UNLOCKING POTENTIAL

LEVELLING THE SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC ARENA

PSHE POLICY

Mission Statement

The Levels School exists to provide a nurturing environment in which students with specific learning difficulties and co-occurring diagnoses can develop their self-esteem and aspire to be independent young adults who value the rights, responsibilities and rules that exist to promote and support their future welfare. Our approach toward establishing this ideology is predicated on trauma-informed practice and an obligation to develop the social skills required to build their future aspirational communities. We exist to help them find their level.

This policy covers all premises known as The Levels School.

Date of policy	October 2025
Next review date	October 2027
Frequency of policy review (annually, every two years)	Every 2 years
Policy owner	Ben Bridger
Published policy	Yes ☐ No ☒
List of connected policies	Safeguarding, SMSC, Equality and Dignity at Work Policy, Relational Policy, Curriculum Policy, British Values Policy, Anti bullying Policy, RSHE Policy

Approved / Date	Approved by Governors

The Board of Governors acknowledge their responsibility to ensure that this policy is effective and follows regulatory requirements. Governors undertake a review to satisfy themselves that the implementation of this policy is effective.

The Board of Governors ensures the establishment of familiarity with and the effective operation through monitoring, of school policies, approving those requiring GB sign-off in line with a regular cycle of school policy reviews. This occurs through a cycle of governor committee meetings and full board meetings.

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Introduction and Scope

This policy covers the Level School's approach to Personal, Social, Health and Economics Education (referred to as PSHE throughout this policy) which rides in tandem with our delivery of the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development of our students. It was produced by the SLT and Teaching Body and in consultation with the Governing Body who retain responsibility for safeguarding and welfare throughout this policy and ensuring that the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs are met. This is a whole school policy, covering Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 which is responsive to the social and educational needs of the student body.

Parents/carers will be able to access this policy via the school on request or -online via the website. They are provided with a reminder of its availability at the start of the academic year when we inform them of the upcoming curriculum for their child's year group. This policy may be made available in accessible formats when requested.

The School's PSHE provision dovetails into the students' respective curriculums and compliments their learning and way of life within the school community.

The review and continuous improvement of the PSHE curriculum within the Levels School is sourced from the students' own views and stands as the cornerstone to maintaining a relevant and engaging curriculum for our students, that is in-step with their needs and the changing times we live in.

Statutory Compliance

This PSHE policy has been written taking into account the following statutory (mandatory), and non-statutory guidance:

- Equality Act 2010.
- The Independent Schools Standards Regulations (2014).
- SMSC development of pupils in independent schools – departmental advice November 2014 and update (November 2014).
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused, (DfE 2015).
- Counter – Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (sections 26 and 29).
- The use of social media for on-line radicalisation (July 2015).
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (December 2020).
- Careers guidance and access for education and training providers – (DfE 2025).
- Working together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2023).
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE September 2025).
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- Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales 2023).
- Teaching on-line safety in schools (Jan 2023).

- The Inspection Handbook (Guidance for inspectors in conducting routine inspections, ISI, Sept 2025).

Aims and objectives

The Levels School exists to provide a nurturing environment in which students with specific learning difficulties and co-occurring diagnoses can develop their self-esteem and aspire to be independent young adults who value the rights, responsibilities and rules that exist to promote and support their future welfare. The school places importance on evidence which shows that well-delivered PSHE programmes have an impact on both academic and non-academic outcomes for students, particularly the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

In line with these values our PSHE curriculum promotes the students' needs for healthy living and safe working in the modern world enabling our young people to develop into well rounded, independent and moral citizens through outstanding and inspirational education that is as much about nurturing the spirit as it is about outstanding academic success.

The PSHE programme also promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and acceptance of those with different faiths and beliefs, through our modules on Citizenship and responsibility.

The Levels School's pastoral system supports and feeds into the PSHE curriculum and the students' aspirations within the school. It is integral to bringing the school values to life and ensuring they are relevant to the lives of our students both now and in their lives after school.

Empowering students to identify and lead on the things that matter to them is an important part of the leadership approach that sits underneath our personal development work. Where possible the PSHE programme will be multisensory and will include learning that takes a global perspective on issues related to environment sustainability, political awareness and social justice. External partnerships and internal projects serve as a stimulus for a variety of learning opportunities that engage students in real world issues.

Creating a safe and supportive environment

In order to deliver a PSHE programme which works within students' real-life experiences, we create a safe and supportive learning environment by explicitly establishing agreed ground rules at the start of every module around respect, openness, confidence (to share) and kindness. The teachers who lead the sessions facilitate a safe and supportive environment for learning through applying by these agreed rules and ensuring that every voice is heard, regardless of the opinion or perspectives being shared. We aim to ensure that students know that their opinions and questions are valued and respected, and if required will be debated safely and supportively.

Where we believe that students may be vulnerable and at risk of significant harm or present a risk of significant harm to others, staff will adhere to the School's **Safeguarding** policy and procedures around disclosure which are contained in that policy.

Vulnerable students are closely monitored, and are risk assessed in accordance with the vulnerable students' register and risk assessment policy.

In accordance with the government's Prevent Duty, PSHE is one of the ways the Levels School builds students' resilience to radicalisation through promoting the fundamental British Values and enabling them to challenge and debate extremist views.

Equality and diversity

The Levels School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students, welcoming students from all ethnic groups, backgrounds and creeds whilst balancing human rights and freedoms with the lawful needs and rules of the school community and the rights and freedoms of others.

Whilst the school welcomes students from all faiths or none, the school expects all its students to attend school assemblies which are fundamental to its ethos and may contain acts of worship or presentations on different cultures; although parents have the right to withdraw their child from this should they so wish.

The Levels School is active in its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and has an **Equal Opportunities** Policy in place that reflects this. The school endeavours to make reasonable adjustments for students and staff on a case-by-case basis, having evaluated the nature of the need.

We promote the needs and interests of all students, irrespective of their race, colour, religion or belief, national, ethnic or social origin, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, disability or special educational needs by actively exploring and celebrating peoples' differences, and ensuring that the PSHE programme is in line with the school's **Equal Opportunities** policy that facilitate this. The delivery of PSHE will take into account the ability, age, readiness, and cultural background of our students and those with English as a second language to ensure that all can fully access the PSHE programme. We promote social learning and expect our students to show a high regard and empathy for others. We use our PSHE education as a vehicle to address diversity issues and to ensure equality for all.

We seek to raise students' awareness of local, national and international political issues and views in a non-partisan way and without actively encouraging support of any particular political viewpoint in order to prevent political indoctrination. This will be done through the delivery of a balanced curriculum which promotes the respect of the rights and views of others.

Intended Outcomes

As a result of our PSHE programme of learning, the students will:

- Explore, embrace and take ownership of the school's values.

- Develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to manage many of the critical opportunities, challenges and responsibilities young people will face as they grow up and in adulthood.
- Develop awareness of staying safe and healthy.
- Build self-esteem, resilience and empathy.
- Build upon prior skills and knowledge.
- Develop the confidence to ask questions, challenge information and express and debate their views and opinions.
- Be able to form relationships, communicate and work with others.
- Understand they have a right to feel valued and respected, in both their work and social lives.
- Respect others, irrespective of race, colour, religion or belief, national, ethnic or social origin, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, disability or special educational needs.
- Be provided with the opportunity to make real decisions and understand they should take responsibility for their decisions and actions and contribute to the lives of others.
- Have the skills to develop as an independent and emotionally resilient individual.
- Have an understanding of how to manage their finances responsibly.
- Understand and promote, where possible, the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Have an understanding of local, national and international political issues and views;
- Have a strong moral sense of what is right and wrong (and consequently what is contrary to the law of England).
- Acquire a broad general knowledge of, and respect for, public institutions and services in England; and have access to information about events in Britain and the wider World.

We recognise the importance of ensuring our PSHE programme of learning is accessible for our students, which will be monitored and reviewed with the support of student voice and Governors.

Key principles and teaching methodology

The core themes of health and wellbeing, relationships and living in the wider world (economic wellbeing, careers and the world of work) are at the centre of the school's PSHE provision.

Before beginning any PSHE module teachers and students will agree ground rules, ensuring that every child's voice is heard, and miscommunication and misrepresentation of topics is mitigated.

It is The Levels School's practice that when beginning a new PSHE module, a session will be given over to identifying students prior knowledge on the topic and listing the "hot topics" of that module's focus, which will be returned to at the end of the module as part of the student's peer review process.

We will ensure that sessions, including those on risky behaviours, remain positive in tone, rather than using scaremongering as a tactic to build aversion to the topic in discussion. This will be achieved by maintaining an open and inclusive classroom where students feel safe and trusted to voice their opinions honestly, knowing that there is no such thing as a "stupid question" when it comes to PSHE.

All lessons will review at the end with a focus on how the learning has been, or not been, relevant to the student, and where possible to provide a class-based forum for discussion on those points.

Planning for KS2 and KS3-4

Timetabling for Key Stage 2

In the Prep School, the approach to PSHE is more integrated and whilst it is mostly taught as a discrete lesson, it is reinforced at other points in the week as appropriate (e.g: through assemblies and pastoral tutor sessions). The Key Stage 2 PSHE curriculum will be taught through a thematic model, delivered across three themes; "Relationships", "Living in the Wider World" and "Health and Wellbeing" across the three terms. Further details of this programme of learning can be made available from the school on request.

Timetabling for Key Stage 3 and 4

In the Senior School, PSHE is delivered in a discrete lesson on a weekly basis, as well as support through the pastoral tutor programme, using a range of teaching methods, including group work, discussions and debates, student-led projects and presentations and guest speakers. Taught through a Competencies-based model that is designed to support our students Specific Learning Difficulties, our PSHE curriculum groups competencies (including skills and attributes) under three headings:

- Independence and Aspirations
- Autonomy and Advocacy
- Choices and Influences.

These competencies are covered twice per academic year across all 6 of the half terms of teaching. Further details of this programme of learning can be available from the school on request.

The Levels School recognises that PSHE is a gateway into many student's future lives and as such will sometimes elicit questions of a broad and varied nature. Teachers who are responsible for delivering PSHE will respond to any questions they find difficult or do not know the correct response to, will be supported by providing the students with an acknowledgment of the question, and informing them that they will feedback on that question in the following session. They can then take the opportunity to discuss with other staff and therapists on the correct response to the question aired. It is of utmost importance to ensure that the response is carried out to maintain the trust within the PSHE space.

In Post -16, PSHE topics are discussed through the ASDAN 'Living Independently' short course. Key topics include, Earning and Spending Money, Making Financial Choices, A Place of your Own, Health and Wellbeing, Career Management and Preparing for the World of work.

Confidentiality and Handling Disclosures

Part of the ground rules agreed upon at the start of every PSHE module will be to ensure that students and staff agree to maintain confidentiality and to not be personal about items discussed.

In the event of a disclosure from a child, Teachers will consult with the designated safeguarding lead and in their absence their deputy who will follow protocol. For further details please see our Safeguarding policy.

Assessment: How we assess learning and progress:

We assess students' learning and progression through a range of assessment for learning techniques. End of topic summative assessments may include the production of posters or in-class debates. We use a whole class Big Book to collate the students thoughts and topics covered as we progress through the module. At the end of a unit, the Lead Teacher will organise students peer review forums to gather their feedback on the quality of resources, activities and delivery, as well as provide students with the opportunity to reflect on lessons learned.

Teaching Responsibility and Staff Training

At The Levels School the PSHE Lead Teacher is responsible for building the programme of learning based on the feedback from Governors and Student voice. They may organise guest speakers or workshops to enhance the programme on offer. The PSHE Lead Teacher also has responsibility for ensuring the programme is suitable for the age and stage of the children in the Prep school, taking into account feedback from Governors, Student voice and Prep staff, including the Head of Prep and lower school.

Staff responsible for delivering the PSHE curriculum will be provided training through courses (such as that produced by the National College), and drawing on the expertise within the staff body through INSET and twilight training sessions.

How Parents and Carers are involved

The Levels School recognises that effective PSHE is at its strongest when school and home are working collaboratively, facilitated by good communication. We will ensure parents and carers know they have access to the programmes of learning through the school website or by post, with information passed on through Curriculum slides each half term which contain an update of subjects to be covered.

Where feedback identifies a necessity, we will provide an evening workshop for parents and carers that will outline our ideology and delivery of the PSHE curriculum, along with information on external agencies who we work with or look to guidance.

As per current Governmental guidance, Parents still have the Right to Withdraw their child from the Sex Education element of our RSHE provision, unless the student is aged 15 years or older at which point they can advocate for themselves. PSHE staff will inform families at the start of each half term what the students will be covering in the PSHE/RSHE curriculum. Following this, parents have the opportunity to request the withdrawal of their child and the school will provide support for that child while they are out of those Sex Education lessons. For further details on content of the RSHE curriculum, please see the TLS RS~~H~~E Policy.

Guest speakers

The Lead Teacher may organise guest speakers to deliver a talk, presentation or workshop session as part of their PSHE education programme to enhance the delivery of PSHE. Staff who organise guest speakers must complete a risk assessment for visiting speakers and follow the School's safeguarding and child protection procedure for visitors in order to assess and limit the risk of harm or radicalisation of students in accordance with the Prevent Duty. Visitors/external agencies which support the delivery of PSHE will be required to provide DBS checks before attending the site and will be partnered with a member of teaching staff while on school grounds.

Reviewed By Ben Bridger: 10.9.20
Reviewed by Caroline Cook 06.09.21

Reviewed by Ben Bridger and Caroline Cook – September 2023

Reviewed by Ben Bridger – October 2024

Reviewed by Ben Bridger – October 2025