



External Providers

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

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CONTENTS

<u>3</u>	<u>Introduction</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>Knowledge, Skills & Values</u>
<u>4</u>	<u>Purpose & Scope</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>SMART Outcomes</u>
<u>5</u>	<u>The role of external providers</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>Active Learning Techniques</u>
<u>6</u>	<u>The role and responsibilities of the education setting</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>Managing Disclosures & Safeguarding</u>
<u>7</u>	<u>Linking to the curriculum</u> <u>Informal Education</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>Signposting</u>
<u>8</u>	<u>Local Quality Framework</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>Managing Different Behaviour</u>
<u>9</u>	<u>Safe Learning Environments</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>Encouraging Questions</u>
<u>10</u>	<u>7 Guiding Principles of RSHE</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>Responding to Difficult Questions</u>
<u>11</u>	<u>Delivering the Session</u> <u>Assemblies</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>Equality, Inclusion & Accessibility</u>
<u>12</u>	<u>Distancing Learning</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>Political Impartiality & Prevent</u>
<u>13</u>	<u>Using Lived Experience</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>Assessment & Evaluation</u>
<u>14</u>	<u>Avoiding Shock, Fear or Shame</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>External Provider Checklist</u>
<u>16</u>	<u>Avoiding Inspiring or Instructing on Risky Behaviours</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>External Provider Evaluation Forms</u>

INTRODUCTION

Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education helps children and young people develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to thrive. It supports their health and wellbeing, prepares them for life and work, and helps them achieve their academic potential while building skills that will benefit them throughout their lives.

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.

External providers can enrich pupils' education by offering specialist expertise, real-world perspectives, practical skills and additional support. However, they should **enhance, not replace**, high-quality teaching and the planned curriculum.

Education settings remain responsible for the quality, suitability and safeguarding of all provision. External contributions should therefore be carefully selected, planned, monitored and evaluated.

This guidance supports both external providers and education settings when considering external PSHE delivery and should be read, used and supported alongside relevant internal policies, including;

- Safeguarding
- RSHE
- Behaviour
- Equality
- Prevent
- Political Impartiality
- Educational Visits
- Health and Safety
- Complaints
- Online Safety

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this guidance is to promote best practice when external providers or speakers work with children and young people during PSHE education.

It aims to ensure that external provision:

supports the aims and objectives of the curriculum;

is age-appropriate, accurate and evidence-informed;

is inclusive and accessible;

is delivered by suitably skilled and competent people;

complements rather than replaces teaching by education professionals;

supports pupils' knowledge, skills and personal development;

takes account of safeguarding and Prevent responsibilities;

respects the legal requirement for political impartiality;

provides appropriate opportunities for questions and discussion;

protects pupils from avoidable distress or harm; and

is evaluated for its impact and effectiveness.

THE ROLE OF EXTERNAL PROVIDERS

External providers can add significant value when their contribution is purposeful and well planned.

They may:

- Provide specialist knowledge or expertise;
- Offer professional or vocational perspectives;
- Bring learning to life through relevant examples;
- Provide opportunities to develop practical skills;
- Offer credible information and advice;
- Support children and young people to understand available services;
- Provide appropriate lived experience;
- Help children and young people explore different perspectives;
- Provide resources or approaches that complement classroom teaching; and
- Help children and young people connect learning to real-life situations.

External providers should not be used simply because a topic is considered difficult, sensitive or uncomfortable for school staff to teach.

The involvement of an external provider should have a clear educational purpose and should form part of a planned programme of learning.

The provider should understand:

- What children and young people already know;
- What they are expected to learn;
- How the session fits into the wider curriculum;
- The age and developmental stage of the pupils;
- The needs of the particular group;
- Relevant safeguarding considerations; and
- What learning or follow-up will take place before and after the session.



The Department for Education Guiding Principles for RSHE state that parents and carers should know exactly what is being taught and have access to all RSHE materials, this includes materials used by external providers.

THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EDUCATION SETTING 6

The education setting retains overall responsibility for the education and safeguarding of its pupils.

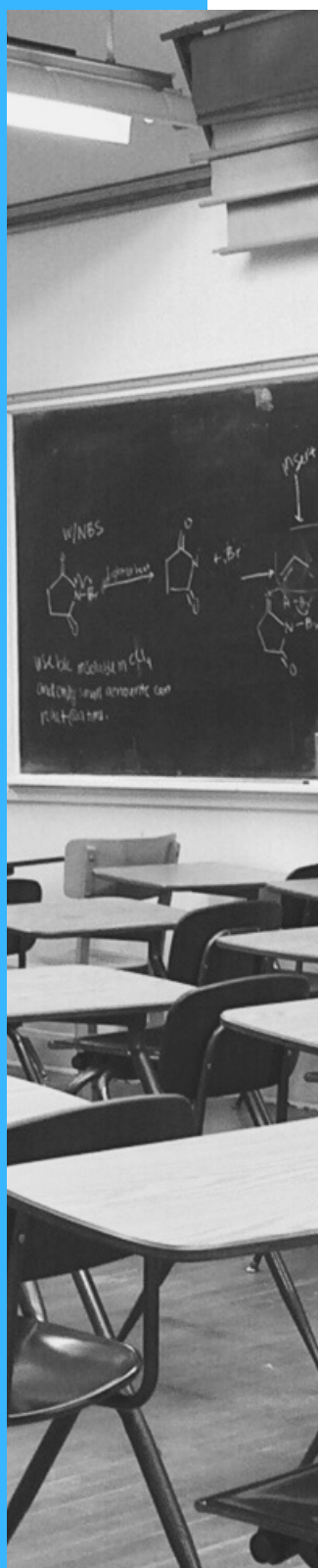
This includes responsibility for deciding:

- Whether external provision is appropriate;
- Whether a provider or speaker is suitable;
- How the contribution fits within the curriculum;
- Whether the content is accurate and age-appropriate;
- How safeguarding and Prevent risks will be managed;
- Whether political impartiality requirements apply;
- What supervision arrangements are required; and
- How the provision will be evaluated.

External providers should not be expected to determine independently what pupils need to learn. The education setting should provide clear information about:

- The purpose of the session;
- Learning objectives and intended outcomes;
- The curriculum context;
- The age and stage of pupils;
- Additional needs and accessibility requirements;
- Relevant safeguarding considerations;
- Behaviour expectations;
- Ground rules;
- Staff presence and supervision;
- Procedures for managing disclosures; and
- appropriate support and signposting.

A member of the education setting's staff should normally remain responsible for the pupils and their behaviour during the session.



LINKING TO THE PSHE CURRICULUM

The most effective model of delivery for PSHE education is a sequenced, spiral programme that builds on prior learning as children and young people progress and mature.

It is now also a statutory requirement to teach the majority of the subject. This statutory content, often referred to as RSHE, includes Relationships Education (KS1-2), Relationships and Sex Education (KS3-4) and Health Education from key stages 1 to 4. And though not yet statutory, economic wellbeing, careers and personal safety should also feature in any good quality PSHE education programme. PSHE education in Key Stage 5 is not statutory and there is no prescribed national curriculum. However, it remains an important part of education, helping young people develop the knowledge, skills, and understanding needed to make informed decisions and prepare for adult life.

Ensuring that an education setting meets the statutory requirements for PSHE is the responsibility of the education setting.

We use the learning outcomes suggested by both the PSHE Association and the Department for Education.

INFORMAL EDUCATION

We recognise that PSHE Education also occurs outside of formal education in youth clubs and community settings. Youth providers working across Stoke and Staffordshire also play a significant role in supporting children and young people to develop and thrive and may invite external providers in to deliver session to their children and young people.

We have also mapped PSHE outcomes to the National Youth Agency (NYA) National Curriculum for Youth Work, which aims to enable a greater understanding of youth work practice, provides an educational framework and acts as a reference tool to be used by decision makers, policy makers, commissioners, youth workers and young people.

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.

SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

A safe learning environment enables children and young people to feel comfortable to share their ideas without attracting negative feedback. It avoids possible distress and prevents disclosures in a public setting and enables professionals to manage conversations on sensitive issues confidently. A safe learning environment supports open discussion while protecting pupils from unnecessary distress.

Prior to the session, the education setting and external provider must agree an approach that reflects and supports the safe learning environment established through the setting's PSHE curriculum.



1: Ground Rules

Create in collaboration with the group. As the facilitator role model the agreed ground rules.



2: Collaborate with the DSL

Let them know when the session is being delivered to ensure the correct support is in place should any disclosures be made.



3: Staff Confidence

Check staff confidence before teaching. Use resources such as these packs to increase topic confidence and competence.



4: Learning Techniques

Use scenarios and stories to help participants engage with the topic. Use distancing techniques.



5: Difficult Questions

Acknowledge the question, then either take a moment to consider an appropriate response or gently deflect it if it isn't suitable.



6: Signposting

Include information about where to go (both within the setting and outside), for further information, help and support, in every lesson.

For more information about Creating a Safe Learning Environment, you can access our Best Practice guidance [here](#).

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-appropriate, accessible and tailored to local needs. Schools 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.

DELIVERING THE SESSION:

Establishing a safe learning environment helps participants feel comfortable sharing ideas without fear of negative feedback and enables facilitators to manage sensitive discussions confidently.

It is good practice to establish ground rules for PSHE Education sessions, such as;

- Everyone has the right to be heard and respected
- We will use language that won't offend, stereotype or upset anyone
- We will use the correct terms, and if we don't know them, we'll ask the teacher
- We will comment on what was said, not the person who said it
- We won't share our own, or our friends', personal experiences, but will instead use hypothetical or fictitious examples to discuss key ideas
- We won't put anyone on the spot, and we have the right to pass
- We won't judge or make assumptions about anyone

Education settings should have established ground rules for PSHE sessions. For consistency, it is recommended that these are used by external providers. External providers may choose to use their own. These should be agreed during planning and reinforced throughout the session, or included in the session materials.

Assemblies

Assemblies are generally not an appropriate environment for delivering PSHE education, particularly when exploring sensitive, personal or safeguarding-related topics. The large-group format can make it difficult to create the trust, psychological safety and participation needed for effective PSHE learning.

Children and young people may feel unable to ask questions, express uncertainty or discuss sensitive issues, while the setting can increase the risk of unintended disclosures or distress. It can also make it harder for professionals to identify and respond to individual needs or safeguarding concerns.

Assemblies may be appropriate for raising awareness, sharing information or signposting to support, but should not replace interactive PSHE learning in a safe and supportive environment where children and young people can participate and access appropriate support.



Distanced learning is a key pedagogical approach within high-quality PSHE education and can provide a safe, inclusive, and educationally appropriate way to explore sensitive or complex issues. Through the use of fictional, anonymised, or case-study-based examples, pupils can engage with real-world situations without requiring personal disclosure from themselves or others.

By creating emotional and psychological distance from the subject matter, learners are able to critically examine issues, develop empathy, consider different perspectives, and explore decision-making processes while reducing the risk of distress, personal exposure, or identification with harmful behaviours.

Well-planned distanced learning approaches encourage reflection, discussion, and critical thinking in a way that safeguards pupils' emotional wellbeing and promotes balanced, objective engagement with complex topics. Importantly, they enable pupils to focus on the knowledge, understanding, skills, and values being developed, rather than becoming overly focused on an individual's personal experiences.

Education settings should therefore consider whether distanced approaches can achieve the intended learning outcomes before relying on personal testimony or lived experience accounts, particularly where there is potential for distress, re-traumatisation, unintended influence, or safeguarding concerns.

Ideas for distancing learning:

- **Provide scenarios, cartoons and stories to help participants to engage with the issues**
- **Avoid using terms like “you and your friends”. Instead use “people of about your age”**
- **Avoid saying “what would you do?”. Instead ask “what could/should this character/someone do?”.**

When incorporating lived experience role models and personal testimony into PSHE education, education settings must exercise careful professional judgement and place the welfare, safety, and learning needs of pupils at the centre of all decision-making. While lived experience can provide authentic, relatable, and impactful learning opportunities, personal narratives can also carry risks if they are not thoughtfully planned, appropriately delivered, and supported within a robust safeguarding framework.

The value of lived experience should not be measured solely by its emotional impact. Instead, its inclusion should be clearly linked to intended learning outcomes and contribute positively to pupils' understanding, knowledge, skills, and wellbeing.

Schools and settings have a responsibility to consider whether personal testimony is educationally necessary and whether the benefits outweigh any potential risks to pupils.

Before using lived experience role models who share personal testimony to support PSHE delivery, the following considerations should be carefully assessed:

- Is the testimony genuinely necessary to achieve the intended learning objectives, or could the same outcomes be achieved through alternative approaches?
- Is the content developmentally appropriate and suitable for the age, maturity, and needs of the pupils?
- Could the testimony cause distress, anxiety, or re-traumatisation for individuals who may have related lived experiences?
- Is there any possibility that the content could unintentionally glamorise, normalise, or sensationalise harmful behaviours, experiences, or choices? Could pupils identify with, imitate, or become overly influenced by descriptions of risk-taking or harmful behaviour?
- Have appropriate safeguarding measures, risk assessments, and staff preparations been put in place?
- Are clear opportunities available for pupils to step away, disengage, or access support if they find the content upsetting or overwhelming?
- Is appropriate follow-up support available, including pastoral, wellbeing, and safeguarding provision where required?

Education settings should recognise that lived experience is not, in itself, a qualification for delivering effective PSHE education. Personal testimony should complement, rather than replace, evidence-informed teaching and should always be carefully planned, structured, and purposefully integrated into the curriculum. Emotional impact alone is not a sufficient justification for its use.

Ultimately, the use of lived experience within PSHE should support safe, inclusive, and meaningful learning, ensuring that pupils gain valuable insights while protecting their wellbeing and maintaining a focus on the educational objectives of the session.

AVOIDING SHOCK, FEAR OR SHAME

14

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 children and 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.

Considerations:

Resources should be carefully reviewed for age appropriateness and potential impact. PSHE should support children and young people to make informed, healthy and safe decisions by presenting risks accurately and proportionately, while focusing on practical strategies for staying safe, seeking help and making positive choices.

Fear-based or shock tactics are ineffective and may cause harm, including re-traumatising some pupils. Instead, learning should provide balanced information and empower children and young people to make informed decisions and act on positive choices.



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.

AVOIDING INSPIRING OR INSTRUCTING ON RISKY BEHAVIOURS

PSHE 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.

When discussing crime, exploitation, substance use, violence, online harms or other risky behaviours, providers should consider whether information could unintentionally:

- Glamorise harmful behaviour
- Normalise harmful behaviour
- Provide practical instructions
- Explain how to evade detection
- Increase curiosity or experimentation
- Create the impression that harmful behaviour is widespread or expected.

Providers should avoid unnecessary operational detail about how harmful or illegal activities are carried out.

Where statistics are used, they should be accurate and presented in context.

Sessions should reinforce positive social norms and make clear that harmful behaviour is not inevitable or universal.

The emphasis should be on:

- Recognising risk
- Understanding consequences
- Resisting pressure
- Seeking help
- Supporting others
- Making informed choices

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & VALUES

PSHE education should equip children and young people to make safe and informed decisions in real-life situations, including moments when they may experience pressure, uncertainty or risk. Knowledge is important, such as understanding potential consequences or knowing where something may be unsafe or unlawful, but knowledge alone may not be enough to support positive decision-making.

Children and young people also need the skills and confidence to manage pressure, resist influence, leave unsafe situations, seek help and support others. They need opportunities to reflect on their own values and develop the confidence to act on them. Sessions should therefore have a clear purpose and provide a balanced focus on knowledge, skills and values, enabling children and young people to apply their learning when it matters.

The definition of each of these is:

Knowledge	What do they need to know?	Facts, information and understanding
Skills	What do they need to be able to do?	Decision-making, help-seeking, communication and practical skills
Values	What do they need to reflect on?	Beliefs, attitudes, empathy and respect for others

Examples:

Outcome By the end of the session participants will be able to:	K S V?
identify and name two Class A drugs	Knowledge
explain what county lines means	Knowledge
recognise signs that someone is being exploited	Knowledge
demonstrate how to cross the road safely	Skills
practise negotiating one conversation around consent with a partner	Skills
present strategies to decline drugs from a friend or stranger	Skills
describe your 'ideal' partner	Values
draw a picture depicting your views around exploitation	Values
list behaviours they would want within a relationship	Values

SMART OUTCOMES

When writing an outcome, they should be smart:

- Specific- are clearly defined
- Measurable- can be measured to know they have been met
- Achievable- can actually be achieved by the intended participants
- Realistic- are relevant and relate to the aim
- Time bound- can be met within the time of the activity/ session

This table lists some verbs to use in outcomes, and those to avoid, helping you to write a SMART outcome.

SMART verbs to use		Verbs to avoid- not SMART	
Analyse	List	Accept	Join
Answer	Make	Adapt	Judge
Assemble	Measure	Adopt	Know
Build	Name	Allow	Learn
Calculate	Obtain	Apply	Listen
Carry out	Operate	Appreciate	Look
Change	Organise	Assist	Maintain
Choose	Participate	Attempt	Manage
Clarify	Perform	Be aware of	Outline
Classify	Practise	Believe	Plan
Compare	Present	Challenge	Praise
Complete	Print	Criticise	Prepare
Construct	Produce	Defend	Provide
Contrast	Recall	Develop	Question
Convert	Recap	Devise	Rationalise
Create	Recognise	Discuss	Read
Define	Repeat	Dispute	Reflect
Demonstrate	Select	Enable	Relate
Describe	Show	Encourage	Review
Design	Sketch	Enjoy	Save
Differentiate	Solve	Establish	See
Draw	State	Evaluate	Share
Estimate	Summarise	Facilitate	Study
Explain	Switch	Formulate	Suggest
Identify	Use	Gain	Support
Illustrate	Weigh	Hear	Understand
Justify	Write	Help	Visualise
Label		Interpret	Volunteer
		Introduce	Watch

ACTIVE LEARNING TECHNIQUES

Children and young people learn best when they actively take part in the learning.

Using active learning techniques does not mean running around the classroom it can involve:

- Question and Answer sessions
- Predicting what might happen next in a scenario
- Responding to carefully chosen film clips and images
- Creating storyboards or scripts
- Problem solving
- Offering advice on what someone should do
- Designing awareness campaigns

Lessons dominated by facilitator talk can quickly lose participants' attention, even when the topic is relevant and engaging. Passive listening does not develop skills, strategies or attributes. Whole-class questioning can help, but often the same few participants answer while the majority remain disengaged.

Top Tips:

- Work with the host organisation's staff to plan the lesson, using their expertise of what activities work best to help participants to learn, and the external provider's expertise on the topic.
- Participants should be told in advance about the external provider's visit and the topic of the session – this gives the participants an opportunity to prepare questions before the visit.
- Ensure the lesson has opportunities for the whole class, individual, paired and group work.
- Include a range of activities in every lesson that enable the participants to do some of the following:
 - Ask questions
 - Learn facts
 - Be creative
 - Solve problems
 - Offer advice
 - Experience empathy
 - Build confidence
 - Make predictions
 - Analyse consequences
 - Collaborate
 - Allow participants to reflect and apply the learning to their own lives at the end of the session (this can be through private reflection where appropriate)

All organisations working with children and young people must have clear safeguarding arrangements. External providers must understand and follow the safeguarding procedures of the host organisation. The education setting retains responsibility for ensuring that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place.

Host Organisation	External Provider
• identify the safeguarding lead; • brief providers; • agree disclosure procedures; • establish supervision arrangements.	• know who to contact; • understand confidentiality limits; • report concerns promptly; • do not investigate concerns themselves.

Providers should not promise children and young people absolute confidentiality.

If a child or young person discloses information that raises a safeguarding concern, the provider should follow the education setting's procedures and report the concern promptly to the DSL or appropriate member of staff.

Providers should avoid investigating or attempting to resolve safeguarding concerns themselves.

The education setting should consider whether the child or young person needs additional support following the session.

Appropriate opportunities for children and young people to seek help should be available after sessions.

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

TOP TIPS FOR MANAGING DISCLOSURES AND SAFEGUARDING

1 Make all participants aware of how they can seek help after the session, both within their education setting and from external services (signposting)

2 It should be agreed beforehand between the External Provider and the host organisation who will respond to potential disclosures, and how (in line with the external provider and education setting's policies)

3 External providers who are delivering should have read the education setting's safeguarding policy, and if possible be introduced to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

4 Try to build in time after the session to stay behind to enable disclosures; this means not leaving the classroom straight away. Alternatively, ask for a private space for a period of time to be provided for anyone who would like to discuss specific concerns.

5 Ensure everyone involved in delivering sessions is familiar with the safeguarding policy and process.

MANAGING DISCLOSURES AND SAFEGUARDING

22

If a professional believes a child or young person is at immediate risk, this must be reported to the Police on 999. This should then be followed up urgently using the relevant telephone numbers.

If a non-urgent referral to Children's Social Care is required, please contact:

Staffordshire:

Make sure you have considered Staffordshire Right Help, Right Time resources.

Staffordshire Integrated Front Door – 0300 111 8033

Monday – Thursday 8.30am – 5pm and Friday 8.30–4.30pm

Out of Hours – 0345 604 2886 to speak to the Emergency Duty Service.

Online Referral Form

Stoke:

CHAD – 01782 235 100

Monday – Thursday 8.30am – 5pm and Friday 8.30–4.30pm

Out of Hours – 01782 234 234

SIGNPOSTING

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

Speaking to a teacher or other Safe Adult 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. The Pan-Staffordshire PSHE Education Service can support you to identify the correct signposting services.

MANAGING DIFFERENT BEHAVIOUR

The education setting remains responsible for managing behaviour of children and young people.

Before delivery, the provider and education setting should agree:

- Behaviour expectations
- Ground rules
- The role of education staff
- How low-level disruption will be addressed
- What will happen if behaviour becomes unsafe or seriously disruptive.

Education staff should normally lead behaviour management.

Providers should:

- Model calm and respectful behaviour
- Reinforce agreed expectations
- Praise positive participation
- Challenge behaviour rather than personally criticising
- Avoid humiliation or confrontation
- Seek support from education staff when necessary

Providers should not attempt to impose their own behaviour system in place of the education setting's procedures.



Anyone working with children and young people should recognise that behaviour is a form of communication. Behaviour may be a way of expressing unmet needs, distress, fear, anxiety, trauma, or experiences that a child or young person may not have the words, confidence or ability to communicate directly.

Understanding behaviour as communication does not mean accepting behaviour that is unsafe or harmful. Adults should maintain clear and appropriate boundaries while responding in a way that preserves dignity, promotes safety, builds trust and supports the child or young person to communicate their needs and access appropriate help.

TOP TIPS FOR MANAGING DIFFERENT BEHAVIOUR

Considerations:

- Participants should be given advance warning that the external provider will be visiting and remind them of expectations for behaviour when a visitor attends.
- Wherever possible, staff from the education setting should continue to take control of managing participants' behaviour during the lesson, drawing on their own policies.
- Remember to consistently give praise throughout the lesson for good behaviour and enthusiastic participation, staff from the education setting should do this too.
- Refer to the group's agreed ground rules throughout.
- When challenging behaviour, comment on the behaviour rather than the individual and refer back to the ground rules e.g. "we agreed not to talk when other people are sharing ideas because it makes it difficult for us to hear" rather than "You are really rude to talk over someone else".
- If there is a particular group member who is behaving inappropriately, take them aside and try to have a one-to-one conversation with them about their behaviour.

External Provider Staff should avoid:

- Taking the lead on managing behaviour and applying their own behaviour system.
- Publicly challenging participants' behaviours in front of others.
- Any attempt to pick on, threaten or embarrass people who are misbehaving – this is likely to make the individual defensive and increase their poor behaviour.
- Making assumptions about why the individual is misbehaving.

TECHNIQUES FOR MANAGING DIFFERENT BEHAVIOUR

25

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.).

Questions are an important part of learning. It is important for external providers to encourage questions from the participants, including making it possible for those who may not want to ask in front of the whole group to still have their questions answered.

External providers should:

- Value questions from the participants. Use phrases like “that’s a really interesting question...” “Thanks for asking that....”
- Give participants thinking time to come up with questions or answers. Let them discuss in pairs before talking in front of the class.
- Ask for volunteers to ask or answer questions.
- Answer questions in a factual, honest and age-appropriate way.
- Create an anonymous question box or envelope that participants can add questions to throughout the session and agree with the host organisation how and when these questions will be answered.

External providers should not:

- Pick on an individual person to either ask or answer a question.
- React with sarcasm or anger to a question – even if it is suspected that the question has been asked to challenge.
- Ignore questions. There may be some questions that are inappropriate to answer, but if this is the case, politely explain why (refer to the ground rules).
- Try to answer a question if they don’t know the answer. It is better to be honest with participants and buy time to check an answer rather than saying something inaccurate or misleading.



RESPONDING TO DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

Sometimes a child or young person will ask a difficult question. As with all questions the first thing is to value the question whilst either allowing time to consider an appropriate answer or to deflect an inappropriate question.

- Check understanding of question
- Give factual, age appropriate answer or, if not able, give time – “I’ll get back to you”
- Consider response/answer to whole class or if a more personal, individual response is required
- Do colleagues need to be consulted?
- What is the education setting’s policy?
- Are there any safeguarding considerations?

Be aware of:

- Body language
- Facial expressions
- Tone

When responding to difficult questions, the following phrases could be utilised:

- “That goes beyond the scope of this session, but I’d be happy to chat with you about that after the session”
- “That question deserves a really good answer; let me give it some thought and come back to you later”
- “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”

EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

External provision should be inclusive and accessible.
Providers should consider children and young people's:

- Age
- Disability
- Special educational needs
- Communication and language needs
- Cultural and religious backgrounds
- Family circumstances
- Language needs
- Prior experiences
- Other relevant individual circumstances.

Resources should avoid stereotypes and discriminatory assumptions.

Providers should use respectful and appropriate language.

Providers should use respectful and appropriate language. The education setting should ensure that reasonable adjustments are made where required.

External providers should be informed of relevant accessibility needs before delivery.

Pupils should be treated with dignity and should not be singled out or required to represent a particular group.

POLITICAL IMPARTIALITY & PREVENT

Education settings must comply with their legal duties relating to political impartiality and the prevention of political indoctrination.

[Click here for Guidance on External Speakers: On-Site Events and Off-Site Visits from Educate Against Hate and the Department for Education.](#)

Where external providers address political or controversial issues, the education setting should ensure that children and young people are able to consider relevant perspectives in a balanced and age-appropriate way.

External providers should not use educational activities to promote partisan political views or seek to persuade pupils to adopt a particular political position.

The same principles apply to relevant extracurricular activities and events organised by or on behalf of the education setting.

Education settings should also consider their responsibilities under the [Prevent duty](#).

External speakers and providers must not use education premises or educational activities to promote extremist or radicalising views.

Where there are concerns about the suitability of a speaker, provider or proposed content, the education setting should follow its safeguarding and Prevent procedures and seek specialist advice where appropriate.

The education setting should consider:

- The speaker's background and role
- The organisation they represent
- The purpose of the event
- The content and intended audience
- Publicly available information where relevant
- Potential risks to children and young people
- Potential risks of incitement to hatred or violence
- The potential for radicalisation or extremist influence
- Whether additional controls or advice are required.

Checks should be proportionate to the circumstances and should not be based on assumptions or stereotypes.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

30

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 on assessment and techniques that can be utilised. It may be that the external provider 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, which 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.



EXTERNAL PROVIDER CHECKLIST

Before booking/commissioning	
Is there a clear educational purpose?	
Does the provision meet a genuine need?	
Does it fit within the curriculum or wider educational programme?	
Is the provider appropriately skilled and experienced?	
Is the individual speaker suitable?	
Have proportionate due diligence checks been completed?	
Have relevant safeguarding arrangements been checked?	
Have Prevent considerations been considered?	
Have political impartiality requirements been considered where relevant?	
Have equality and accessibility needs been considered?	
Has the provider's content and resources been reviewed where appropriate?	

Before the session	
Have the learning objectives and intended outcomes been agreed?	
Does the session build on prior learning?	
Has the provider been given information about the pupils and their needs?	
Has the provider been briefed on safeguarding procedures?	
Does the provider know who the DSL is?	
Are staff supervision arrangements clear?	
Have behaviour expectations and ground rules been agreed?	
Has the approach to questions been agreed?	
Are arrangements in place for managing disclosures?	
Is appropriate support and signposting available?	
Have resources been checked for age appropriateness and accessibility?	

During the session	
Are pupils actively engaged in learning?	
Is the content accurate, age-appropriate and evidence-informed?	
Are pupils treated with dignity and respect?	
Are personal disclosures avoided or managed appropriately?	
Are questions handled safely and respectfully?	
Is the provider avoiding shock, shame and sensationalism?	
Is harmful behaviour discussed without providing unnecessary operational detail?	
Are safeguarding concerns reported promptly?	
Are education staff maintaining responsibility for pupils and behaviour?	

After the session	
Have pupils been reminded where to seek support?	
Have any safeguarding concerns been passed to the appropriate staff?	
Has follow-up learning or support been considered?	
Has feedback been gathered?	
Have any concerns about the provider or session been recorded?	
Has the effectiveness of the provision been evaluated?	
Should the provider or speaker be considered for future use?	



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?

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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?	



PSHE

Education

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