

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

BRAMHALL HIGH SCHOOL

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Personal Development at Bramhall High School is delivered in accordance with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education Statutory Guidance (September 2026)
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Prevent Duty Guidance
- Careers Guidance and Access for Education and Training Providers Statutory Guidance
- SEND Code of Practice
- DfE Guidance on Behaviour in Schools
- DfE Guidance on Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools
- Guidance from the Stockport Safeguarding Children Partnership

1. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT CORE PRINCIPLES

Personal Development (PD) is at the heart of our school. It promotes, adopts and embeds a range of skills that allow children to be life-long learners and to be safe and successful now and in the future.

Personal Development is an essential component of the school's safeguarding, attendance, wellbeing and curriculum strategy. It supports pupils to become safe, healthy, resilient, respectful and active members of society.

This policy overarches and is closely related to other policies, including:

- PSHE Policy
- RSE Policy
- Careers Information Advice & Guidance Policy

2. KEY TERMINOLOGY

- RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education)
- SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development)
- PDP (Personal Development Pioneers)
- SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)
- DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead)

3. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD) AIMS

Adult life requires a range of skills in order for people to flourish, both in the workplace and in their daily lives, from the confidence and motivation to seek challenges and complete tasks, to the interpersonal skills that aid teamwork and other social interactions.

These essential life skills are crucial to people achieving their potential and, therefore, it is natural that PD lies at the heart of what we do. PD is an essential part of our curriculum as we support pupils to acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to manage their lives, now and in the future.

The promotion of pupils' personal and social development underpins other learning. PD education helps pupils to build their personal identities, confidence and self-esteem and understand what influences their decisions. We believe that developing self-understanding, empathy and the ability to work with others are essential life skills so too is developing digital resilience and the ability to navigate online environments safely, responsibly and critically and developing understanding of safeguarding risks including child-on-child abuse, exploitation, radicalisation, online harms, harmful sexual behaviour, criminal exploitation and unhealthy relationships.

PD encourages pupils to play a positive role in contributing to the life of the school and the wider community. Bramhall High School academic curriculum, extra-curricular programme, and wider aspects of school life supports pupils to develop their character.

The earlier we help children cultivate strength, vulnerability, and ownership over their thoughts and actions, the lower the chances they'll feel burdened or afraid by life later.

Personal development allows us to look at ourselves objectively and gain an awareness of how our internal programming might be hindering us or affecting how we behave. It is a lifelong process. As adults, having a good sense of self can have an impact on our lives, both professionally and personally. It is why we want our pupils to have the knowledge, skills, values and attributes that support lifelong fulfilment, wellbeing, employability and active citizenship from a young age:

- Self-control
- Self-perceptions/Confidence
- Social skills/Communication
- Motivation
- Resilience – the ability to cope with stress and to manage emotions

These are the attitudes, skills and behaviours that underpin success in school and work, and include the ability to respond to setbacks, work well with others, build relationships, communicate effectively, manage emotions, and cope with difficult situations.

4. RESEARCH BASIS FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Research from Harvard University has shown social skills are becoming more important in the workplace all the time. With increasing automation, it is the ability to show flexibility, creativity and teamwork that are increasingly becoming just as valuable, if not more valuable, than academic knowledge and technical skills. Essential life skills such as confidence, motivation, resilience and communication are associated with better academic outcomes and better prospects in the workplace.

Work completed by the Sutton Trust argues schools should take a 'whole-school' approach to engendering life skills in young people. Life skills education should be embedded in the day to day curriculum, through extra-curricular activities, and through dedicated programmes. Social and Emotional Learning programmes and the Personal Social Health and Economic Education curriculum can help to develop skills such as confidence, resilience and ability to work with others.

More recent evidence from the Education Endowment Foundation, the Careers & Enterprise Company and the Department for Education continues to support the importance of personal development, character education, social and emotional learning, career readiness and wellbeing in improving outcomes for young people.

5. OBJECTIVES

PD is important in its own right and as a foundation for other types of learning. It contributes the most to school improvement, health, achievement, the development of attitudes and values and skill development.

- Develop the confidence, self-esteem and responsibility to make the most of their abilities.
- Develop self-understanding, empathy and healthy, productive relationships.
- Be prepared to take an active role as members of the school community and a democratic society.
- Develop healthy, safer lifestyles.
- Develop good relationships and respect differences.
- Develop the promotion of good mental health.
- Understand physical, emotional, social and cognitive development.
- Understand harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment, sexual violence and healthy relationship behaviours.
- Understand sexual health, emotions and relationships.
- Learn the importance of values, individual conscience and moral considerations.
- Learn the value of stable and loving relationships.
- Learn the value of respect, love and care.
- Explore and understand moral dilemmas.
- Learn to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Develop self-respect and empathy for others.
- Learn to make choices based on an understanding of differences.
- Develop an appreciation of the consequences of choices made.
- Understand consent, personal boundaries and respectful relationships.

- Recognise online risks including grooming, image-based abuse, pornography, misinformation, fraud and coercion.
- Understand the importance of attendance and engagement in education.
- Develop financial literacy and economic wellbeing.
- Develop awareness of protected characteristics, equality and inclusion.
- Build confidence in accessing support and reporting concerns.

6. KEY AREAS OF THE PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY:

6.1. PSHE/RSE/SMSC DELIVERY

Personal Development, including PSHE, RSHE and SMSC, is delivered through a planned, sequenced and age-appropriate curriculum alongside assemblies, focus days, form time, curriculum subjects, enrichment and wider school experiences.

Lessons follow a sequenced learning journey bespoke to each year group and the programme is tailored to follow a child across their whole school career. For example, all year groups learn about healthy relationships; the learning builds year on year in an age appropriate way so that pupils have the right skills and knowledge at the right time.

These lessons promote pupil welfare across a vast array of topics such as sexual health, reproduction and choices, staying safe online, keeping safe from Child Sexual (and Criminal) Exploitation, stress management, mental health awareness, safe driving, risk management, financial planning, gambling, debt bondage (including 'money mules'), awareness of ethical issues, careers, study skills, relationships, healthy lifestyle choices, first aid, bereavement, discrimination and equality.

In addition to high quality lessons, this learning is embedded through assemblies, focus days, visiting speakers, workshops, whole school events, educational visits.

The RSE Programme forms an integral part of our PSHE programme. We recognise sex education is an essential part of the life-learning process, beginning in childhood and continuing into adult life. The RSHE curriculum equips pupils with the knowledge and skills required to develop healthy relationships, understand consent, stay safe, recognise abuse and exploitation, and make informed decisions throughout life.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development equips them to be thoughtful, caring and active citizens in school and in wider society. Learning within the PD curriculum is enhanced through Beliefs & Values lessons and other curriculum areas as well as through assemblies, Pupil Leadership opportunities and peer led support opportunities, focus days, visiting speakers, workshops, whole school events, educational visits.

6.2. PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Pupils are supported to understand physical health, nutrition, exercise, sleep, hygiene, healthy lifestyles, emotional wellbeing and mental health. Opportunities to develop physical confidence and lifelong participation in physical activity are embedded throughout school life.

6.3. CAREER INFORMATION ADVICE AND GUIDANCE (CIAG)

Bramhall High School's careers programme is aligned to the Gatsby Benchmarks and Careers Guidance Statutory Guidance. The school regularly evaluates its provision to ensure pupils receive meaningful encounters with employers, further education providers and higher education institutions.

The school complies with the Baker Clause by providing access to technical education and apprenticeship providers.

Activities include, but are not limited to:

- Options and careers discussions with parents/carers at Parents' Evenings and Yr9/Yr11 events.
- CIAG offered via 1:1 appointment with our specialist Careers Advisors.
- Work Experience Yr10.
- Mock Interview Day and University visits Yr11.
- Guest speakers and assemblies.

6.4. EXTRA-CURRICULAR

Extra-curricular activities are an integral part of Bramhall High School and particularly beneficial for developing children's wider skills, as a complement to what happens in the classroom

The school seeks to remove barriers to participation and actively monitors engagement of disadvantaged pupils, young carers, pupils with SEND and other potentially vulnerable groups.

Activities such as debating, volunteering or team sports provide real-life situations where pupils can learn to develop relevant skills such as teamwork, responsibility and perseverance with the help of adult mentors.

We promote a range of strategies to help pupils develop these skills, including encouraging pupils to speak in lessons, and in assemblies.

There are a range of extra-curricular activities at Bramhall High School including, but not limited to:

- Numerous sports clubs
- Performing arts clubs
- Art, design, textiles and knitting clubs
- Book / literature/ reading club
- Film Buff Club
- Debating club
- Chess club
- Science club
- Homework club
- Maths club
- Computer and coding clubs
- Gardening Club
- Bee keeping club

6.5. CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Character development is promoted through curriculum learning, leadership opportunities, volunteering, enrichment activities, restorative approaches, safeguarding education and community engagement.

Pupils work hard with the school to prevent all forms of bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying.

Developing pupils' character, the set of positive personal traits, dispositions and virtues that informs their motivation and guides their conduct so that they reflect wisely, learn eagerly, behave with integrity and cooperate consistently well with others.

Bramhall works to develop pupils' ability to identify and monitor emotions. This includes skill in being aware of others' emotions and using this to build good relationships, and using emotional information to guide thinking and behaviour.

The curriculum and experience around school develops emotional regulation, self-control, positive relationship and skills, and using these skills to make responsible decisions. The ability to deal with difficulties, adversities and risks, is developed.

How an individual identifies themselves, specifically in relation to self-concept and self-esteem is cared for; for example, Bramhall High School has active pupil-led groups that promote inclusion, belonging, diversity and support.

Self-esteem development is important to us at Bramhall and we have a number of mechanisms in place to support this, including teacher recognition (stickers, stamps, points, postcards), reward logging systems, praise assemblies and praise activities and events.

Team building is threaded throughout school life. Bramhall High School is a friendly and safe school which fosters team building activities every day.

6.6. CITIZENSHIP, DEMOCRACY AND BRITISH VALUES

The school promotes democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. These values are embedded across the curriculum, assemblies, pupil leadership opportunities and wider school culture.

The school Pupil Leadership Team is viewed as a crucial part of the democratic process in school. Representatives are major stakeholders in the school and are given an opportunity both to make a difference to the way the school operates, as well as to develop their citizenship and social skills.

6.7. ONLINE SAFETY AND DIGITAL RESILIENCE

Pupils learn about online relationships, social media, gaming environments, digital footprints, misinformation, artificial intelligence, online exploitation, cybercrime, image-sharing risks and online financial harms.

Parents/carers can access support through the school, the website and by attending one of our parent/carer seminars throughout the year. Topics include online grooming, phishing, understanding social networking/new apps and supporting a child's mental wellbeing.

6.8. ANTI-BULLYING

Pupils know the different forms of bullying and the negative effects bullying can have upon a person for their entire life. Bramhall High School promotes an environment free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behaviour. This includes racism, sexism, misogyny, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, disability discrimination, faith-based bullying, child-on-child abuse and online bullying.

We ensure all members of the school community understand what bullying is and ensure:

- an atmosphere and environment where children, parents/carers and staff feel able to tell the school about bullying if it arises and are confident it will be taken seriously and dealt with.
- Clear procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying.
- Detailed logging systems that enable us to track trends and 'heat map' school buildings to ensure safety.

6.9. PUPIL LEADERSHIP

Leadership starts in Y7 with children being kind to one another and befriending those who may find themselves outside a friendship group. In Y8 all pupils take on the responsibility of becoming Pupil Clerks for a day supporting main reception and undertaking duties within school. Year 9 pupils are invited to apply for the role of Pupil Leader and are given specific areas of responsibility such as acting as ambassadors. In Y10 Pupil Leaders are tasked with mentoring peers and are invited to apply for the position of Senior Prefects and, from this, Head Pupils are selected in Y11 to represent the school at various events.

Pupil leaders take part in training sessions in order to develop their skills and prepare them for their Leadership roles. Pupil Leadership is highly valued by pupils who participate and by those who receive support. During the summer term Pupil Leaders support Year 5 pupils from primary feeder schools to participate in the Legacy Games here at Bramhall and visit feeder Primary Schools to talk to the Year 6 pupils ahead of their transition to us.

Pupils benefit enormously from the sense of responsibility they gain as Leaders. They are easily identifiable to the rest of the school by their ties, badges and high-profile duties.

7. SAFEGUARDING THROUGH PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Personal Development forms a key part of the school's preventative safeguarding curriculum.

Through Personal Development pupils are taught:

- how to stay safe
- how to seek help
- how to recognise risk
- how to report concerns
- how to identify trusted adults
- how to recognise abuse and exploitation
- how to manage online risks
- how to maintain healthy relationships

The curriculum is reviewed regularly to reflect local safeguarding priorities, national trends and emerging risks.

8. EXPECTATIONS

Teachers ensure:

- Understand and support the aims and philosophy of the PD curriculum and policy.

- They are actively involved in the development, delivery and evaluation of PD.
- Work alongside any visiting subject specialist.
- Report on the achievements of their pupils to parents/carers.

PD/CIAG Leaders ensure:

- They provide support and high-quality training to staff.
- Quality Assure the delivery of learning in conjunction with QA leads.
- Ensure all teaching resources are relevant, appropriate and up to date.
- Share current developments, relevant courses and by providing a lead and direction for the subject in school.
- Work alongside SLT to monitor standards of pupil work and the progression of understanding and skills.
- Work in close liaison with all parties to ensure that the programme is meeting the needs of the school and reflects the local and national agenda.

SLT leads involved in PD ensure:

- Various visitors help bring our PD curriculum to life, including visits from agencies such as Police, Fire Service, Health service, Road safety experts etc.
- Parents are invited to join in events and are regularly informed of events and developments through email and newsletters.
- Links are developed with local businesses, councillors, and the local places of worship.
- The monitoring and review of progress, standards of work and quality of teaching.
- Provision of strategic support for PD across whole school.
- Evaluation/action planning is completed, indicating areas for further improvement.

- Up to date information on PD is available to all staff, pupils and parents/carers to inform and discuss.

Governors ensure:

- Personal Development remains a strategic priority.
- Statutory requirements are met.
- Pupil outcomes and participation are monitored.
- Appropriate challenge and support are provided to leaders.

DSL ensures:

- Personal Development reflects current safeguarding risks and priorities.
- Safeguarding themes are embedded throughout the curriculum.
- Local safeguarding trends inform curriculum planning.