

Introduction

At Oundle School we take the health of our pupils very seriously, recognising the responsibility and trust placed in us. The School provides an extremely flexible, responsive and supportive child protection and welfare network for its pupils, promoting and safeguarding welfare as outlined in the Pupil Welfare Policy (H06)

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, makes Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. Independent Schools are not obliged to teach Health Education but Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE, known as Learning for Life at Oundle) is compulsory in independent schools. Our RSE policy is written following the guidance found in the DfE publication *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education* (June 2019) which can be found here

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805781/Relationships Education Relationships and Sex Education RSE and Health Education.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805781/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf)

Aims

Relationships and Sex Education is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health (Sex Education Forum 2014). The aim of RSE is to equip children and young people with the information, skills and values to have safe, fulfilling and enjoyable relationships, and to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being. We support a rights-based and age appropriate approach, founded on qualities such as mutual respect, trust and enjoyment.

Content, Delivery and Assessment

At Oundle School, RSE is delivered through Biology as part of the GCSE Curriculum and in Learning for Life through lessons, assemblies, talks and workshops. There is the opportunity for children to learn about the characteristics of safe, happy and stable relationships, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation. Pupils learn about the importance of taking responsibility for the consequences of their actions in relation to sexual activity and the effect of peer pressure and risk taking behaviour such as drinking alcohol, taking drugs and sharing online content. Consent is dealt

with in an age appropriate manner. Other subjects discussed include: sexting, pornography, STIs, contraception and FGM. Pupils are taught about the law as it applies to relationships in order to ensure that they can understand what is allowed and the implications of their decision making.

At the heart of the teaching of RSE is a focus on keeping children safe and it is important that the appropriate aspects of safeguarding are included in the delivery of the curriculum and that staff are clear what they should do in the event of a child disclosing an issue that might raise a safeguarding concern. This is covered in the School Safeguarding Policy (P05)

The curriculum content can be obtained by contacting the Head of Learning for Life. The content of the curriculum is based on the guidance in the DfE publication *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education* (June 2019) mentioned above.

The curriculum is taught by a range of teachers throughout the School who receive support and guidance from the Head of Learning for Life, Lead Nurse, Mental Health Lead and other staff. There is specific training for those teaching the Sex Education aspects of the course. We are also mindful of those pupils with Special Educational Needs when designing and delivering the curriculum.

There is no formal assessment within RSE or Learning for Life. However, staff are able to monitor pupils' performance through observation of their contributions in class, presentations and group work. Any feedback regarding a pupil's understanding or response will be shared with their tutor or Hsm. Pupils are asked about their views on Learning for Life (inc RSE) in self-evaluation forms and also via Learning for Life reps in Houses. There is also opportunity through these fora for pupils to suggest content for sessions thus ensuring the lessons are relevant and up to date. The annual Oundle Survey offers an opportunity for pupils to comment on the content of the Learning for Life programme. It is also possible to ascertain the effectiveness of the messaging by looking at comments from pupils in the Survey with regard to peer on peer behaviour in particular.

Protected Characteristics

Oundle School recognises that under the Equality Act we must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils with protected characteristics (age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation). We recognise that it is important to ensure that discriminatory behaviour is not tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and

tackled. We also recognise that staff have an important role to play in modelling positive behaviours.

We consider the make up of our pupil body and put in additional support if necessary, taking positive action to deal with particular groups because of their protected characteristic. We work to facilitate good relationships between our pupils and tackle issues such as sexism or gender stereotypes and make it clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable. We see it as important to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between pupils. (DfE Publication: Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges May 2018) and monitor this via feedback from pupils through the Oundle Survey, Pupil Council and open discussions with teachers in House or in lessons.

Pupils are taught about LGBT issues in a sensitive and age appropriate manner, integrating the teaching into programmes of study rather than delivering it as a standalone unit.

Parental Choice

Parents and carers play an important role in the development of their child's understanding of relationships and are a significant influence on their child. Oundle School recognises that parents and carers have the right to withdraw their child from some aspects of sex education. However, parents **do not** have the right to withdraw their children from the relationship or health aspects of the curriculum or the science curriculum.

Our strong recommendation is that all children access all aspects of Learning for Life so that their learning about the physical aspects of sexual relationships is supported by an understanding of the emotional aspects and implications. Parents, guardians and carers may withdraw their child from aspects of the curriculum by writing to the Deputy Head Pastoral. It is good practice for there to be a discussion between the School and the parents or carers to establish the benefits of receiving such education. Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16 [the School takes this to mean the term when the pupil turns 15]. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the School will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. If a child is withdrawn from sex education then the School will ensure that the child is provided with purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. The School will keep a list of those children who are withdrawn from sex education lessons.

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of RSE at Oundle is monitored and reviewed annually by the Learning for Life and Biology departments and the Deputy Head Pastoral. The School will consult parents in developing and reviewing the policy. The policy is ratified by the Governors of Oundle School.

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