



CPD

and PSHE Education in Staffordshire &
Stoke-on-Trent.

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CONTENTS

3	Introduction	20	Common Areas for Professional Development
4	Purpose & Scope	20	Handling Sensitive Topics
5	Why CPD Matters in PSHE	22	Managing Questions
6	The Voice of Young People	25	Ideas for Responding to Questions
7	The National Picture	27	Managing Challenging Behaviours
8	National Guiding Principles of Effective RSHE	30	Support from PSHE Education Service
9	Local Quality Framework	31	Supporting Resources
10	Improving Confidence	32	Identifying Training Needs
11	Building a Whole-Setting PSHE CPD Strategy	33	Observation of Practice Template
13	Creating a CPD Plan	35	CPD Plan Template
17	Monitoring and Evaluating Impact		
18	Choosing Effective Training		

Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education plays a vital role in helping children and young people develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to navigate life safely, healthily and successfully.

High-quality PSHE education supports children and young people to:

- Build positive relationships
- Develop resilience and emotional wellbeing
- Recognise how to keep themselves safe
- Make informed decisions
- Manage risk
- Access help and support when needed
- Prepare for adult life, employment and financial wellbeing

The Department for Education statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance (RSHE) (2025) states:

The curriculum should be delivered by school staff or, where schools choose to use them, external providers who have the knowledge, skills and confidence to create a safe and supportive environment and to facilitate participative and interactive education which aims to support and not to alarm pupils.

The quality of PSHE education is therefore heavily influenced by the confidence, competence and subject knowledge of those delivering it.

CPD ensures that staff remain informed about:

- Statutory requirements
- Safeguarding responsibilities
- Emerging risks and issues
- Evidence-informed practice
- Effective PSHE pedagogy
- The needs of children and young people
- The local context

This guidance has been developed to support educational settings in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent in building a strategic and sustainable approach to PSHE professional development.

It should be read alongside:

- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Healthy Education Statutory Guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- The Equality Act 2010
- Prevent Duty Guidance
- Local Safeguarding Policy

Effective PSHE education requires trained, confident and competent professionals who can create safe learning environments and support children and young people to develop the knowledge, skills and values needed to thrive.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this guidance is to support education settings in developing a planned and evidence-informed approach to PSHE CPD.

It aims to ensure that CPD:

Supports high-quality PSHE education

Reflects current statutory requirements

Responds to emerging safeguarding issues

Improves outcomes for children and young people

Supports inclusive and accessible practice

Promotes effective teaching and learning strategies

Strengthens safeguarding practice

Is viewed as an ongoing process rather than a single training event

Is planned, sustained and integrated into wider school improvement priorities

WHY CPD MATTERS IN PSHE

PSHE is a rapidly evolving subject area.

Children and young people are growing up in a world that presents new opportunities and challenges including:

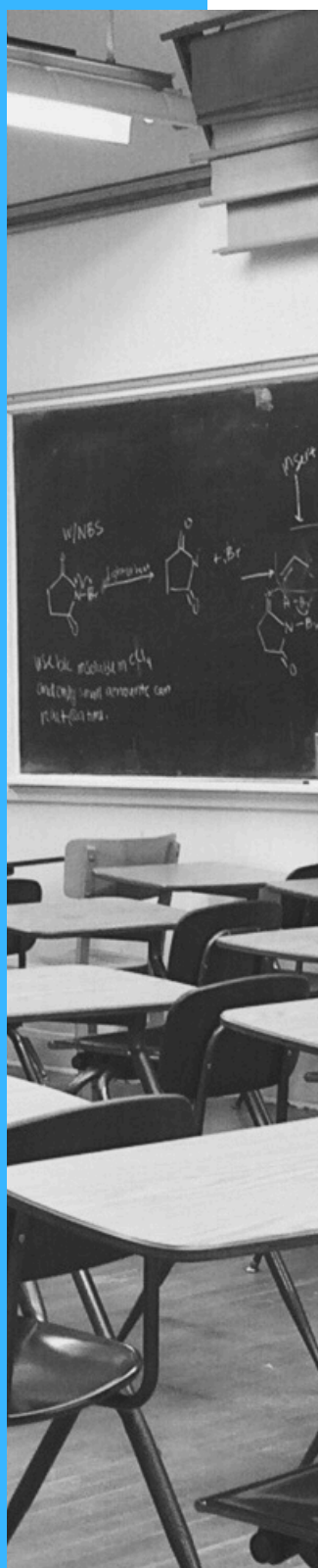
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) and deepfakes
- Social media influence
- Online exploitation
- Harmful sexual behaviours
- Mental health challenges
- Financial risks
- Misinformation and media literacy
- Changing social and cultural influences

As these issues evolve, professionals require regular opportunities to develop their knowledge, confidence and practice.

Unlike many curriculum subjects, PSHE often addresses sensitive, personal and safeguarding-related issues. Effective delivery requires educators to facilitate discussion, manage questions, recognise safeguarding concerns and create environments where children and young people feel safe to participate.

CPD enables staff to:

- Remain current with legislation, guidance and research
- Develop confidence in delivering sensitive topics
- Improve teaching and facilitation skills
- Strengthen safeguarding practice
- Improve consistency across the setting
- Respond effectively to local and emerging needs
- Improve outcomes for children and young people



The statutory RSHE Guiding Principles remind us of the importance of listening to the voice of children and young people, as their views provide a valuable insight into what high-quality PSHE looks like in practice.

The Sex Education Forum's Young People RSE Poll (2024) found:

57% of young people believed improving teacher training should be a Government priority for improving RSE

The 2025 poll found that the qualities young people valued most in those teaching RSE were:

Not making students
feel judged

Being comfortable
with the topics

Giving factual and
accurate information

Answering student
questions

Allowing students'
views to be shared in
class

Young people consistently report better experiences when lessons are delivered by knowledgeable, confident and approachable professionals.

This demonstrates that investment in staff development is not only beneficial for practitioners but directly impacts the quality of learning experienced by children and young people.

THE NATIONAL PICTURE

Evidence consistently demonstrates that staff confidence remains one of the biggest factors affecting the quality of PSHE delivery.

A joint survey carried out by the NSPCC and NASUWT in 2022 found:

- 46% of secondary teachers did not feel confident teaching RSE
- More than a quarter lacked confidence responding to difficult questions
- 86% believed they needed additional resources and training
- Many teachers felt unsupported in delivering the subject

Research continues to highlight educator confidence, competence and comfortability as critical components of effective RSE.

Where staff feel insufficiently prepared:

- Certain topics may be avoided
- Delivery can be inconsistent
- Learning may focus heavily on factual knowledge at the expense of skills and values
- Opportunities for discussion can be reduced
- Children and young people may receive an incomplete curriculum

On the other hand, confident educators are more likely to:

- Create safe learning environments
- Facilitate meaningful discussions
- Deliver comprehensive and inclusive learning experiences



How would responses from staff delivering PSHE in your setting compare to the NSPCC and NASUWT findings?

7 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The 2025 Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (RSHE) statutory guidance includes an overarching set of guiding principles that education settings are asked to keep in mind when developing their curriculum.

Engagement with Pupils

Pupils should help shape the RSHE curriculum so it feels relevant to their lives. Their input keeps lessons engaging, grounded and meaningful.

Engagement and transparency with parents

Parents and carers should know exactly what is being taught and have access to all RSHE materials. They must be clearly informed about sex-education content and their right to withdraw their child.

Positivity

Teaching should build positive attitudes, healthy norms and strong relationship skills. Avoid language that normalises harmful behaviour or reinforces damaging stereotypes.

Careful Sequencing

Content should be taught in a logical order that supports pupils before challenges arise. Early, well-timed learning helps prevent harm and builds confidence.

Relevant and Responsive

The curriculum must be age/stage-appropriate, accessible and tailored to local needs. Education settings should work with local partners to address specific issues in their community.

Skilled delivery of participative education

RSHE should be led by confident, knowledgeable staff or vetted external experts. Teaching must feel safe, interactive and supportive, with staff trained to handle disclosures.

Whole school approach

RSHE works best when it aligns with the school's wider culture and policies. A consistent approach across behaviour, safeguarding and wellbeing strengthens its impact.

We believe that for PSHE education to be effective it must:

- Be delivered in a safe learning environment based on the principles that prejudice, discrimination and bullying are harmful and unacceptable.
- Have clear learning objectives and outcomes and ensure sessions and programmes are well planned, resourced and appropriately underpinned by solid research and evidence.
- Be relevant, accurate and factual, including using the correct terminology.
- Be positively inclusive in terms of:
 - Age
 - Gender Identity
 - Race
 - Sex
 - Disability
 - Pregnancy and Maternity
 - Religion or Belief
 - Sexual Orientation
- Designed to include the development of knowledge, skills and values to support positive life choices.
- Use positive messaging, that does not cause shame or victim blaming.
- Challenge attitudes and values within society, such as perceived social norms and those portrayed in the media.
- Be reflective of the age and stage of the children and young people and be tailored to the environment and group.
- Utilise active skill-based learning techniques to encourage active participation.
- Ensure 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.
- Be delivered by trained, confident and competent professionals.
- Empower and involve children and young people as participants, advocates and evaluators in the development of PSHE education.

For more information about Quality Assurance, you can access our Best Practice guidance [here](#).

Professional development is essential in ensuring these principles are consistently achieved.

Improving confidence in staff delivering PSHE can be achieved through several effective strategies:

1

Comprehensive Training:

Providing thorough and ongoing professional development is crucial. Training should cover not only the content but also pedagogical strategies, classroom management, and how to handle sensitive topics.

2

Mentorship and Peer Support:

Pairing less experienced educators with mentors who are confident in teaching PSHE can provide valuable guidance and support. Regular peer discussions and sharing of best practice can also help build confidence.

3

Access to Quality Resources:

Ensuring educators have access to high-quality, up-to-date resources and teaching materials can make them feel more prepared and supported. Our free [Resource Library](#) provides nationally sourced and locally produced resources.

4

Creating a Safe Learning Environment:

Encouraging an open and non-judgmental classroom environment where children and young people feel safe to ask questions and discuss topics can help educators feel more comfortable and confident. See our [Creating a Safe Learning Environment Guide](#) for tips and strategies on how to do this.

5

Using Interactive and Participatory Techniques

Using interactive and participatory teaching methods, such as discussions, role-plays, and group activities, can make the session more engaging and less daunting for educators. See our [Active Learning Techniques Guide](#) for more information.

6

Feedback and Reflection:

Regular feedback from children, young people and colleagues, as well as self-reflection on teaching practices, can help educators identify areas for improvement and build their confidence over time.

BUILDING A WHOLE-SETTING PSHE CPD STRATEGY

A whole-setting approach to PSHE CPD ensures that professional development is planned strategically, addresses the needs of all staff, and supports consistent, high-quality delivery across the setting. Rather than relying on one-off training events, leaders should develop a coordinated plan that builds knowledge, confidence and skills over time.

DEVELOP AN ANNUAL CPD CYCLE

- 1 Audit staff confidence and identify training needs at the start of each year
- 2 Map CPD opportunities across the year, linked to curriculum priorities
- 3 Include a mix of whole-staff, role-specific and individual development
- 4 Build in time for follow-up, reflection and embedding of learning
- 5 Review and evaluate impact at the end of each cycle to inform future planning

ENSURE APPROPRIATE TRAINING FOR DIFFERENT ROLES

PSHE Lead

In-depth subject knowledge, curriculum design, leading staff development and subject leadership

Class Teachers

Confidence in delivery, managing sensitive discussions, and age/stage-appropriate content

Support Staff

Understanding of PSHE themes, supporting children and young people, reinforcing key messages

All Staff

Whole-setting awareness, safeguarding responsibilities, consistent messaging

Governors/Trustees

Awareness of statutory requirements, monitoring provision

Senior Leaders

Strategic oversight, quality assurance, safeguarding links

EMBED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING INTO EVERYDAY PRACTICE

12

Some of the most effective professional development occurs through regular reflection, discussion and collaboration.

Opportunities may include:

Peer observations

Team teaching

Coaching and mentoring

Curriculum planning sessions

Sharing effective practice

Staff meetings

Professional Learning Communities, e.g. PSHE Lead Network Meetings

Embedding professional learning within day-to-day practice can help sustain improvements and encourage continuous development.

RESPOND TO EMERGING NEEDS

CPD plans should remain responsive to the changing needs of children and young people.

Training priorities may be informed by:

- Pupil voice
- Safeguarding trends
- Behaviour data
- Local intelligence and emerging risks
- National research and guidance updates
- Curriculum audit findings

Regular review ensures that professional development remains relevant and reflects the issues most affecting children and young people.

MONITOR IMPACT OVER TIME

A whole-setting CPD strategy should focus on long-term improvement rather than individual training events.

Leaders should consider:

- Whether staff knowledge and confidence have improved
- Whether teaching practice has changed
- Whether PSHE provision has become more consistent
- Whether staff feel better equipped to manage sensitive topics and safeguarding concerns
- Whether outcomes for children and young people have improved

Monitoring impact over time helps ensure that professional development remains purposeful and provides value for both staff, children and young people.

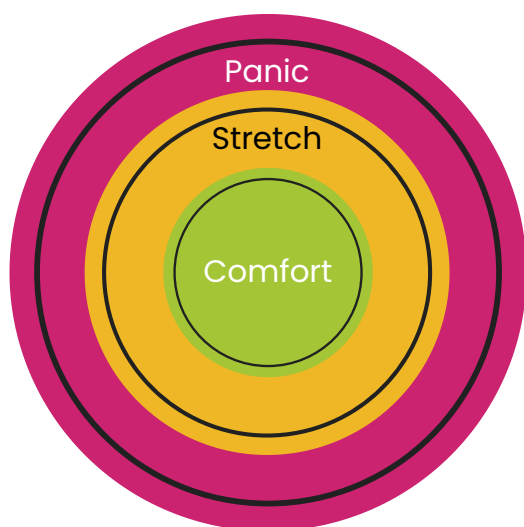
IDENTIFYING TRAINING NEEDS

Effective CPD should be informed by a clear understanding of staff strengths, confidence levels and areas for development. Training needs should be assessed at both an individual and whole-setting level to ensure professional development is targeted and meaningful. A CPD Plan Template can be found in the Supporting Resources.

Staff Voice and Self-Assessment

Staff delivering PSHE education should be given opportunities to reflect on their knowledge, skills and confidence across the curriculum. This can be undertaken through individual reflection, professional discussions, surveys or team-based activities.

Using the PSHE curriculum map, ask staff to consider how confident they feel delivering each topic area using the following model:



Comfort Zone:

- Topics staff feel confident, knowledgeable and experienced in delivering

Stretch Zone:

- Topics staff can deliver but would benefit from additional support, resources or professional development.

Panic Zone:

- Topics staff do not currently feel confident or competent to teach
- Staff member is currently experiencing the topic e.g. domestic abuse, fertility, pregnancy loss etc...

Where a topic is identified as being within a member of staff's Panic Zone, consideration should be given to whether additional training, coaching, team-teaching or alternative delivery arrangements are required.

Delivering sensitive or complex content without sufficient confidence may negatively impact both teaching quality and the learning experience of children and young people.

A training needs analysis template is included within the supporting resources section of this guidance.

Before planning CPD, it is important to audit current PSHE provision. This includes reviewing:

- The curriculum coverage and quality of teaching
- Staff confidence and subject knowledge
- Resources and materials currently in use
- Pupil outcomes and engagement
- Alignment with statutory requirements and local priorities

Setting CPD Objectives

CPD objectives should be specific, measurable and directly linked to improving outcomes for children and young people. Objectives should reflect identified training needs and align with the school development plan.

Objectives may relate to the following areas:

- Subject knowledge and curriculum content

- PSHE pedagogical skills and teaching approaches

- Confidence in delivering sensitive topics

- Assessment and monitoring of pupil progress within PSHE

- Use of resources and external agencies

- Safeguarding and statutory compliance

Examples of CPD Objectives

- 1 Staff will be able to list the statutory requirement for RSHE
- 2 Staff will be able to identify local and national support service relevant to PSHE topics
- 3 Staff will be able to demonstrate or describe a range of active-learning techniques
- 4 Staff will be able to explain the principles of a safe learning environment
- 5 Staff will be able to explain how to respond when they do not know the answer to a question

Once training needs and priorities have been identified, the next stage is to determine the content of the CPD programme. Professional development should reflect statutory requirements, local needs, emerging issues and evidence-informed practice, while ensuring staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence required to deliver high-quality PSHE education.

Core Curriculum Areas

CPD should support staff to confidently deliver the full breadth of the PSHE curriculum. This should include professional development relating to:

- Mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Physical health and healthy lifestyles
- Financial education and economic wellbeing
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Relationships and sex education
- Online safety and media literacy
- Personal safety and safeguarding

Training should ensure that staff understand both the curriculum content and the intended learning outcomes for children and young people.

Emerging Issues and Local Need

CPD programmes should remain responsive to developments affecting children and young people.

Training priorities may be informed by:

- Pupil voice and participation activities
- Behaviour and safeguarding trends
- Local needs assessments
- National research and evidence
- Updates to statutory guidance
- Emerging issues identified through the PSHE Digest, PSHE Leads Network and other professional networks.

Current areas of focus may include:

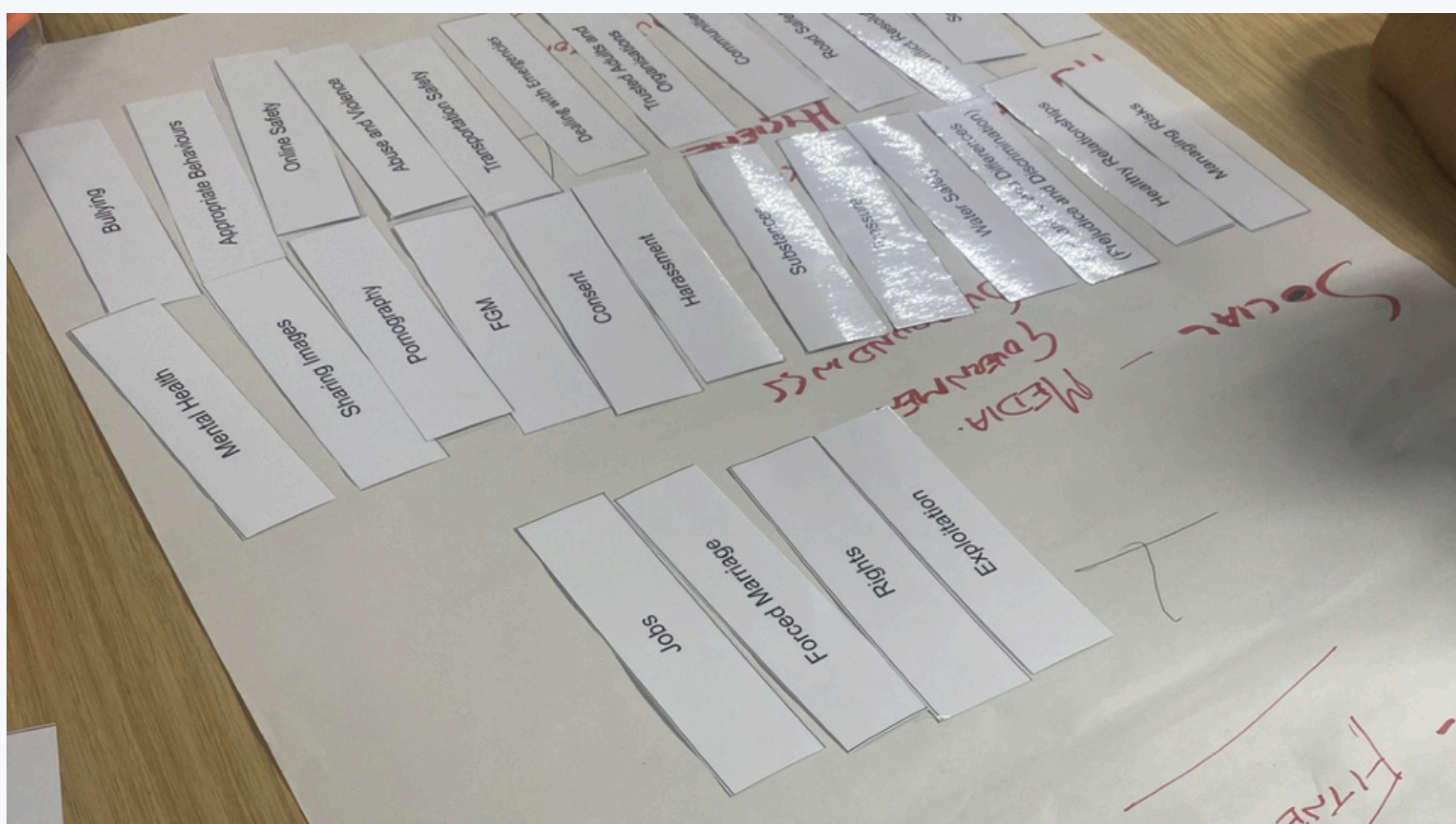
- Artificial intelligence and deepfakes
- Online exploitation and harmful online content
- Consent and healthy relationships
- Child-on-child abuse
- Misogyny and gender stereotypes
- Mental health and wellbeing
- The influence of social media

Regular review of local and national trends will help ensure professional development remains relevant and responsive.

Effective PSHE education requires a distinct set of facilitation skills. Unlike some curriculum areas, PSHE frequently involves discussion, reflection, exploration of values and the development of practical life skills.

CPD should include opportunities for staff to develop their understanding of:

- Active learning techniques
- Facilitation and discussion skills
- Creating safe learning environments
- Managing sensitive topics
- Responding to difficult questions
- The use of distancing techniques
- Assessment within PSHE
- Managing disclosure and safeguarding
- Inclusive and accessible practice



Evaluating the impact of CPD is essential to ensure that professional development leads to meaningful improvements in practice and, ultimately, in outcomes for children and young people.

Gathering Feedback

Gathering feedback from professionals following CPD activities provides valuable insight into the quality and relevance of the training. This can include immediate post-session evaluations as well as longer-term follow-up to assess whether learning has been applied in practice.

Evaluating Impact

The success of CPD should not be measured solely by attendance or participant satisfaction. Education settings should seek to understand how professional development has influenced practice and improved outcomes for children and young people.

Evaluation should consider the impact at three levels:

Staff Knowledge and Understanding

Has the CPD increased staff knowledge and understanding? For example, can staff:

- List current statutory RSHE requirements?
- Describe the features of an effective PSHE lesson?
- Explain the principles of a safe learning environment?

Professional Practice

Has the CPD influenced practice? For example, do staff:

- Demonstrate increased confidence when delivering PSHE?
- Facilitate discussions in a safe and inclusive manner?
- Respond appropriately to difficult questions and disclosures?

Outcomes for Children and Young People

Has the CPD improved the learning experience and outcomes for children and young people? For example, do children and young people:

- Report positive experiences of PSHE education?
- Feel safe to participate and ask questions?
- Know where to access help and support?

Evidence of impact could be gathered through:

Lesson observations

Peer observations

Pupil voice activities

Staff self-assessment

Curriculum audits

Safeguarding reviews

Quality assurance process



The ultimate measure of effective CPD is not whether staff attended training, but whether it has improved professional practice and enhanced outcomes for children and young people.

CHOOSING EFFECTIVE TRAINING

Choosing effective training for PSHE education is crucial for ensuring that educators are well-prepared to deliver high-quality sessions. Here are some key considerations.

1

Research Training Providers:

- Look for training provided by reputable organisations, ensuring that the trainers have expertise in PSHE education and a track record of delivering effective training.

2

Evaluate Training Content:

- Ensure that the training content is relevant to the current curriculum and guidance and addresses the specific needs identified in your assessment.
- Look for training that provides practical strategies and resources that educators can immediately apply in their classrooms.

3

Consider Delivery Methods:

- In-person or virtual workshops and seminars can provide interactive and engaging learning experiences.
- Online courses offer flexibility and can be accessed at any time, making them convenient for busy professionals.
- Blended Learning, a combinations of in-person and online training can provide a balanced approach, catering to different learning preferences.

4

Evaluate:

- Collect feedback from professionals who completed the training to assess its effectiveness, impact and identify areas for improvement.

5

On-Going Support:

- Choose training that includes follow-on sessions or ongoing support to help staff implement what they have learnt.

CPD can be delivered through a range of approaches. The most effective professional development programmes typically utilise a combination of methods over time rather than relying on a single training event.

Workshops

Face-to-face and virtual workshops provide opportunities for staff to develop knowledge, discuss practice and engage with subject specialists. They can be particularly effective when introducing new curriculum content or responding to emerging issues.

Online Learning

Online learning offers flexibility and allows staff to access professional development at a time that suits their role and responsibilities.

A range of training opportunities can be accessed through the [Pan-Staffordshire PSHE Education Service training pages](#).

Peer Learning and Professional Networks

Research consistently highlights the value of collaborative professional learning.

Opportunities may include:

- Peer observations
- Team teaching
- Coaching and mentoring
- Curriculum planning sessions
- Professional learning communities
- Sharing effective practice across teams

The Pan-Staffordshire PSHE Leads Network provides opportunities for professionals across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent to come together to discuss challenges, share resources and learn from one another. You can reserve your place via our [Eventbrite page](#), and view recordings of our previous meeting on our [dedicated website page](#).

The Pan-Staffordshire PSHE education Service also hosts a dedicated [PSHE Leads Network Facebook Group](#) to support ongoing collaboration and professional discussion.

An Observation of Practice Template is included within the supporting resources section of this guidance and can be used to support peer learning and reflective practice.

COMMON AREAS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

20

Research and feedback from professionals consistently identify several areas of PSHE practice where additional support, guidance and professional development can be beneficial.

The areas most frequently highlighted are:

- Handling Sensitive Topics
- Managing Questions
- Managing Challenging Behaviour

Developing confidence in these areas can help educators create safe learning environments, facilitate meaningful discussion and deliver high-quality PSHE education.

HANDLING SENSITIVE TOPICS

Many aspects of PSHE education explore issues that children and young people may find personal, emotional or challenging. Effective delivery requires careful planning, clear boundaries and a supportive learning environment.

The aim is not to avoid sensitive subjects, but to ensure they are explored in a way that promotes learning, protects wellbeing and supports meaningful participation.

Creating a Safe Learning Environment

A safe learning environment enables children and young people to participate without fear of embarrassment, judgement or negative feedback.

Professionals should:

- Establish clear ground rules that promote respect and participation.
- Reinforce that personal experiences should not be shared within the group.
- Ensure children and young people understand their right to pass and not contribute to discussions.
- Foster a culture where differing views can be explored respectfully and safely.
- Model inclusive and respectful language at all times.

Using Distancing Techniques

Distancing techniques are recognised as an effective approach when exploring sensitive or potentially emotive topics.

By discussing fictional characters, scenarios or situations, children and young people can engage with the learning without feeling personally exposed.

Examples include:

- Fictional Case Studies
- Stories and Scenarios
- Role-play activities
- Film clips and media examples
- Books and fictional characters

What advice could someone give in this situation?

This approach encourages discussion while maintaining appropriate emotional distance

Providing Accurate and Balanced Information

Children and young people should receive information that is:

- Accurate
- Age-appropriate
- Evidence-informed
- Relevant to their needs
- Reflective of different experiences and perspectives

Where differing viewpoints are explored, professionals should ensure that discussions remain balanced while making it clear that discrimination, prejudice, bullying and harmful behaviours are unacceptable.

Information should be drawn from credible, safe and trusted sources and reviewed regularly to ensure accuracy.

Encouraging Safe Participation

Some children and young people may feel more comfortable asking questions or expressing views anonymously.

Strategies may include:

- Anonymous question boxes
- Written reflections
- Small group discussions
- Paired activities
- Digital question submissions where appropriate

These approaches can increase participation and reduce anxiety when discussing sensitive issues.

Preparing for Disclosures

Some topics within PSHE may increase the likelihood of children and young people seeking support or disclosing concerns.

Professionals should:

- Be familiar with safeguarding procedures
- Recognise and work within the limits of confidentiality
- Know who to contact if concerns arise
- Ensure children and young people know how to access help and support
- Work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) when planning curriculum delivery

It may also be helpful to share curriculum plans with safeguarding teams so appropriate support can be anticipated and made available.

Reflection and Continuous Improvement

The needs of children and young people change over time, as do the issues affecting them.

Professionals should regularly:

- Seek feedback from children and young people
- Reflect on their confidence and practice
- Review emerging research and evidence
- Update their knowledge and skills through professional development
- Adapt approaches in response to changing needs

Effective PSHE education creates opportunities for meaningful discussion while ensuring that children and young people remain safe, supported and able to learn.



Questions are an important part of effective PSHE education. They provide opportunities for children and young people to check their understanding, explore ideas, challenge misconceptions and engage more deeply with learning.

Creating an environment where questions are welcomed helps to foster curiosity, participation and critical thinking. However, educators often report that responding to unexpected, sensitive or challenging questions can be one of the most difficult aspects of PSHE delivery.

Confidence in managing questions can be developed through preparation, practice and a clear understanding of the boundaries of the educator's role.

Responding to Questions

All questions should be treated respectfully and viewed as valuable learning opportunities.

When a question is asked, professionals should:

- Acknowledge and value the question
- Take time to establish what is being asked
- Consider whether the question is appropriate to answer within the group
- Provide a factual, balanced and age-appropriate response
- Consider any safeguarding implications
- Signpost to further information or support where appropriate

Children and young people should never be made to feel that a question is silly, inappropriate or unimportant. Even when a question cannot be answered directly, the individual should feel that their contribution has been respected.

Managing Difficult or Sensitive Questions

Some questions may relate to sensitive topics, challenge personal beliefs, fall outside the intended learning outcomes or raise safeguarding concerns.

When responding to more complex questions, professionals should consider:

- Whether the question should be answered with the whole group or individually
- Whether additional information or advice is needed before responding
- Whether colleagues, senior leaders or safeguarding staff should be consulted
- Whether the question falls within the scope of the planned learning
- Whether there are any policy, safeguarding or parental considerations

It is acceptable to delay a response if additional information is required. Professionals do not need to have immediate answers to every question.

To help maintain trust, while ensuring information shared is accurate and appropriate, this can be a useful phrase:

That is an important question, and I would like to give you an accurate answer. Let me check the information and come back to you.

Providing Accurate Information

Children and young people should receive information that is:

- Accurate
- Factual
- Evidence-informed
- Age/Stage-appropriate
- Relevant to the learning.

Professionals should avoid providing information that is unclear, misleading or based solely on personal opinion.

If an educator does not know the answer to a question, it is both acceptable and good practice to say so. Modelling a willingness to seek accurate information reinforces the importance of critical thinking and lifelong learning.



Recognising the Limits of the Role of the Professional

There may be occasions when a question is not appropriate to answer within the classroom or group setting.

For example:

- The question may require individual support
- The question may be outside the planned curriculum
- The discussion may involve personal experiences
- Safeguarding concerns may be present
- The content may not be appropriate for the age or stage of the group

In these situations, the priority should be to ensure the child or young person receives appropriate support, information or signposting.

Professional Communication

When responding to questions, the way information is communicated can be as important as the answer itself.

Professionals should remain aware of their:

- Body language
- Facial expressions
- Tone of voice
- Choice of language.

A calm, respectful and non-judgemental response helps to maintain a safe learning environment and encourages continued participation.

Effective PSHE educators do not need to know the answer to every question. What is important is that questions are valued, handled safely and responded to honestly, respectfully and in a way that supports learning and wellbeing.





IDEAS FOR RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS

That question deserves a really good answer, let me give it some thought and come back to you later

That goes beyond the scope of this session, but I'd be happy to chat with you about that after the session

That's a really interesting question! No one's ever asked me that before, so I'm going to think about that for a while. Can you remind me if I haven't given you an answer before the end?

We agreed not to put anyone on the spot so it wouldn't be right for me to answer that question

We agreed not to talk about our personal experiences so it wouldn't be right for me to answer that question



Have an "ask-it" basket in the room for anonymous questions available before, during and after the session. Give children and young people time to ask questions; you could ask for questions or if they don't have a question, to write down what they had for breakfast so everyone in the group is writing and putting a question into the box.



Top Tips:

Best Practice	Try to avoid...
Ask for volunteers to ask or answer questions	Picking on an individual to either ask or answer a question
Value questions from the children and young people. Use phrases like "that's a really interesting question..." "Thanks for asking that...."	Reacting with sarcasm, frustration or anger to a question, even if it is suspected that the question has been asked to challenge
Give children and young people thinking time to come up with questions and answers. Let them discuss in pairs before talking in front of the class	Ignoring questions. There may be some questions that are inappropriate to answer, but in this case, politely explain why (refer to ground rules)
Answer the question in a factual, honest and age/stage-appropriate way without referring to own opinions or experiences	Trying to answer a question if they don't know the answer. It is better to be honest with children and young people and buy time to check an answer rather than saying something inaccurate or misleading.
Create an anonymous question box or envelope that children can add their questions to throughout the session and agree with the host organisation how and when these questions will be answered.	

Managing Challenging Behaviours

The vast majority of children and young people want to participate positively in learning and will engage well when they feel safe, respected and involved. However, there may be occasions when behaviour becomes challenging or disrupts learning.

Managing behaviour effectively is an important part of creating and maintaining a safe learning environment. Consistent expectations, positive relationships and appropriate support can help to maximise participation and minimise disruption.

Understanding Behaviours

Behaviour is a form of communication.

Children and young people may display challenging behaviour for a variety of reasons, including:

- Anxiety or nervousness about the topic being discussed;
- Previous experiences or trauma;
- Unmet emotional needs;
- Difficulties with communication;
- Low confidence or self-esteem;
- Attention-seeking behaviours; or
- Frustration, confusion or disengagement.

Understanding that behaviour may communicate an underlying need does not mean accepting behaviour that is unsafe or inappropriate. Rather, it encourages professionals to respond with curiosity, empathy and appropriate boundaries.

The acronym WILMA can help professionals to manage different types of behaviours, as shown on the next page

Consistency and Expectations

It is useful to check your setting's behaviour policy and to discuss common techniques used for responding to low-level disruption. For example, many settings will use a consistent technique for attracting attention back to the professional in between activities or to signal that they want quiet. This might be silently raising an arm at the front and waiting for everyone else to mirror this action before they stop talking. Some professionals will clap their hands and the group will have to repeat the pattern, whilst others will count down from "3,2,1" before expecting there to be silence and for everyone to be paying attention.

When engaging with an external provider, it is vital that a member of staff from the education setting is present to help manage classroom behaviour.

If external providers facilitating the session can use the same techniques, it helps to maintain consistency for the children and young people and means they are more likely to be ready to listen.

Equally, each organisation will have systems to manage behaviour that is consistently disruptive, such as giving a number of warnings before the child/young person is removed from the group.

TECHNIQUES FOR MANAGING DIFFERENT BEHAVIOUR

W

Worried

Reassurance, ask what they want from the session, set out early on what you are going to do and expect from them, get them to work with a friend.

I

Insecure

Reassurance, ask questions which the children and young person would be comfortable with to start with, encourage them to work with a friend.

L

Loud

Lay out the group agreement including something around taking turns to share opinions, create a rule that everyone has the opportunity to share one opinion over a set time, create opportunities to work in small groups which change so they do not dominate the same conversations.

It is known that people either take 5 seconds to formulate an answer or 10 seconds. Encourage everyone to wait until 10 seconds before answering to give everyone a chance.

M

Mute

Ask them closed and direct questions which are easy to answer. Create more opportunities for small group work; it may be that they just don't want to talk in front of everyone.

A

Aggressive

Lay out on the group agreement that it is not acceptable, position the individual close to you to keep an eye on them. Ask someone else to intervene if distracting you from the rest of the group and the outcomes (e.g. teacher, youth worker etc.).

Encouraging Participation

Participation does not come naturally to all children and young people. When we are delivering sessions we will create a positive, safe environment with the use of ground rules. Here are some additional tips to encourage participation.

Different methods:

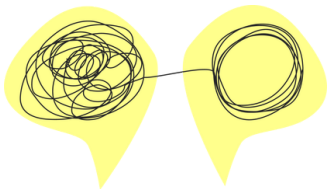


Participation does not just mean a reliance on speaking. Ensure the session utilises different activity styles to incorporate participation. Discussions can be in pairs or threes rather than in the full table and then get feedback from these smaller groups.



Thinking Time:

It can be tempting to jump into a question and ask for reactions from the participants. Stop and give them time to think. Embrace silence do not expect an immediate response.



Clarity:

It is important to anticipate and plan for point of confusion or different questions/responses. Be ready to explain or demonstrate the different activities.

SUPPORT FROM PSHE EDUCATION SERVICE

30

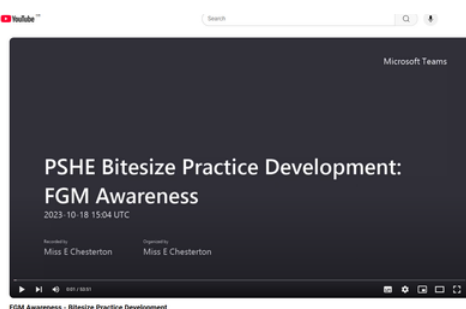
The PSHE Education Service is dedicated to supporting the development and delivery of high-quality, age/stage-appropriate PSHE education across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

The service provides regular webinars and training sessions to help educators stay updated on best practices and new developments in PSHE Education.



PSHE Leads Network Meetings:

These half-termly online meetings provide an opportunity for PSHE Leads to come together, share best practice, address challenges and build connections. Information and booking can be [found here](#).



Bitesize Practice Development Sessions:

Aimed at improving knowledge of specific topics taught within the PSHE curriculum, these webinars are led by subject experts who share their knowledge and expertise.



... & PSHE Packs:

Showcases how a topic links to the statutory guidance and PSHE Association's learning outcomes and provides information to equip professionals with the knowledge required to meet them. Including national and local signposting information.

All completed ... & PSHE packs can be found on [our website](#) and under the relevant topic's heading within the [Resource Library](#). ([Registration required](#) and free to access for settings in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent)

Resource Library:

A central repository of high-quality nationally sourced and locally produced resources. Free to access for education settings in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire, [registration is required](#), and there is no limit to the number of accounts each setting can have.

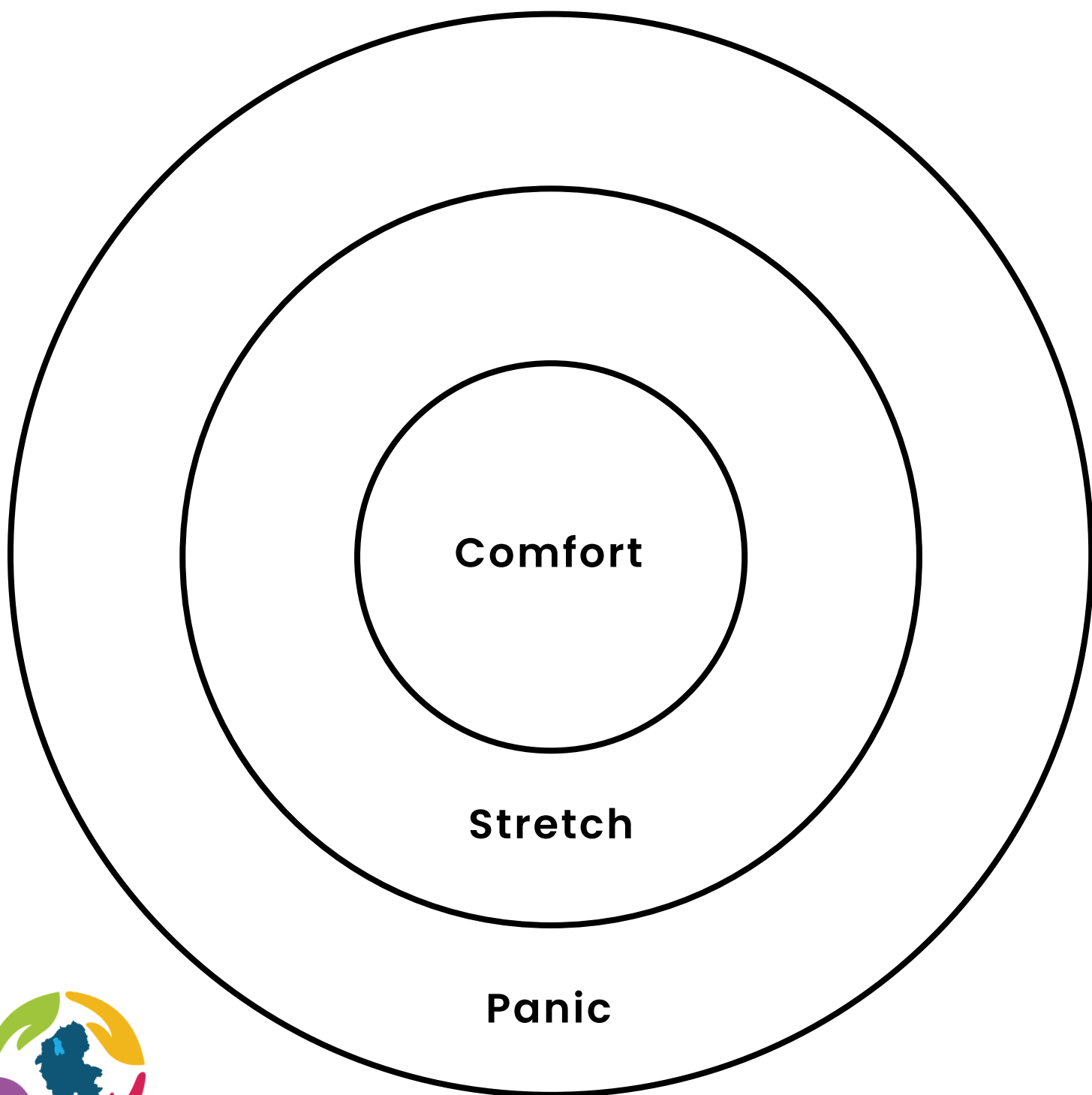


SUPPORTING RESOURCES



IDENTIFYING TRAINING NEEDS

Use your setting curriculum map and consider each topic area. Mark on the diagram below the zone that best describes how you feel about teaching PSHE sessions on this topic.



OBSERVATION OF PRACTICE

This form is designed to create discussions around positive and constructive feedback and identify learning needs.

Delivery

Prompts:

- Is the facilitator passionate and enthusiastic?
- Time management – how does the facilitator keep to the specified timings? Is the session pacy? Is the content sufficiently explained but points not overlaboured or repeated?
- Is the atmosphere positive?
- Has a safe learning environment been created?
- Is the facilitator engaging/ are the group engaged and enthusiastic?

Content

Prompts:

- Does the facilitator have a good grasp of the content?
- Does the session flow well?
- Is the facilitator familiar with the session resources and materials?
- Are the activities well explained and executed?

Skills

Prompts:

- How well are discussions managed?
- Does the facilitator respond appropriately to members of the group that might be challenging?
- Does the facilitator use inclusive strategies to ensure wider participation e.g. asking for feedback from different groups?
- Is the facilitator about to keep the attention of the group and keep them on task?

General Comments and Feedback

Person Observed:

Date:

Observer:

Session Observed:

CPD PLAN TEMPLATE

Name of Setting		PSHE Lead	
Date Completed		Review Date	

IDENTIFIED TRAINING NEEDS

Priority Area	Evidence Source

CPD OBJECTIVES

By the end of this CPD programme, staff will be able to:

CPD Activity Plan

CPD Activity	Objective(s) Linked To	Date	Lead/Provider

EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

Staff Confidence

Area	Setting Rating Before CPD	Setting Rating After CPD

Evidence Collected

Staff Feedback		Lesson Observations		Peer Observations	
Pupil Voice		Curriculum Audit		Learning Walks	
Safeguarding Review		PSHE Support Visit			
Other					

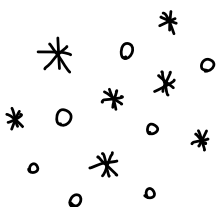
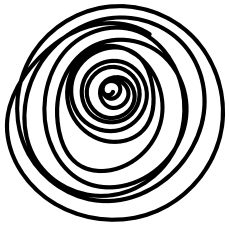
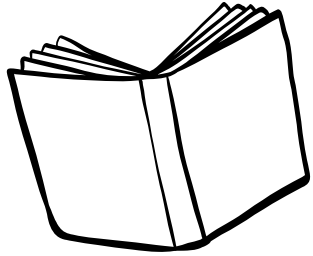
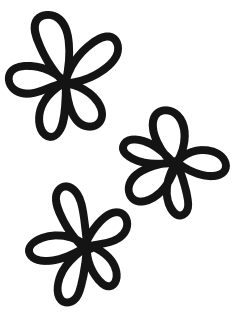
IMPACT REVIEW

What has changed in staff knowledge, confidence or practice?

What evidence demonstrates improved outcomes for children and young people?

Priorities for next year:

PAGE FOR NOTES





PSHE

Education

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