

General guidance for PSHE teaching

Guidance document

PSHE

These notes accompany the teaching packs, and should be read before teaching any sessions.

Context for learning

All the activities within each pack are designed to fit in to a one-hour lesson. The timings given are the minimum time required to deliver the activities. While it is always important for PSHE education lessons to be pacy, it is equally important to meet the needs of your pupils. More may be gained from spending longer on an in-depth exploration of an activity that has fired up discussion and imagination, so long as you are comfortable leading the discussion and feel pupils are progressing toward the lesson objectives. When this is the case, it may be more appropriate for your group to extend the

elements as required: be flexible on timings, and allow adequate time both to cover all of the learning within the sessions and to meet pupils' needs.

Ideally the pack will be taught within a one-hour session or as individual lessons to supplement your own good practice; the elements can be taught as and when time allows during the day.

Creating a safe learning environment

It is important to prepare a safe learning environment for the pupils and staff in the classroom. This will enable pupils to share feelings, explore values and attitudes, express opinions and consider those of others without attracting negative feedback. As well as encouraging more open discussion, it also helps to make sure that teachers are not anxious about unexpected disclosures or comments. It is important to be well prepared to deal with any issues arising from the taught sessions

– consider any sensitivities and prior knowledge about specific pupils' circumstances. Giving prior notice that an issue will be covered may be advisable, which should also be given to pastoral and other relevant staff. It is best practice to:

- Ensure that the content, approach and use of inclusive language reflect the diversity of the school community, to help every pupil feel valued and included

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- Work with pupils to establish ground rules about how they will behave towards each other in discussion (see notes on 'Ground rules' below)
- Offer some opportunities for pupils to discuss issues in small groups as well as sharing views with the class
- Make boxes available in which pupils can place anonymous questions or concerns (see the 'Ask-it basket' section on page 3)
- Provide access to balanced information and differing views to help pupils clarify their own opinions and views, while making it clear that behaviours such as racism, discrimination and bullying are never acceptable in any form (see relevant pack for learning objectives and outcomes for discrimination)
- Be sensitive to the needs and experiences of individuals – some pupils may have direct experience of some of the themes raised
- Always work within the school's policies on safeguarding and confidentiality, ensure that pupils understand school policies on disclosure of confidential information, and follow up concerns in a more appropriate setting outside lessons
- Link PSHE education into the whole-school approach to supporting pupil welfare
- Make pupils aware of sources of support both inside and outside the school.

It is possible that during discussion a pupil or pupils may express uncomfortable, discriminatory or extremist views. If this happens, challenge the attitudes rather than the person, and remind pupils that extremist attitudes are unacceptable in school. In particular cases, you may wish to report the views to the person with responsibility for safeguarding in the school.

Ask-it basket

An Ask-it basket, or question box, encourages pupils to ask difficult or awkward questions anonymously and without embarrassment. Introduce the Ask-it basket either while creating the ground rules, or at the beginning of each lesson as a reminder of the ground rules. It should be accessible both in and after every lesson. The purpose of the Ask-it basket should be explained to the pupils, for example:

- Anyone can use it to post a question, at any time and as many times as they want
- Questions can be anonymous, or if the pupils want to they can put their name on their question so the teacher can follow it up
- Only the teacher will see the questions, unless there are significant issues about a pupil's safety or wellbeing that need to be shared with others – see the 'Limits of confidentiality' section below
- Questions raised will be dealt with in the following session (or sooner if relevant to a pupil's safety and wellbeing)

Tip

- To ensure that pupils do not feel self-conscious about being seen to be asking a question, give each pupil a piece of paper and ask them to write down what they had for breakfast or lunch, and then add any questions they have. This means that everyone is writing at the same time. Set some time aside at the end of each session to do this.

Limits of confidentiality

There may be a question, behaviour, or language that as a teacher you feel should be discussed with parents or carers. According to the nature of your concern, you should discuss this with the head teacher or designated safeguarding lead in school. Depending on your concern, it is good practice before involving a parent or carer that you talk to the pupil(s) concerned and explain that it is in their best interests to talk to their parent(s) or a trusted adult. If a child refuses or rejects talking to their parent or carer, this should be taken seriously and discussed with the head/designated safeguarding lead and in accordance with the school's confidentiality policy.

Ground rules

Ground rules help to minimise inappropriate and unintended disclosures, plus comments of a negative nature made towards other pupils, intentional or not. Such ground rules support broader class and school rules, and the school's behaviour policy. To be effective, pupils and teachers need to develop ground rules together and then test them in discussion and group activities, amending them as necessary.

Examples of ground rules include:

- not asking personal questions or putting people 'on the spot'
- listening to others
- respecting what people say
- having the right to 'pass' if you do not wish to comment
- ensuring that anything said inside the classroom, remains inside the classroom.

Using the 'Draw and write' technique for assessment purposes

Introduction

Draw and write is a simple but highly effective way to find out where the pupils are in their understanding of a topic or subject. It can be used at the start of a topic or series of lessons, to show the pupils' baseline knowledge and understanding, and then again at the end of the topic or series of lessons to show the pupils' new learning.

Draw and write could also be adapted as a baseline assessment for each individual pack, if the wording of the instruction is changed to refer to the topic of the packs (e.g. for the Resilience pack, 'Draw a child of around their age who is resilient. Around the outside, write anything they do, say or think that shows they are resilient').

Instructions

Ideally this will be done before starting the sessions, as this will allow the teacher to assess the starting point of the pupils' knowledge. It should take no more than 15 minutes, and it is important that the topic is not discussed with pupils beforehand.

Give each pupil a copy of the **Draw and write activity sheet** and a pen or pencil. Ask them to write their names but nothing else. Tell the pupils that you are going to ask them to do some drawing and then some writing on the sheet provided. Tell them that they should work on their own and quietly; explain that the purpose of the activity is to find out all their own ideas, so you do not want them conferring while they are working. They can share their ideas after they have finished drawing and writing. Tell the pupils that there are no right or wrong answers, and not to worry about their spelling. The adults in the room will help them with their writing if they need it.

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Once the pupils are settled:

- Ask the pupils to draw a quick picture of a child the same age as them to who feels happy with their life and good about themselves
- *Remember*, do not prompt them in any way.
- Now ask the pupils to write around their picture anything that makes that child feel happy with their life and good about themselves. Encourage them to write as many ideas as they can think of. Tell them to put up their hand if they need help with their writing and an adult will come and write for them (the adults should only write exactly what the pupil actually says).
- Remind them that there are no right or wrong answers, and not to worry about spelling.
- Make sure that everyone has put their name and done some writing, before collecting up the papers.

Revisiting the baseline assessment at the end of the series of sessions, or after completing a pack

Return the original Draw and write assessment sheets to the pupils. Using a different-coloured pen or pencil to record their thinking, ask the pupils to add anything they want to add or amend their original drawing or writing however they wish in the light of their new learning.