

The Westgate School Personal Development Newsletter



Personal Development at The Westgate School plays a pivotal role in realising our vision and intent. Our personal development curriculum is designed to cultivate character and provide experiences that empower our students for life beyond The Westgate School. We aspire to offer students opportunities for self-reflection and self-discovery while fostering an awareness of their role in the broader world. Throughout their time at The Westgate School, we endeavour to nurture students' character through enriching experiences, encompassing both our curriculum and co-curricular activities. Anchoring all our efforts in Personal Development are our core values of ambition, reflection, and kindness.



Positive Relationships



Health and Wellbeing



Living in the Wider World

PSHE/RSE Curriculum

Personal, Social, Health, and Economic (PSHE) education is delivered through a sequenced, spiral programme that progressively builds upon prior learning as students advance through school. It provides every student at The Westgate School with an equal opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge necessary for thriving in both the present and the future.

This encompasses assisting them in addressing critical issues they encounter daily, such as friendships, emotional well-being, and change, while establishing a strong foundation for navigating any challenging opportunities that may arise. Thus, they can confront an uncertain world with optimism.

From making informed decisions about alcohol to succeeding in their first job, PSHE education equips our students to prepare for the full spectrum of opportunities, challenges, life choices, and responsibilities they will encounter. This, in turn, creates a 'virtuous circle' in which students with better health and well-being can achieve greater academic success and overall accomplishment.

Year	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
7	Positive Relationships	Living in the wider world: Staying Safe	Health and Wellbeing	Living in the wider world: Careers and Aspirations	Living in the wider world: Community and Citizenship	Positive relationships: Celebrating Equality and Diversity
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9	Positive Relationships	Living in the wider world: Staying Safe	Health and Wellbeing	Living in the wider world: Careers and Aspirations	Living in the wider world: Community and Citizenship	Positive relationships: Celebrating Equality and Diversity
10	Positive Relationships	Living in the wider world: Staying Safe	Health and Wellbeing	Living in the wider world: Careers and Aspirations	Living in the wider world: Community and Citizenship	Positive relationships: Celebrating Equality and Diversity
11	Positive Relationships	Living in the wider world: Staying Safe	Health and Wellbeing	Living in the wider world: Careers and Aspirations	Living in the wider world: Community and Citizenship	Positive relationships: Celebrating Equality and Diversity
12	Positive Relationships	Living in the wider world: Staying Safe	Health and Wellbeing	Living in the wider world: Careers and Aspirations	Living in the wider world: Community and Citizenship	Positive relationships: Celebrating Equality and Diversity
13	Positive Relationships	Living in the wider world: Staying Safe	Health and Wellbeing	Living in the wider world: Careers and Aspirations	Living in the wider world: Community and Citizenship	Positive relationships: Celebrating Equality and Diversity



Autumn Term 2 Theme: Staying Safe

We are excited to share with you a dynamic and crucial topic that our students are delving into this term: "Living in the Wider World: Staying Safe." In today's rapidly evolving society, equipping our students with the knowledge and skills to navigate potential risks and make informed choices is paramount. This term's personal development/PSHE curriculum encompasses a spectrum of essential life skills, including personal safety, online safety, as well as addressing pressing issues like the dangers of vaping, drugs and knife crime. Our goal is to empower our students with the tools they need to thrive in a changing world while prioritising their safety and well-being. We are committed to providing them with a holistic education that fosters responsible citizenship, critical thinking, and personal growth.

Together, we ensure that our students are prepared to make safe and responsible choices as they venture into the wider world beyond our school gates.



Assembly Schedule

The Assembly Programme at The Westgate School aims to promote:

Our whole school values

PSHE themes

British Values and SMSC

Safeguarding

National news, events and significant dates

Individual successes and achievements.

Within tutor groups, students then concentrate on the assembly topics through carefully planned age-appropriate tasks. The programme is designed to enhance our students' knowledge and understanding of the world around them, promoting values such as respect, tolerance, compassion, and empathy for others. Assemblies are conducted by specialist colleagues, ensuring that essential information regarding British Values and Safeguarding (particularly online safety) can be consistently and clearly conveyed to all year groups.

Below is the assembly schedule for Autumn term 2:

WEEK	NATIONAL AWARENESS DAYS, RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS AND EVENTS THIS WEEK	ASSEMBLY TOPIC	PSHE/SMSC LINK			SCHOOL VALUE
6 to 10 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marie Curie's birthday (7 November) • World Science Day (10 November) • Armistice/Remembrance Day (11 November) • Diwali/Deepavali (12 November) 	<u>Standards and Expectations</u>	Positive Relationships			Ambition Reflection Kindness
13 to 17 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-Bullying Week (begins 13 November) • World Diabetes Day (14 November) • Road Safety Week (begins 16 November) • Disability History Month (begins 16 November) • BBC Children in Need (17 November) • International Day for Tolerance (16 November) 	<u>Director of Learning Assembly (PSHE topic introduction)</u> <u>Focus on Vaping</u>	Positive Relationships	Health and Wellbeing	Living in the Wider World	Kindness Reflection
20 to 24 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Children's Day (20 November) • Mary Seacole's birthday (23 November) 	<u>Safeguarding (Anti-Bullying Week)</u>	Positive Relationships	Health and Wellbeing	Living in the Wider World	Kindness Reflection
27 November to 1 December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birthday of Guru Nanak (27 November) • St Andrew's Day (30 November) • World AIDS Day (1 December) • International Day for the Abolition of Slavery (2 December) • International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3 December) • Advent begins (3 December) 	International Day of Persons with Disabilities	Positive Relationships	Health and Wellbeing		Reflection Kindness
4 to 8 December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hanukkah (begins at nightfall on 7 December) • Human Rights Day (10 December) 	International Day for Tolerance	Positive Relationships		Living in the Wider World	Reflection Kindness
11 to 15 December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hanukkah (ends at nightfall on 15 December) • Jane Austen's birthday (16 December) 	Celebration Assemblies	Positive Relationships			Ambition Reflection

“The purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows.”

Events and Workshops

On the week commencing Monday 16th October, we had 'Rabbits RSE' into school to deliver information to all students regarding relationships and sex education.

We had some fantastic feedback from our students!

Rabbits
Relationships & Sex Education Ltd



The speaker was really relatable and helped us focus on our future

I learnt lots that I didn't know before the workshop. It was really informative

I liked that there were lots of opportunities for us to discuss things with our friends, and the speaker was interested in our opinions

"Great things are never done by one person. They're done by a team of people."

Upcoming Events and Workshops

The Schools Consent Project deliver hour-long workshops to 11-18-year-olds on the legal definition of consent, how to identify consent, bystander intervention, the ages of consent, responding to disclosures and ways to obtain help. The workshop is delivered through a series of fun, interactive games and exercises aimed at gently challenging the students' misconceptions and bringing about safer, healthier interactions. By adopting a legal approach, The Consent Project are able to address subjects that can otherwise feel challenging, sensitive, or simply taboo. Their workshops give young people agency, enabling them to fully understand the law around sex and consent in order to make informed and sensible decisions. Each workshop is delivered to a maximum of 35 students.

The Schools Consent Project are the only organisation of its kind that provides legal education to school-age children. They believe that these conversations ought to be happening at a young age for there to be real and lasting change.

During the week commencing Monday, November 27th, 'The Schools Consent Project' will conduct workshops for all students and staff at The Westgate School. Additionally, we will also be holding a parent workshop on the evening of Thursday, December 14th, 2023. More information about this event will be provided to you closer to the date.

Please see The Schools Consent Project's website for more information:
<https://www.schoolsconsentproject.com/>



The Consent Project
Parent/Carer Workshop
Thursday 14th December 2023



Our work gives young people agency, enabling them to understand the law around sex and consent in order to make informed and sensible decisions.

"All of your facilitators were so engaging, so credible and very skilfully delivered the content, handling the difficult questions brilliantly"



"Great things are never done by one person. They're done by a team of people."

**ASK.
LISTEN.
RESPECT.**

www.teachconsent.org

A FEW WORDS ABOUT CONSENT...

CONSENT IS...

- a clear and enthusiastic “yes”.
- an active, voluntary, and verbal agreement.
- a process and a conversation.

Consent can always be withdrawn.

WHY TALK TO MY KIDS ABOUT IT?

Communication, respect, and honesty are the building blocks of healthy relationships, and consent is about all of those things.

Teaching kids about the skills of consent can help reduce sexual coercion, harassment, and even assault.

When we teach kids about consent, we help them learn how to express what they want and don't want. We give them tools to express their limits. We teach them that they deserve to be treated in a respectful way.

Teaching consent also means teaching kids that it's just as important to respect others' limits and wishes. We teach them that their friends have a right to say “no” and “yes” and have that be respected.

HOW EARLY CAN WE START TALKING?

As early as age 1, we can begin teaching kids that “no” and “stop” are important words and should be honored by children and adults. We can teach even very young children that they have a right to have their “no” and “yes” respected too.

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE.

Talking about consent can start at any time...and it's never too late to begin the conversation.

You can begin by asking kids for their consent in a variety of ways.

HERE'S AN EXAMPLE...

The more you talk about consent, the more normal it will become, so talking openly and respectfully with friends and partners will become second nature.

“ I'd like to post this great picture of you on my social media. Can I get your consent to do that? ”

**ASK.
LISTEN.
RESPECT.**

teachconsent.org

Mental Health Awareness Week



On the week commencing Monday 9th October, all students recieved an assembly on 'World Mental Health Day' delivered by Miss Fisher.

Mental Health - "is a state of well being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her community" - World Health Organisation.

With a notable increase in the number of young people in the U.K. experiencing poor mental health, The Westgate School aims to support each student with their emotional health and wellbeing. This includes promoting positive mental health. As a staff body we approach this in various ways, including through our safeguarding team, pastoral team, tutor time programmes, and as part of the PDC curriculum.

For any student who may be experiencing poor mental health, we have qualified Mental Health First Aiders along with our safeguarding team who are available to listen, offer advice, mentor or signpost parents/students to agencies who can offer guidance.

We are aiming to work with our young people who may need additional support with tutor time interventions which would focus on skills such as mindfulness.

Useful contacts:

Telephone: 0300 123 3393 (9am-6pm Monday to Friday) or text 86463

Email: info@mind.org.uk

Website: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-young-people/>

Mind provides confidential mental health information services. With support and understanding, Mind enables people to make informed choices. The Infoline gives information on types of mental health problems, where to get help, drug treatments, alternative therapies and advocacy. Mind works in partnership with around 140 local Minds providing local mental health services.

A website dedicated to self harm recovery, insight and support:

<https://www.selfharm.co.uk/>

Anna Freud Centre's child mental health experts have written a leaflet to provide simple advice and guidance to parents and carers about how to make conversations about their child's feelings part of everyday life.

Talking Mental Health with young people at secondary school: some advice for parents and carers" booklet.

Parents Mental Health Support | Advice for Your Child | YoungMinds

Safeguarding Update

Dear Parents/Carers,

The Safeguarding Team have been working hard over the last half-term to ensure that students at The Westgate School remain safe and happy. We have worked with all stakeholders to do this: parents/carers; students; staff; members of the community and external agencies i.e., social care, police etc. and we are proud of the care we afford our young people.

We look forward to engaging further after the half-term by conducting surveys to determine what we can do to further improve our provision, so, please keep an eye out for this because it really does help. For example, in response to last year's surveys:

We have extended break and lunchtime to promote student wellbeing.

- *We have reduced the transition periods by two to minimise disruption on the corridors.*
- *We have developed our toilets to promote inclusivity and safety for students.*
- *We have more members of staff on duty to help and support our students*
- *We have ensured that all cover lessons (except for one day!) are covered by a member of staff to prioritise student learning and progress.*
- *We have begun construction on our school site to further ease movement around the school site.*
- *We have offered all members of the school community additional means of reporting concerns to staff through the school website and via email: worry@westgate.slough.sch.uk.*

We trust that you will agree that this has further enhanced our 'Outstanding' safeguarding, but, as one of our school values, we will seek to 'reflect' because #betterneverstops.

In addition, to surveys, we have made some calculated decisions to improve our approach to safeguarding. This includes:

- *Enhancing our Personal Development Curriculum to ensure that students are learning about PSHE/RSE within a strategic framework, across all year groups.*
- *Introducing regular student workshops on elements of PSHE/RSE so that their knowledge of positive relationships, health and wellbeing and living in the wider world is secure.*
- *Offering parental workshops to reinforce what we are doing as a school to build upon our safeguarding practices.*

Staff have been instrumental in ensuring that safeguarding remains a priority and have undertaken additional professional development to maintain a culture of safeguarding at The Westgate School.

As a result, the latest Senior Leadership Team monitoring of how we are delivering the Personal Development Curriculum indicates that all students across every year group knew what to do if they were worried or had a concern and could describe what a healthy relationship looks like – our focus for PSHE/RSE during this half-term.

The system we use to monitor and track disclosures help us to strengthen what we are doing and identify what we may need to focus on as a school based on our context. Consequently, there have been 528 disclosures made and all have been acted upon, with over 95% of referrals made to our external agencies meeting threshold. It is no surprise that two of the most prevalent issues of concern are mental health and wellbeing (73 disclosures) and online safety (58 disclosures).

Safeguarding Update

With a notable increase in the number of young people experiencing poor mental health, The Westgate School aims to support each student with their emotional health and wellbeing. This includes promoting positive mental health. As a staff body we approach this in various ways, including through our Safeguarding Team, Pastoral Team, Personal Development Curriculum and are implementing additional mechanisms to help our students. This includes:

- *We have qualified Mental Health First Aiders along with our Safeguarding Team who are available to listen, offer advice, mentor or signpost parents/carers and students to agencies who can offer guidance.*
- *Building additional capacity i.e., School Counsellor, Youth Worker, Social Worker, Educational Psychologist etc. to work with more students who may need support.*
- *We are aiming to work with our young people who may need additional support during Tutor Time to focus on skills such as mindfulness through bespoke interventions.*
- *Promoting Mental Health Week in assembly and during Tutor Time as part of the Personal Development Curriculum, with additional resources used to help parents/carers.*
- *Introducing additional online safety assemblies and activities post-half-term to make students more aware of their online footprint and how to keep themselves safe online.*
- *Restructuring the Safeguarding Team to ensure a wider range of specialists who can offer further professional advice.*
- *Investing in our IT infrastructure to bolster the means of monitoring and filtering online access.*

Some quick tips that parents/carers can do to support our school include:

Supporting your child to build positive routines such as healthy eating, exercising, getting a good night's sleep, and using mobile phones/technology appropriately.

Engaging with your child in their academic learning to effectively support them. Be there to listen and stay involved in their life, encouraging their interests.

Engaging with us. If you would like to help build resilience in your children and yourself – reducing risks affecting wellbeing and learning – get in touch for some practical strategies.

Many children and young people will experience behavioural or emotional problems at some stage. For some, these will resolve with time, while others will need professional support. You know your child better than anyone, so if you're worried, first think if there has been a significant change in their behaviour. If there has, is it caused by any specific events or changes in their life? Does it only happen at home or at school, or when they're with others or alone?

It might be difficult to know if there is something upsetting your child, but there are ways to spot when something's wrong, such as:

- *Significant changes in behaviour.*
- *Ongoing difficulty sleeping.*
- *Withdrawing from social situations.*
- *Not wanting to do things they usually like.*
- *Self-harm or neglecting themselves.*

If you're worried or unsure, please contact The Westgate School. We are confident that by working together if you have any worries or concerns about your child, we will work towards a positive resolution for all. Alternatively, other useful contacts are 0300 123 3393 (9am-6pm Monday to Friday), text 86463 or info@mind.org.uk.

Safeguarding Update

We know that the cost-of-living crisis is making life harder and harder for families. New evidence in Barnardo's report 'At what cost? The impact of the cost-of-living crisis on children and young people' shows that more than half of parents (54%) have been forced to cut back on food spending for their family over the past 12 months.

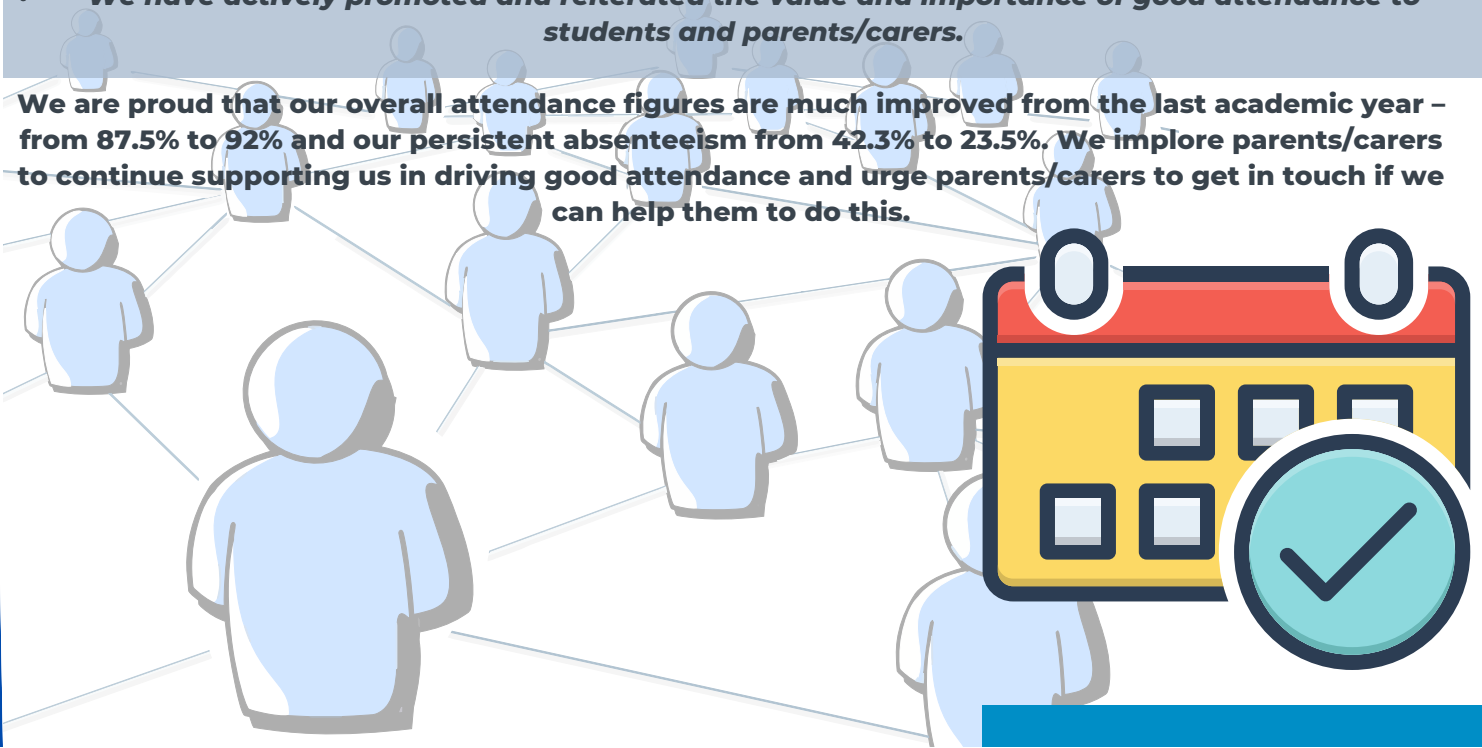
Growing up in poverty can harm children's life chances, limiting their opportunities, holding them back in education, or leading to worse physical and mental health outcomes. So, if you're struggling, looking to access free school meals, or potential hardship funds, please get in touch. We will endeavour to support and can also answer some of your questions about this or put you in touch with the right person in the school to help alleviate some of the worst and immediate impacts of the cost-of-living crisis.

Finally, no doubt that many parents/carers will have seen the national concerns about student attendance and punctuality. Government data shows that one in five students were persistently absent from school last year. Research, supported by charities Impetus, Khulisa and School-Home Support, found an "increased willingness among parents to take children on holiday during termtime", a rise in mental health problems and the cost-of-living crisis were among the "factors" driving lower attendance.

We recognise that strong attendance correlates to strong outcomes and have endeavoured to do all we can to promote good attendance. For example:

- We have streamlined our systems and processes of reporting attendance and punctuality to enable us to intervene much earlier with students so that they get the right support.***
- We have conducted over 100 home visits since September 2023 to ensure that barriers are removed for students to attend school regularly.***
- We have built capacity within our Pastoral Team to ensure that more support is invested in families to work together to improve their child's attendance.***
- We have actively promoted and reiterated the value and importance of good attendance to students and parents/carers.***

We are proud that our overall attendance figures are much improved from the last academic year – from 87.5% to 92% and our persistent absenteeism from 42.3% to 23.5%. We implore parents/carers to continue supporting us in driving good attendance and urge parents/carers to get in touch if we can help them to do this.



Safeguarding Update



We trust that this safeguarding update has been useful and will strive to continue ensuring that our students are safe and happy. Please do reiterate to your child to speak with a trusted adult or use worry@westgate.slough.sch.uk if they have any concerns or worries. Our staff remain committed to upholding our high standards of care and effective safeguarding practices.

Have a nice half-term.

Yours Sincerely,

The Safeguarding Team.