

Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE), including Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

Oxford High Prep School Policy

2025-26

Context and Aims of the policy

PSHE is a curriculum subject that helps children and young people stay healthy, safe, and prepared for life in modern Britain. Most of PSHE education became statutory in September 2020 under the Children and Social Work Act. This act introduced compulsory relationships education in primary schools and compulsory health education.

The Department for Education calls PSHE ‘an important and necessary part of all pupils’ education’ and their subsequent evidence review highlighted the subject’s importance to children and young people’s wellbeing and the knock-on effects of academic achievement – ‘PSHE can improve the physical and psychosocial wellbeing of pupils and a virtuous cycle can be achieved, whereby pupils with better health and wellbeing can achieve better academically, which in turn leads to greater success’.

At Oxford High Prep School, PSHE is integrated into a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. Under section 78 of the Education Act 2002 and the Academies Act 2010, the PSHE curriculum:

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils.
- Prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of later life.

This policy and the associated curriculum are informed by the Oxford High School ethos, which is one of intellectual challenge combined with real heart, resulting in an atmosphere of true originality. They are underpinned by our school values: educating high achieving girls with drive and determination; developing resourceful girls unafraid of challenge; encouraging girls to make the most of their individual strengths; encouraging girls to reach their academic potential while learning skills for life; an outward facing approach to our community; and friendly and down to earth approach that encourages every girl to find her own voice. They also support the Prep School Key Attributes – Kindness, Resilience, Creativity, Respect, Courage, and Responsibility.

Engagement

This policy has been written by the Assistant Head Pastoral of the Prep School, in conjunction with the Head of the Prep School and Deputy Head Pastoral of the Senior School, and in consultation with pupils and parents. It can be accessed on the school website using this link:

<https://oxfordhigh.gdst.net/about/our-policies/>

Pupils and parents were first surveyed in May 2021 ahead of a new curriculum being implemented which would meet statutory RSE guidance. Further curriculum evaluation led to policy updates, as well as changes to staffing, timetabling, and reporting. From September 2022 parental engagement has included a video series, and question and answer sessions. Pupils have opportunities to voice opinion and share ideas through a standing item on the school council agenda.

The Teaching of PSHE

We teach a spiral PSHE curriculum so that topics are revisited in later years resulting in deeper learning. The statutory relationships and sex education content is integrated into the wider PSHE curriculum which we believe is appropriate for the age and stage of our pupils. Oxford High Prep School have written their own custom PSHE curriculum. Content is taken from the 'Jigsaw' scheme, ThoughtBox and Unicef Rights Respecting Schools, but adapted to include additional content from other recognised bodies such as PSHE Association, NSPCC, and Mentally Healthy Schools, to suit the specific needs of our pupils and context of our school. We recognise the right of all pupils to fully access PSHE provision, and teaching and assessment methods will be adapted accordingly to consider age, ability, readiness, cultural backgrounds and SEND.

The table below outlines the units which are taught throughout the year:

Term	Unit	Summary
Autumn 1	Being Me in My World/Living in the Wider World	Pupils begin to understand their own identity and how they fit into the class, school, and global community.
Autumn 2	Celebrating Differences	Covers diversity work and anti-bullying (including cyber, racist, and homophobic bullying).
Spring 1	Dreams and Goals	Pupils consider who they want to become and learn about aspirations and goal-setting techniques.
Spring 2	Healthy Me	Looks at aspects of both mental and physical health and begins to touch on drug and alcohol education. Focus on making healthy and safe choices.
Summer 1 and 2	Relationships and Changing Me	Spiral teaching around the issue of consent, through themes of positive relationships, friendships, and conflict resolution. Puberty and RSE in the context of coping positively with change. Also covers communication skills, and bereavement and loss.

In EYFS PSHE is timetabled for 30 minutes per week, and is taught by the class teacher. In KS1, PSHE is timetabled for 30 minutes and is taught by a specialist teacher. In KS2, PSHE is timetabled for 60 minutes per week, and is taught by a specialist teacher. Staff members belong to the PSHE Association and receive regular CPD training both nationally and through the GDST.

The explicit PSHE lessons are reinforced and enhanced in several ways as part of a whole-school approach. These include, but are not limited to; the House system, the assembly programme, class learning charters, focused wellbeing times, worry/question boxes, a positive and values-based rewards system, visiting speakers, and relationships across the school.

At Oxford High Prep School, we promote respect for all, and value each individual child. We also respect the rights of our children, their families, and our staff, to hold beliefs that may sometimes be in tension with our approach to aspects of PSHE teaching.

Other Relevant Documents

This policy is linked to, and should be read in conjunction with the following OHS policies:

- PSHE policy (Senior)
- RSE policy (Senior)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy (whole-school)
- Equality and Diversity policy (whole-school)
- Behaviour policy (whole-school)
- Rewards and Sanctions policy (Prep)
- Anti-Bullying policy (whole-school)
- British Values and Prevent policy (whole-school)

This policy is informed by the following DfE guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education
- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice
- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools
- SMSC requirements for Independent Schools
- Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools

Statement on Health Education

The DfE has set statutory guidance on what pupils must know by the time they leave primary school. This covers 'mental wellbeing', 'internet safety and harms', 'physical health and fitness', 'healthy eating', 'drugs, alcohol and tobacco', 'health and prevention', 'basic first aid', and 'changing adolescent body'. The expected outcomes for each of these elements can be found in the linked document – [Relationship Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#)

The Oxford High Prep School [PSHE Mapping Document](#) will show where and when each topic is covered as part of our spiral curriculum.

Statement on Relationships Education

The DfE has set statutory guidance on what pupils must know by the time they leave primary school. This covers 'families and people who care for me', 'caring friendships', 'respectful relationships', 'online relationships' and 'being safe'. The expected outcomes for each of these elements can be found in the linked document – [Relationship Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#)

The Oxford High Prep School [PSHE Mapping Document](#) will show where and when each topic is covered as part of our spiral curriculum.

Statement on Sex Education

Sex Education is not compulsory in primary schools, however the DfE guidance recommends that all primary schools have a Sex Education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. This is to ensure that pupils are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and have knowledge of the human life cycle including how a baby is conceived and born. At Oxford High Prep School, we believe that this requires a cross-curricular approach as it encompasses both human reproductive biology and the relationships and emotions that come with this. Facts around human reproduction will be taught as part of the National Curriculum for Science. PSHE lessons will focus on puberty, relationships, and emotions. The two will complement each other and strengthen the impact of our whole-school approach.

Managing difficult questions

It is common for primary aged pupils to ask questions pertaining to sex or sexuality that go beyond what is set out in Relationships Education. Given the ease of access to the internet as well as playground gossip, we feel that it is best to answer these questions openly and honestly, keeping answers basic but factual. PSHE staff have received training in how to deal with sensitive subjects and we work closely with families to offer support and advice in talking to children about sex.

The right to withdraw

The DfE guidance states that parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or some of Sex Education if delivered as part of statutory Relationships and Sex Education. We conclude from the DfE guidance that 'sex' refers to human reproduction. To teach this in a scientific context and meet the National Science Curriculum requirement of knowing how mammals reproduce, we have opted to teach this within our science curriculum. Therefore, the right to withdraw is not applicable.

Progress and Assessment

Assessment is as central to effective learning and teaching in PSHE as it is in any other subject, but it would be inappropriate for assessment in PSHE to be about grades or passing and failing. At the core of PSHE are personal attributes, values, and identity, but these are arguably the hardest elements for a teacher to assess. Therefore, opportunities for personal reflection are essential. In addition, the model of assessment most meaningful in PSHE is ipsative assessment. Ipsative assessment compares where a pupil is at the end of a lesson or series of lessons against where they were before the lesson(s). This means that the benchmark against which progress is measured is the pupil's own starting point, not the performance of others or the requirements of an exam syllabus. Assessing learning in PSHE will use a combination of teacher assessment and pupil self and peer assessment. PSHE will be included in the cycle for reporting to parents.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review



The PSHE curriculum is evaluated on an ongoing basis by way of half-termly review meetings with the Head of PSHE and PSHE teachers. Staff update a shared notes document for each lesson evaluation and this is used to inform future planning. Pupils participate in evaluation through the school council. Parents participate in evaluation through survey responses and virtual question and answer sessions. Teaching and curriculum is monitored by the Headteacher and Head of PSHE through lesson observations, and PDP discussions and targets.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Date: September 2025

Review Date: September 2026

Signed:

Olivia Walter Assistant Head Pastoral	
Jessica Williams Head of Prep School	
Kate Mitchell Prep Governor	