Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) Policy
including Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

Overview

Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education is a school subject through which pupils develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to manage their lives, now and in the future. It helps children and young people to stay healthy and safe, while preparing them to make the most of life and work. When taught well, PSHE education also helps pupils to achieve their academic potential.

Relationships Education is compulsory for pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is compulsory for pupils receiving secondary education. Oakhill has regard to the revised DfE statutory guidance effective from 1 September 2026, in accordance with Standard 2A of the Independent School Standards. As an independent school, Oakhill provides Health Education through its required PSHE programme under the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014; the separate statutory Health Education requirements for maintained schools and academies do not apply to Oakhill.

This policy also reflects Keeping Children Safe in Education, the Equality Act 2010, the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Online Safety Act 2023 and the EYFS Statutory Framework where relevant.

Aims

The School seeks to promote pupils' emotional wellbeing, resilience, inclusion, safeguarding awareness and respect for diversity.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) helps to give our pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, active, responsible British citizens. This is in line with the aims and ethos of Oakhill School which commit us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, and emotional) and our PSHE programme is an integral part of this education. We aim to complement and reinforce the role of the parents, in line with our aims to develop spiritual awareness; to encourage a sense of self-worth; challenge students to achieve; instill mutual respect and understanding and teach the value of service to others. We actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Pupils are encouraged to take part in a wide range of activities and experiences across and beyond the curriculum, contributing fully to the life of their school and the local community. In doing so they learn to recognise their own worth, work well with others and become increasingly responsible for their own learning. They reflect on their experiences and understand how they are developing personally and socially, tackling many of the spiritual, moral, social issues that are part of their own and other cultures and encouraged to respect the differences that exist between them. Morality is explored and they develop an appreciation of the British legal system. Pupils also find out about the main political and social institutions that affect their lives as part of a democratic society and about their responsibilities, rights and duties as individuals and members of communities. They learn to understand and respect our common humanity; diversity and differences so that they can go on to form the effective, fulfilling relationships that are an essential part of life and learning.

Aims of the Oakhill PSHE Programme

- To know and understand what constitutes a healthy and safe lifestyle;
- Be independent and responsible members of the school and local community;
- Be positive and active members of a democratic society;
- Develop self-confidence and self-esteem, and make informed choices regarding personal and social issues;
- Develop good relationships with other members of the school and the wider community.
- To encourage respect for diversity, equality and inclusion.
- To support pupils in understanding consent, boundaries, respectful behaviour and online safety;
- To promote positive mental health, wellbeing and emotional resilience;

Inclusion and differentiated learning

We will ensure our PSHE programme is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils in respect to pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances; for example, their own sexual orientation, faith or culture and is taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Lessons will also help children to realise the nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including cyber-bullying), use of prejudice-based language and how to respond and ask for help. Teaching and resources will be age appropriate, inclusive and sensitive to the backgrounds and experiences of pupils

Equalities obligations

The School is committed to ensuring that teaching reflects the needs of all pupils and promotes equality, diversity and inclusion. The Governing Body has wider responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and will ensure that Oakhill strives to do the best for all pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, pregnancy or maternity, sex, gender reassignment, religion or belief, or sexual orientation, and whether or not they are looked-after children.

External Agencies

When appropriate, Oakhill may use external agencies, visitors and health specialists to support aspects of PSHE. Such input will complement, and will not replace, teacher-led provision. External

contributors must understand their role, follow Oakhill's policies and avoid creating circumstances that encourage inappropriate comments or disclosures.

Oakhill will carry out and record due diligence on all external providers and teaching resources to assure their suitability, quality, age-appropriateness, factual accuracy and consistency with this policy and the statutory guidance. Particular care will be taken with materials from organisations holding strongly partisan views on contested topics, and with resources that perpetuate stereotypes or encourage pupils to question their gender. Parents may see any resources used to teach RSE on request.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The SLT together with the PHSE coordinator will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme which will be evaluated by means of questionnaires / response sheets / needs assessment given to pupils, and / or by discussion with pupils, staff and parents. If necessary, we will refine the programme in light of the feedback received.

Parents and carers

We recognise that parents and carers are the primary educators of their children. Oakhill will consult parents before making or revising its RSE policy statement and will retain evidence of the consultation and how views were considered. Parents and carers are informed about curriculum content through regular learning overviews and may view the resources used by Oakhill on request. Our aim is that every parent and carer has confidence that the programme will meet their child's needs.

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE, except for content required by the National Curriculum science programme. There is no right to withdraw a child from Relationships Education or Health Education. Requests should be made to the Principal and will be discussed with the parent before arrangements are confirmed. From three school terms before a pupil turns 16, a pupil who has previously been withdrawn may choose to receive sex education; Oakhill will make arrangements for this unless there are exceptional circumstances. These rights will be clearly communicated to parents and pupils.

Children's questions

We aim to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which PSHE can take place. We want to ensure that pupils can ask questions freely, be confident that their questions will be answered, and be sure that they will be free from bullying or harassment from other children and young people. Some questions may raise issues which it would not be appropriate for teachers to answer during ordinary class time, e.g., where a child or young person's questions hints at abuse, is deliberately provocative or is of a personal nature. Teachers will respond to questions in an age-appropriate, factual and sensitive manner.

PSHE in Key Stages Three and Four

At Oakhill, we follow the programme of study for PSHE Education designed by the PSHE Association, the national body for Personal, Social and Health Education. Relationships and Sex

Education (RSE) is embedded within this programme. The programme is delivered through the following areas:

1. Health and Wellbeing
2. Relationships
3. Living in the Wider World

Teaching and Learning

PSHE lessons are taught discretely at KS3 and KS4 with a weekly timetabled lesson. We ensure that we use a range of different teaching and learning styles throughout all our sessions. Teaching strategies will include:

- establishing ground rules
- distancing techniques
- discussion
- project learning
- reflection
- brainstorming
- film & video
- group work
- role-play

Progression and assessment

The PSHE programme at KS3 is planned so that there is a clear progression in the building of the student's knowledge and understanding of the topic which is appropriate to age and stage of development.

Pupils' understanding of the concepts taught within PSHE is continually assessed through a range of formative assessment strategies, including questioning, discussion, reflection and the evaluation of pupils' responses to learning activities. This enables teachers to monitor progress, identify misconceptions and adapt teaching to ensure that learning is appropriately supported and extended. There are no formal assessments for subjects delivered through PSHE. Progress is assessed against age-related expectations, taking into account pupils' developing knowledge, understanding and ability to apply key concepts. Where a pupil is not yet meeting age-related expectations, appropriate support and intervention will be provided to address identified gaps in understanding. Parents and carers will be informed of their child's progress where concerns arise regarding their attainment of age-related expectations, and where additional support or intervention may be required. This ensures that communication with families is purposeful, timely and focused on supporting pupils' progress and development.

<u>PSHE in Key Stages One and Two</u>

PSHE provision is required at Oakhill under the Independent School Standards, including in Key Stages One and Two. Relationships Education is embedded within the programme. The

knowledge, skills and understanding for this programme are taught through the following four interrelated areas:

1. Developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of pupil's abilities.
2. Preparing to play an active role as citizens.
3. Developing a healthy, safer lifestyle.
4. Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people.

Forms of Curriculum Provision:

In Prep, Ten:Ten resources are used to teach topics. Ten: Ten is a family-run, Catholic creative media company producing Relationship, Sex and Health Education materials for schools. Their media-rich resources are widely used in UK primary schools. Parents are able to access resources through a dedicated parent portal.
PHSE teaching in not confined to specific timetabled time in key stages one and two. It is delivered within a whole school approach which includes:

- Discrete curriculum time (for example circle time) where particular individual, group or class issues are introduced
- Teaching through and in other subjects/curriculum areas- for example science work on healthy bodies, geography and the environment, mood and feelings in art and music
- Through particular activities and events-for example sports day, school visits, fund raising, visits from the local police or fire service
- Through pastoral care and guidance
- Through themes in assemblies
- Use of rewards, for example awards in assemblies

Teaching and Learning:

All teachers use a repertoire of flexible, active learning methods that are appropriate and sensitive to the pupil's needs:

- Working and sharing together
- Problem solving
- Understanding the viewpoint of others
- Working with feelings and imagination
- Reflection, review and evaluation
- Drama and role-play
- Circle time

Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

Relationships Education is compulsory in primary education and Relationships and Sex Education is compulsory in secondary education. Revised DfE statutory guidance applies from 1 September 2026. In partnership with parents, Oakhill aims to provide children and young people with positive and prudent education compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological and spiritual maturity. Provision includes relationships, health, online safety and wellbeing, personal safety and age-appropriate sex education.

Teaching will include proper anatomical names for body parts, including genitalia, from primary age where appropriate; the facts about nicotine addiction and vaping at primary level, and the harms of vaping and its role in adult smoking cessation at secondary level; online safety, misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories; and age-appropriate personal safety relating to roads, water and railways.

At the appropriate secondary stage, pupils will learn relevant legal facts, including the Online Safety Act, the age of criminal responsibility and Gillick competence.

Defining Relationship and Sex Education

The DfE guidance states that “children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way”. RSE should “give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This will help pupils understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

Objectives

The three main aspects of RSE - attitudes and values, knowledge and understanding, and personal and social skills - will be covered in three inter-related ways: through the ethos of the whole school, through cross-curricular links and through the PSHE curriculum. All of the topics will be delivered in an age appropriate fashion and at the relevant stage in a young person’s development. Teaching will encourage pupils to recognise healthy and unhealthy behaviours and know where to seek support.

We aim to develop the following attitudes and values:

- respect for the dignity of every human being – in their own person and in the person of others
- responsibility for their own actions and a recognition of the impact of these on others
- recognising and valuing their own sexual identity and that of others
- recognising the importance of marriage, long term relationships, and family life
- understanding of consent, personal boundaries and mutual respect
- respect for equality, diversity and inclusion

We aim to develop the following personal and social skills:

- making sound judgements and good choices which have integrity, and which are respectful of the individual’s commitments
- loving and being loved, and the ability to form friendships and loving, stable relationships free from exploitation, abuse and bullying
- managing emotions within relationships, and when relationships break down, with confidence, sensitivity and dignity
- managing conflict positively, recognising the value of difference;

- cultivating humility, mercy and compassion, learning to forgive and be forgiven;
- developing self-esteem and confidence, demonstrating self-respect and empathy for others
- building resilience and the ability to resist unwanted pressures, recognising the influence and impact of the media, internet and peer groups and so developing the ability to assess pressures and respond appropriately
- assessing risks and managing behaviours in order to minimise the risk to health and personal integrity
- managing online interactions safely and responsibly
- recognising unsafe situations and knowing how to seek help and support

Pupils will be taught to know and understand:

- the physical and psychological changes that accompany puberty;
- the facts about human reproduction, how love is expressed physically
- how to manage fertility in a way which is compatible with their stage of life, their own values and commitments
- how to keep themselves safe from sexually transmitted infections and how to avoid unintended pregnancy, including where to go for advice.
- how to access support and reliable health information where appropriate
- the importance of consent, healthy boundaries and respectful relationships

Balanced curriculum

Oakhill will provide a balanced, age-appropriate RSE programme covering a range of viewpoints, clear scientific information and relevant law. This includes the legal facts about biological sex and gender reassignment as a protected characteristic. Staff will not endorse a particular contested view or teach it as fact; in particular, they will not teach as fact that all people have a gender identity or suggest that social transition is a simple solution to distress or discomfort. Pupils will be supported to express differing views respectfully. Teaching will use positive language that promotes healthy norms and will avoid wording that normalises harmful behaviour, including gendered language that might normalise male violence or stigmatise boys.

At secondary level, relevant law also includes forced marriage, female genital mutilation, abortion, the age of consent, online safety, the age of criminal responsibility, equality and Gillick competence. Teaching facts and enabling pupils to explore differing viewpoints is not the same as promoting behaviour and is compatible with Oakhill's ethos. An age-related curriculum overview is included in Appendix 1.

Other roles and responsibilities regarding RSE

The Principal will:

- consult parents before the RSE policy is made or revised
- ensure that the policy is available to parents;
- ensure that the policy is in accordance with other whole school policies, e.g. SEN, the aims and ethos of the school

- ensure that parents and pupils understand the limits of the parental withdrawal right and the pupil's right to opt back into sex education from three terms before turning 16;
- establish a link governor to share in monitoring and evaluating the programme, including the suitability and due diligence of resources and external providers;
- ensure that the policy provides proper and adequate coverage of relevant science topics and the setting of RSE within PSHE
- ensure staff have adequate expertise and training to deliver the revised statutory content in a factual, balanced, sensitive and legally accurate manner.

All Staff

Although RSE is taught within the curriculum by a subject specialist, it is a whole-school issue. All teachers have a duty of care and contribute to pupils' physical, moral and spiritual wellbeing. Staff teaching RSE will receive appropriate training, including on biological sex, gender reassignment, contested views, social transition, anatomical terminology, withdrawal and opt-back-in rights, and the use of positive, non-stigmatising language. All staff must understand this policy and model respectful relationships and inclusive behaviour.

Relationship to other policies and curriculum subjects

This RSE curriculum is to be delivered as part of the PSHE framework. It includes guidelines about pupil safety and is compatible with the school's other policy documents (for example, Anti-Bullying policy, Safeguarding Policy, SEND policy) Pupils with particular difficulties whether of a physical or intellectual nature will receive appropriately differentiated support in order to enable them to achieve mature knowledge, understanding and skills. Teaching methods will be adapted to meet the varying needs of this group of pupils.

Controversial or sensitive issues

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSE. These may be matter of maturity, of personal involvement or experience of children, of illegal activity or other doubtful, dubious or harmful activity. We believe that children are best educated, protected from harm and exploitation by discussing such issues openly within the context of the RSE programme. The use of ground rules, negotiated between teachers and pupils, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion.

Supporting children and young people who are at risk

Children will also need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RSE takes place. Effective RSE will provide opportunities for discussion of what is and is not appropriate in relationships. Such discussion may well lead to disclosure of a safeguarding issue. Teachers will need to be aware of the needs of their pupils and not let any fears and worries go unnoticed. Where a teacher suspects that a child or young person is a victim of or is at risk of abuse they are required to follow the school's safeguarding policy and immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Staff should remain alert to signs of abuse, exploitation, peer-on-peer abuse and harmful sexual behaviour

Confidentiality and advice

All governors, all teachers, all support staff, all parents and all pupils must be made aware of this policy, particularly as it relates to issues of advice and confidentiality.

All lessons, especially those in the RSE programme, will have the best interests of our pupils at heart, enabling them to grow in knowledge and understanding of relationships and sex, developing appropriate personal and social skills and becoming appreciative of the values and attitudes which underpin the understanding of what it means to be fully human.

Pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about the issues which are discussed in the programme. Teachers will always help pupils facing personal difficulties, in line with the school's pastoral care policy. Teachers will explain to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality, in matters which are illegal or abusive for instance. Pupils will be reminded of sources of support both within and outside school. Teachers will explain that in such circumstances they would have to inform others, e.g. Designated Safeguarding Lead and that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken.

Reviewed: September 2024. Updated: September 2026 for revised RSE guidance; November 2026 to clarify the independent-school basis for PSHE and Health Education.

Appendix 1

Overview of RSE topics covered by age:

Key Stage 1	Families and people who care for me Caring friendships Respectful relationships Online relationships Being safe Proper anatomical terminology, including genitalia Online safety and wellbeing Personal safety: roads, water and railways Nicotine addiction and vaping facts
Key Stage 2	Families and people who care for me Caring friendships Respectful relationships Online relationships Being safe Puberty Cyber safety-awareness of social media and what is posted online Proper anatomical terminology, including genitalia Online safety, misinformation and disinformation Personal safety: roads, water and railways Nicotine addiction and vaping facts
Key Stage 3	Puberty Relationships - Friendships; healthy and unhealthy Social media, sexting and sharing sexual images and grooming Consent: introduction and recognising consent, consent and the law, avoiding assumptions relating to consent, capacity to consent and persuasion, pressure and coercion Gender identity and sexual orientation Sexual health including contraception Biological sex and the legal facts about gender reassignment Online Safety Act and age of criminal responsibility Misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories Vaping harms and the role of vapes in adult smoking cessation

Key Stage 4	Intimate relationships Same sex relationships Healthy and unhealthy relationships Pregnancy and childbirth Parenting Consent: pornography, sexual images and consent, rape myths and victim blaming Biological sex and the legal facts about gender reassignment Online Safety Act, age of criminal responsibility and Gillick competence Misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories Vaping harms and the role of vapes in adult smoking cessation Withdrawal and pupil opt-back-in rights