

The Cooper School

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

FAQ

This document aims to answer any questions that arose following a parents consultation (November 2020) of the RSE policy.

1. Do you teach students about
 - a) the dangers of drugs?
Yes, Students are taught about smoking and alcohol in Year 7 and legal and illegal drugs in Year 9 during PSHE lessons in a unit that comes under the staying safe online and offline topic area.
 - b) pregnancy and abortion?
Yes, Pregnancy and options available during pregnancy are covered in Year 11 during a unit titled adult health and well being.
 - c) Grooming?
Yes, This is taught during PSHE lessons, firstly in brief detail in Year 7 and then in further detail in Year 8 in a unit that comes under the staying safe online and offline topic area.
 - d) STIs?
Yes, Students are taught about STI's during an RSE unit in Year 9 titled Contraception and STIs. It will then be revisited during 1 session in Year 11.

Please note that the policy only covered Relationship and Sex Education which makes up one topic taught in PSHE so many other topics are delivered through PSHE's other units. The full curriculum will be available online from Summer 2021 once it is finalised.

2. How are all student's needs, such as Autism taken into account when delivering lessons on RSE?
As with all lessons, teachers are aware of students' needs prior to teaching them and each topic includes a reminder of ground rules that underpin every PSHE lesson, encouraging all students to take a shared ownership to take everyone's needs into account. Their needs will be taken into account by using differentiated tasks, using images and tasks to encourage empathy for others. We will also explain the rationale for teaching sensitive topics. Students will also have the opportunity to leave the room if they feel overwhelmed by the topics being covered in the lesson.
3. I am concerned with the amount of time taken to cover these topics, how do you balance PSHE and academic aspects of the curriculum?
This has been carefully considered at all levels of leadership of The Cooper School and the time given to PSHE reflects the needs of all students. More time is given in KS3 to allow for a greater focus on exam subjects in KS4. We do however believe that in order for students to focus effectively on their academic curriculum they need to have life skills and knowledge to be able to function in our ever changing society.
4. Who wrote the curriculum?

The curriculum has been planned by the Head of PSHE in consultation with other key staff in the school including the safeguarding officer, student support staff, school nurse and counsellor. The starting point was the government guidelines issued in Summer 2020 and advice from the PSHE Association and Cre8tive Education who supply many of the resources have been taken into account.

5. How were students consulted when developing the curriculum?
Students were initially consulted from July 2018 to December 2019 by all students being invited to join student voice groups for each key stage. Students applied and were invited to meetings held by the Head of PSHE. These groups met termly to discuss needs for each area of the PSHE syllabus including content taught, methods of teaching and learning and age appropriateness of topics. Students will continue to be consulted through online surveys of whole year groups and a continuation of student voice groups when possible.
6. Are students made aware of where they can get support?
Yes, each lesson there is information which will be displayed on the board at the end of the lesson of where to get further advice regarding that topic area. At the end of each unit the teacher will go into further detail showing websites or highlighting who to go to or where to get more information.
7. Are you aware of student's personal situations when delivering sensitive topics?
The PSHE team work in conjunction with the student support managers to ensure we know of relevant information needed about students prior to teaching sensitive topic areas. We also email parents when RSE topics are going to be taught and ask for parents to raise any concerns with either the Head of PSHE or the students PSHE teacher.
8. What does it mean when you teach-What it means to be a man in 2020?
This lesson explores the issues relating to gender stereotyping and in particular men not being seen as being emotional or sensitive. It highlights the need to reduce gender stereotypes and the dangers they can have on mental health.
9. Can you share lesson resources for parents to see prior to the lessons being taught?
We will always email parents with unit content prior to teaching Relationship and sex education and any other units that we feel may be sensitive for our students. If parents wish to see resources for individual lessons they can contact the Head of PSHE who will share lessons where necessary. We are working towards having a downloadable sheet for each unit with a brief overview and key terminology used, which will be available on our website later in 2021.
10. How do you consider students who do not actively back LGBTQA+ communities when teaching PSHE and ensure they are not bullied?
PSHE lessons are focused on education and raising awareness, rather than a promotion of any lifestyle choice. We encourage students to consider all points of view and to respect each other regardless of their upbringing, beliefs or lifestyle, including their viewpoints about sexual and gender orientation. As with all bullying any bullying for this reason would be taken seriously by the pastoral team.

11. Can parents have a brief summary of lesson content and key words used in order to be able to continue conversations at home?

Yes, great idea-we believe in working with parents to ensure the best outcomes for all students at The Cooper School. This has been planned and a download containing a brief overview and keywords of each topic will be available later in 2021.

12. Will there be a catch up programme in order to account for missed learning during lockdown?

We have been working hard to ensure that no students miss out due to learning time lost during lockdown. We issued home learning to continue PSHE learning for our students and have altered some curriculum content this year to ensure we cover any units missed last year.

13. Is there any option of same sex groups to learn with a same sex teacher?

While there are some benefits to this model of PSHE teaching, government and PSHE association advice now suggest that the benefits of mixed lessons outweigh single sex teaching. This is due to all students needing to know what other students go through in order to encourage empathy and an ability to have open discussions now and in later life. Where we feel student's needs have not been met in PSHE lessons there will be the possibility of single sex sessions during form times to readdress any topic areas needed.

I hope this document has been of assistance but please do not hesitate to contact the head of PSHE, ksheppard@thecooperschool.co.uk should you have further questions.