



## **Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy**

**Bancroft's**  
Independent Co-educational Day School 7–18

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## 1. Policy Aims

This policy covers Bancroft's Senior School's approach to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). We believe that RSE is vital for the personal, social and emotional development of our pupils. Bancroft's School believes that all children and young people have a right to holistic, inclusive and needs-led RSE. We believe that through providing high quality RSE, we are upholding the ethos and values of our school and its commitment to equality and celebration of difference. RSE is delivered as part of the Learning for Life curriculum to all year groups.

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 policy complies with our statutory obligations to deliver RSE under sections 34 & 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. It will have due regard for the DfE's statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Guidance and other relevant guidance. We will review this policy on a regular basis to ensure that it is in line with current Government guidance and legislation and to ensure that our RSE programme continues to meet the needs of our pupils.

'...lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health' DfEE 'Sex and Relationship Guidance', 2000.

## 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.

We define relationships education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human relationships including friendships, intimate, sexual and committed relationships and family life.

We define sex education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human sexuality and behaviour, including human reproduction. This includes conception and contraception, safer sex, sexually transmitted infections and sexual health. (The definitions for relationships education and sex education is taken from the Sex Education Forum)

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

## 4. Ethos and Aims

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 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 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. The aim of RSE is to provide balanced factual information about relationships and sex, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, religious, and moral dimensions of sexual health.

Our RSE programme aims to prepare students for an adult life in which they can:

- Develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour; have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want.
- Understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within different types of relationships.
- Avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex.
- Communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for sex and relationship issues.
- Develop awareness of their sexuality and understand human sexuality; challenge sexism and prejudice, and promote equality and diversity, in line with The Equality Act 2010
- Understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity.
- Understand the reasons for having protected sex.
- Have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from unwanted sexually transmitted infections.
- Be aware of possible links between relationships and sex on mental health, and how to deal with them
- Be aware of sources of help and support, and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary
- Know how the law applies to relationships

At Bancroft's School RSE also helps to safeguard children and is an integral part of their learning journey. It supports students by:-

- Equipping them with the knowledge and vocabulary needed to make informed decisions
- Helping them to develop their social skills, reasoning, listening to views of others, helping to develop positive friendships and relationships.
- Teaching them about their bodies, boundaries, appropriate behaviour and privacy.
- Establishing a safe learning environment for pupils to ask questions and get reliable and accurate information.
- Understanding the range of relationships within the wider world and supporting family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness.
- Fostering the values of love, respect, equality and caring for each other.
- Generating an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment.
- Recognising that parents/carers are the key people in teaching their children about relationships, sex and growing up. We aim to work in partnership with parents/carers and students, consulting them about the content of programmes.

## **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. However, the Department for Education states that you may not withdraw your child from the wider Relationships Education curriculum, any aspect of Health Education, or from the elements of the Science curriculum that cover puberty, conception and reproduction. Before granting any such request, parents will meet with Mrs Channer, Deputy Head Pastoral and Mrs Khera, 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 plan 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. Inclusion**

We believe that RSE is a key vehicle for promoting equality, inclusion and social justice. Our RSE programme is designed to promote gender equality through challenging gender stereotypes and sexism and sexual harassment in schools. We take these issues seriously and ensure that we embed content on gender equality throughout the curriculum. We are also committed to an RSE that makes every pupil feel valued and included and is relevant to them. RSE is taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination and is mindful of individuals' religious, spiritual and moral beliefs. Bancroft's School will seek to challenge all forms of discrimination and prejudice between pupils and promote understanding and respect as outlined under the Equality Act 2010.

## 7. Delivery

To cover the curriculum content outlined in the RSHE Guidance, we will equip our pupils to build positive and respectful relationships online and offline. We seek to ensure that it gives pupils the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will help them to:

- realise their health (including sexual health), wellbeing and dignity
- build self-esteem and self-worth
- explore and value their personal and sexual identity and the personal/sexual identities of others
- understand family structures, committed relationships and the legal status of different types of long-term relationships
- understand and make sense of the real-life issues they are experiencing in the world around them
- manage and explore difficult feelings and emotions
- consider how their choices affect their own wellbeing and that of others
- develop as informed and responsible citizens
- understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives.

We believe that high quality, comprehensive RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation but in fact builds young people's confidence and self-esteem and helps them understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Evidence shows that effective RSE plays a role in behaviour change, including reducing unprotected or unwanted sex and reducing harmful behaviour, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

All content will be delivered in a timely way and will be age and developmentally appropriate to meet the needs of our pupils, content is also revisited as part of a circular curriculum.

For example: -

Thirds – Digital Literacy, Puberty, Respectful Relationships, Marriage and Commitment, and Body Image

Removes – Healthy Relationships, Consent and Harassment, and Managing Change

Lower Fourth – Relationships, Consent, Online Grooming, Contraception, Sexually Transmitted Infections

Upper Fourth – Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships, Coercive Control, Domestic Abuse, Intimacy

Fifths – Marriage and Co-habitation, Fertility and Menopause, Sexual Violence and Harassment

Sixth Form - Media Literacy and Digital Resilience, Self-Concept, Mental Health and Emotional Well-being, Managing Risk and Personal Safety, Forming and Maintaining Respectful Relationships, Relationship Values, Bullying, Abuse and Discrimination.

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 a range of resources such as Chameleon PDE, EC Resources and Creative Curriculum. Each lesson moves through a PowerPoint with topics for discussion in groups and by the whole class. Some year groups use booklets and there is also written work completed during the lesson. Teaching and learning are monitored by the Head of Learning for Life and Deputy Head of Learning for 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 into 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 5<sup>th</sup> 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.

## 8. Review

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).

## Appendix.

Parent request to withdraw child from Sex Education within the RSE curriculum.

To be completed by parents.

Name of pupil	
Form	
Name of Parent	
Date	

Reason for wishing to withdraw from sex education within RSE education.
Any other information you would like the school to consider.

Parental signature.....