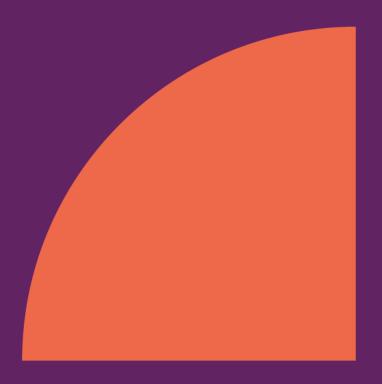


KS1-5

Drug education







Teacher guidance

This guidance accompanies the PSHE Association suite of drug education lessons for key stages 1-5 developed for the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID). Please read this guidance carefully before teaching any of the lessons. Introduction

Why teaching about drugs is important

The Department for Education (DfE)'s statutory guidance for Health Education at the primary phase requires that pupils be taught the facts and risks associated with drug, alcohol and tobacco use. At secondary this extends to the facts, laws, risks and consequences associated with drug, alcohol and tobacco use and the dangers of drugs that are prescribed, but still present serious health risks. It also considers the benefits of smoking cessation and how to access support in relation to this 1.

Alongside the statutory requirements, teaching about how to manage social influence, pressure and risk is vital in promoting pupils' ability to navigate the situations in which they may encounter substances. It also contributes to safeguarding, by providing pupils with the knowledge, understanding, attributes, skills and strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe. This 2024 update to the resource also includes additional content on vaping and synthetic drugs, which are not included within the current DfE statutory Health education guidance.

Drug education should be integrated within a planned PSHE education curriculum, where it will enhance – and be enhanced by – teaching in other topic areas. For example, lessons on mental health and emotional wellbeing will include teaching healthy coping mechanisms and the importance of seeking support and help, which will feed into lessons on alcohol, nicotine and other drugs and vice versa.

All children and young people have a right to effective drug education that not only teaches them the facts about substances and their effects, but also equips them with the skills, strategies and attributes to manage their lives in a substance-using society. For some children and young people, this might mean the additional challenge of balancing religious or cultural beliefs or expectations that prohibit drug and alcohol use with different societal norms and influences. All PSHE education teaching should be inclusive and accessible for all, so it is important to be sensitive to this throughout these lessons, allowing space for discussion, and avoiding approaches or language that imply that all young people will use alcohol or other drugs at some point, or that fail to recognise the importance of religious or cultural beliefs and expectations for many young people in relation to substance use.

Preparing to teach

Drug education should not be delivered in isolation. The knowledge, understanding, skills, strategies and attributes needed to stay healthy and safe, and to manage situations involving substances should be developed throughout the PSHE education programme. These lessons focusing specifically on drug education should be integrated into wider learning within a spiral PSHE

KS1-5: Drug Education Teacher Guidance

¹ Department for Education, 2019. *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)* and Health Education: Statutory Guidance for Governing Bodies, Proprietors, Head Teachers, Principals, Senior Leadership Teams, Teachers.

education curriculum where prior learning is revisited, reinforced and extended in developmentally-appropriate contexts.

The lessons have been designed to address all the explicit drug education included in the PSHE Association Programme of Study and the DfE statutory guidance for Relationships Education/Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education. Teachers who teach lessons about alcohol and other drugs must feel confident in teaching these topics and should be supported in accessing training and support.

A note about Covid-19

As we navigate the ongoing impacts of COVID-19, including on pupil wellbeing and educational priorities, integrating drug education into the school's PSHE curriculum remains essential. However, PSHE leads and teachers should consider pupils' understanding and experiences of, and misconceptions about, topics such as infections, their spread, and vaccinations, ensuring these are addressed sensitively in lessons. In particular be aware that:

- in many areas, there continues to be limited access to mental health care this has resulted in more young people self-medicating. For example, more are buying 'street benzos', which claim to be prescription drugs, and there has been a rise in the use of adulterated products, such as vapes mixed with THC or synthetic substances.
- widespread discussions about vaccines have increased awareness amongst young people, but also made them more susceptible to misinformation. It is therefore important to address the facts relating to vaccinations at KS1-2, to ensure pupils develop a well-informed understanding early on.
- pupils' prior learning may vary within a class and between cohorts, due to the disruption of school closures and the nature of home learning. It is therefore essential that baseline assessments are used to identify their current understanding, knowledge, beliefs and attitudes, so that lessons can be adapted accordingly.

Adapting your teaching

These lessons include support and challenge recommendations so you can adapt your teaching to respond to pupil needs, and ensure all pupils can access the learning and make progress. These suggestions support you to adapt your teaching appropriately, however, you know your pupils best and may find that the activities need further tailoring.

Extension activity ideas are provided at the end of each lesson, to support you to extend and deepen the learning further – for the whole class, if time allows, for individuals who require further challenge, or to be used as home learning if appropriate.

Creating a safe learning environment

A safe learning environment helps pupils feel comfortable with sharing their ideas — without attracting negative feedback — and avoids possible distress and disclosures in a public setting. It also helps teachers to manage discussions on sensitive issues confidently.

It is good practice to:

- work with pupils to establish ground rules about how they will behave in PSHE education lessons, such as:
 - Everyone has the right to be heard and respected.
 - We will use language that won't offend or upset other people.
 - 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 anyone else's, personal experiences.
 - We won't put anyone on the spot, and we have a right to pass.
 - We won't judge or make assumptions about anyone.
- make a box or envelope available in which pupils can place questions, anonymously or with their name on, to avoid having to voice them in front of the class
- provide balanced information and differing views to help pupils clarify their own opinions
- be sensitive to the needs and experiences of individuals young people will have a range of experience and understanding of legal and illegal drugs and alcohol
- distance the learning from pupils to keep the learning environment safe and to discourage personal disclosures in the classroom
- make pupils aware of sources of support, both inside and outside the school
- link PSHE education into the whole school approach to supporting pupil wellbeing
- always work within the school's policies on confidentiality, safeguarding and child protection be aware of the procedures you should follow if a pupil confides in you or gives you cause for concern. Do not promise confidentiality if information is disclosed which suggests a pupil is at risk.

Some activities require careful management of pupil feedback to ensure a safe classroom environment. For example, lessons may contain reference to drug and alcohol use in the context of sexual consent or personal safety. It is important to be vigilant to any potential victim blaming expressed by pupils during feedback. 'Victim blaming' happens when a target of crime is held partially or fully responsible for it. This might be expressed explicitly, by stating it was the person's fault; or implicitly, for example, questioning what they could or should have done differently. It can have a significant impact on young people who may have similar experiences and can prevent those affected from seeking support.

If pupils use victim-blaming language, this should be challenged in a constructive and supportive way; encouraging pupils to consider the impact this language can have on others and empathising with the character.

Further guidance on creating a safe learning environment is available from the <u>PSHE Association</u>.

Safeguarding

Pupils will have a range of experience and understanding of legal and illegal drugs, and some may have families that have been affected by substance use. Always prepare for and teach all lessons on the basis that there will be at least one member of the class who is personally affected by the lesson content. Making the lesson safe for that pupil will help to ensure the learning is safe for everyone.

Safeguards to put in place include:

- Alerting relevant pastoral and safeguarding staff about the topic you will be covering and
 encouraging them to discuss the lesson content with any pupils who are accessing support for
 related issues. It can be helpful to inform parents too, in case pupils come home with questions or
 wish to discuss these
 issues further.
- Giving the pupil(s) a chance to withdraw from the lesson if appropriate (without being asked to justify their absence to their peers). Consider how to follow up the missed lesson with the pupil(s), as this learning may be especially relevant to them.
- Signposting sources of support before, during and after the lesson.

Signposting support

Support for teachers

Although it is important that pupils make personal disclosures in an appropriate, safe setting and not during the course of the lesson, appropriate support must be signposted in the lesson. This means:

- being familiar with (and sharing appropriate parts of) the school's safeguarding, or other relevant
 policies such as the school drug and alcohol policy. Before doing this, ensure that the policy has
 been updated recently see the accompanying evidence briefing for further guidance on policies
 as part of a whole-school approach to alcohol, vaping and other drug use.
- reassuring pupils that they will always be taken seriously, listened to and never judged, if they make a disclosure
- making sure pupils know how to access support and especially with younger pupils what they might say to someone to get the help they need.

Support for pupils

Ensure pupils know where they can seek help and further advice, now and in the future, if they have questions or concerns related to substance use. Remind pupils that they can ask for help and advice from trusted adults at home, outside the home, in school or from appropriate organisations. Share the following website details with pupils:

- www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/you-your-body/drugs-alcohol-smoking/drugs
- www.nhs.uk/better-health/drink-less
- www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking
- www.nacoa.org.uk
- <u>www.talktofrank.com</u>
- www.turning-point.co.uk
- www.wearewithyou.org.uk
- www.al-anonuk.org.uk/alateen

Developing subject knowledge

Identifying and addressing common misconceptions about substances

Pupils will have a range of beliefs about substance use; some of which may be inaccurate. A range of activities is embedded within the lessons to tackle misconceptions; however, some may arise in your lesson and need to be addressed or discussed further. These misconceptions may present in discussion in the classroom or may be highlighted in the baseline activities that pupils complete at the start of each lesson. For this reason, it is essential that pupils have adequate time to complete these baseline assessments and that they are not given any examples or prompts when completing them, so that they can demonstrate what they already know and believe without teacher or peer influence on what should be included. Below are some commonly held misconceptions that you may encounter.

If someone takes any substance once it will kill them

Pupils, especially in younger years, are particularly susceptible to polarised thinking. For example, believing that a single cigarette will inevitably cause lung cancer. If this type of belief is not addressed it may lead to children and young people not appreciating the value of cessation (quitting), as they believe the damage is already done. They may also feel scared about family members who smoke or drink. Ensuring that pupils learn that some effects of substances develop over time and that there is a benefit to cessation can help to provide a more useful understanding of commonly used substances.

All drugs are really addictive

Pupils may not differentiate between how addictive or hazardous different substances may be. If this misconception is reinforced or left unchallenged, children and young people may reject the messages they are given in lessons, especially if they see evidence to the contrary via their friends, family or their own experience. Pupils may benefit from understanding that different substances interact with the body in different ways and can be more or less addictive, this includes legal drugs such as alcohol and nicotine. Further to this, pupils should be made aware that even if a substance is not addictive, there are risks in its use; and even though one person might not become addicted to a substance, another person might.

Everyone is drinking alcohol/smoking/vaping/using drugs, or will do so at some point

Based upon media reports and varied experiences within their families, pupils may feel that when it comes to drinking alcohol and using drugs that 'everyone is doing it.' The 2021 Key Data on Young People from the Association for Young People's Health2 and NHS Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use surveys3 show that this is not the case and that most young people are making healthier decisions. Young people's perception of their peers' behaviour is often a very powerful influence on their own behaviour, so sharing these positive social norms with pupils can help them to make healthier choices by reassuring them that they are in the majority if they choose not to use substances. Several opportunities to share positive social norms are embedded within the lesson activities. It is, however, important to be aware that pupils may have differing experiences with substance use in peer groups or in the home and that there might be some peer or friendship groups, where substance use is

² Association for Young People's Health, 2021. *Key Data on Young People 2021*.

³ National Health Service, 2021. *Smoking, Drinking and Drug use among young people in England.*

normalised, and a number of members use substances. Therefore, it is important to handle discussions carefully, ensuring that activities about norms do not exclude or shame higher risk pupils, as this may reduce their likelihood of engaging with the lessons or seeking support.

Only certain groups or 'types' of people use alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

Pupils may stereotype people who use drugs, as a result of their prior experience, what they have been told by family or friends, or the influence of the media. Pupils should understand that a wide range of people use drugs, and that their use is not limited to particular age groups, cultures, or socio-economic groups. This is to avoid making assumptions about other people and to avoid a false sense of security about who is at more or less risk.

People who are addicted to drugs are 'bad' people

As with stereotypes regarding the groups of people who may use drugs, pupils may have developed polarised attitudes towards people who use illegal drugs or alcohol. Such attitudes may include a misconception that people who use such substances are inherently 'bad.' Some pupils may have encountered drug or alcohol use within their own families and may consequently feel upset or hurt by peers expressing such views.

Vaping is completely safe because it doesn't contain tobacco

While vaping may be less harmful than smoking cigarettes, it is not without risks. Vapes (e-cigarettes) contain nicotine, which is addictive, and can expose users to other harmful substances besides tobacco. Teaching should emphasise that vaping is not risk-free and that children should not vape.

Vaping is just as dangerous as smoking cigarettes, or more so

Vaping is generally less harmful than smoking cigarettes and can be an effective cessation tool for adults. However, it still poses health risks, especially for youth and non-smokers, as it contains nicotine and other potentially harmful substances.

All prescription drugs are safe because they are prescribed by a doctor

Prescription drugs are safe when used as directed by a doctor and obtained from legitimate sources. Medications prescribed by healthcare professionals and from licensed pharmacies are what they claim to be, unlike counterfeit drugs, which can be harmful. Using another person's prescription or drugs not sourced from reputable pharmacies can have serious health risks.

All drugs are exactly what they claim to be

Not all drugs are guaranteed to be what their labels claim, or what a dealer might suggest they are. Adulteration and counterfeiting of drugs pose significant risks, particularly with illegal drugs and with medications not prescribed or sourced from reputable pharmacies.

Using 'visitors' in the classroom to support teaching about substances

Visitors to the classroom can bring expertise that a teacher may not have, that can enhance lessons about drugs. Visits from professionals such as police officers can also build trust and help to establish a first contact, should pupils need to approach officers for support. Additionally, the novelty of a visitor can add to the memorability of a session. As the teacher, you should ensure that

you are present at all times, take responsibility for classroom management and that the external visitor is only asked to deliver parts of lessons in which they have expertise.

PSHE education best practice principles still apply to external visitors, so causing shock, fear or shame must still be avoided. Always meet with external visitors and work to ensure that their input will not provide instruction, or inspiration to engage, in the risky behaviours they are aiming to prevent. For example, the visitor should avoid giving too many details (such as how to access or use a substance), or unintentionally glamorising experiences.

Ensuring that pupils are aware of the visitor attending the school before the lesson will enable them to generate questions in anticipation of the visit. And always embed the learning after the visit, for example through a follow-up lesson.

Further guidance on working with external visitors is available from the PSHE Association.

Additional guidance for teachers and police officers on ensuring <u>police input</u> in PSHE lessons is safe and effective is also available from the PSHE Association.

Some pupils may raise concerns regarding police stop and search procedures either whilst discussing the law in class or if a police officer visits the school. It may help to use <u>government guidance</u> to explain people's rights while being searched. Additional advice on how to manage a stop and search can be found at: <u>release.org.uk/law/stop-and-search</u>

Appendix 1: Links to the Programme of Study and DfE's statutory guidance on Relationships, Sex and Health education

The tables on subsequent pages map the lesson plans against the relevant learning opportunities from the PSHE Association Programme of Study's core themes at each key stage, which are met by these lessons. They also identify where content from the DfE statutory guidance for Relationships Education/ RSE and Health Education is addressed through the lessons.

Learning objective	Programme of Study	DfE statutory guidance	
Year 1-2	Healthy lifestyles	Physical health and fitness	
Lesson 1: Keeping safe To learn about things that go into bodies and onto skin and how they can make people feel.	H1. About what keeping healthy means; different ways to keep healthy H6: that medicines (including vaccinations and immunisations and those that support allergic reactions) can help people to stay healthy	how and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health	
Lesson 2: Keeping healthy	H10. About the people who help us to		
To learn about medicines, and the people who help someone to stay healthy. Lesson 3: Medicines and household products To learn about keeping safe around medicines and other household products.	Keeping safe H29. to recognise risk in simple everyday situations and what action to take to minimise harm H31. That household products (including medicines) can be harmful if not used correctly H33. About the people whose job it is to help keep us safe Drugs, alcohol and tobacco H37. About things that people can put into their body or on their skin; how these can affect how people feel	About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing Drugs, alcohol and tobacco the facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-	
Year 3-4	Healthy lifestyles (physical wellbeing)	taking taking	
Lesson 1: Medicines and household products	H1. how to make informed decisions about health		
To learn about the safe use of medicines and household products.	H3. about choices that support a healthy lifestyle, and recognise what might influence these		
Lesson 2: Smoking, vaping and alcohol To learn that caffeine, cigarettes, vaping (e-cigarettes) and alcohol can affect people's health.	H4. how to recognise that habits can have both positive and negative effects on a healthy lifestyle		

Year 5-6

Lesson 1: Medicines

To learn how the correct use of medicines, and vaccinations, can help to maintain health and wellbeing.

Lesson 2: Legal and illegal drugs

To learn about some of the risks and effects of legal and illegal drug use.

Lesson 3: Influences and pressure

To learn about the reasons why people use drugs, and how to manage peer influence.

Lesson 4: Tobacco, vaping and alcohol in the media

To learn how mixed messages about drug use in the media can influence opinions and decisions.

Keeping safe

H10. how medicines, when used responsibly, contribute to health; that some diseases can be prevented by vaccinations and immunisations; how allergies can be managed

H40. about the importance of taking medicines correctly and using household products safely (e.g. following instructions carefully)

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

H46. about the risks and effects of legal drugs common to everyday life (e.g. cigarettes, e-cigarettes/vaping, alcohol and medicines) and their impact on health; recognise that drug use can become a habit which can be difficult to break

H47. to recognise that there are laws surrounding the use of legal drugs and that some drugs are illegal to own, use and give to others

H48. about why people choose to use or not use drugs (including nicotine, alcohol and medicines)

H49. about the mixed messages in the media about drugs, including alcohol and smoking/vaping

H50. about the organisations that can support people concerning alcohol, tobacco and nicotine or other drug use; people they can talk to if they have concerns

Safe relationships

R28. how to recognise pressure from others to do something unsafe or that makes them feel uncomfortable and strategies for managing this

Shared responsibilities

L1. to recognise reasons for rules and laws; consequences of not adhering to rules and laws

Learning objective	Programme of Study	DfE statutory guidance
Year 7-8	Self-concept	Drugs, alcohol and
Lesson 1: Understanding drugs To learn about substance use and the risks and effects of caffeine consumption.	H5. to recognise and manage internal and external influences on decisions which affect health and wellbeing Drugs, alcohol and tobacco H23. the positive and negative uses of drugs in society including the safe use	 the facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use, and the associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions. the law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances. the physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk
Lesson 2: Tobacco and nicotine To learn about and manage influences relating to tobacco and nicotine product use.	of prescribed and over the counter medicines; responsible use of antibiotics H24. to evaluate myths, misconceptions, social norms and cultural values relating to drug, alcohol	
Lesson 3: Alcohol and risk To learn about the risks and	and tobacco use H25. strategies to manage a range of	
consequences of alcohol use.	influences on drug, alcohol and tobacco use, including peers	
Year 9	H26. information about alcohol,	alcohol consumption in adulthood.
Lesson 1: Vaping To learn about different influences and consequences that might affect decisions relating to vaping.	nicotine and other legal and illegal substances, including the short and long term health risks associated with their use H27. the personal and social risks and consequences of substance use and	consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency. • awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still
Lesson 2: Exploring attitudes To learn about drugs and young people's attitudes and	misuse including occasional use H28. the law relating to the supply, use and misuse of legal and illegal substances	
behaviours regarding drug use.	H29. about the concepts of dependence and addiction including awareness of help to overcome	harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the
Lesson 3: The law and managing risk	addictions	benefits of quitting and how to access support to
To learn about the potential legal consequences of using illegal drugs.	Managing risk and personal safety H30. how to manage risks to personal safety in increasingly independent situations, including online	do so.

Lesson 4: Alcohol and cannabis

To learn about the short and long-term effects of alcohol and cannabis use on individuals.

Lesson 5: Managing influence

To learn how to manage peer and other influence in relation to substance use.

H31. ways of assessing and reducing risk in relation to health, wellbeing and personal safety

Forming and maintaining respectful relationships:

R16. to further develop the skills of active listening, clear communication, negotiation and compromise

R20. to manage the influence of drugs and alcohol on decision-making within relationships and social situations

Social influences:

R42. to recognise peer influence and to develop strategies for managing it, including online

R43. the role peers can play in supporting one another to resist pressure and influence, and access appropriate support

R44. that the need for peer approval can generate feelings of pressure and lead to increased risk taking; strategies to manage this

Year 10-11

Lesson 1: Assessing risk

To learn about the impact of substance use on risk-taking and personal safety.

Lesson 2: Managing influence

To learn how to manage influences in relation to alcohol and other drug use.

Lesson 3: Help seeking

To learn about the potential consequences of drug production, sale and use, and support available for individuals with problematic substance use, including addiction and dependency.

Self-concept

H4. strategies to develop assertiveness and build resilience to peer and other influences that affect both how they think about themselves and their health and wellbeing

Health-related decisions

H14. about the health services available to people; strategies to become a confident user of the NHS and other health services; to overcome potential concerns or barriers to seeking help

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

H19. the consequences of substance use and misuse for the mental and physical health and wellbeing of individuals and their families, and the wider consequences for communities

H20. wider risks of illegal substance use for individuals, including for personal safety, career, relationships and future lifestyle

H21. to identify, manage and seek help for unhealthy behaviours, habits and addictions including smoking cessation

Managing risk and personal safety

H22. ways to manage risk and personal safety in new social settings, workplaces, and environments, including online

H23. strategies for identifying risky and emergency situations, managing these and getting appropriate help, including where there may be legal consequences (e.g. drugs and alcohol, violent crime and gangs)

Social influences

R35. to evaluate ways in which their behaviours may influence their peers, positively and negatively, including online, and in situations involving weapons or gangs

Key stage 5

Lesson 1: Understanding risks and consequences

To learn about the risks and consequences of drug use.

Managing risk and personal safety

H15. to manage personal safety in relation to travel, such as cycle safety, young driver safety, passenger safety, using licensed taxis and getting home safely

Lesson 2: Medicines and substances

To learn about different substances, including medicines, and how to seek reliable information about these.

Lesson 3: Managing influences and seeking support

To learn how different influences can affect decision making related to alcohol and other drugs.

Lesson 4: Keeping safe

To learn how alcohol and other drugs can affect personal safety.

Lesson 5: Travelling and making decisions

To learn how to make safe decisions related to alcohol and other drugs in contexts where young people are independent, including abroad.

H16. to travel safely around the UK and abroad; understand legal rights and responsibilities when travelling abroad, including passport, visa and insurance requirements

H17. to perform first aid and evaluate when to summon emergency services, irrespective of any potential legal implications, for example, when the situation involves alcohol, drugs, gangs or violent crime

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco:

H21. To manage alcohol and drug use in relation to immediate and long-term health

H22. to understand how alcohol and drug use can affect decision making and personal safety, including looking out for friends, safe travel and drinkspiking

H23. the impact of alcohol and drug use on road safety, work-place safety, reputation and career

H24. the risks of being a passenger with an intoxicated driver and ways to manage this