

# Year Seven and Eight

## Respectful Relationships

### Key Focus for Year 7–8 Teachers:

Students in early adolescence are exploring independence, navigating complex emotions, and building peer identity. This curriculum supports them in developing emotional skills, understanding power dynamics in relationships, respecting diversity, and seeking help when needed.

### Core Learning Objectives:

#### 1. Emotional literacy

- Recognise and manage intense and fluctuating emotions.
- Understand how thoughts, emotions, and behaviours are connected.
- Build emotional vocabulary and emotional intelligence in peer settings.

#### 2. Personal strengths

- Identify personal qualities and reflect on how they contribute to well-being and relationships.
- Explore self-esteem, confidence, and using strengths to overcome challenges.

#### 3. Positive coping

- Develop a range of healthy strategies to manage setbacks, stress, and peer pressure.
- Learn to regulate emotions and manage social comparison and self-judgment.

#### 4. Problem-solving

- Understand and apply structured approaches to resolving personal and peer-related challenges.
- Practice responsible decision-making that considers consequences and values.

#### 5. Stress management

- Identify personal stressors and signs of overwhelm.
- Learn techniques for calming the body and mind (e.g. mindfulness, physical activity, journaling).
- Recognise how stress impacts mental health and academic performance.

#### 6. Gender and identity

- Explore how gender roles and social norms influence beliefs, choices, and opportunities.
- Reflect on how culture, media, and peer groups shape identity.
- Promote respect for diverse identities and challenge discrimination.

#### 7. Positive relationships

- Understand the qualities of healthy vs. unhealthy relationships (friendships, dating, teams).
- Recognise power imbalances, coercion, exclusion, and respect for boundaries.
- Build skills in assertiveness, active listening, empathy, and respectful disagreement.

#### 8. Help-seeking

- Reduce stigma around mental health, emotions, and relationship concerns.
- Identify trusted support networks, such as school staff, family, professionals, and peers.
- Build confidence in supporting others to access help when needed.



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### Tips for Teaching at Years 7–8 Level:

- **Respect autonomy:** Empower students to explore ideas and make their own decisions, while guiding with care.
- **Use peer-relevant scenarios:** To explore situations that students may face, such as friendship drama, social media issues, and pressure.
- **Challenge stereotypes:** Create safe spaces to question assumptions and discuss identity, fairness, and inclusion.
- **Practice skills regularly:** Use role-play, discussions, and reflection journals to reinforce skills like boundary-setting and respectful dialogue.
- **Encourage reflective thinking:** Use prompts like "What would you do?" and "Why might someone feel that way?" to deepen learning.

### Years 7 - 8 is all about:

- Building Self-Awareness and Emotional Intelligence
- Identifying and Using Strengths Under Pressure
- Navigating Peer Relationships with Respect
- Questioning Norms, Stereotypes & Power Dynamics
- Knowing When and How to Get Help, for Yourself and Others

