

RELATIONSHIPS, SEX & HEALTH EDUCATION (RSHE) POLICY

This policy applies to the whole school

The Policy is publicly available on the school website and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office

We have a whole school approach to safeguarding, which is the golden thread that runs throughout every aspect of the school. All our school policies support our approach to safeguarding (learner protection) . Our fundamental priority is our learners and their wellbeing; this is first and foremost.

Scope: All who work, volunteer or supply services to our school have an equal responsibility to understand and implement this policy and its procedures both within and outside of normal school hours, including activities away from school. All new employees and volunteers are required to state that they have read, understood and will abide by this policy and its procedural documents and confirm this by signing the *Policies Register*. This policy applies to all provision delivered by Imperial Oak School, including any alternative provision or off-site settings operating under the school's oversight.

Legal Status: Complies with The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations currently in force. This policy takes into account the school's Safeguarding Policy, SEND Code of Practise 2015 and the Equality Policy.

Monitoring and Review: These arrangements are subject to continuous monitoring, refinement, and audit by the executive head of school. The Proprietor and Advisory Board will undertake a full annual review of this document, inclusive of its implementation and the efficiency with which the related duties have been implemented. This review will be formally documented in writing. Any deficiencies or weaknesses recognised in arrangements or procedures will be remedied immediately and without delay. All staff will be informed of the updated/reviewed arrangements, and it will be made available to them in writing or electronically.

Date Reviewed: April 2026

Next Review: April 2027

Signed 

Chizzy Chukwukere
Executive Head of School

Introduction: In the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education in England paper (2019), The DfE states that 'Relationships Education, Relationships Education and Health Education must be accessible for all learners' and that ALL learners are entitled to "high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised'. Mainstream schools and special schools have a duty to ensure that children and young people with SEND are properly included in Relationships Education saying that good quality Relationships Education:

'Is an entitlement for ALL young people regardless of gender, sexuality, religion, faith and those with physical, learning or emotional difficulties.'

(Children and Social Work Act 2017)

Aims

The aims of Relationship, Sex & Health Education (RSHE) at Imperial Oak School are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place

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- Prepare learners for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help learners develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach learners the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Support families and students in any challenges that may arise relating to RSE
- Support staff through their induction training and their continued development.
- Support students to form safe relationships and to safeguard students

Rationale

At Imperial Oak School, we want all our pupils to be independent, safe and to be able to lead happy, healthy, and successful lives. We know that Relationships Education is crucial to safeguarding our pupils. Good quality RSHE equips children and young people with the information, skills, and values they need to have safe, fulfilling, and enjoyable relationships. It teaches them to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing. By teaching Relationships Education within the safe and nurturing environment of school, our pupils get the opportunity to explore who they are, the values that they have, their relationships and their future decisions.

We recognise and accept that *‘teaching Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) to children with severe learning difficulties (SLD) will be very, very different to teaching RSE to neuro-typical conventionally developing learners. Following the Equals model (Equals, 2021), we believe that it is not possible to simply take standard curriculum models, such as those proposed by the Sex Education Forum and the DfE and apply them wholesale to those with SLD however much they might be differentiated’*; merely because *‘neither were written with SLD’*, OUR LEARNERS, *‘needs in mind’*.

Definitions

1. Relationships Education

Relationships Education is about learners being taught different relationships including about friendships, family and the people than can help them. Respect for others is also taught in a developmental age-appropriate way with a focus on healthy relationships that pupils will encounter. This also applies to online relationships to ensure that children and young people are safe when online and how others can use their information in a way that they may not expect.

This teaching will include different types of family that provide a nurturing environment for children and young people, including for example single parent families, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, LGBTQ+ parents among others. The purpose of this is to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of different families and to show people come from different backgrounds.

2. Relationships & Sex Education (RSE)

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) at Imperial Oak School is delivered in a developmentally appropriate and needs-led way. It focuses on helping pupils to understand their own bodies, recognise safe and unsafe situations, develop appropriate boundaries, and build positive relationships with others.

Teaching is adapted to meet the communication, cognitive and emotional needs of each pupil, with an emphasis on safety, wellbeing, and understanding appropriate behaviour in different contexts.

3. Health Education

Health Education teaches learners about physical health and mental wellbeing is to give them the information that they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing. It should enable them to recognise what is normal and what is an issue in themselves and others and, when issues arise, know how to seek support as early as possible from appropriate sources. It is important for schools to promote learners’ self-control and ability to self-regulate, and strategies for doing so. This will enable them to become confident in their ability to achieve well and persevere even when they encounter setbacks or when their goals are distant, and to respond calmly and rationally to setbacks and challenges. This integrated, whole-school approach to the teaching and promotion of health and wellbeing has a potential positive impact on behaviour and attainment.

RSHE is used as an umbrella term, which encompasses Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education. Imperial Oak School acknowledges that Relationships & Sex Education are only compulsory in Secondary Schools (from age 11).

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Statutory Requirements & Right to Withdraw

Phase	Statutory Requirements	Provision at Imperial Oak	Parental Right
Primary	Relationships Education is now compulsory in all primary schools in England.	Relationships Education	For Primary aged-learners, parents/ carers do not have the right to withdraw learners from Relationships Education.

Imperial Oak School provides Relationships Education appropriate to primary-aged pupils. Content relating to sex education is delivered in a developmentally appropriate and needs-led manner in line with statutory guidance.

Roles & Responsibilities

- **The Proprietor / Advisory Board** – The Advisory Board will approve the RSHE policy and hold the Senior Leadership Team to account for its implementation.
- **Senior Leadership** - The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has the responsibility to review and approve the RSHE Policy and curriculum that sits within the wider Personal Development programme of study across school. SLT offer supervision and support to the Pathway Leads responsible for implementation of RSHE.
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (D/DSL)** – Imperial Oak’s Safeguarding Team (DSL & DDSL(s) are closely involved with (or at least be made aware of) the planning and teaching of RSE. In any event, there will need to be links to the school’s safeguarding policies with lots of information on ‘what to do if.....’, particularly if any learner makes a disclosure during a lesson (or at any time) as a result of the teaching content. It is in the nature of effective RSE teaching to make your learners more aware of their own sexuality and this must be recognised by all stakeholders, especially parents and carers. This carries risks, but rather like other potentially risky ventures such as Travel Training and Cooking, the risk is not a reason to not teach RSE as effectively and fully as we can.
- **Pathway Leads** - The Pathway Lead(s) are responsible for the implementation of RSHE within the wider curriculum of each pathway. This includes but is not limited to: learning walks, quality assurance of planning and review, observations of teaching and learning, managing RSHE resources, identifying and meeting any training needs amongst staff and ensure that all staff are kept up to date with developments and good practice.
- **Class Teachers** – Class teachers are responsible for incorporating elements of Relationships Education (and RSE/ Health Education where appropriate) as part of the delivery of the curriculum within their pathway. The Relationships Education curriculum is delivered as part of learner’s normal classroom access to the curriculum to ensure that learners feel comfortable, safe, and able to participate and learn.
- **All Staff** – All staff working directly with pupils are responsible for safe, consistent delivery of RSHE in naturalistic contexts; modelling a positive attitude towards RSHE; responding to individual needs of pupils; maintaining high quality safeguarding practices throughout teaching.
- **Parents/ Carers** - All RSHE teaching at Imperial Oak School is taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the background and beliefs of learners and parents. We wholly believe that parents/carers are the first teachers of their children and have a significant influence helping their children to grow and mature to form healthy relationships. We are committed to working with parents/carers and the wider community in getting the support for the RSHE programme. We ensure clear communication channels are open and training opportunities are taken.
 - **Right to withdraw** – Parents/ carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.
 - Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 2 of this policy and addressed to the executive head of school. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil’s educational record.
 - Before granting any such request, the Senior Leadership Team will discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum.

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Curriculum Intent

Learners at Imperial Oak School are taught the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships. Throughout the Primary phase, a particular focus is made to friendships, family relationships and relationships with others. As pupils progress through the school, teaching is adapted in line with their developmental stage, communication needs, and individual understanding.

The curriculum helps to equip our children and young people to:

- Help pupils understand right and wrong, and how to treat others kindly
- Encourage positive self-perception, confidence, and self-esteem in learners
- Foster respect for oneself and others
- Instill values of respect, care, and love
- Guide learners in making positive choices
- Assist in the development of healthy relationships within a moral framework
- Provide insights into how relationships are formed, maintained, and managed
- Help pupils understand changes in their bodies and feelings in a safe and supported way
- Educate on appropriate and inappropriate behavior in public and private spaces
- Foster assertiveness in learners
- Promote safety awareness
- Aid in the understanding of emotions and feelings
- Develop an awareness of family life and the responsibilities of parenthood
- Promote acceptance of same-sex unions as stable, loving, and committed relationships
- Encourage understanding and acceptance of diversity
- Address diversity related to religion, gender, culture, and sexual orientation in line with the 2010 Equality Act and the school's safeguarding and child protection protocols
- Use age-appropriate subject content and techniques tailored to each child's developmental level

The content of the curriculum covers:

- Families and people who care for me (Importance of families, stable relationships, choice, healthy family lives, different types of families, marriage and choice of marriage, responsibilities of parenthood, trust and keeping safe)
- Respectful relationships, including friendships (Positive and healthy friendships, trust, managing conflicts, different types of relationships, stereotypes, respect, bullying, control, rights and responsibilities regarding equality and harassment)
- Online and media (Rights, responsibilities, opportunities online, online risks, sensitive materials, sharing online, harmful content, how and where to get support and keeping information safe)
- Being safe (Laws on consent, coercion, abuse, how to understand and communicate consent, private and public, appropriate behaviours, safety in all types of relationship and online safety)

Implementation of RSHE

At Imperial Oak School, implementation of RSHE is differentiated by pathway to tailor the content and teaching methods to meet the specific characteristics of each learner in sensitive, age and developmentally appropriate means (in line with the DFE guidance). Relationships Education is taught in a safe, non-judgmental environment where adults and children are confident that they will be kept safe and their views respected.

RSHE is implemented at two levels:

1. **Class Based Learning** – Overarching themes and curriculum areas are explored in discrete, group-based activities that incorporates pupil motivators to ensure engagement with a broad and balanced access to RSHE. Topics and content are interwoven by class teachers through play, group activities, stories and other sessions such as Attention Autism as appropriate for each class/ pathway.
2. **Individualised Learning Outcomes** – Individual learning intentions are set on a 1:1 basis as identified by mutli-disciplinary input to target specific skills through Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) which address gaps in skills and/or knowledge or increase comprehension, application or generalisation of learned skills.

Implementation of RSHE is primarily informed by

1. The Equals Semi-Formal '**Relationships & Sex Education**' scheme of work

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The Equals Semi-Formal Curriculum has been designed for pupils who have learning difficulties to such a degree that they are consistently working at academic levels considerably below their age-related peers and who therefore cannot access a differentiated form of a standard curriculum models. The key features of the Equals RSE Scheme of Work involves:

- Recognising and enabling the vital role played by staff and other adults;
- Enabling and maximising each individual learner's self-realisation, self-expression and self-confidence within any formal or informal programme;
- Progressing at the learners' pace, so that the teaching is always appropriate to the individual;
- Accepting that some guided practice in decision making is necessary whilst still accepting the inalienable rights of the individual to make choices.

The scheme of work outlines six sections which are flexible enough to teach according to individual need at any particular time to build upon previous learning to teach the right thing in the right way at the right time. These are: Knowing my body; Knowing me; Private and public; Touching and allowing others to touch me; Forming relationships.

Implementation of RSHE is also informed by:

- Intensive Interaction to develop opportunities for understanding and experiencing reciprocal interactions.
- Sensory massage to create opportunities for meaningful interaction and engagement with others and co-regulate.
- The SCERTS Framework
- The creation of social stories as needed to aid comprehension of routines, interactions or processes
- Multi-disciplinary assessment and observation from class teacher and team, therapists and home.
- Imperial Oak's masturbation policy (included in Appendix 1 of this policy)
- Use of correct medical vocabulary to describe private parts to aid comprehension and vocabulary for disclosures.
- Whilst most of the RSHE curriculum is delivered in mixed gender groups, this is supplemented with single sex sessions if appropriate.

Implementation by pathway

Explore	Semi-Formal	Formal
Individualised learning outcomes with some content interwoven into class-based activities as appropriate. Multi-sensory exposure to topics through play and everyday routines/ activities.	Combination of individual learning outcomes and class-based learning Subject knowledge taught directly and incidentally and highly individualised.	Class-based learning, supplemented by individualised learning outcomes as required. Subject knowledge taught in an abstract setting and later generalised and applied to functional contexts.

Staff Training

Implementation of RSHE is included in Imperial Oak's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) calendar and additional training is delivered as and when a need is apparent. Staff are kept informed of developments in key aspects of school life that impact Relationships Education, including links with safeguarding, inclusion, equality, child protection and antibullying, through regular training provided at staff meetings and INSET days.

Health Professionals/ External Agencies involvement: Imperial Oak School may invite specialist external agencies in to support the delivery or CPD of staff in relation to RSHE. Such sessions take place in either whole class setting or in smaller specified groups. This is planned with and communicated with staff.

Personal Care

The nature of our school means that many of our learners will be reliant on support for their personal care and may not have all the independence and life opportunities that are referred to in many Relationships Education resources. The need for sensitivity around this and adaptability of teaching methods and resources will be stressed during all staff training to ensure that all learners have a curriculum pertinent and accessible to them.

Confidentiality and Child Protection Issues

Where possible and appropriate during RSHE sessions, confidentiality is maintained by the teacher or member of staff. Relationships Education discussions may prompt a learner to disclose about related incidents; for example, FGM, Forced marriage, child

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exploitation or abuse. If the member of staff believes that the child is at risk or in danger or has concerns about any information disclosed, she/he talks to the named Designated Safeguarding Lead who takes action as laid down in the Child Protection Policy. The child will be fully supported throughout such disclosures. Clear communication will be given to the child so that they fully understand why confidentiality is being breached. Learner and staff safety and welfare will be carefully monitored at this point and support given.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Assessment of RSHE

This policy and its implementation are approved by the Advisory Board. We ensure that all learners have equal and appropriate access to the RSHE provision that is inclusive and appropriate to all learners, regardless of age, culture, gender, ability, disability, sexual orientation, religion, experiences or family background.

Progress towards RSHE outcomes is monitored, evaluated and assessed through by class teachers via the platform Evidence for Learning.

- For class-based learning, evidence is uploaded each half-term and tagged with 'RSHE'. This evidence qualitative describes pupil engagement and learning in ways that are appropriate for their developmental maturity, age, need, ability and personal circumstances.
- For individualised learning outcomes included in pupil PLPs, evidence is uploaded weekly with progress measured ipsatively using the MAPP Assessment of Lateral Progress (ALP).

Pathway Leads review this evidence in line with policy and provision reviews to ensure that the intent, implementation and impact of RSHE is functional and meaningful for all Imperial Oak's children and young people.

The Policy is cross referenced and supported by other school policies and statutory documents listed below:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Equality Act 2010
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance)
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts)

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Masturbation Policy

Appendix 2 – Parental Right to Withdraw Form

Appendix 1 – Masturbation Policy

Where developmentally appropriate, pupils are supported to understand the difference between public and private behaviours.

Staff follow safeguarding and intimate care guidance at all times, ensuring dignity, safety and appropriate supervision.

The following are step by step guides to support with varying needs.

- 1) Staff to be aware of the behavior of the pupils in order to identify the clues that a pupil may begin to masturbate.
- 2) Remind the learner that masturbation happens in a private space, like your bedroom at home. Not in a public space, like school.
- 3) Use a social story which is suitable for the learner and attempt to use the strategies included in the social story (see appendices).
- 4) If the social story strategies are not successful, give a firm and clear instruction to stop. For example, “You have to stop because that is private, and this is not a private space.”
- 5) If the learner does not stop and there are other pupils present, use a blanket or towel to obstruct the view of the other learners, in order to keep all the pupils safe.
- 6) Either support the learner who is masturbating to a private space such as a toilet or support the other learners out of the room.
- 7) Make the toilet or room private and do not stay in the room, whilst ensuring that the learner is safe.
- 8) When the learner has finished masturbating, support the learner to be clean and dressed appropriately.
- 9) Work through the individual social story with the learner, to support the learner in understanding that, masturbation is allowed but it must only happen in your bedroom. Your bedroom is a private place.

Appendix 2 - Right to Withdrawal from RSE (Relationships and Sex Education)

1. Pupil Details

- Full Name of Pupil: _____
- Date of Birth: _____
- Year Group/Class: _____

2. Parent/Carer Details

- Full Name: _____
- Relationship to Pupil: _____
- Contact Number: _____
- Email Address: _____

3. Request for Withdrawal

Under the current statutory guidance for **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education** (DfE 2019), parents have the right to withdraw their child from **some or all of Sex Education** delivered as part of RSE, except for content that is part of the **National Curriculum for Science**.

Please indicate your preference:

- I request to withdraw my child from **all** Sex Education lessons.
- I request to withdraw my child from **specific elements** of Sex Education.
 - If selected, please specify which elements:

*(Note: Parents **cannot** withdraw pupils from Relationships Education or Health Education.)*

4. Reason for Withdrawal (optional)

Providing a reason is not required. However, this may help the school in understanding your concerns.

5. School Responsibilities (for parent/carers information)

- The school will **discuss this request** with you to ensure your decision is informed.
- The school will outline:
 - the **content** your child would miss,
 - the **benefits** of receiving RSE,
 - any **alternative arrangements** for supervision and learning.
- A record of this request and discussion will be kept in line with Ofsted expectations and the **Independent School Standards (ISS)**.

6. Parent/Carer Declaration

I confirm that I am requesting to withdraw my child from the selected elements of Sex Education. I understand the statutory framework and that this request will be followed by a discussion with a senior member of staff.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

7. School Use Only (For administrative purposes)

- Date request received: _____
- Staff member responsible for follow-up meeting: _____
- Date of meeting with parent/carers: _____
- Outcome of meeting:
 - Withdrawal approved
 - Partial withdrawal agreed
 - Withdrawal not approved (explanation required):
- Alternative supervision/activities arranged:

Signed (School Representative): _____

Date: _____

This form should be stored securely as part of the pupil's educational record in compliance with Ofsted and Independent School Standards.