



A comprehensive whole school approach to domestic abuse and healthy relationships education for secondary schools.

Why is Equate needed in schools?

Equate was developed because domestic abuse is a widespread problem with a huge impact on children and young people in Nottingham and the UK:

- 1 in 10 children are living with domestic abuse (Unicef, 2006)
- 16-19 year olds are more at risk of domestic abuse than other age groups (Director of Public Prosecutions, 2011)
- 1 in 4 teenage girls have experienced physical violence from their partner (NSPCC, 2009)
- 1 in 8 women aged 17-21 years say a partner frightened or threatened them (Girlguiding, 2015)
- 1 in 6 teenage girls have been hit by their partner (NSPCC, 2011).

This violence puts young people in danger, and can affect their attendance and performance at school. Prevention work to stop domestic abuse needs to start early. It is hugely important to encourage all young people to aspire to have healthy relationships in the future and acknowledge that they deserve healthy relationships. Schools are ideal places where prevention work can take place, while young people are beginning to form their ideas about relationships.

What are the aims of Equate?

Equate aims to empower young men and young women to have equal, healthy relationships, by helping them:

- form healthy attitudes towards relationships
- build their self-esteem and sense of wellbeing
- recognise their rights within relationships and to live free from fear
- feel safe and supported

Equate has been designed in line with the British Government's Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy, which aims to use prevention work to "educate, inform and challenge young people about healthy relationships, abuse and consent, and engage men and boys in challenging VAWG."

What does Equate involve?

The programme includes different creative, informative and age-appropriate projects on a range of issues relevant to healthy relationships and domestic abuse. Equate includes:

- Relationships Project (year 7)
Exploring relationships, self-esteem, diversity, working with others
- Media Campaign (year 8)
Creating an awareness campaign for other young people around healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Personal Space (and sexual bullying) (year 9)
Learning about personal space, consent, and the law
- Digital Safety (sexting) (year 9)
Learning about sending images, digital footprints, and the law
- Staff twilight on domestic abuse
- Information for school, parents and governors

[Read sample session plans for some of our popular Equate sessions.](#)

What are the benefits of Equate?

- Young people increase their self-worth and aspirations for their future, reducing their vulnerability to abuse and exploitation
- Pupils recognise the qualities of healthy and unhealthy relationships and how to recognise signs of domestic abuse
- Pupils learn where to go for help and support with unhealthy relationships
- Young people increase their understanding of gender inequality and respect for women
- Pupils increase their understanding of the legal and moral issues around consent and personal space, recognising their rights and responsibilities in intimate relationships
- Young people understand the legal and emotional consequences of sending intimate images via email, text and social media.
- Participants improve their skills in managing friendships and family relationships

Long-term studies also suggest that interventions focussing on social and emotional well-being can result in a positive shift in attainment levels (Durlak *et al.*, 2011)

How does Equate meet curriculum requirements?

Equate has been developed to meet the Ofsted criteria on pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare.

The project supports schools to demonstrate their commitment to the concepts of the Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) Association's recommended programme of study.

Equate also links to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) and sex and relationships education (SRE) agendas.

Evaluation: measuring success

Following project delivery, each school will receive a detailed impact report that highlights evaluated changes in knowledge and attitudes amongst the project participants, as well as what they thought of the project.

In a single year, Equate reaches nearly 4,000 pupils in 20 secondary schools and we trained 50 teachers to deliver parts of our work.

Funding

Costs for Equate projects vary according to the delivery needs of each school. It is possible for a school to have single year group sessions or bespoke sessions. Equation receives some funding to be able to provide sessions at a subsidised cost. Please [get in touch](#) with our Children and Young People team to discuss your requirements and get a quote.