

# **The Thomas Adams School**

## **Policy Statement**

**PSHE  
2023/24**

Updated July 2023



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## Policy Context and Rationale

At Thomas Adams, Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) covers the 3 areas recommended by the PSHE Association (2020) of Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World. The Citizenship curriculum is incorporated within PSHE lessons.

The policy was produced following the school's decision to change PSHE's place in the curriculum from being a weekly timetabled subject, to being taught as part of 6 drop down days as of 2019/2020 school year (During the 2018/2019 school year the subject had been taught as 5 drop down days). Due to the changes, it was considered that the policy needed updating to reflect the changes. It was produced by James Hargreaves (Subject Lead for PSHE) through consultation with members of SLT, including Mark Cooper (Headteacher), Jenni Whitfield (Deputy Headteacher) and PSHE Co-ordinator, Hannah Lester.

The document was written following a review of the PSHE programme, through staff and students' consultation. The findings of this research provided key findings, aiding the development of a sustainable programme as it develops from its conception to become part of the established school curriculum.

This policy will be reviewed as part of an annual review of the PSHE provision led by the subject lead at the end of each summer term. This will coincide with staff and student questionnaires, analysis of these results, the department development plan, review of the RSE policy and an audit against the PSHE Association's recommended curriculum in their *PSHE Education Programme of Study: Key Stages 1-5* (2020) or any update from the organisation and from the government's Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education paper (Updated 2021). This is consistent with the school's Plan-Teach-Review policy.

## Policy Aims and Objectives

The school's aims and objectives for students are:

- To encourage and support the potential of all our students.
- To ensure there is a culture throughout the school where excellence, progress and achievement are valued.
- To provide an enjoyable and stimulating curriculum that meets the needs of all students.
- To provide a disciplined, caring and moral environment which supports and inspires young people to become useful and caring citizens and family members.
- To provide an ethos which promotes mutual respect, tolerance and individuality whilst appreciating the value of democracy and law.

(Thomas Adams Website 2019, <https://thomasadams.net/school/>)

This policy fulfils our school ethos by demonstrating how PSHE provides an intrinsic part of fostering pupils' skills and emotional wellbeing with the goal of creating positive members of society. The PSHE/Citizenship curriculum has been developed in order to help achieve these goals.

The school's core values are respect, resilience and success. This subject aims to help reinforce these values as part of an ongoing curriculum and assembly programme with the aim of embedding these within pupils. This document shall show how that is achieved.

The policy also seeks to explain how the programme works and justify the decisions about what to include in the programme and when. It will also seek to explain the PSHE assessment model, and the decisions made.

## **Creating a safe and supportive learning environment**

The school follows the principles of Maslow's hierarchy of needs; PSHE can be a difficult subject for some pupils due to the sensitive nature of the lessons included. As such, the subject lead needs to ask the guidance of the pastoral department, in particular the safeguarding lead and school counsellor in those lessons considered by the PSHE Coordinator to be of particular concern, e.g. FGM, grief or suicide.

When the pastoral department identify such a risk, the PSHE Coordinator finds alternative provision, in the form of working in an alternative form, or working with TAs in the learning support department.

However, as it is not always possible to identify subjects that may affect the emotional state of pupils, support is offered as expected by staff and by the pastoral department should there be a need following the lesson. If staff feel that there is a concern about a pupil's welfare, the teacher should follow the school's safeguarding policy using the safeguarding laptop application.

In some lessons, where a student may feel they need outside support, PPT slides are shown to pupils which can sign post support e.g. CEOP for online safety. In July 2019, the school began a partnership with Kooth, (<https://www.kooth.com/>) who offer anonymous support, PPT slides and promotional material advertising the organisation are located in the school.

## **Entitlement and Equality of Opportunity**

The school recognises the right for all pupils to have access to a relevant PSHE education learning which meets their needs. All pupils are expected to take part in the school's PSHE programme, apart from if a concern has being raised by the pastoral department, the pupil will be offered an alternative, however, the choice remains theirs.

The school recognises the importance of pupils with SEND to have access to PSHE and attendance of all lessons during the day is expected. Differentiation is available for SEND pupils to access the learning through differentiated questions following Bloom's Taxonomy

in the majority of lessons, differentiated worksheets and through Teaching Assistant Support, using pupils designated support. In addition, to support SEND students, a RSE review booklet has been created to identify areas students may need further clarification on.

## **Intended Outcomes**

Our PSHE programme allows pupils to;

- develop positive attitudes and values enhancing their personal and social development;
- create a deeper understanding of health and wellbeing, relationships and living in the wider world;
- develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to thrive as individuals, family members, members of the school and of their community;
- Have a greater understanding about the dangers of risk-taking behaviour;
- Understand themes through a variety of teaching/learning styles and to provide a motivating context in which a holistic and relevant approach to learning will reinforce concepts, skills and attitudes across the Curriculum;
- to develop a positive sense of worth in the individual so that they may fully utilise and develop their talents and abilities and so realistically face the challenges and responsibilities of adult life in a rapidly changing world.

The goal of PSHE teaching and learning is to encourage active engagement in learning, rather than passively receiving information. Pupils need opportunities to consider and clarify their values and beliefs and to rehearse and develop enquiry and interpersonal skills. (PSHE Association 2018) As such teachers are given the opportunity to divert away from the proscribed lesson in order to engage the class more effectively.

## **Principles and Methodology**

PSHE is taught in drop down days, through a bespoke form time activity programme and through assemblies.

In the 2019/2020 academic year, a sixth drop down day was added to enable a more comprehensive coverage of the PSHE Association's recommended content and to introduce a spiral curriculum, as recommended by the PSHE Association, where topics can be revisited in ever increasing complexity.

Each day features an over-riding theme in most cases (see PSHE Overview documents for details). This allows pupils to build upon skills and knowledge learnt throughout the day in a coherent manner. Teachers lead the sessions for their normal classes where possible, having received training on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023 to support them in their delivery.

The aim for PSHE lessons are for pupils to enjoy (depending on content) the topics and be engaged, as such the lessons are taught through different teaching methods including:

- Videos
- Role Play
- Case Studies
- “Treasure Hunts”
- Collaborative learning.
- Drama
- Literacy exercises
- I.T. Career Exercises
- Notice board advice activities

Where subjects are of a sensitive nature such as drugs or knife crime, it will be taught as the PSHE recommends, in a way that does not scare, shock or glamorise (PSHE Association 2018) as this creates excitement and curiosity, instead lessons focus on informing students and explaining the risks and impact involved with such activity and where applicable, details of where to find support are included within the lessons.

In the 2021/22 school year, Thomas Adams reinforced its commitment to its PSHE programme by allocating a form time per week to PSHE themes. This is to ensure students retain key knowledge or introduce topics which are taught later in the year e.g prevent. PSHE related topics also form part of the assembly programme which focuses on inclusivity and aims to create a caring and inclusive school community.

## **Planning and Delivery KS3 and 4**

The lessons, form time and assembly programme follow the PSHE Association’s recommended topics as laid out in their PSHE Education Programme of Study: Key Stage 1-5 Document (2020) and the DofE Citizenship Curriculum. The programme follows the PSHE Associations recommended 3 themes of:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Relationships
- Living in the Wider World

The school’s PSHE Programme is based around a spiral curriculum where pupils will be introduced to themes which will then be revisited as pupils’ progress within the school.

During Year 7 pupils are introduced to key concepts, with a strong focus on health and wellbeing, puberty, online safety and extremism. The themes chosen are designed to be the building blocks of students’ knowledge and assist in keeping them safe.

This progresses during Year 8 as pupils begin to learn about sex education and drugs, two areas of potential peer pressure over the course of the next few years. Pupils are introduced to citizenship by learning about the environment and topics from living in the wider world including basic financial management and employability skills.

In Year 9, students build upon their knowledge of keeping safe through the more sensitive topics on the PSHE Association's recommended topics for Key Stage 3, such as FGM and Knife Crime. Citizenship is also taught in Year 9, with the themes of politics and immigration before learning more about financial management.

Lessons continue into Key Stage 4, with the school following the PSHE Associations recommended content.

Due to the nature of the school adopting a drop-down day approach, the school feels it is important that the schedule has a review process. As a result the PSHE mapping document was created in order to assess our curriculum against the recommended. This demonstrates that a spiral curriculum occurs.

The reasoning behind our programme is to enable pupils to make informed choices about their futures and to provide them with holistic social and emotional skills they will need throughout their lives. These skills are developed through the programme and assessed as part of the assessment criteria.

The assessments take the form of group presentations where students work in groups of three or four to create a short presentation on the given task. Criteria include:

- Knowledge – the understanding of the assessed topic including facts and ideas.
- Opinions – Students must present and formulate an opinion based upon what they have studied.
- Analysis and Evaluation – Pupils demonstrate understanding and explain the complexities of different opinions on the assessed topic.
- Synthesis/teamwork – Pupils create and develop a presentation and are judged on the quality of their teamwork. Pupils are all given the same grade, however, teacher discretion means this can be modified based on the pupil's attitude during the assessment preparation.

## **Sixth Form Planning and Delivery**

At Thomas Adams Sixth Form, PSHE is taught as part of the registration programme. Tutors are given one session per week in order to follow a PSHE programme provided by the Head of Sixth Form. These sessions heavily follow the Sixth form programme recommended by the PSHE Association.

## **Timetabling**

The decision was made in 2018 to introduce drop down days to teach PSHE, previously it was part of the curriculum, given one hour per week. The introduction of the drop-down days in 2018/19 school year saw PSHE given five drop down days, each featuring 5 hours of lessons. However, the PSHE justification document showed that to provide a spiral curriculum and to include more topics that a sixth day was needed. Following a teacher

survey in March 23, it was decided to where possible to teach PSHE in teachers' normal classes to allow familiarity with the students.

## Student Absence

As PSHE is taught in drop down days, if a student is absent, they will miss crucial lessons, some of which are now statutory. Any student who is absent during a drop-down day completes a reading and comprehension task during form time providing an overview of the work missed.

## Assessment

PSHE follows the schools policy of using formative assessment and summative assessment. Pupils are formally assessed in PSHE as part of the Citizenship curriculum and some relevant PSHE topics where debate can be involved. They are assessed twice throughout the academic year (except for Year 11, where this is only once).

The following topics are assessed:

- Online Safety
- Healthy Living
- Politics and Parliament
- British Values
- Female Safety
- Crime and Punishments
- World Issues
- Communities
- Fake News

Assessments take the form of presentations by groups of three to four students, which are marked by the teacher. Students should be given the same grade as the rest of their team for the assessment, unless the teacher makes a reasoned judgement that a pupil has not assisted their group enough to be given a certain grade.

The structure of the drop-down days means that PSHE and Citizenship, both combined together in the 'My Future' days, have to be assessed without physical marking for the teacher assessing. As teachers are chosen based on the timetable, the school feels that it would be unfair on those teachers who teach the last lesson of the day, should they have to mark an extended piece of work.

The school accepts that oral presentations are a difficult option for some students. If the teacher feels that a student can't be fairly marked on the basis of the verbal assessment, a written piece of work can be produced and then marked by the PSHE subject leader. However, as a team member, students should be given the same grade

The following categories are assessed over the course of the Key Stage 3 and 4.








- Knowledge
- Opinions
- Conceptual Understanding
- Use of Evidence
- Synthesis/Create

The assessments increase in complexity over time and through the years in order to challenge pupils.

Teachers give feedback in the lesson, verbally giving pupils feedback.

The grades are worked out as a best fit on a matrix (see below)

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	
 DIAMOND	Project is outstanding and tackles a wide range ideas and fully considers all sides of the issue. Excellent SPAG. Attention to detail is clear. Professional layout and pitch. Excellent project based skills demonstrated
 RUBY	Project is complete, thought out and executed. Project appears to be very informative, educational and credible. Includes a range of factual information, very good SPAG and layout. Very good project skills shown.
 EMERALD	Project is mostly complete. Project meets the minimum requirements. Includes a some factual information, have good SPAG and layout. Good project skills shown
 SAPPHIRE	Project is half complete. Your project appears to need further work. You include some relevant information, adequate SPAG and layout. Improvement in project skills needed.
 AMBER	Project has been attempted but it hasn't been very successful. There are sections missed or rushed and a lack of relevant information. Not worked well as a team and poor project skills have been shown

The teacher needs to plot “a best fit” of the 5 categories and make a decision based upon this. This grade is then inserted into the school’s assessment software, in line with the school assessment policy for Key Stage 3, this reporting system also applies to Key Stage 4 pupils as well.

The school acknowledges that the function of PSHE is not to assess pupils but supports the PSHE’s Associations beliefs on skills and developing knowledge to allow them to become a fully rounded individual. Impact is measured with students giving a score out of 5 for each topic prior to the learning, and then completing

## Teaching Responsibility and Staff Training

PSHE is taught by all staff at Thomas Adams, as the school believes that PSHE education is crucial for developing our students. PSHE is taught in drop down days for Key Stage 3 and 4,

and in Key Stage 5 during tutor time. The programme is devised by the subject lead for PSHE for Key Stage 3 and 4 and by the Head of Sixth Form for KS5, with support by the PSHE subject lead.

The school recognised the need of staff training for teaching PSHE, staff training is a priority of the 2022/23 academic year, with the a session by Sally Martin, <https://sallymartineducation.co.uk/> working in conjunction with the University of Chester to improve teacher confidence teaching difficult subjects held on 28<sup>th</sup> June.

Some PSHE sessions are taught by outside speakers. These include the following outside agencies during the first year.

- West Mercia Police
- Shropshire Road Safety Adviser
- Elevate Education

When we have an outside organisation leading PSHE sessions, teachers are always present for safeguarding and to ensure that students behave.

## **Confidentiality and Handling Disclosures**

Due to the nature of PSHE education, pupils' learning may result in them seeking advice or support on a specific personal issue. Teachers cannot offer complete confidentiality; it is important for everyone's safety that teachers and pupils are clear about what can and cannot be kept confidential (following school policy).

Should a disclosure occur during a lesson, teachers are to follow the school's current policy on safeguarding where teachers are to report issues through the safeguarding app on teachers' laptops. Teachers are to follow the advice in the document Keeping Children Safe in Education (revised 2023) that all teachers in the school have read and responded to the questions set by the school.

## **Responding to Pupil's Questions**

Pupils' will ask teachers questions during PSHE lessons that teachers may feel the need to ask the PSHE lead or a member of the School's Senior Leadership Team for advice on the school's position. Teachers should not feel pressured to answer questions if they are uncomfortable to do this. If questions are inappropriate, the teacher should feel vindicated in reprimanding the student.

## **Links to other School Policies and areas of the curriculum**

This PSHE policy has links to other school policies, complementing other school policies, including:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- British Values and the Prevention of Radicalisation
- Bullying policy statement
- Careers Information and Guidance Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Online Safety
- Drug Education Policy
- Mobile Phones Policy

## **Involving Parents and Carers**

The School recognises the importance of PSHE education in school and the role that adults with parental responsibility have the strongest influence in the beliefs and values of children.

The school completed a Parental survey as part of the RSE 2020 update to PSHE. PSHE was part of the 2021/22 stakeholder voice programme, and it showed that some parents questioned the effectiveness of the subject taught through drop down days.

Relevant documentation and advice will be uploaded onto the school website e.g., links to CEOP and Kooth websites. It is the school's intention to continue the construction of a personal development hub which will support students and parents/carers with challenging topics and conversations by providing a hub for useful information.

The school recognises the right of parents/carers to remove pupils from the Sex-Education element of PSHE. When a pupil is enrolled at the school, parents are given a form to fill with contact details which consists of the option of the withdrawal of their child from Sex-Education. Parents have the right to withdraw pupils from Sex-Education at any point should they wish. With the changes to Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) in September 2020, parents will have the right to request withdrawal until three terms before their child's 16th birthday. The school will follow these changes and Year 11 pupils from September 2020 will be expected to have RSE. For further information, please consult the School's RSE Policy, available on the website.

## **Review Date**

The document will be reviewed in July 2024 and updates to teacher CPD will be made.