



## Life Skills at The Bridge

### **Aims and objectives**

Life Skills at The Bridge incorporates elements of Drama and Theatre Studies as we work to help develop the invaluable skills of confidence, self-assurance and empathy. Through the use of script work, improvisation and performing, Life Skills aims to instil respect and love for the arts and its ability to aid the process of managing our emotions and build up our confidence, resilience and self-esteem whilst improving our communication skills.

### **Teaching and learning styles**

The topic of drama and the art of acting is taught and learnt through both theory and practical work. Theory helps us to analyse text and discover writer's intentions when working with scripts and practical work encourages play, working within a team, rapid thinking and building confidence with performing and speaking aloud. It is taught through a range of styles including: learning through script work, collaborative rehearsal and performance, improvisation, scenario-based work, recording and camera work, games and movement.

We aim to create a fun and inclusive environment where the students are equipped to learn, experiment and take risks. To build this we begin every session with a short drama game in order to connect body and mind, gain focus, work collaboratively or speak with confidence from the start. This reinforces the fact that Life Skills lessons are a safe environment and a 'no judgement zone'; students are free to be who they want to be.

### **Life Skills planning**

Unlike other subjects, Life Skills is heavily focused on connecting the body to mind. By this, it means to physicalise our thoughts into actions in a way that can be interpreted by an audience. Through the analysis of language and ability to embody emotions that are not our own, Life Skills aims to facilitate healthy discussion about our emotions and to reflect on the way we act in certain situations.

At Key Stage 3 we use texts that reflect real life situations students may find themselves in. Heavily correlating with topics being covered in PSHE such as emotional wellbeing, bullying and peer pressure, we read and discuss possible scenarios and outcomes of reacting in a certain way within a situation.

At Key Stage 4 we use texts for slighter older audiences that correlate with PSHE and the English curriculum and current issues in the national media, with topics such as grooming, gangs and healthy

relationships. Through these texts we discuss ethics and morals, how to avoid certain situations and the possible outcomes of a range of scenarios.

### **Teaching Life Skills to students with special needs**

Any students with an EHCP (Educational, Health and Care Plan), IEP (Individual Educational Plan) or SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) are taken into account when teaching Life Skills. As it is a lesson that delves into extensive and possibly highly emotive topics, we ensure that topics being discussed are relevant, important and appropriate for the students it is being taught to.

### **Assessment and recording**

Throughout the period of being taught Life Skills, students are encouraged to feedback on their own work and others where appropriate, critically analysing as thoroughly as they can. Due to the nature of performance being subjective, there is currently no formal assessment for this subject as its main aim is to help promote confidence and resilience throughout life beyond school. We hope that you see genuine improvements in students' behaviour and mental wellbeing through the studying of Life Skills; this may be by being more communicative at home or by having a more positive attitude to certain situations (particularly social ones) which may usually cause anxiety. We strongly believe that the use of drama offers the ability to open students eyes up to viewing the world in a different way.

### **Resources**

We use Drama Online to access scripts and plays to use within class, as well as YouTube and the internet to watch clips from theatre performance, TV shows, films, series, etc. where we analyse acting and writing technique. We have access to a range of props if need be, and also use objects for drama games, such as juggling balls for ball memory games, storytelling dice for improvisation games and charades cards for confidence building games.

### **Monitoring and review**

Maria Jackson (Deputy Head i/c Teaching and Learning) is responsible for monitoring the standard of student work and the quality of teaching. Monitoring of the Life Skills curriculum and areas for development are identified as part of the Personal Development/Quality of Education Health Checks three times a year and discussed with the Head of School and the lead governor responsible. Feedback is then given to the Local Governing Body.