

# FORBES WASTIE

## The 4th year do their own evaluation



Eastbourne College is a 13-18 boys' independent school. Boys are admitted by examination and spend three years preparing for GCSE. Girls are admitted to the Sixth Form houses; 66% of pupils are boarders.

Health education at the school has never had any real status. Although the School Medical Officer and other health staff have been used as deemed appropriate, there had been no attempt to examine the curriculum implications of the subject. Discussion between myself as Second Master and Hugh Graham, District Health Promotion Officer, Health Education Department, led to an agreed course of action.

1. A meeting between key health professionals and interested staff. This was to establish a working relationship and share ideas, etc.

2. An open staff meeting: the District Health Promotion Officer to be a guest and table schemes and strategies with a successful record from their use in other establishments. The SHEP 13-18 Curriculum Guide formed the basis of this input, and from this a pilot course emerged.

3. The pilot course was to be implemented over two terms in 1989, followed by pupil evaluation.

The pilot course was run over 12 sessions with a selected group of 19 4th-year pupils (in the 14-15

age group). The choice of content has been greatly influenced by the 13-18 Curriculum Guide, but was also inevitably affected by considerations of staffing. Using a variety of different adults to lead in different subject areas exposed the boys not only to new material but also highlighted for them different styles of leadership and presentation.

### QUESTIONNAIRE

At the end of the course a questionnaire (see Fig. 1) was used for evaluation, each member of the group having ample time to fill in their answers. This exercise was treated with complete confidentiality, the aim being to produce an unbiased and objective assessment. The findings are summarised question by question.

**Question 1. Rating of interest and effectiveness.** It is clear from Table 1 that the topic with the most impact was *Physiological impact of smoking*, followed by *Resuscitation*, and the topics with the least impact were those dealing with the more sophisticated and adult topics of *Stress* and *Relaxation*.

**Question 2. Highest and lowest scoring subjects.** The answers to this question varied from person to person depending on their interests, needs, and individual judgments,

but the topics which featured most consistently in the top bracket were *Resuscitation*, *Smoking*, *Fitness testing*, and *Personal hygiene*. Similarly, those which featured most consistently in the bottom bracket were *Stress*, *Relaxation*, and *Diet*.

**Question 3. Personality of leader v. subject appeal.** This question was inserted to attempt to gain some insight into whether the pupils were responding more to the personality of the leader than to the topic itself. Subjects mentioned where this may have been the case were *Advertising*, *Smoking*, *Peer groups*, *Stealing etc.*, and *Role play*. The most consistent of these was *Advertising*.

**Question 4. Order of value.** The rank order selections by the 19 pupils were totalled for each subject, and the subjects were then put in overall rank order, as follows:

Rank order	Subject
1	Smoking
2	Resuscitation
3	Fitness
4	Stealing, etc.
5	Role play
6	Personal hygiene
7	Peer groups
8	Diet
9	Advertising
10	Home problems
11	Stress
12	Relaxation

It will be noticed that there are some differences between the order derived from this question and the rank order obtained by adding 'interest' and 'effectiveness' levels in Table 1.

### RIGHT LENGTH

**Question 5. Length of course.** Just over half the pupils thought that the course was 'the right length'. Of the rest, eight thought it was too short and only one thought it was too long.

**Question 6. Extra topics to be included.** The following topics were all mentioned at least once in the answers.

- Alcoholism
- Drugs
- First Aid
- Gambling
- Health of the body
- Problems at school
- Puberty
- Safe sex
- Sex education
- Sexually transmitted diseases

**Question 7. Best school year for health education.** These percentages add up to more than 100, since more than one answer could be given.

Third Form	63%
Fourth Form	95%
Fifth Form	16%
Sixth Form	21%

**Question 8. Personal gains from the course.** The following responses are representative:

- Cleared up misunderstandings.
- Convinced me never to smoke.
- More awareness of other people.
- Easier to cope with stress.
- Better awareness of peer group pressure.
- Proper knowledge of fitness.
- Confidence about resuscitation.
- How to relax before exams, etc.
- Awareness of a proper diet.
- Ability to say 'No'.
- To be able to consider before making a decision.
- Importance of regular washing.

Fig. 1. The end-of-course evaluation questionnaire. (The format of this two-sided document has been compressed.)

**HEALTH EDUCATION: END OF COURSE EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. Below are listed the subjects/activities which were included in your course. In the space beside each one score out of 10 for each. (a = interest, b = effectiveness.)

SUBJECT/ACTIVITY	a	b	SUBJECT/ACTIVITY	a	b
Fitness testing			Resuscitation		
Physiological effects of smoking			Diet - healthy eating		
Ethics of advertising			Stress and associated disorders		
Peer group pressure			Relaxation therapy		
Stealing, bullying, drinking			Home-based problems		
Role play - saying No			Personal hygiene		

2. Select your top two total scores and bottom two scores and say why you scored them that way.

3. In which of the subjects did the personality of the leader override the value of the subject?

4. Put in order the subjects, starting with that which has been of most value to you, and ending with that which has been of the least value.

5. Do you think that the course was (a) too long, (b) too short, (c) about the right length?

6. Which other subjects would you like to see included in any health education course?

7. Should such a course be included at (a) Third Form level, (b) Fourth Form level, (c) Fifth Form level, (d) Sixth Form level?

8. What have you personally gained from the experience of this course?

9. Have you any other comments you would like to make about this pilot scheme?

Table 1. Average values, and overall ranking, for the 12 subjects taught to Fourth Form pupils during the two-term pilot course.

Subject/activity	Interest average (out of 10)	Effectiveness average (out of 10)	Interest + effectiveness (out of 10)	Order
Smoking . . . . .	8.0	7.2	7.6	1
Resuscitation . . . . .	7.5	7.3	7.4	2
Fitness . . . . .	7.7	7.0	7.3	3=
Stealing, etc. . . . .	7.5	7.2	7.3	3=
Peer groups . . . . .	6.7	6.6	6.6	5=
Personal hygiene . . . . .	6.5	6.6	6.6	5=
Role play . . . . .	6.7	6.6	6.6	5=
Advertising . . . . .	7.2	5.8	6.5	8
Home problems . . . . .	5.6	5.9	5.8	9
Diet . . . . .	5.9	5.1	5.5	10
Relaxation . . . . .	4.7	4.9	4.8	11
Stress . . . . .	4.5	5.0	4.7	12

*Question 9. Other comments about the pilot scheme.*

Very beneficial, and the course should continue.

The smoking lecture was very beneficial and it ought to be included in the programme for all new boys as they enter the school so that they are aware straight away of the dangers and before they are enticed into it by other pupils.

When the sessions were not relaxed, it was difficult to talk truthfully.

Gratitude for being included in the pilot scheme.

Sessions should be longer. They must not be rushed.

Individual preferences played a part.

## **THE RESULT**

1. In the eyes of the pupils the scheme was obviously successful, and they would like to see it become incorporated into the curriculum for either the Third or the Fourth Forms.

2. Some topics appealed more than others, which is only to be expected, and indicated individual interests and preference. But some topics, such as those relating to stress and relaxation techniques, were too advanced and sophisticated for this age group.

3. It is recommended that a Health Education Programme

become part of the curriculum for all members of the Fourth Form. It should be spread over the whole school year and take the form of a single lesson every two weeks, the lesson being taken from other subjects by rotation as in the pilot scheme.

4. If it is to be incorporated as an important addition to the education of the pupils, then it must be established on a proper footing with a Master in Charge and with a departmental allowance.

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