



PSHE Education
STOKE-ON-TRENT & STAFFORDSHIRE

Using External Providers

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INTRODUCTION

Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education supports children and young people to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes needed to thrive as individuals and members of society. These skills and attributes help children and young people to stay healthy and prepare them for life and work. When taught well PSHE education helps children and young people to achieve their academic potential and equipped with skills they will need throughout their life.

The Department for Education (DfE) states:

“Working with external organisations can enhance delivery of these subjects, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with young people.”

When used well, external speakers can add interest and expertise to enhance embedded PSHE education delivery. The PSHE Association states that:

- Visitors can bring a level of expertise in a particular issue or topic that a teacher may not have, nor should be expected to have.
- Outside agencies often have resources and personnel capacity which schools may otherwise lack.
- They can act as an expert witness, recounting events in their lives from a personal or professional perspective (for example a mother with a new baby, or a doctor explaining their career pathway).
- They can establish a ‘first contact’ to a helping agency – it can be really hard for a young person to approach any source of support ‘cold’. Establishing a relationship in a classroom session can help to overcome this. (For example, this may help establish a relationship with a school nurse, a police officer or a representative of a local drop-in centre.)
- They bring ‘novelty’ – we know the brain recalls novelty. Well planned sessions can therefore add emphasis to important learning elements.

It is also recognised that PSHE Education occurs outside of formal education and that youth providers working across Stoke and Staffordshire also play a role and may invite external providers in to deliver session to their children and young people, to avoid confusion the term organisation is used throughout the document to mean school, alternative education provider or youth organisation. The term classroom is used to mean the space where PSHE education is being delivered and does not refer to a space just in school.

This information within this document is based on guidance from the PSHE Association and Sex Education Forum.

EXTERNAL PROVIDERS

Education settings receive many offers from external providers to support their PSHE/RSE curriculum and it is important to be selective when making decisions about providers, this ensures that settings reap the benefits and avoid possible hazards. An accompanying guide for external providers has been created to enable effective collaboration.

WHO ARE EXTERNAL PROVIDERS?

External Providers are visitors or speakers who are not regular staff members to support the planned delivery of any curriculum or awareness raising activity.

External agencies offer input and resources into RSE/PSHE include voluntary, statutory and commercial organisations. Education providers may receive input from parents, local or national charities, faith groups and health professionals.

Some organisations will have clear outcomes they want to achieve in relation to children and young people's health and well-being e.g. raise awareness of contraception choices.

Other organisations may have less clear, hidden purposes, for example they appear to offer a session on RSE and within the session covertly promote particular values e.g. pro-life.

It is helpful to understand how the organisation is funded, particularly if the session is being offered free of charge.

Some external providers are private individuals rather than an organisation and these may have very compelling motives to want to deliver PSHE including sharing personal life experiences. Please see our section on Lived Experience for further information on managing these sessions.

WHY USE EXTERNAL PROVIDERS?

ENRICH LEARNING THROUGH DIRECT CLASSROOM INPUT

- Learning about local services including health and support services can help build trust and encourage someone to use the service.
- Learning about different perspectives, including faith, culture and social.
- Accessing specialist knowledge on a topic, for example the Sexual Health Prevention team, can provide up-to-date, evidence based input that might not be as readily available to organisation's staff and can increase input.
- Children and young people can develop personal and social skills through hosting and interacting with a visitor.
- Experience a different learning method, e.g. theatre in education.
- Learning about other people's lives from a particular life experience e.g. a teenage parent.

BUILD CAPACITY TO DELIVER GOOD QUALITY PSHE

- Run small-group or one-to-one PSHE with targeted individuals who may be "at risk" and need personalised support or to utilise a particular skill in meeting specific needs e.g. working with a child or young person with SEND.
- Supports the organisation's CPD plan for PSHE by upskilling staff through on-the-job training, staff meetings or INSET.
- Supports senior leaders and governors in their leadership, for example carrying out consultation with children/young people, parents/carers, staff, governors to inform a review and in turn the RSE/PSHE policy.
- Sharing knowledge of PSHE practice in other organisations, both local and national, to provide a wider perspective and potentially link up organisations with each other for peer support. This is something the PSHE Coordinators can offer through the half-termly PSHE Leads Network Meetings that are advertised in the monthly PSHE Digest.

ENGAGE WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

- Facilitate a conversation between the organisation and parents and carers about PSHE, for example by supporting a parent/carer meeting.
- Working directly with parents and carers to support them in their role of providing PSHE education for their children and young people.

EDUCATION SETTINGS' RESPONSIBILITY

A education setting is responsible for what is delivered within the classroom and so it is essential to be clear about the content, methods, and approach taken by any external contributor.

External expertise should only be used to enhance or add value to the learning experience, not to deliver it in full. For example, by providing specialist knowledge and resources, helping to consolidate learning or supporting parental engagement.

It is the responsibility of the education setting to know what will be delivered and how it links into the scheme of work and the education settings values.

Organisations will have a safeguarding and child protection policy in place which should states that should any visitor have any concerns or have received a disclosure whilst in the setting, they are expected to notify DSL or member of staff. This is the guidance from Education Safeguarding in both Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.

Within the education setting there will be a safeguarding and child protection policy in place which states that should any visitor have any concerns or have received a disclosure whilst in the setting, they are expected to notify DSL or member of staff.

It is the responsibility of the education setting to ensure that the external organisation is made aware of the name and contact details for the DSL.

There should always be staff present and engaged during any inputs delivered by external speakers, this is a great method to enable staff to receive discreet CPD. The education setting is also responsible for managing the behaviour of the participants and should agree with the external providers how this will be managed.

Some settings may feel that having no members of staff present could allow children and young people to feel more confident in asking questions. It is important to remember that staff will need to take forward any learning as well as take action if any possible safeguarding or behaviour management issues are identified.

Any external provider should be made aware and work within the organisation's policies that relate to PSHE.

It is essential that children and young people know where to go if they want more advice or have concerns.

Many external agencies are from national organisations or individuals who may not have an awareness of local services.

It should be agreed before delivery, who will be responsible for informing participants the signposting information.

Speaking to a teacher or adult they trust in the host organisation should be the first port of call, but this may not always be practical. You should include details of local and national organisations that provide support on a particular topic and ensure that the participants know how to access this support.

Best practice is to include this at the end of any PSHE delivery to ensure that children and young people leave the session equipped with information on where to go for further support. Your local PSHE Coordinator can support organisations to identify the correct signposting services, details can be found at the end of this guide.



USING LIVED EXPERIENCE

Using people to share their personal story can be an way to bring a topic to life and many children, young people and professionals will find listening to a lived experience can be impactful. Sharing of personal stories must be carefully managed to ensure that stories do not inadvertently glamorise aspects of their experience, be triggering or frightening for children and young people or drift towards entertaining the participants rather than contribute to meaningful learning.

External providers who share their lived experience tend to be those who were involved in a traumatic event. It is important to recognise that children and young people can learn from lots of different lived experiences including a parent, someone living with HIV, someone in a particular career e.g. to challenge gender stereotypes.

Some visitors have inadvertently given participants instructional content or inspired risky behaviour. Dr Pooky Knightsmith found a workshop on self-harm that had clear negative outcomes for some young people, with one young person saying that they facilitator "was really good, but she gave you ideas"

"I'd be burning myself for ages and didn't want anyone to know, and she shared all these different ways she'd hidden it and stories she'd told to explain her burns. I used some of them and they worked."

Another young person said:

"So I'd been self-harming for ages and had been on all the forums so there was nothing she could teach me about it, but I seriously had to control myself not to stand up and scream at her. It was like some kind of twisted 'how to self-harm workshop' and seeing as she worked so hard to 'break the stigma' and make us realise it was okay to self-harm, loads of kids tried it after that. A couple carried on for ages too."

Some organisations who utilised the lived experiences method for delivery provide a framework and training for individual speakers and provide ongoing supervision to support them.

KEY PRINCIPLES OF PSHE

When engaging with external providers it is important to ensure that key principles are in place to ensure that the PSHE education is effective. Within Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire we believe that PSHE education must be:

- Delivered within a safe learning environment based on the principle that prejudice, discrimination and bullying are harmful and unacceptable
- With clear learning objectives and outcomes and ensure sessions and programmes are well-planned, resourced and appropriately underpinned by solid research and evidence.
- Relevant, accurate and factual, including using the correct terminology
- Positively inclusive in terms of:
 - Age;
 - Disability;
 - Gender identity;
 - Pregnancy and maternity;
 - Race;
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex;
 - Sexual orientation
- Designed to include the development of knowledge, skills and values to support positive life choices
- Using positive messaging, that does not cause shame or victim blaming
- Challenging attitudes and values within society, such as perceived social norms and those portrayed in the media
- Reflective of the age and stage of the children and young people and be tailored to the environment and group
- Utilising active skill-based learning techniques that accommodates a range of learning styles
- Ensuring that children and young people are aware of their rights, including their right to access confidential advice and support services within the boundaries of safeguarding
- Delivered by trained, confident and competent professionals
- Empowering and involving children and young people as participants, advocates and evaluators in the development of PSHE education.

EMBED THE LEARNING

Research shows that one-off events have limited impact on learning or long-term behaviour change. A 'one-off' event can only raise awareness or perhaps offer should quick strategies regarding a particular topic or issue. It is important to consider how the use of external agencies contributes to the PSHE curriculum. Children and young people need the opportunity to develop skills and attributes including communication, problem-solving and decision-making; these are developed through a well-planned, sequenced, spiral curriculum that builds on prior learning.

There should be opportunity for the participants to prepare for and debrief from the visit - allowing for deeper exploration of key themes and for the learning to be embedded. This is why the pan-Staffordshire PSHE Education Service developed the follow-on session for Alison Cope, so if local partners commissioned Alison to speak within the school there is an opportunity to embed the learning and for participants to explore their response to Alison's story.

AVOID SHOCK, FEAR AND SHAME

It is a common misconception that if a child or young person is shocked or scared by what they are shown they will avoid the behaviour in the future.

Whilst young people will often say that they like 'hard-hitting' material and that it engages them more effectively, in fact when experienced in a safe setting (in this case a classroom or youth space), shocking images become exciting (in a similar way to watching a horror film or riding a rollercoaster) and this excitement response can block the desired learning. Equally, for anyone who has previously been affected by something similar, it can re-traumatise them or they can block the message as it is too close for comfort, which again prevents the intended learning. It also presents a scenario which is more likely to make young people think 'that won't ever happen to me' than the desired 'that could be me' response.

Therefore, best practices and research demonstrate that sessions should not include graphic images of injuries, incidents, scenes e.g., a knife injury, sexually transmitted infections, images of a smokers' lung.

TOP TIPS FOR AVOIDING SHOCK, FEAR OR SHAME



1 Evidence shows that shock and scare tactics just don't work.

2 Check resources for images or scenes that might be shocking, harrowing or scary for the age group – remember that children and young people will have a much lower threshold for what might worry them.

3 Remember the purpose of the session is to educate not entertain. Just because young people might watch scary films in their own time, does not mean using similar films within PSHE education will promote learning.

4 Make sure there are a range of examples, case studies and consequences, most of which do not focus on the most dramatic or extreme outcomes.

5 Focus on making resources relatable – children and young people should think “that could be me” rather than “that would never happen to me”.

6 Think about how positive choices and actions might be promoted rather than negative actions warned against.

AVOID INSPIRING OR INSTRUCTING ON RISKY BEHAVIOURS

PSHE Education sessions must be carefully planned to ensure that participants are aware of the consequences of risky behaviours, without unintentionally inspiring or instructing children and young people to pursue such behaviours themselves.

Some resources can unintentionally glamorise behaviour that the session was intended to warn against. For example, showing participants a range of knives and guns seized from gang members can make the lifestyle seem appealing or glamorous to some vulnerable children/young people, as can focusing on the money gang members might offer young people to recruit them.

Giving too many specific details about how a crime was committed can also instruct children or young people who may be tempted to commit a similar crime themselves. For example, when talking about cybercrime, avoid explaining how to access the dark web or how seemingly 'easy' it might be to set up a Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attack against a host organisation's data system – in case this unintentionally provides a would-be hacker with all the information they need to carry out a cyber-attack on their school/youth organisation.

Similarly, details of how young people have hidden their activities from their families (which could range from drug use, to truancy, shoplifting, carrying knives or involvement in online bullying) can inadvertently give 'reassurance' that others are doing these things and provide details of how they're 'getting away with it'

Sessions that focus on aspects of crime and negative behaviours may also unintentionally give the impression to participants that 'all young people are doing this', or that crime is commonplace. This can make children and young people feel unsafe in their own area, or pressured into participating in negative behaviours to 'fit in'. It is important to balance messages about crime or inappropriate behaviour with reminders that most people (including children and young people) do not witness or participate in crime most of the time. Statistics can be used to point out the rarity of crimes or other "positive social norms".

The 1996 Education Act (Provision 407) requires that lesson content avoids political indoctrination, PSHE sessions should avoid inappropriately biased input on any issue.

PSHE education is not 'value-free', but an important space in which children and young people can explore their own values and beliefs to different topics in as neutral a way as possible. The PSHE curriculum should be influenced by, reflect and support the school's agreed ethos, being clear on the law and promoting healthy, safe behaviours whilst encouraging children and young people to question and explore different topics.

Organisations should check the background of any external provider and their funding source to consider whether there is any potential for bias. This can be mitigated by providing visitors with differing perspectives, however there is a duty to ensure that participants are not exposed to, for example extremist (or offensive content).

Balance should be carefully considered. It is more complex than just offering two different or opposing viewpoints. One may have a considerable amount of evidence that underpins their position, whilst the other is supported by very little (or none) factual evidence. Participants could consider each visitor equally, they should have the opportunity to reflect on what has been heard, how it has been presented and their response to it. This ensures that personality, charisma, or conviction in position is not confused with factual information.

ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT IN LEARNING

People learn better when they are involved and active learning techniques are the most effective teaching technique for PSHE education.

It is important that pupils actively engage with their new learning. A "chalk and talk" session from a well-meaning expert is likely to have much less impact than an interactive session where children and young people are encouraged to prepare questions, take part in activities which encourage reflection on their own views and share ideas with the 'expert' who challenges, extends or deepens their thinking

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

When utilising external providers it is still important to consider how the learning will be assessed and evaluated.

The Pan-Staffordshire PSHE Education Service has produced guidance to assessment and techniques that can be utilised. It may be that the external providers is part of a wider scheme of work and that assessment is done pre and post the contribution from the external provider, rather than during the session. It is important that the contribution is evaluated to seek the views of the participants – this will also highlight any potential negative outcomes as highlighted by Dr Pooky Knightsmith earlier.

A template evaluation form has been devised and is included in the supporting resources, that all education settings are welcome to download and use. You are welcome to share the findings with the Pan-Staffordshire PSHE Education Service, as this could contribute to commissioning decisions and funding applications.



SUPPORTING RESOURCES



External Provider of PSHE Checklist:

This self-assessment tool is an aide to education settings, based upon best practice guidance from the PSHE Association and Sex Education Forum to demonstrate considerations for the use of external provider to support their PSHE Curriculum.

Criteria	Yes	No	N/A	Explanation/Action/Evidence
Credibility				
Charity				
Is the external provider a charity?				
If they are a charity do they have a Charity Commission listing ?				
Having checked that their charitable objectives are relevant to PSHE and aligned with your organisation's ethos?				
Company, Social Enterprise or Community Interest Company				
Is the external provider a company, social enterprise or community interest company?				
Have you checked their registration with Companies House ?				
Have you checked how the company is described on Companies House listing and website?				
Having checked the organisation's objectives – either displayed on their website, Companies House information or elsewhere are they aligned with your organisation's ethos?				
Have you checked if there are any conflicts of interest with the educational purpose and responsibility of the organisation?				
Individual				
Is the external provider operating as an individual?				
Having checked published information about the individual e.g. on a website, is the description of their work aligned with the organisation's ethos?				
If the visitor is affiliated with any particular organisation(s) are they credible and align with your organisation's ethos?				
Have you requested examples of recent work in other similar organisations to your own to demonstrate expertise and experience?				
Any External Provider				



If the service is offered free of charge, are you aware how the external provider is funded?				
Does the funding pose any conflicts of interest with the educational purpose and responsibilities of the organisation?				
Has the external provider been checked with the DBS?				
Quality				
Have you planned to meet with the external provider before delivery?				
Are you clear how the external contribution fits in with the aims and objectives of the PSHE curriculum?				
Is the visit embedded into the organisation's PSHE education scheme of work?				
Do they use research evidence to under-pin their work?				
Is the research from a credible source?				
Does the external provider commit to the key principles outlined in this guidance document?				
Is the external provider adequately qualified, experienced and trained?				
Have you seen a copy of the contents planned to be delivered?				
Have you made the external provider aware of any professional boundaries that they need to work within?				
Have you ensured a member of staff will be present during the external providers input?				
Have you agreed with the external provider how the learning will be assessed and evaluated?				
Content				
Have you agreed learning outcomes with the external provider?				
Have you agreed who the external provider will be working with?				
Are participants actively involved in the learning?				
Is the external provider clear about the difference between medical and legal facts and opinions and beliefs?				
Do any resources used by the external provider use shock ,fear or shame tactics?				








Are any of the resources likely to trigger an emotional reaction from participants?				
Does the external provider have clear signposting within the session?				
Participants				
Have safeguarding measures been put into place for any participants who might experience an emotional reaction to minimum the potential for harm?				
Is the external provider aware of the needs of the participants, such as class dynamic, ability, age?				
Have you discussed and informed the external provider of relevant organisational policies, such as behaviour, safeguarding, health and safety, PSHE/RSE?				
Have you discussed how class behaviour will be managed?				
Has time been planned for the participants to have time to reflect on what they have learnt from working with the external provider?				



External Visitor PSHE Education Participant's Evaluation

Your feedback is anonymous and will not be linked back to you personally. The information you give will be used to monitor and improve our PSHE.

What did you think of today's session? (Please circle)

				
Brilliant	Good	Ok	Not Great	Rubbish

My favourite thing about the session was:	My least favourite thing about the session was:

Did you learn anything new from today's session?



What did you learn?

Based on what you have learnt today, are you going to do anything differently in your life – now or in the future?

Yes, I am going to.....	No, I don't think I need to because.....

Would you recommend this session to other people your age? Yes No

Session Title:	Venue:
Age:	Identified Gender:



PSHE External Visitor Professional's Evaluation

Thank you for supporting today's session. Any feedback given on this form is anonymous and is used to help us improve the quality and impact of our PSHE education programmes. Please note, your comments may be included in future reports and marketing materials.

Date:		Name of school / provider:		Your position / job role:	
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1. Overall, what did you think of today's session?	Please explain your score.
1. Very Poor 2. Poor 3. Ok 4. Very good 5. Excellent	
2. What did you think of the resources and activities used during the session?	Please explain your score.
1. Very Poor 2. Poor 3. Ok 4. Very good 5. Excellent	
3. What did you think of the way the session was facilitated?	Please tell us what you thought of the facilitator's style / approach.
1. Very Poor 2. Poor 3. Ok 4. Very good 5. Excellent	
4. To what extent do you think the session will have a positive impact on your students' ability to keep themselves safe and enjoy their relationships without harm?	Please tell us what impact you think the programme will have for your students.
1. Very unlikely to have a positive impact 2. Unlikely to have a positive impact 3. Quite likely to have some positive impact 4. Likely to have a positive impact 5. Very likely to have a positive impact	
5. Would you recommend this session to other schools?	Please tell us what you would like to say about the programme to other schools.
Yes No	
6. Do you have any other comments on the session, how it could be improved or any future support you would like from this external provider?	



Evaluation Record of External Provider Input

For completion by the organisation's staff who were present during the activity or programme. We would be grateful if these could be shared with the [PSHE Education Service](#) to enable a pan-Staffordshire overview of the contributions made by external providers to help shape commissioning decisions.

Name of External Provider	
Date of Session	Year/Age/Group
Brief aims/objectives	
Evaluation of the session <i>What went well? What did you learn from the session?</i> <i>What went less well? How could the session be improved?</i> <i>To what extent were the aims met?</i>	



PSHE Education

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