



My role at Merchiston Castle School is Assistant Head of Pupil Support and Head of PSHE. Within my role, I have developed a range of resources across most years groups from Second Form (P7) to Upper Sixth Form (S6). Within this role, through discussion with our students and staff as well as in communication with parents, it is clear that all concerned want to have variety of topics covered within the lessons, for the lessons to be relevant to their age and stage and relevant to the world they are growing up and experiencing.

This year, I have incorporated a range of outside speakers in the PSHE programme including Positive Voice – HIV (Emma Cole), Police Scotland – Drugs and alcohol, PsychEd – Mental Health, Melanoma Awareness Project – Stirling University and again Police Scotland – Sexting and Social Media. The PSHE programme runs up until 5<sup>th</sup> Form (S4). We differentiate across the year groups to ensure that there is progression and use pupil voice to inform and guide the school on topics that should be covered and in areas where the students feel there is greater need of information and discussion. Being able to bring in outside speakers has been an invaluable way of ensuring that the students have first-hand accounts from professionals in a particular field and add variety to lessons.

Our senior PSHE programme is referred to as Life Skills. Students in Lower and Upper Sixth (S5 & S6) follow a similar pattern to the younger students in terms of the variety of topics covered within the programme but with many more inputs from external speakers including : Streets Ahead (Safe Driving), Teenage Cancer Trust, Anthony Nolan Trust, Mindfulness, Healthy Relationships (online addictions including pornography), Employability Law and Social Media, Stewart Ivory Financial Awareness presentations, Penumbra (mental health awareness), Entrepreneurship (Entrepreneurial Scotland, Business in the Community and The Princes Trust) and the Blood Transfusion Service. The range and variety of these experiences within the life skills programme is partly informed again using pupil voice – students in particular wanted an input on entrepreneurship, financial education and mental health. It has been important to source relevant speakers to provide these inputs but unfortunately some of these come at a cost and as a result, is possibly not open to all schools.

I consider PSHE to be a vital aspect of a young persons education regardless of their age and stage. The topics we have tried to cover go some way to preparing our students for the life they are, and will experience as they grow older. Students having an input into their programme is also very important. They should see the benefit of a PSHE course, feel that they are able to contribute to it and help form it in such a way that it is relevant to them. PSHE is about providing students with knowledge so they are able to make informed decisions, based upon fact and not rumour and giving them the opportunity to experience and explore aspects of their lives, particularly as some may not get this input away from school.

Kind regards,

Bryan Campbell

**Bryan Campbell | Assistant Head Pupil Support | Head of PSHE**