ACS Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education Policy

Please note:

ACS International Schools is committed to protecting individuals' personal data, and aims to remain at all times fully compliant with data protection laws and guidance from the relevant regulators. ACS further commits to ensuring that the planning and writing of all policies and procedures that involve the handling of personal data are guided by the principle of privacy by design, and that individuals' rights to have their data safeguarded are a paramount consideration in ACS' pursuit of all its operational and strategic practices.

ACS is committed to inclusion across race, gender, faith, identity and abilities. We believe that diversity helps us to fulfil our purpose, realise our vision and exemplify our values.

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1. Aim and Vision

ACS International Schools' approach to Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) is taught throughout our curriculum. The programme aligns with the schools' broader educational vision for all students to face the world as effective, confident and caring individuals. Specifically, the curriculum supports students' personal, social, and emotional development, equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally in a rapidly changing world.

2. Statutory Requirements

The following government publications, including Department for Education (DfE) guidance on PSHE education, highlight the importance of providing comprehensive and inclusive education to support students' personal development and well-being.

Children and Social Work Act 2017
Independent School Standards
Education Act 2011
Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education 2019

ACS covers required content outlined in the DFE guidance: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education 2019, as detailed in the ACS Relationships (and Sex) Education (RSE) Policy, available on the ACS website.

The curriculum is expected to be inclusive and sensitive to the diversity of pupils, families, and communities. ACS meets this statutory requirement through its integrated delivery of the PSHE curriculum. ACS schools follow advice from the Department for Education to design and implement PSHE education programmes, statutory guidance on R(S)E, and with reference to the PSHE Association. ACS International Schools is a member of the PSHE Association.

3. Content and Delivery

All staff are responsible for elements of the PSHE programme. Key personnel at each level of the school deliver, or support the delivery of, the PSHE education programme which includes knowing and understanding the key concepts of Health & Wellbeing, Relationships, and Living in the Wider World. Based on these key concepts, each campus develops its own scope and sequence (scheme of work) that includes essential objectives about social-emotional learning, mental health and wellbeing, physical health (including healthy lifestyles and first aid), and forming/maintaining safe, healthy relationships (including understanding consent and negotiating life online).

PSHE education programmes are reviewed and evaluated with feedback from students, teachers, and parents to identify areas for improvement. Cross-campus meetings provide opportunities to share best practice and the schools belong to the PSHE Association which provides resources, training, planning and advice.

PSHE education programmes at ACS Schools:

- Are designed in alignment with Independent School Standards and the Children Act 2004 as relating to students' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing, contribution to society, and social and economic wellbeing
- Are part of a holistic approach to students' personal growth and development that includes a rich co-curricular and sports programme, service learning, and leadership development opportunities
- Underpin a robust universal and individualised Early Help initiatives that further PSHE learning objectives
- Reflect our values and our commitment as international schools in which we respect diversity, recognise a wide range of cultural experiences, and value multiple perspectives
- Are integrated in, and promoted across, key themes and topics which are addressed consistently and spiralled through grade levels and subjects, especially Physical Education and Science courses; the Advisory Programme; and career education activities and events
- Are designed to be comprehensive and coherent, providing progression and continuity, building on prior learning and experiences
- Have clearly defined learning objectives and outcomes for each stage of the PSHE education curriculum
- Link with other areas of the curriculum, such as science, physical education, social studies, technology etc. to reinforce learning and promote interdisciplinary understanding
- Ensure that all students, including students with special education needs, receive accessible, inclusive, and effective education that supports their personal, social, health, and emotional development
- Cater to the diverse needs and abilities of students by adopting a differentiated approach to teaching and learning, providing support and challenge as needed

- Employ a variety of active learning strategies and teaching methods, including discussions, group work, role-play, case studies, multimedia resources, and real-life scenarios, to engage students and enhance their learning experiences

- Engage with appropriate community resources and external groups, in line with ACS policy and practice

- Foster an inclusive learning environment that respects and values the contributions of all students, regardless of their backgrounds, identities, or abilities

- Are responsive to, and concerned with, changes in the wider world or needs of sections of the community

- Include developmentally appropriate opportunities for students to learn that people may be attracted to someone emotionally, romantically, and sexually; that people may be attracted to someone of the same sex or different sex; that gender identity and sexual orientation are different; and that for some people, gender identity does not correspond with sex registered at birth
- Involve parents, and the wider community in the delivery of the PSHE programme, seeking their input, feedback, and support to reinforce learning and promote shared values
- Include ongoing training and support for teachers and staff to enhance their knowledge, skills, and confidence in delivering high-quality PSHE education, including awareness of relevant policies, legislation, and best practices

- Utilise regular assessment and evaluation procedures to monitor students' progress and attainment, using a range of formative and summative assessment methods to ascertain prior knowledge, measure learning outcomes and inform future planning.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Governing Board

The Board of Trustees (Education Sub-Committee) will approve the PSHE policy. The Board may request the Heads of School to account for progress in PSHE and to report on any changes in the policy that have consequences for assessing the programme's intent, implementation, and impact.

4.2 The Head of School and Senior Leadership Team

The Head of School is responsible for ensuring that PSHE is taught consistently across the school. The senior leadership team (SLT) are responsible for ensuring that PSHE is effectively integrated into the school curriculum. They set the overall

direction and priorities, allocate teachers and resources, and ensure that PSHE education aligns with statutory requirements and school policies.

4.3 PSHE Education Programme Leads

Dedicated staff may be appointed to coordinate and oversee the planning, delivery, and evaluation of the PSHE curriculum and ensure that the PSHE programme is comprehensive and meets the needs of all students.

4.4 Cross-Campus PSHE Committee

Staff will be nominated by the schools to meet at least three times a year. The meeting agenda includes, but is not limited to:

- Reviewing statutory guidance
- Discussing trends emerging trends (anecdotally and based on reflection of school systems)
- Sharing resources, including appropriate external organisations, and good practice
- Updating scope and sequence documents
- Discussing protocols for reviewing, monitoring and assessing the policy's impact.

4.5 Staff

All staff share the responsibility for knowing about, supporting and delivering PSHE content. Whilst some classes may be led by designated PSHE staff, all staff need to be equipped with the right skills and knowledge to handle sensitive topics effectively and inclusively. Training matrices for teaching staff and school leaders are regularly reviewed, updated, and monitored for compliance.

Safeguarding and pastoral wellbeing staff, including the nurses, play a significant role in supporting the delivery of the PSHE education programme. They provide specialised knowledge and support, especially on topics related to relationships and health and well-being. ACS also supports individual learning through partnerships and memberships with organisations like Teen Hub and TES.

4.6 Students and Parents

Engaging students and their parents in the PSHE education process is crucial for its success. Feedback from both groups can help tailor the PSHE curriculum to better meet their needs and make the lessons more relevant and effective. PSHE curriculum is informed by ongoing survey data (including school climate, wellbeing, Parent Satisfaction, and Contextual Safeguarding) as well as student and parent organisations, focus groups, and educational events.

5. Related ACS International School Documents

This policy is associated with, and should be read in conjunction with, the following ACS Policies, procedures and charters which can be found on the ACS International Schools' website or are available from the school office.

- Attendance Policy
- Diversity Equality Inclusion and Belonging Charter
- Health and Safety Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Relationships (and Sex) Education Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Special Education Needs (SEN) and Disabilities Policy
- Student Mental Health Policy
- Student Wellbeing Charter - Early Childhood & Lower School
- Student Wellbeing Charter - Middle & High/Upper School