



# storyybrook

## PSHE Policy





**Contents:**

1. Introduction and context
2. PSHE curriculum intent
3. Curriculum framework and structure
4. SEMH-adaptive curriculum delivery
5. Stage-not-age curriculum approach
6. Personal development through PSHE
7. Safeguarding through PSHE
8. Assessment and progression
9. PSHE across school life
10. Monitoring, evaluation and impact
11. Compliance
12. Links to other policies





## 1. Introduction and context

At Storybrook, Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) forms a central part of the school's wider curriculum and personal development provision. As a specialist SEMH setting, the school recognises that many pupils arrive with disrupted educational experiences, unmet emotional needs and barriers relating to trust, regulation, communication and engagement. In this context, personal development is not supplementary to academic learning but foundational to it.

The PSHE curriculum is designed to support pupils to develop emotional security, self-awareness, relational understanding and the ability to participate successfully within school and wider society. Through a structured and relational approach, pupils are supported to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to manage emotions, form positive relationships, communicate effectively and make safe, informed decisions.

At Storybrook, PSHE is embedded throughout school life and reinforced through:

- teaching and learning
- behaviour systems
- safeguarding practice
- relational interactions
- wider school experiences

The curriculum reflects the school's trauma-informed and relational ethos and aligns with the consistent whole-school approach:  
Regulate → Relate → Repair → Reflect

Teaching recognises that readiness for learning is closely linked to emotional regulation and feelings of safety and belonging. PSHE therefore supports pupils not only to learn about themselves and others, but to rebuild confidence, resilience and successful engagement with education over time.

## 2. PSHE curriculum intent

The intent of the PSHE curriculum at Storybrook is to enable pupils to develop the knowledge, understanding and internal frameworks required to participate safely, confidently and successfully within education, relationships and wider society.

The curriculum is designed to support pupils in developing:

- emotional literacy
- self-awareness
- resilience
- communication skills
- independence
- self-regulation
- social understanding
- confidence and self-efficacy





- self-advocacy

The curriculum aims to equip pupils with the ability to:

- understand and manage emotions
- build and maintain healthy relationships
- recognise and communicate needs
- make safe and informed decisions
- develop strategies for managing challenge and adversity
- participate positively within their community

Within the SEMH context, PSHE also plays a significant role in rebuilding pupils' capacity to engage with learning itself. Personal development, emotional wellbeing, behaviour and academic engagement are therefore understood as interconnected elements of the same developmental process.

### **3. Curriculum framework and structure**

PSHE at Storyybrook is delivered through a carefully sequenced and developmentally appropriate framework underpinned by the HeartSmart Programme.

**HeartSmart provides a consistent thematic structure through which pupils develop:**

- emotional literacy
- resilience
- relationships skills
- self-worth
- communication
- wellbeing
- social understanding

The programme is organised around five core principles which are revisited progressively over time, allowing pupils to deepen understanding as their developmental readiness increases. This spiral approach is particularly important within a SEMH context, where pupils benefit from repetition, consistency and opportunities to revisit previously taught concepts.

**HeartSmart operates as the school's overarching PSHE framework and supports the delivery of wider personal development themes, including:**

- wellbeing
- emotional regulation
- healthy relationships
- identity
- safeguarding
- resilience
- online safety
- independence





**The curriculum is adapted carefully to ensure that content remains:**

- developmentally appropriate
- emotionally accessible
- relevant to pupils' experiences
- aligned with the school's SEMH provision

The principles of HeartSmart align closely with Storyybrook's relational and trauma-informed approach, supporting pupils to develop emotional regulation, relational understanding, self-worth and increasing readiness for learning through the school's consistent model of: Regulate → Relate → Repair → Reflect.

Teaching prioritises explicit vocabulary development and structured communication, ensuring pupils are supported to articulate thoughts, emotions and experiences increasingly confidently over time.

Particular emphasis is placed on helping pupils develop the language needed to identify, express and regulate emotions appropriately.

Teaching materials, discussion and wider experiences are carefully selected to ensure pupils see themselves positively represented within the curriculum while also developing understanding and respect for the diverse world around them.

#### **4. SEMH-adaptive curriculum delivery**

The delivery of PSHE at Storyybrook is explicitly adapted to reflect the needs of pupils with SEMH and associated SEND. Teaching is grounded in a trauma-informed, regulation-aware and relational approach, recognising that pupils must feel emotionally safe in order to engage successfully with learning.

**Lessons are characterised by:**

- predictable routines
- clear structures
- calm environments
- relational consistency
- supported communication
- emotionally safe discussion

Staff prioritise trust, co-regulation and emotional safety, ensuring that pupils are able to participate without fear of shame, failure or judgement. Staff also consider sensory, environmental and physiological factors which may impact pupils' ability to regulate, communicate and engage successfully. At Storyybrook, learning experiences are carefully structured to ensure pupils experience success, build confidence and develop increasing willingness to engage with challenge over time.

**Teaching incorporates:**

- explicit modelling





- scaffolded discussion
- guided reflection
- visual supports
- repetition and reinforcement
- structured opportunities for practice

This approach reduces cognitive and emotional overload while supporting pupils to develop confidence and understanding gradually over time.

**Behaviour is understood as communication and staff respond in line with the school's Behaviour and Relationships Policy through:**

- co-regulation
- de-escalation
- restorative approaches
- relational repair

This ensures pupils remain connected to learning and are supported to re-engage successfully following dysregulation or difficulty.

### **5. Stage-not-age curriculum approach**

In line with the school's wider curriculum model, PSHE operates on a stage-not-age basis. This recognises that pupils' developmental pathways may not align with chronological age, particularly within a SEMH context.

Curriculum access is therefore informed by pupils' readiness, including:

- emotional regulation
- communication skills
- relational understanding
- social development
- cognitive accessibility

This approach enables pupils to engage with learning that is appropriately supportive while maintaining high expectations for progress and development.

Concepts are revisited regularly to ensure secure understanding and meaningful retention over time. This prevents superficial coverage and allows pupils to build confidence through repeated and supported engagement with key themes.

### **6. Personal development through PSHE**

At Storyybrook, PSHE forms a central part of the school's wider personal development curriculum.

**The curriculum supports pupils to:**

- understand themselves and others





- develop confidence and self-esteem
- communicate effectively
- build resilience
- develop empathy
- strengthen independence
- form positive relationships
- understand boundaries and safety
- prepare for future transitions

Particular emphasis is placed on developing emotional literacy and helping pupils recognise, understand and manage emotions successfully. Pupils are supported to reflect on their experiences, recognise strengths and develop increasingly positive learner identities over time.

Opportunities for play, collaborative activity and supported social interaction are recognised as important components of social, emotional and relational development within a primary SEMH context.

**Teaching and relationships at Storybrook intentionally strengthen protective factors such as:**

- belonging
- trust
- resilience
- communication
- self-efficacy

in order to support long-term emotional wellbeing and successful engagement with education.

The curriculum also supports pupils to move gradually from adult-supported co-regulation towards increasing independence, self-regulation and confidence within both learning and social environments. PSHE also supports pupils to understand and manage change, uncertainty and transitions in a structured and supportive way.

Over time, the curriculum supports pupils to develop the confidence, independence and social understanding required to navigate future education, relationships and participation within wider society successfully.

## **7. Safeguarding through PSHE**

PSHE forms an important part of the school's wider safeguarding curriculum and contributes directly to the development of pupils' understanding of safety, boundaries and responsible decision-making.

Consistent, trusted relationships with adults are recognised as essential protective factors in supporting pupils' emotional safety, wellbeing and engagement.

**Teaching supports pupils to:**



Date Last Reviewed: 09.05.2026 | Scheduled Review Date: 09.05.2027  
Review By: R. Burbridge





- recognise safe and unsafe situations
- understand personal boundaries
- identify trusted adults
- develop online safety awareness
- recognise risk
- seek help appropriately
- understand consent and respect in age-appropriate ways

Safeguarding themes are delivered sensitively and within emotionally safe environments. Staff remain responsive to pupils' emotional presentation and recognise that some topics may trigger anxiety, distress or dysregulation.

#### **Teaching prioritises psychological safety through:**

- predictable delivery
- clear language
- supported discussion
- trusted relationships
- opportunities for regulation and support

All delivery aligns with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and wider trauma-informed approach.

### **8. Assessment and progression**

Assessment within PSHE reflects the school's holistic understanding of progress. In a SEMH context, progress is not measured solely through written outcomes but also through pupils' development in:

- communication
- regulation
- confidence
- relationships
- participation
- independence

#### **Assessment is continuous and formative, drawing on:**

- observation
- discussion
- pupil reflection
- interaction
- professional judgement

#### **Staff evaluate pupils' ability to apply learning within real contexts, including:**

- social interactions
- emotional responses
- decision-making





- conflict resolution
- participation within school life

**Progression is understood as developmental and relational. Over time, pupils demonstrate increasing:**

- self-awareness
- emotional regulation
- resilience
- independence
- social understanding
- readiness for learning

This approach ensures assessment remains meaningful, responsive and aligned with pupils' individual developmental pathways.

Pupils are encouraged, where developmentally appropriate, to reflect on their own progress, recognise achievements and contribute to discussions about next steps in personal development.

## **9. PSHE across school life**

PSHE at Storybrook is not confined to discrete lessons but embedded throughout daily practice and wider school experiences.

**Personal development themes are reinforced through:**

- classroom interactions
- behaviour systems
- restorative conversations
- safeguarding practice
- play and social times
- therapeutic approaches
- pupil voice opportunities
- wider curriculum experiences

**Staff consistently model:**

- respectful relationships
- emotional regulation
- communication
- empathy
- positive problem-solving

This whole-school approach ensures pupils experience consistent messages, expectations and relational approaches across all aspects of school life. Consistent language and relational approaches are used across the school environment to reinforce emotional literacy, communication and shared understanding.





## 10. Monitoring, evaluation and impact

Leaders regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the PSHE curriculum through:

- lesson observations
- learning walks
- pupil voice
- behaviour information
- safeguarding data
- staff discussions
- curriculum review

Evaluation focuses on:

- curriculum coherence
- quality of delivery
- consistency of relational practice
- pupil engagement
- emotional safety
- impact on personal development outcomes

Impact is evidenced through pupils' increasing ability to:

- regulate emotions
- engage positively in learning
- form healthy relationships
- communicate effectively
- demonstrate resilience
- participate safely within school and society

Over time, pupils demonstrate increased confidence, independence and readiness for future transitions and wider participation in society.

## 11. Compliance

This policy supports compliance with:

- ISS Part 2 - Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils
- ISS Part 3 - Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils

The policy is consistent with:

- the Equality Act 2010
- the SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- the Children and Families Act 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- statutory Relationships and Health Education guidance





The policy reflects the school's commitment to inclusive, trauma-informed and relational practice, ensuring that pupils with SEMH needs are able to access meaningful personal development successfully.

## **12. Links to Other Policies**

**This policy should be read alongside:**

- Curriculum Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy
- SMSC Development Policy
- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEMH Policy
- SEND and Inclusion Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Equality Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Ethos, Mission and Values Statement

Together, these policies ensure that personal development, safeguarding, curriculum, behaviour and inclusion operate within a coherent and consistent whole-school approach.

