

Personal, Social and Health Education Policy

Aim

At Wynstones we strive to continually work with the young person in developing their moral, social, spiritual and personal well-being within a context of a healthy and balanced lifestyle and body. As the young person develops, this work becomes something they are more aware of but is part of our curriculum from 3 to 18 years.

The kindergarten

In Wynstones Kindergartens, the development of social skills and awareness of others are central to our education. The mixed age, family groupings, encourage the children to share and work together, caring for each other and respecting the different needs of others. Through imitation, the children learn to behave in a respectful manner towards each other and through areas such as traditional fairy tales and nature stories a moral sense for knowing right from wrong is awakened and developed.

The Role of Play:

Children are encouraged to find their own learning situations in child-initiated free and creative play, in which they develop positive social skills and empathy towards each other. Overtime, the teachers and assistants aid and facilitate the development of life skills that then become good habits, supporting the child's learning. Children then become motivated and independent learners within a context of kind and supportive play where the difference is respected and support for each other encouraged.

The Healthy Environment:

Utmost importance is placed on the care of the senses and care of the physical body. A daily healthy and nutritious mid-morning snack is provided for all children in the Kindergarten. The children help with the preparation of the meal. The food is organic, vegetarian and forms part of a healthy diet. Vegetables and herbs are sown, grown and harvested by the children in our own Kindergarten garden. Apples are harvested from the trees around the grounds and the produce is used for cooking and eating. Fresh filtered water is available throughout the morning.

Nature informs much of what we do and the seasonal connection has a strong bearing on the food we grow, harvest and eat throughout the year. Much time is spent out in the garden and school grounds, giving children a strong experiential relationship to nature, the seasons and the cycle of the year. Dressed appropriately, the children are able to enjoy all nature's elements, no matter what the weather. Many of the physical outdoor activities build strength, stamina and resilience.

Activities reflect the concerns, interests and developmental stages of the child and the carefully structured environment is designed to foster both personal and social learning.

Multiculturalism and Respect for Difference:

Reverence and respect are part of daily life - for each other, our environment and ourselves.

The seasonal and Christian festivals of the year are celebrated in Kindergarten. Through these the children are helped to recognise and respect the human being and the bounties of the world. The meaning behind the festivals is brought to the children through story, practical preparation and appropriate ritual, leading up to the particular festival day. The underlining message and gesture of the festival is at the centre of the celebration.

Birthdays are important events, where the parents or carers provide the 'birthday story*' based on the child's own life, told as a special birthday ceremony to which the parents/carers are invited. This allows the teacher to share with the children, aspects of the child's life reflecting their cultural family diversity and history. Each child listens and absorbs the importance of each member of the group through these birthday celebrations and learns about the background of the 'special' person for that day. Songs representing each child's first language and/or parents' country of origin are sung which helps to give an experience of the diverse tapestry of languages and differences.

The Lower School

The Lower School has a strong emphasis on PSHE which is led by the class teacher who, ideally, accompanies the children for eight years of their development. The relationships that develop are therefore strong and profound, which allows the teacher to develop age-appropriate dialogue on these issues with the class and individuals or groups within the class. Many of the learning situations arise in real life contexts where discussions, incidents or news can be integrated into the overall educational work of the school.

The Class I teacher works hard on developing habits that will sustain the class for the eight year cycle; care and respect for the classroom, for one's own and other's property, tolerance for differences, appropriate behaviour, hand washing after visiting the toilets, sharing lunch together, etc. The teacher also demonstrates with their own appearance and conduct, the reverence, respect and attention to the other which we wish the pupils to learn. These foundations lay the basis for a year-on-year growth of increasingly conscious and specific dialogues, which are emphasised in the moral and spiritual aspects brought by the non-denominational religion lessons. By Class VIII, the teacher will have pastoral meetings with all the individual children, sometimes accompanied by their parents, and class discussions will reflect what is expected of young people in the modern world.

This work is strongly supported by the Main Lesson format in Steiner Waldorf schools, where a three or four week focus on a subject allows it to be developed in considerable depth. All subjects in the Lower/Middle School try to bring the pupils into relationship with the world around them, including the plant, animal and human life that surrounds them and that they are a part of. Any main lesson may offer therefore scope for PSHE, especially as a proportion of work is done in pairs or groups, which can strongly enhance the social and personal aspects of learning.

Steiner Waldorf schools make extensive use of artistic media as the basis for learning. Drama, eurythmy, narrative, stories, music, modelling, painting and drawing are essential educational tools, and several of these elements will be present on a daily basis in the main lesson, whilst some have their own subject lessons. These aspects stress the social and personal learning and lay the basis for the young person to deepen their experience of their peers and the world around them.

A couple of examples of main lessons are offered here. Firstly, the development of local history and geography from Class IV, looking at how our village has grown up; how people live and work together; the jobs they do and how this was related to our local environment. By Class VII, European geography looks at neighbouring countries, extending into world geography in Class VIII to include the Americas, Asia and Australia. There is a progression in considering physical, social, economic, cultural and racial differences that is fertile ground for discussion.

Secondly, the Physiology main lesson in Class VII looks at different systems in the body and is the forum for an extended focus on health and hygiene, care for the body and sex education. Questions of tobacco, alcohol and substance abuse are formally tackled here too. This is supported by subject lessons in gardening and cooking where food plants are grown and human diet and crop rotation on the land are major themes.

The Lower/Middle School operates a number of policies to support teachers and parents:

- A Dress Code - which creates guidelines for clothing aimed at supporting the learning environment, including wet weather gear for the outdoors and sun protection in the younger classes.
- A Food Policy - which bans sweets, sugary drinks and chocolate and seeks to support parents in providing healthy and nutritious food.
- SRE Policy -
- Citizenship

The Upper School

Wynstones Upper School has at its core the principle of equipping each student with the faculties that will enable him/her to live a fulfilled, responsible, respectful and healthy life. This requires each student to receive an education that supports them in making balanced and considered choices that are informed by moral and social responsibility, good quality information, personal safety, and an appropriate developmental level of self-awareness.

Throughout the Upper School these principles are developed within a wide range of subjects, trips, festivals and other teaching situations in an age appropriate manner. Each class has a class guardian and there is a session every week is devoted to any social or other issues that arises from within or outside the class.

Eurythmy and music (integral to the weekly curriculum) and drama also have important aspects to bring to our PSHE programme, developing increasing social and personal awareness, team work, overcoming frustration with each other's differences and so forth.

Certain subjects (particularly geography and history) have clear connections with the PSHE programme and these are fully explored. Within main lesson time is spent, whatever the topic, relating the issue under study to the wider world and discussing the implications of these current affairs for the individual in the choices they are called upon to make.

The following list details the specific lessons and activities where PSHE are given in the academic year:

Guardian lessons:

In the guardian lesson (given once a week per class) social issues within the class and health issues are dealt with and the agenda is formed around the needs arising through tutor discussion, pastoral care and subject teacher meetings. These seek to increase students confidence in talking about their fears and feelings, debates on bullying and safety within school,

Assemblies:

Talks at the weekly upper school assembly cover a wide range of topics designed to widen students understanding of world and local issues. Students regularly make presentations of various kinds. Moral and ethical issues are also often highlighted including issues around cyber bullying; racism, respecting and caring for the individual within the group.

Eurythmy, Music and Drama:

Eurythmy and music both are taught weekly and work to develop the social being of the class. The value of each individual is explored, together with how each individual forms the whole through awareness and connection with the other. All students in all upper school classes participate in at least one drama production in the course of the year

Biology and Psychology:

Main lessons in class 9 explore (1) issues of sexual health including discussion of relationships as well as contraception, sexually transmitted diseases and 'safe' sex; and (2) non-medical drug related issues. There are also workshops bringing in outsiders to explore these issues. The class 11 main lesson looks at environmental and ecological issues in depth and explores personal attitudes to environmental challenges. The class 12 main lesson focuses on human psychology and personal understanding.

Work Experience:

Class 9 venture forth for a week of work experience to help them experience the attractions and challenges of the workplace.

Study skills sessions:

During study skills, students are asked to explore questions such as 'what kind of learner am I?' They are asked to look at the existence of multiple intelligences and to devise ways of improving their own learning. These skills are reinforced in subject lessons.

Lower school buddies:

In class 12 students spend time working—and playing—with children in class one. This prompts much interesting reflection and increases their sense of responsibility for others and the feeling of safety within the school

Careers (classes 9-12):

Class 11 and 12 have careers sessions focused upon higher education and university courses and are well supported in research for open days. One to one sessions with the careers advisor are organized for personal career advice and application details.

All policies & procedures are available from the school receptionist.

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