

	Policy Name: Life Skills Policy Owner: Head of Pastoral Care
	Last Reviewed: September 2025 Next Review: September 2026 This policy will be revised as regulations or review demands.

1. Introduction

At Mayfield School, we use the term Life Skills to describe our comprehensive programme that brings together statutory Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE). It also encompasses selected elements of the Careers Guidance programme and wider areas including citizenship, finance, STEM, and independence skills. We believe this name reflects a clear and transparent description of the purpose of the subject: to equip students with the essential knowledge, values, and skills they need to navigate the complexities of modern life.

The Life Skills Programme at Mayfield is deeply rooted in the philosophy of our foundress, Cornelia Connelly, who believed in empowering girls to “grow strong in faith and lead fully human lives.” This wide-ranging curriculum is underpinned by the moral and social teachings of the Catholic Church, providing students with a framework of values that encourage ethical decision-making and personal growth. In addition to its religious foundation, the programme has a broader universal application, promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

The programme aligns fully with the Department for Education Statutory Guidance (July 2025) and ensures that Mayfield pupils are prepared to thrive in contemporary society, able to make ethical decisions and safeguard themselves and others.

2. Creation of the Life Skills Programme

This programme was devised through consultation with our Leadership and Management team, teaching staff, boarding staff, and the Health and Wellbeing Centre, with regard to the National Curriculum for PSHE, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, and ISI guidelines. Most of PSHE education became statutory for all schools from September 2020 under the Children and Social Work Act 2017. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) became compulsory in all schools in September 2020, and Health Education became statutory in all state-funded schools.

Documents that inform the school’s Life Skills programme include:

- Statutory RSHE Guidance (DfE, July 2025)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025 update)
- Teaching Online Safety in Schools (2023)
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2019 + 2021 updates)
- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools (2014)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Education and Inspection Act (2006)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education Act (1996 + 2011 updates)

Please read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equal Opportunities for Pupils
- Policy for Pupils with Particular Needs
- Acceptable Use of ICT Policy for Pupils

- SMSC at Mayfield

3. Principles

The Life Skills Programme at Mayfield is guided by the following principles:

- **Transparency** – Parents are consulted annually, informed in advance of topics, and invited to view materials.
- **Inclusivity** – Lessons are adapted for pupils with SEND and are responsive to the diverse cultural and personal backgrounds of our community.
- **Safeguarding** – Life Skills underpins the school's safeguarding culture, explicitly addressing issues such as sexual harassment, online harm, exploitation, and peer-on-peer abuse.
- **Whole-school approach** – Life Skills is delivered not only through dedicated lessons but is also reinforced in form time, assemblies, RE, Science, Computing, PE, and the wider pastoral programme.
- **Respectful learning environment** – Lessons are interactive and reflective, built on clear ground rules that emphasise respect, responsibility, and correct use of terminology.

4. Aims and Objectives of the Life Skills Programme

Our goal is to develop young women who are outward-looking, informed, and compassionate. If we are to educate girls to *"meet the wants of the age,"* it is essential that they are supported in exploring the complexities and challenges they may face, as well as those that shape the wider world. Through this exploration, they are better equipped to fulfil their potential and apply what they have learned to real-life situations, actively contributing to their communities.

The programme nurtures values of dignity, respect, inclusivity, and resilience. It encourages ethical decision-making, empathy, and independence, while also giving students the practical skills they need to live with confidence and responsibility. It works in tandem with other subjects across the school, ensuring that values of respect, tolerance, mutual understanding, and support are consistently reinforced. In this way, students learn not only how to protect themselves from harm but also how to evaluate and respond to the risks and opportunities they encounter in life.

In line with Mayfield's safeguarding culture, and in active response to The Prevent Duty (1 July 2015, updated September 2023), the Life Skills Programme places a strong emphasis on safety, resilience, democracy, free speech, and mutual respect. Pupils are equipped to recognise diversity in society, to challenge prejudice and harmful ideologies, and to identify and manage risks to themselves and others.

The Life Skills Programme prepares Mayfield girls to:

- Care for their physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing.
- Show respect and consideration for others.
- Be aware of the needs of those around them and have a positive influence in their communities.
- Recognise, evaluate, and manage risks to their own well-being and that of others.
- Understand the society in which they live and their place within it.
- Respect cultural, racial, and sexual differences, fostering inclusivity and empathy.
- Make critical and responsible life choices aligned with their values and beliefs.
- Approach new challenges with resilience and confidence.
- Make informed decisions about a wide range of career opportunities and prepare for adult independence.

5. Diversity and Inclusion within the Life Skills Programme

The Life Skills Programme at Mayfield applies to all students, reflecting the School's deep commitment to inclusivity and equality of opportunity. We aim to provide a curriculum that is relevant, accessible, and engaging for every girl, regardless of ability, social or cultural background, religion, sexual orientation, or physical and emotional needs. The programme is designed to be sensitive to each student's unique circumstances, ensuring that all feel represented, respected, and supported in their learning.

This inclusive ethos informs every aspect of the programme's organisation and delivery. Content is adaptable and responsive to the diverse needs of our students, helping to foster a supportive environment where every individual can fully engage with and benefit from the Life Skills curriculum.

Importantly, our approach is also underpinned by core British values—including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. These values align powerfully with our commitment to diversity and inclusion, encouraging students to appreciate and celebrate difference, while developing a strong sense of social responsibility and shared identity.

By integrating British values into the fabric of the Life Skills Programme, we ensure that Mayfield girls grow into open-minded, compassionate, and principled young women who can contribute positively to modern British society—and to the wider world.

6. Organisation and Delivery of the Life Skills Programme

Life Skills is delivered through a structured and integrated model which combines timetabled lessons with wider opportunities across school life. The programme is overseen by the Head of Department and guided by a Life Skills Committee comprising the Head of Department, Head of Pastoral (DSL), Head of Religious Studies and a Housemistress. This committee meets annually to review the programme, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements and continued relevance to the needs of students.

Modes of Delivery

- Weekly Life Skills lessons across Years 7–13, led by form tutors and specialist staff.
- Personal Development lessons (Years 7–10), which provide extended time to explore RSE, Health and Wellbeing, and citizenship in depth.
- Form Time activities that focus on wellbeing, resilience, and relationships.
- Assemblies that highlight moral, social, personal, and faith-based themes.
- Peer-led learning, with Sixth Form students delivering sessions (e.g. menstrual wellbeing).
- External speakers, including healthcare professionals, financial specialists, chaplaincy representatives, and legal experts such as HMRC Ambassadors and criminal lawyers.
- Curriculum subjects such as RE, Science, Computing, and PE, which embed and reinforce RSHE themes.

Teaching and Staffing

The programme is delivered by form tutors alongside teachers with subject expertise in areas such as Food and Nutrition, Religious Studies, and Careers. Staff beyond the core Life Skills team may also contribute talks in their areas of expertise. Teachers typically deliver four or five of the core units each year, often specialising in one or two areas to enhance the quality of provision.

Timetable and Structure

Life Skills is taught in weekly 40-minute sessions. For Years 7–13, the curriculum is organised into five core units, usually delivered in five-week blocks:

- Health and Well-being (incorporating RSE)
- Society and Citizenship
- Financial Literacy
- Practical and Independence Skills
- STEM
- Careers

In Years 12 and 13, the focus shifts towards transition and preparation for life beyond school, equipping students with the skills and confidence to navigate adulthood.

An exception to this structure is the RSE programme, which is delivered through both Life Skills and Personal Development classes. In the Lower and Middle Schools, when a Life Skills block is focused on RSE, students remain

with the same teacher throughout the five-week unit. This provides continuity, fosters trust, and allows for deeper engagement with sensitive topics. Lessons are always delivered at the appropriate level for each year group, ensuring content is age-appropriate and responsive to pupils' needs. Elements of RSE are also revisited and reinforced through Personal Development lessons.

Pedagogical Approach

Life Skills teaching is inclusive, interactive, and reflective, using discussions, group work, role-play, and journaling. Lessons are designed to be accessible to all students, including those with SEND, and to be responsive to the diverse cultural and personal backgrounds of the school community. Clear class rules emphasise respect, responsibility, and the correct use of terminology for body parts and relationships.

Cross-Department Collaboration

The Life Skills Department works collaboratively with other academic and pastoral departments to ensure that key RSHE and wellbeing themes are reinforced across the curriculum. This cross-departmental approach allows pupils to encounter consistent messages about relationships, health, digital safety, and ethical responsibility in multiple learning contexts. Subject leaders are consulted during curriculum review to identify natural links between Life Skills and their disciplines, promoting coherence, reinforcement, and shared responsibility for personal development across the school.

7. Teaching and Learning in the Life Skills Programme

The Life Skills programme at Mayfield is taught in a way that is inclusive, engaging, and reflective of the needs of all pupils. The nature of the topics covered — many of which are personal and sensitive — requires active engagement and careful consideration of the learning environment. The aim is not only to deliver statutory knowledge but also to nurture the skills and values that enable students to flourish as individuals and members of society.

Approach to Learning

- Wherever possible, students are taught in non-classroom-based settings that make learning more engaging and meaningful. For sensitive topics, lessons may be held in St Raphael's Wellbeing Centre, a calm and reflective space overlooking the garden, which provides an environment especially suited to discussing personal and challenging issues.
- For practical topics such as Independence Skills, alternative settings are used to enhance the application of learning and prepare pupils for real-life situations.
- Lessons are interactive and participatory, using a variety of methods such as discussions, debates, group work, role-play, case studies, hands-on activities, and journaling.
- The rotational nature of the Life Skills teaching team exposes pupils to a variety of teaching styles, ensuring the programme remains dynamic, engaging, and responsive to different groups.
- Learning activities are designed to promote critical thinking, self-reflection, and the development of resilience, empathy, and confidence.

Lesson Expectations

It is important that:

- The purpose of each lesson is made clear, and the content is relevant and engaging.
- Pupils are given opportunities to draw on their own experiences and knowledge.
- A variety of opportunities exist for pupils to learn, practise, and demonstrate skills, as well as to express coherent opinions and personal understanding.
- Correct terminology is always used when teaching about body parts, relationships, and sensitive issues, ensuring clarity and safeguarding best practice.
- Assessment is continuous and ipsative (self-referenced), with pupils encouraged to reflect on their own progress, identify areas for growth, and track their personal development over time.

Inclusivity and Differentiation

- Lessons are designed to be accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND or additional needs.

- Content is pitched appropriately for each year group, taking account of pupils' maturity and prior knowledge.
- Teaching is responsive to the diverse cultural and personal backgrounds of our students, ensuring that all voices are respected and valued.

Safeguarding and Staff Support

- Life Skills teaching contributes to the school's safeguarding culture, equipping pupils to recognise and manage risks, both online and offline.
- Sensitive topics are approached with care, enabling pupils to feel secure when discussing issues such as relationships, mental health, or personal safety.
- Staff are supported by the Head of Life Skills, who provides training, resources, and guidance to ensure teachers feel confident in handling diverse and sensitive subject matter.

Through this pedagogy, Life Skills contributes not only to academic and statutory outcomes but also to the wider spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of our students.

8. Staff Development and Training

Staff delivering Life Skills receive regular training and ongoing professional development to ensure they feel confident and well-prepared to teach sensitive and diverse topics effectively. The Head of Life Skills coordinates annual CPD sessions, which focus on subject knowledge, safeguarding awareness, inclusive practice, and approaches to discussion-based learning.

New staff are briefed on the structure and ethos of the programme during induction, and updates are shared throughout the year to reflect any changes to DfE guidance or emerging pastoral themes within the school.

The Life Skills Department also provides access to external training opportunities, conferences, and resources from the PSHE Association, the Catholic Education Service, and other relevant bodies. Staff are encouraged to share good practice through collaborative planning and peer observation, ensuring consistent quality and confidence in delivery across year groups.

Evaluation of staff training needs forms part of the annual review of the programme, and feedback from teachers is used to shape future CPD provision.

9. Pastoral Welfare of Students Related to the Life Skills Programme

The Life Skills programme is underpinned by Mayfield's strong pastoral care system, ensuring that pupils are supported both within and beyond the classroom. Sensitive issues raised in Life Skills lessons are carefully managed, and students are guided towards the right sources of support where needed.

9.1 Whole-school support

Pastoral care is coordinated through form tutors, Heads of Year/School, Housemistresses, the Head of Pastoral (Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)), the Lay Chaplain and other senior staff to ensure coordinated and effective support for every pupil.

Teachers deliver the Life Skills programme in line with whole-school policies, including the *Safeguarding Policy*, *Anti-Bullying Policy*, and *Acceptable Use of ICT Policy*. Staff also work within the Staff Code of Conduct and have access to the school's pastoral network for guidance and escalation when required. The Health and Wellbeing Centre provides confidential medical and emotional support, alongside signposting to external health professionals when appropriate.

9.2 Safeguarding links

The programme is closely aligned with the school's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*. Any disclosures made in Life Skills lessons are handled in accordance with safeguarding procedures, ensuring pupils are kept safe and

supported. Topics such as self-harm, eating disorders, sexual harassment, exploitation, and online safety are addressed sensitively and linked to wider safeguarding education.

9.3 Specialist and external support

External speakers (e.g. healthcare professionals, financial specialists, and legal experts) enrich the curriculum and provide pupils with access to further guidance and support. Parents are included in this support network through events such as webinars, guest talks, and Parents' Breakfasts, equipping them to engage confidently with their daughters on sensitive topics.

9.4 Wellbeing and accessibility

Pastoral provision is both proactive and responsive, with regular monitoring of pupil wellbeing across the school. Support is tailored to individual needs, ensuring inclusivity for students with SEND or additional pastoral concerns.

Through this integrated approach, Mayfield ensures that Life Skills is not only an academic subject but also a vital part of the school's wider culture of care, where pupils feel valued, safe, and empowered to seek support.

10. Curriculum Overview – Life Skills

The Life Skills curriculum follows the Department for Education Statutory Guidance for Relationships, Sex and Health Education (2025) and the PSHE Association framework, extending beyond statutory requirements to reflect Mayfield's Catholic ethos and Cornelia Connelly's vision of educating young women to "lead fully human lives." The DfE Statutory Guidance (2025) is included as Appendix A to this policy.

It is organised into seven interrelated themes, revisited through a spiral curriculum from Year 7 to Year 13. This structure enables pupils to deepen their understanding, apply learning to real-life contexts, and develop moral and practical judgement as they grow. Together, these seven themes ensure that every Mayfield pupil receives a balanced, age-appropriate, and values-driven education, designed to nurture intellect, character, and compassion.

The strands of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), Health and Wellbeing, and Society and Citizenship are also explored and reinforced through Personal Development lessons, which offer additional time for reflection, discussion, and critical thinking. Details of this complementary provision can be found in the separate RSHE Policy.

The full Life Skills Curriculum is appended to this policy as *Appendix B*. As a live document, it is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect new guidance and emerging needs.

10.1 Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

This strand helps pupils understand the nature of healthy, respectful relationships and the importance of love, commitment, and family life. Teaching includes consent, boundaries, emotional literacy, and the responsibilities that accompany adulthood. Lessons are rooted in Catholic teaching on human dignity, the sanctity of life, and the moral dimensions of relationships, while also recognising diverse experiences in modern society. The aim is to prepare pupils to make informed, compassionate, and morally grounded decisions about relationships, sexuality, and family life, promoting respect for themselves and others. This strand is also reinforced through the school's Personal Development and Religious Studies programmes.

10.2 Health and Wellbeing

Health and Wellbeing provides pupils with the knowledge and skills to maintain physical, emotional, and mental health. Topics include healthy eating, exercise, sleep, personal hygiene, and the management of stress and anxiety. Students learn to recognise the signs of mental ill-health and how to seek help from appropriate sources, including the Health and Wellbeing Centre and external services. Lessons encourage self-care, resilience, and reflection, helping pupils to balance personal wellbeing with academic and social demands. This strand is also reinforced through the school's Personal Development, Biology and Religious Studies programmes.

10.3 Society and Citizenship

This theme explores the role of individuals within society and the responsibilities of citizenship. Pupils learn about democracy, British values, diversity, human rights, and environmental stewardship. By developing political and social literacy, pupils are encouraged to form independent, evidence-based opinions and to participate actively in their communities. The aim is to nurture empathy, tolerance, and a sense of moral responsibility, enabling pupils to act with integrity and respect for others. This strand is also reinforced through the school's Personal Development and Politics programmes.

10.4 Financial Literacy

Financial education is essential preparation for adult life. Pupils are taught how to manage money responsibly, including budgeting, saving, taxation, credit, debt, and consumer awareness. Lessons empower students to make informed financial choices and avoid exploitation, linking closely with careers education. External speakers, such as HMRC Ambassadors, provide insight into taxation, earnings, and financial systems, connecting classroom learning to real-world experiences.

10.5 Practical and Independence Skills

This strand equips pupils with practical skills to live independently and responsibly. Lessons include personal safety, first aid, basic household management, digital safety, time management, and travel skills. The emphasis is on fostering independence, problem-solving, and readiness for adulthood, ensuring pupils leave Mayfield with the competence to manage daily life.

10.6 STEM

The STEM strand introduces students to opportunities and challenges within Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, aiming to inspire girls to pursue STEM-related careers. Pupils engage in projects, workshops, and talks with professionals from different industries to explore innovation and sustainability. By linking scientific learning to ethical and societal issues, pupils gain an appreciation for how STEM disciplines shape the modern world and can be used for the common good.

10.7 Careers

Careers education is woven throughout the Life Skills programme, with a focus on helping pupils make informed choices about future pathways. Lessons cover goal setting, transferable skills, CV writing, and preparing for interviews, alongside exploration of apprenticeships, university courses, and vocational routes. The programme aligns with the Gatsby Benchmarks and the school's Careers Guidance Policy, ensuring every pupil receives timely, personalised support to make confident and ambitious decisions about their future.

11. Assessment and Monitoring

Assessment in Life Skills is designed to capture each pupil's personal growth and developing understanding, rather than to generate numerical grades. The focus is on progress, reflection, and the ability to apply learning to real-life contexts.

The school uses an ipsative (self-referenced) model of assessment, where pupils reflect on their own progress over time and identify areas for improvement. This approach encourages ownership of learning, self-awareness, and confidence in personal development. Reflection activities, self-assessment checklists, and discussion tasks are built into lessons so that students can track their own growth.

Teachers provide formative feedback through dialogue, questioning, and observation, ensuring that each pupil is supported in their next steps. Evidence of progress is drawn from pupil reflections, lesson activities, and contributions to discussions, which collectively demonstrate increasing knowledge, resilience, and critical thinking.

To evaluate the overall impact of the Life Skills programme, the school also considers a wider range of indicators, including pupil feedback, staff observation, safeguarding and pastoral data, wellbeing surveys, and attendance patterns. Findings from these are reviewed annually by the Life Skills Committee and the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that the curriculum remains effective, relevant, and reflective of pupil needs. Recommendations from these reviews inform updates to the Life Skills curriculum and contribute to the school's ongoing strategic and pastoral development.

11.1. Pupil Voice and Feedback

Pupil voice plays a vital role in the development and continual improvement of the Life Skills curriculum. Students are encouraged to reflect on their learning experiences and share their views through feedback forms, surveys, and informal discussions. Each year, pupil representatives from across year groups are invited to contribute to the review of the Life Skills programme through the School Council or targeted focus groups. Their perspectives help the department identify emerging needs, refine lesson content, and ensure topics remain relevant and engaging. Anonymous question boxes are also used during RSE and wellbeing units, allowing students to raise sensitive questions safely and ensuring that the curriculum is responsive to the issues that matter most to them.

12. Monitoring of Provision of the Life Skills Programme

The Head of the Life Skills Department, along with the Life Skills Committee, is responsible for conducting an annual review of the programme. This review takes place at the end of the Summer Term to allow adequate time for adjustments and preparation for the upcoming academic year.

The review process includes:

- Consultation with staff delivering the course.
- Consultation with senior staff, boarding staff, and the Health Centre.
- Consultation with students and parents.
- Evaluation of teaching and learning through observation and feedback from both staff and students.
- Review of the course structure.
- Review of resources used in the programme.
- Assessment of staff support and professional development needs.
- Review of external speakers and their contributions.
- Setting targets for future programme development to ensure the continued relevance and effectiveness of the Life Skills curriculum.

13. The Right to Withdraw

The Life Skills programme at Mayfield includes statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) alongside other non-statutory areas such as Financial Literacy, Independence Skills, STEM, and Careers.

In line with the Department for Education Statutory Guidance (2025):

- Parents or carers have the right to withdraw their child (up to and until three terms before the child turns 16) from any or all of the sex education components within the Life Skills curriculum, except for content covered in the National Curriculum for Science.
- The sex education component refers specifically to teaching about "Intimate Sexual Relationships, including sexual health."
- After this age, participation becomes the student's choice.
- There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education, as these are statutory requirements.
- Students cannot be withdrawn from any sex education content taught as part of the Science curriculum.
- Requests to withdraw will normally be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances.

When a withdrawal request is made:

- The Head of Life Skills or Head of Pastoral will meet with parents/carers (and the student, where appropriate) to:
 - Clarify their wishes and reasons for the request.
 - Explain the educational aims and moral framework of the Life Skills curriculum.
 - Outline the potential risks of withdrawal, including the likelihood of pupils receiving inaccurate information from peers or external sources.

When a pupil is withdrawn from non-statutory content, they will be provided with alternative, supervised learning that supports their personal development.

14. Contribution of RSE to the Wider School Ethos

The Life Skills programme contributes significantly to the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of Mayfield pupils, nurturing confident, reflective, and responsible young women. Through the seven strands of the curriculum, pupils are supported to:

- Develop confidence in expressing opinions, engaging in respectful debate, and listening to others.
- Recognise and respond to the characteristics of healthy friendships and relationships, including the importance of consent, trust, and empathy.
- Understand the laws and ethical responsibilities that govern modern life, including issues of consent, coercion, online safety, discrimination, and equality.
- Build resilience and emotional literacy, enabling them to make informed and ethical decisions.
- Develop awareness of mental and physical wellbeing, including the impact of diet, exercise, and lifestyle choices.
- Explore the moral dimensions of citizenship, justice, and social responsibility in the context of Catholic teaching and British values.
- Engage critically with media and digital culture, understanding the influence of advertising, social media, and online behaviour.
- Learn about financial management, independence, and career planning to prepare for adult life.
- Recognise the link between risk-taking behaviour (such as substance misuse) and its effects on safety, relationships, and wellbeing.
- Gain awareness of wider safeguarding themes including sexual harassment, exploitation, radicalisation, and online harm.
- Life Skills is delivered within the context of Gospel values and the moral teachings of the Catholic Church, ensuring that the dignity of every person and the principles of compassion, respect, and integrity are central to every lesson.

15. Working with Parents

Parents are partners in the delivery of Life Skills and the school values the insight and partnership of parents in reinforcing the values taught through Life Skills and supporting the wellbeing of their daughters. Through the availability of the Life Skills policy on the school website and parent portal, they are informed in advance about topics being covered and are encouraged to participate in the life of the programme. Parents are welcome to request copies of this document and associated schemes of work. Regular parent webinars, consultation events, and feedback surveys are held to gather views and ensure the programme reflects community needs. Parents are invited to attend events such as Parents' Breakfasts, speaker talks, and workshops on topics like mental health, self-harm, and online safety.

Appendix A Government Statutory Requirements for RSE Teaching

FAMILIES

1. That there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
2. How these relationships might contribute to wellbeing, and their importance for bringing up children.
3. Why marriage or civil partnership is an important relationship choice for many couples. The legal status of marriage and civil partnership, including that they carry legal rights, benefits and protections that are not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have, for example, undergone a non-legally binding religious ceremony.
4. That 'common-law marriage' is a myth and cohabitants do not obtain marriage-like status or rights from living together or by having children.
5. That forced marriage and marrying before the age of 18 are illegal.
6. How families and relationships change over time, including through birth, death, separation and new relationships.
7. The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting and the importance of the early years of a child's life for brain development.
8. How to judge when a relationship is unsafe and where to seek help when needed, including when pupils are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust.

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS INCLUDING FRIENDSHIPS

1. The characteristics of positive relationships of all kinds, online and offline, including romantic relationships. For example, pupils should understand the role of consent, trust, mutual respect, honesty, kindness, loyalty, shared interests and outlooks, generosity, boundaries, tolerance, privacy, and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships.
2. How to evaluate their impact on other people and treat others with kindness and respect, including in public spaces and including strangers. Pupils should understand the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, and that everyone is unique and equal.
3. The importance of self-esteem, independence and having a positive relationship with oneself, and how these characteristics support healthy relationships with others. This includes developing one's own interests, hobbies, friendship groups, and skills. Pupils should understand what it means to be treated with respect by others.
4. What tolerance requires, including the importance of tolerance of other people's beliefs.
5. The practical steps pupils can take and skills they can develop to support respectful and kind relationships. This includes skills for communicating respectfully within relationships and with strangers, including in situations of conflict.
6. The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, the responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.
7. Skills for ending relationships or friendships with kindness and managing the difficult feelings that endings might bring, including disappointment, hurt or frustration.
8. The role of consent, including in romantic and sexual relationships. Pupils should understand that ethical behaviour goes beyond consent and involves kindness, care, attention to the needs and vulnerabilities of the other person, as well as an awareness of power dynamics. Pupils should understand that just because someone says yes to doing something, that doesn't automatically make it ethically ok.
9. How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender reassignment, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). Pupils should be equipped to recognise misogyny and other forms of prejudice.
10. How inequalities of power can impact behaviour within relationships, including sexual relationships. For example, how people who are disempowered can feel they are not entitled to be treated with respect by others or how those who enjoy an unequal amount of power might, with or without realising it, impose their preferences on others.
11. How pornography can negatively influence sexual attitudes and behaviours, including by normalising harmful sexual behaviours and by disempowering some people, especially women, to feel a sense of autonomy over their own body and providing some people with a sense of sexual entitlement to the bodies of others.

12. Pupils should have an opportunity to discuss how some sub-cultures might influence our understanding of sexual ethics, including the sexual norms endorsed by so-called “involuntary celibates” (incels) or online influencers.

ONLINE MEDIA, INCLUDING INTERNET SAFETY AND HARMS

1. Rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
2. Online risks, including the importance of being cautious about sharing personal information online and of using privacy and location settings appropriately to protect information online. Pupils should also understand the difference between public and private online spaces and related safety issues.
3. The characteristics of social media, including that some social media accounts are fake, and / or may post things which aren't real / have been created with AI. That social media users may say things in more extreme ways than they might in face-to-face situations, and that some users present highly exaggerated or idealised profiles of themselves online.
4. Not to provide material to others that they would not want to be distributed further and not to pass on personal material which is sent to them. Pupils should understand that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once this has happened there is no way of controlling where it ends up. Pupils should understand the serious risks of sending material to others, including the law concerning the sharing of images.
5. That keeping or forwarding indecent or sexual images of someone under 18 is a crime, even if the photo is of themselves or of someone who has consented, and even if the image was created by the child and/or using AI generated imagery. Pupils should understand the potentially serious consequences of acquiring or generating indecent or sexual images of someone under 18, including the potential for criminal charges and severe penalties including imprisonment. Pupils should know how to seek support and should understand that they will not be in trouble for asking for help, either at school or with the police, if an image of themselves has been shared. Pupils should also understand that sharing indecent images of people over 18 without consent is a crime.
6. What to do and how to report when they are concerned about material that has been circulated, including personal information, images or videos, and how to manage issues online.
7. About the prevalence of deepfakes including videos and photos, how deepfakes can be used maliciously as well as for entertainment, the harms that can be caused by deepfakes and how to identify them.
8. That the internet contains inappropriate and upsetting content, some of which is illegal, including unacceptable content that encourages misogyny, violence or use of weapons. Pupils should be taught where to go for advice and support about something they have seen online. Pupils should understand that online content can present a distorted picture of the world and normalise or glamorise behaviours which are unhealthy and wrong.
9. That social media can lead to escalations in conflicts, how to avoid these escalations and where to go for help and advice.
10. How to identify when technology and social media is used as part of bullying, harassment, stalking, coercive and controlling behaviour, and other forms of abusive and/or illegal behaviour and how to seek support about concerns.
11. That pornography, and other online content, often presents a distorted picture of people and their sexual behaviours and can negatively affect how people behave towards sexual partners. This can affect pupils who see pornographic content accidentally as well as those who see it deliberately. Pornography can also portray misogynistic behaviours and attitudes which can negatively influence those who see it.
12. How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.
13. That websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes (e.g. to enable targeted advertising).
14. That criminals can operate online scams, for example using fake websites or emails to extort money or valuable personal information. This information can be used to the detriment of the person or wider society. About risks of sextortion, how to identify online scams relating to sex, and how to seek support if they have been scammed or involved in sextortion.
15. That AI chatbots are an example of how AI is rapidly developing, and that these can pose risks by creating fake intimacy or offering harmful advice. It is important to be able to critically think about new types of technology as they appear online and how they might pose a risk.

BEING SAFE

1. How to recognise, respect and communicate consent and boundaries in relationships, including in early romantic relationships (in all contexts, including online) and early sexual relationships that might involve kissing or touching. That kindness and care for others requires more than just consent.
2. That there are a range of strategies for identifying, resisting and understanding pressure in relationships from peers or others, including sexual pressure, and how to avoid putting pressure on others.
3. How to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, how to judge when a relationship is unsafe (and recognise this in the relationships of others); how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.
4. How to increase their personal safety in public spaces, including when socialising with friends, family, the wider community or strangers. Pupils should learn ways of seeking help when needed and how to report harmful behaviour. Pupils should understand that there are strategies they can use to increase their safety, and that this does not mean they will be blamed if they are victims of harmful behaviour. Pupils might reflect on the importance of trusting their instincts when something doesn't feel right, and should understand that in some situations a person might appear trustworthy but have harmful intentions.
5. What constitutes sexual harassment or sexual violence, and that such behaviour is unacceptable, emphasising that it is never the fault of the person experiencing it.
6. That sexual harassment includes unsolicited sexual language / attention / touching, taking and/or sharing intimate or sexual images without consent, public sexual harassment, pressuring other people to do sexual things, and upskirting.
7. The concepts and laws relating to sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault.
8. The concepts and laws relating to harmful sexual behaviour, which includes all types of sexual harassment and sexual violence among young people but also includes other forms of concerning behaviour like using age-inappropriate sexual language.
9. The concepts and laws relating to domestic abuse, including controlling or coercive behaviour, emotional, sexual, economic or physical abuse, and violent or threatening behaviour.
10. That fixated, obsessive, unwanted and repeated behaviours can be criminal, and where to get help if needed.
11. The concepts and laws relating to harms which are exploitative, including sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and abuse, grooming, and financial exploitation.
12. The concepts and laws relating to forced marriage.
13. The physical and emotional damage which can be caused by female genital mutilation (FGM), virginity testing and hymenoplasty, where to find support, and the law around these areas. This should include that it is a criminal offence for anyone to perform or assist in the performance of FGM, virginity testing or hymenoplasty, in the UK or abroad, or to fail to protect a person under 16 for whom they are responsible.
14. That strangulation and suffocation are criminal offences, and that strangulation (applying pressure to the neck) is an offence, regardless of whether it causes injury. That any activity that involves applying force or pressure to someone's neck or covering someone's mouth and nose is dangerous and can lead to serious injury or death.
15. That pornography presents some activities as normal which many people do not and will never engage in, some of which can be emotionally and/or physically harmful.
16. How to seek support for their own worrying or abusive behaviour or for worrying or abusive behaviour they have experienced from others, including information on where to report abuse, and where to seek medical attention when required, for example after an assault.

INTIMATE SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP, INCLUDING SEXUAL HEALTH

1. That sex, for people who feel ready and are over the age of consent, can and should be enjoyable and positive.
2. The law about the age of consent, that they have a choice about whether to have sex, that many young people wait until they are older, and that people of all ages can enjoy intimate and romantic relationships without sex.
3. Sexual consent and their capacity to give, withhold or remove consent at any time, even if initially given, as well as the considerations that people might take into account prior to sexual activity, e.g. the law, faith and family values. That kindness and care for others require more than just consent.
4. That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or

negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.

5. That some sexual behaviours can be harmful.
6. The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available, including male and female condoms, and signposting towards medically accurate online information about sexual and reproductive health to support contraceptive decision-making.
7. That there are choices in relation to pregnancy. Pupils should be given medically and legally accurate and impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help.
8. How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, are transmitted. How risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use). The use and availability of the HIV prevention drugs Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) and how and where to access them. The importance of, and facts about, regular testing and the role of stigma
9. The prevalence of STIs, the short and long term impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.
10. How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead people to take risks in their sexual behaviour.
11. How and where to seek support for concerns around sexual relationships including sexual violence or harms.
12. How to counter misinformation, including signposting towards medically accurate information and further advice, and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

THE LAW

Pupils should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:

- marriage
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- pornography
- abortion
- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism and radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)

MENTAL WELLBEING

1. How to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.
2. The benefits and importance of physical activity, sleep, time outdoors, community participation and volunteering or acts of kindness for mental wellbeing and happiness.
3. That happiness is linked to being connected to others. Pupils should be supported to understand what makes them feel happy and what makes them feel unhappy, while recognising that loneliness can be for most people an inevitable part of life at times and is not something to be ashamed of.
4. That worrying and feeling down are normal, can affect everyone at different times and are not in themselves a sign of a mental health condition, and that managing those feelings can be helped by seeing them as normal.
5. Characteristics of common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression), including carefully presented factual information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious mental health conditions. This should not be discussed in a way that encourages normal feelings to be labelled as mental health conditions.
6. How to critically evaluate which activities will contribute to their overall wellbeing.

7. Understanding how to overcome anxiety or other barriers to participating in fun, enjoyable or rewarding activities – that it's possible to overcome those barriers using coping strategies, and that finding the courage to participate in activities which initially feel challenging may decrease anxiety over time rather than increasing it.
8. That gambling can lead to serious mental health harms, including anxiety, depression, and suicide, and that some gambling products are more likely to cause these harms than others.
9. That the co-occurrence of alcohol/drug use and poor mental health is common and that the relationship is bi-directional: mental health problems can increase the risk of alcohol/drug use, and alcohol/drug use can trigger mental health problems or exacerbate existing ones.
10. That stopping smoking can improve people's mental health and decrease anxiety.

INTERNET SAFETY AND HARMS CONNECTED TO MENTAL WELLBEING

1. About the benefits of limiting time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
2. The similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image); how people may curate a specific image of their life online; the impact that an over-reliance on online relationships, including relationships formed through social media, can have.
3. How to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.
4. The risks related to online gambling and gambling-like content within gaming, including the accumulation of debt.
5. How advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online, understanding the prevalence of misinformation and disinformation online, including conspiracy theories.
6. The risks of illegal behaviours online, including drug and knife supply or the sale or purchasing of illicit drugs online.
7. The serious risks of viewing online content that promotes self-harm, suicide or violence, including how to safely report this material and how to access support after viewing it.

PHYSICAL HEALTH AND FITNESS

1. The characteristics of a healthy lifestyle, including physical activity and maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill-health, including cardiovascular ill-health.
2. Factual information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious health conditions.
3. That physical activity can promote wellbeing and combat stress.
4. The science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.

HEALTHY EATING

1. How to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay, unhealthy weight gain, and cardiovascular disease.
2. The risks of unhealthy weight gain, including increased risks of cancer, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.
3. The impacts of alcohol on diet and unhealthy weight gain.

DRUGS ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO

1. The facts about which drugs are illegal, the risks of taking illegal drugs, including the increased risk of potent synthetic drugs being added to illegal drugs, the risks of illicit vapes containing drugs, illicit drugs and counterfeit medicines, and the potential health harms, including the link to poor mental health.
2. The law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances.
3. The physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption. What constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood, and the legal age of sale for alcohol in England. Understanding how to increase personal safety while drinking alcohol, including how to decrease the risks of having a drink spiked or of poisoning from potentially fatal substances such as methanol.

4. The physical and psychological consequences of problem-use of alcohol, including alcohol dependency.
5. The dangers of the misuse of prescribed and over-the-counter medicines.
6. The facts about the multiple serious harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer and cardiovascular disease), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so.
7. The facts about vaping, including the harms posed to young people, and the role that vapes can play in helping adult smokers to quit.

HEALTH PROTECTION AND PREVENTION AND UNDERSTANDING THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

1. Personal hygiene, germs and how they are spread, including bacteria and viruses, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics.
2. Dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene, including brushing teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and cleaning between teeth, reducing consumption of sugar-containing food and drinks, and regular check-ups at the dentist.
3. How and when to self-care for minor ailments, and the role of pharmacists as knowledgeable healthcare professionals.
4. The importance of taking responsibility for their own health, and the benefits of regular self-examination and screening.
5. The facts and scientific evidence relating to vaccination, immunisation and antimicrobial resistance. The introduction of topics relating to vaccination and immunisation should be aligned with when vaccinations are offered to pupils.
6. The importance of sufficient good-quality sleep for good health, the importance of screen-free time before bed and removing phones from the bedroom, and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
7. The importance of healthy behaviours before and during pregnancy, including the importance of pre-conception health, including taking folic acid. The importance of pelvic floor health. Information on miscarriage and pregnancy loss, and how to access care and support.
8. How to navigate their local healthcare system: what a GP is; when to use A&E / minor injuries; accessing sexual health and family planning clinics; the role of local pharmacies; and how to seek help via local third sector partners which may have specialist services.
9. The concept of Gillick competence. That the legal age of medical consent is 16. That before this, a child's parents will have responsibility for consenting to medical treatment on their behalf unless they are Gillick competent to take this decision for themselves. Pupils should understand the circumstances in which someone over 16 may not be deemed to have capacity to make decisions about medical treatment.

PERSONAL SAFETY

1. How to identify risk and manage personal safety in increasingly independent situations, including around roads, railways – including level crossings - and water (including the water safety code), and in unfamiliar social or work settings (for example the first time a young person goes on holiday without their parents).
2. How to recognise and manage peer influence in relation to risk-taking behaviour and personal safety, including peer influence online and on social media.
3. How to develop key social and emotional skills that will increase pupils' safety from involvement in conflict and violence. These include skills to support self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making, as well as skills to recognise and manage peer pressure.
4. Understanding which trusted adults they can talk to if pupils are worried about violence and/or knife crime.
5. The law as it relates to knives and violence. Content and examples should relate to the local context and avoid using fear as an educational tool. Children should be taught that carrying weapons is uncommon, and should not be scared into the perception that many young people are carrying knives (which can lead to the misconception that they need to carry a knife too).
6. The risks and signs that they may be at risk of grooming or exploitation, and how to seek help where there is a concern.

BASIC FIRST AID

1. How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary.
2. Concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries.

3. Basic treatment for common injuries.
4. Life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR.
5. The purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed and who can use them.

DEVELOPING BODIES

1. The main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.
2. The facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body, including brain development.
3. About menstrual and gynaecological health, including: what is an average period; period problems such as premenstrual syndrome; heavy menstrual bleeding; endometriosis; and polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS). When to seek help from healthcare professionals.
4. The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and menopause, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women.

Appendix B- Life Skills Curriculum

Year – by – Year Structure

Year 7 Overview

In Year 7, the Life Skills and Personal Development programmes lay the foundations for pupils' growth as independent, confident, and compassionate young people. The topics are chosen to support their transition into middle school, helping them to build healthy routines, positive friendships, and a strong sense of personal responsibility. Lessons introduce essential themes such as wellbeing, safety, independence, and respect for others, all grounded in Catholic values and the DfE (2025) RSHE guidance. Together, Life Skills and Personal Development provide pupils with the knowledge, habits, and moral framework they need to flourish both in school and beyond.

Year 8 Overview

In Year 8, pupils build on the foundations laid in Year 7 by developing greater self-awareness, responsibility, and understanding of the world around them. The Life Skills and Personal Development programmes encourage them to think critically about influences such as advertising, peer pressure, and digital media, while also exploring mental health, decision-making, and community values. The curriculum also introduces more mature discussions around drugs, health, and decision-making, helping pupils to make informed and responsible choices that reflect self-respect and care for others. The curriculum helps pupils become more reflective and independent as they navigate adolescence — fostering empathy, resilience, and moral judgement grounded in Catholic teaching and the DfE (2025) RSHE framework.

Year 9 Overview

In Year 9, the focus expands to include civic awareness, equality, health responsibility, and the impact of media and peer influence. Pupils deepen their understanding of law, government, diversity, and identity while exploring how social pressures and online behaviours shape personal wellbeing and moral choices.

Year 10 Overview

In Year 10, pupils are encouraged to think more deeply about adult responsibility, ethics, and future pathways. The curriculum builds maturity through topics such as online identity, reproductive health, relationships, consent, work readiness, and personal finance. It supports pupils as they begin to make independent decisions and prepares them for Sixth Form life and the wider world. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions, understand the wider world, and build confidence through practical skills such as self-defence, political awareness, and financial understanding.

Year 11 Overview

In Year 11, pupils consolidate their understanding of personal responsibility, mental wellbeing, relationships, and the transition into adulthood. The curriculum prepares students for life beyond GCSEs, building confidence, self-management, and moral awareness. Topics promote resilience, emotional maturity, and readiness for post-16 study.

Year 12 Overview

In Year 12, pupils move towards greater independence, maturity, and adult responsibility. The Life Skills programme provides practical knowledge and moral awareness to prepare them for life beyond school — covering safety, financial literacy, reproductive health, and consent. Students develop confidence in managing real-world situations, making ethical choices, and understanding personal wellbeing in the context of Catholic values and modern life.

Year 13 Overview

In Year 13, the Life Skills programme focuses on transitioning to adulthood, equipping pupils with the confidence, independence, and practical skills needed to thrive beyond Mayfield. The curriculum integrates safety, financial awareness, civic responsibility, and moral judgement, helping pupils navigate new freedoms with wisdom and integrity. Lessons combine real-life preparation with Catholic values of responsibility, community, and compassion.

YEAR 7 – Life Skills Curriculum 2025-2026

5 Strands – 40min of Lessons per week – complimented by Personal Development and Tutor Programme

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

Life Skills:

- Online safety
- Social media & mental health

Personal Development:

- Positive friendships & empathy
- Managing friendship challenges
- Consent & respecting boundaries
- Bullying & peer pressure

Practical Skills Citizenship

Life Skills:

- Study & research skills
- How to address and wrap a parcel / letter
- How to pack a suitcase
- How to clean shoes / set a table

Life Skills:

- Personal safety (roads, water, rail)
- Responsible pet ownership

Personal Development:

- Managing conflict & reconciliation
- Active citizenship & fairness

Health and Wellbeing

Life Skills:

- Basic nutrition & healthy eating
- Mental health: benefits of activity & lifestyle
- Physical activity for wellbeing
- Relaxation & meditation
- Self-care & emotional wellbeing
- First Aid

Personal Development:

- Puberty & body changes
- Menstrual wellbeing
- Basic health: dental care, hygiene, sleep
- Emotional resilience & coping
- Dealing with change

Financial Literacy Careers: My Professional Future

Careers

Careers introduction

Life Skills:

- Money: saving, spending, borrowing
- Introduction to taxes & bank accounts

YEAR 8 – Life Skills Curriculum 2025-2026

5 Strands – 40min of Lessons per week – complimented by Personal Development and Tutor

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

Life Skills:

- My Values (CEOP)
- Being a Positive Bystander
- Listening, Understanding, and Communication
- My Body, My Image, My Dignity
- Being a Change Maker / Making a Change

Personal Development:

- Peer Pressure and Alcohol
- Respectful Communication
- Developing Confidence in Choices
- Understanding the Law and Responsibility in Social Situations

Practical Skills Citizenship

Life Skills: (Peer session offered by Prefects)

- Hair Care and Styling
- Skin Types and Skincare
- Dressing Suitably for Different Occasions
- Finding My Own Sense of Style

Personal Development:

- Personal Responsibility and Goal-Setting

Life Skills:

- Being a Positive Bystander
- Being a Change Maker
- Social Responsibility and Ethical Action

Personal Development:

- Understanding Peer Influence
- Exploring Consequences of Actions
- Recognising the Role of Media in Shaping Choices

Health and Wellbeing

Life Skills:

- Self-care and Wellbeing Activities (linked to “Being a Change Maker”)
- My Body, My Image, My Dignity
- Positive Mental Health Awareness

Personal Development:

- Introduction to Drugs
- Caffeine and Its Impact
- Tobacco and the Effects of Smoking
- Alcohol and Moderation
- Alcohol and the Law

Financial Literacy STEM

Life Skills:

- Enterprise Project (Summer Term)
- Evaluating Money Choices and Responsibility
- Advertising and financial choices
- Recognising manipulation in spending habits
- The role of money in consumer behaviour

Life Skills:

- STEM Science Fair Project

YEAR 9 – Life Skills Curriculum 2025-2026

5 Strands – 40min of Lessons per week – complimented by Personal Development and Tutor

Health and Wellbeing

Lifeskills

- Responsibility for my health – Vaccination and immunisation.
- Prescription and illegal drugs: Risks, misuse, and safety.
- Sun safety.
- Tattoos and piercings.
- Body image and cosmetic surgery.
- Chronic illnesses – physical health.
- Gangs and violent crime – knife crime.

Personal Development

- Personality types – Identity.
- How do identities change?
- Boundaries, privacy, and consent.
- Committed, stable relationships and family structures.
- Parenting roles and family environments.
- Homophobia, transphobia, and inclusion.

Practical Skills

- How to iron clothes
- How to upcycle clothes
- How to change a plug
- Basic first aid II
- How to remove stains

STEM

Digital Literacy

Life Skills:

- STEM Science Fair Project

Lifeskills

- Gaming, social media, and algorithms: Targeted advertising and pressure online.

Personal Development

- Toxic masculinity and misogyny – role models and the manosphere.
- Social influencers and online radicalisation.
- Femininity and the femosphere.
- Internet safety and influencer endorsements.

Careers

- My professional future – introduction to Unifrog

Citizenship

Lifeskills

- Rules and Laws in society – What is crime?
- What is a democratic community?
- How is the UK government organised?
- What is parliament?
- Roles of different government departments.
- British Values: Evidence of British values in our school.

Personal Development

- Diverse and inclusive communities – what are communities like?
- Children's rights in the UK.
- Stereotypes and prejudice.
- Discrimination and the law.
- Equalities Act 2010 and protected characteristics.
- Gender stereotypes, power imbalance, and inequality.

YEAR 10 – Life Skills Curriculum 2025-2026

5 Strands – 40min of Lessons per week – complimented by Personal Development and Tutor

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

Life Skills:

- Being safe: Relationship boundaries and unwanted contact
- Respecting privacy and consent
- Positive and healthy relationships
- Emotions and attraction: love vs. lust
- Readiness for intimacy
- Consent and the law – rights in relationships
- Dangers of online relationships and sexual predators

Personal Development:

- Types of relationships – romantic, family, and friendship.
- Recognising healthy and unhealthy relationships.
- Coercive control and domestic abuse.
- Sexual harassment, assault, and the law.
- How to access support and report abuse.

Independence Skills Citizenship

Lifeskills:

- Self-defence
- Sun safety
- Tattoos and piercings
- Body image, aesthetics, and cosmetic surgery
- Gangs and violent crime (knife crime)
- Chronic illnesses – physical health

Personal Development:

- Internet safety and harm
- Managing online influence and radicalisation

Lifeskills

- Elections
- Government
- What happens in a General Election – voting process
- What is local government?
- How can young people be involved in local decision-making?
- Migration and integration: why do people move around?
- Children's rights in the UK

Careers Financial Literacy

Careers

- World of Work – what matters to them in a career.
- Careers – how do you define success?
- Competencies and skill sets

Life Skills:

- Budgeting for independence.
- Understanding payslips and taxation.
- Borrowing and credit.
- Managing debt responsibly.
- Fake news analysis

Health and Wellbeing

Lifeskills:

- Mental Health: Digital resilience
- Regulating emotions, talking about emotions, connecting with others
- Building connections to manage loneliness
- Behaviours, thoughts, and feelings
- Every Mind Matters: social media and online identity

Personal Development:

- Mental Health: An introduction
- Evaluating coping strategies and promoting wellbeing
- Unhealthy coping strategies – self-harm and eating disorders
- Building healthy coping strategies: anxiety, depression, and stress management
- Change, loss, grief, and bereavement
- Seeing opportunities that change can bring
- Toxic masculinity, misogyny, femininity, and online influence
- Online groups and radicalisation
- Homophobia and Transphobia
- LGBTQ+ awareness

YEAR 11 – Life Skills Curriculum 2025-2026

5 Strands – 40min of Lessons per week – complimented by Personal Development and Tutor

Healthy Living and Well Being

Life Skills:

- Managing stress and pressure
- Time management and organisation
- Positive mental health and self-care
- Balancing priorities: school, rest, and social life
- Managing sleep, diet, and exercise

Personal Development:

- Managing stress and pressure – strategies for wellbeing
- How to build resilience in challenging times
- Maintaining healthy routines during exam periods
- Emotional regulation and relaxation strategies

Independence Skills Citizenship

Life Skills:

- Preparing for Sixth Form life
- Study skills and personal organisation
- Transition planning and self-motivation
- Understanding workplace etiquette and teamwork

Personal Development:

- Decision-making and accountability
- Growth mindset and reflection on achievements

Life Skills:

- Human rights and international law
- Global citizenship and the role of the UK
- Understanding equality and discrimination
- Freedom of speech and the responsibilities that come with it
- Media and propaganda – recognising misinformation

Personal Development:

- Online extremism and propaganda
- Racism, prejudice, and social justice
- Using your voice for positive change

Careers Financial Literacy

Life Skills:

- Preparing for Sixth Form life
- Study skills and personal organisation
- Transition planning and self-motivation
- Understanding workplace etiquette and teamwork

Personal Development:

- Decision-making and accountability
- Growth mindset and reflection on achievements

Life Skills:

- Managing money responsibly
- Budgeting for independence
- Understanding payslips, tax, and deductions
- Student finance and cost of living
- Avoiding scams and financial exploitation

GCSE

Summer term block 5 & 6

GCSE EXAMINATION

YEAR 12 – Life Skills Curriculum 2025-2026

5 Strands – 40min of Lessons per week – complimented by Personal Development and Tutor

Health and Wellbeing

Lifeskills:

- Self-examination: breast examinations
- Screening and smear tests
- Health services – how do I use the healthcare system
- Pressure, persuasion, and coercive control
- The end of relationships and break-ups
- Harassment, abuse, and rape (including sexual assault, stalking, harassment, and blackmail)
- What makes a healthy online relationship?
- Dating apps
- Toxic femininity and masculinity
- Routes to parenthood: surrogacy, adoption, sperm/egg donation

Practical & Independence Skills

Lifeskills:

- Fire safety
- Electrical safety
- The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up

Relationships and Sex Education

Lifeskills:

- Conception and contraception: barrier methods
- Conception and contraception: chemical methods
- Conception and contraception: natural family planning (NFP)
- Conception and contraception: abstinence
- Conception and early parenting
- Fertility and menstrual cycles
- Pregnancy: testing, labour, and vaginal birth
- Miscarriage
- Infertility (male and female)
- Menopause
- Sexual consent and the law

Financial Education

Lifeskills:

- Main payment methods: how can we pay for things
- Reading my payslip: income tax, national insurance, VAT
- Different ways to save and invest
- How can we budget successfully
- How to insure my car

YEAR 13 – Life Skills Curriculum 2025-2026

4 Strands – 40min of Lessons per week – PowerPoints, Resources, Assessment sheets and

Health And Wellbeing

Lifeskills:

- Being a donor: blood, organ, and stem cell donation

*****Cooking on a budget will run in every block***

Practical & Independence

Lifeskills:

- Travelling in the UK and abroad – independence and safety
- Independence and safety in adulthood: practical awareness
- Ironing and fabric care
- Cooking on a budget (integrated practical module)

*****Cooking on a budget will run in every block***

Citizenship

Lifeskills:

- Voting: Why is registering to vote so important
- Anti-social behaviour: examples, causes, consequences, and impact on victims
- Independence and safety in adulthood: keeping safe on a night out
- Fraud and financial scams (PSHE crossover)
- Human rights: grooming, exploitation, and coercion
- County Lines
- Extremism and radicalisation: causes, trauma, and prevention
- Overseas volunteering
- Emigration and immigration

*****Cooking on a budget will run in every block***

Financial Education

Lifeskills:

- Buying and renting property: Housing (Oak Academy)
- How do financial systems affect access to housing
- Financial products – changing how we manage money
- Pensions – thinking ahead
- Bitcoin and cryptocurrency: online financial harm
- Student loans decoded
- Risks of online financial lending
- Implications of borrowing money
- Consumer rights

*****Cooking on a budget will run in every block***