



Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Bancroft's

Independent Co-educational Day School 7–18

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1. Policy Aims

The school publishes this policy as a statutory requirement and with the following aims:

- Defining RSE within the Learning for Life curriculum and explaining its delivery at school; to offer a clear guide to parents, staff and visitors.
- To give information to parents about their involvement with RSE.

2. Statutory Requirements

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 makes Relationships Education and Health Education statutory in all schools. The guidance became mandatory in September 2020.

3. Definitions

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) supports and guides children and young people in life-long learning about relationships, emotions and the human biology of sex and sexual health. In partnership with parents, we help our young people to understand and manage their physical and emotional development during adolescence and to prepare for decisions to be made in adult life.

Health Education focuses on the characteristics of good physical and mental health and wellbeing.

4. Ethos and Aims

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. Therefore, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is a compulsory subject within the curriculum 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 are given 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 traditions 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 the 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.

The Head of Learning for Life will liaise regularly with the SENCO to support SEND students in accessing the curriculum content, some of which requires sensitive handling. This may include the SENCO talking through information with a pupil before the lesson is delivered, or deploying a member of the department to a class in which sensitive topics are being discussed. In preparing for the academic year, members of the SEND department are made aware of the curriculum content in Learning for Life for each year group so that individual pupils' needs can be met.

5. Parental information on withdrawing pupils from sex education.

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 an appropriate member of the pastoral team. 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 make arrangements 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.

6. Delivery

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 4th – Gender and stereotypes, consent, sex and the law, choices around sex, contraception and STI's.

Upper 4th – 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 a variety of staff, including 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 in 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 choose to do RS GCSE will cover the issue of abortion, from both religious and ethical perspectives. They will also look at religious attitudes towards homosexuality 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 Biology, U4th students consider sexually transmitted diseases and the production of gametes (sex cells) by meiosis and, in the 5th Form, the menstrual cycle, the development of secondary sexual characteristics and different forms of contraception.

Depending on 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 Mrs Channer, Deputy Head (Pastoral).

