



BRADFIELD COLLEGE

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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1.2	Sarah Davies and Stuart Williams	June 2022	Incorporation additional DfE guidance including KCSIE Sept 2022, updating of staff titles

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Introduction

Sex and relationship education is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of loving and caring relationships. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching. All pupils will be made aware of the key features of this policy especially but not only as they relate to the boarding environment of the College.

Research demonstrates that effective, comprehensive sex and relationship education does not make young people more likely to become sexually active at a younger age.

Policy Aims

RSE at Bradfield takes account of the statutory guidance published by the DfE: *Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education Guidance (July 2020)*.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/908013/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf

Our RSE programme also takes note of the guidance provided in Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment September 2021:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/999239/SVSH_2021.pdf

The aim of RSE is to provide children with age appropriate information, explore attitudes and values and develop skills in order to empower them to make positive decisions about their health-related behaviour. This will take place with consideration of the qualities of relationships within families.

- To provide the knowledge and information to which all pupils are entitled;
- To raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence, especially in their relationships with others;
- To develop pupils' skills to ensure a healthy, safe lifestyle;
- To develop pupils' communication skills and assertiveness skills to cope with the influences of their peers, the media and online;
- To help pupils learn to respect and care for their bodies;
- To prepare pupils for puberty and adulthood;
- To help pupils learn about the importance of consent in relationships;
- To ensure that pupils are fully aware that at Bradfield we have zero tolerance for all forms of child-on-child abuse including sexual violence and harassment, whether direct or involving the use of technology, so that no form of any such abuse (no matter how 'low level' it may appear) is ever dismissed as a joke or banter.
- To help pupils understand that when someone who has harassed them proceeds to challenge them with phrases like 'can't you take a joke' this is simply another form of harassment;
- To help pupils learn how to gain access to information and support;
- To ensure that pupils are aware that the law is there to protect them;
- To help pupils understand that at Bradfield we actively seek their feedback.

Values Framework

As part of relationship and sex education, pupils will be taught about the nature and importance of marriage (as understood following the legalization of same-sex marriage in 2013) for family life and bringing up children. In addition, there will be recognition of the strong, mutually supportive relationships that can exist outside the institution of marriage, so pupils will learn about the significance of both marriage and stable relationships as key building blocks of community and society.

Care will be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.

All those who teach aspects of RSE within school, including visitors, will be guided by the following values framework which represents the values held in common by the whole school community.

The teaching of RSE will encourage students to:

- Value and respect themselves;
- Value and respect others for who they are, not for what they have or what they can do;
- Value relationships which are based on mutual respect and care;
- Value and respect difference in people's religion, culture, sexual orientation, physical and mental ability and social background;
- Value and respect their own and others' rights to make choices in relationships after having considered the consequences of those choices;
- Value and respect others in the context of sexual relationships, appreciating the importance of informed consent in all shared sexual activity;
- Value stable and loving relationships for the nurturing of children and as the basis of a society in which people care for one another;
- Value informed advice on sexual health and learn how to access this, understanding the circumstances in which they are entitled to confidential advice and support.

The personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence the teaching of relationships and sex education in the College.

Curriculum Content

RSE has three main elements:

- Attitudes and Values
- Personal and Social Skills
- Knowledge and Understanding

Bradfield College will ensure that its RSE programme covers all three of these elements as set out in section 9 of the government guidance *Relationship and Sex Education (July 2020)*.

In accordance with the Safeguarding Policy, the issues surrounding FGM and child sexual exploitation will be discussed at appropriate points in the programme.

In Faulkners, Shell and Fifth form:

- Physical and emotional changes at puberty;

- Looking after your body – keeping healthy during puberty;
- Respect and responsibility;
- Consent in relationships;
- Relationships – friends, boyfriends and girlfriends, both on-line and physical;
- Committed relationships (including marriage) and parenthood;
- Assessing risk within relationships;
- Resisting pressure within relationships;
- Prejudice and discrimination linked to sexual identity and orientation;
- Body image and appropriate self-esteem;
- Influence of the media on self-perception and expectations within relationships;
- Accessing help and advice about relationships and sexual health;
- Issues surrounding consent and the law;
- STIs, including HIV: protection and high-risk behaviours;
- The links between regretted sexual behaviour and drugs and alcohol;
- Conception, contraception (including in emergency) and personal responsibility.

In the Sixth Form:

- Relationships, love and care;
- The role of consent in developing sexual activity;
- Responsibilities within relationships and the responsibilities of parenthood;
- Responsibility for the consequence of actions in relation to sexual activity and parenthood;
- Different types of contraception, their contribution to safer sex, and means of accessing local sources of further advice and treatment;
- The arguments for delaying sexual activity and resisting pressure;
- Abortion, exploring the dilemmas and equipping students to discuss it in an informed way with parents and health professionals;
- Challenges to self-esteem in the contemporary world and the development of emotional and physical self-confidence; e.g. links to pornography
- Legal issues: e.g. “revenge porn”
- Looking after your physical, emotional and mental health;
- Complexities in sexual identity;
- Peer pressure and sexual experimentation discussed in conjunction with peer pressure and other risk-taking behaviour (e.g. drugs, smoking, alcohol);
- Safer Sex, HIV/AIDS, genital chlamydial infection, genital warts and gonorrhoea, including work on assertiveness skills for negotiating relationships and equipping students to become potentially effective users of services that help prevent, diagnose and treat STIs and HIV;
- The law and sexual relationships.

Advice on Sexual Health

Specific advice on sexual health will not be offered in the context of RSE lessons. The College Medical Centre will be the primary source of personal advice for individual pupils on matters of sexual health. Any pupil attending the Health Centre regarding a personal sexual health issue will be assessed individually by a Nurse or Doctor.

Such consultation between a pupil and a member of Health Centre staff will be confidential for all pupils aged 16 and above; it will also be confidential for a pupil under 16 who is assessed as being 'Gillick competent' by the health professionals.

In some cases, the Health Centre staff may recommend a referral or appointment at a sexual health clinic.

The Health Centre staff may request that a Matron provides transport to a sexual health clinic; the Matron will treat this request and any associated information as medically confidential and will neither report it nor discuss it with the pupil's HsM, tutor or parents.

A pupil may not request independently that a Matron provides transport to a sexual health clinic. Before a pupil is taken to a sexual health clinic by a Matron, he/she must first be assessed by the Health Centre staff.

Organisation and Delivery

RSE is overseen by the Deputy Head-Pastoral and co-ordinated by the Head of Wellbeing and is taught principally within the Wellbeing programme, by teachers in the Wellbeing department.

Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the Science curriculum. Some moral aspects are discussed within RPE, but not all pupils will follow the RPE curriculum. The core values and principles of RSE are reinforced by House staff, particularly the HsM, personal tutor and the Matron, and embedded in our "Education for Life" principles.

Teachers will use the anatomically correct language for body parts but also acknowledge some of the other terms in common popular use. OfSTED guidance recommends that children learn the formal language associated with body parts, so they are better able to talk to health professionals.

Visitors to school, such as health professionals, members of voluntary organisations and parents, may be invited to plan and contribute to RSE lessons. The Deputy Head - Pastoral will ensure that visitors' contributions to lesson planning and delivery are in line with the learning outcomes of the College's RSE programme. Visitors will be given a copy of this policy and be required to work within the values framework described within. A teacher will be present during any lesson delivered by a visitor to the College.

A range of teaching methods which encourage pupils' full participation will be used to teach relationships and sex education. Approaches will include use of small group work, discussion activities, case studies, material from the media (including, on occasion, social media), drama and role-play. Ground rules will be clearly established, and distancing techniques will be used to establish a safe environment to facilitate open discussions. Students will be encouraged to reflect on their learning.

Teachers will answer pupils' questions appropriately, in line with this policy, and using their professional judgement. There can be no expectation that any teacher delivering RSE will automatically answer every pupil question, as this may infringe personal boundaries. In an instance where a teacher feels unable to answer a question fully in class, pupils will be advised to talk to their tutor, another member of staff, or their parents; they may also be referred to places where they can access information (e.g. helplines, websites, leaflets).

The College is fully committed to preventative education through Wellbeing, RSE, and other classes so that the risks of sexual harassment and sexual violence within the College including in boarding houses are minimised.

Teachers will be alert for any pupil who may be showing signs of anxiety during or outside RSE and Wellbeing lessons, aware that some pupils may find it hard to tell someone that they are being abused or have a personal concern: they may not be ready to do so or they may not know how to do so.

The College understands that the wellbeing of boarders is a primary concern and accordingly does not ignore the potential impact of any sexual violence or sexual harassment within the boarding environment: the College therefore aims to promote good and not harmful relationships within boarding houses. Hence the College provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to raise concerns as well as enabling all pupils to engage productively with the various preventative education programmes available to pupils.

Children who are Lesbian, Gay, Bi, or Trans (LGBTQIA+) can be targeted by their peers. In some cases a child who is perceived by their peers to be LGBTQIA+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBTQIA+. The College will ensure that there are one or more trusted adults to whom LGBTQIA+ pupils may turn if the need arises.

Support and Training

Bradfield College acknowledges that the effective teaching of RSE, within the Wellbeing framework, requires particular skills and expertise; it will take this into careful account when appointing teachers to the Wellbeing department. It is also essential that those teachers delivering the RSE programme are confident in their abilities, knowledge and understanding; staff with specific responsibility for delivering the programme will be consulted about their particular training requirements and these will be met in the context of the College's INSET provision.

All College staff will have opportunity to attend awareness-raising sessions on the College's RSE programme and to participate in discussion of associated whole-school issues.

Partnership with parents/carers

Bradfield College acknowledges that most of a pupil's sex and relationships education occurs informally, within the family (and within the peer group); the College's RSE programme will provide a formal curriculum to complement and build on what is learnt within the home.

The College recognises that parents have the right to withdraw their children, up to the age of 15, from any RSE that falls outside of the statutory curriculum (*Education Act, 1996*). However, parents cannot withdraw their child from lessons on human reproduction delivered within the Science curriculum.

Any parents expressing concerns about the RSE programme will be invited into school for a discussion with the Deputy Head Pastoral and the teacher responsible for delivering the programme to their child; they will have the opportunity to view materials and resources used in the lessons.

If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from any part of RSE, they must contact the Head Master, in writing. Parents exercising their right to withdraw a child from RSE lessons will be formally advised that they have an obligation to provide home-schooling on the issues, using information available from the DfE.

Each year, parents will be reminded of the approach taken to RSE and of their right to withdraw their child as set down above.

Equal Opportunities Statement

The College is committed to the provision of RSE to all its pupils. It is Bradfield's intention that its RSE provision gives all pupils the opportunity to experience a programme of lessons pitched at a level appropriate for their age and physical development, with differentiated provision when required. The RSE programme aims to respond to the diversity of pupils' cultures, faiths and family backgrounds.

Objective discussion of the diversity of personal, social and sexual preference in relationships will take place in RSE and prejudiced views and prejudiced views including those related to LGBTQ+ issues will be directly challenged, in order to affirm the College's commitment to equality and to encourage tolerance. Any bullying around sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation, arising from prejudice, will be dealt with as a serious disciplinary matter.

Safeguarding / Confidentiality

Under the common law young people are entitled to the same duty of confidence as adults. Personal information about them will not be shared without their permission, except for the purposes of child protection. Teachers of RSE will be made aware that effective sex and relationship education (which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship) may lead to disclosure of a child protection issue and that a member of staff cannot promise confidentiality if concerns develop in the course of discussion or if specific disclosures are made.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Both the policy and classroom delivery will be monitored and evaluated as part of the regular cycle of self-review. Procedures will include:

- lesson observations by the Deputy Head Pastoral and the Director of Wellbeing;
- evaluation by pupils of both individual sessions and the whole programme, focusing on learning outcomes and appropriate delivery;
- departmental evaluation of the programme linked to individual teacher feedback.

The policy is published on the College website and is reviewed biennially. Governors will be responsible for scrutinising and helping to evaluate the implementation of the policy, with RSE as an item on the agenda of Pastoral Committee Meetings.

It will also be reported on in the Deputy Head Pastoral's termly reports to Council.

Links to Other Policies and Documentation

- Equal Opportunities
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Confidentiality
- Behaviour Policy and Code of Conduct
- Anti-Bullying

Appendix

SRE and Safeguarding Under 16s' entitlement to confidential health advice and treatment

The School Nurse and other health professionals follow strict guidelines which allow them to give (a) advice on sexual health and contraception and (b) treatment to young people under 16 years old without the knowledge or consent of the parents/carers if that is in the young person's best interests.

They will, however, strongly encourage the young person to talk to their parents/carers. Only in cases where there is abuse, criminality, or serious risk of harm would the health professional breach the young person's confidentiality, following the Local Safeguarding Children Board's child protection procedures. The young person would be kept fully informed at all stages of the procedure.

When a member of the Medical Centre sees pupils on a one-to-one basis they will follow these professional guidelines. In Wellbeing lessons, however, they must follow the same guidelines as teachers.

SRE lessons will inform pupils of their entitlement to seek confidential help, including contraceptive and sexual health advice and treatment, and they will be taught about how they can access local services for this both inside and outside school. If a pupil seeks help from a teacher for her personal and health needs, they will refer them to sources of local help and support.

Safeguarding

The legal age of sexual consent in the UK is 16. Consent means agreeing to something, in this case to having sexual intercourse.

Statutory rape is when one or both of the parties engaging in sexual activity are below the age of consent. Statutes are laws. This law means that a 14-year-old girl cannot legally consent to have sex with her 16-year-old boyfriend. This act would be considered unlawful and the justice system is likely to respond.

Even so, the justice system does not actively respond when two young people both aged from 13 to 15 engage in sexual intercourse except when coercion is involved. The justice system will always respond when a child under 13 is involved.

It is both a safeguarding and a legal matter when any person under 16 engages in sexual activity. Because pupils under 18 are legally children and teachers and others working in the College are in a position of trust and responsibility, there are also safeguarding and legal considerations relating to them also.

There may be occasions when a teacher or other member of staff learns in confidence or otherwise that a pupil under 16 is having or contemplating having sexual intercourse. In such a case the teacher should immediately consult the DSL or a member of the designated safeguarding team, if necessary on a no-names basis. The DSL will consider the safeguarding and legal implications liaising as appropriate with the School Nurse and/or other health professionals and will advise accordingly.

Confidentiality may only be maintained if there are no safeguarding or criminal issues involved. The DSL will be alert to the possibility of coercive control.

Student support services available in school

The College Medical Centre offers all pupils confidential health advice and support on any issue.

They work together with Matrons, HsMs, House staff and the Deputy Head Pastoral but will not share personal information about students without their permission unless there are child protection concerns.