

THE ST. CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL

Academy Trust - Special School

Mountdale Gardens, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 4AW

Headteacher: Mr D Woodman

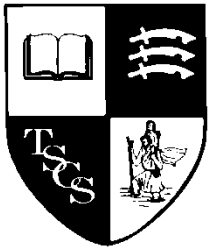
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SEN Trust Southend



PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION (PSHCE) POLICY PRIMARY AND SECONDARY

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Latest Revision:	July 2026
Next Review:	July 2028
PSHCE Coordinators:	Jamie Mander and Paul Shuttleworth

1. Definition, Aims and Rationale

Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) at The St Christopher School (TSCS) is the structured, planned provision through which pupils develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to thrive — now and throughout their lives. It sits at the heart of our curriculum, not as a discrete add-on, but as a thread woven through everything we do.

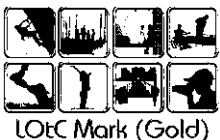
Our PSHCE programme is shaped by our school vision — “Lighting the way for everyone to thrive” — and is grounded in our core values of Nurture, Inspire and Empower. We believe that every learner, regardless of their individual needs and learner profile, has unique potential waiting to be unlocked, and that PSHCE is one of the most important vehicles through which that potential is realised.

At TSCS, we recognise that our pupils’ individual needs and learner profiles mean that PSHCE carries a particular weight and urgency. Developing the ability to communicate needs and feelings, to understand and navigate relationships, to recognise and respond to risk, and to grow in independence and self-advocacy are not incidental outcomes — they are fundamental entitlements for every pupil in our school. PSHCE provides the deliberate, carefully structured space in which these capabilities are built.

Our programme aims to enable all pupils to:

- develop a secure sense of identity, self-worth and emotional wellbeing
- build the communication skills and strategies needed to express themselves, make choices and advocate for their own needs
- form and maintain positive, safe relationships with others
- understand and manage risk, and know how to seek help when they need it
- develop the confidence and independence to participate actively in their communities
- prepare, at their own pace and in ways appropriate to their individual profile, for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life

These aims run continuously from the Early Years Foundation Stage through to Post 16, growing in depth and complexity as learners develop. The foundations laid in the earliest years are as important as the preparation for adulthood that shapes our later provision.



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2. Roles, Responsibilities and Staff Training

PSHCE at TSCS is led by two subject coordinators: one with responsibility for the primary department and one for the secondary department, with the secondary coordinator maintaining links to the 16-19 provision. Together they are responsible for the planning, delivery, monitoring and development of PSHCE across the school.

The PSHCE coordinators are responsible for:

- overseeing curriculum planning and scheme of work development, ensuring alignment with the PSHE Association's SEND Planning Framework
- supporting and advising colleagues on effective teaching approaches and strategies
- leading monitoring activity including learning walks, work scrutiny and moderation
- managing resources and budget allocation for the subject
- meeting regularly with the curriculum governor to discuss provision, progress and development priorities

PSHCE is taught by class teachers across the school. Staff receive ongoing professional development through a responsive, in-house model, informed by learning walks, moderation activity and identified need. Early Career Teachers receive subject-specific support through their assigned mentor as part of their broader induction programme.

TSCS does not routinely use external visitors to deliver PSHCE. Where an external professional is invited to contribute to a pupil's PSHCE experience — which would always be considered carefully in relation to that pupil's individual needs and learner profile — the following applies:

- the visitor must be fully briefed on the school's safeguarding and child protection policy prior to working with pupils
- whilst on site, the visitor is bound by the school's safeguarding and confidentiality policies, not those of their own organisation
- any materials or content must be reviewed by the PSHCE coordinator in advance to ensure suitability for our learners
- the visitor's input must complement and connect to the planned PSHCE programme rather than substitute for it

3. Engaging Parents and Other Stakeholders

We are committed to working in close partnership with parents and carers, recognising that PSHCE is most effective when learning is reinforced and supported at home.

At the start of each half term, timetables and topic maps are shared with families through ClassDojo, our primary communication platform. This ensures parents and carers are informed about the themes and content their child will be encountering, and are supported to continue conversations at home where appropriate.

The school's Pastoral team can offer coffee mornings for parents and carers. These are needs-led and may cover themes such as e-safety, puberty, and emotional wellbeing. Parents and carers are encouraged to help shape the focus of these sessions, ensuring they address the questions and concerns most relevant to their families.

The PSHCE policy is published on the school website and is available on request from the school office. If a parent or carer has questions or concerns about any aspect of PSHCE provision, they should contact their child's class teacher in the first instance, or the school office for the attention of the PSHCE coordinators.

At TSCS, pupil voice in PSHCE is understood in the context of our learners' individual communication needs and profiles. Teachers observe and respond to pupil engagement, using what they learn about what works — what connects, motivates and is accessible to their pupils — to inform their planning. This responsive, pupil-informed approach is embedded in our planning and review processes and ensures that PSHCE remains relevant and meaningful for every learner.

4. Policy Links and Review Date

This policy sits within a broader suite of school policies and should be read alongside the following:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Relationship and Sex Education Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Communication Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Pastoral Support and Personalised Learning Policy
- Careers Education, Vocational and Work Related Learning Policy

PSHCE learning is complemented by and connects to other areas of the curriculum, including Science, ICT and Computing, and Life Skills. These subjects reinforce and extend PSHCE themes without duplicating them. Further detail on cross-curricular links is set out in the Curriculum Planning section of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by July 2028, or earlier if significant changes to statutory guidance or school context require it.

5. Curriculum Planning

Curriculum Framework

The PSHCE curriculum at TSCS is built around the PSHE Association's SEND Planning Framework, organised into six strands:

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Care, Support and Safety
- Managing Feelings
- Changing and Growing
- Healthy Lifestyles
- The World I Live In

These six strands provide the thematic architecture of the curriculum from Key Stage 1 through to Key Stage 3. They are not taught as discrete, one-off topics but as a spiral curriculum — revisited and deepened as learners progress, with content consolidated and extended in ways appropriate to each pupil's individual needs and learner profile. For many of our pupils, revisiting and consolidating learning is not simply good practice but is central to how meaningful progress is made.

At Key Stage 4, the six strands continue to provide the thematic framework, but content is delivered and accredited through the ASDAN PSHE Short Course and/or AQA unit awards, alongside Enterprise activities and Work Experience, which develop and apply learning within real-world contexts.

PSHCE also connects to and is reinforced by other areas of the curriculum. Science supports learning about the body, health and growing and changing. ICT and Computing extends e-safety learning. Life Skills provides a practical context in which PSHCE themes are applied, particularly around independence, relationships and community participation.

Curriculum Routes

At TSCS, pupils are placed within one of three curriculum routes based on their individual needs, learner profile and stage of development. PSHCE is delivered differently across these routes to ensure it is accessible, meaningful and appropriately ambitious for every learner.

Pathway Route

For pupils in the Pathway Route, PSHCE is embedded throughout the entire school day rather than delivered as a discrete lesson. Learning is highly personalised, sensory and communication-rich, and

centred on the earliest foundations of the PSHE Association framework. Themes are introduced through co-active, adult-facilitated experiences, objects of reference, sensory exploration and AAC, with a strong focus on regulation, early communication and the beginnings of self-awareness. A thematic focus is identified each half term, around which daily activities and experiences are shaped. Progress is captured through the Engagement Model.

Blended Route

For pupils in the Blended Route, PSHCE is both embedded across the week and taught through planned sessions. At Key Stage 2, a discrete PSHCE lesson is timetabled weekly alongside embedded learning throughout the curriculum. At Key Stage 3, pupils receive both a weekly PSHCE lesson and a weekly Life Skills lesson, with PSHCE themes further reinforced across the wider curriculum. Learning moves through the PSHE Association framework progressively, with increasing use of functional communication, structured choices and practical, contextualised activities. EHCP outcomes remain central to planning.

Subject Core Route

For pupils in the Core Subject Core Route, PSHCE is taught as a discrete weekly lesson at both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3, with additional Life Skills lessons at Key Stage 3. At Key Stage 4, a discrete weekly PSHCE lesson is timetabled, supported by ASDAN, AQA unit award programmes, Enterprise lessons and Work Experience. Teaching draws on the PSHE Association framework in increasing depth, delivered through adapted whole-class teaching with differentiation for individual needs. Pupils engage with PSHCE content in ways that develop the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for greater independence and active participation in their communities.

6. Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment in PSHCE at TSCS is designed to capture meaningful progress for every learner, recognising that progress will look different across our three curriculum routes and will not always be measurable in traditional ways. Our focus is on each pupil's individual journey and the quality of their learning and development over time.

Assessment by Route

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, PSHCE learning is assessed through the EYFS Profile as a prime area of learning and development.

From Key Stage 1 through to Key Stage 3, all pupils are assessed using our bespoke assessment system on Evidence for Learning (EFL). PSHCE has its own dedicated assessment framework within EFL, built around the six curriculum strands. Each strand has its own progressive assessment criteria from Branch 1 through to Branch 8, reflecting the full range of learners across our curriculum routes. Assessments are completed termly and cover the two thematic areas addressed during that term.

At Key Stage 4, assessment is through the ASDAN PSHE Short Course and AQA unit award programmes, with progress also tracked against individual EHCP outcomes.

For pupils in the Pathway and Blended Routes, EHCP outcomes remain central to assessment across the curriculum, including PSHCE. The Social, Emotional and Mental Health area of need within a pupil's EHCP will frequently map directly onto PSHCE learning, and progress towards these outcomes is tracked termly alongside the EFL PSHCE assessment framework.

Monitoring and Moderation

The PSHCE coordinators oversee the quality of assessment through a programme of learning walks, work scrutiny and moderation. Moderation takes place within our MAT schools to ensure consistency of judgement and to support the professional development of staff. Planning is reviewed regularly to ensure that assessed content is appropriate, well-sequenced and responsive to the needs of individual learners.

7. Teaching and Learning

PSHCE at TSCS is taught through a range of approaches that reflect the diverse needs and learner profiles of our pupils. There is no single method of delivery; instead, teachers draw on a broad repertoire of evidence-informed, specialist techniques to make PSHCE learning accessible, meaningful and engaging for every learner.

Across all curriculum routes, teaching is responsive to individual communication needs. Visual supports, AAC, objects of reference, social stories, role play, circle time, Attention Autism principles and sensory-based learning are all used where appropriate. The approach taken in any given lesson or activity will always reflect what is most effective for the pupils in that group.

PSHCE at TSCS develops knowledge, skills and attributes in ways that are age and stage appropriate. For pupils in the Pathway Route this may mean building the earliest foundations of self-awareness and emotional regulation through co-active, sensory experience. For pupils in the Blended Route it may mean developing functional communication skills, understanding of relationships and growing independence through structured, practical activities. For pupils in the Core Subject Route it may mean engaging with PSHCE content in increasing depth, developing the reasoning, self-advocacy and decision-making skills needed for greater independence and community participation.

Sensitive topics, including those within Relationships and Sex Education, are approached with care and with appropriate use of visual supports and communication strategies. Our RSE Policy sets out in further detail how this content is planned and delivered. When delivering any sensitive content, teachers are mindful of the wellbeing of every pupil and adult in the room, and ensure that learning feels safe and supportive at all times.

8. Establishing a Safe Learning Environment

At TSCS, a safe learning environment for PSHCE is built on the consistency of the environment, the predictability of routines, and the trusted relationships that staff build with pupils over time.

Staff know their pupils well. They understand individual communication needs, sensory profiles and emotional regulation needs, and they use this knowledge to ensure that every PSHCE learning experience feels safe, manageable and appropriately paced. This depth of individual knowledge is the foundation on which effective PSHCE teaching is built at TSCS.

Where a pupil's circumstances or wellbeing require additional consideration in relation to specific PSHCE content, this is managed through the school's pastoral structures and in communication with parents and carers. Any concerns about a pupil's wellbeing during or following PSHCE learning should be referred to the class teacher and, where appropriate, escalated through the school's safeguarding procedures.

9. Responding to Questions and Disclosures

Questions and Communications

At TSCS, pupils may communicate curiosity, confusion or distress about PSHCE content in many different ways. Staff are attuned to the full range of communicative signals their pupils use — whether verbal, behavioural, through AAC, or through changes in mood or engagement — and respond with sensitivity and care. Staff are not expected to have an answer to every question in the moment; where further guidance is needed before responding, teachers are supported to seek advice from the PSHCE coordinators or the senior leadership team.

Families may also raise questions or concerns about PSHCE content. These should be directed to the class teacher in the first instance, or to the school office for the attention of the PSHCE coordinators. We welcome these conversations and aim to respond openly and promptly.

Disclosures

Due to the nature of PSHCE, learning may sometimes prompt a pupil to make a disclosure. Any disclosure made during or following a PSHCE lesson or activity must be managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Teachers cannot offer confidentiality to pupils, and this principle applies equally to any external visitor contributing to PSHCE provision.

Where a member of staff discloses sensitive personal information in the context of PSHCE delivery, they should be supported and signposted to the school's Senior Mental Health Lead.