

The St Michael Steiner School

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education & Careers

PSHEE

The PSHEE provision at the St Michael Steiner School is an integral part of their everyday school experience. It begins in Kindergarten with the learning of practical, useful skills such as vegetable preparation, bread making, and whittling. Practical activities continue in the Lower School in this way and also in craft lessons, where skills are taught in a more intentional way.

From Class 1 onwards, the children have what is called a 'Religion' lesson at least once a week. These begin as story lessons where archetypal pictures of human qualities, such as courage, compassion, kindness, perseverance and love are brought to the children.

The development continues with fables and stories of saints which illustrate different ways in which people deal with the passions, conflict, suffering and other challenges of life. Later, we tell biographies that demonstrate, through real examples, these human experiences and challenges in a way that is more relatable for older children.

In order to support the young people in their continued development, around age 12, these lessons begin to include world events and issues that affect their own lives, coming out of news stories or from biographies. At this point the name of the lesson changes to 'Global Issues'. This lesson is also used to introduce the pupils to societal institutions such as the electoral system, why and how we pay taxes, how banks work, the NHS etc. Some of these issues are also discussed in Main Lessons, for example when looking at simple and compound interest in maths lessons, or democracy in social sciences.

These lessons are also opportunities to address issues such as e-safety and bullying (see separate policies). As they get older, the children are increasingly aware of what is going on in the world and are more able to listen to different points of view and have more informed discussions.

Although these discussions can arise in any lesson, we dedicate one lesson per week specifically for this. The teacher's task is to guide the discussions in a productive way, and to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to contribute if they want to.

Issues that arise may also be related to the group dynamics, perhaps in order to address a particular situation within the group, or for an individual. This process is supported by the fact that, where possible, the teacher who leads these lessons has been doing so with the same group of children since Class 1. This means that they know the children very well and a good, trusting relationship has been built up over several years, so that the children feel comfortable to speak about whatever needs to be discussed.

Sex and relationships education, apart from the biological aspects which come in the biology blocks, is also given in these lessons. Questions of coercion, consent, contraception and appropriate behaviour are brought and discussed at an appropriate age in each case. See separate *Relationships and Sex Education policy* for more detail.

Staff leading these discussions should have appropriate training and should also be aware of any religious or personal issues among the pupils in the class that may make the content of their lessons difficult for some.

Careers Guidance

General and Lower School: Classes 1 - 8

Our curriculum has, as a central aim, preparation for life. The children learn and use many practical skills during the normal school day. The breadth of the curriculum gives each child the opportunity

to find what they enjoy doing, what they are interested in and what they are good at. Good work habits, related to organisation and punctuality, independence, initiative, stamina and responsibility are consciously developed throughout the school.

The world of work is introduced initially with a Main Lesson in Class 4, when the children look at the work done by people around them such as the bus driver, postman, doctor, vet, shopkeeper and hairdresser. They might begin by learning and telling each other about what their parents do for a living.

Relevant skills are developed through a range of engaging activities woven into lessons throughout the Lower School. These include expressing and explaining ideas and points of view verbally; different styles of writing; public speaking; modern foreign languages; drama; business maths; design and crafts. Classes also do fund raising.

The Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, which can be taken up to Gold, promotes skills that are valuable for future careers and give students experience of teamwork.

We also invite people to talk and answer questions about their chosen career path, so that the students' picture of what is possible in the world of work is expanded and realistic.

During the first part of Class 8, different educational paths are discussed as they come to the end of the Class teacher period and apply to the High School.

High School: Classes 9 - 12

As the students move up the school, an individual approach is taken. Group discussions take place and one to one meetings are arranged with the most suitable staff so that the best guidance be given. The classes are small and the students are well known to the high school staff who encourage a dialogue about future ambitions and plans in and out of lessons. They make the students aware of the range of choices available, possible work experience opportunities and meetings with past students and members of the parent body who have chosen a similar path.

In Class 8, the students have worked for the year on a personal project on a subject of their own choosing and presented it to their peers and parents of the school at the end of the year. This activity is continued in the High School, so that every student is able to develop and go more deeply into something that interests them. In Class 12, the students are assigned a project supervisor who has particular knowledge of skills related to the chosen topic.

The High School's rich and broad curriculum educates the whole student to prepare them for life after school. Careers are introduced in designated lessons and integrated into their curriculum and skills are developed during building blocks, art and craft block and research during academic blocks.

Students are encouraged to visit galleries, theatres and concert venues in London and have attended open events such as careers days and workshops at the V&A and the National Gallery.

Trips further afield are taken and have included Class 9 survival camps at TrackWays, Class 10 surveying and ecology field trips to Wales, Class 11 History of Art trips to Italy and France, Class 12 cultural trips to Vienna, Basel, Berlin, Paris, Prague and New York.

There are termly two week long blocks during which students choose their own areas of interest and work in mixed aged groups, developing their skills and gaining a greater insight into a specific area.

In the High School, each class has a guardian. The High School students are very well known to their teachers. Their character, skills and interests are closely observed and regularly discussed. Guidance is given to encourage them to think about the future and to find a path to a fulfilling and useful life.

Students use computers in the high school. They are taught word processing and online research skills and are introduced to online LMI and careers quizzes, including *Skillsometer* and *Buzz Quiz*.

High School students are encouraged to get work experience through Saturday jobs and internships, and to volunteer. In addition, opportunities to see what is possible for their future paths are made available through literature, websites, visiting speakers, webinars and visits to open days at colleges and education fairs.

Students are encouraged to consider a range of options, including further and higher education, apprenticeships and access courses as well as employment. Teachers provide individual guidance about available Higher or Further Education courses and help with college and university applications, personal statements and CVs.

Students in Classes 11 and 12 are encouraged to visit UCAS fairs and university open days.

Students in class 10 are made aware of the options open to them for the sixth form in time for them to make decisions before applications close.

Measuring Impact

The school measures the impact of the careers programme through conversations with students, parents and teachers, and by keeping in touch with and monitoring the career paths of alumni.

Our Careers Lead is Julia Wallace.

Next review date: March 2026