



# Beacon Academy Trust

A COMPELLING VISION FOR SUCCESS

## SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY

<b>Approving Body</b>	Trust
<b>Date of Last Review</b>	March 2018
<b>To be Reviewed</b>	March 2021
<b>Statutory (Y/N)</b>	N

## **I. INTRODUCTION – PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

1. Although academies are not obliged to teach sex and relationship education ['SRE'], BMAT and its constituent schools appreciate the benefit of SRE to students, if it is delivered in an appropriate, timely and sensitive way.
2. SRE concerns the emotional, social and cultural development of students; it involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, diversity and personal identity. These issues are often extremely sensitive, particularly due to the cultural diversity of BMAT's student cohort. SRE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.
3. This policy aims to ensure that the SRE provided to BMAT students:
  - a. Pays due regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State, as outlined in Section 403 of the Education Act 1996 (as required by our Funding Agreement);
  - b. Respects the cultural and ethnic diversity of students, such that no pupil is ever made to feel 'forced' to have a discussion about SRE, or sanctioned for not participating in SRE because they feel uncomfortable;
  - c. Is tailored to the needs of all students, including students with special educational needs;
  - d. Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place;
  - e. Prepares students for puberty;
  - f. Provides students with an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene;
  - g. Helps students to develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy;
  - h. Promotes a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships;
  - i. Teaches the correct vocabulary for students to describe themselves and their bodies.
4. This policy supports BMAT's zero-tolerance of bullying and harassment: as part of SRE, BMAT will inform students that bullying or harassment based on puberty, sexual development or sexuality will be treated as a breach of the student code of conduct and the BMAT ethos, resulting in a sanction that is proportionate to the seriousness of the bullying.

5. Policy Development: This policy has been developed in consultation with employees, students and parents or carers.
- a. Assigned BMAT employees pulled together relevant information, including national and local guidance;
  - b. BMAT teaching staff were afforded the opportunity to make recommendations regarding SRE (and can continue to do so);
  - c. Parents or carers may opt-out of SRE on behalf of their children, are able to provide feedback on SRE (e.g. at meetings with teachers), and make complaints regarding the delivery of SRE via the BMAT Complaints Policy and Procedure;
  - d. This policy was ratified at Trust Executive level and will be reviewed every three years, or more frequently where necessary.

## **II. SRE DELIVERY**

6. SRE forms part of the Personal, Social, Health and Economic ['PSHE'] education curriculum. Biological aspects of SRE are taught within the science curriculum and other aspects are included in Religious Education ['RE']. BMAT students also receive targeted sex education sessions from trained health professionals.

7. At all stages, BMAT students will be supported with developing the following skills, which do not form part of SRE, but are indirectly relevant to the development of positive relationships with oneself and one's peers;

- a. Communication, including how to manage changing relationships and emotions;
- b. Recognising and assessing potential risks;
- c. Seeking help and support when required;
- d. Informed decision-making;
- e. Self-respect and empathy for others;
- f. Recognising and maximising a healthy lifestyle;
- g. Managing conflict;
- h. Discussion and group work.

8. Parents' right to withdraw: Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of SRE (i.e. the study of human growth and reproduction in science lessons). Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and

addressed to the appropriate BMAT school principal. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. School principals or an appropriate delegate will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from SRE.

9. Sensitive disclosures: Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality and this should never be offered to students. In a case where a teacher learns from a student under the age of consent that they are having or contemplating sexual intercourse:

- a. The young person will be persuaded, where appropriate, to talk to their parents and if necessary to seek medical advice
- b. Child protection issues will be considered, and referred if necessary to the teacher responsible for Child Protection (see the BMAT Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedure)
- c. The young person will be properly counselled about contraception, including precise information about where young people can access contraception and advice services.
- d. In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the teacher will ensure that the young person understands the circumstances where confidentiality can be broken.

### **III. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

9. BMAT school principals are responsible for agreeing and implementing this policy within their schools, such that SRE is taught consistently and requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory/non-science components of SRE are managed sensitively and effectively. BMAT school principals or an appropriate delegate will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching SRE.

10. BMAT teaching staff are trained on the delivery of SRE as part of their induction and it forms part of continuing professional development programmes, where appropriate. BMAT teaching staff are responsible for:

- a. Delivering SRE in a way that is sensitive to the individual and to culture;
- b. Modelling positive attitudes to SRE (e.g. by being alert to SRE issues in and beyond the classroom, and by being seen to tackle them in an assertive, mature but sensitive fashion);

- c. Monitoring progress in SRE focused lessons as rigorously as they would monitor progress on the core curriculum, and in accordance with internal assessment systems;
- d. Notifying pastoral support teams (e.g. form tutors, directors of achievement and progress and deputy directors of achievement and progress) if they have concerns about the development of an individual student;
- e. Responding to the needs of individual students, including responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory/non-science components of SRE;
- f. Discussing any concerns about teaching SRE with their school principal (staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching SRE).

11. BMAT students are responsible for:

- a. Engaging fully with SRE;
- b. Reporting bullying or harassment related to sexual development and/or relationships to BMAT staff, like any other form of bullying or harassment;
- c. Treating others with respect and sensitivity (including cultural respect and sensitivity).