



Outcomes
First Group

PSHE & RSE POLICY

Options Barton School



PSHE & RSE POLICY 2025

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This policy covers the delivery of PSHE and RSE at Options Barton School.

Intended audience:

- Staff
- Governors
- Parents and Carers
- Pupils

Policy Statement

The aim of this policy is to ensure that PSHE and RSE at Options Barton School pays due regard to Statutory Requirements for National Curriculum and Regulations made under Sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, which make Sex and Relationship education compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools.

At Options Barton School, personalised curricula have been developed to best suit the needs of the children, in line with advice from the DoFE and legislation regarding Relationships and Sex education and Health Education.

For our young people to lead happy and successful adult lives they need:

- the knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health, and relationships and to build self-efficacy
- to put knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges, and complex contexts

The belief is that by educating young people within these subjects' pupils can be supported to develop the resilience to know how and when to ask for help and to know where to access support.

School Background Information

Options Barton is a school for children and young people aged 5-19 years. All the students have a diagnosis of autism, many who have additional complex needs including moderate and severe learning difficulties, social emotional and mental health difficulties, global delay, communication and sensory differences. All of our young people are extremely vulnerable, and many have experienced disruption to formal education. For some students this has resulted in long periods of absence from education and has impacted on their self-confidence and self-esteem.

At Options Barton School we believe that all young people deserve the right to an education that will support them to become happy and confident individuals with the right skills, knowledge, qualifications, and achievements that will support them in the future. Our intention is that when students leave Options Barton, they have acquired the necessary life skills, appropriate to their needs. We want all our students to develop strategies to learn how to deal with society so that they will have good mental health and wellbeing.

Our PSHE curriculum promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of our students, preparing them for the opportunities, experiences, and responsibilities for later life. Our Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education enables our young people to learn how to be safe, and to develop healthy relationships.

PSHE and RSE

We follow the PSHE Education Planning Framework for students with SEND written by the PSHE Association. Our PSHE curriculum also includes RSE, life skills and enterprise. For students working on our Meadow Pathway to independence the Equals is used to support the appropriate delivery of key concepts linked to both PSHE and RSE. PSHE can be observed happening right across the school day. Our students have Personalised Learning Intentions to address areas of need or vulnerabilities identified. The long-term curriculum map may also be adapted at any point in response to wider school issues which arise.

RSE must always be appropriate to the individual learners age and developmental level, and that learners do not need to be taught what they do not need to know.

Primary (KS1 and 2) Curriculum Content:

Relationships Education

The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools. Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and close positive relationships
- Friendships
- Managing hurtful behaviour and bullying
- Safe relationships
- Respecting self and others

Sex Education

The DfE Guidance 2025 (p.23) recommends that all primary schools 'have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils'. However, 'Sex Education is not compulsory in primary schools'. (p.23)

Schools are to determine the content of sex education at primary school. Sex education 'should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born'. We define sex education as understanding human reproduction. As is set out in the guidance parents should be consulted about the detailed content on what is to be taught.

We believe that all children at our school should have access to a sex education programme to enable them to:

- Be safe
- Be provided with the correct scientific terminology and information and taught how to use it in the right context
- Make responsible, informed and healthy choices about their lives now and in the future
- Be respectful of themselves and others to enable them to move confidently through childhood, adolescence into adulthood
- Have the understanding to develop and maintain positive and healthy relationships

Health Education

Health Education focuses on the following key areas:

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body

KS3 and 4 Curriculum Content:

Relationships and Sex Education

The Key Stage 3 and 4 Relationships and Sex Education focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media

- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT+ parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

Health Education

The Key Stage 3 and 4 Health Education curriculum continues to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as required and in addition covers the following content by the end of secondary:

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body

Statutory Requirements

“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, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools.”

DfE Guidance p.8 In Key Stage 1 and 2 we teach Relationships education, and in Key Stage 3, 4 and 5, we teach Relationships and Sex education, with all Key Stages being taught Health Education, thus following the statutory guidance as set out by the Department of Education and the Independent School Standards.

At Options Barton School, the curriculum has been developed to best suit the needs of the children, in line with advice from the DofE and legislation regarding Relationships and Sex education and Health Education. All of the compulsory subject content will be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law.

Relationships (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.

Pupils are given the opportunity to work individually and in groups on a range of skills and activities.

They are also given opportunities to acquire the necessary skills and understanding to develop independence and decision making at a level that is appropriate to their ability, through practical application to real life situations and through cross curricular activities. Pupils are expected to practice their acquired skills in other curriculum areas.

PSHE is planned with reference to Department of Education guidance and statutory requirements, drawing from recommended PSHE Association advice. Teachers prepare plans based on the long- and medium-term plans, which take into consideration the needs of the pupils. Planning is monitored to ensure that the framework and Schemes of Work are being followed and that they are suitably differentiated.

Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents and carers are the primary educators of their children in all aspects of life so we will work collaboratively with parents/carers by ensuring that themes and topics are shared at the time of teaching and that if needed, support is provided via verbal communication and/or the sharing of appropriate resources.

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of Sex Education delivered as part of RSE, “up to and until three terms before the child turns 16 years of age. At this point, if the child wishes to receive Sex Education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with Sex Education during one of those terms.” (DfE, 2019. p.18)

The Head teacher will discuss the to withdraw with parents and take appropriate action. There may be exceptional circumstances where the Head teacher may want to take a pupil’s specific needs into account. Alternative, appropriate, purposeful work will be provided to the pupil whilst they are withdrawn. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships and Health Education.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil’s educational record. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative learning will be offered to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education during their allocated teaching time.

Special Educational Needs/Disabilities and Equality.

At Options Barton School we comply with the Equality Act 2010:

- We will not treat pupils with protected characteristics -age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation less favourably
- We will make reasonable adjustments and take positive action to alleviate disadvantages, being mindful of the SEND Code of Practice
- We will regularly review our Accessibility Plan to ensure we are taking positive action towards inclusivity

Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities

All pupils at Options Barton School have additional learning needs and all have an Education Health Care Plan EHCP. To ensure pupils can access the learning in the classroom, resources will be differentiated as appropriate to address the learning needs of children ensuring full access to the contents of the PSHE and RSE curriculum. In most cases, class teachers will be able to determine if any additional support is required for an individual child to access the curriculum.

Equality

The DfE Guidance 2025 states that schools should ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect.

Schools must ensure they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010 under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics..." LGBT content is integrated fully into our curriculum. It is not specifically taught as stand-alone lessons within units.

All pupils will be taught LGBT+ content in an age-appropriate manner at a timely point in the curriculum. We promote respect for all and value every individual child. However, we also respect the rights of our children, families and our staff to hold beliefs, religious or otherwise. Should any content within our curriculum cause parents or carers any concern then we would invite them in to discuss these concerns with the school.

Roles and responsibilities

Head Teacher

The Head teacher, Hannah Mackley is responsible for ensuring that PSHE & RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from components of RSE where applicable, following discussions with parents/ carers.

Key Contact Personnel

Designated Safeguarding Lead Eddy Wharton Eddy.Wharton@optionsautism.co.uk
PSHE and RSE Lead, Carol Botterill, Carol.Botterill@optionsautism.co.uk

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering PSHE & RSE in a sensitive way
- Keeping parents informed of planned content of PSHE & RSE
- Modelling positive attitudes to PSHE & RSE
- Monitoring progress

- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSE - 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 Head teacher.

Pupils

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



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