

CITIZENSHIP POLICY



Citizenship is feeling a sense of belonging to and involvement in a local community which itself has a wider national and international context, and all the rights and responsibilities that this entails.

The Rationale

Citizenship education at Heanor Gate Science College is intended to give students the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to help them play an increasingly active and responsible role within the world and, by providing them with new experiences and challenges, to instil in them the confidence to do so.

The ethos of the school, centred around providing excellence in a caring community, is of great importance in giving our students a sense of self-discipline, responsibility, participation and ownership that it is hoped will gradually be transferred into their local community and into the wider global community.

Aims

- To nurture a sense of belonging to a community
- To stimulate a desire to play a part in that community
- To impart knowledge and develop skills that enable participation to take place
- To instil a sense of fairness and justice for all sections of a community
- To develop a school ethos which insists on the importance of everyone taking responsibility for the community and playing an active role in it

Objectives

- All students understand the basic principles of our democracy
- All students should understand how to get involved in the democratic process` and develop confidence to do so
- All students should understand the importance of law and develop a respect for it
- All students should understand how the laws are developed and how they affect them
- All students should be aware that all sections of a community have rights and responsibilities
- All students should develop a pride in and respect for their community
- All students should have a knowledge of the way the economy works
- All students should be aware of the wider community and the inter-dependence of communities
- All students should have the opportunity to participate in some way in both the school and the local community

Citizenship in and across the curriculum

Citizenship is a compulsory National Curriculum subject from 11 – 16 and it is intended that Citizenship education will continue Post 16. It is taught by discrete Citizenship lessons and also through PSHE, in weekly, timetabled 'PSHCE' lessons. It links with government initiatives such as Connexions, Work Related Learning, Healthy Schools initiative, the Every Child Matters agenda etc.

All other curriculum subjects give emphasis to the parts of their syllabus that are appropriate to Citizenship. A detailed description of this cross-curricular provision can be found in the Cross-Curricular Citizenship Audit report.

Each student has some time off timetable during their time at Heanor Gate Science College to enable opportunity for activities or experiences which are part of their Citizenship entitlement but would not be possible in the normal timetabled lessons (e.g. visiting drama groups, work experience).

Citizenship beyond the classroom

Participation in the running of the House system and the School:

House

All students are part of the House system at Heanor Gate Science College and are given opportunities to engage in various House activities, vote for House Captains, Sports Captains etc. and at the appropriate age to stand for election to posts of authority within the House system. All students are actively encouraged to take part in House events and many do so passionately.

School

There is an elected School Council who meet regularly to discuss issues of importance.

At Key Stages 3 and 4, each year group has its own Year Council which meets prior to a School Council to discuss issues of importance to the year group. There is a Sixth Form Student Council to involve students in the running of the sixth form and organising social events such as the leavers' ball for Year 13.

There is a well-established Prefect system which allows for involvement in the running of the school. The student receptionist scheme also provides an opportunity for all students in to take on a position of responsibility.

Involvement in and responsibility for extra-curricular activities

Various Citizenship related extra-curricular activities exist.eg Amnesty Youth Group, Eco Schools.

All students are encouraged to be involved in extra-curricular activities.

All students are encouraged to participate in at least one House event during the year.

All students are encouraged to support others involved in competitions and team activities.

Students are given opportunities to take some measure of responsibility for running an extra-curricular activity.

All students are given opportunities to participate in at least one school trip each year.

Citizenship links outside the school

Heanor Gate Science College actively seeks to link with the local and wider community.

- Visitors and external groups have involvement in the planning and/or delivery of the Citizenship programme of study
- Charity work is encouraged through all year groups
- There are links with local businesses
- Health and beauty students regularly visit local nursing homes to offer beauty treatments to the elderly
- Students are encouraged to join local clubs and organisations (sports clubs, drama and music groups)
- Students are encouraged to take part in national and international initiative and competitions (Big Vote, Amnesty International, Samaritans Purse etc.)

Citizenship and the rewards system

Acts of good citizenship are recognised and rewarded with Citizenship Praises as part of the whole school system.

Rewards for good work in Citizenship are given with the taught curriculum as part of the normal Learning Praises system at Heanor Gate Science College.

Each student is encouraged to include outside achievements, certificates etc. in their Progress File.

Outstanding achievements through community involvement are recognised during assemblies for all year groups (including sixth form).

Citizenship and moral, social and political issues

Controversial issues are central to citizenship. Within the teaching of Citizenship there are a number of sensitive areas. Most of these areas are subject to existing School Policies which link with the Citizenship Policy. The exception is the issue of political bias.

It is Heanor Gate Science College's policy to achieve a balance of political viewpoints.

Controversial contemporary issues are regularly referred to in order to engage students in their learning in Citizenship and staff encourage pupils to explore the issues and reflect on a balance of responses. Staff receive training and guidance on how to teach controversial issues.

Teaching and learning approaches

Citizenship lessons are very well planned for. Schemes of work include a variety of teaching and learning approaches and are tightly focused on objectives for learning outcomes. Teachers use a wide range of teaching and learning approaches to deliver citizenship with high levels of interaction for pupils. Citizenship education at Heanor Gate aims that students experience the subject rather than just being told about it (e.g. actually hold an election as well as being told about the process).

In every year of Key Stage 3 students complete a Personal Project on a Citizenship related topic of their choice. A spiral curriculum exists, detailing how lessons in each year provide opportunity for students to develop thinking skills and a variety of research skills which they then put into practice in completing the project. Projects are marked by specialist staff, according to the QCA Citizenship level descriptors and this forms an integral part of our assessment procedure.

Fast Track students (G&T) have the opportunity to study GCSE Citizenship.

Each student has a Citizenship File (at present a PSHCE File) which contains evidence of involvement and participation in a variety of different activities which may be used for assessment purposes.