

Relationships Sex Education Policy			
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## 1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at Great Oaks are to:

- **To equip pupils with knowledge and skills to navigate relationships safely** – Providing clear, age-appropriate education on friendships, personal boundaries, consent, and healthy relationships.
- **To promote self-awareness, self-respect, and emotional well-being** – Helping pupils understand their own emotions, build resilience, and develop confidence in their identity and relationships.
- **To ensure pupils understand their rights and responsibilities under the law** – Covering topics such as consent, online safety, protected characteristics, and recognising harmful behaviours.
- **To provide a differentiated and accessible curriculum** – Tailoring content to meet the diverse needs and developmental levels of pupils with SEND, ensuring inclusivity.
- **To support pupils in preparing for adulthood and making informed choices** – Teaching about changes in adolescence, sexual health, family life, and personal safety in a way that enables independent, safe decision-making.

At Great Oaks School, we believe that RSE education, enables children to become healthy, independent and responsible members of society. We strive to provide children with the tools to understand how they are developing personally and socially and whilst doing so allow them to be able to successfully tackle many of the moral, social and cultural issues that are part of growing up. We aim to focus on well-being to enable children and young people to embrace change, feel positive about themselves and enjoy healthy, safe, responsible and fulfilled lives. At Great Oaks School we aim to address the vulnerabilities of our pupils through educating them about safe choices and relationships. Clear communication aids and tools are provided to support self- help skills which are also related to real life experiences.

## 2. Statutory requirements

We provide RSE to all pupils under section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

In teaching RSE, we're required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (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 Great Oaks, we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

## 3. Policy development

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

1. Review – a member of LMT and the coordinator of PSHE gathered all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations

3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to attend a parents coffee morning held with the Welfare Officer and PSHE coordinator to discuss the policy and action any changes required
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

#### **4. Definition**

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.

#### **5. Curriculum**

Our curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1 but we adapt this as and when necessary.

As a secondary school, we deliver RSE topics appropriate to the age of our pupils while ensuring that content is heavily adapted to meet their individual developmental levels and learning needs. We recognise that some pupils may require a more structured, simplified, or sensory-based approach to access key concepts effectively. While our focus remains on secondary-level learning, we may occasionally dip into primary content where it supports understanding, provides essential foundations, or better suits a pupil's stage of development. Our approach ensures that all pupils receive an RSE education that is accessible, meaningful, and relevant to their needs.

The Great Oaks curriculum is adapted from the PSHE Association SEND Framework as well as resources from verified sources such as Jigsaw and the BBC.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils, and staff, considering the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner, so they are fully informed and do not seek answers online. See section 6 Managing Difficult Questions in RSE.

We follow the most up to date government draft guidance on delivering RSE. In line with our RSE curriculum, we do not teach gender identity as a standalone topic. While pupils may discuss identity and personal experiences as part of broader discussions on respect and diversity, we follow government guidance in ensuring that teaching remains factual, age-appropriate, and focused on statutory requirements.

#### **6. Managing Difficult Questions in RSE**

At Great Oaks, we recognise that pupils may ask questions related to relationships and sex that go beyond the scope of the curriculum or are not age-appropriate. Staff are trained to manage these questions sensitively, ensuring that pupils feel supported while maintaining professional boundaries.

To handle difficult questions effectively:

- Staff will respond in a way that is factual, age-appropriate, and aligned with the RSE curriculum.
- If a question is deemed inappropriate for the wider group, staff may suggest discussing it privately with a trusted adult or signposting to appropriate resources.

- Pupils will be encouraged to talk to parents or carers about personal or complex topics where appropriate.
- Staff will follow safeguarding procedures if a question suggests a pupil may be at risk.
- Distancing techniques (e.g. using case studies, anonymous question boxes, and third-person scenarios) may be used to help pupils explore sensitive topics without personal disclosure.
- Teachers will receive ongoing training and support to ensure they feel confident in managing challenging discussions while maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment.

## **7. 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, and other aspects are included in Religious Education (RE).

Pupils also receive stand-alone sex education sessions delivered by either their teacher or trained health professional.

Relationship's education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

RSE 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

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendix 1.

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).

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

### **7.1 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 and during lessons, 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 setting
- Small groups or targeted sessions
- 1-to-1 discussions
- Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

Our RSE curriculum is tailored to meet the diverse developmental needs of our pupils. Sensitive topics are delivered in a way that ensures age-appropriateness and accessibility, with differentiation embedded in lesson planning. Where necessary, streamed sessions are used to group pupils by developmental stage, maturity, or need, ensuring that content is delivered in a manner that is both appropriate and meaningful. This approach allows for greater support, clear understanding, and a safe learning environment for all pupils.

## **7.2 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, developmental stage and background of our 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

## **8. Use of external organisations and materials**

We will make sure that any agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality. We work with external organisations to support the delivery of RSE where appropriate. This includes Yellow Door, which provides targeted sessions for specific pathways to enhance learning around healthy relationships and personal safety.

The school remains responsible for what is said to pupils. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We will make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use are age-appropriate, in line with pupils' developmental stage and comply with:

- This policy
- The [Teachers' Standards](#)
- The [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- The [Education Act 1996](#)

We will also:

- Only work with external agencies where we have full 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
- Be clear on 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
- Share all external materials with parents and carers on request

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

## **9. Roles and responsibilities**

### **9.1 The Governing Board**

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

### **9.2 The Headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE

### **9.3 Staff**

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to 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 headteacher.

All staff at Great Oaks School are responsible for teaching RSE.

#### **9.4 Pupils**

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

#### **10. Parents' right to withdraw**

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of sex education within 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 7 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

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.

Parents will receive written confirmation of withdrawal requests from the headteacher.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

We are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers in the delivery of RSE. Before certain sensitive topics are introduced, letters will be sent home to inform parents of the content and provide opportunities for discussion. This ensures transparency and allows parents to support their child's learning. Information about the RSE curriculum is also available on the school website, and parents are encouraged to contact the school with any questions or concerns.

#### **11. 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 headteacher 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.

#### **12. Monitoring arrangements**

The delivery of RSE is monitored by Pathway Managers (PSHE Leads) through:

- Lesson Observations
- Planning and work scrutiny

- Pupil feedback and observations
- Social care actions arising from CIN meetings

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by an Assistant Headteacher (PSHE Coordinators) annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board.



## Appendix 1: Curriculum map

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
<b>Year 7 Topic</b>	<b>Friendships and Healthy Relationships</b>	<b>Empathy and communication</b>	<b>Physical Health</b>	<b>Puberty and emotional changes</b>	<b>Consent and boundaries</b>	<b>Online and road safety</b>
<b>RSE content</b>	Recognising the qualities of healthy and respectful relationships. Understanding boundaries in friendships and the importance of emotional well-being.	Identifying positive communication within friendships and relationships. Exploring ways to support mental health through good communication.	Exploring the connection between physical health and emotional well-being. Understanding how good hygiene and regular sleep contribute to mental health.	Learning about changes to the body during puberty and how to seek help when needed. Exploring emotional regulation during this time of change.	Exploring the importance of consent in friendships and relationships. Discussing personal space and emotional safety.	Understanding the risks of online interactions, including emotional safety. Practising calm and safe responses in emergencies.
<b>Year 8 Topic</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Respect for others and inclusivity</b>	<b>Peer pressure &amp; decision making</b>	<b>Puberty and wellbeing</b>	<b>Healthy relationships</b>	<b>British values</b>
<b>RSE content</b>	Exploring how responsibilities for physical and emotional health impact well-being.	Understanding the impact of prejudice on emotional well-being and relationships.	Exploring ways to say "no" and maintain boundaries in relationships. Understanding how peer pressure affects mental health. Introduction to contraception (as information, not skills).	Understanding physical and emotional changes and how to access support. Learning how to manage anxiety during puberty. The benefits of exercise		Road safety, travelling alone, basic first aid, emergency contacts
<b>Year 9 Topic</b>	<b>Self-growth – goal setting, resilience and managing failure</b>	<b>Influence and peer pressure</b>	<b>Mental health managing stress, anxiety and emotional wellbeing</b>	<b>Financial literacy – budgeting, saving, debt awareness</b>	<b>Consent and boundaries</b>	<b>Introduction to sex education</b>
<b>RSE content</b>	Understanding how self-awareness and emotional regulation improve relationships and mental health.	Strategies for maintaining boundaries and saying "no" in relationships. Recognising the emotional effects of peer pressure.	Exploring how mental health affects relationships. Understanding self-care as a foundation for emotional resilience.		Exploring consent in intimate relationships, managing influences, and recognising manipulation or exploitation.	Recognising myths in media about relationships. Discussing access to sexual health services. Contraception (including condom demonstrations).
<b>Year 10 Topic</b>	<b>Self-growth</b>	<b>Respect in relationships – managing conflicts and recognising unhealthy relationships</b>	<b>Digital safety</b>	<b>Leadership and influence</b>	<b>Sex in media – tackling misconceptions and the impact of Pornography</b>	<b>Family dynamics and managing relationships</b>
<b>RSE content</b>	Exploring how self-reflection and emotional regulation benefit relationships and health.	Strategies for seeking help in challenging situations.	Managing digital relationships and understanding emotional risks online.	Exploring how positive and negative role models influence behaviour and relationships.	Understanding the emotional and physical impacts of media myths.	Recognising family roles and understanding emotional changes.
<b>Year 11 Topic</b>	<b>Self-growth – reflection, strengths and aspirations</b>	<b>Healthy relationships and Sexual health</b>	<b>Careers and future preparation</b>	<b>Skills for the Future</b>	<b>Independent Living Skills</b>	<b>Health and lifestyle choices</b>
<b>RSE content</b>	Understanding how self-confidence and emotional regulation impact relationships. Learning strategies to adapt to life changes positively.	Recognising healthy vs. unhealthy relationships. Understanding sexual consent and the emotional impacts of intimacy.	Developing confidence in professional communication and understanding workplace relationships.	Managing financial responsibilities in relationships and understanding the emotional impacts of financial decisions.	Exploring how personal resilience and adaptability impact relationships and emotional well-being.	Maintaining healthy relationships in independent settings and recognising how safety measures promote well-being.

## **Appendix 2: By the end of primary school pupils should know**

### **Families and people who care for me**

#### **Pupils should know**

1. that families are important for children growing up because they provide love, security and stability.
2. the characteristics of healthy family life, including commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.
3. that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.
4. that stable, caring relationships are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.
5. that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.
6. how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

### **Caring friendships**

#### **Pupils should know**

1. how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
2. that through no fault of their own, not every child will have the friends they would like, that most people feel lonely at some point and that there is no shame in feeling lonely or talking about it.
3. the characteristics of healthy relationships that lead to happiness and security, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences, and support with problems and difficulties.
4. how to recognise relationships that are less positive
5. that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
6. that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, how to manage conflict, and that resorting to violence is never right.
7. how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, how to handle these situations, and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.

### **Respectful relationships**

#### **Pupils should know**

1. the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs.
2. practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
3. the conventions of courtesy and manners.

4. the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness.
5. that they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show respect to others, including those in positions of authority.
6. about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult), and how to get help.
7. what a stereotype is, how stereotypes can be unfair, negative, destructive or lead to bullying and how to challenge a stereotype.
8. the importance of respecting boundaries, including understanding permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

## **Online relationships**

### **Pupils should know**

1. that people sometimes behave differently online, and that this can lead to dangerous situations. For example, someone pretending to be someone they are not, or an adult presenting as a child, to get another person to do something for them that they don't want to do, or shouldn't do.
2. that children should be respectful in online interactions, and the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including when we are anonymous.
3. the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.
4. how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.
5. how information and data is shared and used online, including the risks of sending images and information (without discussing details of sexual imagery).
6. about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be circulated online and that once a picture or words has been circulated there is no way of deleting it everywhere and no control over where it ends up.
7. that there is a minimum age for joining social media sites (normally age 13) in part to protect children from inappropriate content or unsafe contact with older social media users, who may be strangers, including other children and adults.
8. the importance of avoiding putting pressure on others to share information and images online, and strategies for resisting peer pressure. This should be covered without discussing details of sexual imagery.
9. who to go to for advice and support when they feel worried or concerned about something they have seen or engaged with online. Pupils should understand what they should do if they see something online that makes them feel worried. Pornography should not be referenced in primary education.

## **Being safe**

### **Pupils should know**

1. what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context). This can include learning about boundaries in play and in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources and so on.
2. about the concept of privacy and its implications for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.
3. that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe contact, including physical contact.

4. how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online), including those they do and do not know.
5. how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.
6. how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard.
7. how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.
8. where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

## **Appendix 2: By the end of secondary school pupils should know**

### **Families**

#### **Pupils should know**

1. that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
2. how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.
3. what marriage is, including its legal status, e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.
4. why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and that forced marriage and marrying before the age of 18 is illegal.<sup>16</sup>
5. the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
6. how families and relationships change over time, including through birth, death, separation and new relationships.
7. the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting and the importance of the early years of a child's life for brain development.
8. how to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, how to judge when a relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.

### **Respectful relationships, including friendships**

#### **Pupils should know**

1. the characteristics of positive and healthy relationships of all kinds, online and offline, including romantic relationships. For example, pupils should understand the role of consent, trust, mutual respect, honesty, kindness, loyalty, shared interests and outlooks, generosity, boundaries, privacy, and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships.
2. that fixated, obsessive, unwanted and repeated behaviours can be criminal, and where to get help if needed.
3. the practical steps they can take to improve or support respectful relationships.
4. how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender reassignment, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).
5. that they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show respect to others, including people in positions of authority, as well as tolerance of other people's beliefs.
6. about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.
7. the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, and that everyone is unique and equal.
8. what constitutes harmful sexual behaviour and why, and that such behaviour is unacceptable, emphasising that it is never the fault of the person experiencing it. This should not be taught before year 7.
9. that some types of behaviour, including within relationships, are criminal, including violent behaviour and emotional abuse, such as controlling or coercive behaviour.<sup>17</sup> Schools should not, however, teach about the details of violent abuse before Y9 as it is important that pupils are not introduced to distressing concepts when they are too young to understand them.

### **Online and media**

#### **Pupils should know**

1. their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
2. about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be circulated online and that once a picture or words has been circulated there is no way of deleting it everywhere and no control over where it ends up.
3. not to provide material to others that they would not want to be distributed further and not to pass on personal material which is sent to them. Pupils should understand the serious risks of sending material to others.
4. what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.<sup>18</sup>
5. about circulating images and information and how to safely report to trusted adults the non-consensual creation or distribution of an intimate image. Pupils should understand that making, keeping or sending naked or sexual images of someone under 18 is a crime, even if the photo is of themselves or of someone who has consented, and even if the image was created by the child and/or using AI generated imagery. Pupils should understand the potentially serious consequences of asking for naked, semi-naked or sexual images, including the potential for criminal charges and severe penalties including imprisonment. This topic should not be taught before year 7.
6. the impact of viewing harmful content, including pornography, that presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others, and can negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners. This can affect pupils who see pornographic content accidentally as well as those who see it deliberately. The risks of inappropriate online content can be discussed in an age-appropriate way from year 7, however, the details of sexual acts should not be discussed before year 9.
7. how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.
8. the characteristics of social media, including that social media users may say things in more extreme ways than they might in face-to-face situations, and that some users present highly exaggerated or idealised profiles of themselves online.
9. that websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes (i.e. to enable targeted advertising).
10. that criminals can operate online scams, for example using fake websites or emails to extort money or valuable personal information. This information can be used to the detriment of the person or wider society.

## **Being safe**

### **Pupils should know:**

1. how to recognise, respect and communicate boundaries in relationships, including in early romantic relationships (in all contexts, including online) such as kissing or touching.
2. the concepts and laws relating to harmful sexual behaviour, including sexual harassment, revenge porn, upskirting and taking/sharing intimate sexual photographs without consent, public sexual harassment, and unsolicited sexual language / attention / touching. This should not be taught before year 7.
3. The concepts and laws relating to sexual exploitation and abuse, grooming, stalking, and forced marriage. This should not be taught before year 7.
4. The concept and laws relating to sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault. Whilst it's important for pupils to understand the key principles around sexual offences and violence, for example the importance of understanding what consent means, schools should not teach about this in any sexually explicit way before year 9.
5. the physical and emotional damage which can be caused by female genital mutilation (FGM), virginity testing and hymenoplasty, where to find support, and the law around these areas. This should include that it is a criminal offence to perform or assist in the performance of FGM, virginity testing or hymenoplasty, or fail to protect a person under 16 for whom someone is responsible from FGM, or to take girls who are

UK nationals abroad for FGM, regardless of whether it is lawful in that country. This should not be taught before year 9, except for where schools have identified a greater risk of FGM at an earlier age or have pupils who have been affected by FGM and need support.

6. the concepts and laws relating to domestic abuse including controlling or coercive behaviour, emotional, sexual, economic or physical abuse, and violent or threatening behaviour<sup>19</sup>. Schools should not teach about the details of violent abuse before year 9 as it is important that pupils are not introduced to distressing concepts when they are too young to understand them.

7. how to seek support for worrying or abusive behaviour in themselves or others, including information on where to report abuse.

<sup>19</sup> The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognised children who see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse, and are related to either the victim of the abusive behaviour, or the perpetrator, as victims of domestic abuse in their own right (part 1 section 3). The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 statutory guidance is designed to support statutory and non-statutory bodies working with victims of domestic abuse, including children.

### **Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health**

**Explicit discussion of the details of sexual acts should not be taught before year 9 and should only take place insofar as it is necessary to teach the topics below.**

#### **Pupils should know**

1. the law about the age of consent, that they have a choice about whether to have sex, that many young people wait until they are older, and that people of all ages can enjoy intimate and romantic relationships without sex.

2. about sexual consent and their capacity to give or withhold consent at any time, even if initially given, as well as the considerations that people might take into account prior to sexual activity, e.g. the law, faith and family values.

3. that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.

4. That some sexual behaviours can be harmful and that there are a range of strategies for identifying, resisting and understanding sexual pressure, including from peers, and how to avoid putting sexual pressure on others.

5. the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available.

6. that there are choices in relation to pregnancy. Pupils should be given medically and legally accurate and impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help.

7. how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing.

8. about the prevalence of STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.

9. how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead people to take risks in their sexual behaviour.

10. how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

## Appendix 4: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

The following letter is adapted for each pathway as appropriate:

Dear Parents and Carers,

### Ref: Relationships and Sex Education

As a part of your child's education at Great Oaks School we promote personal wellbeing and development through a comprehensive Personal, Social, Health and Education (PSHE) programme. PSHE is the curriculum subject that gives young people the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and practical skills to live safe, healthy, productive lives and meet their full potential.

PSHE is taught throughout the school in every year group and is monitored and reviewed regularly by the staff and governing body. All PSHE teaching takes place in a safe learning environment and is underpinned by our school ethos and values. Pupils have opportunities to ask questions that help prepare them for relationships of all kinds in the modern world.

It is important that Great Oaks students are taught age-appropriate topics. For this reason, your child will be taking part in lessons that focus on the relationships and sex education (RSE) aspect of this programme. Teachers adapt resources and input as needed to ensure that our students can access the learning at an appropriate level. RSE lessons may include teaching about the following:

Year	Topics include
Year 7	Managing puberty and the issues of unwanted contact and FGM
Year 8	Introduction to sexuality and consent / Introduction to contraception including condom and the pill
Year 9	Inclusivity / Relationships and sex education including healthy relationships and consent / The risks of STIs, sexting and pornography
Year 10	Tackling relationship myths and expectations / Managing romantic relationship challenges including break ups
Year 11	Personal values and assertive communication in relationships

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of sex education within 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 by filling in the form attached and returning it to the school office.

As a school community, we are committed to working in partnership with parents. If you would like to find out more or discuss any concerns, please contact the class teacher.

Yours sincerely,

**PSHE Team**

**Great Oaks School**



Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			