



PSHE TEACHING GUIDE – KEY STAGE 4: WORKING OUT RELATIONSHIPS? PART 1

Learning Objectives:

- To learn about healthy and unhealthy one-to-one intimate relationships and strategies to build healthy lasting relationships.
- To learn how to access support for unhealthy relationships

Learning Outcomes:

Pupils will be able to:

- Evaluate whether a relationship is healthy or unhealthy
- Identify strategies to build a healthy lasting relationship
- Explain how to access support in relation to unhealthy relationships

1. How the lesson fits within the new RSE curriculum

In September 2020, Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) becomes compulsory in secondary schools. The statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education states that by the end of secondary school pupils should know ‘how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.’¹ For Key Stage 4, the PSHE Association’s ‘Programme of Study for PSHE Education’ specifies that pupils should have the opportunity to learn ‘the characteristics and benefits of strong, positive relationships.’² ‘Working Out Relationships?’ is an evidence-based two-part programme to help pupils to learn the *characteristics* of positive, supportive, equal one-to-one intimate relationships and strategies for forming and maintaining such relationships.

¹ Department for Education, ‘Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers’, June 2019, p. 29 available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805781/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf

² PSHE Association, ‘Programme of Study for PSHE Education Key stages 1-5’ (2020), 4th edition, at p. 26 available at: <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/programme-study-pshe-education-key-stages-1%E2%80%935>

1. Building on Prior Learning

This two-part programme, aimed at Key Stage 4 pupils, draws on research from the University of Exeter on the key attributes of healthy, thriving, long-lasting one-to-one intimate relationships. The researchers carried out a longitudinal study of marriages over the first 10 years and cross-sectional study of relationships of at least 15 years duration (married/cohabiting and same sex/opposite sex) to gain insights into what helps long-term relationships to thrive. A summary of the research report (The Shackleton Relationships Project Summary Report) and an infographic and accompanying video (Working Out Relationships?) summarising the research messages can be found at: www.exeter.ac.uk/shackleton. It is not necessary to read the report to deliver this lesson. Laminated A4 and A3 copies of the infographic for classroom walls are available free of charge by contacting Dr Jan Ewing (J.Ewing@exeter.ac.uk). The infographic aims to encourage discussion among pupils upon which the lesson will build. It also provides a focal point for pupils to reflect upon and to be reminded of following the lesson.

This is the first of two lessons in the programme 'Working Out Relationships'. The pupils will analyse an unhealthy relationship scenario of fictitious 16-year olds to emphasise the key signs of an unhealthy relationship and provide advice on how to avoid such relationships and, where necessary, how to exit one safely. In lesson 2 the focus is on recognising healthy relationships and strategies to start and to build healthy, potentially lasting, relationships. The 'Working Out Relationships' programme can be used to revisit and reinforce other learning on one-to-one intimate relationships within your school's PSHE curriculum. Much of the available teaching resources focus on negative relationship behaviours such as coercive control or violence (physical and sexual). Reflecting the change of emphasis within the new PSHE curriculum, this programme builds from considering an unhealthy relationship to the 10 critical questions that the University of Exeter's researchers suggest each partner should ask themselves and each other before committing to a relationship intended to be long-lasting.

The aim of this lesson is to equip pupils with knowledge on the attributes of unhealthy and healthy one-to-one intimate relationships and skills and to be able to make healthy, informed and safe decisions about forming and maintaining such relationships, now and in the future.

Further PSHE Association's quality assured resources are available on the PSHE website (<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk>). These can be used to embed this lesson within a full RSE programme.

2. Creating a safe teaching and learning environment

The lesson uses buzz groups: the class will be divided into several sub-groups to discuss a fictitious 16-year old couple in an unhealthy relationship for a short, specified period, during which they will be asked to decide how this relationship measures against research on healthy relationships. Then they will come back together as a class to share their ideas. This distancing technique should help pupils to discuss their views without attracting personal feedback and help teachers to become more confident about delivering what can be a sensitive topic. Other distancing techniques, such as the use of inclusive language should be employed.

The relationship scenario discussed involves a controlling partner and a difficult homelife. Whilst no personal feedback is sought, the scenario may stir up some uncomfortable feelings for pupils who face similar issues in their own lives. Teachers must therefore make it clear to pupils at the outset that they should consult a named member of the pastoral staff team if anything discussed in the lesson has made them feel uncomfortable.

Limits of confidentiality - teachers should be prepared to deal with any concerns they have about a pupil resulting from the lessons. It is important that at the beginning of the lesson the teacher explains to the pupils the limits of confidentiality, in that if something is said or a behaviour causes concern, teachers will speak to another member of staff. Pupils should be informed that it may also be necessary to speak with parents/carers about a concern or a question raised by pupils. Should this become necessary, it is good practice to talk to the pupil(s) concerned before raising it with parents/ carers.

Teachers should liaise with pastoral staff in advance of the lesson to plan how to manage pupils who find any part of the teaching distressing. Staff should also be ready to signpost pupils to appropriate websites and organisations that can support their learning and further develop their understanding of issues covered within this PSHE lesson. Details of appropriate support websites and organisations are outlined at the end of the Teaching Guide.

Teachers should also familiarise themselves with the protocols laid out in the school's child protection policy and safeguarding policy. A teacher who has concerns about an individual's safety, must report their concerns to their Designated Safeguarding Lead and follow the school's child protection policy. In following the school's child protection policy, it may be necessary (working with the Designated Safeguarding Lead) to report concerns to social services or the police.

Teachers should ensure that pupils are able to ask anonymous questions or talk about any concerns that the sessions raise. An 'Ask-It-Basket', or similar, can support pupils in asking anonymous questions. An anonymous question box encourages all pupils to submit questions and allows time for the teacher to prepare their answers.

Teachers should establish ground rules for safe engagement at the outset. These should include:

- encouraging pupils not to disclose personal information
- keeping anything that others say confidential; "keep the conversation in the room"
- not judging others
- not putting anyone on the spot
- talk about 'someone I know...' rather than using a person's name
- comment on what is said, not who has said it.

3. Differentiation and extension tasks

The topics covered are relevant for all pupils. Plan how you can differentiate your teaching to include and support pupils who may be less able, have specific or additional learning needs, or who have English as an additional language. A teaching assistant may be helpful to support such pupils. At activity 1 and

activity 2, for less able pupils, there are support activities. (highlighted in purple) and for more able pupils there are extension activities (highlighted in green).

4. Format of the teaching notes

The teaching notes below provide a full guide to teaching. In the notes section of the PowerPoint slides, guidance on what the teacher should be doing at each step is summarised. At the beginning of each activity below, this summary guidance is reproduced for ease of teaching. Finally, a homework task is suggested at the end of the teaching guide.

5. Equipment

The teacher will require the PowerPoint slides for lesson 1 and some post-it notes for the baseline activity ('key word' task).

6. Timing

Introduction and 'key word' task	5 mins
Activity 1: (Paul and Sarah scenario)	10 mins
Activity 2: ('Working Out Relationships?' video)	10 mins
Activity 3: (Paul and Sarah scenario and the critical questions)	15 mins
Activity 4: (Paul and Sarah scenario; Group chat advice)	5 mins
Activity 5: (Paul and Sarah scenario; changes needed?)	5 mins
Activity 6: (Paul and Sarah scenario; leaving safely and wrap-up)	<u>5 mins</u>
	Total 55 mins

7. Introduction and 'key word' task (5 minutes)

- Run through the learning objectives (slide 1) and learning outcomes (slide 2)
- Ask the whole class to think of a key word they would associate with a healthy relationship (safe, respectful, equal, kind, supportive, fun) (slide 3)

The lesson is based on research from the University of Exeter on the key attributes of healthy, thriving, long-lasting one-to-one intimate relationships. Many pupils will not be looking to form a serious relationship at this stage in their lives. The central aim is to ensure that any one-to-one intimate relationship that they form is 'healthy' i.e. safe, free from controlling behaviour and mutually respectful. Getting pupils to think more widely at the key attributes of healthy, thriving long-lasting relationships will give them insights into the building blocks of such relationships for the future.

This lesson plan is to be used in conjunction with the 'Working Out Relationships' teaching slides. All the information required for the lesson is contained in the slides, so no printing of handouts is needed.

Try to have pupils sitting in mixed gender groups so that they get to consider matters from the opposite gender's point of view. As some activities involve group work, teachers should carefully consider their groupings.

SLIDE 1❖ **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

The learning objective for this lesson is for pupils to learn about healthy and unhealthy one-to-one intimate relationships and strategies to build healthy lasting relationships. To begin, run through the learning objectives as detailed on slide 1.

SLIDE 2❖ **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Next, run through the learning outcomes as detailed on slide 2. By the end of the lesson pupils will be able to:

- Evaluate whether a relationship is healthy or unhealthy
- Identify strategies to build a healthy lasting relationship
- Explain how to access support in relation to unhealthy relationships

❖ **'KEY WORD' TASK**

HAND OUT post-it notes and ask pupils to write down one word they associate with healthy relationships and stick it on the board. Group these into categories.

SLIDE 3

Pupils should be able to express an opinion on healthy relationships. This baseline test gets pupils to think about what first comes to mind when they think about healthy relationships. To enable the teacher to gauge understanding of the starting point of the whole class and to ensure all pupils actively participate in the activity, ask pupils to each add a key word to a post it note (without speaking to one another or sharing their ideas) that they would associate with a healthy relationship. Then ask them to place these on the board. The teacher can then group the post-its into categories and gain an overall picture of what the class thinks about healthy relationships. The emphasis here is on healthy so keywords like: safe, respectful, equal, kind, supportive should be suggested. Aspects of healthy relationships that go beyond this, so fun and an emphasis on friendship, might also be volunteered.

8. **Activity 1 – Paul and Sarah scenario (10 mins)**

Give pupils five minutes on their tables to read the Sarah and Paul scenario, noting down three things that make the relationship sound unhealthy then five minutes to feedback and to suggest why Sarah does not recognise that the relationship is unhealthy. Note that there is a support activity and an extension activity below, as appropriate.

SLIDE 4

The key word task got pupils to think about healthy relationships. In activity 1 they will consider whether a relationship is unhealthy. This activity introduces Paul and Sarah (fictitious 16-year olds in a relationship). Ask the pupils to read the scenario and to answer the following:

Does this relationship sound healthy? Why?
Write down and feedback three things that make the relationship sound unhealthy.

Pupils should readily identify this relationship as unhealthy. Pupils should be mentioning things like:

- Paul's negative attitude towards Sarah's friends
- Paul's attitude towards Sarah having a platonic friendship with another boy
- Paul trying to control what Sarah wears
- Paul's attempts to isolate Sarah and convince her that she does not need anyone else

Activity 1 support task: For less able pupils, teachers could write on the whiteboard a word bank of healthy/unhealthy features of a relationship, from which pupils select 3 that they feel best describe the relationship between Paul and Sarah. Such phrases could include:

- (Healthy) Supportive/ caring/ trusting/ kind/ accepting
- (Unhealthy) Controlling/ isolating/ manipulative/ inconsistent/ jealous

Alternatively, teachers could choose three 'higher ability' pupils to give their answers here, write them on the board and thus create a word bank of characteristics of unhealthy relationships to which lower ability pupils can then refer.

Ask: Sarah doesn't think she is in an unhealthy relationship. Why does she think this?

- Sarah's home life is difficult so her ability to 'spot' a dysfunctional relationship is potentially compromised
- Paul is Sarah's first boyfriend, so she doesn't have any experience of what to expect/what a healthy relationship looks like
- Paul has been attentive and flattering and Sarah has been drawn in by this
- Sarah sees Paul wanting to have her to himself as 'romantic' and a sign of how much he cares about her rather than controlling

Activity 1 extension task: Ask pupils to discuss whether they think Paul thinks the relationship is healthy or unhealthy and why.

It is likely that Paul doesn't realise that the relationship is unhealthy. This is likely to be his first/ one of his first serious relationships as he is only 16. Perhaps his homelife has been difficult and he hasn't had good role models of healthy relationships. He seems quite insecure and this seems to be causing him to become jealous, controlling and possessive. Despite the reasons for Paul's jealousy, it is important that students recognise that these do not justify or excuse Paul's behaviour.

9. Activity 2 – ‘Working Out Relationships?’ video (10 mins)

Show the class the ‘Working Out Relationships?’ video asking pupils, as they watch, to make a note of and then feedback the four things that it suggests are needed to keep a relationship strong.

SLIDE 5

Show the class the ‘Working Out Relationships?’ video (link on slide). The video uses a gym scenario with the key message that, just like keeping physically fit, keeping a relationship ‘fit’ and healthy requires effort, even when you don’t feel like it. The emphasis here is on normalising that relationships take work (but that this should also be fun if the couple are a ‘good fit’).

As they watch the video ask the pupils to make a note of the four things that it suggests are needed to keep a relationship strong and get them to feed these back. Pupils should identify:

- Building a relationship on friendship and being a good team.
- Being realistic in your expectations and putting in effort.
- Communicating well – talking constructively about any issues when they first arise so that bigger problems don’t develop.
- Having good support networks – having friends and family around you to help when life is tough.

These ideas will be developed further in the ‘10 critical questions’ discussed in activity 3 below. The emphasis here is on normalising that relationships take work to keep them strong to counter the Disney ‘myth’ of fairy tale relationships or the photo shopped lives of celebrities.

Teachers should be aware of common misconceptions that pupils may have:

- That if a relationship is good, it should not take ‘work’/ that the need for ‘work’ or ‘support’ is a sign that this is not the ‘right’ relationship for someone/ that it’s time to move on;
- That it is ‘romantic’ to want to spend all your time with your boyfriend/girlfriend and that support from others should not be needed;
- That jealousy and/or possessiveness is a sign of how much the other person needs/loves you.

Activity 2 support task: Consider suggesting that pupils pull out 1-2 points from the video only.

Activity 2 extension task: Consider asking pupils to rank the 4 features in order of priority.

11. Activity 3 – Paul and Sarah scenario and the critical questions (15 mins)

Give pupils 5 minutes on their tables to consider the ten critical questions, applying them to the Sarah and Paul relationship, asking them to nominate one pupil to feed back. Allow 10 minutes for feedback from all tables.

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Ask the pupils to apply the questions below to Sarah and Paul's situation. What might Sarah say if she asked herself these questions about her relationship with Paul? Give pupils 5 minutes to consider the questions on their tables then ask them to nominate one pupil to feed back. Allow 10 minutes for feedback.

Not all the questions apply to relationships at the stage of Sarah and Paul's relationship. Where the question is not applicable directly it is still important to get pupils to think about why these issues might be important for relationships that they intend to be long-lasting as they get older. Below are some of the things that the pupils should be identifying:

1. Are they a 'good fit'? (Can they work well as a team? Do they have similar values and outlook on life?)

Paul and Sarah began a relationship immediately so didn't really know whether they were going to be a 'good fit'. Of course, for some this is fine, as they get to know each other they will discover if they make a good team. Those who discover that they aren't a good team are likely to separate quite quickly.

2. Do they have a strong basis of friendship? (Do they have fun together? Share interests and humour? Appreciate each other?)

Paul and Sarah seem to lack a strong basis of friendship. The relationship is controlling rather than equal.

3. Do they want the same things in their relationship and out of life? (Do they each feel that they can jointly agree a plan for their lives together? Can they negotiate?)

Paul and Sarah are not at a stage where they would be considering this for their relationship. However, the fact that the relationship is on Paul's terms and is controlling means that this is unlikely to be healthy going forward.

4. Are their expectations realistic? (Do they accept there will be ups and downs? Understand the need to make effort?)

Sarah's experience of couple relationships is not positive. Her stepdad appears to be quite controlling of her mum so she may not recognise this behaviour as unhealthy in her own relationship – this may be what she expects relationships to be like. All the effort to compromise seems to be coming from Sarah which is not healthy.

5. Do they generally see the best in each other? (Can they accept each other's flaws? Respect their differences?)

As above, the effort to compromise seems to be coming from Sarah which is not healthy.

6. Do they both work at keeping their relationship vibrant? (Do they make time to spend together and time apart? Each show the other that they care?)

Sarah sees Paul's attentiveness and attempts to isolate her as a sign of how much he cares for her. Time together, to the exclusion of friends, is unhealthy.

7. Do they both feel they can discuss things freely and raise issues with each other? (Do they deal with issues promptly and constructively? Enjoy talking and listening to each other?)

Perhaps partly because of her experience with her stepdad and mum's relationship, Sarah's response to any conflict is to alter her lifestyle (giving up netball, seeing less of Greg). This is unhealthy.

8. Are they both committed to working through hard times? (Do they both 'give and take'? Work on themselves? Look to a positive future together?)

This is more for the long term, but the signs are not good so far, the relationship is all give from Sarah and take from Paul.

9. When they face stressful circumstances would they pull together to get through it? (Can they each adapt well to change? Would they seek professional help if needed?)

This is more for the long term, but the signs are not good so far, rather than pulling together it seems likely that Paul will simply demand that any change comes from Sarah.

10. Do they each have supportive others around us? (Do they each have a good support network they can turn to or call on for help if needed?)

Paul is trying to isolate Sarah from her support network.

12. **Activity 4 – Paul and Sarah scenario; Group chat advice (5 mins)**

- Give pupils 5 minutes on their tables to come up with advice to the two group chat posts; – one from Sarah and one from Paul (Slide 8). Nominate half the tables to respond to Sarah's post and half to respond to Paul's post. Suggested answers are on slides 9 and 10.
- Ask pupils why they think that people get jealous when in an intimate one-to-one relationship.
- There is also an acronym 'STOP' in response to feeling jealous for teachers to run through

**SLIDES
8-10**

Give pupils 5 minutes on their tables to come up with advice to the group chat posts – one from Sarah and one from Paul (Slide 8). Nominate half the tables to respond to Sarah's post and half to respond to Paul's post.

A suggested answer to Sarah's post will appear on a click on Slide 9. The key thing for pupils to get across is that the behaviour is controlling and unacceptable. Students need to recognise that unhealthy relationships often have some positive characteristics that keep a person with the partner, despite other destructive traits like making a person feel unsupported, undermined and insecure.

A suggested answer to Paul's post will appear on a click on Slide 10. Again, the emphasis is on confirming that the behaviour is controlling and unacceptable and on getting Paul to consider his responses.

Debunking misconceptions: Ask pupils why they think that people get jealous when in an intimate one-to-one relationship. We are not told much about Paul's background to give us clues about why he might be feeling jealous. The emphasis here is to consider generally why people get jealous in relationships and to debunk any misconceptions about this being a bigger issue for one gender.

If there is time it might help to take the class briefly through the 'STOP' acronym taken from the BBC Bitesize article, 'How can I deal with feeling jealous?' available at: (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zm8k382>):

How can someone deal with feeling jealous?

S: Slow things down

First of all, they should **pause**. They should notice that they're feeling jealous but remind themselves that, just because they're feeling something, doesn't mean they have to act on those feelings. They should **take a deep breath** and give themselves time to **think** things through. They can still choose to act later if they want to when they are feeling calm and in control.

T: Think things through

They should consider **why** they are feeling jealous. Is someone they care about really giving them a cause to think that their relationship is at risk, or are their feelings coming from their own insecurities and fears? If so, they may be connected to earlier experiences in their life, so they should try to take a step back and see things for how they really are.

O: Open up

They should **be honest** about how they feel and talk to the person whose actions are leading them to feel jealous. It's okay to explain how they're feeling and even to point out any behaviours that might be making them feel threatened. But they need to be willing to listen to the other person's side of things too.

P: Personal responsibility

It's important to take personal responsibility for their own feelings and choices. If they're repeatedly feeling jealous in their relationship, they should try to work out whether there is any real cause for them to feel jealous. If there is, it's their responsibility to address it.

13. Activity 5 - Paul and Sarah scenario; leaving safely (5 mins)

Give pupils 5 minutes to consider what, as Sarah's friend, they would do to support her if she decides to break off the relationship: (offer non-judgemental support; impress upon her that it is her decision and advise her to tell a trusted adult if she is concerned about how Paul might react (and say you might have to if she won't).

SLIDE 11

Activity 4 aimed to help pupils to recognise when a relationship is unhealthy. Activity 5 is a short exercise which gets the pupils to think about how, if they were Sarah's friend, they would support Sarah if she chooses to end the relationship with Paul when her attempts to explain to Paul what needed to change are unsuccessful.

Give pupils five minutes to discuss and feedback – the emphasis should be on this being Sarah's choice and that if, as her friend, you are concerned at how Paul may react (he has said that he 'cannot live without her') then you should advise Sarah to tell a trusted adult (parent, teacher, ChildLine). If she won't, then you should tell Sarah that you will. This follows the advice of the #LoveRespect website for teenage girls at risk of relationship abuse launched by Women's Aid in September 2019 (see <https://loverspect.co.uk/advice/worried-about-a-friend/>). This may go against some of the values of young people (to respect the privacy of their friends) but it is important to get them to appreciate that the safety of their friend must be their primary concern.

Some suggested responses will appear on a click on Slide 11. Reassure pupils that Paul was saddened by Sarah's decision but accepted it.

14. Activity 6 - Paul and Sarah scenario: changes needed, and wrap-up, including homework task (5 mins)

- To conclude, give pupils 5 minutes on their tables to suggest 3 things that would need to change about Sarah and Paul's relationships for it to be healthy (not trying to distance her from her friends; not getting jealous over having platonic friendships with other boys and not dictating what she wears).
- Finish by asking the pupils to refer to the post-its on the whiteboard from the baseline task and identify which three facets of a healthy relationship are most lacking in Paul and Sarah's relationship/which 3 things from the post-its they need to work on most.

SLIDE 12

To consolidate learning, pupils should readily be able to suggest three things that would need to change (not trying to distance her from her friends; not getting jealous over having platonic friendships with other boys and not dictating what she wears).

Finish by asking the pupils to refer back to the post-its on the whiteboard from the baseline task and identify which three facets of a healthy relationship are most lacking in Paul and Sarah's relationship/which 3 things from the post-its they need to work on most.

Tell the class that in the second of this two-part programme they will be applying the critical questions discussed earlier to a healthy relationship to help pupils make evidence-based healthy relationship choices

HOMEWORK TASK: To finish, ask pupils to create an information leaflet aimed at their year group to highlight the 'warning signs' that indicate that a relationship is unhealthy. They should bring this to their next PSHE lesson.

SLIDE 13

The emphasis of the lesson has been on recognising whether a relationship is healthy or unhealthy. If this has stirred up uncomfortable emotions for any pupil, they should be signposted to pastoral support (see above). Details of further support available are also listed below. Teachers should familiarise themselves with these sources of support and be ready to signpost pupils to these and to pastoral support as needed.

Available support:

BBC Bitesize has further information on healthy relationships at:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/tags/zdnx8xs/healthy-relationships/1>

The Mix has a toolkit to assess whether a relationship is healthy and links to support at:

<https://www.themix.org.uk/apps-and-tools/is-my-relationship-healthy>

Relate has support for young people whose parents argue lots at:

<https://www.relate.org.uk/relationship-help/help-children-and-young-people/common-problems-children-and-young-people/my-parents-are-always-arguing-and-i-dont-have-anyone-talk>

Pupils who have concerns about their own relationship or homelife should be supported to contact Childline at: (<https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/>)

Women's Aid has advice for teenage girls at risk of abuse at:

<https://loverspect.co.uk/>

Men's Advice Line has advice for men at risk of abuse at:

<http://www.mensadvice.org.uk/>