

PSHE Curriculum Statement

Elmfield Rudolf Steiner School

Waldorf education exists to serve growing human beings by helping them to maintain and develop wholesome good health in the child's physical, emotional and mental life throughout their education. The curriculum supports these aims and parents are encouraged to participate in ensuring healthy nutrition sleep rhythms, social interaction and age appropriate activities.

Early Years

Children in the Early Years learn through imitation and a strong and regular rhythm ensures that the children feel safe and secure. Healthy eating is promoted and children are involved in baking, preparation of vegetables and fruit, making soup and other activities. All food is fresh and organic where possible, and hygiene is an important part of the daily routine.

Children in the nursery and kindergarten spend time outdoors, regardless of the weather, thus enabling them to experience nature and the natural rhythms of life, fostering a respect for the world around them.

The children are immersed in a rich culture of traditional stories and fairy tales whereby the children experience archetypal relationships expressing the masculine and feminine, chivalry, and attitude of what is right and true. Social awareness is fostered through games, natural play and other group activities such as sharing lunch. Appropriate behaviour is modelled through the words and actions of the Early Years staff.

Lower School – Classes 1-5

Following on from the Early Years, much of the work is continued by class teachers in order for children to hold their reverence for the natural world and to care for their peers and their environment. The class teacher becomes a model of the human adult along side parents. Each class is encouraged to work together as a group, and children are encouraged to help others, recognizing their different strengths.

As the social group grows, the children gradually, and in their own time, awaken to gender and sexuality as they would within a family unit. The children are supported in their relationships and growing awareness through stories, which provide imaginative understanding of moral and social practice, good and evil, justice and redemption through the main lesson themes. Stories will also deal with death and bereavement in an age appropriate way. Relevant main lesson themes are:

- Classes 1 and 2 – Folk and nature stories, nature observation
- Class 3 – Old Testament stories, nature observation, farming and animal husbandry
- Class 4 – Mythology, nature observation, Human Being and Animal
- Class 5 – Mythology, nature observation, animal studies, botany and plant reproduction

If any issues of an inappropriate sexual nature arise in the younger classes, teachers will consult the Education manager and safeguarding team for guidance.

Middle School – Classes 6-8

During these years, the children begin to reach puberty and the curriculum cultivates a sense for social responsibility. The child begins to question authority and has the emerging potential for self-reflection.

The Class 6 main lesson on Life Cycles allows for the beginning of age appropriate sexual education, leading through to Health and Hygiene and then Human Anatomy. Teachers should begin to provide pupils with comprehensive coverage of the issues surrounding sex and relationships and encourage an atmosphere of respect and understanding while leaving pupils free to form their own judgements. In general, we aim to give the pupils the skills necessary to manage their relationships in a healthy and responsible manner. Topics discussed include the biological aspects of reproduction, different types of sexuality, the impact of law and culture on sexuality, emotional challenges that can arise and how to stay healthy and safe. Sex and relationship education in the middle school can be direct, but should always be related to biology, relationships and love.

During the Health and Hygiene main lesson, the dangers of smoking, drinking and drugs are discussed and the children also visit Safeside in Birmingham. This experience introduces them to difficult situations in a street environment, such as drugs and gangs, and teaches them skills in how to manage potential dangers. Healthy eating is also part of the Health and Hygiene main lesson, and cookery and gardening lessons also underpin the teaching of healthy lifestyles in the middle school.

Middle School children are encouraged to become involved in fundraising for charities and receive education regarding money and finances in the Business Maths main lesson in Class 6.

Roman history in Class 6 introduces the concept of law and the history of modern revolutions explores the emergence of modern political constitutions and the rights of man. During Class 8, formal debating is introduced around current themes.

Upper School – Classes 9-11

In the upper school, all students receive tutorial lessons delivered by the class guardian once a week. During the tutorial, social and health issues are dealt with and an 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. Main lessons and morning modules continue to support the development of healthy lifestyles.

The weekly upper school assembly offers talks for the pupils, which cover a wide range of topics designed to widen students' understanding of the world and local issues. Topics include social, moral and ethical issues. For example: bullying; racism; respecting and caring for each other and the world around us; charity work; social media and the internet.

Upper school classes are paired with the children in classes 1, 2 and 3 and spend time working and playing together. This prompts much interesting reflection and increases their sense of responsibility for others and feeling of safety within the school.

In the upper school, morning modules are vertically integrated within classes 9, 10 and 11, which enables students to experience a wider peer group and presents opportunities for younger students to learn from older ones.

Upper school students receive regular talks in tutorials and sometimes assemblies from outside speakers on a range of career choices as well as presentations by local colleges relating to courses offered.

In the upper school foyer there is a range of literature on college and university courses as well as up-and-coming career open events/open days at colleges. From time to time local colleges come to Elmfield to give talks on the courses they offer. They receive assistance with seeking work experience placements and the school tracks their progress with their applications for work experience.

A range of careers talks are offered from the academic to the artistic, from the practical to business. These talks are delivered in an impartial manner and give the students the opportunity to make informed choices for their future steps.

Reviewed and updated September 2015, DB