Atlantic Academy

Relationships, sex and health education policy

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1. Links to other policies

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Acceptable Use Agreement for Pupils (Devices and Technology)

2. Aims

At Atlantic Academy we understand the importance of educating pupils about relationships, sex and health so that they can make responsible and well-informed decisions in their lives.

The teaching of 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.

The aims of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) at our school are to:

- Develop skills and attributes such as resilience, self-esteem, risk-management, teamworking and critical thinking
- Provide young people with reliable information so they can make informed decisions about their health and bodies
- 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
- Deal with misconceptions, myths and misunderstandings
- To safeguard pupils

3. Definition

RSHE stands for Relationship, Sex and Health Education. It is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity in a safe environment where pupils can discuss their thoughts and receive age appropriate reliable guidance. RSHE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values. RSHE is **not** about the promotion of sexual activity, indeed evidence shows that the provision of well taught, effective RSHE reduces the likelihood of young people engaging in risky behaviours.

4. Statutory requirements

We have an obligation to provide pupils with high-quality, well-evidenced and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects. This policy outlines how the school's RSHE curriculum is organised and delivered, to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils.

Primary Academy:

The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 states that Relationships Education is compulsory in all primary schools. Sex Education is not compulsory in primary schools and the content set out in this guidance therefore focuses on Relationships Education. (DfE RSE Guidance, 2025).

As a primary academy we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

However, we are not required to provide sex education but we do need to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

In teaching RSHE, we must have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

Secondary Academy

As a secondary academy we must provide RSE to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017.

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.

At our Academy we teach RSHE as set out in this policy.

5. 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 – RSHE lead pulled together 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 meeting about the policy and their views were listened to

4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want and need from their RSHE

5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

6. Curriculum

For the purpose of this policy:

- "**RSHE**" is used to refer to the overall programme of relationships, sex and health education.
- "**RSE**" refers to relationships and sex education and is defined as teaching pupils about developing healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, and helping them to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. Sex education is defined as education about human sexual reproduction and sexual intercourse.
- "**Health education**" is defined as teaching pupils about how they can make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, and how physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked.

Our curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1 but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, taking into account 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 that pupils are fully informed and don't seek answers online. Younger pupils will be encouraged to speak with their parents if they ask any questions related to sex education that is not covered in the science curriculum.

The RSHE curriculum will be monitored and reviewed, in consultation with teachers, pupils and parents, and in accordance with DfE recommendations.

Primary:

Atlantic Academy's approach to relationships education is on teaching the skills and knowledge that form the building blocks of all positive relationships, supporting children from the start of their education to grow into kind, caring adults who have respect for others and know how to keep themselves and others safe.

Relationships education is anchored in an understanding of positive relationships, and equips children to keep themselves and others safe, and to recognise and report risks and abuse, including online. There is a focus on boundaries, privacy, and ensuring children understand they have rights over their own bodies and personal information. This will also include an understanding of boundaries in friendships with peers, families and with others, in all contexts, including online. Pupils should be able to recognise emotional, physical and sexual abuse. Even very young children can be equipped to understand what counts as abusive behaviour and to trust their instincts about behaviour that doesn't feel right.

We ensure that pupils understand about bullying, and that this can include the use of derogatory terms relating to sex, race, disability or sexual orientation. Pupils are taught how to report concerns and seek advice. While teaching children how to stay safe, including online, teachers make it clear that being a victim of abuse is never the fault of the child.

Protective and preventative content is introduced sensitively in an age appropriate way and in such a way that does not normalise risky behaviours and activities.

Secondary:

Atlantic Academy understands that effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation but in fact builds pupil's confidence and self-esteem and helps them to understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. This curriculum will therefore aim to support pupils, throughout life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time.

The curriculum will provide knowledge about safer sex and sexual health. It is important to ensure that pupils are equipped to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life. This will be delivered in a non-judgmental, factual way and allow the pupils to ask questions in a safe environment. Teachers may use approaches such as distancing techniques, setting ground rules with the class to help manage sensitive discussion and using question boxes to allow pupils to raise issues anonymously.

Secondary RSE teaching will provide a clear progression from what is taught to pupils in primary school. It will build on the foundations of RHE and, as pupils grow up, at the appropriate time extend the teaching to include intimate relationships.

Pupils will be taught the facts about the law, sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way. All pupils will be offered a curriculum which is relevant to them and their developing sexuality. The curriculum will recognise that pupils may be discovering or understanding their sexual orientation or gender identity. The school will provide pastoral support as necessary following lessons with content that some students may find sensitive.

Grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour, will also be addressed sensitively and clearly, along with physical and emotional damage caused by female genital mutilation (FGM).

The school will teach pupils the knowledge they need to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. This will be delivered by focusing on boundaries and privacy, ensuring pupils understand that they have rights over their bodies. This will also include an understanding on boundaries in friendships with peers, families and with others, in all contexts, including online.

For more information about our curriculum, see our curriculum map in Appendix 1.

There may be times when pupils are exposed to something outside of school that needs discussion in school. Parents will be informed of any deviation from our published RSE policy in advance and any relevant materials will be shared with them on request.

7. Delivery of RSHE

RSHE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum as well as through Deep Learning Days. Biological aspects of RSHE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE) which is taught during PSHE lessons and Deep Learning Days.

Lessons are taught by subject specialist teachers, experienced teachers and occasionally by external agencies such as school nurses or youth workers.

RSHE 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 RSHE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

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).

8. Inclusion

All pupils have a right to age appropriate RSHE regardless of faith, gender, sexual orientation, race or disability. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised is the starting point to ensure accessibility for all of our pupils.

The SENDCo is able to advise teaching staff on how best to identify and support pupils' individual needs and also the use of TAs in order to meet pupils' individual needs.

The Equality Act of 2010 protects children, young people and adults against discrimination, harassment and victimisation in relation to education.

PD&W Leads, as well as the Safeguarding Leads, have a duty of care to ensure that all staff delivering RSHE are familiar with the Safeguarding Policy and understand the necessary protocol should a safeguarding issue arise. Furthermore, the backgrounds of all pupils are taken into account when planning and teaching, so that the topics are sensitive to the needs of our pupils and families.

9. Roles and responsibilities

9.1 Governance

The Board of Trustees for Aspirations delegates responsibility to local Regional Boards (RB). The RB will approve the RSHE Policy. This policy will be reviewed by the PD&W / PSHE Lead annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the RB.

9.2 The Principal

The principal is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non statutory components of RSHE (see section 10). They will also ensure that all teaching staff receive ongoing training on issues relating to PSHE and RSHE and how to deliver lessons on such issues and make sure that all staff are up to date with policy changes, and familiar with school policy and guidance relating to RSHE

9.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a factual and sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils and seeking advice from the SENDCo about adapting materials for pupils with SEND who may require it
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non statutory components of RSHE

It is important that RSHE is taught by staff trained and eager to teach RSHE just like any other subject. If staff have concerns about teaching RSHE they should speak to their line manager, but it is an expectation that all staff will promote the values and ethos of the curriculum.

9.4 Pupils

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

10. The Law

It is important for pupils to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. The school curriculum will include teaching pupils about a range of important facts, including, but not limited to, the rules regarding personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This will help pupils to identify what is right and wrong in law, but it can also be useful in providing a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships.

Pupils will be made aware of the relevant legal provisions **when relevant topics are being taught**, including but not limited to:

- Marriage
- Consent, including the age of consent
- Violence against woman and girls
- Online behaviours including image and information sharing, "sexting," youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.
- Pornography
- Abortion
- Sexuality
- Gender identity
- Substance misuse
- Violence and exploitation by gangs
- Extremism and radicalisation
- Criminal exploitation, including through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations
- Hate crimes
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)

11. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory 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 Academy will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the Principal.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Principal will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

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

12. Training

Staff delivering RSHE are trained on the delivery of RSHE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

13. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSHE is monitored by the PD&W / PSHE Lead just like any other subject through the usual academy monitoring systems. For example, thro

- Learning Walks
- Book Scrutiny
- Data Analysis
- Pupil Voice
- Staff Consultations
- Ongoing CPD

Pupils' development in RSHE is monitored by class teachers termly through summative data. Pupils should be given feedback on their progress and be able to articulate their understanding of key aspects of the curriculum.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Appendix 1: Curriculum map which covers all of the requirements of the DfE statutory guidance for RSE and Health Education July 2025

Relationships and sex education curriculum map

Primary Relationships and sex education curriculum map

	Autumn 1 *Me & My relationships*	Autumn 2 *Valuing difference*	Spring 1 *Keeping Safe*	Spring 2 *Rights and respect*	Summer 1 *Being my best*	Summer 2 *Growing & changing*
Year R	Making healthy choices for myself and my body	What makes me unique and special	Qualities of a good friend	Feelings - expressions	Keeping clean & healthy routines	Healthy routine
Year 1	Positive and safe relationships	Special people in my life and bullying	Private parts Asking for help	Caring for someone	Healthy balanced diet	Safe grown ups Private parts

Year 2	Positive relationships and environments. Recognising emotions	How do my actions affect others?	Risk taking Seeking help	Dealing with big feelings	Resilience & body parts	Bodies & emotions
Year 3	Maintaining healthy relationships	Respect and community	Identifying risk Finding help	Money	Healthy habits Unwell	Changing body parts
Year 4	Recognising more feelings	Friends and acquaintances	Keeping myself safe Medicines	Responsibility & community	Being unique in my community	Controlling emotions
Year 5	Maintaining steady relationships and essential needs	Quality of friendships and relationships	Making difficult decisions Bullying	Facts & opinions	Qualities Being a leader	Changing, emotions and hormones
Year 6	Being assertive, following rules and acting appropriately in a range of environments	Gender stereotypes	Keeping safe online Drugs & alcohol	Real & fake friends	Basic first	Laws around sex
All primary year groups	Diversity Week Healthy Living Week	Anti Bullying Week	Safer Internet Day		Mental Health Week Refugee Week	

Secondary Relationships and sex education curriculum map

	Term 1		Term 2		Term 3	
Yr 7	PSHE- Introduction & Aspiration	RSE- Friends and relationships	PSHE: UK politics and online safety	RE: Hinduism	RSE- Friends and relationships	
	RE : Exploring god and Christianity	RE : Exploring god and Christianity	Careers and Finance			
Yr 8	PSHE- Personal Safety	RE: Hinduism & Islam	RSE: Relationships and safety	Careers and finance: Budgeting, careers and gambling	PSHE: Protected characteristics and British values	

Yr 9	PSHE- Body image	PSHE- Human rights and responsibilities	Careers options and choices	RSE- Sex and relationships	PSHE - The Law	
	RE: Abortion & Eutanasia					
Yr 10	RSE- Sex and relationships	RSE- Sex and relationships	PSHE- Mental Health and positive body image	PSHE- Prejudice, racism, diversity and stereotypes	PSHE- The Law & county lines	
Yr 11	RSE- Sex and relationships	RSE- Sex and relationships	PSHE- Mental Health	PSHE- Global Issues	Summer exam season	
All secondary year groups	Participate in world e safety day in term 2 and PSHE issues are incorporated into our tutor programme such as Black Lives Matter, global issues, British Values, LGBTQ+ and mental health.					

Appendix 2: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within RSE lessons			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	