



**Thomas Mills**  
High School & Sixth Form

## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW: Personal Development

At Thomas Mills High School our Personal Development curriculum is designed to comply with the latest statutory requirements as well as enable young people to develop into kind, knowledgeable and considerate contributors to society. This is done through working towards the goals outlined below:

- Developing skills

Students will learn skills such as communication, relationship building, and emotional resilience.

- Building confidence

Students will become more confident in their abilities and feel able to raise questions and reflect on their learning.

- Preparing for the future

Students will be prepared for life and work in modern society, including making informed decisions about their learning and career paths.

- Developing a healthy outlook

Students will develop a healthy outlook towards school and life beyond school, which can help with attendance and behaviour.

- Understanding British values

Students will demonstrate and apply British values such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, tolerance, and mutual respect.

- Recognising uniqueness

Students will recognise and celebrate their own uniqueness and respect that of others.

- Understanding sexual health and relationship responsibilities



Students will understand the importance of consent, sexual health and contraception. Students will learn about pregnancy and understand the demands of parenthood. Students will also develop an understanding of family relationships and the responsibilities that go with them.

- Understanding choices around drugs and alcohol

Students will learn about a range of substances (legal and illegal), examine why some people choose to use them and discover the short-term effects and long-term consequences of use and abuse including addiction and withdrawal

*In Year 9, pupils are taught core RS and Personal Development (PD) on a 50:50 rotational basis, switching subjects every half-term. As such, timings below are approximate and reflect the information covered in PD lessons only.*

| Year 9 |                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
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| Term   | Topic                                | Knowledge and Skills                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Useful Links                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 1      | <b>Mental Health &amp; Wellbeing</b> | <b>Disciplinary knowledge (taught):</b><br>Year 9 begins with fundamental knowledge concerning mental health and individual wellbeing. Students gain knowledge about the importance of managing emotions, dealing with setbacks, and reducing the impact of distractions. Furthermore, the curriculum introduces students to the concept of healthy coping strategies to support their mental wellbeing. It also explores the nuanced topic of body modification, specifically examining its role in self-expression and the various influences that shape these personal choices.<br><br><b>Skills:</b> | <a href="#">'Mental toughness is the secret to success'   BBC Ideas</a><br><br><a href="#">Stay focused &amp; avoid distraction   Kids story   A FOCUS quest   actionable strategies explained</a><br><br><a href="#">Wellbeing For Children: Resilience</a><br><br><a href="#">Why do humans love body modification?</a> |



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|                   |                                                                          | Regarding skills, this section helps students cultivate practical tools to maintain their mental health in daily life. Students develop self-management skills to effectively regulate their emotions and remain focused by successfully managing distractions. They learn resilience by building the capacity to manage and overcome setbacks. Additionally, the curriculum fosters the ability to identify and implement healthy coping mechanisms, and it encourages critical thinking skills to evaluate personal motivations and societal influences related to body modification and self-expression.                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Assessment</b> |                                                                          | <i>Each main topic area is assessed using an online quiz/assessment. This not only provides an opportunity to gain accurate quantitative data to demonstrate progress but also captures pupil voice and informs future teaching.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>2</b>          | <b>Drug Education</b><br><br><b>Managing Risk in Relation to the Law</b> | <p><b>Disciplinary knowledge (taught):</b><br/>This curriculum section focuses on critical knowledge regarding drug education and managing legal risks. Students acquire knowledge about the realities of vaping, the legal status and associated risks of substances like alcohol and cannabis, and the importance of examining personal attitudes toward these issues. Furthermore, the curriculum introduces knowledge regarding the dangers of serious and organised crime, the causes and effects of cybercrime, and established safety protocols like "Run, Hide, Tell".</p> <p><b>Skills:</b><br/>This unit equips students with strategies to navigate high-risk environments and social pressures. Students cultivate the ability to manage external influence, empowering them to make safer, independent</p> | <p><a href="#">DRUGS...Classifications, Risks &amp; Consequences   EC PSHE</a></p> <p><a href="#">What are the effects of alcohol on the body? 🧠   Easy Science lesson</a></p> <p><a href="#">Young People and Vaping - YouTube</a></p> <p><a href="#">Drugs, Alcohol and Smoking</a></p> |



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|                   |  | choices. In terms of legal and physical safety, they develop actionable skills to identify and respond to the risks of criminal activities, including digital threats and emergency situations requiring the "Run, Hide, Tell" approach. These competencies are designed to foster personal safety, resilience, and awareness of the legal consequences related to substance use and involvement in criminal contexts.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
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| <b>3</b>          |  | <p><b>Disciplinary knowledge (taught):</b><br/>This curriculum section provides essential knowledge regarding intimate sexual relationships and the complexities of navigating online harms. Regarding sexual relationships, students acquire knowledge about the importance of avoiding assumptions, understanding the freedom and capacity required for consent, and defining personal relationship values. Additionally, the curriculum covers health-related topics, including contraception and sexual health, as well as the emotional processes involved in managing the end of relationships. Regarding online safety, students gain awareness of modern risks, specifically addressing the feelings associated with sharing nudes, the technological threats posed by deepfakes, and the specific harms related to misogyny in digital spaces.</p> <p><b>Skills:</b><br/>For skill development, this section focuses on fostering healthy, responsible behaviours and critical digital</p> | <p><a href="#">Tea and Consent</a></p> <p><a href="#">What is Consent? - YouTube</a></p> <p><a href="#">Relationships and Boundaries - Social Emotional Lesson - Special Education Students</a></p> <p><a href="#">STAY SAFE ONLINE   Don't share intimate images on the internet - YouTube</a></p> <p><a href="#">Teaching Sexting Awareness   Mimi on a Mission   BBC Teach</a></p> <p><a href="#">What is a deepfake?   How does it work, and what can it be used for?   Newsround</a></p> <p><a href="#">Why AI deepfakes are worrying the UK's election watchdog</a></p> |



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|                   |  | literacy. Students develop the interpersonal capacity to communicate clearly about consent and respect boundaries within intimate relationships. They cultivate practical skills for managing their sexual health and navigating the emotional challenges of relationship transitions. In the digital sphere, students refine their critical thinking skills to recognise and protect themselves from online harms, such as identifying deepfakes and understanding the negative impacts of misogyny. These competencies are designed to empower students to make informed, safe, and ethical decisions in their personal and online lives. |  |
| <b>Assessment</b> |  | <i>Each main topic area is assessed using an online quiz/assessment. This not only provides an opportunity to gain accurate quantitative data to demonstrate progress but also captures pupil voice and informs future teaching.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |  |