



Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Policy

Definitions

Relationship and Sex Education builds on Relationships and Health Education taught at primary school and extends to include aspects of sex education set out in statutory guidance. There is a parental right to request withdrawal from the sex education component of this subject. There is no right to withdrawal from other parts of secondary Relationships Education, nor from Health Education, nor from any part of the Science curriculum.

Health Education refers to the wider aspects of the physical, mental and sexual health of an adolescent. This includes the physical changes, avoidance of unhealthy lifestyles and substances, adoption of healthy hobbies and physical activities and also personal hygiene regimes. Basic first aid, self-care and knowledge of screening and self-examination are also covered.

Adoption Arrangements and Date

All statutory policies in the Tenax Trust are ultimately the responsibility of the Trust Board.

This is a Level 3 Policy against the Trust Governance Plan. It is also a policy that is shaped in the context of the school community and where arrangements are made to hear and reflect some of the views of parents in the development and review phases.

Review Body	LGB	Adopted	September 2020
Responsibility	Headteacher	Date of next review	Summer 2023
Policy Type	Statutory	Review period	3 years

Background

The RSHE policy at Bennett follows an integrated and carefully mapped approach that ensures that the identified areas in the [DfE statutory guidance](#) , are covered. These areas are addressed through teaching in the context of RSHE sessions but also more widely in other curriculum areas such as citizenship education, religious studies, science, computing and PE.

In making sure the various areas relating to positive caring relationships are introduced at the appropriate stage for students, care is taken to communicate with students, the welfare team, parents and governors to ensure that statutory provision is provided in a sensitive, inclusive, accessible way that accords with the law, in particular the Equality Act 2010. The school prospectus will include a short summary of the school's Relationship and Sex Education Policy, including the legal duties and educational aims of the School, and setting out the circumstances for the parental right to withdraw their child.

2. Educational Aims

Approved by the LGB:

Final version following consultation

This is a Level 3 policy

Bennett's statement of aims and ethos makes clear that Christian values should "provide the focus and inspiration of school life." These values lead to an emphasis on the realisation of potential in the academic, personal, moral and spiritual spheres; on the importance of self-respect and respect for others; and on the unique value of the individual and of human relationships between individuals. These values underpin all the activities of the curriculum, and the school's approach to relationships and sex education.

At Bennett this means ensuring that space is given to the heart of the matter. The setting of all these areas of education, some of them quite complex and technical, must be set in the wider context of the importance of what constitutes healthy relationships. It must seek to adequately inform and equip a child for the adult world whilst at the same time providing a safe space for development during childhood. Careful consideration is therefore given to the stage at which to cover a topic, in what way and at what pace to introduce it.

At Bennett, which is a Church of England school, provision is informed by a Christian understanding of love, the dignity of each human being, and the value of service to others as a Christian vocation. Knowing we are loved, knowing how to love and recognising when something really is not love, are all the basis of much more complex and technical issues and questions as evidenced in the curriculum map.

The basis of an inclusive and loving approach can be found in the Church of England's guidance ['Valuing All God's Children'](#). It refers to the fundamental belief that each person is created with human dignity in the image of God. This document sets the highest standard for our relationships to one another. Students need clear guidance on what constitutes a healthy relationship and on how to recognise and avoid unhealthy relationships. They need informing and guiding in many of the areas of development, human behaviour and risk such that they can live life in all its fullness and truly flourish.

3. The Programme of Relationship and Sex Education

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Bennett's programme of relationships and sex education is the responsibility of the headteacher and local governing body under the Trust governance plan. Operationally this responsibility will be discharged by the assistant headteacher responsible for this area who works with the teacher in charge of Personal And Citizenship Education (PACE).

As well as this document and these principles underpinning the process and practice of lesson delivery, Bennett ensures that its staff are themselves role models of these relationships which we aspire for students to have. Respectful and kind interactions are what we aim not just to teach, but to model and enact. For this reason, we often use form tutors as an integral part of delivery of the RSHE programme in areas where specialisation is not required. They help provide the supportive, relational foundation for much of what is set out.

In addition to this, Bennett uses organisations from beyond the school, as well as expertise from within school including the school nurse. The resources that are used are always carefully previewed before a session. We also make use of specialist training in a number of areas. We have developed a series of resources to support our curriculum delivery. In taking this approach, Bennett seeks to ensure that the resources that we use are fully aligned with the ethos of the school and the manner in which we would want all of these topics approached.

4. Approval and monitoring

When this policy is renewed we consult with parents on its provisions and take into account parents' views.

As with other subjects in the curriculum, both RSE and HE are scrutinised and evaluated as part of the School's ongoing observation and performance management programme. Both Ofsted and SIAMS inspections (Strand 5) inspect this aspect of the school's work. We acknowledge our obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Evaluation and review of this will be periodic and the policy updated at least every three years.

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5. The right to withdrawal

There is a statutory right to request withdrawal from Sex Education, which for this purpose is defined as content set out in statutory guidance under 'Intimate and Sexual Relationships.' Parents have the right to request withdrawal up to 3 terms (autumn, spring summer) before the child's 16th birthday and the headteacher will normally agree to this request. After this point the headteacher is required to consult the pupil concerned. If at that point the child wishes to be included in Sex Education, the headteacher will make arrangements for the pupil to receive some Sex Education in the lead up to the pupil's sixteenth birthday.

Where possible a request for withdrawal should be made suitably in advance, preferably in writing, to the headteacher and should refer to the table of course content in the curriculum map. In the case of a request to withdraw, the school has a duty to set out the benefits of inclusion and disbenefits of exclusion in response to the request and a right to request a meeting. However, the School will honour the request of parents if that remains their preferred option and document the process that has occurred.

6. The Content of Relationship and Sex Education – contained in the curriculum map

There is an emphasis throughout these years on developing each student's self-efficacy and the confidence to make well-informed personal choices about relationships and sexual behaviour, including those which may appear counter-cultural, having understood the provisions of the law, and having formed an informed personal ethical framework of reference. The relationships and sex education programme aims to ensure that students "revisit" the issues covered at different stages and with growing moral maturity. Students will be led to understand that English Law is permissive in the sense that broadly, provided participants in sexual acts are of legal age and consenting, there are no other legal prohibitions. Whilst all citizens must know and act within the limits defined by the law, choices should still be governed by an individual's own ethical framework. The school ensures that students are made familiar with the positions of the Church of England for students to consider as they develop their own stance in these areas in accordance with good conscience.

7. Personal Advice and Counselling

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The school nurse is available to provide a personal advice and counselling service for students on sexual matters. The school nurse will follow the Registered Nurse Professional Code of Conduct and ethics regarding confidentiality in such exchanges. In cases where the possibility of unlawful, exploitative or abusive behaviour is disclosed the school nurse will refer to the headteacher and to the designated safeguarding lead. Occasionally students may wish to talk with teaching staff about their personal sexual or relationship concerns. In such cases, all teaching staff should refer to the student's year manager, who will offer support or referral to the school nurse as appropriate. In cases where there is thought to be a possibility of unlawful, exploitative or abusive sexual behaviour, the year manager will refer to the designated safeguarding lead and to the headteacher.

Where a student is seeking advice on matters such as sexuality, gender identity, contraception, sexual behaviour or relationships, the School's policy will be to encourage the student to discuss these matters with their parent(s), their GP, or, in some cases, with an appropriate counselling service. Staff should avoid offering any personal advice in these areas. However, in terms of advice from the school nurse to students who do not wish to discuss the matter with their parents, the school will act in accordance with the Fraser guidelines, referencing Gillick competency and associated binding legal judgements, in particular Lord Scarman's judgements (1985):

"...it is not enough that [a girl] should understand the nature of the advice which is being given: she must also have a sufficient maturity to understand what is involved ... parental right yields to the child's right to make [her] own decisions when [she] reaches a sufficient understanding and intelligence to be capable of making up [her] own mind on the matter requiring decision."

The school nurse and other senior staff are able to apply these principles and guidelines or seek support in doing so. Other untrained staff must not attempt to do so. All members of staff are instructed that they may not promise confidentiality to any student, but must make it clear to the student that they must refer any serious disclosed matter to the appropriate senior member of staff.

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