



PHSCE CURRICULUM POLICY

Date: August 2026	Next review: August 2027
Ratified by: Susi Earnshaw (proprietor)	

This policy details the Susi Earnshaw Theatre School's policy, procedure and teaching regarding personal, social, health and economic education (PHSCE). It includes the arrangements for teaching relationship and sexual education (RSE) and highlights the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils.

The curriculum is delivered principally through weekly Life Skills lessons, while relevant knowledge, skills and values are reinforced across the wider curriculum, pastoral provision, assemblies, pupil voice and school life.

At Susi Earnshaw we aim to provide a **whole school approach** to the subjects in PHSCE. In our timetable, these subjects are referred to as **"Life Skills"** and are taught mainly by Melissa Gillespie. However, emphasis is placed on covering specific topics across the curriculum and in every part of school life.

This policy has been reviewed and updated to reflect Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE 2026), which came into force on 1 September 2026, and the revised Department for Education statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, also in force from 1 September 2026. As an independent school, the school continues to make provision for PSHCE under the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014; the DfE health-education guidance is used as relevant good practice, while the RSE elements are subject to the statutory guidance.

Related policies and documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equality Policy
- Mental Health Policy
- Health and Safety Policy; and
- any other relevant pastoral or wellbeing policies

Aims and purpose

The PHSCE curriculum is designed to support pupils' personal, social, health, economic and civic development. It helps pupils identify issues and problems that individuals and society may face and, through a structured and age-appropriate programme, enables them to make informed and responsible choices.

- develop self-confidence, resilience and self-awareness;
- develop healthy, respectful and positive relationships;
- understand consent, boundaries and personal safety;
- recognise when something is unsafe, harmful or inappropriate and know how to seek help;
- develop emotional literacy and strategies for managing change, stress and challenge;
- understand physical health, mental health, healthy lifestyles and access to appropriate support;
- develop digital literacy and safe, responsible and critical use of online technologies and AI;
- understand the law and their rights and responsibilities as citizens;
- develop financial capability, independence and preparation for adult life;
- understand equality, diversity, protected characteristics and the importance of respect;
- develop an understanding of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect;
- prepare pupils for further education, training, employment and adult life.

Whole-school approach

The school takes a whole-school approach to PHSCE. Life Skills lessons provide the principal structured teaching time, but relevant content is reinforced through Science, Mathematics, Geography, Careers, assemblies, pupil voice, enrichment activities and day-to-day relationships within the school.

The curriculum is planned to be age- and stage-appropriate, inclusive and responsive to the needs of the pupils. It is sequenced so that pupils acquire knowledge and practise skills before they are likely to encounter relevant risks or situations.

In line with the school's aims and objectives the PSHCE curriculum is designed to help pupils personal and social development. It aims to identify issues and problems that individuals and society in general might face and, through a structured programme, aims to enable pupils to make considered choices when faced with problems and dilemmas, thus developing their self-confidence and enabling them to grow into responsible adults. The teaching aims to support pupils in developing resilience, know when to ask for help and how to access support.

PSHCE must at all times be taught in an inclusive and sensitive manner, meeting the needs of all pupils with their diverse experiences, faiths, cultural backgrounds and values. The appropriate adjustments will be made for those with special educational needs and disabilities. Due regard is given to the teaching of PSHCE and the protected characteristics of pupils and the Equality Act (2010). All adults model respectful behaviour and are expected to treat pupils and their families with dignity. Staff should challenge discriminatory, abusive, bullying or prejudicial behaviour and promote an environment in which pupils feel safe to ask questions and seek help.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils is delivered through all the areas of the curriculum and co-curriculum. This includes, choir, chess, debating and art club. Pupils and staff are expected to display the values and behaviours of an inclusive society at all times. Detailed information is available on request.

Leadership, teaching and safeguarding

The Head of PHSCE prepares, resources, coordinates and monitors the programme. Timetabled Life Skills teaching is delivered principally by Melissa Gillespie, who is trained and confident in teaching sensitive PHSCE content. Other staff contribute where appropriate.

All staff in the school deliver content as appropriate for the age group and with due regard to all aspects of the SMSC development of pupils. All school staff are trained to be alert to any concerns that pupils raise or engender that leads them believe that the pupil is in distress or at risk of harm.

Staff understand that they cannot promise confidentiality and that they should consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in accordance with the School's Safeguarding policy. The protected characteristics and British Values are embedded throughout the PSHCE scheme of work.

Katherine Tyler is the school's DSL, subject to the current safeguarding policy and staff information. The PHSCE curriculum does not replace safeguarding procedures, specialist mental health services, medical care or statutory safeguarding responses.

Melissa Gillespie may provide appropriate pastoral support and signposting within her role. This does not replace the school's safeguarding procedures or specialist clinical services, and any support offered must remain within the individual's competence and the school's safeguarding arrangements.

Safe and supportive classroom practice

- Lessons use clear ground rules, respectful language and age-appropriate participation. • Teachers distinguish between factual teaching, legal information, school expectations and matters on which people may hold different views.
- Pupils are not required to disclose personal experiences or participate in activities that require personal disclosure.
- Teachers use anonymous question methods where appropriate for sensitive topics. • Staff respond to questions in an age- and stage-appropriate manner and do not provide personal advice outside their competence.
- Staff remind pupils how to access help and who they can speak to if a lesson raises a concern. • External visitors are checked and their credentials, lesson plans and resources are reviewed in advance. The school remains responsible for the content and delivery of any externally provided session.
- Any external provider must understand the school's safeguarding, confidentiality and reporting procedures.

Curriculum

The programme is reviewed annually and may be adapted to emerging safeguarding issues and the contextual needs of pupils. Parents are informed of significant changes to the planned programme.

- British Values and citizenship
- Healthy and respectful relationships
- Consent, boundaries and the law

- Mental health, emotional wellbeing and resilience
- Physical health, healthy lifestyles and personal safety
- Online safety, digital literacy and responsible technology use
- Artificial intelligence, deepfakes and AI-generated sexual imagery
- Sharing of nude and semi-nude images, sextortion and image-based abuse •
- Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment and sexual harassment
- Prejudice, discrimination and the Equality Act 2010
- Radicalisation, extremism and Prevent-related safeguarding
- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vaping and nicotine products
- County lines, criminal exploitation, gangs and serious violence
- FGM, forced marriage and other forms of abuse and exploitation
- Financial education and economic wellbeing
- Careers education and preparation for adulthood
- Identity, self-awareness, growth mindset and interpersonal skills
- Democracy, government, law and civic participation
- Environmental responsibility and sustainability

Online safety, digital literacy and AI

Online safety is an explicit and recurring strand of PHSCE. The school recognises that pupils' online and offline lives are closely connected and that online risks can affect safeguarding, relationships, mental health, physical safety and learning.

- privacy, personal data, passwords and digital footprints;
- social media, messaging, gaming and online communities;
- fake accounts, misinformation, disinformation and manipulated or AI-generated content; • critical evaluation of online information, images, advertising and algorithms; • online bullying, harassment, stalking and coercive or controlling behaviour; • grooming, exploitation, sextortion and criminal exploitation;
- pornography and the risks of distorted representations of relationships and sexual behaviour; • sharing personal information, photographs, videos and sexual imagery; • the law relating to indecent images of children, including AI-generated sexual imagery and deepfakes;
- how to report harmful content and where to seek help;
- safe and critical use of generative AI, including risks of fake intimacy, harmful advice, privacy and data misuse;
- online gambling and gambling-like features in games, scams and financial harms. Teaching will reflect current DfE safeguarding and AI resources and will be coordinated with the school's Online Safety Policy, filtering and monitoring arrangements and safeguarding procedures.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

RSE is taught through Life Skills and Science is planned as part of a coherent, age- and stage appropriate programme. The school's programme aims to help pupils form and sustain healthy relationships, understand consent and boundaries, recognise risks and harms, and know how to seek help.

- healthy, respectful and stable relationships;
- friendships and family relationships;
- communication, kindness, respect and conflict resolution;
- consent, boundaries, pressure and the law;
- sexual harassment, sexual violence, abuse and exploitation;

- puberty, reproductive health and changes during adolescence;
- sexual health and sexually transmitted infections;
- online sexual behaviours, image sharing, grooming and sextortion;
- pornography and its potential impact on expectations and behaviour;
- FGM, forced marriage and other harmful practices;
- the Equality Act 2010 and protected characteristics;
- sexual orientation and gender reassignment, taught factually, sensitively and respectfully and in accordance with current DfE guidance;
- how to access trusted adults, health services and other appropriate support. Where the curriculum addresses law, the school teaches applicable legal provisions factually and clearly, including the law on consent, sexual offences, FGM, forced marriage, image sharing, pornography, grooming, sextortion, hate crime and exploitation.

Further details are contained in the RSE Policy.

Parental engagement and withdrawal

The school will proactively engage and consult parents when developing and reviewing its RSE policy and will make curriculum information and relevant teaching materials available to parents. Parents are notified annually of the planned PHSCE and RSE content and may contact the Head of PHSCE with questions.

Parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE, subject to the provisions of the current DfE guidance. Parents cannot withdraw pupils from relationships education, health education or content forming part of the Science curriculum. From three terms before a pupil turns 16, the pupil may opt back into sex education even where a parent has requested withdrawal.

Equality, inclusion and SEND

PHSCE is taught inclusively and sensitively, recognising pupils' diverse experiences, faiths, cultural backgrounds, family circumstances and values. The school will make reasonable adjustments and adapt teaching so that pupils with SEND can access the curriculum.

The school has regard to the Equality Act 2010 and the protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. Pupils are taught the importance of equality, respect and dignity and that bullying, harassment and discriminatory behaviour are unacceptable.

RSE content relating to sexual orientation and gender reassignment is taught factually and respectfully, in accordance with the 2026 DfE statutory guidance. Where there is significant public debate, teaching will distinguish facts, law and differing views and will not present contested opinions as established fact.

Physical wellbeing

- healthy eating, nutrition and a healthy relationship with food;
- physical activity, exercise and the relationship between physical activity and wellbeing; • sleep, screen use and healthy routines;
- personal hygiene, infection prevention, dental health and vaccination/immunisation; • drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vaping and nicotine products;
- first aid and how to contact emergency services;
- road, railway, water and general personal safety;
- theatre and performance-related safety;
- puberty, reproductive health and adolescent development;

- access to appropriate health and medical support.

Emotional wellbeing and mental health

- mental health literacy and emotional vocabulary;
- resilience, coping strategies and help-seeking;
- managing stress, workload and time;
- conflict resolution and healthy communication;
- life changes, including puberty, bereavement, illness and family change;
- healthy relationships and social connection;
- recognising when professional or specialist support is needed;
- how and where to seek support from trusted adults and appropriate services. Sensitive subjects such as eating disorders and self-harm, where included, will be taught cautiously, age-appropriately and using reliable materials. The school will seek specialist advice where necessary and will signpost appropriate support.

Safeguarding through PHSCE

- keeping safe in public places and around school;
- online safety and digital safeguarding;
- recognising abuse, neglect, exploitation and grooming;
- child-on-child abuse, bullying, harassment and sexual harassment;
- sexual violence and harmful sexual behaviour;
- FGM and forced marriage;
- radicalisation and extremism;
- criminal exploitation, county lines, gangs and serious violence;
- knife crime and weapon-related risks;
- emergency services and personal safety;
- how to report concerns and access help.

Teaching will reinforce the principle that victims are never to blame for abuse or exploitation and that pupils should seek help when something feels unsafe or wrong.

We have a good relationship with our local community support officer who comes in as a guest teacher in Life Skills and teaches a class based on ‘the consequences of crime’ and ‘keeping safe online’

Economic education and financial capability

Economic education is cross-curricular and supports pupils in developing the knowledge and skills required for increasing independence.

- Mathematics: percentages, decimals, fractions, ratios, interest, best buys and problem solving
- Science: energy use and costs
- Life Skills: budgeting, saving, independent living and financial decision-making
- online scams, fraud, gambling and gambling-like features in gaming
- consumer awareness and targeted advertising
- the relationship between income, expenditure, choices and longer-term financial wellbeing

Citizenship education

- British Values;

- environment and sustainability;
- government and democracy;
- law and civic responsibility;
- moral education and RE;
- careers guidance;
- economy and business;
- challenging stereotypes and living in a diverse society;
- Prevent, radicalisation and extremism;
- SMSC development and pupil voice.

Pupils learn about parliamentary democracy and representation and how government operates at local, national and international levels. Pupil voice provides practical opportunities to participate in democratic decision-making, including voting for representatives and discussing school improvement

SOCIAL, MORAL AND CULTURAL EDUCATION (SMCE)

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

This is taught in a class situation with each year group, and is also covered by our pupil assemblies, which consists of pupil and staff representatives. Pupils are encouraged to take an interest in local, national and international current affairs.

Pupils will be taken to the local library and museum as appropriate.

As a school, we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Develop an understanding of their individual and group identity.
- Learn about service in the school and in the wider community.
- Begin to understand the imperative for social justice and a concern for the disadvantaged.
- To develop students' social and inter-personal skills to enable them to foster good relationships.
- To understand the importance of human connection for well-being and mental health.
- To help students to manage their relationships confidently and sensitively.

MORAL DEVELOPMENT

The school aims to instil in all pupils a moral conscience: to know the difference between right and wrong, to respect themselves, one another, the school and the wider community, and to aim to give something back. Part of our school ethos is that those who have the ability to create a positive effect on other people's lives have the moral obligation to do so.

Social entrepreneurship is taught in the school: pupils organise events and give the proceeds to local charities. A weekly school assembly, comprising pupil and staff members, meets to ensure that the pupils' voices are heard.

Pupil voice is held every Friday. The aim of this is to give any notices and share any concerns or issues. Monday morning assembly sometimes includes a short reading by a teacher or pupil

who has chosen something that means something to them and which they would like to share, or a prepared dramatic or other presentation by pupils. The pupils have a weekly Life Skills class with Melissa Gillespie where they can also express any PCHSE related issues that they have.

If any Child Protection issues should arise, staff report to our Designated Safeguarding Lead (Katherine Tyler) For further information please see our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

How to use **emergency services**, discussions on **street crime** and **visits from our community police officers** form part of the **Life Skills** curriculum.

As a school, we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Recognise the unique value of each individual.
- Listen and respond appropriately to the views of others.
- Take initiative and act responsibly, with consideration for others. Distinguish between right and wrong.
- Show respect for the environment.
- Make informed and independent judgements
- To learn the values of respect, empathy and emotional intelligence.
- To help students to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice such as racism, sexism or homophobia.
- To learn how to recognise and avoid exploitation, bullying and abuse.
- Learn to differentiate between right and wrong in as far as their actions affect other people. They will be encouraged to value themselves and others.
- Understand the need for rules and the need to abide by rules for the good of everyone. School and classroom rules should reflect, reiterate, promote and reward acceptable behaviour and provide opportunities to celebrate pupils' work and achievements.

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

As a school, we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Recognise the value and richness of cultural diversity in Britain, and how these influence both individuals and society.
- Develop an understanding of Britain's local, national, European, Commonwealth and global dimensions.
- Develop, Understand and Celebrate British Values.
- To help students to understand the origins of their own and other cultures and to respect and celebrate cultural diversity.
- To encourage respect for other people, with particular to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation).

As part of our commitment to promoting and upholding British Values, the school actively participates in a range of educational events and enrichment opportunities. These experiences are designed to deepen pupils' understanding of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The most memorable being a Performance at the RAF Museum to Celebrate the Centenary. We performed a piece that highlighted front line trench conditions of the first world war and key features, events and writing from the time. The piece was performed to various Primary Schools in Barnet. The performance was subsequently shared with a range of primary schools within Barnet, further strengthening community links and providing opportunities for younger pupils to engage with important aspects of British history. Through activities such as these, the school ensures that

British Values are embedded meaningfully within the curriculum and wider school life.

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

As a school, we aim to provide learning opportunities that will:

- Encourage pupils to consider and embrace their own values, attitudes and beliefs. • Provide knowledge and opportunities for pupils to understand other people and their beliefs. Enable pupils to develop a sense of awe and wonder and provide awareness of the mystery that lies at the heart of all being.
- Promote awareness of the value of a non-material dimension to life.
Present the challenge of belief and the search for truth.
- Enable pupils to consider the ways in which people have sought to explain the universe and the purpose of life.
- Enable pupils to explore the convictions that are central to religious traditions and encourage reflection on questions about religion and the meaning of life.
- Enable students to explore the creative power of the arts and aesthetic communication.
- Enable pupils to develop language to think, organise their ideas and reflect. • To understand the importance of human connection for well-being and mental health.

CAREERS GUIDANCE AND PREPARATION FOR ADULTHOOD

Careers is covered throughout the whole school in Life Skills. The school provides a planned and progressive careers programme from Year 7 onwards, supporting pupils to develop the knowledge, skills, confidence and aspirations needed for education, training, employment and adult life.

Parents and pupils are able to make appointments to the headteacher regarding references or advice.

Regular careers classes are provided to give knowledge on the world of further education and the different qualifications out there that are relevant to their interests.

These classes also help the pupils to know themselves and how their strengths weaknesses and interests relate to the world of work, learn about different careers and opportunities; obtain individual guidance, have some work experience, and gain information about training, education and occupations beyond school.

They are also given classes on how to apply for colleges and are taught how to prepare a CV, Personal Statement and have help filling in applications.

The programme includes:

- self-awareness, strengths, interests and aspirations;
- careers exploration and labour-market awareness;
- information about further education, higher education, apprenticeships, technical education, training and employment;
- employer encounters, workplace experiences and work-related learning;
- employability skills, applications, CVs, interviews and workplace expectations; • impartial, individual careers advice and guidance;
- preparation for successful transitions and adult life; and
- appropriate support for pupils with SEND and those who may face barriers to progression.

The school works with employers, education and training providers and careers professionals to ensure pupils have access to accurate and impartial information about future pathways.

Further details are contained in the Careers Policy.

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

Our department follows the school's marking policy and use the "two stars and a wish" and the "A.P.E." (Attitude, Presentation, Effort) forms to instil confidence in the student's abilities, inform of levels achieved and give a guidance for progress too.

TEACHING & ORGANISATION

Development in spiritual, moral, social and cultural values (SMSC) will take place across all curriculum areas, within activities that encourage pupils to recognise the spiritual dimension of their learning, reflect upon the significance of what they are learning, and to recognise any challenges that there may be to their own attitude and lifestyle.

All curriculum areas should seek illustrations and examples drawn from as wide a range of cultural contexts as possible.

OUR ENVIRONMENT

At Susi Earnshaw Theatre School we aim to make our environment as safe as possible. In 2006, steel gates were erected to replace the wooden gates we put up when the school first moved to the Bull Theatre. The front gates were moved forward to street level in order to provide more outside space for our pupils. More recently, we have acquired outside tables with benches, where students can choose to enjoy their lunch outside.

We have cleaners who come into the building in the early morning of each school day. Teachers and pupils also tidy up their belongings after lessons, to keep the classrooms as tidy as possible. During the summer holidays, maintenance, fresh painting and general improvements are carried out through the building, to make the environment as salubrious and as conducive to learning, happiness and well-being as possible.

At Susi Earnshaw, we want to make our environment as pleasing to the eye as possible, and a variety of uplifting displays are produced each year. There are also displays of students' academic work on classroom walls, to give students a greater sense of pride and purpose in their studies, and to make the environment as visually stimulating as possible.

All the school buildings are no smoking areas, and information is available to staff who need help to give up smoking.

No pupil is allowed into the kitchen area. There are always members of staff on lunchtime duty around the building and in the outside area. Please see the headteacher for an up-to-date version of this rota.

Pupils enter the front door only. After school, pupils can either leave via the front door or the back gate where there is always a member of staff to ensure the safety of the pupils. Pupils and staff also use the side door to get to and from the portacabin and to go outside (via the back gate) at lunchtimes.

Information on recycling, global warming and climate change is taught in year groups, in Life Skills, Geography and Science classes. We have separate bins for recycling various different materials, and both staff and pupils have constant access to these.

Teachers and pupils are encouraged to use public transport or walk to school, and there is a bicycle shelter at the rear of the building, to encourage greener travel and exercise.

Susi Earnshaw was chosen by SuDs who over the year have worked with only ten schools in North London to design and build Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in the school grounds. Our rain garden features a pond and its main function is to absorb, slow and filter the large amounts of polluted water that runs off of our car park surface.

REVIEW

Parents are notified annually with an outline of the PSHCE and RSE content to be covered with their son in the coming year. They are invited to contact the Head of PSHE if they have any questions or queries.

This policy was developed by the Head of PHSCE in consultation with staff members, form tutors, Head of SEN and Senior Leadership team. Both the PSHCE curriculum and this policy are reviewed annually by the head of PHSCE and this is approved by the Senior Leadership team.