

Considerations for visitors when working with schools

Visitors' expertise and creative resources can add interest and a fresh voice on this important health education topic. Support services visiting schools is also an ideal way of introducing young people to the support available, and encouraging help-seeking behaviours.

However, in order to ensure you make a difference to pupils' learning, it is important to be aware of safe and effective practice guidance (see the PSHE Association's [How to address gambling through PSHE education teacher handbook](#) for further details).

In summary, in order to deliver safe and effective gambling-harm prevention education, it is important to follow these ten principles:

- 1. Avoid one-offs:** sustained prevention work is more effective than brief interventions so your contributions should be part of an embedded, progressive approach to addressing gambling as part of a wider PSHE education programme.
- 2. Build protective factors as well as teaching about risk factors:** lessons should help pupils develop skills, strategies, attributes and attitudes as well as knowledge.
- 3. Promote positive social norms:** learning should aim to reduce the perception that gambling is something that 'everyone does' and is a key part of enjoying sport entertainment yet should avoid stigmatising gambling.
- 4. Create a safe learning environment:** ensure ground rules are negotiated with pupils, activities are distanced,

questions are handled safely and suitable support is signposted. Discuss agreed strategies with the class teacher before beginning your input.

- 5. Start where young people are:** lessons should be adapted to meet the needs of different school contexts and year groups, in line with pupils' maturity and learning needs, so find out what pupils have already learnt about gambling before designing your session.
- 6. Don't set out to shock, shame or scare:** shock tactics don't work – and can do more harm than good – never try to make pupils feel afraid or ashamed about their own or others' behaviour.
- 7. Don't provide a 'how to' manual or inspire risky behaviour:** use personal stories and resources with caution - input should never glamorise risky activities or give pupils details about how to engage in or hide such behaviours.
- 8. Assess and evaluate learning:** it's important to know if work has been effective – work with teachers to establish suitable assessment and evaluation strategies.
- 9. Base learning on evidence of what works:** it's important that learning intentions reflect evidence of what works and of safe practice.
- 10. Embed within wider approaches:** think about ways to link your session with wider prevention work in the school to maximise impact.

You must also work within the bounds of school policies so it's important to ask your link teacher about this and to discuss disclosure protocols.

Whilst it is not always possible to plan for every eventuality, good planning and preparation can ensure pupils learn safely and effectively.



PLANNING CHECKLIST

- Are you clear how your contribution fits with the aims and objectives of the curriculum?
- Have you discussed with the school how your knowledge and expertise is appropriate to meet the school's objectives?
- Is the school clear about your values, aims and objectives and your reasons for working with schools?
- Do you need to follow the checking procedures by the DBS?
- Have you planned adequate time for discussing details of the visit, including any preparatory or reflective work to be done by the pupils?
- Have you checked with the schools about the needs of the pupils, such as in relation to ethnicity, ability, and age?
- Do you know about the relevant school policies, such as behaviour, sensitive and controversial issues and child protection and health and safety?
- Have you discussed with the school any professional boundaries, codes of conduct or guidelines that you need to work within?
- Do you know which teacher will remain with you throughout the activity?
- Are the school clear that your role is a supportive one, not a substitute or replacement for the teacher?
- Will you co-operate with the school to ensure that you work towards agreed planned learning outcomes?
- Will you carry out appropriate monitoring and evaluation of the learning activities?
- Are you clear of the role in any follow up work agreed with the school, for example in respect of feed-back, monitoring, evaluation, and celebration of pupil's achievements?

More detailed guidance can be found within the PSHE Association's [How to address gambling through PSHE education teacher handbook](#). Visit: www.pshe-association.org.uk/gambling for further updates and resources.



Considerations when working with gambling education visitors

Visitors with expertise and creative resources can add interest and a fresh voice on this important health education topic. It is also an ideal way of introducing young people to support services, and encouraging help-seeking behaviours.

However, schools must be selective about the visitors invited into the classroom. Teachers should be discerning around how they are used and confident that any content is safe and appropriate.

Visitors must be aware of safe practice guidance (see the PSHE Association's [How to address gambling through PSHE education teacher handbook](#) for further details). Sessions which are instructional, which inspire interest in unhealthy or unsafe behaviours, and those using shock tactics or focusing only on worst-case scenarios have risks and are at best insufficient.

It might for example seem an obvious choice to invite someone with lived gambling experience to speak. However, we need to consider whether elements of their personal story may contradict our aims to deliver safe, effective gambling education. For example, stories of gambling may be exciting for young people. There is also a risk we can instruct them in how to hide harmful gambling behaviours if a person explains how they hid their gambling addiction from others.

It is also vital that visitors focus on agreed aims, objectives and outcomes to design a session plan which is agreed in advance. This ensures that learning is effectively focused and complements other aspects in the PSHE education curriculum.

Visitor sessions should be interactive, as any other lesson would aim to be. Lengthy presentations are unlikely to be as effective as an interactive session where students are encouraged to prepare questions, take part in reflection activities and share ideas with the 'expert' who challenges or extends their thinking.

Visitors must also work within the bounds of school policies and be aware of disclosure protocols.



Visitor checklist

In order to select visitors appropriately, consider the following set of questions:

- Who is, or are, the people you are inviting into your session? What organisations are they affiliated with?
- Is their (or their organisation's) agenda transparent and appropriate? Are they trying to sell or market particular products or services directly to young people?
- What skills, expectations, experiences or knowledge do they bring? In particular, are they better able to deliver an effective session than existing teaching staff?
- Does this visit fit into and build on current schemes of work?

- Is the input relevant? Or can it be made relevant in negotiation with visitors?
- Does it build on, extend or enrich previous work?
- Does it offer a stimulus for future work, and if so do my team or I have the skills and knowledge to capitalise on it?
- Might any young person be upset by this input? If so, are there ways to manage such eventualities to minimise the potential for harm?

Whilst planning the session, you may also wish to consider:

- Is the session planned in a way that will allow all pupils to meet the learning outcomes?
- Is there interactivity and differentiation in the session which supports young people to learn effectively?
- Does this visitor need additional support in understanding best practice in a PSHE education classroom?

Whilst it is not always possible to plan for every eventuality, good visitor research and preparation can ensure pupils learn safely and effectively.

More detailed guidance can be found within the PSHE Association's [How to address gambling through PSHE education teacher handbook](#).

Please visit:

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for further updates and resources.



Those who gamble at an early age are at a higher risk of problem gambling later in life. And in a digital world, gambling is more accessible than ever, while efforts to encourage young people to gamble are becoming increasingly sophisticated.

The 2019 Young People and Gambling Report published by the Gambling Commission found that 11% of 11 to 16 year olds had spent their own money on gambling in the week prior to completion of the survey.

This was compared to:

- 16% who had drunk alcohol during the week
- 5% who had smoked cigarettes
- 3% who had used drugs

Yet preventative education has tended to prioritise the potential harms of other issues, such as those relating to drugs or alcohol.

More than two million people in the UK either have a gambling disorder or are at risk of addiction. There has been a significant increase in hospitalisation for gambling disorder and calls to the National Gambling Helpline have increased by 30% from 2014 to 2018.

Additionally, the research has raised concerns regarding young people's engagement with gambling-style games, e-sports and in-app purchases which often have a chance-based component. Researchers have theorised that 'gambling-like' activities such as in-game loot box purchases may:

- increase children's exposure to advertising for gambling products
- foster their confidence in their ability to win
- give them an illusion of control that might motivate their involvement in gambling
- further normalise gambling as a fun activity which is free of risk
- be particularly influential on younger versus older adolescents and children with additional vulnerabilities

Such concerns are supported by recent studies which have found an association between loot box opening and problem gambling.

These statistics and research findings highlight the prevalence of gambling and gambling harms in society and the need to support young people to negotiate a host of present and future risks.

More detailed guidance and research references can be found within the PSHE Association's [How to address gambling through PSHE education teacher handbook](#).



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In order to deliver safe and effective gambling-harm prevention education, it is important to follow these ten principles:

1. **Avoid one-offs:** consistent PSHE education which includes gambling prevention work is more effective than brief interventions.
2. **Build protective factors as well as teaching about risk factors:** lessons should help pupils develop skills, strategies, attributes and attitudes to manage real life situations, as well as delivering knowledge.
3. **Promote positive social norms:** learning should aim to reduce the perception that gambling is something that 'everyone does' and is a key part of enjoying sport entertainment yet should avoid stigmatising gambling.
4. **Create a safe learning environment:** ensure ground rules are negotiated with pupils, activities are distanced, questions are handled safely and suitable support is signposted.

5. **Start where young people are:** lessons should be adapted to meet the needs of different school contexts and year groups, in line with pupils' maturity and learning needs.
6. **Don't set out to shock, shame or scare:** shock tactics don't work – and can do more harm than good – never try to make pupils feel afraid or ashamed about their own or others' behaviour.
7. **Don't provide a 'how to' manual or inspire risky behaviour:** use personal stories and resources with caution - input should never glamorise gambling or give pupils details about how to access, engage in or hide such behaviours.
8. **Assess and evaluate learning:** it's important to know if work has been effective – build in activities that demonstrate or assess what has been learned and inform future planning.
9. **Base learning on evidence of what works:** it's important that learning intentions reflect evidence of what works and of safe practice – effective training can help with this.
10. **Embed within wider approaches:** plan ways to link gambling work with wider PSHE provision to maximise impact.

The following approaches have been identified as showing promise in education around gambling on the basis of either gambling prevention research or wider research and theory:

- Increasing awareness of one's personal autonomy, intrinsic goals, and ethical values
- Increased self-efficacy to act in line with values and goals, resisting peer or other influences

- Emotion regulation skills, including coping adaptively with negative emotions and adaptive ways of sensation-seeking
- Promoting positive social norms - to combat instances where individuals believe their peers and/or others are more approving or more involved in gambling than in fact they are
- Understanding of probability, odds, house edge, randomness, superstition and other 'thinking errors' such as a sense of deservedness
- Understanding of gambling industry strategies to draw people in and keep them gambling, including those that exploit natural human biases and errors
- Understanding of gambling risks and harms

Most of these can be applied to various potential harms and risks taught in PSHE education, not just gambling, and therefore can be partly developed through teaching about other issues such as drugs and alcohol, along with gambling specific lessons. However, as with all PSHE education learning, it is important that young people make explicit links between the knowledge, skills and strategies they have learned in other aspects of PSHE with gambling, so that they can apply it to a gambling related situation should the need arise.

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