



### **Statement of Intent**

At Foxfields we believe in ensuring that school is a place that every child can access without fear of discrimination and where children and families can seek support.

Foxfields aims to:

- Be a place where it is safe to be living with HIV and where families feel safe to share this information.
- Be a HIV-friendly school through a holistic approach that promotes a caring, supportive and inclusive environment.
- Be a place where all children are safe and able to equally access education.

### **What is HIV?**

HIV is a blood-borne virus that was first identified in 1983. HIV can be transmitted through blood, breast milk and sexual fluids. HIV is not passed through saliva, transmission is only possible if there is a sufficient quantity of the virus entering the bloodstream directly, so exposure to HIV does not make infection inevitable.

HIV is a 'non-notifiable' disease because all people living with HIV, including pupils and staff in schools, present no risk of onward transmission in everyday contact. If there were any concerns about people in the school community posing a risk of onward infection, HIV would not be a non-notifiable disease and staff and pupils would be legally required to report their HIV status.

- HIV cannot be passed on through normal daily contact, which includes playing and normal childhood interactions.
- The vast majority of HIV positive pupils in education in the UK acquired HIV from their mothers during pregnancy, birth or breast-feeding.
- A pupil (or teacher) living with HIV poses no risk to the school community.
- There has never been a case identified of a child passing HIV to another child, teacher or member of the school community within a school.
- People living with HIV are able to live long, healthy lives.
- Confidentiality is critical to people living with HIV, due to the stigma that is still present in society.

## **What is stigma?**

The term stigma is often used when talking about HIV. Stigmas refers to the devaluing, shaming, blaming or punishment of particular individuals or groups. Stigma taps into existing prejudices and often further marginalizes people. For HIV, stigma comes from HIV being associated with sex, disease and death, and with illegal or culturally taboo behaviours such as drug use.

Stigma is harmful to the individual and can lead to HIV positive or affected children feeling shame, guilt and isolation. It can also lead individuals or institutions to discriminate, causing harm or violating children's legal and human rights, such as by denying services or entitlements.

## **HIV and the law:**

Children living with HIV are legally defined as 'disabled' and are therefore protected against discrimination by the Equality Act 2010.

The Children and Families Act 2014 sets in law a duty to support pupils with medical conditions in maintained schools, academies, free schools and pupil referral units.

As a school we meet our legal duties in these relevant areas:

- Equality
- Confidentiality
- Health and safety
- Bullying
- Statutory duties to promote children and young people's well being
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions

## **What will Foxfields do when a HIV disclosure is made?**

Our process follows the format and statutory guidance provided by the DfE regarding children with medical conditions in schools:

Foxfields is informed about a pupil or families HIV status:

Research has shown that 33% of disclosures to schools happen through a third person within the families consent. If this happens, the first step is to establish whether the person has the family's consent, and if not, to speak with the family, in order to inform and reassure them.

The headteacher designates a staff member to co-ordinate a meeting with the parent/carer, child and HIV health or social care practitioner, to discuss the child's medical and/or pastoral needs.

The meeting should address and reach agreement on, the following issues:

- Confidentiality and reassurance that the child will not be treated differently.
- Arrangements on attendance due to hospital appointments, illness or caring responsibilities.
- The level of educational and pastoral support needed, and how this will be reviewed.
- How confidential records will be kept on the child's health and these meetings.

## Foxfields Academy **HIV Policy**

Published: June 2021

Review Date: June 2022

- Where the child is HIV positive, decide how any important health information that may affect the child, such as changing medication and its side effects will be shared with the school.

Draw up agreed support plan, to include confidential information storage and sharing, and dates to review this plan.

Consider the information or training needs of the designated staff member, to improve their knowledge and understanding of HIV. This could be reading guidance in full, or a conversation with a paediatric HIV practitioner.

If a pupil informs school about their own or their parent/carer's HIV status, the pupil will be reassured that this information will be kept confidentially amongst specific staff in school, and will inform the parent/carer that this information has been shared.

Information about individual or family HIV status should not normally be added to a pupils' record. If Foxfields feels that it is essential to include this information on the pupil's record, parent/carers will be given the opportunity of having it removed before a pupil transfers schools. If HIV status information is included in the school records system, Foxfields will guarantee this information remains confidential.

### **Staff awareness**

It is important that all staff discuss, and are aware of, the procedures for HIV disclosure, before it happens. This presents the opportunity to ensure that staff's HIV knowledge is up to date and firmly establish the need for confidentiality.

### **First Aid**

If a pupil with HIV status has a cut, this should be dealt with in the normal manner, following universal first aid procedures and standard hygiene practices. This will be effective in preventing transmission of all blood-borne infections, including HIV.

### **Policy Review**

Foxfields considers the HIV Policy document to be important and the Headteacher of Foxfields will undertake a thorough review of both policy and practice each year and report to the Local School Board annually.