

# Spotlight on the Rossett Curriculum

## Personal Development

In this episode of our 'spotlight on the curriculum' series, we explore Personal Development. Why do we teach Personal Development to all students? How do we make sure the curriculum is meeting the needs of our students? And how are personal development opportunities woven into daily life at Rossett?



"Success for everyone": the whole school walking to raise money for local, national, and international charities.

Our vision for personal development is highly aspirational:

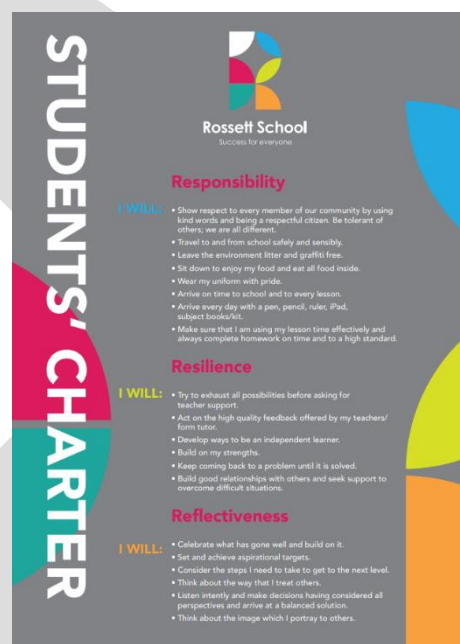
**Personal development at Rossett will ensure that all students, regardless of background, receive the knowledge and guidance they need to lead safe and healthy lives; make informed decisions about their career; and be advocates for equality.**

We believe our students have the right to an holistic education that teaches them how to live happy, healthy, and safe lives. We prioritise the personal development of our students because we know the challenges they will encounter throughout their adolescence and into adulthood. We have a duty to help our students navigate the rapidly changing world around them and equip them with the knowledge to make informed decisions about their personal wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.

### The Students' Charter

The Students' Charter outlines the core responsibilities of all Rossett students. Underpinned by the essential skills of **responsibility**, **resilience**, and **reflectiveness**, it aims to guide students towards behaviours and practices that will not only ensure their own success in school and beyond, but also contribute to the safety, happiness, and strength of the whole school community.

Click on the poster to visit a readable version on our school website →



## What is special about the Personal Development curriculum at Rossett?

The powerful knowledge included in the curriculum has been influenced by a careful review of what our students need. We redesigned the curriculum taking in to account several spheres of influence:



\*Growing Up in North Yorkshire reports are available to schools on an annual basis and highlight key social issues emerging from questionnaire responses from young people across North Yorkshire

The curriculum is highly specialised and designed to meet the needs of the communities we serve. Drawing from a large geographical area, we have ensured we cover issues that may face our diverse range of students – from the inner-city neighbourhoods of Leeds to the remote, rural communities of Nidderdale. Seeking the opinions of the students themselves was a big part of the curriculum design process. An example of this was the consultation with the school's **LGBTQ+ Group** on the sections of Personal Development related to Relationships and Sex Education. The students provided us with incisive feedback about how the curriculum can meet their needs. Additionally, students from minority ethnic groups were consulted about the teaching of racial discrimination, breaking this broad topic in to what they believe the most significant knowledge is, such as learning about what **micro-aggressions** are and **community misrepresentation** in Leeds.

Our partnerships with local agencies including West Yorkshire and North Yorkshire Police; and Children's Services, mean we have an excellent understanding of **contextual safeguarding** and the local risks to young people. One issue facing Harrogate, and surrounding settlements, is **child criminal exploitation**. In direct response to this, we ensure all students in KS3 are taught about county lines and child sexual exploitation, returning to these issues regularly. **Mental health** features heavily in the Personal Development curriculum. During our focus groups, students told us that they valued being taught about the different types of mental illness and what to do to promote positive mental health in themselves, but requested we included specific reference to how to support a family member or friend who is experiencing a mental health crisis.

These are just some examples of how we have tailored the curriculum to meet the needs of our students. The content of the curriculum is reviewed on a termly basis to ensure that emerging issues, such as the **metaverse**, are included. This approach keeps the personal development curriculum organic and responsive.

## An interview with Year 11 students Rhian and Evan



### **What are your Personal Development lessons like at Rossett?**

*"This year we covered a lot of different topics. I feel they fitted well with what we need to know at this age. We were also plugging some important gaps in our knowledge because of the pandemic, so I feel more confident moving forward."  
(Evan)*

### **Which topics do you feel had the biggest impact on you?**

*"I think, for me, the lessons on coercive control had a big impact on everyone. Most of us didn't know that coercive control is a crime and therefore I feel we will be better prepared for the future if we ever find ourselves in this situation. Also, we went into sexual harassment in a lot of detail. It was good to look at it in this depth as it is a complex issue and one that is relevant to us all."  
(Rhian)*

*"I thought the lessons on employability were good because we learnt from our teachers' experiences of applying for jobs, attending interview and then the legal frameworks around employment. We did a few role-plays that stick in my mind!"  
(Evan)*

### **You were consulted before the new personal development curriculum was written. Do you feel this helped create a more relevant curriculum for you and your peers?**

*"I think being part of this process meant the lessons spoke to everyone. An example would be the teaching of STIs. Our teacher made sure they considered the broad spectrum of sexuality and gender when talking about STIs and sexual health. This made people feel included and informed."  
(Rhian)*

### **Do you feel prepared for entering adulthood?**

*"Yes, I feel over the course of five years, we have had so much input about personal safety, careers, relationships, British Values etc. that we know a lot. This year particularly, we have noticed a difference in the new curriculum. It has been updated and digs a lot deeper into issues than the previous lessons we had lower down the school".  
(Evan)*

## **Personal development across the curriculum**

Personal development is not just taught through the dedicated Personal Development curriculum. Every subject taught at Rossett includes opportunities to develop students socially, morally, spiritually, and culturally. When we designed the new curriculum, leaders thought deeply about the opportunities they could create to develop our students on a level beyond the academic knowledge they need to acquire.



The chosen texts in the **English** curriculum enable students to develop their understanding of marginalised groups; experience literature from traditionally 'unheard voices' in society; and consider representation through the media.

In **Modern Foreign Languages**, students learn about their own identity and experiences as well as comparing their lives with French and Spanish teenagers, globally. They learn about the culture, traditions and rich diversity across the Francophone and Hispanic world. For example, students learn about child soldiers in El-Salvador and racial tension in the Parisian suburbs.

In **Drama**, students learn to work effectively as part of a team and develop the confidence to form opinions and share these with others. The Drama curriculum places great emphasis on problem solving, designed to develop them for their future.

In **Maths**, students develop their awareness of real-world numerical application such as personal finance.

This is just a snapshot. Every subject area has a stake in personal development. We believe our wider curriculum shapes attitudes and prepares our students to advocate passionately for those less fortunate.

## Here & Now

Every morning, all students attend **Form Time**. This twenty-minute session is dedicated to discussion and debate around **contemporary issues**. A centrally planned, mini-curriculum called 'Here & Now' engages students with issues arising in local, regional, national, and international news. Through discussion, students and their form tutors broaden their knowledge of current affairs and the world around them.

### Some of the topics explored in 2021-2022:

- ✓ Diversity in British Culture - Black History Month, LGBT+ History Month, Pride Month;
- ✓ Understanding racism, misogyny, stereotypes through the news;
- ✓ The war in the Ukraine, war crimes, the role of NATO;
- ✓ British politics in the news and other political international events; UK Youth Parliament Elections;
- ✓ Environmental issues such as climate change – COP26, stopping food waste;
- ✓ Developing personal health awareness through such as road safety, sleep hygiene, Mental Health Awareness Week, World Aids Day, Safer Internet Day;
- ✓ Human rights, Holocaust Memorial Day, International Womens' Day – celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women;
- ✓ Exploring careers options - National Apprenticeship Week;
- ✓ Opportunities for developing cultural capital through celebrating World Book day, World Poetry Day linking its relevance to the world today;
- ✓ Science in the news – e.g., new Hubble telescope discoveries, understanding lunar eclipses;
- ✓ Significant national and international sporting events such as the Winter Olympics and Paralympics, cultural events such as Eurovision, diversity in sport, the Platinum Jubilee.

### HAVE YOUR SAY...

Students are actively encouraged to contact the Personal Development Team with their ideas of issues they wish to be covered in the Here & Now.

**Here & Now**

**Today's question – What can be done about racism in football (and wider society)?**

Discuss with your partner – what do you already know about this news story?

*Struggle will pay... the biggest club in...*

**What can be done?**

- What can be done to bring racist abuse in football to an end?
- What can the police, social media companies, court system, fans and the government do?

**Here & Now**

**TASK – Do you know where the rainbow Pride flag came from? Discuss with a partner...**

- The Pride flag was created by American artist and gay rights activist Gilbert Baker, and first displayed in 1978 to be a symbol for the LGBT community.
- The original design had eight stripes instead of the six normally seen now, and each of its colourful stripes had a meaning.
- Speaking about his design, Gilbert said: "We needed something beautiful... something from us."

**Watch this...**

**Where did the rainbow flag come from?**

**feedback**

- The flag design spread around the world and in the 1990s it became a symbol for those fighting for equal rights for the LGBT community.
- Forty four years later the Pride flag is still a widely used and recognised symbol of the LGBT community.

**Here & Now**

**Do you know what changes have been made to the Pride flag? Discuss with a partner.....**

**feedback**

- In 2017, Philadelphia's Office of LGBT Affairs added black and brown stripes to the Pride flag to recognize people of colour.
- One year later, an artist called Daniel Quasar released a redesign of the Pride flag, called the Progress Pride flag, which was widely shared on social media.
- It included black, brown, pink, pale blue and white stripes, to represent marginalised people of colour in the LGBT+ community, as well as the trans community, and those living with HIV/AIDS.

Over the years the original rainbow flag has been redesigned, with some within LGBT+ movements arguing it needed to better represent and reflect more communities.

He said, "The arrow points to the right to show forward movement, while being along the left edge shows that progress still needs to be made."

## Enrichment



We pride ourselves on our broad and varied enrichment offer. We believe there is something for everyone to get involved in. We are currently in the process of building back this offer after two years of national disruption. Here are some examples of the ways we help our students develop through our enrichment programme:

### Bewerley Park

A rite of passage for Year 7; the Bewerley Park trip gives our most recent arrivals to the school a taste of the great outdoors. We use this opportunity to build students' resilience, help students to make new friendships and set them up with incredible memories, right from the start of their time with us.

### The Japanese Exchange

The school also has strong ties to the **Ishigami School in Japan**. Each year, several students get the opportunity to travel to Japan and stay with a host family. During the stay, students visit several historical sites; most notably, Hiroshima. Here, they learn about the pervasive impact of war on people and the environment.



### The American Exchange

The school has a long-standing relationship, stretching back to 1985, with **Falmouth Middle School in Maine, USA**. Students spend time in an American high school, learn about the lobster trade and visit several sites of cultural and historical significance. Students also get to tour Harvard University.

### The Sponsored Walk

The Sponsored Walk is one of our flagship events that all students and staff take part in. The entire school undertakes a fifteen-kilometre walk across the North Yorkshire countryside to raise money for local, national, and international charities. Having the whole school doing the walk at the same time really is a sight to behold. The students and staff both agree that the walk is about much more than fundraising. The walk builds **resilience**, personal **responsibility** and offers everyone an opportunity to **reflect** and contemplate life.



### Duke of Edinburgh Award

Students get the opportunity to pursue the Duke of Edinburgh Award at Bronze, Silver and Gold level. Every year we have expeditions heading off into the surrounding wilderness to learn essential skills such as teamwork, resilience, and planning for success.

### Cultural tours to France and Spain

Students studying French get the opportunity to visit Paris. Here they visit the Louvre, walk through the catacombs, and develop their French by speaking with local people. Students studying Spanish travel to Malaga and visit the Picasso Museum; learn how to cook paella; and converse with the locals in Spanish.

### Reading Club

Students who attend this club, shadow the Carnegie and Excelsior Awards, reading, discussing, and reviewing the shortlist for both awards.

### Sport

Students from all year groups have the opportunity to get involved with sport, regardless of their sporting ability. Physical activity is fundamental to leading a healthy and happy life, and the wide array of sporting opportunities helps our students start this journey of life-long engagement in exercise and sport.

Some other examples include:

- ✓ Music tours to Europe
- ✓ The European Battlefields Trip
- ✓ The Auschwitz Trip
- ✓ Drama productions
- ✓ Music concerts
- ✓ Art exhibitions
- ✓ Science Olympiad
- ✓ Maths Challenge
- ✓ Author visits
- ✓ External speakers from: The National Citizenship Service, (including Sir Ian McKellen, Rachel Daly)



Several after-school clubs are also available for students to take part in. The range of these clubs is increasing week-by-week. If your child has an idea for an after-school club, they should speak to Mrs Daly.



Author, Tom Palmer, visits Rossett School to share his sources of inspiration and talk to our young people about finding your voice as a writer.

## **Careers Education**

We aim to equip our students with the knowledge, skills, and attributes to make the most of changing opportunities in learning and work. At Rossett, all students follow a planned Careers Education Information and Guidance programme, which will help them to make these important decisions. **CEIAG** is delivered to all students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and Sixth Form. The programmes for delivery to Years 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11 are separately organised from the Year 12 & 13 programmes, where the responsibility for their management rests with the Sixth Form Leadership Team.

The delivery of the careers programme for all students is through Personal Development lessons along with inputs from the Independent Careers Adviser, the Careers Leader, Directors of Learning, assemblies, careers themed off-timetable days, external visitors such as employers, guest speakers and visits to external organisations and events. In Year 10, students take part in a **'Futures Day'** where they get the opportunity to listen to external speakers, take part in workshops and further consider their next steps after GCSE. This day is hugely successful, and we find it gives students a day to ask questions and consider what they want to do next.

## Wellbeing in Mind and Just B

We are proud to be the base for the NHS Wellbeing in Mind Team. The team is made up of **mental health professionals** that are permanently based on site at Rossett. Led by Clinical Lead, Ged Davies - the team provides Rossett with an enhanced layer of support for students' mental health. In addition to one-to-one counselling, the team also:



provides professional development opportunities for Rossett staff; lead assemblies and off-timetable days; and is there to advise the

school in its approach to supporting students who have challenges with their social, emotional, and mental health. Recently, Year 7 spent a day learning how to ensure they promote positive mental health in themselves and those around them. **Just B** supports our students who need more intensive **counselling** as part of their personal development. We are proud to offer this service to our students, helping many through challenging periods of



their lives.

## How can you support your child's personal development?

- Discuss global, national, and local issues with them
- Support them to develop their resilience by adopting a positive outlook on failure – "I can't do this...yet"
- Create cultural opportunities for them such as attending music concerts, drama productions, art galleries. Many free opportunities are available.

**Want to know more?** Please visit our website: [www.rossettschool.co.uk](http://www.rossettschool.co.uk)

