



IGNITE INNOVATE INSPIRE

Policy for Life Skills

Updated March 2025

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.” *Barack Obama, Former US President*

Curriculum Vision: Why we teach this Lifeskills curriculum

At Monkhouse, we believe all children will be ambitious, courageous, resilient, respectful and kind so that they fulfil their unique potential and become active members of the wider global community. We believe that holding values and developing Lifeskills are a crucial part of becoming members of the community and these form a core part of our curriculum. We aim to develop children who understand their place in the world, its history and its future; children who understand how to keep themselves safe and protect others; children that are respectful and show British Values; children that can be critical and think differently.

What we teach in our Lifeskills curriculum

At Monkhouse, we provide a broad, balanced and progressive Lifeskills curriculum which is integrated into other areas of our children’s learning where appropriate. We aim to ignite a passion for learning and explore Lifeskills in real life experiences with children to allow them to become self-aware and confident contributors to our wider society. In Lifeskills, our curriculum is designed to allow the children to learn about ‘being my best self’. This mantra is an underlying feature of lessons and is planned for in order to allow curriculum links to be made and to promote critical thinking about how current learning fits within people’s lives. This helps children to develop an awareness of their position in the world and actively link their knowledge across the curriculum.

Our curriculum is broken down into six sections (Emotional Wellbeing, Physical Wellbeing, Safety and First Aid, Discrimination and Values, Relationships, British Values and Understanding our place in the world) and these strands specifically focus on how to create a healthy life for themselves and those around them; our curriculum includes topical and relevant information from various agencies and bodies. Safety is further broken down into different types of safety, including safety online. Alongside this, we teach our 5 core school values to support children to become Ambitious, Courageous, Resilient, Respectful and Kind.

How we teach our Life Skills curriculum

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, educators will prepare children for their future primary curriculum through the prime area of Personal, Social and Emotional Development. The prime area of PSED focuses on; Self confidence and Self Awareness; Managing Feelings and Behaviour and Making Relationships. PSED supports children to learn to get on with others and make friends, understand and talk about feelings, learning about 'right' and 'wrong', developing their early independence and beginning to understand what makes them feel good about themselves. At Monkhouse, we understand that Children’s early PSED can have a huge impact on their later well being, learning achievement and economic success. Therefore, we ensure that PSED does not happen in isolation and forms part of our daily classroom practice, routines and environment. For example; we encourage children to recognise, talk and manage their feelings, we provide opportunities to develop social skills and turn-taking through play and provide a supportive environment that builds resilience through developing a growth mind-set and acceptance that it is okay to make mistakes as

we learn from them. While independence is promoted through an enabling environment, such as: easily accessible tools and craft materials and encouraging children to put on, take off and hang up their own aprons and coats.

Through each project in KS1 and KS2, the children are able to explore the world around them in engaging and innovative ways, seeing how and where Lifeskills learning and behaviours have an impact on the wider world. Children are given the opportunity to explore key skills within project learning and some Lifeskills knowledge and skills are taught through discrete learning sessions to ensure coverage and progression in children's understanding. The health and relationships statutory curriculum, which came into effect from September 2020, allowed us to plan a series of relationship lessons that are progressive across each year group. We ensure the statutory SRE curriculum for Year 5 and Year 6 children is taught explicitly in the Summer term. Keeping Children Safe in Education is reflected throughout our curriculum and children are taught about aspects of this in a progressive way across the school.

To enhance the curriculum teaching, iPads are used in a range of forms to complement the Lifeskills curriculum. Children use ICT to research, record and present information in digital forms e.g. Pic collage, Book creator, Keynote and iMovies and Floorbooks. These forums also allow for the content that the Lifeskills curriculum brings in each year group to be shared on a wider scale depending on the messages and skills being promoted. Children will also be involved in weekly Collective Worship sessions where we focus on individual strands of our Lifeskills curriculum in an open discussion; this is predominantly focussed around online safety. This links conversations and ideas and enhances previously taught skills through a relaxed and open environment. The Floorbook forms a bank of conversations, practical tasks and images that reflect the work in class. Our school takes part in the Commando Joe programme, which is designed to fit with our school values and develop children's core skills. These sessions are delivered around missions and linked to explorers or important people through history. They are often in addition to Lifeskills lessons, which develop children in a practical and challenging way.

Assessment and Monitoring

The teaching of Relationships and Health within the Life Skills curriculum became statutory for primary aged children from September 2020. We will use SOLO assessment for both areas in line with the assessment of other foundation curriculum subjects across KS1 and KS2 alongside the development of Knowledge Organisers to inform curriculum planning for Health and Relationships.

At the end of each term, the subject leader provides feedback to the SLT through a subject leader report. This includes evidence seen in books and details actions for the coming term based on the analysis. Where necessary, staff support and CPD is delivered on the outcomes of this monitoring.

Participation - Community School, Local, Regional, National and Global

At Monkhouse, we recognise the importance of Community links to both the pupils, parents and the wider community. We hope to inspire the children to become involved in issues that affect their local, national and global community, igniting a collective responsibility in their actions and the impact it can have on them and others. We do this by providing children opportunities to talk about and act on issues that impact on them or other people e.g. supporting charities, taking part in community events and taking active responsibility for their actions. We are proud of our children's commitment to helping each other and often putting others feelings and well-being at the forefront of their actions.

Extra Curricular

At Monkhouse, we offer a range of extra curricular activities to support and enrich learning in school. Over the course of the year, we offer opportunities for children to work collaboratively on Lifeskills projects both in school and with our wider collaborative group of schools. The children can be a Pupil Leader or an Eco Warrior and in both roles, they have the opportunity to have an impact on issues locally and internationally. Children are provided with the opportunity to work with other year groups through our school houses and perform to a school, family or community audience at events that welcome our local community into school.

INVOLVEMENT WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES

At Monkhouse, we work closely alongside the Health and Wellbeing advisor for the Local Authority to promote and build upon the teaching of Lifeskills in our school. We work alongside the advisor to maintain our Healthy School status, which we are committed to holding year on year. A variety of agencies are invited in to enhance the delivery of our curriculum, such as NSPCC, Show Racism the Red Card, HMD, World of Work, The Cat and Dog Shelter, WaterAid, Road Safety and the RNLI.