



# **Athena Learning Trust RSHE Policy**

## **Primary Cluster**

### **Altarnun, Egloskerry and Launceston Primary School**

#### **Review**

Reviewed on: November 2023

Reviewed by: Local Governing Body

Review Period: Annual



## **Statement of intent**

At the Primary Cluster, we understand the importance of educating pupils about sex, relationships and their health, for them to make responsible and well-informed decisions in their lives.

The teaching of Relationships education, Sex education and Health education (RSHE) can help to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. It allows us to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and in the wider society.

We have an obligation to provide pupils with high-quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects. This policy outlines how the Primary Cluster RSHE curriculum is organised and delivered, to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils.

### **1. Legal framework**

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2021) 'Keeping children safe in education 2021'
- DfE (2021) 'Teaching about relationships, sex and health'
- DfE (2019) 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'
- DfE (2015) 'National curriculum in England: science programmes of study'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Anti-bullying Procedure
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy



## 1. Statutory requirements

The Primary Cluster is required to provide a curriculum that is broad and balanced in accordance with Section 78 of the Education Act 2002.

The Primary Cluster must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#). In teaching relationships education the school is required to have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996, Published 25 June 2019.

## 2. Policy aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the right provision is in place so that pupils may have all the background knowledge they need to make informed decisions and responsible choices as they grow up. By providing comprehensive relationships education Athena Learning Trust Primary Schools (Altarnun Primary, Egloskerry Primary and Launceston Primary) are not encouraging pupils to become sexually active at a young age.

Through the provision outlined in this policy we also aim to raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence, trying to develop communication and assertiveness skills that can help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see in the media. We seek to teach pupils to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, physical and mental abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them. We want our pupils to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle, teach them to care for and respect their bodies and provide them with all the right tools that will enable them to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their school years and after.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### **School staff**

The school provides regular professional development training in how to deliver relationships education so that all school staff feel comfortable to take PSHE classes and answer questions from pupils. If a teacher does not feel confident leading such discussions then that is likely to be reflected by the pupils, and their learning will be compromised.

This includes sessions on confidentiality, setting ground rules, handling controversial issues, responding to awkward questions and an introduction to the rationale of why teaching relationships education is so important.

There are certain members of the school leadership team, such as *the RSHE Coordinator and Headteacher*, who will hold more responsibility for ensuring that the school's relationships education provision is relevant to our pupils and is effective, but this is generally a responsibility for all staff members and the school expects staff to voice opinions and share expertise in this area.

### **Senior leaders will:**

- o Develop this school policy and review it annually. This policy is developed in consultation with school parents/carers, pupils and staff to ensure that it meets the needs of the whole school community.

- o Parents, pupils and staff are consulted on relationships education provision, and their involvement in developing/reviewing the policy through:

  - Staff consultation – all school staff will be given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations

  - Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties will be sent the policy and invited to email in share concerns or meet with a member of the leadership team

  - Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their [relationships education / relationships and sex education]

- o Ensure that all staff are given regular and ongoing training on issues relating to relationships education and how to deliver lessons on such issues.

- o Ensure that all staff are up to date with policy changes, and familiar with school policy and guidance relating to relationships education.
- o Provide support to staff members who feel uncomfortable or ill-equipped to deal with the delivery of [relationships education / relationships and sex education] to pupils. This may be because they do not feel that their training has been adequate or that aspects of the curriculum are in conflict with their religious beliefs.
- o Ensure that relationships education is age- relevant and appropriate across all year groups; this means ensuring that the curriculum develops as our pupils do and meets their needs.
- o Ensure that the knowledge and information regarding relationships education to which all pupils are entitled is provided in a comprehensive way.
- o Support parental involvement in the development of the relationships education curriculum.
- o Ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing a balanced relationships education in school.
- o Ensure all lessons will be taught with more than one member of staff in the room to safeguard both pupils and staff.
- o Communicate freely with staff, parents/carers and the governing body to ensure that everyone is in understanding of the school policy and curriculum for relationships education, and that any concerns or opinions regarding the provision at the school are listened to, taken into account and acted on as is appropriate. We want the provision of relationships education at home to be complementary to the provision the school provides, and this should be clearly communicated to parents/carers and additional support given where necessary or requested.
- o To ensure that SRE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from [non-statutory/non-science] components of relationships education.

**All staff will:**

- o Ensure that they are up to date with school policy and curriculum requirements regarding relationships education. If a member of staff feels that any areas are not covered or inadequately provided for they should report that to *the RSHE Coordinator and Headteacher*.
- o Attend and engage in professional development training around relationships education provision.
- o Encourage pupils to communicate concerns regarding their social, personal and emotional development in confidence, listen to their needs and support them seriously. Any potential safeguarding concerns must be referred to the DSL through the online reporting mechanism (CPOMS).
- o Provide regular feedback to their managers on their experience of teaching relationships education and student response.
- o Ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing balanced relationships education in school.
- o Ensure all lessons will be taught with more than one member of staff in the room to safeguard both pupils and staff.
- o Tailor their lessons to suit all pupils in their class, across the whole range of abilities, including those pupils with special educational needs. If a member of staff needs support in this area they should speak to the SENDco.

### **Pupils**

Pupils are expected to attend relationships education classes that are in their school timetable and take them seriously. Although they are not assessed through examination, these classes are still a very important part of the curriculum and a tool to aid personal development and the school expects pupils to recognise this.

Pupils should support one another with issues that arise through relationships education. Listening in class, being considerate of other people's feelings and beliefs, and complying with



confidentiality rules that are set in class are key to effective provision. Pupils who regularly fail to follow these standards of behaviour will be dealt with under the school behaviour policy.

Pupils should feel comfortable to talk to a member of staff, in confidence, regarding any concerns they have in school related to relationships education or otherwise.

Conversations of this nature between staff and pupils will be held in confidence; however staff must take concerns to the DSL using the online referral system (CPOMS) if there is a child protection concern or they feel ill-equipped to deal with the issue at hand.

Pupils will be asked for feedback on the school's relationships education provision annually, by the wellbeing lead. Opinions on provision and comments will be reviewed by senior managers and taken into consideration when the curriculum is prepared for the following year's pupils. In this way, the school seeks to provide pupils with the education they need on topics they want to learn about.

### **Parents/carers**

The school expects parents/carers to share the responsibility relationships education and 4 support their children's personal, social and emotional development.

We encourage parents/carers to create an open home environment where their children can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through the school's relationships education. Parents/carers are also encouraged to seek additional support in this from the school where they feel it is needed. For information on accessing school support, see section 5.

## **4. Implementation, delivery and curriculum**

It is important that the school's relationships education policy is implemented consistently and effectively throughout the school. Teachers are encouraged to provide classes that are specific to the needs of the pupils in that class, and responsive to their behaviour and development.



Through this aspect of our curriculum we aim to explore different attitudes, values and social labels, and develop skills that will enable our pupils to make informed decisions regarding relationships. It is important that pupils know the difference between fact, opinion and belief.

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).

Parts of it are taught discreetly during the Science lessons which is taught weekly.

### **Guest speakers**

Guest speakers may be invited into school to talk on issues related to relationships. It may be the case that the subject under discussion is better coming from an expert or experienced health professional who can challenge pupil's perceptions. A teacher will be present throughout these lessons. Visitors will be given a copy of this policy and required to comply with the guidelines outlined within it.

### **Terminology**

Pupils will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts, but slang or everyday terms used in certain social circles will be discussed; this will surround discussion about what is and isn't acceptable language to use. A glossary of terms is provided to parents/carers prior to the unit of lessons.

### **Dealing with difficult questions**



Staff training will include sessions on how to deal with difficult questions. There may still be times when staff are faced with a difficult question in class that they feel uncomfortable or ill equipped to answer. In this case, they may wish to put the question to one side and seek advice from the *the RSHE Coordinator and Headteacher*.

Ground rules in class are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter. Some strategies staff may use to support this might using an anonymous suggestion box or emphasizing that the classroom is a safe place.

### **Pupils with special educational needs**

The school works hard to ensure that all aspects of the school curriculum are inclusive and support the needs of pupils of all ranges of abilities. Staff differentiate lessons to ensure that all members of the class can access the information fully, and this is no different when it comes to relationships education.

The school will use a variety of different strategies to ensure that all pupils have access to the same information. Some of these may include:

- use of expert guest speakers.
- practical activities.
- using video clips.
- group and paired activities.

### **5. Withdrawal from relationships education**

The school aims to keep parents/carers informed about all aspects of relationships education curriculum and urges parents/carers to read this policy. Parents/carers can request access to resources and information being used in class, and the school will do everything it can to ensure that parents/carers are comfortable with the education provided to their children in school.

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

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the teaching of sex education other than that delivered through the science curriculum and Head Teachers will automatically grant a request to withdraw a pupil.

At Athena Learning Trust's Primary Schools (Altarnun Primary, Egloskerry Primary and Launceston Primary), parents have the right to request that their child will be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of the statutory RSE (stated DFE). The school are transparent with all curriculum content and share this through letters and Power Points sent to parents prior to teaching. Before granting any withdrawal request the Head Teacher would invite the parent in to discuss the request with the Wellbeing Lead or class teacher, and as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum.

## **6. Complaints**

Parents/carers who have complaints or concerns regarding the relationships education curriculum should contact the school and follow the school's complaints procedure.

## **7. Equal opportunities**

Relationships education lessons provide a good background for talking openly and freely about the diversity of personal, social and sexual preferences. Prejudiced views will be challenged and equality promoted. Any bullying that relates to sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation will be dealt with swiftly and seriously, in the same way as bullying of any kind - the procedures regarding this are outlined in the school's behaviour policy.

## **8. Safeguarding and confidentiality**

The school seeks to provide a safe and supportive school community where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. Training around confidentiality will be provided to all teachers. It may be the case that discussion around what is acceptable and not acceptable in relationships may lead to a reference in accordance with the school's child protection and safeguarding procedure.

Personal information about pupils who have approached a teacher for discussion should only be shared where there is a concern through the online referral system with the DSL. If there is a child protection concern, the information must be handled as outlined in the school child protection and safeguarding procedure. Staff members that breach the right to a child's privacy

by disclosing or sharing confidential information with no reason to do so will be dealt with under the school's staff discipline, conduct and grievance procedures. 7

If a member of staff is informed that a pupil is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, this will be dealt with under child protection procedures and must be referred to the DSL immediately using the school referral system.

Pupils with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation and less able to protect themselves from harmful influences. If staff are concerned that this is the case, they should seek support from the SENDco to decide what is in the best interest of the child.

## **9. Monitoring, review and evaluation**

The educational and personal needs of our pupils develop in line with varying societal pressures and economic change. Our aim is to provide relationships education that is relevant and tailored to meet the needs of our pupils, depending on their age and stage of personal development. For this reason we review the relationships education curriculum annually, and will inform parents/carers of any revisions to this policy or [relationships education / relationships and sex education] curriculum.

We will monitor the effectiveness of our relationships education provision through:

- yearly feedback from pupils
- yearly feedback from parents/carers
- feedback from staff
- classroom observations.

The school will review this policy annually, evaluating its effectiveness by taking into account feedback from pupils, staff and parents/carers, as well as what has come to light through classroom observations and information we receive from national reports and curriculum reviews.

## **10. Support**

Pupils should feel safe in the school environment to talk to any member of staff in confidence about any areas of concern regarding their personal, social and emotional development, including matters raised by or relating to relationships education. We promote the school ethos as one of inclusion and acceptance throughout all areas of school activity and hope that pupils



respond to this by feeling comfortable to ask questions and continue their learning both in and outside of the classroom.