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Dear Parents/Carers

PSHE Focus for KS3

As part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) Programme students at KS3 focus on health and economic wellbeing, relationships and the management of emotions, the world of work, wider citizenship issues as well as how to learn.

In **Year 7** Students undertake lessons in which issues affecting friendship and anxieties and worries are reflected upon, as well as the physical and emotional changes which take place during puberty. This is followed by a consideration of lifestyle choices where students focus on the impact of drugs, smoking, gambling and alcohol and reflect on how to manage risky situations and make decisions when confronted by sensitive issues. There is a strong focus on healthy lifestyles and this also incorporates healthy eating. Students will look at the issue of bullying, considering the causes and the impact, as well as sharing strategies for preventing it taking place. This will be complimented with a reflection on resolving conflict. Additionally, emphasis will be placed on the Catholic ethos of the school and will be reflected in lessons on Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural (SMSC) issues and St Bernard's as a Holocaust Beacon School. There will be two sessions on Fire, Community and Road Safety led by the local authority. Finally, there will be a focus on developing thinking skills to promote more effective learning.

In **Year 8** students further explore what being healthy means. They look at ways in which we can keep ourselves fit and healthy; including preventing infections. They develop an understanding of the pressures some people feel under to conform to body image stereotypes and reflect on the influence of media celebrities. In addition, there is a focus on nutrition and eating healthily. The focus on health is supplemented with presentations on mental health and by the Samaritans. Students develop an understanding of sex, FGM and Misogyny. Puberty is revisited and leads into Sex and Relationships Education. We aim to develop self-esteem and the idea that it is ok to say "no". Students consider situations where saying "no" might cause them concern in all kinds of relationships in and out of school. We aim to increase the value of the whole person and all their qualities, not just the physical. Lessons focussing on Sex and Relationships Education will be rooted in Catholic teaching and students will reflect on the dangers of peer pressure, as well as considering the risks and damages of exposure to early sexual experience.

This year, we will also deal with the issues of smoking, alcohol, gambling, knife crime and drugs so that students are fully aware of the risks involved in such lifestyle choices. Student safety is also highlighted with a focus on cyber-bullying and an internet safety session with advice on how to prevent this taking place.

Bullying takes many forms and there will be consideration of homophobic bullying towards the end of the year. In addition, each tutor group will have a lesson on Fire Safety in the Home, delivered by local Fires Safety Officers.

In **Year 9** we aim to raise awareness of the risks students may face when out with friends or alone. Various issues are covered and a range of scenarios for students to consider and review responses. The legal position on drugs is emphasised with a presentation by external speakers and this leads into a wider consideration of addictions and the social and personal consequences.

Sex & Relationships Education (including FGM and honour bred violence) encourages students to learn about current safeguarding issues. They will also learn about the nature of loving sexual relationships and focus on the emotional as well as the physical aspects so that they are empowered to make considered decisions for them selves at a later point in their lives. Emphasis will be given to Catholic teaching and seeing sexual activity as a gift from God and that our bodies are “temples of the Holy Spirit”.

A reflection on mental well-being and internet safety concludes the health and emotional well-being focus at KS3.

Political Literacy and an appreciation of current affairs will be a focus in the Spring Term as well as knife crime. Financial Literacy is also encouraged and student decision-making on options and careers is supported. Finally, students think about feminism in the context of contemporary society.

There will also be a focus on the dangers of alcohol and personal safety.

Should you require any further information please feel free to contact me at the school.

Yours sincerely

Mrs H Barnes
Assistant Head Teacher