The Oakwood Academy

Relationships, Sexual and Health Education (RSHE) Policy 2026-27

Approving Body	Head Teacher
Date Approved	September 2026
Version	V.03
Supersedes Version	V.02
Review Date	September 2027
Further Information/Guidance	

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Relationships, Sexual and Health Education (RSHE) Policy 2026-27

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1. Introduction

The Oakwood Academy is aware that children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, 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.

As part of the student's education at The Oakwood Academy, we teach a comprehensive Relationships, Sexual and Health Education (RSHE) programme through tutor groups. RSHE is the subject that gives young people the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and practical skills to live safe, healthy, productive lives and meet their full potential.
From September 2020 we also have a mandatory requirement to teach Relationships, Sexual and Health Education (RSHE). Much of what is included in the new RSHE publication was previously within the former PSHE provision, however the provision and policy is being updated based on the new requirements.

2. The aims of Relationships, Sexual and Health Education

The aim of this policy is to communicate to staff, governors, parents/carers, visitors and students the manner in which RHSE will be delivered and supported at The Oakwood Academy.

The aim of RSHE is to give student's 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, civil partnership 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 students 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.

The Academy's RSHE policy will provide clear progression from what is taught in primary in Relationships, Health Education (RHE). We will build on the foundation of RHE and, as students grow up, at the appropriate time extend teaching to include intimate relationships. Alongside being taught intimate relationships, students will also be taught about family relationships, friendships and other kinds of relationships that are an equally important part of becoming a successful and happy adult.

Teaching of RSHE at The Oakwood Academy will enable students:

- to distinguish between content and experiences that exemplify healthy relationships and those that are distorted or harmful;

- to understand the benefits of healthy relationships to their mental wellbeing and self-respect and to understand that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on mental wellbeing;
- to believe they can achieve goals and that in order to achieve those goals they must stick at the tasks despite the challenges they may face;
- to be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way;
- to recognise when relationships (including family relationships) are unhealthy or abusive (including the unacceptability of neglect, emotional, sexual and physical abuse and violence including honour-based violence and forced marriage) and strategies to manage this or access support for themselves or others at risk;
- to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how and when to report issues to keep them safe online and offline;
- to, within the law, be well equipped to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives in the future, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs;
- To be prepared for the changes that occur to their bodies, minds and emotions as a consequence of growth from childhood to adulthood.

3. Links with other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Academy policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Equality Information

4. What is effective Relationships, Sex and Health Education?

It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of a stable and loving relationship. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health as well as preparing students at school for opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching. Our curriculum is also designed to support children growing up in an increasingly complex and digital world. Whilst the internet is an overwhelmingly positive development in our lives, it does present significant challenges, particularly for young people. The dominance of social media, the prevalence of cyber-bullying and the risk that children learn about relationships from untrustworthy sources – we aim to support children to make the right decisions and keep themselves safe and happy.

Attitudes and values

Students are helped to examine the value of family life, marriage and civil partnerships, and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children. They are also encouraged to explore and consider moral dilemmas. RHSE can also help pupils to develop a positive self-image and high self-esteem, responsibility and the ability to make informed decisions.

Personal and social skills

RSHE encourages students to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively whilst developing selfrespect and empathy for others. Students are taught to make choices based on an understanding of difference, with an absence of prejudice and learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse. It also provides opportunities to develop communication skills and assertiveness within a range of different situations.

Knowledge and understanding

RHSE focuses on understanding physical development at appropriate stages. The students will explore; human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships. Students will also be provided with information on contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice support services. Students will look at the reasons for delaying sexual activity, the benefits to be gained from such delay and the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

This will provide an objective and balanced view of sexual matters, correcting any misconceptions and misinformation students may have gained.

5. Delivery of RSHE at The Oakwood Academy (Personal Development Period PDP)

RSHE will be set in the context of a wider whole-school approach to supporting pupils to be safe, happy and prepared for life beyond school. The curriculum on relationships, sex and health will complement and be supported by, the Academies wider policies on behaviour, inclusion, respect for equality and diversity, anti-bullying and safeguarding. RSHE will sit within the context of the Trust and Academy's broader ethos and approach to developing pupils socially, morally, spiritually and culturally; and its pastoral care system.

The RSHE curriculum will be predominantly taught every 4 weeks for 1 hour in their Personal Development Period (PDP), providing a safe environment to explore these topics. Each session will be delivered in age specific content to make sure students are accessing relevant content for their year/age group. Additionally, the Academy will use outside agencies to provide specialist, age specific support to deliver some of the RSHE content. Furthermore, we recognise that RSHE is not an isolated subject and many other subjects provide a focus for exploring some elements of RSHE; for example: Science, Food Technology, PE and Philosophy, Religion and Ethics.

When studying RSHE the Academy recognises the need to create a supportive and secure atmosphere where students can develop the confidence needed to talk, listen and think about sex, health and relationships. In order to do this, teachers will:

- Establish ground rules with students
- Emphasise the importance of mutual respect
- Encourage reflection
- Make students aware of the relevant persons to approach in the Academy.

The lead teacher (Mr Wood) for RSHE will work closely with colleagues to ensure resources used to teach the curriculum are relevant, accessible and of a high standard. Effective teaching will ensure that core knowledge is broken down into topics of manageable size and communicated clearly to pupils, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned programme of lessons.

6. Pupils with special education needs and disabilities (SEND)

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) will be accessible for all pupils. High quality teaching is differentiated and personalised, this is the starting point to ensure accessibility for all pupils. The Academy will also be mindful of the preparing for adulthood outcomes as set out in the SEND code of practice, when preparing these subjects for pupils with SEND. The Academy is aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. RSHE can also be a priority for some pupils, for example some with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs or learning disabilities. For some pupils there may be a need to tailor content and teaching to meeting the specific needs of children at different development stages.

Selected students are taken out of PDP and work with the SENCO and T.A's to make sure the content is appropriately delivered, but still working in line with the 5 year plan and age related content.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

The RHSE programme will be led by Darren Wood. The curriculum will be delivered in a number of different ways including: through subject lessons, during Assemblies, tutor time programme and PDP session. Teaching staff will receive RHSE training through a combination of Staff Meetings, Staff INSET Days, Online Training Sessions and External Courses as part of the Academy's ongoing Continuing Professional Development Programme. The RSHE provision will

be monitored and reviewed annually, to meet the ever changing needs and demands of the students in our local community.

The Governor Mr E Adjaidoo

Head Teacher Mr A Gilbert

Staff Member Mr D Wood

All staff will ensure that:

- Ground rules are negotiated with the group before embarking on lessons of a sensitive nature so that both the staff and pupils can work together in a supportive atmosphere in which all members can speak with confidence and without fear of embarrassment, anxiety or breach of confidentiality;
- All students are offered the opportunity to explore ideas, situations and feelings in an atmosphere of confidence and support;
- All points of view they may express during the course of teaching RSE are unbiased
- The teaching of RHSE is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- The emphasis of teaching RHSE will always be the importance and understanding of personal relationships and the right of the individual to make informed choices;
  Issues of stereotyping, sexual equality, harassment, rights and legislation underpin the teaching of RHSE;
- Where appropriate they direct pupils to seek advice and support from an appropriate agency or individual. It is inappropriate for staff to give students personal advice on matters such as contraception;
- Where a student has embarked on a course of action likely to place them at risk, the member of staff will ensure that the student is aware of the implications of their behaviour. The member of staff should refer any potential concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Parents/carers

The Trust acknowledge the key role that parents/carers play in the development of their children's understanding about relationships. Parents are the first educators of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.

All Parents/Carers will be:

- Given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of Relationships, Sexual and Health Education (RSHE);
- Encouraged to participate in the development of Relationships Education and RSHE;
- Able to discuss any concerns directly with the Academy.

8. Parental right to withdrawal from sex education

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn only from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSHE. The Academy, before granting any such request, will require the Head Teacher to discuss the request with the parent and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature

and purpose of the curriculum. Following the discussions, except in exceptional circumstances, the Academy will respect the parents' request to withdraw their child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. The Head Teacher will ensure that where a pupil is excused from sex education, the pupil will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. There is no right to withdraw from the national curriculum.

9. Working with external agencies

The Academy is aware that working with external partners will enhance the delivery of RSHE and will support staff to bring in specialist knowledge and implement different ways of engaging with young people. Where external agencies are used, we will check the credentials of the visiting organisation and any visitors linked to the agency. We will also ensure that the teaching delivered by the visitor fits with the planned programme ant the published policy. We will work with external agencies to ensure that the content delivered is age-appropriate and accessible for all pupils. Any materials that are used as part of the delivery must be approved by the Academy in advance of the session. The Academy will ensure that the visitor is aware of aspects of confidentiality and understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with the Academy's Safeguarding Policy.

10. Safeguarding, reports of abuse and confidentiality

The Trust recognises that at the heart of RSHE, the focus is on keeping children safe, and acknowledges the significant role The Academy have in preventative education. In our curriculum we will allow children an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues. Such discussions can lead to increased safeguarding reports. Children will be made aware of the processes to enable them to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This will also include processes when they have a concern about a peer or friend. All staff are aware of what to do if a child tells them that they are being abused or neglected. Staff are also aware of need to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those that need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead. A member of staff will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this is not in the best interests of the child. The involvement of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) will ensure that trusted, high quality local resources are engaged, links to the police and other agencies are utilised and the knowledge of the any particular local issues it may be appropriate to address in lessons.

11. Procedure for Monitoring and evaluating RSHE

The policy and its implementation will be reviewed every 12 months. The Academy's RSHE link governor is Eric Adjaidoo. RSHE will be monitored by the Headteacher, Andy Gilbert and Assistant Head, Scott McNeill , whose responsibility it is to:

- Ensure that RSHE is covered in the schemes of work for PSHE;
- Monitor the use of teaching and learning styles;
- Monitor the use of teaching materials;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Academy's RSHE programme; Ensure the content is age appropriate.

12. RSHE curriculum content

The Academy will cover the following content by the end of secondary school:

Relationships and sex education curriculum

- Families
- Respectful relationships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

Health and Wellbeing

- Mental wellbeing
- Wellbeing online
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping
- Health protection and prevention, and understanding the health system
- Personal safety
- Basic first aid
- Developing bodies

If you wish to look into the topic identify above in more detail, please see the link attached:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68b8499e11b4ded2da19fd92/Relationships_education__relationships_and_sex_education_and_health_education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf