



Olive Academies

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Sex and Relationships Education Policy

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Sex and Relationship Education Policy

Introduction

PSHE, sex and relationship education is generally taught in mixed sex classes. This Olive Academies' policy has been developed through collaboration and consultation between the MAT board, Academy Advisory Board (AAB), teachers and parents.

The responsibilities of Olive Academies in relation to sex and relationship education are contained in the 1996 Education Act (Section 351-(1)). Further guidance was issued in 2000.

Statement of Intent

Olive Academies MAT believe that appropriate and responsible sex and relationship education as required by the 1996 Education Act is an entitlement of all pupils and an important element of the curriculum in preparing pupils for adult life.

Sex and relationship education will be taught in such a way as to complement and support the role of parents in carrying out their responsibilities for bringing up their children and will promote the values of family life.

Sexual facts will be presented in an objective and balanced manner in order to enable pupils to:

- Understand a range of sexual attitudes and behaviour.
- Know what is and what is not legal.
- Be able to make informed, reasoned and responsible decisions about the attitudes and behaviour they may adopt in adulthood.

Implementation

The teaching of physical and emotional aspects of sexual behaviour will be set within the clear moral framework of the whole curriculum in which pupils are encouraged to consider the importance of self-restraint, dignity, and the value they should set upon themselves and others.

Pupils will be helped to appreciate through open discussion the benefits and desirability of stable relationships, of married and family life, and the responsibilities of parenthood. Pupils will be given the opportunity to debate sexual issues and be made aware of the health risks of casual and promiscuous sexual behaviour.

Sex and relationship education will therefore aim to give pupils a full understanding of themselves and others and help them to develop fulfilling relationships. To achieve that aim Olive Academies will:

- Help pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of growth, development, and human sexuality.
- Foster pupils' self-esteem, self-awareness, and sense of moral responsibility.
- Help pupils to develop the skills of avoiding and resisting unwanted sexual experience.
- Encourage pupils to explore values and attitudes concerning sexuality and personal relationship and to develop the skills of communication and decision-making.
- Promote the values associated with stable family life.

Organisation and content of the programme; teaching methods; staffing

The programme of study for sex and relationship education includes the material required by the national curriculum (specifically in Science) and reflects the guidance provided by the DfE and Thurrock LA.

The detail of the programme of study for sex and relationship education is contained in the schemes of work followed by the departments involved. The schemes of work are altered from year to year, in the interest of continuing improvement in the quality of education at Olive Academies.

OA invites appropriate specialists to support the staff for certain parts of the sex and relationship education programme. In particular, the academy welcomes the regular involvement of medical staff, especially the community school nurse.

Reflection is an essential part of learning. It helps pupils to consolidate the knowledge and skills they have been learning and to form new understanding and attitudes. Reflection, prompted by questions and discussion forms part of the programme of work.

Staff Development

Implementing sex and relationship education can cause anxieties for some teachers who may lack confidence in dealing with some of the more sensitive aspects of the content of the programme. There may also be issues arising from changes in the legislative framework for sex and relationship education. Staff development work focused on sex and relationship education will therefore be a part of the programme of staff development at the academy, as needs either of the staff or the organisation dictate.

Statements about specific issues

- Teachers can provide individual pupils, including those who have been withdrawn from the Sex and Relationship Education programme, with general information about contraceptive methods and local contraceptive services as this does not count as Sex and Relationship Education. However, they should not give **specific** 'advice' as to which contraceptive method to use etc.

- Health professionals working in the academy, on a one to one basis with pupils, are bound by their professional codes of conduct. However, when working in a classroom situation, they are bound by academy policy. OA provides space for a “drop-in” facility, staffed by the community school nurse, which offers pupils one-to-one confidential advice and opportunities for reflection.
- Teaching staff will first consider whether or not child protection procedures are an issue in a given situation. Health professionals, in particular, the community school nurse, are able to offer confidential advice but must be prepared to supply information on a “need to know” basis to keep a pupil from harm.
- When discussing issues of a confidential nature with pupils, respect for privacy is enforced throughout the academy. However, teaching staff will not promise confidentiality to pupils because the degree of confidentiality will be governed by the need to protect the pupil. Confidentiality may not be maintained if the withholding of information will prejudice the welfare of the pupil.
- There will be occasions when staff and other professionals providing sex and relationship education have to exercise their discretion and judgement about how to deal with explicit issues raised by an individual pupil, especially when they are raised in class. They should confine themselves to those matters falling within this sex and relationship education policy. The shaping of the response should be consistent with the maturity and understanding of the pupils present.
- Sexual harassment is the intimidation of one person by another through the use of bullying, inappropriate and unwelcome sexual language or actions. It can be a particularly unpleasant and demoralising form of bullying. The OA policy against bullying is a separate document. Possible cases of sexual harassment will be dealt with by staff of appropriate seniority and gender; child protection procedures will be followed if necessary.
- A member of OA who is affected by a disease which may be sexually transmitted will not be discriminated against. Normal precautions will be taken to protect other members of the academy against risk of infection. Support will be given through the agencies which work with OA (e.g. the community school nurse) both to the person directly affected and to others who may be deemed at risk.
- “Young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs. Teachers should be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support.
- There should be no direct promotion of sexual orientation.” (DfE Sex and Relationship Guidance, 2000).

Working with Parents

OA acknowledge the right of parents to withdraw their children from all or part of the sex and relationship education provided, unless it forms part of the National Curriculum (which is statutory). However, they hope that parents will be able to support both the policy and the practice of OA.

In the event of a complaint arising from the sex and relationship education programme of the academy, parents should first contact the academy headteacher. If it is not possible to resolve the matter, a formal statement of the complaint should be made to the chair of the AAB, c/o the clerk to the AAB, at the academy.

OA will consult the parents of academy pupils about developments in the Sex and Relationship Education Policy. Parents who would like to know more in detail about the programme of study, the resources and the staffing are very welcome, and should contact the academy's head in the first instance.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years. The review will include an assessment of its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout Olive Academies.