



The Athelstan Trust

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

| Date of Review | Approved by | Date of Approval | Next Review Date | Website |
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1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) in our Trust are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

The Trust is aware that children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way. The Trust believes that RSE is an important dimension of this statutory entitlement, and that it should be complementary to and supportive of the role of parents in educating their children about relationships and sexuality.

The aim of relationships and sex education (RSE) is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage, civil partnership or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This will help students understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such

situations can be managed. Our RSHE policy will provide clear progression from what is taught in the primary curriculum. We will build on the foundation of learning and, as pupils grow up, at the appropriate time extend teaching to include intimate relationships. Alongside being taught intimate relationships, pupils will also be taught about family relationships, friendships and other kinds of relationships that are an equally important part of becoming a successful and happy adult.

2. Statutory requirements

In our primary academies, we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#). This legislation also requires us to provide RSE to all pupils at our secondary academies.

We do not have to follow the National Curriculum but we are expected to offer all pupils a curriculum that is similar to the National Curriculum including requirements to teach science. This would include the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum at primary level.

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 The Athelstan Trust we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

3. Policy development

This draft policy is being developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involves the following steps:

1. Review – a working group of trustees with support from the central team staff pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – staff across all schools 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 meeting about the policy at their respective schools
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with local governors and the board of trustees for ratification

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

5.1. Curriculum design

Each school within the Trust has set out their Curriculum for Relationships, Sex, Education and their approach to delivering RSE and roles and responsibilities on their school website. Staff responsible for RSE teaching in each school will ensure that the curriculum is appropriate to the needs of pupils and will adapt content according.

As a minimum, all schools within the Trust will meet statutory guidance of topics covered in the following guidance: [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-and-health-education-guidance)

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, and taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

Primary Relationships, Sex Education will cover the statutory requirements of:

- Families and People who care for me
- Caring Friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being Safe
- Changing Adolescent Bodies

Including:

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings
- How a baby is conceived and born

Secondary Relationships, Sex Education will cover the statutory requirements of:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and Media
- Intimate sexual relationships including Sexual Health

Each school's curriculum will be designed to meet the needs of their students and their context in terms of which age each of these topics is covered. The RSE Procedures document for the school is shown in Appendix I of this Policy.

All schools in the Trust have curriculum materials available for parents / carers to view. An appointment should be made with the RSE lead.

In our Primary Schools, parents / carers have the choice to withdraw their child from sex education teaching which is beyond the science curriculum. Parents / carers wishing to withdraw their child from this should contact the Headteacher.

In our Secondary Schools, parents /carers may withdraw their child from the sex education elements of our RSE curriculum until the 3rd term before their child turns 16. Parents / carers wishing to withdraw their child from this should contact the Headteacher.

Please note that there is no right for a parent / carer to withdraw their child from Relationships Education or Health Education.

5.2 SEND

The Athelstan Trust expects that schools will make reasonable adjustments for students with SEND needs in the delivery of RSE.

5.3. Inclusivity and Protected Characteristics

The Athelstan Trust expects that resources used will be inclusive and where appropriate protected characteristics represented.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The board of trustees

The board of trustees will approve the RSE policy and hold the CEO to account for its implementation.

6.2 Local governing bodies

Local governing bodies are responsible for supporting the implementation of the policy at their school and reporting issues to the board of trustees if they occur.

7. Monitoring arrangements

Schools will typically review their Curriculum and RSE Procedures Annually, consulting with parents where appropriate. This Policy will be reviewed and approved by the board of trustees annually.

Appendix 1 - Relationships and Sex Education at Bradon Forest School

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.

Teaching of RSHE at Bradon Forest School will enable pupils to:

- distinguish between content and experiences that exemplify healthy relationships and those that are distorted or harmful;
- understand the benefits of healthy relationships to their mental wellbeing and self-respect and to understand that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on mental wellbeing;
- believe they can achieve goals and that in order to achieve those goals they must stick at the tasks despite the challenges they may face;
- be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way;
- recognise when relationships (including family relationships) are unhealthy or abusive (including the unacceptability of neglect, emotional, sexual and physical abuse and violence including honour-based violence and forced marriage) and strategies to manage this or access support for themselves or others at risk;
- recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how and when to report issues to keep them safe online;
- within the law, be well equipped to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives in the future, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs.

DELIVERY OF RELATIONSHIPS, SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION

In teaching RSE, we are 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

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, and taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

Bradon Forest School acknowledges that high-quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching can help pupils prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life as well as promoting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils both at school and in society.

RSHE will be set in the context of a wider whole-school approach to supporting pupils to be safe, happy and prepared for life beyond school. The curriculum on relationships and sex will complement and be supported by our wider policies on behaviour, inclusion, respect for equality and diversity, anti-bullying and safeguarding. RSHE will sit within the context of our broader ethos and approach to developing pupils socially, morally, spiritually and culturally; and its pastoral care system.

The curriculum on health education will similarly complement and be supported by our education on healthy lifestyles through physical education, food technology, science and extra-curricular activities. The promotion of healthy living is also facilitated through Catering to ensure that pupils are able to make nutritional food choices throughout their time at Bradon Forest School.

We will deliver the content in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum. Effective teaching will ensure that core knowledge is broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly to pupils, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned programme of lessons. Teaching will include sufficient well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to practise applying and embedding new knowledge so that it can be used skilfully and confidently in real life situations.

The Subject Leader for Personal Development will work closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure RSHE programmes complement each other and do not duplicate, content covered in national curriculum subjects including science, ICT/computing, P.E, R.S.

The Personal Development team is responsible for delivering modules on RSHE in Years 7-11. The classes are mixed sex and ability.

PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)

RSHE will be accessible for all pupils. High quality teaching is differentiated and personalised, this is the starting point to ensure accessibility for all pupils. We will also be mindful of the preparing for adulthood outcomes as set out in the SEND code of practice, when preparing these subjects for pupils with SEND.

We are aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Relationships Education can also be a priority for some pupils, for example some with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs or learning disabilities.

For some pupils there may be a need to tailor content and teaching to meeting the specific needs of children at different development stages.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The HT/AHT lead will ensure that:

- All staff are informed of the policy and the responsibilities included within the policy;
- All teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support subjects;
- The subjects are staffed and timetabled in a way to ensure that Bradon Forest school fulfils its legal obligations;
- The teaching of RSHE is monitored to ensure that it is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- Bradon Forest School works with parents/carers when planning and delivering RSHE to pupils;
- Clear information is provided to parents/carers on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn.

All staff will ensure that:

- Expectations are established with the group before embarking on lessons of a sensitive nature so that both the staff and pupils can work together in a supportive atmosphere in which all members can speak with confidence and without fear of embarrassment, anxiety or breach of confidentiality;
- All students are offered the opportunity to explore ideas, situations and feelings in an atmosphere of confidence and support;
- At all times teaching will take place in the context of an explicit moral framework;
- All points of view they may express during the course of teaching RSHE are unbiased;
- They avoid any discussions which directly relate to their own personal sexual experience, orientation, religious belief or opinions (e.g. on controversial matters such as abortion) and ensure that pupils are made aware that people may hold different views and that it is the role of the teacher to present the information in such a way that they can confidently make up their own minds;
- They avoid a situation where a teacher and pupil are having a 'delicate discussion' alone, particularly if advice is sought;
- The teaching of RSHE is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- The emphasis of teaching RSHE will always be the importance and understanding of personal relationships and the right of the individual to make informed choices;
- Issues of stereotyping, sexual equality, harassment, rights and legislation underpin the teaching of RSHE;
- Where appropriate they direct pupils to seek advice and support from an appropriate agency or individual. It is

inappropriate for staff to give pupils personal advice on matters such as contraception or answer questions about something they feel insufficiently knowledgeable or confident;

- Where a pupil has embarked on a course of action likely to place them at risk, the member of staff will ensure that the pupil is aware of the implications of their behaviour. The member of staff should refer any potential concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Parents/Carers:

At Bradon Forest School we acknowledge the key role that parents/carers play in the development of their children's understanding about relationships. Parents are the first educators of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships. Therefore, we ask that parents/carers will be:

- Encouraged to contribute to the development of RSHE of their child;
- Able to discuss any concerns with appropriate staff at Bradon Forest School.

THE RIGHT TO BE EXCUSED FROM SEX EDUCATION

Under the new Department for Education guidelines regarding RSHE teaching from September 2020 parents will not be able to withdraw their child from any aspect of Relationships Education or Health Education.

Parents will be able to withdraw their child (following discussion with the school) from any or all aspects of Sex Education, other than those which are part of the science curriculum, up to and until three terms before the age of 16.

After that point, the guidance states that '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.'

Where pupils are withdrawn from sex education, schools should document the process and will have to 'ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.' There is no right to withdraw from the national curriculum.

Where parents make a request for their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education the school will require the Headteacher to discuss the request with the parent/ carer and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. Following the discussions, except in exceptional circumstances, we will respect the parents' request to withdraw.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

RSHE will be monitored by the Subject Leader of Global Citizenship in collaboration with Curriculum Leaders of Science, ICT & Computing, P.E and R.S and will be overseen by the Leadership Team.

The Curriculum Leader for Learning Support/SENCo will be consulted for those children with special educational needs.

A member of the Governors will have a link role between the school and the governing body.

This policy will be placed on the school website and full programmes of study are available on request to parents through the Headteacher/AHT lead and the Subject Leader of Personal Development