

## Providing an outstanding PSHE curriculum: Walton High

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### Brief description

This example shows how Walton High's multi-faceted approach to personal, social, health and enterprise education is extremely successful because the subject has high status and is central to the school's vision and ethos; staff are well-trained and supported in teaching the subject; the curriculum programme is continually evaluated by stakeholders to ensure that it is meeting the needs of all students including disabled students and those who have special educational needs; and teaching and learning are robustly evaluated and assessed.

### Overview – the school's message

'We aim to enhance and enrich the lives of children and young people by enabling them to make the most of outstanding learning opportunities within and beyond the curriculum; instilling an appreciation that there are no limits to what they can achieve and developing the attributes needed to successfully shape and respond to the future. PSHE education is delivered through a range of methods and is fully embedded in all aspects of school life.'

*Michelle Currie, Principal*

### The good practice in detail



PSHE education is delivered through all areas of the curriculum; the tutor programme; specific subjects; advanced learning days; short courses; enrichment, and as part of the school's subject specialism. The curriculum model aims to meet all individual, group and local needs via this multi-faceted approach. To enable this to work, teachers and students are regularly consulted on the content ensuring flexibility in the material covered and that it is up-to-date and relevant. This fluid, dynamic and evolving model is constantly reviewed and revised to ensure that provision is of the highest quality.'

## The delivery model

The delivery model provides opportunities for a range of different approaches. It means that provision is sufficiently flexible to meet the individual needs of different students and year groups. The various aspects of the programme are described below.

## Advanced Learning Days



**Advanced Learning Days (ALDs)** provide opportunities for learning beyond that which is possible in the normal timetable. On these days, all other lessons are suspended and replaced by an extensive range of off- and on-site learning opportunities. The programme draws on a range of external agencies as well as providing focused and interactive learning experiences. The **PSHE education programme** has been integrated into this through a range of compulsory core events including:

- Year 7 healthy living events
- Year 8 fair trade event
- Year 8 careers day (including work with parents' day)
- Year 9 global diversity day
- Year 10 leadership day (supported by the British Army)
- Key Stage 4 'Teenage Kicks' - sex and relationships education (SRE) related days
- Key Stage 4 careers days

## Tutor programme

PSHE education is taught as part of the tutor programme through vertical tutor groups for Years 7 to 11 and in year and key stage groups as appropriate. Two 35-minute sessions of PSHE education are delivered each week. A five-year plan has been devised to ensure that students do not experience the same content over and over again. Revisions each year are informed by a thorough evaluation of previous practice, including feedback from students, parents and carers, and staff. It is a dynamic programme that is continuously reviewed, improved and changed according to the current needs of the students.

## Short course programme

Students follow a **range of compulsory and optional short courses** each Wednesday afternoon throughout the year. The programme provides opportunities for students to take part in activities that go beyond the curriculum and support the PSHE education programme. Some, such as the compulsory **First Aid short course**, include accreditation; others are designed to meet students' particular needs and interests.

## Cross-curricular programme

PSHE education is an integral part of the wider school curriculum. Subjects such as science, [business and enterprise](#), [economics](#), philosophy and ethics, food technology and physical education take a lead role in delivering the PSHE programme through their subject curriculum provision. However, all subject areas are involved in the delivery of PSHE education content that is specific to their subject specialism. Students see the links between PSHE education and other subjects and can identify when the PSHE education programme is being delivered through the curriculum model.



## Contribution from the school's specialism

Business and enterprise education is embedded throughout the curriculum. It begins with work at Key Stage 2, involving Walton High students leading as [enterprise ambassadors](#) supporting the delivery of termly events in feeder primary schools and building a culture for enterprise education. The work continues through the school's [Key Stage 3 curriculum](#) where students complete project-based units of work to help them improve a range of business, information and communication technology and enterprise skills. Each key stage is supported by ALDs and enrichment opportunities such as [young enterprise](#), mock trial, and a business development day.

## Post-16 provision

The post-16 programme is created to meet the school's [mission statement](#), in consultation with students, their parents and carers. It builds on what students experience in the lower school while acknowledging that 40% of the intake is external and that 16-19-year olds experience issues particular to their age. The curriculum is constantly evolving to take account of current local, national and global issues, along with student interests and individual circumstances. It is delivered through the [tutorial programme](#) and split into half-term units, ALDs and a range of [enrichment activities](#).

## Extra-curricular provision

Enrichment and extra-curricular provision are integral parts of the PSHE education programme and students are consulted at all stages of programme development. They participate through an inter-house 'get involved' programme which is tracked and celebrated via the tutor group system and school e-praise reward system. Student participation is also celebrated via regular updates on the school website and [newsletters](#).

## Staff training

Time is allocated for staff to familiarise themselves with units and to enable discussion of best practice in promoting student learning in PSHE education. External facilitators deliver some specialist topics and train and support tutors. Each year, a curriculum area takes the lead in planning a scheme of work to further develop cross-curricular links and improve students' personal and social skills. Opportunities are in place for joint staff planning to improve ownership and understanding of the PSHE education topics being delivered. Staff are trained in the delivery of PSHE education at post-16 in much the same way as the lower

school. However, emphasis is placed on drawing on knowledge and expertise through collaborative planning to help students become fluent in the key terminology associated with the different topics. For example, an economics specialist helped to design a unit on economic well-being.

### What the staff say about training

'The SRE training was both light hearted and informative. The staff were professional and engaging and they provided me with a new level of confidence in teaching what can be a 'tricky' subject! I left the session feeling that no question was too embarrassing to answer.'

'I was worried about teaching PSHE at post-16; I had only ever taught it at Key Stage 3 before, but the training and support I received was outstanding. Many sessions created debates due to the excellent planning and leadership; and the students seemed to thrive and enjoy the newsworthy topics. I see myself more as a facilitator now.'

### Student voice

**Student Voice** ensures that students' opinions are considered in the day-to-day teaching, administration and future plans of the school. Students are regularly consulted about the content and method of delivery of the PSHE education programme. The school's online surveys and forums are also used to gather student opinions.

### What the students say

'The student voice is a phenomenal way to express what you would like to do in the PSHE curriculum.'

'Tutorial time is a great time to hear other students' points of view – it's not just the student voice group who make the decisions, it's the whole school.'

'If we don't think an ALD or PSHE topic has been relevant or useful to us, then with our help, it is adapted and improved for when it's run again.'

'The PSHE programme has been valuable this year, and as an external student it really helped me settle into post-16.'

'At first I was slightly apprehensive having PSHE. I thought post-16 students didn't need the support, but after the last 10 months I wouldn't be without it.'

'I have enjoyed the way the PSHE programme has been broken down into six categories. I found the social, physical and mental well-being and reflection and futures particularly useful.'

## The school's background

**Walton High** in Milton Keynes has around 1,400 students on roll, including 400 in the sixth form. The school is a national support school and has business and enterprise as its specialism. In 2011, the school became an Academy.

Are you thinking of putting these ideas into practice; or already doing something similar that could help other providers; or just interested? We'd welcome your views and ideas. Get in touch [here](#).

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