



## RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Today's 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 personal, academic, and social lives in a positive way. This is why Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is compulsory in all secondary schools.

Effective RSE can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils if they are to establish and maintain relationships. It also enables children and young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and well-being. RSE makes an important contribution to health and well-being by supporting children and young people's ability to learn, achieve and flourish.

Pupils receive comprehensive scientific and medical information in a moral framework. The RSE programme emphasises the need for a responsible attitude towards sexual relationships, draws attention to emotional implications, and raises moral issues. Pupils are encouraged to consider their religious tradition and to respect the traditions of others. In building healthy relationships young people need to understand that these can be in many forms, and relationships are built on mutual trust, tolerance, and respect. Students learn that with any healthy relationship, there comes a responsibility.

RSE also helps to safeguard children by:

- Equipping them with knowledge and vocabulary needed to make informed decisions
- It helps them to develop their social skills, reasoning, listening to views of others, helping to develop positive friendships and relationships.
- It teaches them about their bodies, boundaries, appropriate behaviour and privacy.
- It establishes a safe learning environment for pupils to ask questions and get reliable and accurate information.

Parents are entitled to withdraw pupils from sex education classes delivered as part of RSE within Learning for Life. Before granting any such request, parents will meet with Mrs Channer – Deputy Head Pastoral and Mrs Whitbread – Head of Learning for Life to discuss the request. Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw their child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should arrange to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

If a pupil is excused from sex education, we will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships or Health Education.

In **Learning for Life**, the curriculum builds year on year in an age appropriate way to develop knowledge so that students can make informed decisions around relationships and sex.

3rds – Puberty, healthy relationships, feelings and how to manage them.

Removes – Body image, commitment and relationships, sexting.

Lower 4<sup>th</sup> – Gender and stereotype, Consent, sex and the law, choices around sex, contraception and STI's.

Upper 4<sup>th</sup> – Successful relationships, sexual relationships, abuse and exploitation, relating to others.

5ths – Gender identity and transgender, sexual health and pornography.

L6 – Healthy relationships; the laws relating to consent/coercion/grooming/ honour based violence; contraception & parenthood; impact of STIs

U6 – Relationships on social media; online safety/presence/ digital footprint; personal safety offline, including drink spiking, driving, passenger safety & licensed taxis

The Learning for Life programme is delivered by tutors, Junior House staff, the Head of Learning for Life, and professional topic based speakers. The lessons taught are based on resources produced by Hodder Dynamic Learning. Each lesson moves through a PowerPoint with topics for discussion in groups and by the whole class. There is also a small amount of written work completed during the lesson. Teaching and learning are monitored by the Head of Learning for Life and the Assistant Head of Learning of Life, through observations and by looking at the reflection and feedback pages completed by

the students at the end of each term. The Learning for Life programme also embeds the Values of Bancroft's School: Balance, Integrity, Excellence, Kindness, Curiosity, and Courage.

Learning for Life schemes of work can be found on the School website and provide an insight to how we scaffold the curriculum in an age appropriate way. Some of the lesson content provokes healthy class discussion and occasionally this may touch on sensitive material. The students know they can always approach a range of staff if they have any worries about lesson content.

In **Religious Studies**, pupils who chose to do RS GCSE will cover the issue of abortion, from both religious and ethical perspectives. They will also look at religious attitudes towards LGBTQ+ as part of a broader study of prejudice and discrimination.

In **Science**, the Thirds cover sexual reproduction as part of a topic on Cells. They are taught the correct names for the male and female anatomy, the changes that bodies undergo during puberty and learn how fertilisation occurs. They look at the development of the human foetus from conception to birth and consider infertility without looking at treatment.

In GCSE Biology, students consider sexually transmitted diseases and the production of gametes (sex cells) by meiosis in U4 and the menstrual cycle, the development of secondary sexual characteristics and different forms of contraception in the Fifth year. According to their age and level of maturity, pupils may discuss controversial and sensitive topics in class. Examples include homosexuality, abortion, fertility treatment, adoption, parenting, and single parenthood.

The School Nurse is available to give advice and information, in confidence, to individual pupils on contraception and sexual health matters. Teachers do not give advice to individual pupils on contraception or sexual health. Bancroft's provides a safe and secure environment and provides support to the students in their care. We actively promote positive relationships, which helps prevent negative behaviours in and around our school community.

As part of effective RSE provision, the RSE policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of pupils, staff and parents and that it is in line with current Department for Education advice and guidance.

If you would like further information, or wish to discuss Sex Education provision, please contact the Deputy Head (Pastoral).