

Children and young People's Services  
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Dear Parent or Carer

In 2014 Oxfordshire County Council's Public Health directorate commissioned Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust to provide the school health nursing service within Oxfordshire. We are delighted to be delivering this service and are working closely with our colleagues from Education to take forward the health and wellbeing of the children and young people in Oxfordshire. Further information on the service model can be found on our website:

<http://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/children-and-young-people/oxon/school-health-nursing/>

Oxfordshire School Health Nurses are able to provide with the agreement and support of the Head Teacher, a range of services to protect and promote the sexual health of young people, easily accessible on school premises.

#### Trained School Health Nurses

The service is provided by the School Health Nurse, who will have undertaken specialist training in sexual health, this training is updated regularly to ensure our nurses deliver the best evidence based practice, to keep our young people safe. School health nurses have full access to support services and adhere to confidentiality procedures as per Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust policies and the Nursing, Midwifery Council (NMC) Code of Conduct; further information is available at [www.nmc.org.uk](http://www.nmc.org.uk)

#### Parents and Carers involvement

This will mean that young people are able to access confidential advice and support about wellbeing, relationships and their sexual health. We know that the best people to support young people are their parents and carers and therefore will always work with the young people to encourage them to talk to their parents/carers. We are aware, however, that occasionally young people feel unable to do this and it is therefore important for them to have someone they can turn to for advice. The School Health Nurse service will, by using evidence based sexual health provision in school, encourage young people to have a positive approach to their sexual health and empower them to make informed and responsible choices about relationships and sex.

#### Rates of sexually transmitted infections

Research shows that young people want sexual health services that are easy to access. Furthermore evidence shows that young people between the ages of 16-24 years continue to have the highest rates of sexually transmitted infections (STI) with Chlamydia remaining the most prevalent STI in England with rates substantially higher in 15-24 year olds than any other age group. With the School Health Nurse providing education, information and support to young people we strive to improve the sexual health outcomes for young people. As we are now based in schools, we have often developed an ongoing working relationship with many of the young people. The school health nurse offers a range of services in school which will include support and advice on the following; delaying sex, healthy relationships, the meaning of consent and what constitutes abusive relationships, pregnancy and STI testing, contraception and we screen all young people for risk of child sexual exploitation. We can

contribute to whole school programmes in supporting the school to ensure that young people develop healthy and well, in all aspects of their growing years to reach their full potential.

### Assessing the sexual health needs of young people

Young people accessing the service would receive age appropriate health advice and information relevant to their sexual history and clinical condition (health and wellbeing/past medical history). The school health nurse would be able to offer translators or interpreting services (face-to-face or telephone) where requested or necessary.

The assessment may develop and cover condom teaching, pregnancy testing, assessment of risk of sexually transmitted diseases with the option of screening and treating Chlamydia, provision of Emergency Hormonal Contraceptives. If in the young person's best interest contraception is required, condoms, contraceptive pills, patches or injections can be issued, free of charge. If needed, young people can be signposted to other services for further treatment. Sexual health advice and the follow up of students are integral to this process.

### Gillick Competency and Fraser Guidelines

All young people who come to the school nurse service for sexual health advice are assessed to ensure that they are mature enough and competent to make decisions for themselves. This has particular relevance in regard to sexual health and we assess young people for Gillick competence and contraception can be provided if necessary within 'Fraser guidelines'. The Gillick competency and Fraser guidelines help us all to balance young peoples' rights and wishes with our responsibility to keep children safe from harm.

Consideration would also be given to those aged 16-18 years with a mental or physical disability, or in a relationship where there are power or control concerns. Ability to consent would be assessed under Gillick competence, which is a term originating in England and is used in medical law to decide whether a child (16 years or younger) is able to consent to his or her own medical treatment, without the need for parental permission or knowledge.

Fraser Guidelines relate purely to providing contraception. School Health Nurses and other health professionals follow the criteria outlined by Lord Fraser in 1985, following the House of Lords' ruling in the case of Victoria Gillick v West Norfolk and Wisbech Health Authority and Department of Health and Social Security. These are commonly known as the **Fraser Guidelines**:

- The young person understands the advice and has sufficient maturity to understand what is involved
- The health professional cannot persuade the young person to inform his or her parent or allow the doctor to inform the parents that he or she is seeking contraceptive advice;
- The young person is very likely to begin or continue having intercourse with or without contraceptive treatment;
- Without contraceptive advice or treatment, the young person's physical or mental health or both are likely to suffer;
- It would be in the young person's best interests to be given contraceptive advice, treatment or both, without parental consent.

### Confidentiality and record keeping

The service provided to students is **confidential** and the School Health Nurse will maintain confidential health records on individual students. Clinical information regarding young people using the services of Oxford Health

NHS Foundation Trust, including those related to their sexual health will be held securely and strictly in accordance with Caldicott Guidance, the Data Protection Act (1998), the NMC Code of Conduct and Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust Policies, including Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (OSCB) information sharing policy. Further information can be found at: <http://systems.hscic.gov.uk/infogov/igfaqs/quickreferencef.doc>

School health nurses have a passion to improve the health outcomes for children and young people and by working with school staff and parents, we strive to ensure our children and young people achieve their full potential.

For more information or to discuss this further please don't hesitate to contact your school health nurse, through your child's school or myself.

Yours faithfully

Margaret Fallon

Operational Manager School Health Nursing

**<http://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/children-and-young-people/oxon/school-health-nursing/>**