



GLOUCESTER
ACADEMY

Gloucester Academy

RSE Policy

Gloucester Academy is part of the Greenshaw Learning Trust.
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Gloucester Academy Sex Education and Relationship (SRE) Policy

Approval and review:

This policy is the responsibility of: Assistant Headteacher, Student Culture and Behaviour

This policy was approved by the Local Governing Body on: June 2023

This policy is due for review by: June 2024

This Policy applies to Gloucester Academy and all governors and staff of the school must abide by this policy which has been adopted in accordance with and pursuant to the Curriculum Policy of the Greenshaw Learning Trust.

It is the responsibility of the local governing body and Headteacher of the school to ensure that their school and its staff adhere to this policy. In implementing this policy school staff must take account of any advice given to them by the Executive Headteacher and/or Board of Trustees.

This policy is subject to the GLT Curriculum Policy and the Scheme of Delegation approved for the school. If there is any ambiguity or conflict then the GLT Curriculum Policy and the Scheme of Delegation and any specific Scheme or alteration or restriction to the Scheme approved by the Board of Trustees takes precedence. If there is any question or doubt about the interpretation of this, the Chief Executive Officer of the GLT should be consulted.

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1. Policy Aim

Gloucester Academy would like to emphasise that by providing comprehensive RSE we are not encouraging pupils to become sexually active at a young age. The aim of this policy is to ensure that the right provision is in place so that pupils may have all the background knowledge they need to make informed decisions and responsible choices as they grow up.

Through the provision outlined in this policy we also aim to raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence, trying to develop communication and assertiveness skills that can help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see in the media. We hope to teach pupils to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, physical and mental abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them. We want our pupils to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle, teach them to care for and respect their bodies and provide them with all the right tools that will enable them to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their school years and after.

2. Roles and responsibilities

Our SRE provision is overseen by the Assistant Headteacher for Culture and Ethos. They are assisted by a PSHE Coordinator (this role may be split between more than one member of staff, likely to be heads of year).

However, all staff, whether or not they are directly involved in the delivery of SRE provision have a general responsibility to promote positive and healthy relationships.

2.1 The PSHE Coordinator

The PSHE Coordinator will ensure:

- all staff are given regular and ongoing training on issues relating to RSE and how to deliver lessons on such issues.
- all staff are up to date with policy changes, and familiar with school policy and guidance relating to sex education.
- support is provided to staff members who feel uncomfortable or ill-equipped to deal with the delivery of sex education to pupils.
- sex education is age-relevant and appropriate across all year groups; this means ensuring that the curriculum develops as our pupils do and meets their needs.
- the knowledge and information regarding RSE to which all pupils are entitled is provided in a comprehensive way.
- parental involvement is part of the development of the RSE curriculum.
- personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing a balanced RSE in school.
- they communicate freely with staff, parents/carers and the governing body to ensure that everyone is in understanding of the school policy and curriculum for sex education, and that any concerns or opinions regarding the provision at the school are listened to, taken into account and acted on as is appropriate.

2.2 Staff

All staff should support the delivery of the PSHE/RSE curriculum by:

- Ensuring that they are up to date with school policy and curriculum requirements

regarding sex education.

- Encouraging pupils to communicate concerns regarding their social, personal and emotional development in confidence, listen to their needs and support them seriously. Any potential safeguarding concerns must be passed on to the DSL.

Staff involved in delivering aspects of the RSE curriculum should also ensure they:

- Attend and engage in professional development around sex education provision
- Provide feedback to the PSHE Coordinator
- Ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing balanced RSE in school.
- Tailor their lessons to suit all pupils in their class, across the whole range of abilities, including those pupils with special educational needs. If teachers need support in this area they should speak to the SENDCO .

2.4 Students

Students are expected to attend sex education classes that are in their school timetable and take them seriously. Although they are not assessed through examination, these classes are still a very important part of the curriculum and a tool to aid personal development and the school expects pupils to recognise this.

Pupils should support one another with issues that arise through RSE. Listening in class, being considerate of other people's feelings and beliefs, and complying with confidentiality rules that are set in class are key to effective provision. Pupils who regularly fail to follow these standards of behaviour will be dealt with under the school behaviour policy.

We also hope that pupils will feel comfortable to talk to a member of staff, in confidence, regarding any concerns they have in school related to sex education or otherwise. Conversations of this nature between staff and pupils will be held in confidence where possible, but potential safeguarding concerns will always be reported to the DSL.

We ask pupils for feedback on the school's sex education provision annually and expect them to take this responsibility seriously. Opinions on provision and comments will be reviewed by senior managers and taken into consideration when the curriculum is prepared for the following year's pupils. In this way, the school hopes to provide pupils with the education they need on topics they want to learn about.

2.5 Parents and Carers

The school expects parents/carers to share the responsibility of sex education and support their children's personal, social and emotional development. We encourage parents/carers to create an open home environment where pupils can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through school PSHE. Parents/carers are also encouraged to seek additional support in this from the school where they feel it is needed.

3 Curriculum

At Gloucester Academy, RSE includes, but is not limited to, the following topics:

- The development of skills, knowledge and resilience needed to experience positive mental, emotional and physical wellbeing
- The development of skills, knowledge and strategies children need to keep themselves safe, happy and well both online and in the real world
- Teaching the characteristics of positive, healthy and respectful relationships – including learning about how to effectively communicate consent, how to recognise consent from others and a person’s right to withdraw consent
- Teaching about different types of relationships, promoting equality and respect, and recognising the importance of diversity
- Teaching about healthy, respectful, non-exploitative and non-coercive behaviours
- Teaching about the concepts and laws relating to the age of sexual consent, sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, grooming, rape, forced marriage, FGM and honour-based violence – including how these can impact current and future relationships
- Developing an understanding of protected characteristics, sexuality, gender equality, rights, consent and respectful and healthy communication (Equalities Act, 2010) including:
 - i. Sexuality/sexual orientation (avoiding heteronormative assumptions & attitudes)
 - ii. Gender identity
 - iii. Home background (e.g. different family make-up)
 - iv. Ethnicity
 - v. Gender
 - vi. Special educational needs and disability
- Teaching about the physical and biological aspects of puberty, and growing up, the human life cycle and how a baby is conceived and born; ensuring access to up to date and correct factual information (Health Education - Changing Adolescent Body)
- Effective teaching and learning that supports pupils to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships at the appropriate time – including learning about the choice to delay first sex and the right to enjoy intimacy without having sex
- Teaching about the impact of viewing harmful and / or sexually explicit material – including the extent to which pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, damaging the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affecting how they behave towards sexual partners
- Teaching about safer sex and sexual health, to ensure pupils are equipped to make safe, informed healthy choices as they progress through adult life – including learning about fertility, pregnancy and avoiding unplanned pregnancy
- Developing young people’s knowledge and awareness of services that provide information, advice, support or treatment, including developing their understanding of their rights in relation to accessing these services

4 Implementation

In Years 7-9, SRE is delivered through allocated curriculum PSHE lessons, one per fortnight, delivered by a subject specialist. These sessions are supported by fortnightly tutor time sessions, which allow pupils to discuss and debate key content learnt in PSHE, including SRE.

In Year 10 SRE is delivered through allocated curriculum PSHE lessons, once per fortnight. Whilst in Year 11 SRE is taught through the Personal Development programme which takes place one hour per fortnight during Period 6.

In all year groups the teaching of SRE may be through some aspects of the core curriculum (e.g. Biology Lessons). In addition, these lessons may be supplemented by additional assemblies, which may be delivered by external speakers (see below).

Across all sessions, we aim to ensure:

- The SRE programme and our lesson plans and schemes of work are based on the PSHE Association Key Themes and Guidance and Jigsaw PSHE.
- Lessons are age appropriate; content will be made accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND and use an engaging range of active learning methods that differentiate materials and resources to ensure all pupils are able to access the programme
- There is confident and consistent use of the correct terminology
- Those fulfilling in-class support roles also receive training so as to ensure they can help facilitate the access of those pupils they are specifically supporting
- Have a proactive and planned approach to involving external professionals (e.g. school health nurse, Police, National Mental Health Organisations) in supporting the delivery and development

4.1 Guest speakers

We may invite guest speakers into school to talk on issues related to sex and relationships. It may be the case that the subject under discussion is better coming from an expert or experienced health professional who can challenge a pupil's perceptions. A teacher will be present throughout these lessons. Visitors will be given a copy of this policy and expected to comply with the guidelines outlined within it.

4.2 Terminology

Pupils will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts, but slang or everyday terms used in certain social circles will be discussed; this will surround discussion about what is and isn't acceptable language to use.

4.3 Dealing with difficult questions

Staff training will include sessions on how to deal with difficult questions. There may still be times when staff are faced with a difficult question in class that they feel uncomfortable or ill equipped to answer. In this case, they may wish to put the question to one side and seek advice from the AHT/PSHE leads.

Ground rules in class are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter. Some strategies staff may use to support this might include using a suggestion box, or emphasising that the classroom is a safe space.

5 Supporting Students

5.1 SEND students

The school works hard to ensure that all aspects of the school curriculum are inclusive and support the needs of pupils of all ranges of abilities. Staff should differentiate lessons to ensure that all members of the class can access the information fully, and this is no different when it comes to SRE.

5.2 Equal Opportunities

SRE lessons provide a good background for talking openly and freely about the diversity of personal, social and sexual preferences. Prejudiced views will be challenged and equality promoted. Any bullying that relates to sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation will be dealt with swiftly and seriously. This is the case for bullying of any kind and the procedures regarding this are outlined in the school's behaviour policy and anti bullying policy.

5.3 Safeguarding and confidentiality

We hope to provide a safe and supportive school community where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. However, it is important not to promise confidentiality to students, discussion around what is acceptable and not acceptable in relationships may lead to the disclosure of a child protection issue. If this is the case, normal safeguarding protocols must be followed.

Personal information about pupils who have approached a teacher for discussion should only be shared where reasonable. If there is a child protection concern, the information must be handled as outlined in the school child protection and safeguarding procedure. Staff members who share confidential information without a valid reason may be dealt with under the school's disciplinary process.

5.4 Disclosures of Sexual Activity

If a staff member is approached by a pupil under 16 who is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, the teacher should:

- Notify the DSL
- Ensure that the pupil is accessing all the contraceptive and sexual health advice available
- Encourage the pupil to talk to their parents or carer. Pupils may feel that they are more comfortable bringing these issues to a teacher they trust, but it is important that children and their parents/carers have open and trusting relationships when it comes to sexual health and the school will encourage this as much as possible.
- Pupils with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation and less able to protect themselves from harmful influences. If staff are concerned that this is the case, they should seek support from the SENDCO to decide what is in the best interest of the child.

5.5 Disclosure of a concern regarding an STD

Staff who are approached by pupils with a concern about having contracted or possibly contracted a sexually transmitted disease should refer them immediately to the DSL.

There is no reason for staff, other than the DSL, to expect to be made aware of a pupil or colleague's HIV or hepatitis status, and no person will be discriminated against because of this if there is a disclosure of this type of information.

6. Withdrawal from SRE

The school aims to keep parents/carers informed about all aspects of the SRE curriculum and urges parents/carers to read this policy.

Parents/carers can request access to resources and information being used in class, and the school will do everything it can to ensure that parents/carers are comfortable with the education provided to their children in school. It is, however, a statutory right of parents/carers or carers to withdraw the children in their care from SRE. This excludes withdrawal from the elements of human growth and reproduction which fall under the National Curriculum science.

Any parent wishing to withdraw their child from SRE should contact the Assistant Headteacher for Culture and Ethos, alongside the Personal Development Lead who will arrange a meeting to discuss their concerns. SRE is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports child development and we strongly urge parents/carers to carefully consider their decision before withdrawing their child from this aspect of school life. However, it is acknowledged that the final decision on the issue is for the parent to take.

Once discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances the school will respect the parents' request up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

7. Monitoring

The educational and personal needs of our pupils develop in line with varying societal pressures and economic change. Our aim is to provide SRE that is relevant and tailored to meet the needs of our pupils, depending on their age and stage of personal development. For this reason we review the SRE curriculum regularly, and will inform parents/carers of any revisions to the school policy or sex education curriculum.

We aim to monitor the effectiveness of our sex education provision through:

- yearly feedback from pupils
- yearly feedback from parents/carers
- feedback from staff
- classroom observations.

The school will review this policy every year, evaluating its effectiveness by taking into account feedback from pupils, staff and parents/carers, as well as what has come to light through classroom observations and information we receive from national reports and curriculum reviews.

8. Complaints

Parents/carers or carers who have complaints or concerns regarding the SRE curriculum should contact the school and follow the school's complaints procedure found on the school website.