

Ormiston Academies Trust Health Education Policy

Introduction

Section 1 of the Education Reform Act 1988 places a statutory responsibility upon academies to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which:

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at the academy and of society
- Prepares students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Principles

Health Education is an essential part of every students' curriculum. It helps to protect students from illnesses and risks and promotes the development of healthy lifestyles. This then helps to improve the quality of life and the environment.

Essential features of health education are the promotion of quality of life and the physical, social and mental well being of the individual. It covers the provision of information about what is good and what is harmful and involves the development of skills which will help individuals to use their knowledge effectively.

Healthy living must be important for the individual and society in general. Health is essentially one of the most important 'products' of society. We believe it is a vital resource which is the basis of a healthy lifestyle. All individuals are exposed to potential risks to good health, but they can do much to lessen those risks and thereby improve the quality of their own lives and their environment.

Health Education cannot be left to chance. Many health concerns such as smoking, alcohol and other drugs, AIDS, and safety, require more individual attention, and we aim to deal with these within a structured health education programme. Such a programme should encourage students to establish healthy patterns of behaviour, make healthy choices and eventually lead to the development of a healthy population.

Policy for Health Education

Key factors which inform the Academy's Health Education provision are as follows:

Prevention is better than cure

The twentieth century saw a significant shift away from infectious disease as the major cause of mortality. Today, non-infectious disease, fatal accidents and unhealthy patterns of behaviour are the key factor. Much unnecessary illness, injury and premature death is caused by specific behaviour patterns including the use of tobacco, insufficient physical exercise and an unbalanced diet. Many of these patterns of behaviour are established during childhood

and adolescence. Research has shown that well-planned health education can bring about positive changes which are demonstrated in responsible attitudes and behaviour.

Influences on attitude to health

The Academy has a powerful impact on the development of healthy lifestyles but it is only one influence among many. The academy's programme considers other influences such as the family, community, peer group, media, legislation and the background of students.

The Academy's responsibilities

The Academy is responsible for giving accurate information about health matters, so that students can understand the attitudes and values which influence health choices and promote healthy patterns of behaviour. This will require the consideration of health education as part of the formal curriculum and as something which permeates the ethos of the academy. This includes, for instance, the quality of relationships within the academy, the example set by teachers, the physical environment and the academy's facilities.

In order that all students have access to a health education programme, consideration will be given to students with special educational needs and attempts made to meet those needs. For students with ethnic minority backgrounds it must be remembered that learning is likely to be influenced by different cultural backgrounds and experiences. Consideration will also be given to the needs of bilingual students.

Management and co-ordination of health education

Effective management and co-ordination of our health programme should minimise repetition and support curriculum progression and continuity. We believe it is essential that the contributions made by National Curriculum subjects and other parts of the curriculum are co-ordinated. An audit was carried out and we are now able to identify where health education is located in the whole curriculum, how it is taught and ways in which healthy behaviour is being promoted throughout the academy. Regular discussion takes place between the PSE, Science, Home Economics and PE Departments on these matters.

Progression and continuity of learning

Key areas of health education, such as relationships, personal safety and substance use and misuse, may be introduced to students at an early stage. Progression in learning will involve developing and expanding these topics at regular intervals throughout a student's academy career using various approaches.

The Health Education Curriculum

Curriculum planning in health education requires matching the curriculum with the students age, developmental stage, background, the particular social pressures they are likely to encounter and their interests and needs. Information and activities which are suitable at one stage can be inappropriate and even counter-productive at another. During adolescence

especially, skills concerned with resisting social pressures and respecting the needs of others can prove to be as important as facts.

In planning the health education curriculum the Academy has considered the following:-

- Aims and objectives
- The overlapping interests of individual, group and community health
- Methods of evaluation
- The nature of the topic under consideration
- Teacher expertise and experience
- Available resources
- The academy ethos
- Expectations of parents and other interested parties
- The needs and interests of young people

As a result of the above, nine components have been devised to form a framework for a health education curriculum. These are:

- Substance use and misuse
- Sex education
- Family life education
- Safety
- Health-related exercise
- Nutrition
- Personal hygiene
- Environmental aspects of health education
- Psychological aspects of health education

These cannot be dealt with in isolation and are linked so that progress from one to another is effectively achieved.

The core of the Health Education programme is delivered via PSE.

Content of the components of the Health Education Curriculum at the Academy

Substance use and misuse

The acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills which enable students to consider the effects of substances such as tobacco, alcohol and other drugs on themselves and others and to make informed and healthy decisions about the use of such substances.

Key Stage 3

- Recognise personal responsibility for decisions about substance use
- Know the basic facts about substances including their effects and relevant legislation
- Be aware of myths, misconception and stereotypes linked with substance use

- Develop appropriate techniques for coping with situations in which substance use occurs

Key Stage 4

- Explore the historical, cultural, political, social and economic factors relating to the production, distribution and use of drugs worldwide
- Understand that Britain is a drug-using society and recognise the different patterns of use and their effects, e.g. transmission of HIV infection through shared needles and the detrimental effect on the foetus of all types of drug use
- Recognise that individuals are responsible for choices they make about drug use
- Be able to analyse safe levels of intake; e.g. tobacco use is never safe, limited use of alcohol may be
- Be able to communicate effectively and confidently with those who administer medication
- Discuss the role of Media in influencing attitudes towards drugs, particularly smoking and alcohol

Sex Education

Sex education provides an understanding that positive, caring environments are essential for the development of a good self-image and that individuals are in charge of and responsible for their own bodies. It provides knowledge about the processes of reproduction and the nature of sexuality and relationships. It encourages the acquisition of skills and attitudes which allow students to manage their relationships in a responsible and healthy manner.

The Education Act 1993 provided new arrangements for sex education. Section 241 required that:

- Education about human sexual behaviour (including education about HIV and AIDS) will be removed from the National Curriculum.
- All maintained secondary academies, and maintained special academies with secondary age students, will be required to provide such sex education for all their students.
- At maintained primary schools, sex education will remain discretionary; and
- At all maintained academies, parents will have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the sex education offered.

Letters are always sent to parents making them fully aware of what sex education is provided in academy.

Key Stage 3

- Recognise the importance of personal choice in managing relationships so that they do not present risks, e.g. to health, to personal safety.
- Understand the organisms (including HIV) can be transmitted in many ways, in some cases sexually.
- Discuss moral values and explore those held by different cultures and groups
- Understand the concept of stereotyping and identify its various forms.
- Be aware of the range of sexual attitudes and behaviours in present day society.
- Understand that people have the right not to be sexually active; recognise that parenthood is a matter of choice; know in broad outline the biological and social factors which influence sexual behaviour and their consequences.

Key Stage 4

- Understand aspects of Britain's legislation relating to sexual behaviour.
- Understand the biological aspects of reproduction.
- Consider the advantages and disadvantages of various method of family planning in terms of personal preference and social implications
- Recognise and be able to discuss sensitive and controversial issues such as conception, birth, HIV/AIDS, child-rearing, abortion and technological developments which involve consideration of attitudes, values, beliefs and morality.
- Be aware of the need for preventative health care and know what this involves
- Be aware of the availability of statutory and voluntary organisations which offer support in human relationships, e.g. Relate
- Be aware that feeling positive about sexuality and sexual activity is important in relationships, understand the changing nature of sexuality over time and its impact on lifestyle, e.g. the menopause.
- Be aware of partnerships, marriage and divorce and the impact of loss, separation and bereavement.
- Be able to discuss issues such as sexual harassment in terms of their effects on individuals.

Family Life Education

The principal objective of family life education is that students understand and value the central role of the family as an institution and the important part it plays in the development of attachment, love and concern. This covers the need for good child care, effective parenting and the changing nature of relationships within the family.

Key Stage 3

- Know in more detail about child development and the role of primary health care.
- Know about vaccination/immunisation in general health care e.g. protection against disease for children, young people and individuals travelling abroad.
- Recognise the factors involved in setting up and maintaining a home, planning and having a family, know about the role of the father and the mother and their relationships before and after the arrival of the children.
- Recognise the changing nature of relationships within the family, e.g. children gaining independence, new members of the family group, death.

Key Stage 4

- Understand the importance of feeling positive about oneself and others; be able to express feelings confidently.
- Be aware of the part that family life can play in happy and fulfilling relationships.
- Be aware of problems which can occur in family life, e.g. domestic violence, abuse, bereavement, substance use, unemployment, illness, be aware of the effects of such problems; recognise that some individuals have special needs.
- Know in detail and be able to put into practice child care skills.
- Understand that the roles of different members of the family may alter over time.
- Know how to use the helping agencies, e.g. clinics, hospitals, dentists.

Safety

The acquisition of knowledge and understanding of safety in different environments, together with the development of associated skills and strategies, helps students to maintain their personal safety and that of others.

Key Stage 3

- Be able to analyse and assess situations in terms of safety and know that individuals play an important part in the maintenance of safe, healthy environments.
- Become aware of rules and legislation relating to health and safety.

Key Stage 4

- Investigate and be able to demonstrate safe practices in various environments, e.g. home, academy, work, road.
- Know and understand the background and importance of legislation affecting the workplace, including statutory and voluntary bodies concerned with safety.

- Know and understand the effects of medicines, tobacco, alcohol, drugs and fatigue in relation to accidents.
- Know and understand specific safety issues relating to groups such as the very young, elderly people and people with disabilities.

Health related exercise

Recognition of the role of exercise in promoting and maintaining good health encourages students to make positive choices about their own activities.

Key Stage 3

- Know that energy expenditure should be increased whenever possible and that exercise is the only voluntary way to do this.
- Know that regular exercise influences body shape and allows daily activities to be performed more easily.
- Know that regular exercise can help to alleviate stress and anxiety.

Key Stage 4

- Know that regular exercise promotes well-being and improves bodily health.
- Know that regular exercise increases the functional capacity of people of all ages and can help those who are disabled or chronically ill.
- Understand the advantages of incorporating regular exercise as part of their lifestyle, to improve their health - both physical and mental.

Food and Nutrition

Education about nutrition covers the relationships between diet and health, the nutritional quality of different foods and food safety. It encourages students to make healthy choices.

Key Stage 3

- Know that individual health requires a varied diet.
- Understand malnutrition and the relationships between diet, health, fitness and circulatory disorders.
- Understand basic food microbiology, food production and processing techniques.

Key Stage 4

- Be able to analyse and evaluate diet and recognise suitable adjustments which take account of a range of factors such as the availability of food and social cultural and financial influences.
- Know that various types of diet promote health for different groups, acknowledging cultural and ethnic variations.

- Understand consumer aspects of food hygiene; shopping for food; legislation, including the current food labelling system.
- Understand the relationship between food, body image and self esteem.
- A separate module on anorexia and bulimia has recently been included at student request.
- Have accurate information to enable them to distinguish between fact, propaganda and folklore in dietary matters.

Personal Hygiene

Acquisition of the knowledge and practices needed to promote personal cleanliness helps to reduce transmission of communicable diseases and encourages pride in body maintenance.

Key Stage 3

- Know that a lack of personal hygiene can contribute to ill health and social disadvantage, recognise that there are socio-economic factors which make cleanliness more difficult for some people.
- Be aware of the influence of clothing, household fabrics and fashion on health and hygiene.
- Recognise the importance of valuing and taking care of oneself.

Key Stage 4

- Be able to discuss the value of "hygiene" products; be aware of the influences of the media on self-image.
- Know how gender stereotyping can affect behaviour in relation to personal hygiene.
- Recognise about the provision of dental services and understand the importance of regular attendance.

Environmental aspects of health education

The aim is to develop the environmental aspects of health education, including social, physical and economic factors which contribute to health and illness, helps to raise awareness of environmental health issues, avoid unnecessary risks and promote good health.

Key Stage 3

- Understand the importance of a balanced healthy lifestyle.
- Be able to distinguish between infectious and non-infectious diseases, know how they are spread and be able to assist in their prevention.
- Understand the impact of the media and advertising on attitudes towards health.
- Know about the NHS.

Key Stage 4

- Understand how legislation and political, social, economic and cultural decisions affect health.
- Accept responsibility for and be able to justify personal choices and decisions about health; show some insight into other people's lifestyles, values, attitudes and decisions.
- Be aware of how food shortages and surpluses occur and the health effects of malnutrition and over-consumption.
- Develop a commitment to the care and improvement of their own and other people's health, community and environment.

Psychological aspects of health education

Acquisition of knowledge and an understanding of the factors that affect mental health, emotional well-being and stress, and the development of self-awareness, skills and attitudes necessary to act on this knowledge.

Key Stage 3

- Know how labelling and stereotyping can have a negative effect on mental health.
- Be able to give and receive praise and encouragement in order to promote the self-esteem and self-confidence essential to mental health.
- Understand the emotional changes which take place during puberty; understand differences in maturation and have a positive self-image.

Key Stage 4

- Be able to carry out honest self-assessment.
- Appreciate ways in which they can control aspects of their own behaviour and resist peer pressure.
- Be able to understand and manage changes in relationships.
- Know about factors which influence the process of making decisions, including choosing between alternatives and considering long and short-term consequences of decisions for oneself and others.
- Recognise the causes and effects of stress; be able to identify ways of reducing/managing/preventing stress; know how to ask for and give support.
- Be aware of personal beliefs and prejudices about mental illness.

A whole school approach to health education

Health education in academies does not begin and end in the classroom. The subtle messages that students receive about health from the daily life of a academy are as important as those given during lessons. The message thus conveyed should be consistent.

The aims, attitudes, values and procedures of the academy are fundamental to the successes of any health education programme.

The relationships between staff and students and those among staff themselves are important elements of health education. Standards, attitudes and patterns of behaviour can convey powerful messages and their significance is often underestimated. Lessons which promote courtesy, concern, respect and acceptance of responsibility for self and others will be more effective if these qualities are valued consistently in every aspect of life. Health messages will have a more significant impact if they are supported by opportunities to exercise skills learnt in the classroom through appropriate systems of rewards and punishment.

All of these factors are acknowledged at the Academy. The Academy policies on Pastoral care, Personal, Social, Moral and Spiritual Education and Praise make particular reference to the broader context and ways in which this impinges upon the physical, emotional and social health of students. Those who are happy with their image are able to take increasing control of their lives, including decisions relating to healthy lifestyles. The organisation and management structures of an academy can do much to encourage the development of self-confidence and self-esteem. For example, open communication can make an individual feel wanted and valued; a strong pastoral system can support personal development as well as being a mechanism for responding to crises or misdemeanours.

The quality of relationships between an academy and the local community is also important.

Responsibility for health education is a shared one and, in addition to sound links with parents, association with local health services is an advantage. We have very good links with our local health service using their services very widely. The academy nurse provides assistance in certain lessons and also has a weekly 'Open Door' session for all students.

Teaching Health Education at the Academy

The emphasis in our health education programme is on encouraging individual responsibility, awareness and informed decision-making. We believe that the provision and acquisition of information alone is unlikely to promote healthy, or discourage unhealthy, behaviour. It is also apparent that well-intentioned attempts to shock or frighten young people rarely develop positive attitudes and behaviours in the long term.

So, if our health education programme is to help students make informed choices, establish a healthy lifestyle and build up a system of values, the teaching methods that we use are as important as the content of lessons.

The participation of students is essential in order to encourage students to learn from others and to help them use appropriate languages in ways that are understood by others.

This requires the use of a balanced range of teaching methods. Opportunities are given in all areas for students to assess evidence, making decisions, negotiate, listen, make and deal with relationships, solve problems and work independently and with confidence. Whilst there is a place for direct teaching, the use of audio-visual aids, visits and contributions from visitors, a lot of the teaching in health education will be based on the active involvement of students. Teaching methods particularly suited to this kind of approach include games, simulations, case studies, role plays, problem-solving exercises, questionnaires, surveys, open-ended questions and sentences and group work of various kinds. All of these are used throughout the years.

The method of teaching will be adjusted according to the topic or sensitive issue so that it provides minimal embarrassment, distress and unconsidered, unintended personal disclosures.

A cross curricular approach

It is vital that the departments whose curriculum include discrete health education all work together and especially PE, Home Economics, Biology and PSE.

Joint meetings have been held and an up-to-date audit taken of what is being covered and where. Whole academy health weeks are organised. The overall aim is to give Health Education a high whole academy profile.

The Academy Development Plan, shows the priority now given to developing a whole academy life skills programme including citizenship and a co-ordinated health programme. This will build on the existing very good provision for Health Education, as outlined above, but aim at showing students even more clearly the importance of this area for their overall health and happiness.

There will be whole day health related events that are designed to give a high profile to the area