



OXFORD INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE BRIGHTON

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

POLICY INTENDED FOR:	Parents, Students, Staff
CATEGORY:	Pastoral Care and Student Welfare
POLICY IMPLEMENTED BY :	Senior Leadership Team
REVIEWED BY:	Board of Governors
REVIEWED DATE:	August 2026
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AIMS AND INTRODUCTION

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy, and cultivate positive characteristics such as kindness and integrity
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

At OICB we believe that high-quality RSE is fundamental to safeguarding, student wellbeing, and the development of positive relationships throughout life. RSE is delivered as part of our wider Personal Development curriculum.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

As an independent secondary school, we must provide RSE to all pupils under section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State, as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

In developing and delivering RSE, the College has regard to the Department for Education statutory guidance, *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education*, revised in July 2025 and applicable from 1 September 2026.

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 404 to 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, Chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

At OICB, we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents/carers. The consultation and policy development involved the following steps:





- **Review** – a member of staff or working group has brought together all relevant information, including relevant national and local guidance.
- **Staff consultation** – all school staff will be given the opportunity to review the policy and make recommendations.
- **Parent/stakeholder consultation** – parents/carers and other interested parties will be invited to provide feedback on the policy.
- **Pupil consultation** – pupils will be consulted about what they want and need from RSE.
- **Ratification** – following consultation and any resulting amendments, the policy will be considered by the Senior Leadership Team and approved by the Governing Board.

DEFINITION

For the purpose of this policy:

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

CURRICULUM

In developing the curriculum, we consult with parents and carers, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs (including cultural and religious needs), and feelings of our pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

We will share all curriculum materials with parents and carers on request.

Detailed curriculum content, including the sequencing of RSE across year groups, is set out in the College's RSE/Personal Development curriculum overview. This is reviewed to ensure that the statutory content set out in the Department for Education guidance is covered by the end of secondary education and is taught at an appropriate point, taking account of pupils' age and developmental stage.





DELIVERY OF RSE

RSE is taught within the Personal, Social, Health, and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, while other elements are incorporated into the Personal Development program (PD).

The school will make sure that:

- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of manageable size
- The required content is communicated to pupils clearly, in a carefully sequenced way and within a planned scheme of work
- Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge, so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations

The aims of RSE at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- Prepare students for puberty and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence, and empathy.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships, including:

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

RSE complements several other curriculum subjects. Where appropriate, the school will seek opportunities to make connections between subjects and integrate teaching. Appropriately trained staff members and external providers will deliver the RSE curriculum.

Teachers will ensure that pupils understand the importance of equality and respect, and learn about the laws relating to protected characteristics, as set out in the Equality Act 2010, by the end of their secondary education.





Pupils will be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way. Sexual orientation and gender identity will be explored at an appropriate point in a clear, sensitive and respectful manner. Teaching will ensure that all pupils feel that the content is relevant and accessible to them.

Throughout each year group, we will use appropriate material to assist learning, such as:

- Diagrams
- Videos
- Books
- Projects
- Discussions and practical activities

Teachers will ensure that all pupils' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussions. Teachers will answer questions sensitively, honestly and appropriately for the age of the pupils.

The school will ensure that all teaching and materials are suitable for the pupils' ages and needs, including any additional requirements, such as special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The College values ongoing engagement with parents and carers regarding its RSE provision and will provide appropriate opportunities for parents and carers to understand the curriculum and provide feedback.

It is essential for secondary pupils to know what the law says about certain topics covered in RSE, particularly in relation to the law and young people. This will help pupils identify what is right and wrong, and can provide a foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion. These topics include, but are not limited to:

- Marriage, including forced marriage and civil partnerships
- Consent, including the age of consent
- Domestic abuse, stalking, rape, sexual offences, female genital mutilation (FGM), 'virginity testing' and hymenoplasty
- Sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation, including public sexual harassment and harmful sexual behavior
- Online behaviors including image and information sharing (including sexual imagery, youth-produced sexual imagery and AI-generated sexual imagery and deepfakes). Pupils should understand the law about online sexual harassment and online sexual abuse, including grooming and sextortion
- Pornography
- Abortion
- The protected characteristics
- The age of criminal responsibility





We may amend our curriculum content to respond to the needs and context of our pupils, to discuss issues affecting them in an age-appropriate manner. We will inform parents and carers of any deviations from our published policy in advance and share any relevant materials upon request.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatization of children based on their home circumstances (i.e. families can include single-parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents among other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children, young carers or kinship carers).

Across our school, we will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal activity, such as violent action against individuals, criminal damage to property, or hate crimes.

INCLUSIVITY

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all pupils' experiences
- During lessons, it makes pupils feel:
 - Safe and supported
 - Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

- Make sure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example, in:
 - A whole-class or assembly setting
 - Small groups or targeted sessions
 - 1-to-1 discussions
 - Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

USE OF RESOURCES

We will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age and maturity of the pupils
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources





- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress

We will ensure that when we consult with parents/carers, we provide examples of the resources that the school plans to use.

USE OF EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND MATERIALS

We will ensure that the agency and any materials used are accurate, age-and stage-appropriate, unbiased, and in line with our legal duties regarding political impartiality.

We **will**:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and the resources they intend to use:
 - Are age-appropriate
 - Are in line with pupils' developmental stage
 - Comply with:
 - This policy
 - The Teachers' Standards
 - The Equality Act 2010
 - The Human Rights Act 1998
 - The Education Act 1996
- Only work with external agencies where we have complete confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
- Review any case-study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with
- Be clear on:
 - What they're going to say
 - Their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people



- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers
- Inform all external organisations that the school is legally obliged to share all content with parents and carers
- Share all external materials with parents and carers

We **won't**, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme
- Work with agencies that don't allow their material to be shared with parents and carers

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The governing board

The governing board will approve the RSE policy and hold the Principal to account for its implementation.

2. The Principal

The Principal is responsible for making sure that RSE is taught consistently across the school, for sharing all resources and materials with parents and carers, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from sex education within RSE (see Right to Withdraw section).

3. Staff

Internal and external staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a way that is sensitive, high-quality and appropriate for each year group
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from sex education within RSE.





- Modelling positive behaviour and avoiding language that might perpetuate harmful stereotypes, and being conscious of everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures that pupils may make as a result of the subject content to the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Principal, Vice Principal or the head of PSHE.

4. Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

Parents/carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or from content taught as part of the science curriculum.

Withdrawal requests should be submitted in writing using the form provided on request and addressed to the Principal.

Before granting a request, the Principal will discuss the request with the parent/carer and, where appropriate, with the pupil, to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. This discussion may include the benefits of receiving sex education and any potential detrimental effects of withdrawal. A record of the discussion and decision will be kept.

Except in exceptional circumstances, the College will respect a parent's/carer's request to withdraw their child from sex education up to and until three terms before the pupil turns 16. From three terms before the pupil turns 16, if the pupil wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the College will make arrangements for them to receive it during one of those three terms.

Where a pupil is withdrawn from sex education, the College will ensure that they receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

TRAINING

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction, and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The Principal will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.



MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The Head of PSHE monitors the delivery of RSE through:

- Learning Walks
- Staff Training
- Student Voice
- Student Surveys
- Student Council Feedback
- Parent Participation

Class teachers monitor pupils' development in RSE as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, the policy will be considered by the Senior Leadership Team and approved by the Governing Board.