

Year 8

We have less PSHE lessons in Year 8 as we consider Year 7 and 9 as times where a more intensive input is necessary. As with Year 7 topics have been carefully chosen to reflect the skills and attitudes needed for the next stages in students' lives. These areas are informed by consultation with Brighton and Hove City Council but also by scrutinising the Brighton and Hove Safe and Well at Schools Survey (SAWSS) data (results are from all 10 local secondary schools) and specifically, the Blatchington Mill SAWSS data. This data is obtained by means of a bi-annual confidential on-line survey which helps Public Health gather information about health and wellbeing issues, emotional wellbeing, diet and exercise and lifestyle issues like sex, relationships, alcohol, drugs and bullying.

Alcohol and Cannabis

Within our PSHE planning we consider national and local issues. It is important that we address the risks and effects of choices in relation to alcohol and cannabis in advance of the situation arising. It is pertinent that we deliver this at this stage as our Safe and Well at School Survey (SAWSS) shows that a minority of students face these decisions in Year 8 and many further students in following years. This unit encourages students to think about why young people drink alcohol and/or experiment with cannabis. It challenges stereotypes and underlines the potential risks that young people take if they choose to experiment. Lessons on alcohol focus on the impact on health and behaviour and encourage students to consider how their choices impact not only on themselves but also on those around them. It outlines the legality of both alcohol and cannabis so students fully understand the choices they are making.

Alcohol

The unit on alcohol starts by presenting a normative approach to alcohol using statistics from our SAWSS data. Our data suggests that more people have not tried alcohol at this age compared to those who say they have tried alcohol. This alleviates pressure as many students may feel that they are the only one who is not risk taking. Reference is made to changing attitudes to alcohol in the UK as fewer people are drinking. We explore the role of advertising as a medium to influence our choices and we encourage critical thinking on the media's role. We tease out the risks to health for an underage drinker as many believe that these risks only apply to older people. The students are encouraged to assess the long and short term effects of alcohol, including its role in emotional health and to differentiate between facts and common myths about alcohol.

Pointing out that health guidelines have 0 units for a young person is an important message, but it is also vital that students understand what constitutes a unit. We teach all students about the types of alcohol, volume, strength and their unit value; not to encourage drinking, but to provide knowledge and empowerment for themselves, a friend or even a family member. Students are provided with a number of tools to deal with peer pressure, using most likely scenarios taken from analysis of the SAWSS data.

Cannabis

This unit begins by discussing cannabis types, slang names and identification. We believe that students should know what drugs look like so that if they ever see them they will have recognition and facts. In a community where CBD (cannabidiol) oil is increasingly discussed, we clearly explain the difference between CBD and THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) as properties of cannabis. As with alcohol, we examine the long and short term effects of cannabis, evaluating why someone may take the drug. We spend time looking at the increasing evidence of mental health links, whilst allowing students to formulate their own evidence based opinions. Students are given factual information on cannabis and the law. Changes in the law have led to misunderstanding which we feel needs correction. We conclude the unit by looking at how we can help a friend who has a cannabis dependency, also touching on how to make a friend safe after a negative cannabis experience and where to go for support and advice. As with the alcohol unit, understanding the emergency procedures including how to put someone in the recovery position links back to their understanding of the Year 7 first aid knowledge.

Emotional Health and Wellbeing

In a world with growing knowledge and acceptance of increasing mental health concerns in young people, we deliver this unit at a time where students are reaching the advised age to use social media platforms and have increasing demands on their brains; both socially and within school. This unit is designed to encourage students to reflect on the importance of their own mental health and to accept that it can be negative and positive. The message we deliver is that we all have mental health and that we need to look after our own mental health. We explore ways students can do this by encouraging self-reflection and self-awareness and hopefully provide a platform where students can analyse what makes them feel happy and what makes them feel sad. This builds on ideas gained when students visited a reflection room in Year 7 RE. With this as a starting point, we then encourage ways students can improve their self-esteem and deal with any negative thoughts and emotions using a range of tips and strategies.

We begin by getting the students to assess their attitude to stress. This allows them to practically identify their strengths and areas for development, it also gets them to see the strategies that are needed to navigate stress. We explore navigating sadness and anger, providing lots of practical tips and advice. Sleep can be a barrier to having good mental health and many of our students report that they have problems associated with sleep. Therefore, we have created a lesson which seeks to address some of these issues with tips and practical advice culminating in time to practise a sleep technique in the lesson.

From here we explore healthy lifestyles around food and exercise and once again delve into the SAWSS data for the school. The purpose is to identify good habits to take forward in their lives. We explore worries and stresses and teach the students the difference between useful worries and useless thoughts. Self-identification and self-care are vital in promoting good mental health as well as providing students with the correct tools for dealing with episodes of poor mental health. We explore how we can identify poor mental health in ourselves and others, coupled with a wealth of expertise on-line and in person. Unaided mental health searches on-line can send students down the wrong path and we want to ensure that students have access to the best mental health resources and advice.

We know that when people feel unrepresented in some way it can have a bearing on negative mental health and so in this unit we explore two minority groups in school. One is to look at the role of a young carer and to explore the support that Young Carers in Brighton can help our young people. The other is to understand the level of support that is available in our local community for LGBTU students. We invite Allsorts - the local LGBT charity - to deliver a workshop which also feeds into our Relationship and Sex Education unit in Year 8.

Relationship and Sex Education - RSE

During Year 8, relationships can start becoming more complex. The purpose of delivering this unit at this time is to equip young people with the skills in advance of the contexts arising - to be able to deal with issues maturely and fairly.

This unit centres around positive relationships and looks at how our self-esteem can be boosted or damaged by how others treat us. It encourages reflection on what is appropriate behaviour and what positive qualities are needed to make our relationships work effectively and honestly. This unit is important as it encourages students to think about their emotions as relationships become more intense and also reflect upon their own role in the different types of relationships they will be nurturing as they enter their teenage years.

It is crucial to start with self-esteem as an introduction into relationship and sex education. We know that the higher someone's self-esteem then the less likely they are to engage in negative risk-taking behaviour. We teach the students to recognise what both high and low self-esteem look like and we discuss growth mindset. Students are involved in an exercise to compliment someone else in the class, to improve their ability to give and receive compliments and to reduce embarrassment. Using respected websites which outline steps for happiness we encourage students to make one change in their lives.

We spend time looking at what makes a positive relationship and students evaluate what qualities they look for in all relationships. Students also explore what happens when relationships involve risk-taking and we touch on underage pregnancy. As part of our signposting and knowing about key skills in sexual relationships the students also watch the teacher complete a condom demonstration. We are very clear that this should be information for the future and that enjoying someone's company without anything sexual being involved is of paramount importance. This unit comes at a point when the hot days develop and so does puberty. With this in mind we end on a look at personal hygiene as they prepare to embark on their future relationships and so the link with self-esteem comes full circle.

Digital Literacy

As students reach the recommended age for many social media platforms, this unit is delivered whilst the idea of building a presence or just using social media is prevalent. Delivering at this point in Year 8 is aimed to avoid damaging content being uploaded by young people and further builds on the content of the sexting unit.

Digital literacy is a series of lessons which encourage students to explore the challenges and rewards of life online. It is designed to encourage students to reflect on the permanency of digital

communication, the consequences of oversharing information and remaining safe online. All the students send digital messages every single day of their lives and this comes with a responsibility and young people need to realise that once the message is sent they have no control over it. We also encourage students to consider their online social media presence and how this can be scrutinised by universities and future employers. We address online bullying and how everything the students send cannot be erased. With programmes such as Snapchat students think their messages cannot be traced, but computer experts and the police will always be able to trace all communications if required. The unit is really about making students reflect on their own online usage, why they feel compelled to spend increasing time on-line and how they always have a responsibility towards themselves and to others.

In digital literacy we teach students to understand how their social media feeds can impact their self-esteem and they are encouraged to make connections between living digitally and the wider impact on our mental health, and so this links back to a previous unit. We want our students to understand how to safely interact with people online but to also know the red flags to look out for when talking to someone you don't know, as well as exploring appropriate reactions to spotting warning signs. Within this unit we extend it to understanding what fake news is and how to identify characteristics of fake news.

The unit then progresses to cyberbullying and discussing and examining potential cyberbullying situations. We encourage students to analyse their own online behaviour and consider the consequences. As students become more active online we respond with a lesson which focuses on the delicate balance between freedom of expression and protection from offensive content online. We provide students with a clear understanding of the restrictions around free speech online and an examination of community guidelines.

We know that many students are getting caught out online as companies seek to exploit young people who they hope will not read the small print and so we conclude this unit with an increased awareness of what is included in Terms and Conditions and to analyse why these Terms and Conditions are in place.

Digital Romance

This unit continues to examine how students' lives are affected by social media and how relationships can be played out on-line.

This is a new unit started in 2019, based on a research project led by Brook (the UK's leading sexual health and wellbeing charity for under 25s). It looks at how young people use technology in developing romantic relationships and surviving break-ups. Navigating through these times can be hard enough but now schools should be responding by giving students the tools to know how to conduct elements of their relationship on-line, as this is likely to become an increasing norm. We refer to Brook's survey statistics, and focus groups which asked them about how they are conducting their relationships in the digital age and we examine written case studies from their one-to-one interviews.

Included in this unit is a look at the role of pornography in relationships. By creating time to critically reflect on these issues, young people are more likely to be able to act confidently and resist

pressures to engage in behaviours they later regret or which cause emotional upset. We know that some young people are viewing pornography from an increasingly young age – sometimes before receiving any objective and accurate relationships and sex education (RSE). Placing this subject sensitively within the curriculum allows for misinformation to be corrected and for anxieties to be addressed.

The unit looks at how digital technology is used in young people's sexual and romantic relationship practices, including flirting, sending nude or sexual images and negotiating relationships. We also aim to increase their critical consciousness and thinking skills in separating fact (reality) and fiction (fantasy) related to the media and pornography. Students are asked to consider definitions and categories of pornography and the law as it relates to sex and pornography. Within this we look at developing skills that will raise self-esteem and assertiveness to resist pressure and coercion in relation to sex and sexual acts. We build on internet safety awareness from year 7 and whole school and teach skills to stay safe on and offline and in using mobile technology. We promote a positive view of relationships and sex based on equality, mutual respect between consenting partners, shared pleasure and the importance of negotiating safer sex. This final point is reinforced in much more detail within the Year 10 consent unit.

Healthy Sexual Behaviours

The students continue with the topic which they began in Year 7. We explore peer on peer abuse, explain about healthy and unhealthy behaviours and identify types of sexual harassment in order to empower all students to know about and to report these issues.

Our SAWSS data and national data identify the role that social media is playing in the lives of our young people. We need the students to be able to respond to the pressures around sexting and the sending of naked pictures. It is important that all students understand the consequences of sending a text/their behaviour on any social media platform and also to be clear about the legality of sending nudes.

We also discuss why people share and post photos and videos online and get them to consider the platforms they use. We provide them with advice they should keep in mind before sharing photos /videos and we explore how things go wrong when posting photos/videos online and what to do in these situations. In getting the students to think long term we aim to bring to life that we all have a digital footprint that we must protect through thinking about what we share and do online. Digital footprints can be used to create a positive impression and we explain to the students how their future employers will be using their on-line presence to assess their qualities.

This short unit is concluded with a revisit to our spiral Child Sex Exploitation topic. We know that certain students at this age can be vulnerable online and in the community and we want all students to recognise the grooming line which starts with the targeting stage. Students are taught to recognise

the signs of grooming both in their own or others relationships with a view to potentially preventing escalation.

Risks and Anti-Social Behaviour

Student safety is our top priority and we want students to be aware of issues which they may face in our community. One of these areas is the increasing use of knives in our city.

Students are taught about the dangers of carrying a knife but also the law and implications of doing so both in and out of school. We want students to understand the outcomes for themselves, their family, friends and the wider community and to reinforce that it is not just knives but any sharp or weapon type implement which could end their time at Blatchington Mill.

From here we move into exploring anti-social behaviour in the community. We want students to understand the correct way to behave both in our school and also to continue that positive behaviour as they make their journey home. Students examine what is understood by anti-social behaviour, mob mentality and joint enterprise. Tips are provided on how to challenge mob mentality within their own friendship groups in a safe way and students also evaluate how they may be perceived by older members of our community with an empathy exercise.

Finally, students discuss positive community conduct and prosocial behaviour. They are provided with many examples of this from Blatchington Mill and are given the opportunity to take part in a community challenge involving older people in our local area.

Cultural Identity and Diversity in Society

As students develop their understanding of relationships, it is important that social issues are covered, including difficult relationships and the importance of respecting differences. In addition to this, understanding the impact of relationships on others and to develop empathy in complex situations.

This unit is important for generating conversation and reflection around the issues of diversity and cultural identity within our society. It is vital for students to reflect upon what it means for 'people to belong' and for people to feel welcome in a country where they are a minority. Students will reflect on how self-esteem can be eroded when there is a lack of social cohesion. Where there are feelings of isolation and people being unfairly judged through stereotyping and labelling, communities (and schools) have an important role in encouraging dialogue and promoting ideas that bring people together.

Cultural identity allows students to have the opportunity to explore their own identity. We look at a range of local young people talking about their cultural identity but before they do, we see if the students can guess which statements match the person. Invariably they are wrong which provides a great platform to explore stereotyping. The lessons explore commonalities and differences between the people and allows the students to empathise with people who feel different. We use materials from the Jo Cox Foundation to enhance learning, which has culminated in events in school to celebrate both similarities and differences. For example we have celebrated Blatchington Mill's rich cultural diversity with a very successful food festival in collaboration with our EAL (English as an

Additional Language) department. From here we have focused on minority groups with the Show Racism the Red Card project, which condemns hatred but which also celebrates diversity. All students are given the opportunity to enhance their learning by entering art work or creative writing in a national Show Racism the Red Card competition. Blatchington Mill have previously won at Regional and National level. We also cover Islamophobia in this unit, with the aim of promoting tolerance and respect both in the school and the local communities. The activities have been designed to help young people to challenge stereotypes and prejudice towards Muslims and gain a greater historical and political awareness of the climate which has enabled Islamophobia to flourish in recent times.

We introduce the students to the concept of the pyramid of hate, highlighting that racism can start with bias and examples are explored. Students are shown BAME role models in society and they research contributions and impact in our community. This unit allows for student voice and concludes with a clear explanation of how to support and report.

Finally in this unit we focus on the GRT - Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community. The activities familiarise young people with a range of information and skills that enable them to challenge negative stereotypes and racism towards Gypsy, Roma and Travellers and to encourage a greater empathy. We aim to increase young people's understanding of issues of diversity and identity and to promote young people's involvement as active and responsible citizens in a growing multicultural society.

Disability

We know from Brighton & Hove bullying data from the Safe and Well School Survey (SAWSS), along with national data, that there is evidence that children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are more likely to be bullied than those who do not have SEND. This unit has been specifically designed to give a voice to, and to share the experiences of, some disabled children and young people living and attending school and college in Brighton and Hove and beyond. It seeks to challenge stereotypes, raise aspirations and contribute to a shared understanding of the social model of disability. The social model of disability argues that disability is caused by the way society is organised, rather than by a person's impairment or difference. It looks at ways of removing barriers that restrict life choices for disabled people. When barriers are removed, disabled people can be independent and equal in society, with choice and control over their own lives. We feel that this is such an important aspect of equality that all students should understand. In addition we deliver the unit by focusing on Scope's (charity with a focus on disability) core campaign messages which are :-

- See the person, not just their impairment.
- Try not to make assumptions about what someone can do, how they live or how being disabled affects them.
- Questions, questions, questions. We all have questions in life. It's usually okay to ask someone if they might need help but just because someone is disabled doesn't mean you should ask them intrusive or personal questions.
- Accept what the disabled person says about themselves and their impairment.
- Remember not all conditions are visible.

The unit aims to provide practical ideas for students, including what they should do and what not to do around the topic of disability awareness.