



Personal Development: A Guide for Parents/Carers

What is Personal Development?

Personal Development sits at the heart of the curriculum at Fernwood School, with importance placed upon dedicated weekly lessons delivered by a team of Personal Development teachers. Other schools may call this PSHE. We focus on nurturing our young people to show empathy to others, be a reflective learner, and to become a critical thinker.

What will my child learn in these lessons?

Their lessons act as a strong guiding vessel for delivering the schools' curriculum aims; to develop successful learners, responsible citizens, and confident individuals. In Personal Development lessons, pupils are likely to take part in discussions, hear from guest speakers, explore lots of scenarios, role play, challenge misconceptions and encounter lots of new information.

How can I support my child at home?

The teenage years can be difficult to navigate for both young people and the adults dealing with them! We aim to provide you with an overview of what your child is covering in each half term along with some suggested discussion points/questions you could talk about at home.

Click on the links below to access further support:

[Young Minds](#): general support with children's mental health

[Support and advice if you are concerned about your child and drugs.](#)

[Vaping: a guide for parents and carers](#)

Year 8: Autumn Term 1

Unit 1: Drugs and Alcohol

As part of encouraging the ideas of 'happy, health and safe', this unit provides pupils with new knowledge and acts as forum to challenge misconceptions. In promoting positive social norms, this unit gives opportunity for reflection and decision making.

This unit is carefully designed to be age-appropriate and explores some of the following:

- What are drugs? Medicinal vs. recreational drugs.
- How to use over-the-counter and prescription medications safely.
- What are the risks of using drugs? We focus on nicotine, tobacco and vaping/e-cigarettes.
- What are the risks of drinking alcohol?
- How do we resist peer pressure?

At the end of each lesson, we signpost students to support services both in and out of school. We also use anonymous question boxes so that students can ask questions they may be too embarrassed to ask!

Discussion points/questions for home:

- How aware is your child about vaping/e-cigarettes and the dangers associated with them?
- What does your child consider a safe/dangerous drug? This could be medications such as paracetamol or illegal drugs such as marijuana.
- Does your child have access to medications at home? If so, do they understand how to use these safely?
- Consider strategies to resist peer pressure that are appropriate for your child.

If your child uses a slang term for a drug and you are unsure what they mean, the Frank website is useful to look at.