Our Rock Academy

RSHE (PSHE) Policy

" A nurturing, ambitious and inclusive school where every child feels known, valued and connected."

Author: Lauren Benson

Approved by: Emmanuel Ajayi

Date: 2nd September 2026

Review Date: 2nd September 2027

Version Control

Date	Revisions

Resilience, Ownership, Creativity and Kindness

Policy Statement & Aims

Our Rock Academy is a specialist independent secondary school, providing education to pupils year 7 through to year 11. We are committed to delivering a high-quality Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education, RSHE (PSHE) programme that supports the holistic development of our pupils. Using Oak National Academy RSHE (PSHE) as our core framework, we provide a consistent, progressive and spiral curriculum that integrates emotional literacy, social skills, spiritual and moral development. Our Rock recognises that pupils with SEND may experience increased vulnerability in relation to abuse, exploitation, coercion, online harm, unhealthy relationships and social isolation. The RSHE *(PSHE)* curriculum therefore prioritises the explicit teaching, rehearsal and generalisation of the knowledge and skills pupils need to recognise risk, communicate boundaries, seek help and develop safe and healthy relationships, as well as;

- development of self-advocacy;
- understanding consent and personal boundaries;
- preparation for adulthood and greater independence;
- financial literacy;
- community participation;
- managing risk in real-life and online environments;
- knowing how, when and from whom to seek help.

Context and statutory framework

As an independent school, Our Rock Academy is required to provide a programme of personal, social, health and economic education that reflects the school's aims and ethos and encourages respect for other people, with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. Pupils receiving secondary education must also receive Relationships and Sex Education, except where a pupil is withdrawn from the sex education elements in accordance with statutory guidance and current legislation, drawing information from;

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education statutory guidance;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Children and Families Act 2014;
- SEND Code of Practice: 0–25 years;

- Keeping Children Safe in Education;
- Prevent duty guidance;
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- statutory guidance on political impartiality, where relevant.

The Independent School Standards require a programme of PSHE that reflects the school's aims and ethos and encourages respect for other people, with particular regard to the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010.

The revised Department for Education statutory guidance on relationships, sex and health education came into effect on 1 September 2026. Our Rock Academy will have regard to this guidance when reviewing its curriculum, resources, staff training and information for parents.

Curriculum delivery

We use the *Oak National Academy: RSHE (PSHE)* programme to deliver a comprehensive and spiral curriculum, ensuring progression and consistency in learning across all key stages. The programme is designed to meet the statutory requirements for relationships and sex education and health education, while supporting safeguarding, equality, fundamental British values and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

At Our Rock Academy School, RSHE *(PSHE)* is delivered through two 45-minute timetabled lessons each week taught by the RSHE *(PSHE)* department staff. The team engage in ongoing professional development and are overseen by the RSHE *(PSHE)* lead and where necessary in regards to safeguarding, the headteacher and DSL in collaboration with other pastoral staff where necessary. This approach ensures that RSHE *(PSHE)* knowledge and skills are taught in an age-appropriate manner and are further reinforced and enriched through a variety of Personal Development initiatives embedded within the school's ethos and structure.

The RSHE (PSHE) curriculum is planned across Years 7–11. Teachers revisit key knowledge and adapt the pace of teaching to pupils' needs while maintaining the planned curriculum. In Year 11, teaching also supports pupils' transition to post-16 education and adult life.

Where pupils have gaps in their prior learning, individual catch-up teaching will be provided where appropriate. Key safeguarding concepts will be revisited regularly and will not be taught only once within a single annual unit.

Inclusion and equality

Teaching will be inclusive and not assume that all pupils have the same family structure, identity, experiences, relationships or future aspirations. Protected characteristics will be taught appropriate to age and developmental stages that promote dignity, respect and understanding.

We will also ensure that:

- Reasonable adjustments will be made under the Equality Act 2010;
- Pupils will not be withdrawn from learning about protected characteristics;
- Materials and resources will represent different families, disabilities, cultures and relationships;
- Staff will challenge discriminatory language and stereotypes;
- Teaching will be objective, balanced and politically neutral.

Tailored learning

Adaptations may occur based on emotional maturity and all lessons are planned with consideration of pupils' developmental and emotional stage. Content may be adapted or reordered in response to emerging needs in the school community and all lessons are differentiated, using support strategies to ensure accessibility. Approaches could include:

- Visual timetables, now-and-next boards and lesson previews;
- Symbol-supported text, Widgit resources or AAC;
- Pre-teaching of sensitive vocabulary;
- Small-group teaching where this provides a safe, appropriate environment;
- Repetition, overlearning and regular retrieval practice;
- Social stories, comic-strip conversations and scenario-based learning;
- Modelling and structured rehearsal of help-seeking;
- Sensory breaks and agreed regulation strategies;
- Reduced written demand and alternative methods of recording;
- Careful preparation for lessons involving puberty, bodies, relationships or trauma;

One-to-one teaching should not be suggested automatically as the best adaptation. It would need to be risk assessed, appropriately recorded and delivered in accordance with all safeguarding procedures.

Additional resources may be used within the Oak National Academy framework.

Assessment, Tracking and monitoring

The Oak National Academy, from which our RSHE *(PSHE)* programme is built from, uses built-in tools and end of topic assessments to enable us to monitor progress and ensure learning objectives are met. This, alongside teacher assessment and SEND specific monitoring provides a holistic picture of the pupils progress and may identify where further differentiation and adaptations may be required. Pupil progress will be tracked against the key learning points and objectives and recorded using an in-house tracking system. Regular review through observations, book scrutinies, staff and parent feedback will be used to monitor the effectiveness and implementation of our RSHE *(PSHE)* programme.

Safeguarding and confidentiality

RSHE (PSHE) forms an important part of Our Rock Academy's safeguarding curriculum. Pupils will be taught how to recognise unsafe situations, report concerns, understand consent and boundaries and identify trusted adults and sources of support.

It should cover:

- No promise of confidentiality;
- Handling anonymous questions;
- Disclosures passed promptly to the DSL;
- Avoidance of personal disclosures by pupils and staff;
- Agreed classroom ground rules;
- Signs that a pupil may need additional support;
- Child-on-child abuse and sexual harassment;
- Grooming, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation and sextortion;
- Domestic abuse and coercive control;
- Online relationships, pornography and image sharing;
- Forced marriage, FGM and honour-based abuse where age appropriate;
- Prevent and radicalisation;
- Special consideration of the additional safeguarding barriers faced by pupils with SEND.

This aligns with Keeping Children Safe in Education, which stresses an inclusive safeguarding curriculum that is appropriate to pupils' age, stage and SEND.

Staff training and external visitors

All teaching and support staff within Our Rock Academy will receive training in the following areas but not limited to;

- Statutory RSHE content
- SEND- inclusive teaching
- How to handle and respond to questions and disclosures
- Consent and sexual harassment
- Online safety and exploitation
- Trauma-informed practice
- LGBTQ+ inclusion
- Teaching sensitive topics safely and effectively
- Our Rocks safeguarding and recording procedures.

External visitors and speakers will be expected to brief the SLT team on what they plan to deliver prior to any on-site sessions taking place. Extra sessions may be provided in addition to teaching of the content, not instead of.

Roles and responsibilities

The Headteacher/DSL: will ensure compliance with the independent school standards and approve any policy changes and updates. Have oversight of the overall implementation and make withdrawal decisions.
Ensure safeguarding content, disclosures and staff guidance is in line with our schools safeguarding policy and following procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns.

The Deputy Headteacher/SENCo: will ensure the curriculum is accessible to all and reasonable adjustments are made where necessary and linked to individual pupils' EHC plans.
Support the teaching and support staff in the delivery of the RSHE *(PSHE)* curriculum where necessary.

RSHE (PSHE) lead: will provide curriculum mapping and resources, monitor effective delivery of the curriculum and support staff development where appropriate.

Teachers, Higher learning support assistant (HLSA), Learning support assistants (LSA): will ensure safe and inclusive delivery and assessment of the curriculum. Engage in CPD and training as required and follow all safeguarding procedures and school policies.

Pupils: will engage in the RSHE (PSHE) curriculum with respect, openness and understanding of their own and others individual needs.

Parental engagement and withdrawal

Parents may request withdrawal from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of RSE, except content taught through science. Requests must be made to the Headteacher, who will discuss concerns with the RSHE *(PSHE)* lead and agree appropriate arrangements. Pupils themselves may choose to opt into Sex Education three terms before their 16th birthday, even if previously withdrawn.

Parents will be consulted when the school develops or materially changes its RSHE *(PSHE)* policy. Consultation will inform decision-making but does not provide individual parents with a right to reject statutory curriculum content.

Our Rock may also provide:

- plain-English curriculum summaries;
- accessible or translated information where required;
- advance notice of sensitive units;
- opportunities to view key teaching resources