

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

The Corporation of Oundle School includes both Oundle School, a boarding and day School for pupils aged 11 – 18 and Laxton Junior School, a day School for pupils aged 4 - 11. This policy applies solely to Oundle School.

This policy links to the Learning for Life Policy [F04], and should be read in conjunction with the Pupil Diversity and Equality Policy [F03], the Anti-Smoking and Vaping Policy [G34], the Accessibility Plan [E02], the Safeguarding Policy [P05], the Countering Bullying and Cyber Bullying Policy [P07], the Illegal Drugs and Illicit Substances Policy [G35] and the Technology Policy for Pupils [G41].

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 (July 2025) which can be found [here](#).

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. We aim to teach an understanding and tolerance of different types of relationships, covering topics ranging from diverse families to understanding gender stereotypes. The focus of relationships education is on equipping children with the skills to develop positive relationships, aiming to avoid harmful behaviours before they occur.

Content, Delivery and Assessment

At Oundle School, RSE is delivered through timetabled lessons for Key Stages 3 and 4. It is supplemented by assemblies, talks and workshops. We recognise that RSE is everyone's responsibility; it is supported through other timetabled lessons on the curriculum including English, Politics, History, Geography, History of Art, Biology, TPR and PE.

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 content online. Consent is dealt with in an age-appropriate manner.

Other subjects discussed include: image-based abuse, pornography, STIs, contraception, sexuality, gender stereotypes, sex and pleasure, and FGM. Teaching LGBTQIA+ inclusive RSE is one of our core values: we ensure that LGBTQIA+ examples are integrated into lessons and scenarios to ensure everyone is represented. Teachers are trained to model using correct terminology (for example in relation to genitalia and period products) and to understand and teach key terms such as consent, rape, sexual assault, victim blaming and coercion. 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 (July 2025) 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, as well as regular INSET sessions from the organisation It Happens which specialises in ensuring schools are compliant with RSHE guidance. Using external providers and internal experts such as the Clayton Rooms and the Health Centre we are able to respond to staff questions and training needs. We are also mindful of those pupils with Special

Educational Needs when designing and delivering the curriculum. Pupils also have information RSE via Nurse visits to Houses. They can also visit the Health Centre to speak in confidence to a Nurse there. There is a dedicated SHARE (Sexual Health and Relationship Education) email address linked to the Health Centre which pupils can contact at any time with questions relating to RSHE. Fifth and Upper Sixth pupils receive a session from C-Card nurses from a sexual health clinic to ensure they understand how to access and use contraception.

Monitoring of Understanding and Engagement

While there are no formal written examinations within RSE or Learning for Life, staff are able to assess pupil understanding in a variety of ways, ensuring differentiation in each set based on individual pupils knowledge. For example, classroom material will often include low-stakes quizzes to check for core understanding. Extension activities are available in every lesson. Staff also check pupils' understanding through observation of their contributions in class, presentations and group work. Pupils complete worksheets in their OneNote notebooks which are regularly checked by teachers. In addition to this, at the end of every RSE unit of teaching teachers monitor pupils' overall progress through short multiple-choice quizzes distributed to each year group. This medium is also used for pupils to have the opportunity to submit anonymous questions relating to RSE which are answered in follow-up lessons.

Once a year, pupil reports for Learning for Life are published, and teachers have the opportunity to comment on pupil progress. 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. The Pupil Pastoral Forum is key in helping to inform the content of lessons and to ensure they are relevant: the Pupil Ambassadors regularly drop in to Learning for Life lessons and act as a bridge between the pupils and staff. 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

The 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 it is important to ensure that discriminatory behaviour is not tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and tackled. We also recognise staff have an important role to play in modelling positive behaviours.

We consider the makeup 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. This happens through in-house follow-up discussions to talks, PPF fora, assemblies and lessons. We see it as important to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between pupils and monitor this via feedback from pupils through the Oundle Survey, Pupil Pastoral Forum and open discussions with teachers in House or in lessons. Pupils are taught about LGBTQIA+ issues in a sensitive and age-appropriate manner, integrating the teaching into programmes of study. The School has a pupil-led LGBTQIA+ society, in addition to the two LGBTQIA+ Pupil Ambassadors, to provide a safe space for pupils to come together and celebrate their identity.

Pupil Voice

Pupil views on RSE are important so we can be clear that we are covering those topics pupils would find useful and supportive. We make use of feedback and suggestions given through the Oundle Survey and Pupil Pastoral Forum as well as canvassing pupils' opinions in lessons and tutorials. Some speakers will ask pupils to fill in a questionnaire in advance of visiting so they can target their talk appropriately. At the end of each year, each LfL class is surveyed about their learning and changes are made where needed. It is recognised that lessons should allow for discussion between pupils rather than being solely the teacher voice.

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. Parents and carers have a right to view any of the taught RSHE topics. This can be done in one of the parent webinars which parents are invited to throughout the year. Alternatively, parents may contact the Head of Learning for Life to request to view specific lesson materials. The 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 the School is monitored and reviewed annually by the Learning for Life and Biology departments and the Deputy Head Pastoral. The School consults parents in developing and reviewing the Policy. At the start of each academic year, new pupils' parents are given a link to this Policy. All parents are also given the opportunity annually to participate in an RSE parent consultation webinar. The Policy is ratified by the School's Governing Body.

Reviewer	AJD
Post of Reviewer	Deputy Head Pastoral
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