

‘Personal development is the belief that you are worth the effort, time, and energy needed to develop yourself’

Denis Waitley

At Toot Hill School, we deliberately teach a Personal Development Curriculum to ensure that our students are well informed, thoughtful decision makers who feel secure and safe in their personal identities, and are able to positively and articulately connect with all members of our community, with respect and compassion. We challenge students to reflect upon, and think critically about, the world around them, whilst supporting them to develop the self-belief and bravery required to leave a legacy within our ever evolving world.

Our Personal Development Curriculum is designed to drive and shape the character development of our young people, to enable our students to flourish as well informed, self-aware young people, equipped to make thoughtful and safe decisions within their lives. It is coherently planned to help students make sense of the world and ignite the passion and courage required to question the status quo, promote social justice and make a difference. Our students are encouraged to develop their unique personalities and perspectives, grounded in knowledge and confidence.

Our pastoral team expertly lead an age appropriate, specific learning journey, continuously adapting to current research and understanding, emerging trends and threats; working closely with local and national agencies to ensure the highest quality, bespoke learning experience for our students.

To be well informed, we believe our students are entitled to learn a broad and relevant Personal Development Curriculum, including current core knowledge of health and well-being, citizenship, finance, careers, scholarship, personal safety and relationships. This progressive curriculum is intricately woven into all aspects of school life so knowledge, values and decision making can be reinforced and refined many times to build confidence wholesomely and sustainably within our students. High levels of literacy and oracy are modelled and developed as key skills within this curriculum in order to enable students to engage in all aspects of life, articulate their opinions and be a positive influence within their homes, at school and the wider community.

All staff members within our school take responsibility for shaping the development of our students as we lead by example, modelling our Work Hard; Be Kind; Take Pride ethos in our thoughtful daily interactions and through the ambitious opportunities we provide.

Our taught Personal Development curriculum is complemented by a uniquely diverse and extensive character building, enrichment and extra-curricular programme of the highest quality. Students are provided with a multitude of opportunities to try new things, discover new interests, develop their talents and connect with others more deeply, thus developing their emotional resilience, personal identity and long term goals.

By embracing our ethos and engaging with our Personal Development Curriculum experience, Toot Hill students develop into knowledgeable, responsible, determined, tolerant and kind young people. Our students can grow into happy, safe and successful young adults, taking pride in their ability to look after themselves, and others, as they contribute significantly to our local community and the wider global society.

Curriculum Design

Our Personal Development Curriculum is extensive and carefully sequenced in an age appropriate manner, continuously adapting to current research and understanding, emerging trends and threats to ensure the core knowledge of health and well-being, citizenship, finance, careers, scholarship, personal safety and relationships is always relevant when taught through our bespoke learning experience.

This progressive curriculum is intricately woven into all aspects of school life so knowledge, values and decision making can be reinforced and refined many times to build confidence wholesomely and sustainably within our students. Encouraging all students to articulate their ideas and opinions permeates all aspects of school life; Student Voice is a vital aspect of our decision making and enables students to contribute significantly to the shaping of their own legacy, with autonomy and a freedom of thought. Students are encouraged to develop and deepen their knowledge, whilst building in opportunities to retrieve and revisit age appropriate topics. Throughout their experience, high levels of literacy and oracy are modelled to ensure our students are able to express themselves with high levels of articulation and confidence.

The building of character is explicitly taught and reinforced through all aspects of school life. The strong foundation of our RESPECT ethos and clear Learning Routines means we are able to focus on developing our students' sense of **purpose** as they take **responsibility** for their personal growth with a **determination** to develop their moral compass to do the right thing, to make a positive difference to others, acting with **integrity** and **empathy**. Students are able to track their character development through our My Character Counts programme and are recognised for this over time.

Our taught curriculum is broad and encompasses six key themes that enable us to teach all aspects of the curriculum in a student centred manner, always focusing new knowledge in a reflective form to drive self-awareness and personal growth:

Keeping Yourself Safe and Happy – Being safe, contextual safeguarding, reporting concerns and worries, access to services, online safety and media, internet safety and harms, road safety, communication, positive mental health, personal space, first aid, anti-bullying, stress management and Toot Hill School Respect Rules.

Health, wellbeing and relationships – Relationships and Sex Education guidance, families, respectful relationships including friendships, intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health, physical health and fitness, exercise, physical education, healthy eating, sleep, diet, health and prevention, changing adolescent body, drugs alcohol and tobacco, mental wellbeing and positive wellbeing.

What do I stand for? – British values, legality, politics, democracy, parliament and government, diversity, equality, citizenship, community, rights and responsibilities, tolerance, stereotypes, respect, prejudice and discrimination, purpose, responsibility, integrity, determination and empathy.

My future – Ambition, aspiration, careers education and guidance, subject disciplines and future career prospects.

My scholarship – Feedback, reading for pleasure, purple pen, oracy, literacy, research and presentation skills, debating skills, articulation, revision strategies, independent study skills, self-assessment, academic successes and areas for development.

The World around me – Appreciation of local, national and global communities, languages, society, religion and culture, current topics and the impact on the environment, current affairs, legacy, economy, climate change, recycling.

Implementation

The implementation of our Personal Development curriculum is not just confined to lessons; it pervades all aspects of our school ethos and culture, in every step, conversation and interaction, whereby our staff act as role models, central to the personal and character development of our students'.

This progressive curriculum is intricately woven into all aspects of school life so that knowledge, values and decision making can be reinforced and refined many times, building authentic and sustainable confidence within our students. This coordinated approach facilitates the holistic growth and development of our young people.

The structure of the personal development curriculum involves weekly lessons delivering a PSHE specific strand for Years 7, 8 and 9, with drop down days at Key Stage 4, all of which are strategically and responsively planned by our PSHE leader. A coherently planned daily active tutoring programme, which includes publicised and recognised national themes which is embedded into the annual plan, and complemented by a complimentary assembly programme which further enables key themes to be introduced and shared. Our investment in the coaching and professional development of the pastoral team and all tutors demonstrates our unswerving commitment to the highest quality of provision and care.

Our daily extra-curricular and enrichment programme is designed to further support our students' academic learning and provide enriching and varied wider experiences. This is complemented by a range of local, national and international trips and is further accompanied by our annual 'Activities Week' providing students with an opportunity to immerse themselves in brand new experiences and areas of interest.

Opportunities for Student Voice are systematically built in at all levels, embracing an ambassador scheme, prefects in Years 8 and 11, and a Student Council which provides vital feedback and contributes to the shaping of students' legacy. All students also recognise their character development through the 'My Character Counts' Programme allowing them to consider the skills, experiences and qualities that develop through their experiences.

Subject specific departments have played a significant contribution in explicitly teaching specialised areas of the Personal Development curriculum, including Physical Education, Geography, Citizenship, Business and Philosophy and Ethics. An age appropriate careers programme is also deeply embedded within the active tutoring programme, which enables young people to feel inspired as they consider their futures and aspire to be the best version of themselves, whilst feeling fully informed of the steps that need to be taken to reach their long term goal.

The curriculum is regularly reviewed, canvassing staff, student and parent feedback to ensure the curriculum remains relevant, current and is positively impacting the development of our young people.