

HIV/AIDS POLICY

INTRODUCTION

HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. HIV can damage the immune system, weakening the body's defences against infections which would be fought off under other circumstances but which can be life threatening to people with HIV. An HIV test is usually for antibodies to HIV, and where such antibodies are found, a person is said to be HIV positive (HIV+) or HIV antibody positive.

AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. When a person is diagnosed as having AIDS, it means that a collection (syndrome) of specific infections has been identified which is related to damage to the immune system as a result of HIV infection. Many of these infections, however, can be successfully treated and people living with AIDS are often well with only occasional acute episodes of illness.

The term 'people with HIV and AIDS' will be used to describe people living with HIV infection and AIDS.

Whilst terminology for HIV and AIDS has not changed it is now referred to as HIV/AIDS and will be for the purpose of this document.

CURRENT STATE OF THE EPIDEMIC

Over 34 million people worldwide have HIV/AIDS, no-one has been cured. Since the start of the epidemic 18.8 million people have died.

Pupils of all ages have heard of HIV and/or AIDS. Research has shown that children in the first years of school have some awareness of the term HIV/AIDS. Any child who watches Eastenders will know something about it – even if all they know is you have to go to the hospital. Many pupils will have noticed red ribbons or seen the pictures of film of Princess Diana at London Lighthouse. They might notice posters around especially on World Aids Day, or have heard jokes or gossip.

MISSION STATEMENT

We at Collis School believe that all members of the school community are of equal value regardless of age, gender, sex, religion, culture, race and HIV status.

The school challenges misinformation and supports the development of understanding and care of those infected and affected with HIV/AIDS.

This is supported by our Drugs Education Policy, Sex Education Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Borough Policy for Employment and general ethos of the school.

AIMS

- To raise awareness of the issue of HIV/AIDS in society
- To ensure that members of the school community are aware of HIV/AIDS and understand that people with HIV/AIDS pose no risk to the health and safety of others
- To ensure that staff or pupils affected or infected are supported within the school

OBJECTIVES

- Develop a respect for others
- Be aware that people have different values
- Explore influences on how people make choices
- Challenge prejudice and discrimination

DELIVERY OF OBJECTIVES

These objectives will be met:

- through the general ethos of the school such qualities as tolerance, understanding, fairness, empathy and compassion are modelled to pupils by all members of staff and developed through all areas of school life;
- by the health and safety in the workplace policy;
- through existing PSHE policies.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS POLICY

The Headteacher has the overall responsibility for the development and implementation of this policy. All members of the school community will be involved in the delivery of the policy.

SPECIFIC ISSUES

- It will not be generally appropriate to invite outside speakers to talk to pupils about HIV/AIDS but should this happen they will be made aware of school policy on HIV/AIDS and will be asked to submit the content outline of their speech or lesson to the school beforehand.
- When questions arise on HIV/AIDS with children these will be dealt with honestly and straightforwardly but without mention of sexual transmission. Sometimes a child may be referred to parents or an appropriate agency.

- Information on helplines and support agencies will be available for the whole school community on notice boards.
- The Coordinator will keep up to date with new initiatives and information and ensure appropriate inset is provided. Induction of new staff will be included.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All HIV/AIDS issues will be treated with total confidence. All disclosures relating to HIV/AIDS will be kept totally private.

Any member of the school community who has information on the HIV/AIDS status of any individual will not share this information. Where it is deemed desirable that this information is made available to another staff member consent must be sought and given before proceeding.

No member of staff is under any obligation to reveal their HIV status in any circumstances, nor should any member of staff disclose the HIV status of anyone within their family or friendship group unless they wish to.

Parents are under no obligation to reveal the HIV status of their child/ren to staff. Should any teacher be informed that a child is HIV+ they will keep this information confidential, but may ask for permission from the parent or carer of the child to inform the Headteacher if they feel it is in the family's best interests that another adult is informed. If consent is denied no further action should be given.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed in line with the cycle of policy review in the School Development Plan.

Nikki Connor
PSHCE Coordinator