



# The Athelstan Trust

## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Date of Review	Approved by	Date of Approval	Next Review Date	Website
May 2023, Nov 23, Nov 24	Board	12 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2024	December 2025	Y

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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 family, 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/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-and-health-education-guidance/publishing.service.gov.uk)

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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 I

School specific procedures for RSE will be shared in this appendix.