



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 9: Autumn Term 1

Unit 1: Peer Influence

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 is peer pressure?
- Exploring attitudes towards drugs.
- What does the law say about illegal drugs?
- What are the effects and risks associated with alcohol and cannabis?
- How to manage influence
- Risks associated with serious and organised crime

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:

- What does your child already know about illegal drugs?
- Are there any drugs your child views as 'safe' to take?
- Ask your child to imagine their friend tries drugs at a party for the first time and tries to encourage them to take some. What would they do? What 'exit strategies' do they have in place?
- Many young people say that "everyone" is drinking/smoking, yet research tells us that this is not the case at all. In fact, quite the opposite!
- Does your child understand what would happen if they were found with alcohol/drugs/vapes in school?

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.