

Sensitive Issues in PSHE: Questions Students May Ask



Instructions:

Share these questions at your next staff meeting and ask staff to work in pairs to develop thoughtful responses. You don't need to cover all the questions at once—select those most relevant to your school context or plan to address them over a series of meetings or training sessions.

The aim is to equip staff—particularly those who are not PSHE specialists (which, let's be honest, is most of us)—with the confidence to respond effectively to students' questions on sensitive topics.

By practising together, staff will feel better prepared to handle these conversations with care and professionalism.

Please note that the above questions have been designed for KS3 and 4 PSHE UK Curriculum.

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

- What should I do if I feel constantly anxious or stressed?
- How can I help a friend who seems depressed?
- Why do people self-harm, and how can they stop?
- Who can I talk to if I'm struggling with my mental health?

Relationships and Sexual Health

- How do I know if I'm in a healthy relationship?
- What does consent mean, and how do I make sure I give or get it?
- Why is it important to respect other people's gender identities?
- How do I talk to someone about contraception?

Bullying and Discrimination

- What should I do if I see someone being bullied?

- How do I stand up to someone who is being racist or homophobic?
- Why do people bully others, and how can we stop it?
- What can I do if I feel discriminated against?

Substance Abuse and Addiction

- Why do people start using drugs or alcohol?
- How can I say no to drugs or alcohol without feeling embarrassed?
- Is vaping really as dangerous as smoking?
- What should I do if I think someone I know has an addiction?

Online Safety

- How do I know if someone online is being truthful?
- What should I do if I send a photo that I regret?
- How do I protect myself from online bullying?
- What are the dangers of sharing too much personal information online?

Body Image and Self-Esteem

- Why do people compare themselves to others on social media?
- How can I feel confident about my body?
- What are eating disorders, and why do people have them?
- How do I deal with pressure to look a certain way?

Safety and Violence

- What should I do if I feel unsafe in my community?
- How can I avoid being involved in gangs?
- What is radicalisation, and how can we stop it?
- Who can I talk to if I think someone is experiencing domestic violence?

Financial Literacy

- How do I avoid getting into debt when I'm older?
- What should I know about credit cards and loans?
- Why is gambling so addictive?
- How do I manage money wisely?

Bereavement and Loss

- How do I cope with losing someone I love?
- How can I support a friend who is grieving?
- Why do people react differently to grief?
- Is it normal to feel angry after a loss?

Diversity and Inclusion

- How can we celebrate differences in our school?
- Why do some people have unconscious biases?
- What can I do if I hear someone say something offensive?
- How do we make sure everyone feels included?

Current and Global Issues

- How can I make a difference with climate change?
- Why are some people forced to leave their countries?
- How do wars affect people my age?
- What is terrorism, and why does it happen?

Physical Health

- How do I support someone with a chronic illness?
- What should I know about living with disabilities?
- How can I stay physically healthy without feeling overwhelmed?
- What does it mean to be "healthy"?

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