

<b>Policy Title:</b>	<b>Sex and Relationships Education</b>
<b>Policy Reference:</b>	<b>TOA037</b>
<b>Description:</b>	<b>This policy lays out the legal and moral responsibilities of the Academy to educate students with regard to Sex and Relationships and how these responsibilities will be met</b>
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# Index

		Page
1.	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>4</b>
2.	<b>The Moral and Value Framework</b>	<b>4</b>
3.	<b>The Legal Framework: The Academy's Obligations</b>	<b>4</b>
4.	<b>The Aims of Sex and Relationships Education</b>	<b>5</b>
5.	<b>Organisation of Sex and Relationships Education</b>	<b>6</b>
6.	<b>Knowledge and Information</b>	<b>7</b>
7.	<b>Values and Beliefs</b>	<b>7</b>
8.	<b>Skills and Abilities</b>	<b>8</b>
9.	<b>Parental Right to Withdraw</b>	<b>8</b>
10.	<b>Quality Assurance</b>	<b>8</b>
11.	<b>Child Protection and Sexual Abuse</b>	<b>9</b>
12.	<b>Confidentiality and Advice</b>	<b>9</b>
13.	<b>Answering Difficult Questions</b>	<b>10</b>
14.	<b>Harassment and bullying</b>	<b>10</b>
15.	<b>Monitoring, Evaluation and Review</b>	<b>10</b>
16.	<b>Contact Details</b>	<b>11</b>

## THE OXFORD ACADEMY

The Oxford Academy is a learning environment at the heart of its community. We promote care and respect and expect high standards in all aspects of Academy life.

We aim to build a community clearly based on a Christian ethos, recognising the integrity and the unique value of each individual. We aim to build self-esteem, model conflict resolution and protect the vulnerable. We are committed to justice and compassion. Mutual respect and trust are central within the Academy.

Our vision for The Oxford Academy is based on the following beliefs:

- Education matters in society: the provision of a well ordered, stimulating learning environment is a common right for all our children
- The Academy should articulate social and moral values and respect for others, irrespective of their class, gender, race or religion
- The Academy will promote the highest achievement in youngsters, irrespective of their abilities or self-expectations. Competition and collaboration are both equally important to learning. The aspirations of all our students will be nurtured
- The Academy will celebrate students' achievements and challenge fixed notions of ability. We will value and reward young people's verbal, practical, academic, sporting, artistic and leadership skills
- An effective and flourishing Academy should be "public" rather than "private", explaining to parents what is being taught and how the curriculum is being interpreted. It should be open to praise and constructive feedback in a genuine spirit of partnership
- An effective Academy should work closely with neighbouring schools to improve opportunities for children and young people
- The work of the Academy will be underpinned at all times by its ultimate aim – to improve standards, achievement and the life chances of young people. The Oxford Academy is, first and foremost, a place of high quality learning and teaching for young people aged 11-19

This policy, and its associated procedures and protocols, is based on these key principles.

# **Sex and Relationships Education**

## **1. Rationale**

The teaching of sex and relationships education at the Academy, using an integrated and consistent approach, is an important aspect of students' education. Sex and relationships education includes planned opportunities to support the development of self-confidence and relationships, enabling students to participate harmoniously in the wider community. The policy aims to promote an understanding of the range of family groups and other people who contribute to providing students with the care, love and support they need to grow and develop.

This policy has been developed to ensure that staff, parents and carers are clear about the statutory requirements regarding sex and relationships education and that the students receive their educational entitlement through its implementation.

## **2. The Moral and Value Framework**

Sex and relationships education is required to be taught within a moral framework. Students will learn about moral values through all aspects of Academy life and all curriculum areas, not just sex and relationships education. The moral and value framework for the delivery of sex and relationships education will therefore underpin all teaching and learning in this aspect of the Academy's curriculum.

## **3. The Legal Framework: The Academy's Obligations**

The Education Act 1986 Act requires that the Governing Board and the Principal of a school:

“shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that where sex education is given to any registered students at the School, it is given in such a manner as to encourage those students to have due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life”.

The Education Reform Act 1988 requires all state schools to offer a curriculum which:

- a. promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at the school and of society; and
- b. prepares such students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Following the Education Act 1993 schools are required to ensure that sex education, including education about HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, is provided for all students. This is a Governing Board responsibility.

Governors are also obliged to produce a sex education policy outlining the content and organisation of the curriculum and to make copies available for inspection by parents and, if requested, provide a copy free of charge. A copy of this policy can be obtained from The Oxford Academy reception or from the website [www.theoxfordacademy.org.uk](http://www.theoxfordacademy.org.uk).

Currently, parents of both primary and secondary students do have the right to withdraw students from all or part of any sex education that does not form part of the National Curriculum.

In the National Curriculum Science Order at Key Stage 3, there is a requirement for all students to be taught about human reproduction and the physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence. (A parent cannot withdraw its child from this).

Guidance on sex and relationship education was issued to schools July 2000. The guidance offers support for schools, teachers and governors on how to deliver effective sex and relationship education and for developing their school's policy.

The sex education provisions of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 came into force on 1 November 2000. From that date schools have a legal duty to ensure that students are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate, having regard to the age, religion and cultural background of the students concerned. Schools should also ensure that, within the context of talking about relationships, children should be taught about the nature of marriage and its importance for family life. Their sex education policy should contain a statement that a parent may request that a pupil is withdrawn from sex education.

This policy will be reviewed in a year's time when it will be clearer whether the proposed changes within the Children, Schools and Families Bill 2009/2010 will still be implemented.

#### **4. Aims of Sex and Relationship Education**

The Academy governors believe that sex and relationship education is important to provide knowledge and encourage the acquisition of skills and attitudes to allow our students to manage their lives in a responsible and healthy way. Parents and carers have a major responsibility to help students cope with the physical and emotional aspects of growing up. The Academy will support parents in this task and ensure that all students are adequately and equally informed.

Taking account of the age, maturity and needs of the students, sex and relationship education aims to:

- ensure that the Academy's sex education programme meets the needs of all young people in the Academy and is developmentally appropriate
- emphasise that sex education is an integral part of the Academy's personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) programme
- provide guidance for all staff (teaching and non-teaching) and outside visitors
- include all relevant legislation and policy guidelines in this area
- ensure that sex education relates to the Academy's Equal Opportunities and Safeguarding Child Protection and Student Welfare Policies
- give clear information, developing an awareness and understanding of the human body
- help students to understand and express their feelings by providing the vocabulary and developing confidence and communication skills
- develop an understanding and valuing of other people's beliefs, needs and feelings
- equip students with the skills needed to develop a range of relationships and encourage respect and consideration for others
- develop an understanding of the individual's ability to make healthy choices and encourage personal responsibility in all forms of behaviour
- provide information about agencies, which can give support and information on health and related issues
- encourage self-esteem

## **5. Organisation of Sex and Relationship Education**

Sex and relationship education will be co-ordinated through the Academy Nurse, the Principal and Vice Principals. Aspects of sex and relationship education, addressed through the taught curriculum, will be delivered by the teacher with responsibility for drugs, sex and relationship education, with support from the Academy Nurse and other relevant outside agencies.

Delivery will be through agreed topics, planned aspects of science, religious education, PSHCE and assemblies. All aspects of sex and relationship education will be presented in a balanced way, taking into account the cultural diversity within the Academy.

## **6. Knowledge and Information**

The following issues will be addressed within the appropriate key stages:

Key Stage 3 - Puberty, personal safety, friendship and love, family life and relationships, gender issues/conception and birth, contraception, HIV/AIDS, safer sex, helping agencies, sex and the law, life stages.

Key Stage 4 - Birth processes, abortion, fostering and adoption, genetic inheritance, early parenting, sexually transmitted diseases (including HIV/AIDS), sexual lifestyles, helping agencies, prejudice and stereotyping, different faiths and cultures.

Issues will be presented in an objective and balanced way, with students being encouraged to consider their attitudes and values within our values' framework. They will be made aware of the difference between fact, opinion and religious belief.

## **7. Values and Beliefs**

As well as knowledge and information, students will be encouraged to consider the importance of the following values, which are derived from the Academy's value system:

- respect and valuing of themselves and others;
- understanding and sensitivity towards the needs and views of others
- responsibility for their own actions
- responsibility to the Academy, their family and the wider community
- formulating and discussing their own views whilst respecting those of others

## **8. Skills and Abilities**

Students will be encouraged to develop skills in:

- communication, including the making and keeping of relationships
- assertiveness
- decision-making
- recognising and using opportunities to develop a healthy lifestyle

## **9. Parental Right to Withdraw**

Under current legislation:

*“Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of all or part of the sex and relationship education provided at school except for those parts included in the National Curriculum.” - SRE Guidance, (DfEE 0116/2000).*

Parents who have concerns about the content of SRE lessons should contact the PSHCE Co-Ordinator for more information about the course. Information about the SRE Scheme of Work will be given to parents so that the content can be supported at home.

The impending Children, Schools and Families Bill 2009/2010 proposes to remove this right for students over fifteen years of age and, should this become statute, the Academy will implement these changes.

Sex and relationship education incorporates the development of self-esteem and relationships. We seek to ensure that students have access to sound, factual information on these matters. Students’ learning does not just take place through the taught curriculum but through all aspects of Academy life.

## **10. Quality Assurance**

Regular teacher review processes will inform discussion about the successful implementation of the Sex and Relationship Education policy. Judgments about its success may also be made through gathering evidence from:

- the wider Academy staff, on how the policy supports them
- parents and governors, about the clarity of the information provided
- students, and how PSHCE provision is meeting their needs
- 'Drop ins' by the Senior Leadership Team
- formal lesson observations
- work scrutiny

## **11. Child Protection and Sexual Abuse**

The Academy is legally required to refer concerns regarding child protection issues, including sexual abuse, to other agencies such as Children's Services. This will mean that sometimes Academy staff need to support an investigation into the care of individual students attending the Academy. The investigation does not mean that accusations are being made, but that a concern is being looked into.

## **12. Confidentiality and Advice**

Students will be made aware that some information cannot be held in confidence and that certain disclosures will lead to certain actions. Staff will adhere to the following procedures:

- Disclosure or suspicion of possible abuse will invoke the Academy's safeguarding, child protection and student welfare procedures
- Disclosure of pregnancy to any member of staff should be referred to the designated Child Protection Officer, and followed up by the sex and relationships education teacher who will contact the appropriate agency

It is also perfectly appropriate for staff to re-direct a student to a professional with relevant expertise in a particular area, eg Youth Workers and the Academy's pastoral team.

Where a student makes a disclosure to a member of staff, and he/she finds the subject matter difficult to deal with, it is not a breach of confidentiality to discuss the matter with a line manager.

These guidelines are intended to ensure that staff use their professional discretion, whilst also operating within a legal framework. It is important that staff know that it is not a requirement that they deal with a student beyond the referral stages, as there are designated staff, both within the Academy and within Children's Services, who are responsible for implementing investigations and offering support to students.

### **13. Answering Difficult Questions**

If a student asks an explicit or difficult question, staff should use their professional judgment in deciding the best way to answer it. This may be through individual work or discussion with the student. If a staff member is concerned, they can refer the matter to the sex and relationships education teacher, the Academy Counsellor or Child Protection Officer.

### **14. Harassment and Bullying**

Students come from a variety of backgrounds and all are entitled to learn in a supportive environment, free from fear. Some students may use sexually related or homophobic language as a way to harass others. This is unacceptable and will be dealt with as any other form of harassment, through the Academy's behaviour and discipline procedures.

An understanding of human difference, including sexuality, is an important aspect of education and will be addressed as appropriate through the curriculum.

### **15. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

The Governing Board will review this policy after one year to reflect the expected changes in legislation as a result of the Children, Schools and Families Bill 2009/10 due to be implemented in 2011. After that the Governing Board will review the policy every two years to assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Academy.

## 16. Contact Details

Academy Nurse	Cerian Townsend Tel: 01865 774311 cerian.townsend@theoxfordacademy.org.uk
Child Protection Officer	Margaret White, Student Counsellor Tel: 01865 774311 Ext: 327 margaret.white@theoxfordacademy.org.uk
Child Protection SLT Link	Chris Davies, Vice Principal Tel: 01865 774311 Ext: 373 chris.davies@theoxfordacademy.org.uk
Child Protection Governor	Maureen Thompson Tel: 01865 777796
SRE Coordinator	Vacant
PSHCE Co-Ordinator	Vacant