



Sex and Relationships Education  
Policy



## **1 Introduction and Aims**

- 1.1 Oasis Community Learning is committed to helping young people develop loving and respectful relationships and a responsible attitude to intimacy and sex. The Oasis Ethos should be at the heart of all teaching on relationships and sexual health, including the commitment to promoting healthy and positive relationships, treating everyone equally and respecting differences. Oasis recognises the reality and legitimacy of human diversity and is committed to providing sex and relationship education which values this diversity. Oasis also recognises that it has an obligation to combat homophobia and transphobia, which blights the lives of many lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) and non-LGBT people.
- 1.2 The aims of the sex and relationships education policy (SRE) are:
- to clarify the provision of SRE to all students;
  - to set out the statutory provisions;
  - to ensure that the SRE provided by the Academy supports the personal and social development of all students;
- 1.3 This policy statement is designed to be complementary to, and supportive of, the role of parents/carers in educating their children about sexuality and relationships. It recognises that the prime responsibility for bringing up children rests with parents and carers, though it equally recognises that the focus of sex and relationships education must be the well-being of pupils and the provision of accurate, objective and appropriate information.
- 1.4 Avoiding sensitive or controversial issues does not make them go away and leaves children and young people confused and at risk. It is important to recognise the power of confusion caused by "informal" learning - from television, internet, DVDs, radio, magazines, newspapers, gossip, jokes, and various other sources. Education within the curriculum can do much to dispel myths, reduce fear and anxiety, clear up misunderstanding and counteract prejudice. All official documentation is in favour of the discussion of topics such as contraception, abortion, pornography, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections.
- 1.5 It is important that our students develop understanding and attitudes based on values which prepare them to view relationships in a responsible and healthy manner. SRE will be part of the curriculum and will not be taken out of context or overemphasised in any way. SRE is not intended to encourage unlawful sexual activity.
- 1.6 The policy is based on the belief that SRE:
- Is an integral part of the learning process, beginning in childhood and continuing into adult life;
  - Should be provided for all children and young people including those with physical, learning or emotional difficulties;
  - Should encourage consideration of values, moral issues, sexuality, personal relationships and the development of communication and decision-making skills; and
  - Should foster self-esteem, self awareness, a positive body-image and the skills to avoid and resist unwanted sexual experiences and a sense of moral responsibility.

## **2 Statutory Duty**

- 2.1 Each Oasis Academy is required to make this Policy available to all parents and carers.
- 2.2 The Principal must ensure that any SRE in the Academy uses teaching materials which are appropriate, having regard to the age and cultural background of the students concerned.

- 2.3 In accordance with the law the biological aspects of human reproduction remain compulsory for all students, but parents/carers may withdraw their child from any other part of the Academy's SRE programme without giving reasons.
- 2.4 The views of parents will be borne in mind when determining the provision of a sex and relationships education programme in the Academy, though the focus of the programme must be pupil well-being, and the provision of correct and appropriate information on sex and relationships. The Academy will ensure that parents are invited to comment on the extent to which the Academy's policy reflects their wishes and the culture of the community served by the Academy.

### **3 The Academy's Sex and Relationships Education Programme**

- 3.1 The Academy should have a SRE programme which supports the personal and social development of all students. It should demonstrate the importance of accepting diversity, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender identity, and of enjoying relationships based on mutual respect and responsibility, free from any abuse.
- 3.2 The objectives of the Academy's SRE programme are:
- i to explore what students know, understand, think and feel and to identify their needs;
  - ii to encourage unembarrassed acceptance of sexuality by using appropriate words for all parts of the body and encouraging positive attitudes to all bodily functions;
  - iii to create an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without embarrassment;
  - iv to counteract misleading myths;
  - v to provide constant reassurance that change is part of the life cycle and to give help in adjusting to such change;
  - vi to enable students to accept variation in rates of growth and development (physical, emotional and social) and in ages when puberty or social activities develop;
  - vii to learn to respect each other as individuals, and to encourage boys and girls to understand and honour one another;
  - viii to recognise the value of loving and caring relationships and the place of intimacy within them;
  - ix to appreciate the value of family life, marriage, civil partnership, the implications of parenthood and the needs of the very young;
  - x to understand and respect cultural and religious influences on individual sexuality;
  - xi to help young people know their rights and responsibilities;
  - xii to promote self esteem and personal safety so that young people are able to resist unwanted touch or advances and can communicate about such matters and seek advice;
  - xiii To help young people develop a positive body image and deal with pressures from the media and internet (including pornography and pressures from social networking sites);
  - xiv to develop students' understanding of risk (including drugs, alcohol, contraception and internet safety) and to provide the motivation and skills to keep themselves safe;
  - xv to make students aware of where they can go for support, treatment and advice ;
  - xvi to be aware of the law on sexual behaviour, and of distributing pornographic materials including photos and video clip; and
  - Xvii to challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, including bullying related to homophobia, and to promote acceptance of the difference between individuals.

- 3.3 The SRE programme will teach about love and care in relationships and the possible outcomes of sex including pregnancy, HIV and other STI's. Students will be taught about the responsibilities of parenthood and will be helped to develop a clear understanding of the arguments for delaying sexual activity, for faithfulness and for resisting pressure. It may be necessary to link SRE with issues of peer pressure and other risk-taking behaviour, such as drugs, smoking and alcohol, and ensure that young people understand how the law applies to sexual relationships.
- 3.4 Teachers have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of students.
- 3.5 In order to help students make informed and intelligent choices, establish a healthy lifestyle and build up a system of values, the teaching methods used are as important as the content of the lesson. The participation of students in lessons is essential in order to encourage them to learn from others and to help them to use appropriate language in ways which are understood by others. This requires the use of a balanced range of teaching methods.

#### **4 Teaching Methods**

- 4.1 SRE will be carried out in a variety of different ways and by different specialists as well as teachers.
- 4.2 The programme of study for SRE will demonstrate:
- i Progression:* This extends from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 with language, concepts and content increasing in depth and complexity as the students mature physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially (see appendix 1 – Sex and Relationships Education in the Curriculum).
  - ii Relevance and differentiation:* Teachers come to know the levels of development of their students; they are able to draw out existing knowledge and needs and to build on them appropriately. The SRE programme will need to take into account and to address the issues that are relevant to answer the questions expressed by the students.
  - iii Integration:* SRE will be integrated into relevant areas of the Academy's curriculum.
- 4.3 Oasis Esteem is a SRE resource which is delivered within the Oasis Academies.. Oasis Esteem places an emphasis on building healthy self-esteem in young people so that they understand their worth and value and are better equipped to make positive life choices that are right for them. Sex and sexual health are explored in the context of focusing on the importance of relationships and what it means to have a good, healthy and fulfilling relationship. Training is provided to teachers who deliver the Esteem programme.
- 4.4 SRE will not be isolated, taken out of context or overemphasised in any way.
- 4.5 An SRE programme is not just what is 'taught' in the classroom. Young people learn much from the overall ethos of the Academy, regarding gender and other issues, from the attitudes and relationships of staff. It is important that all staff, whether directly involved in the programme or not, discuss the Academy's approach to SRE in the broad sense. With increased understanding and support, most teachers will feel able to make some positive contribution to the 'whole' curriculum.
- 4.6 It is an essential part of the Oasis Community Learning policy that the following ground rules are observed in all teaching about sex and relationships:

- a. no-one (teacher or student) will be required to answer a personal question;
- b. no-one will be forced to take part in any discussion;
- c. only the correct scientific name for body parts will be used; and
- d. meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual manner.

## **5 Pastoral Support**

- 5.1 Sexuality is an important part of living and learning but it may present some individuals with worries and tension at certain times in their lives. Students have both rights and responsibilities to be supported and to support others during their time in the academy. The quality of support available for individual students worried or disturbed by some aspect(s) of their development, relationships or environment is of prime importance.
- 5.2 There should be a clear duty of care in counselling and advice to individual students, particularly with regard to their sexual behaviour, orientation or identity. It will require skilled judgement to know when to counsel and when, and how, to refer for specialist counselling and support.

## **6 Morals and Morality**

- 6.1 Morals and morality are essential dimensions of SRE. The programme will respect individual differences - inspired by cultural, religious, ethnic and family backgrounds - and it will endeavour to promote those values of respect and dignity for human life which are common to all faiths and societies. Oasis will ensure there is no discrimination on basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and is committed to ensure that it fulfils all statutory obligations as set in the Equality Act 2010 .

## **7 Relationships**

- 7.1 Relationships have an important part to play in SRE. Friendship, building positive relationships and valuing friendship, will be topics in the early part of the programme. Choosing a partner, assessing personal qualities, considerations before entering a committed relationship, together with relationships within the family, will be considered together with roles, avoidance of stereotyping and acknowledging different attitudes and influences.
- 7.2 The KS3 Curriculum will cover how to deal with relationship breakdown, and the KS4 Curriculum extends this to cover awareness of exploitation in relationships and the impact of separation, divorce and bereavement in families and the need to adapt to changing circumstances.

## **8 Contraception**

- 8.1 Contraception will be taught as part of Secondary Science curriculum and therefore form part of each student's experience and entitlement in their education. Appropriate and objective information will be provided on the issue.
- 8.2 Teachers may not give personal, individual advice on contraception to those under 16 years of age for whom sexual intercourse is unlawful. Teachers must advise students to seek advice from parents, GPs and/or appropriate staff in the Well Being Centre (where this is accessible).

- 8.3 Different types of contraceptive methods will be dealt with by the appropriately qualified professional together with information about agencies offering help and advice.

## **9 Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), HIV and AIDS**

- 9.1 Students will be made aware through the SRE programme, of the risks relating to Sexually Transmitted Infections, including Chlamydia and Genital Warts which are the most common. Teaching on this subject needs to cover the aspects of transmission, symptoms, prevention, treatment and consequences.
- 9.2 Students in all age groups need to know the difference between HIV and AIDS, modes of transmission, basic hygiene and risky behaviours (for younger students, for example, picking up discarded needles or any skin piercing; for older students sharing needles and specific sexual behaviour). All need to learn that there are no risky groups, only risky behaviours, and that there is no danger from persons with HIV or AIDS in any normal social contact.
- 9.3 Young people should be sign-posted through the SRE programme as to where they can receive treatment and advice on STIs and HIV/AIDS .

## **10 Abortion**

- 10.1 Any teaching on abortion must present a balanced view which respects a range of ethical and religious beliefs and which takes into account the law relating to abortion. It provides an opportunity to distinguish between opinion (e.g. the stage at which human life commences) and clarification of moral values (e.g. in what circumstances abortion is a positive choice).

## **11 Aspects of sexual behaviour raised outside the SRE programme**

- 11.1 The teaching of apparently unrelated topics may occasionally lead to a discussion of aspects of sexual behaviour. Provided that such a discussion is relatively limited and set within the context of the other subject concerned, it will not necessarily form part of the Academy's SRE programme.
- 11.2 In such cases, particularly since they may involve students whose parents have withdrawn them from sex education, teachers will need to balance the need to give proper attention to relevant issues with the need to respect students' and parents' views and sensibilities.
- 11.3 The Academy expects that teachers will draw upon their professional judgement and common sense to deal effectively with such occurrences and that they will be conversant with this Policy and act accordingly.

## **12 Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity**

- 12.1 The Academy seeks to ensure that all students understand the importance of accepting diversity, valuing LGBT identity. The Academy operates a no tolerance policy on homophobic, and transphobic - related bullying, harassment or discrimination. The Academy takes into account the anti-discrimination provisions in the Equality Act 2010, and will ensure that any information about sexual orientation is fair and balanced. The Academy recognises that LGBT staff and pupils have a right to be protected against homophobia and

transphobia. The Academy further recognises that the failure to conduct open and unprejudiced discussion of LGBT issues encourages homophobia and transphobia.

### **13 Sexuality and physical development**

- 13.1 The awareness of self and physical changes that occur are important in SRE. This includes development and puberty (physical, mental and social development) and acceptance of others' sexual orientation with the pressures imposed by peers, the media and internet.

### **14 Visiting speakers**

- 14.1 Appropriately qualified visiting speakers may be used to help enhance the SRE programme. Where they are used, they will be required to conform to this policy statement. Health professionals are bound by their professional codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with individual students.

### **15 Confidentiality**

- 15.1 Teachers are required to adhere to these procedures with regard to confidentiality between themselves and students.
- 15.2 Students should be reassured that their best interests will be maintained. However, teachers cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality. If confidentiality has to be broken, the student should be informed first and then supported, as appropriate.
- 15.3 It is only in the most exceptional circumstances that the Academy should be in the position of having to handle information without parental knowledge. Where younger children are involved this will be grounds for serious concern and child protection issues will need to be addressed.
- 15.4 Students should be encouraged to talk to their parents and given support to do so. If there is evidence of abuse, the Academy's child protection procedure should be adhered to, ensuring that students are informed of sources of confidential help.

### **16 Equal Opportunities**

- 16.1 In developing and implementing programmes of study under this policy all Academies will take into account the Oasis Community Learning Equality and Diversity Policy.

### **17 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

- 17.1 The Academy Council is responsible for adopting this Policy and for agreeing the Academy's programme on SRE which will take into account the guidance in this Policy. The Principal, staff, students and parents should be consulted before the programme is determined.
- 17.2 The Principal will advise the Academy Council on this Policy and the SRE programme and its implementation in the Academy. The Principal will ensure that the Academy's policy and programme are coordinated by a senior member of staff. The Principal will ensure that there is appropriate support and training for staff who deliver the SRE programme within the academy.

- 17.3 All staff are responsible for ensuring that any teaching on SRE or any advice and guidance they may give to students is in accordance with this Policy, current health guidelines, current government guidelines and best education practice.
- 17.4 Oasis Community Learning will review this policy every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Academy.

## Appendix 1

### Current status of Sex and Relationships Education – June 2010 By Sex Education Forum

#### Sex and Relationships Education in the Curriculum

Key Stage 1 – Sex and Relationships Education in the Curriculum	
Science: Statutory Programme of study: (NC, 1999)	PSHE: Non-statutory Framework (NC, 1999)
<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>Life processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That animals, including humans, move, feed, grow, use their senses and reproduce</li> </ul> <p>Humans and other animals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To recognize and compare the main external parts of the bodies of humans and other animals</li> <li>That humans and other animals can produce offspring and that these offspring grow into adults</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>Developing a healthy, safer lifestyle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About the process of growing from young to old and how people's needs change</li> <li>The names of the main parts of the body</li> <li>Rules for, and ways of, keeping safe...and about people who can help them to stay safe</li> </ul> <p>Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To recognise how their behaviour affects other people</li> <li>To listen to other people, and play and work cooperatively</li> <li>To identify and respect the differences and similarities between people</li> <li>That families and friends should care for each other</li> <li>That there are different types of teasing and bullying, that bullying is wrong, and how to get help to deal with bullying</li> </ul>

Key Stage 2 – Sex and Relationships Education in the Curriculum	
Science: Statutory Programme of study: (NC, 1999)	PSHE: Non-statutory Framework (NC, 1999)
<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>Life processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That the life processes common to humans and other animals include nutrition, movement, growth and reproduction</li> </ul> <p>Humans and other animals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About the main stages of the human lifecycle</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>Developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of their abilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To recognise as they approach puberty, how people's emotions change at that time and how to deal with their feelings towards themselves, their family and others in a positive way</li> </ul> <p>Developing a healthy, safer lifestyle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About how the body changes as they approach puberty</li> <li>To recognise the different risks in different situations and then decide how to behave responsibly, including...judging what kind of physical contact is acceptable and unacceptable</li> <li>That pressure to behave in an unacceptable or risky way can come from a variety of sources, including people they know, and how to ask for help and use basic techniques for resisting pressure to do wrong</li> </ul> <p>Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That their actions affect themselves and others, to care about other people's feelings and to try to see things from their point of view</li> <li>To be aware of different types of relationship, including marriage and those between friends and families, and to develop the skills to be effective in relationships</li> <li>To recognise and challenge stereotypes</li> <li>That differences and similarities between people arise from a number of factors, including cultural, ethnic, racial and religious diversity, gender and disability</li> <li>Where individuals, families and groups can get help and support</li> </ul>

Key Stage 3 – Sex and Relationships Education in the Curriculum	
Science: Statutory Programme of study: (QCA 2007)	PSHE: Non-statutory Programme of study: Personal Wellbeing (QCA 2007)
<p>Range and content should include:</p> <p>Organisms, behaviour and health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The human reproductive cycle includes adolescence, fertilisation and foetal development</li> <li>Conception, growth, development, behaviour and health can be affected by diet, drugs and disease</li> </ul> <p>The curriculum should provide opportunities for pupils to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider how knowledge and understanding of science informs personal and collective decisions, including those on substance abuse and sexual health</li> </ul> <p>Explanatory notes:</p> <p><b>Sexual health:</b> includes issues related to contraception, pregnancy and disease</p> <p><b>Diet, drugs and disease:</b> This includes...the effect of drugs such as alcohol, tobacco and cannabis on mental and physical health. It also includes the effects of bacteria and viruses, such as those associated with sexually transmitted infections.</p>	<p>Range and content that teachers should draw on when teaching the key concepts and processes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>examples of diverse values encountered in society and the clarification of personal values</li> <li>physical and emotional change and puberty</li> <li>sexual activity, human reproduction, contraception, pregnancy, and sexually transmitted infections and HIV and how high-risk behaviours affect the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities</li> <li>the features of positive and stable relationships, how to deal with a breakdown in a relationship and the effects of loss and bereavement</li> <li>different types of relationships, including those within families and between older and young people, boys and girls, and people of the same sex, including civil partnerships</li> <li>the nature and importance of marriage and of stable relationships for family life and bringing up children</li> <li>the similarities, differences and diversity among people of different race, culture, ability, disability, gender, age and sexual orientation and the impact of prejudice, bullying, discrimination and racism on individuals and communities</li> </ul>

Key Stage 4 – Sex and Relationships Education in the Curriculum	
Science: Statutory Programme of study: (QCA 2007)	PSHE: Non-statutory Programme of study: Personal Wellbeing (QCA 2007)
<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>Organisms and health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human health is affected by a range of environmental and inherited factors, by the use of misuse of drugs and medical treatments</li> </ul>	<p>Range and content that teachers should draw on when teaching the key concepts and processes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the effect of diverse and conflicting values on individuals, families and communities and ways of responding to them</li> <li>how the media portrays young people, body image and health issues</li> <li>the benefits and risks of health and lifestyle choices, including choices relating to sexual activity and substance use and misuse, and the short and long-term consequences for the health and mental and emotional wellbeing of individuals, families and communities</li> <li>where and how to obtain health information, how to recognise and follow health and safety procedures, ways of reducing risk and minimising harm in risky situations, how to find sources of emergency help and how to use basic and emergency first aid</li> <li>characteristics of positive relationships, and awareness of exploitation in relationships and of statutory and voluntary organisations that support relationships in crisis</li> <li>parenting skills and qualities and their central importance to family life</li> <li>the impact of separation, divorce and bereavement on families and the need to adapt to changing circumstances</li> <li>the diversity of ethnic and cultural groups, the power of prejudice, bullying, discrimination and racism, and the need to take the initiative in challenging this and other offensive behaviours and in giving support to victims of abuse.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2

### **OASIS COMMUNITY LEARNING POLICY STATEMENT ON THE DELIVERY OF SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES INCLUDING ACCESS TO THE MORNING AFTER PILL (EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION) FROM SELECTED COMMUNITY HUBS JUNE 2008**

#### **Introduction**

##### **Update this appendix, adding a statement about the commitment to train teaching staff and hub staff in Esteem**

Sexual health in the UK has deteriorated significantly over the last 12 years. Recent figures indicate a steady rise in the number of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and a corresponding increase in those seeking advice and treatment from sexual health services. The pregnancy rate in young women under 18 years of age is the highest in Europe with 38 per cent of young people, under the age of 15, admitting to being sexually active. In the light of the alarming rise in poor sexual health and nationally recommended guidance, the Trustees of Oasis have decided to support the delivery of a range of sexual health initiatives, including access to the morning after pill (MAP) otherwise known as the emergency contraceptive pill, from selected Oasis community hubs. As an organisation, we recognise and accept our responsibility to provide advice, information and services that young people can access either before they become sexually active, or very soon after, to reduce the risks associated with unplanned and/or unprotected sex. This policy statement reflects our commitment to the promotion of sexual health and treatment choice as part of Oasis' wider social inclusion agenda, which also includes health and wellbeing.

#### **The provision of integrated and holistic sexual health care**

Motivated by our Christian faith, we are committed to promoting standards of sexual behaviour based on loving and respectful relationships. Furthermore, we believe that given the current increases in sexually transmitted infections, it is essential that young people, their parents, carers and the wider community are actively engaged to receive the support, advice and information they need to achieve a greater sense of well-being. Our efforts to support family life and promote a responsible attitude to sex among young people have been underpinned by the promotion of Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) and other associated activities since 1987, through the Esteem programme. Over the past 20 years Oasis has delivered high quality SRE to over 250,000 young people in schools. However, with the development of Oasis Community Learning's Academies Programme and its approach to personal, social and health education based on the National Curriculum and the incorporation of existing health services under Oasis Community Health, we are even more conscious of our duty towards helping those, who use our services, make fully informed decisions about available health care choices. Our decision to support the delivery of the morning after pill was taken after considering specialist advice, recommended practice and current government guidelines. We regard the provision of good, confidential and accessible health services as being vital to optimising sexual health. Parental involvement is crucial and wherever we can, we encourage their input. However, for a variety of reasons, we acknowledge that not all young people can access support from home.

Working closely with local Primary Care Trusts and other agencies, we aim to deliver sexual health services in environments which emphasise the importance of self-esteem, encourage self-respect, and promote loving, secure, and stable relationships. Our services are based on evidence-based practice, which focuses on one-to-one interventions that address the personal and social factors known to influence an individual's sexual behaviour. Widening our provision of sexual health services to include enhanced advice and support, contraception, STI testing and a range of other health promotion information continues this commitment to provide holistic care. In doing so, we hope to challenge prevalent negative social attitudes concerning sexuality and empower young people to make positive, healthy life choices which result in them delaying sexual activity until they are ready.

## References

1. **Department for Education and Skills (2006)** 'Teenage pregnancy: accelerating the strategy to 2010'.
2. **National Institute of Clinical Excellence Guidelines (NICE, February 2007)** 'One to one interventions to reduce the transmission of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV, and to reduce the rate of under 18 conceptions, especially among vulnerable and at risk groups'.
3. **Triple Helix (Spring 2001)** The Morning After Pill; Pam Sims, pp14-15