



SANDWELL ACADEMY



Welfare Curriculum Policy

October 2025

Policy Title:	Welfare Curriculum Policy (PSHE/Citizenship)
Policy Reference:	SA/Curriculum and Assessment
Description:	This document sets out how the Academy will incorporate PSHE and Citizenship into the curriculum
Status:	Statutory
Category:	Academy / Curriculum and Assessment
Contact:	Name: Mr T Byrne Title: Deputy Head for Welfare
Version	V1.5
Other relevant SA policies:	SMSC & RSE
Adopted by the Governing Board on:	
Date for Review:	July 2026

Change Record		
Version	Date	Description
1.1	Jan 2012	Change of policy contact and review of contents
1.2	February 2015	Change contact details, review of content and addition of British Values.
1.3	June 2021	Change responsibility details
1.4	June 2022	Change of policy contact and review of contents
1.5	October 2023	Review of contents and addition of Citizenship delivery
1.6	October 2025	Full rewrite

Contents

1. Introduction and Curriculum Overview	4
2. Enrichment Through the Wider Curriculum	4
3. Votes4Schools	5
4. Embedding British Values and SMSC	5
5. Curriculum Design, Sequencing and Literacy Development	6
6. Monitoring, Evaluation and Staff Development	6

1. Introduction and Curriculum Overview

At Sandwell Academy, we are dedicated to nurturing students intellectually, emotionally, socially, and morally. Our Welfare Curriculum is a cornerstone of our commitment to developing well-rounded, thoughtful, and responsible young people. It supports students in understanding themselves and the world around them while preparing them for life beyond the classroom.

The Welfare Curriculum sits within the Academy's broader commitment to the personal development of all students and fulfils our statutory duties under the Department for Education's guidance on Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education, Citizenship, British Values, and SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural development).

The core content of the Welfare Curriculum is delivered through weekly Personal Tutor (PT) sessions, where students work through text-rich workbooks structured around Big Questions. This enquiry-based approach is designed to stimulate critical thinking, promote meaningful discussion, and build students' confidence in expressing their views, skills which lie at the heart of both academic success and responsible citizenship.

The Welfare Curriculum is structured around six core themes:

Identity Students learn to develop a secure sense of self, embracing diversity and understanding personal growth 	Healthy Relationships Students learn features of both healthy and unhealthy relationships and how to apply this to a range of relationships and contexts 	Physical and Mental Health Students learn the importance of both physical and mental health, and strategies to promote both across the lifespan 
Rights, Responsibilities and British Values Students develop their understanding of civic life, equality and the law within the UK 	Life Skills and Decision-Making Students develop their understanding of how to live independently and manage risks 	Aspirations Students develop their understanding of the importance of learning and aspiration, and how skills can be deployed effectively within the workplace 

Each unit contains carefully sequenced content that builds core knowledge and vocabulary from Key Stage 3 through to Key Stage 5, ensuring that students revisit, deepen, and extend their understanding of personal and societal issues as they mature.

Our curriculum reflects Sandwell Academy's core values of Bravery, Kindness, and Pride. Students are encouraged to be brave in exploring challenging ideas, kind in listening to others and showing empathy, and to take pride in developing their character and contributing positively to their school and wider community.

In addition, statutory Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is delivered by qualified subject specialists within the Science curriculum, ensuring students receive accurate, age-appropriate, and sensitive guidance in line with government requirements.

2. Enrichment Through the Wider Curriculum

To ensure the Welfare Curriculum is impactful and meaningful, it is embedded within a rich programme of wider curriculum opportunities that extend beyond the classroom. These include:

- Themed assemblies, which align with the six core Welfare themes and highlight issues such as diversity, wellbeing, social justice, and personal ambition.
- Educational visits and trips that reinforce curriculum content and expose students to new perspectives, cultures, and life experiences.
- Guest speakers and external organisations who provide expert insight into areas such as careers, health, safety, justice, equality, and activism.

These wider opportunities are planned with progression and impact in mind, helping students apply their learning to real-world contexts. They also support our legal duty to promote SMSC development and British Values, and help our students become confident, informed, and active citizens.

Across all of these experiences, the Academy's values of Bravery, Kindness, and Pride are reinforced, whether it's taking part in a public debate, engaging respectfully with new ideas, or demonstrating courage in addressing social challenges.

3. Votes4Schools

A key strand of the Welfare Curriculum at Sandwell Academy is the integration of the Votes4Schools platform, which promotes oracy development, critical thinking, and political literacy.

Votes4Schools is a national programme that provides weekly discussion-based resources around current affairs and social issues. Each week, students are introduced to a topical 'Big Question' (e.g. "*Should climate action be taught as a core subject?*"). They explore different viewpoints, examine reliable sources, and participate in structured debates before casting their vote.

This platform not only strengthens students' ability to articulate their opinions clearly and respectfully, but also helps them understand democratic processes, media literacy, and citizenship in action. Importantly, students' votes contribute to national data, showing them how their voices fit into the wider picture, giving them a genuine sense of agency and civic engagement.

The Votes4Schools programme supports our legal obligation to promote British Values, especially democracy, individual liberty, and mutual respect. It also aligns closely with the Academy's values: we foster Bravery through open, respectful debate, Kindness through listening and empathy, and Pride in students' developing political awareness and voice.

4. Embedding British Values and SMSC

At Sandwell Academy, British Values and SMSC development are not standalone elements—they are fully integrated into our Welfare Curriculum and wider school culture.

We actively promote:

- **Democracy** – through school elections, Votes4Schools, and student leadership.
- **The Rule of Law** – through curriculum content on justice and legal rights, and our consistent behaviour systems.

- **Individual Liberty** – by encouraging students to make informed choices and understand their rights and responsibilities.
- **Mutual Respect and Tolerance** – through our celebration of diversity and open dialogue around different beliefs, cultures, and lifestyles.

Our commitment to SMSC development is evident in every aspect of school life—from the curriculum to community outreach, from pastoral care to classroom culture. Students are supported to develop:

- **Spiritual awareness** and a sense of identity.
- **Moral understanding** and integrity.
- **Social skills** and the ability to work with others.
- **Cultural knowledge** and appreciation of diversity.

The values of Bravery, Kindness, and Pride underpin our approach to British Values and SMSC. We expect students to be brave in standing up for what is right, kind in how they treat others, and proud of the inclusive, respectful community they are part of.

5. Curriculum Design, Sequencing and Literacy Development

Our Welfare Curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure that core knowledge and key concepts develop over time, from Year 7 to Year 13. Topics are revisited and deepened as students mature, supporting both cognitive development and emotional intelligence.

For example:

- In Year 7, students begin by exploring “**Who am I?**”, developing a sense of identity and belonging.
- By Year 9, they tackle complex themes like gender, consent, and political responsibility.
- In Sixth Form, students engage with debates around ethics, global challenges, and future ambitions, drawing on prior learning.

Each workbook is text-rich, embedding tiered vocabulary, reading comprehension, and structured writing tasks throughout. This deliberate emphasis on literacy ensures that students not only develop personal insight but also the communication skills necessary for academic and professional success.

The use of Big Questions in every topic challenges students to think critically, form their own opinions, and consider alternative viewpoints—nurturing curiosity and empathy while deepening engagement.

6. Monitoring, Evaluation and Staff Development

The Welfare Curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of our students and aligns with national guidance. Monitoring activities include:

- Regular quality assurance of PT delivery

- Student and staff feedback
- Analysis of Votes4Schools participation
- Ongoing curriculum review and adaptation

Personal Tutors are supported through access to high-quality resources, and collaboration with the Personal Development Team/Welfare Curriculum Lead via feedback.

We are committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of background or ability, have access to a high-quality personal development curriculum that empowers them to thrive. In doing so, we uphold the Academy's statutory duties and our broader mission to develop young people who are brave, kind, and proud contributors to society.

Appendix A – Knowledge Progression

Core Concept	7	8	9	10	11
Physical and Mental Health	Students begin by exploring basic emotional literacy, looking at what emotions are and how they can be managed effectively. They also explore how to seek support during a period of increased stress (transition).	Students continue to explore wellbeing, looking at the impact of stress and effective coping mechanisms for this. The idea of healthy habits is introduced.	Students continue to develop their understanding of emotional wellbeing, whilst also exploring challenges young people face, such as self-harm, poor body image and eating disorders.	Students continue to develop their understanding of how to keep themselves emotionally and physically healthy and avenues of support. Students explore ways of managing anxiety and low mood.	Students look at how to access a range of health services, and how to manage stress during periods of heightened anxiety (e.g. exams, transition).
Identity	Students explore what it means to be a secondary school student. They learn how to identify their own strengths and are introduced to the idea of self-esteem. Students are taught to respect the differences of others.	Students begin to consider how their identity is shaped by the media and social pressures. Students consider the importance of inclusion in greater depth, including by looking at the impact of exclusion.	Students explore protected characteristics in greater depth, including by considering the social consequences of stereotyping and how this can be detrimental to self-identity.	Students explore how self-identity develops and changes throughout the lifespan. Students also consider the importance of reputation, and how to maintain a positive one (both online and offline)	Students learn the importance of self-confidence and assertiveness. Students learn to deal with failure and rejection in healthy ways.
Healthy Relationships	Students learn strategies to develop friendships and how to communicate effectively with others. Students are introduced to the idea of consent.	Students revisit the idea of consent and look at the signs of healthy versus unhealthy relationships. Students explore the consequences of bullying and peer-pressure.	Students deepen their understanding of consent. Students learn strategies for managing conflict and look at the tenets of a positive romantic relationship.	Students deepen their understanding of consent by exploring non-verbal communication. Students learn how to seek support for challenges in relationships.	Students learn to manage breakdowns in relationships in healthy ways. Students revisit ways of gaining relationship support in the wider world.
Rights, Responsibilities and British Values	Students are introduced to British Values and the importance of rules and consequences. Students learn the importance of the Equality Act (2010). Students are introduced to the idea of democracy.	Students explore prejudice and stereotyping, and the concept of freedom of speech. Students learn about what constitutes a 'hate crime'. Students are introduced to how laws are made and what MPs do.	Students deepen their understanding of discrimination and explore unconscious bias. Students are introduced to the idea of online extremism. Students explore the difference between democracy and dictatorship.	Students explore legal rights in relationships, including laws around harassment and abuse. Students also learn about gender equality. Students explore how democracy is maintained in the UK.	Students learn about 'political literacy' and the UK legal system. They also explore the concept of 'youth voice', activism and the importance of voting.
Life Skills and Decision-Making	Students are introduced to the idea of 'risk'. They	Students deepen their understanding of	Students are introduced to financial risk and	Students deepen their understanding of financial literacy	

	learn about online safety and how to seek help.	online risks and resisting peer pressure. Students are introduced to the idea of 'critical thinking'. Students are introduced to the basics of banking.	how to manage this. Students learn about ethical dilemmas, and how to act in accordance with their values.	(including saving, banking and credit) and financial planning. Students consider the risks of fraud and the idea of consumer choices.	
Aspiration	Students learn about the importance of aspiration and goal setting. They are introduced to the concept of working and roles in society.	Students learn how to develop skills and interests. They learn about career-journeys and are introduced to Year 9 options.	Students deepen their understanding of the labour market, including the role of work experience. Students consider a range of employability skills.	Students learn how to manage themselves in the workplace and then reflect on their work experience placement. Students are introduced to post-16 options, and learn key skills for interviews.	