

PSHE & Citizenship Curriculum Overview (Years 7–13)

Welcome to PSHE & Citizenship

At Verulam School, our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education and Citizenship program is designed to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and attributes necessary to manage their lives, now and in the future. Our 7-year progressive curriculum empowers students to stay healthy, safe, and prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of adult life and the modern workplace.

Curriculum Intent & Core Themes

Our curriculum is structured sequentially across three overarching core themes defined by national guidelines:

1. **Health & Wellbeing (HWB):** Physical and mental health, emotional literacy, safety, risk management, and body image.
2. **Relationships & Sex Education (RSE):** Building healthy relationships, understanding consent, diversity, equality, and digital safety.
3. **Living in the Wider World (LWW):** Careers guidance, financial literacy, citizenship, rights and responsibilities, and workplace readiness.

7-Year Curriculum Map (Years 7–13)

Key Stage 3 (Years 7–9)

Year 7: Foundations for Secondary School & Independence

- **Focus:** Easing transition, building resilience, personal safety, early career exploration, and fundamental social values.
- **Key Topics:** Secondary school transition, healthy vs. unhealthy friendships, First Aid (DR ABC, recovery position), road & water safety, introduction to Unifrog, learning styles, teamwork, challenging workplace stereotypes, bullying vs. banter, cyberbullying, deepfakes, personal hygiene, puberty, age-appropriate substance awareness, self-esteem, consent basics, family diversity, and intro to budgeting and saving.

Year 8: Growing Up, Risk & Digital Lives

- **Focus:** Self-regulation, identity, critical thinking online, healthy choices, and personal values.
- **Key Topics:** Self-management & goal setting, medicinal vs. recreational drugs, risks of vaping and alcohol, career interests & employment types, communication & teamwork, entrepreneurial skills, Personal Development Plans, self-confidence, challenging disability/religious/LGBTQ+ stereotypes, mindfulness, emotional literacy, conflict resolution, body image & media, self-harm awareness, anger management, digital footprints, AI & online grooming, and relationship red flags.

Year 9: Choices, Future Pathways & Respect

- **Focus:** Employability, GCSE choices, risk evaluation, and respectful relationship dynamics.

- **Key Topics:** Setting SMART targets, transferable skills, local labour market information (LMI), post-school pathways, GCSE options guidance, soft skills, online presence management, AI chatbots, bystander intervention, peer pressure, dangers of knife crime, drugs and the law, gangs & youth offending, respectful relationship behaviours, consent facts & misconceptions, STI awareness & contraception, teenage pregnancy, sexting & sextortion risks, borrowing & tax awareness, online gambling, and physical/mental health connections.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10–11)

Year 10: Wellbeing, Workplace Readiness & Safe Choices

- **Focus:** Mental health literacy, workplace rights, societal responsibility, and critical evaluation of influence.
- **Key Topics:** Transitioning to GCSEs, managing mental health & overcoming thinking traps, depression & social anxiety awareness, workplace rights & responsibilities, work experience preparation, health & safety at work, AI & future jobs, intimacy & consent laws, media impact & pornography, CSE awareness, revenge porn, domestic abuse prevention, toxic masculinity & misogyny, incels & online subcultures, role models vs. online influence, county lines & gang culture, Equality Act 2010, British values, criminal justice system, budgeting, credit scores, debt management, and cybercrime awareness.

Year 11: Post-16 Preparation, Independence & Safety

- **Focus:** Transitioning to post-16 study or work, independent living skills, adult relationship boundaries, and personal health.
- **Key Topics:** Exam revision strategies, study skills, post-16 pathways (A-Levels, Apprenticeships, T-Levels, Vocational), CV writing & employer expectations, privilege & social mobility, diverse family structures & parenting realities, sexual health & fertility, pregnancy choices, coping with bereavement, Honour-Based Violence (HBV), financial risks of independent living, moving away from home, employment rights, core values in relationships, managing breakups, harassment & stalking prevention, coercive control, nicotine pouches/snus awareness, risk management, first aid refresher, cancer self-examination (testicular/breast), blood/organ donation, and cosmetic/aesthetic procedure risks.

Key Stage 5 (Years 12–13)

Year 12: Sixth Form Success & Adult Readiness

- **Focus:** Higher education/employment readiness, advanced study skills, adult financial literacy, and personal safety.
- **Key Topics:** Advanced study skills & growth mindset, workplace rights, minimum wage, workplace harassment prevention, independent adult budgeting, recognising emotional abuse & gaslighting, extremism awareness, and driving/travel safety.

Year 13: Preparing for Independent Adulthood

- **Focus:** Autonomy, adult safety, relationship health, and navigating modern subcultures.
- **Key Topics:** Media literacy & online subcultures, healthy adult relationships, fertility awareness, navigating sexual health services, workplace rights transitioning to full employment, festival & night-life safety, and harm reduction.

Summary of Key Outcomes

By the end of their 7-year journey at Verulam School, every student will have:

- Developed **emotional resilience** and practical strategies to maintain positive mental and physical health.
- Gained a deep understanding of **healthy, respectful, and safe relationships**, both offline and online.
- Completed comprehensive **careers education**, leaving fully equipped to make informed post-16 and post-18 choices.
- Mastered essential **financial and adult life skills**, from budgeting and tax awareness to workplace rights and safety.