



TOOT HILL SCHOOL

Year 8 Personal Development Curriculum



“Character is doing what is right when nobody is watching” J C Watts

Now that our students have settled into school life, our focus for the Year 8 Personal Development Curriculum at Toot Hill School is to enable our students to continue to flourish and fulfil their potential. Students are now familiar with our core values of Work Hard, Be Kind and understand the importance of our PRIDE values and how this is central to our school community. As students are approaching their adolescent years, it is a key time to help them develop their self-awareness in doing what is right, and to recognise and cultivate the key values on which positive relationships are built. The Year 8 programme is purposely designed to deepen their knowledge of emerging trends that they may encounter and encourage them to understand the importance of their contribution to their local, wider and global communities.

Our carefully constructed curriculum is planned to inspire a culture of kindness which emboldens students to act with bravery and take pride in challenging prejudice and discrimination directed at others and themselves. Students will value the chance to be inherently kind to others and proactively look for opportunities to help and support their peers, which will be further supported through our Year 8 prefects. As they continue to deepen and develop their understanding of the school ethos, our students will be committed to championing kindness to others in their community and they will have a genuine interest in reflecting, accepting and celebrating diversity.

During this school year and beyond, we aspire for our students to be daring and curious and ask questions about their own and others' attitudes, beliefs and values. This encouragement to be inquisitive and open-minded provides opportunities for students to be equipped with ways of respectfully and confidently challenging the status quo. Investigating topics such as the Geography of Russia, mental health, body image and staying safe online enables students to further develop their moral conscience and ask questions such as 'What do I stand for?'. In response to the pandemic, we have included time for students to reconnect and we have carefully planned activities which allow students to continue to build on communication and relationships with others, a key area which was limited, for some, during online learning. Our students will have an introduction to sex education focusing on a deeper understanding of consent in healthy, respectful relationships.

As Year 8 scholars, our students will build resilience during this time of great personal change. Alongside continuing to discover who they are, they will face academic challenges in the classroom and will be expected to take further responsibility for their learning, including at home. To supplement their efforts in working with integrity, the Year 8 Personal Development Curriculum is designed to equip our students to think creatively, to find innovative solutions when they are 'stuck', and use their initiative to discover ways of solving issues and problems they are faced with. Our scholars, whilst exploring their passions, interests and strengths, will have the opportunity to consider which future pathway is right for them. This process allows students to continue to have breadth in their curriculum, whilst also providing them with the opportunity to further develop their knowledge in specific creative arts subjects. Through this rigorous process, and taking part in wider school projects such as the able and aspiring programme or adopting prefect responsibilities, we are committed to our students growing to be well rounded, confident and informed young people. By continuing to engage in our Personal Development Curriculum, we will support our students in making the right choices and having a positive impact on our school and local community.