

Global education charity to run UK's first secure school

This is scheduled to open in late 2020 on the site of Medway Secure Training Centre in Kent.

Today's announcement is a major step towards delivering on the Government's commitment to put education at the heart of youth custody. Oasis provided a clear and ambitious vision and will be given complete autonomy to set the curriculum and timetable, and will decide how they recruit, train and pay staff.

Three quarters of Oasis' academies operate in the UK's most deprived areas and most were rated by Ofsted as failing at the time they were taken over. The organisation has overseen a turnaround whereby 80% are now rated as good or outstanding.

The £5m investment will include extensive refurbishment of classrooms and residential areas to provide the best possible environment for Oasis to deliver services like their existing mentoring and work with young people at risk of violence and abuse.

Justice Minister Edward Argar, said:

Secure Schools are critical to our vision for youth custody – placing education, healthcare and purposeful activity at the heart of rehabilitation.

I have been impressed by Oasis's dedication to improving the lives of young people and its track record across education, health and youth work.

We will now work closely with them on detailed proposals to ensure high standards from day one.

Secure Schools are just one part of a package of reforms to the youth estate which have seen staff numbers increase by more than a third in 2018 and the introduction of a new Youth Justice Specialist role. They will play a key role in tackling youth violence, offering up to 64 places for boys and girls between the ages of 12 and 17 who are either sentenced to custody or held on remand.

Notes to editors

- Secure schools will be jointly inspected by Ofsted, and the Care Quality Commission, covering education, care and health, with the possibility of additional support from other inspectorates.
- Visit www.oasisuk.org for more information on Oasis Charitable Trust.