

## Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Person Responsible: Elena Espigares

Date of Review: January 2025

Next Review Due: January 2026

### Rationale

All children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy and how to manage their personal and social lives in a positive way.

At Oaklands, our Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy is rooted in our commitment to safeguarding, as outlined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSIE)*. RSE equips pupils with the knowledge and skills to develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, empowering them to recognize and report risks, and promoting their well-being in line with safeguarding principles.

The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. (DFE Statutory Guidance, RSE September 2021))

The nature of the learning disabilities for the vast majority of pupils at Oaklands means that they are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and therefore the concept of social safety underpins the core of RSE. At Primary (New Oaks), this starts with pupils being taught the fundamental building blocks of positive relationships, including friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and adults. Where appropriate, and at age appropriate (Secondary- High Oaks) pupils will also develop their knowledge and understanding of intimate and sexual relationships and facts about sexual health. This policy will also include information about a parent's right to request that their child be excused from sex education within RSE only. Additionally, the policy addresses safeguarding concerns, such as challenges with self-regulation of sexual behaviours exhibited by some pupils, through a structured intervention process designed to ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils and staff.

### Aims and Objectives

Aligned with the statutory guidance for RSE and the safeguarding framework of KCSIE 2024, Oaklands aims to empower pupils to:

For pupils to be able to:

- ◆ Develop confidence in communicating and thinking about feelings and relationships
- ◆ Be able to name parts of their body and describe how their bodies work
- ◆ Be prepared for puberty and understand its physical and emotional changes
- ◆ Understand the basic changes that happen during puberty
- ◆ Understand how to keep their bodies healthy and clean
- ◆ Understand how to keep themselves and their bodies safe including recognizing inappropriate behaviours and understanding boundaries.
- ◆ Understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and pastoral relationships
- ◆ Understand the meaning of consent and its importance in relationships.
- ◆ Be aware of and respect the difference in human sexuality

By embedding safeguarding principles into these objectives, we aim to protect pupils from harm, support their emotional and social development, and ensure they can safely navigate challenges as they grow.

## **Curriculum Delivery**

RSE at Oaklands will be primarily delivered through the PSHEC curriculum and the SoSafe programme, integrating the safeguarding objectives of KCSIE 2024, with most of the content based on the learning outcomes for primary schools, as outlined in the DfE's statutory guidance for RSE (2021).

At Primary level, pupils will work on developing an understanding and awareness of themselves and others. This includes developing their senses, body awareness, recognition of body parts, and early social skills.

At Secondary level, pupils will work towards developing their awareness of gender differences and of how living things grow and change. They will work towards developing an awareness of the importance of family and friends and on developing co-operative skills.

Pupils will work towards developing their understanding of public and private (body parts and places), appropriate greetings, issues relating to growing up, including body changes in puberty (pupils' individual needs in relation to RSE for example menstruation and masturbation will be addressed at whatever age they occur). Wherever appropriate, pupils will be taught about the changes that will happen to their bodies before they start to occur, in order for pupils to be better prepared. Pupils will also work to further develop their awareness of feelings and emotions and their ability to make choices. For some older pupils, particularly in sixth form, aspects of developing intimate and sexual relationships, including contraception and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure), may also be taught where this is appropriate. As with all teaching, Oaklands will ensure that their teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law

## **Addressing challenges with self-regulation of sexual behaviours**

At Oaklands School, the safety and wellbeing of all our students is at the core of our values and practices. We recognize that some students may face challenges with the regulation of sexual behaviours, which can impact their own safety and the safety of their peers. As outlined in KCSIE 2024 guidance, including its provisions on child-on-child abuse, it is essential to address such behaviours promptly and effectively to uphold a safe and respectful environment for all. Our approach prioritises a balance between understanding the developmental needs of the student while ensuring robust safeguarding measures are in place. Below is an outline of the systematic strategies and interventions that the school employs to address these behaviours, focusing on offering support to the student both at school and at home. This allows us to foster a culture of safety, responsibility, and mutual respect for our students.

### **1. Flagging of challenging behaviours**

Class staff will flag observed or reported behaviours to the Behaviour Team.

Behaviours are considered challenging are outlined in the Hackett Continuum, as outlined by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) 2021, seen in **Appendix A**.

### **2. Initial Meeting:**

Parents/guardians, the Class Teacher, Class Therapists, Assistant Headteacher (AHT), and Behaviour Team will meet together to discuss the highlighted behaviours and explore potential strategies and solutions.

Parents will receive relevant training to support intervention efforts, offered by the appropriate school teams.

Classroom staff will maintain detailed logs of behaviours to evaluate progress and identify any patterns of behaviour.

### **3. Classroom-Based Intervention:**

An individualized intervention plan will be implemented over 3-4 weeks. This will be drawn up by the Behavioural Team and Therapy Team, as appropriate.

Progress will be monitored closely by class staff using behaviour logs. Review meetings between the teams involved will take place at pre-determined intervals.

#### 4. Follow-Up if No Improvement:

If concerns persist, a follow-up meeting will be held with parents/guardians.

Referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) will be made, if necessary.

Parents will be provided with additional targeted training and resources for home-based support.

#### 5. Escalated Measures: Out-of-class learning:

If behaviours continue, the pupil may transition to an individualized program outside the classroom, with the aim of re-integrating the student back into a whole-class setting when it is safe to do so.

The local authority will be engaged to secure additional resources, such as 1:1 funding.

This process, grounded in safeguarding protocols, ensures pupils' well-being while minimizing risks to themselves and others.

#### 6. Exclusion

In rare and exceptional circumstances where the safety of the school community (including staff and students) continues to be at risk despite the implementation of all outlined interventions and processes, the school may need to consider temporary or permanent exclusion. The school is firmly committed to working in partnership with families, providing support and education to help them and our students address these challenges before such a step becomes necessary. This approach is consistent with the guidance of KCSIE 2024, which highlights the importance of safeguarding the welfare of all children, while fostering a supportive and inclusive school environment. Exclusion is only considered when all other measures have been exhausted, and the safety of others remains a significant risk.

#### **Delivery of RSE**

Pupils will be grouped according to their individual needs and ability. RSE can occur in a whole group, small group or one to one teaching situation. RSE for all stages will be planned and delivered by class staff, with support from the PSHEC coordinator when needed.

#### **Resources**

There are several PSHEC resource boxes, stored in the SEMH cupboard, which contain activity packs and objects including anatomically correct dolls, pictures, and videos that are appropriate for teaching RSE. There is also a wide range of electronic resources (worksheets, PowerPoint presentations, pictures, etc.) stored on Staff Shared in the PSHEC folder. We may also request help from outside agencies such as Image in Action who deliver training on RSE to school staff and work alongside class staff in the delivery of RSE. All materials are aligned with safeguarding guidelines to ensure they are age-appropriate and sensitive to the pupils' developmental needs.

#### **Equal Opportunities**

The school is committed to the provision of RSE to all of its pupils and the differing needs of boys and girls. Our programme aims to respond to the diversity of children's cultures, faiths and family backgrounds. All staff are expected to give every pupil the chance to experience, participate and achieve the understanding of RSE.

Oaklands School believes that RSE should meet the needs of all pupils regardless of their developing sexuality and be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support.

## Parents

Parents are the key people in teaching their children about relationships and sex, maintaining the culture and ethos of the family and helping their children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up. Parents need support in their role as relationship and sex educators. At Oaklands, we work in partnership with parents through daily contact via the home/school books and through regular parents' events led by the school's family support worker. Parents can consult with the class teacher and/or member of the senior leadership team regarding all aspects of RSE at Oaklands. They also have the right to information about the content of the school RSE policy and the right to the withdraw their children from all or part of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE but not relationships or health education.

### **Right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw)**

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Before granting any such request a senior leader will discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. Oaklands will document this process to ensure a record is kept.

A senior leader will also discuss with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher. Although the detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead.

Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school should respect the parents' request to withdraw the 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, Oaklands will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. However; there may be exceptional circumstances where the headteacher may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision. **There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.**

Parents/carers were consulted about the RSE policy in the summer term of 2020 through an online survey, where they were given the opportunity to express their views about the proposed policy and delivery of RSE at Oaklands School, including suggestions for content they would like to see changed, removed or added to the policy. Responses were evaluated and taken into account in the writing of the final draft of this policy.

## Appendix A: Hackett Continuum

# Responding to children who display sexualised behaviour

It's important to be able to distinguish developmentally typical sexual behaviours from those that may be problematic or harmful, and make sure children get appropriate support. Always consider the child's holistic needs and safeguarding concerns alongside any sexualised behaviour and follow due procedures accordingly. This guide is a tool to support objective decision making about a child or young person's sexual behaviour and does not replace professional judgement or policy and legislation. Visit [nspcc.org.uk/hsb](http://nspcc.org.uk/hsb) for more information.

### Need advice?

Contact our helpline for advice and support:

- Call **0808 800 5000**
- Email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)
- Visit [nspcc.org.uk/helpline](http://nspcc.org.uk/helpline)

### Childline

For children who need further support our free, confidential helpline is available 24/7:

- Call **0800 1111**
- Visit [childline.org.uk](http://childline.org.uk)

Developmentally typical		Problematic		Harmful	
Hackett Continuum					
Normal	Inappropriate	Problematic	Abusive	Violent	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developmentally expected and socially acceptable behaviour</li> <li>• Consensual, mutual and reciprocal</li> <li>• Decision making is shared</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single instances of developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour</li> <li>• Behaviour that may be socially acceptable within a peer group but not in wider society</li> <li>• May involve an inappropriate context for behaviour that would otherwise be considered normal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developmentally unusual and socially unexpected behaviour</li> <li>• May be compulsive</li> <li>• Consent may be unclear and the behaviour may not be reciprocal</li> <li>• May involve an imbalance of power</li> <li>• Doesn't have an overt element of victimisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intrusive behaviour</li> <li>• May involve a misuse of power</li> <li>• May have an element of victimisation</li> <li>• May use coercion and force</li> <li>• May include elements of expressive violence</li> <li>• Informed consent has not been given (or the victim was not able to consent freely)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physically violent sexual abuse</li> <li>• Highly intrusive</li> <li>• May involve instrumental violence which is physiologically and/or sexually arousing to the perpetrator</li> <li>• May involve sadism</li> </ul>	
<p><b>How to respond</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although green behaviours are not concerning, they still require a response</li> <li>• Listen to what children and young people have to say and respond calmly and non-judgementally</li> <li>• Talk to parents about developmentally typical sexualised behaviours</li> <li>• Explain how parents can positively reinforce messages about appropriate sexual behaviour and act to keep their children safe from abuse</li> <li>• Signpost helpful resources like our 'Talk PANTS' activity pack: <a href="http://nspcc.org.uk/pants">nspcc.org.uk/pants</a></li> <li>• Make sure young people know how to behave responsibly and safely</li> </ul>	<p><b>How to respond</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amber behaviours should not be ignored</li> <li>• Listen to what children and young people have to say and respond calmly and non-judgementally</li> <li>• Consider the child's developmental age as well as their chronological age, alongside wider holistic needs and safeguarding concerns about the problematic sexualised behaviour</li> <li>• Follow your organisation's child protection procedures and make a report to the person responsible for child protection</li> <li>• Your policy or procedure should guide you towards a nominated child protection lead who can be notified and will provide support</li> <li>• Consider whether the child or young person needs therapeutic support and make referrals as appropriate</li> </ul>		<p><b>How to respond</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Red behaviours indicate a need for immediate intervention and action</li> <li>• If a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999</li> <li>• Follow your organisation's child protection procedures and make a report to the person responsible for child protection</li> <li>• Your policy or procedure should guide you towards a nominated child protection lead who should be notified and will provide support</li> <li>• Typically referrals to children's social care and the police would be required. Referrals to therapeutic services should only be made once statutory services have been informed and followed due procedures</li> </ul>		