regulations, 2014).

“PSHE remains an important and necessary part of all pupils’ education. We believe that all schools should teach PSHE, drawing on good practice, and have outlined this expectation in the introduction to the new National Curriculum” (Written Ministerial Statement: Review of Personal, Social, Health and Economic education, March 2013)

Our curricula were written by the Pastoral Leads in the school through a variety of consultation methods involving pupils, parents and staff.

POLICY STATEMENT

We want to enable children to become positive, healthy, independent and responsible members of society. We recognise that the key learning points in our MHMMMWW curriculum support this, but stress that in addition to classroom teaching, our staff and students should embody these values day to day. We encourage engagement with the school community and promote a strong ethos of support and growth, in line with the SMSC Policy.

The aims of the MHMMMWW curriculum are to enable children to:

- Be independent and responsible members of the school community
- Have a sense of purpose
- Know and understand what constitutes a healthy lifestyle
- Be aware of safety issues
- Understand what makes good relationships with others
- Have respect for others
- Prevent and tackle issues around bullying behaviour
- Manage relationships with potentially addictive substances such as alcohol, drugs and gambling
- Be positive, active members of a democratic society
- Understand themes of equality and recognise and celebrate diversity
- Develop self-confidence and self-esteem and make informed choices regarding personal and social issues
- Develop an awareness of position within a larger school community and see themselves as active participants of society
- Understand and value their ability, and be able to make the most of it
- Manage and embrace transitions
- Recognise that everyone has at least some characteristics shared on the protected characteristic listed in Section 4 of the Equalities Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation).

Other related policies and documents include the RSE Policy and the SMSC Policy

HOW WILL THIS BE TAUGHT AT HOLMEWOOD?

Where possible, Form teachers and Assistant Form teachers are best placed to teach the MHMMMWW Curriculum. They have an acute understanding of the needs of the form and the needs of the individuals within it.

When potentially sensitive elements of the PSHE curriculum need to be taught, specialist teachers and members of the Medical Centre are positioned to take sessions.

All year groups have at least one lesson a week ringfenced for teaching MHMMMWW.

Staff are encouraged to teach in a manner which engages and addresses the needs of the students in their form. The requirement is that the learning focus is met resources are made available to support this. Teachers are not tied to delivering this curriculum in one standardised form – we regard it as a fluid curriculum.

Broadly speaking, the MHMMMWW curriculum cover themes of health and well-being, relationships and living in the wider world.

Our PSHE curriculum encourages students to understand the importance of protected characteristics, as identified in the 2010 Equality Act. We teach to respect these and support students in recognising that everyone will identify with an element of the protected characteristics. We create space for discussion and ensure that material is taught in a non-judgemental, sensitive and factual way which allows scope for students to ask questions which are taken seriously.

Our aim is to present relevant and age-appropriate facts, information and skills, which will be delivered in an objective and balanced manner.

The delivery of PSHE at Holmewood House is underpinned by the following statements:

- The delivery of the content is factual, sensitive and balanced.
- RSE promotes meaningful, loving, and healthy relationships.
- Whilst delivering PSHE, staff and external providers will avoid the imposition of personal opinion. Instead, they will stay focused on the social, moral, spiritual, health and education aspects of the topics.
- The religious background of all pupils must be taken into when planning teaching so that topics are appropriately handled. Staff must ensure they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which religion or belief are amongst the protected characteristics.
- The teaching should reflect the law so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider implications of decisions they make.

PSHE is not taught in isolation but also embedded, as appropriate, in all curriculum areas. The main biological content is delivered in Science lessons while in PSHE the broader health, moral and social issues are raised. In addition, elements of the RSE curriculum are also explored through assemblies and form times and form part of our broad and balanced curriculum.

RSE is normally delivered in mixed gender groups other than when it is deemed more appropriate for topics to be covered in single sex groups. A variety of learning approaches which involve children's full participation is used.

- Reception to Year 4: relationships education is taught through an integrated approach within our MHMMMWW programme and pupils will be taught by their class teacher or the Assistant Head – Pre-Prep.
- Year 5 to Year 8: relationships education is taught through an integrated approach within our MHMMMWW programme by a team of teachers alongside our school Medical Team.

Occasionally, appropriate and suitably experienced visitors from outside school may be invited to contribute to the delivery of PSHE in school.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND ACCESSIBILITY

The school is committed to the provision of PSHE for all pupils and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. Our programme aims to respond to the diversity of cultures, faiths, family backgrounds and sexual orientation, recognising the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

Equal time and provision will be allocated for all groups but there may be occasions where pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are given extra support from SEND staff. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility.

Resources will be chosen to reflect diversity and a range of viewpoints. They will be shared with parents to provide reassurance and enable parents to continue the conversations started in class at home. All RSE books and materials will be regularly reviewed and refreshed to keep all content current.

PARENTS

The role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. We acknowledge the significant influence parents have in enabling their children to grow and mature and form healthy relationships. We have worked with parents to inform this policy and ensure it reflects the

community of Holmewood. Details of the policy, including the key topics covered are made available to parents via the Holmewood House Parent Portal.

CONTENT OF THE PSHE CURRICULUM IN YEARS 5 - 8

Year 5

- Understanding of self and characteristics
- Friendships, conflict resolution and peer pressure
- Familial structures and a healthy family life
- Grief and loss
- Body image
- Strategies to manage both physical and emotional changes during puberty

Year 6

- Understanding of self and characteristics
- Friendships, conflict resolution and peer pressure
- Familial structures and a healthy family life
- Grief and loss
- Body image
- Strategies to manage both physical and emotional changes during puberty

Year 7

- Prejudice based language and discrimination
- Relationships, feelings and emotions
- Identifying the features of healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Strategies to manage both physical and emotional changes during puberty
- Marriage

Year 8 RSE

- Intimate images and the associated risks
- Laws relating to consent
- Choice to delay intimate relationships – explaining consent
- Understanding and identifying characteristics of abuse
- Warning signs and the reporting of abusive behaviour
- Recognising the features and importance of positive, stable relationships
- Navigating peer pressure
- Discussions around the portrayal of sex in the media
- Gender and identity
- Sexual orientation
- HPV

EXPLANATION OF THE RIGHT TO WITHDRAW PUPILS FROM THE SEX EDUCATION COMPONENT OF PSHE

New legislation, brought in through the Children and Social Work Act 2017, brought important changes in relation to parental rights to withdraw children from school RSE.

While parents of pupils in Years 7 & 8 retain the right to withdraw their child from some or all sex education delivered as part of a statutory RSE (other than the aspects of sex education which sits within the science curriculum), parents are not able to withdraw their child from relationships education in Reception to Year 6 or Years 7 & 8.

Before granting any such request, parents are invited to meet with the child's tutor or Form Teacher who will ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. The meeting will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. Should the family then wish to withdraw, this will be approved by the Head and alternative provision arranged. This process will be documented for future reference.

Once these discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school should respect the parents' request to withdraw the child. The process remains the same for pupils with SEND and in this situation the pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND will be taken into account when making the decision.

The Head will automatically grant a request to withdraw a pupil from any sex education delivered from Reception to Year 6, other than as part of the science curriculum. If a pupil is excused from sex education, it is the school's responsibility to ensure appropriate, purposeful education is continued.

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education.

CHILD PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The importance of respecting confidentiality during PSHE lessons is paramount. Staff need to regularly remind pupils of the 'safe space code of conduct' and that the teaching of PSHE takes place within that safe space allowing all pupils to discuss issues openly.

Teachers should act in accordance with the school's Safeguarding Policy should a child make a disclosure of a child protection nature during an PSHE lesson or discussion. Staff cannot guarantee complete confidentiality to pupils; concerns will always be listened to, taken seriously and, where necessary, pupils will be supported appropriately.

CONTROVERSIAL AND SENSITIVE ISSUES

Staff are aware that issues raised in PSHE create differing viewpoints. Personal views are respected but RSE issues are taught without bias. Topics are presented so pupils can develop their own, informed opinions but also respect others who may have a different opinion.

To facilitate open discussions, the creation and agreement of ground rules will be completed as a class at the beginning of such lessons, facilitated by the teacher.

THE USE OF APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE

In order to support staff during lessons and to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings, the following guidance has been agreed:

- staff and pupils should use the correct terms for all body parts
- clear, unequivocal language should be used in an objective manner

- discussions should take place around what ‘slang’ words mean and explanations that some can be seen as offensive.
- staff will use their judgement when introducing language depending on understanding and maturity level of learners.

DEALING WITH QUESTIONS

Both formal and informal questions are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil concerned. The school anticipates that individual teachers will use their experience, skill and discretion in this area and refer to the DSL if they are concerned.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

At Holmewood House, we use a variety of approaches to assess MHMMM. Teachers assess through informal judgements as they observe students during lessons. As such, a strong relationship with students is vital so that decisions can be made which will most benefit those in the class. Our lessons and objectives provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to differing needs. Activities and debates challenge our more able pupils to formulate personal views based on evidence they research and discuss.

Teachers do not write reports on MHMMM lessons. Instead, to ensure we communicate with parents, we host pastoral parents’ meetings, where any issues can be raised if necessary, and form teachers make comments at the end of any written reports. MHMMM is not included discretely in written reports however the tutor may give feedback in the form report. Consultations with the tutor provide an excellent opportunity to share progress from MHMMM lessons. Should something more urgent arise within a MHMMM lesson, teachers are encouraged to contact parents and carers individually, rather than wait for an organised school-wide opportunity.

Should an issue arise in these sessions which could be a pastoral issue, it should be shared with the Pastoral leadership team and be logged on the school Welfare tracker. We trust our staffs’ professional judgement.

DISSEMINATION AND REVIEW

All members of staff and governors receive a copy of the PSHE policy. Training is regularly delivered to staff on the policy content. Copies for parents are available from the School website, and from school office on request.

References

Documents that inform the School’s PSHE and RSE policies include:

- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)
- Keeping children safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2025)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Every Child Matters (ECM) & Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk>
- Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education (2025)