

## EPKCE UKS2 Session 1

### Building Safe and Supportive Relationships

#### Overview:

This session introduces students to the importance of positive friendships, recognising red flags in relationships, and identifying safe spaces in their daily lives. Through interactive discussions and activities, students will develop strategies to maintain healthy relationships and seek support when needed.

#### Learning Objectives:

- Reinforce understanding of good relationships.
- Recognise red flags in friendships and social situations.
- Identify and define personal safe spaces.
- Develop confidence in seeking help when feeling unsafe.

#### PSHE Programme of Study and Statements Links:

- **R10.** The importance of friendships; strategies for building positive friendships; how positive friendships support wellbeing.
- **R11.** What constitutes a positive, healthy friendship (e.g. mutual respect, trust, truthfulness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, sharing interests and experiences, support with problems and difficulties) that the same principles apply to online friendships as to face-to-face relationships.
- **R15.** Strategies for recognising and managing peer influence and a desire for peer approval in friendships; to recognise the effect of online actions on others.
- **R18.** To recognise if a friendship (online or offline) is making them feel unsafe or uncomfortable; how to manage this and ask for support if necessary.

#### RSHE Programme of Study

##### Relationships Education (Caring Friendships):

- Pupils should know how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
- The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trust, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness, shared interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.
- That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
- That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right.

##### Online Relationships:

- That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships.
- How to recognise harmful content and contact online, and how to report these.

##### Being Safe:

- What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).
- How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.

### Assumed Prior Learning:

- Basic understanding of friendship and social interactions.
- Awareness of safe and unsafe situations.
- Some prior discussion about emotions and feelings.

### Session Outline:

- **Activity:** Friendship Tree.
- **Materials:** Large paper tree outline, coloured paper leaves, markers.
- **Task:** Each child writes one quality of a good friend on a leaf and one place where they feel safe. Leaves are then attached to the tree.
- **Outcome:** Visual representation of positive relationships and safe spaces.
- **Interactive Element:** Discuss different scenarios involving friendships (e.g., peer pressure, bullying) and discuss positive ways to handle these situations.

### Session Plan Breakdown

Time	Activity	Linked Resource
10 mins	<b>Introduction:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Icebreaker: Ask students to define “a good friend” in one word.</li> <li>• Have a brief discussion on what makes a friendship positive or negative.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible definitions of a friend.</li> <li>• Possible responses of positive and negative qualities.</li> </ul>
15 mins	<b>Friendship Tree Activity:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give students 10 minutes to continue reflecting on what qualities they feel are important in a good friend and where they feel most safe.</li> <li>• Have them write one quality and the spaces they feel most safe, on their leaves.</li> <li>• Let the students add their leaf or leaves to the tree once they are done.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Printable “Friendship tree” and “leaves”</li> <li>• Print leaves on different colours of paper.</li> <li>• Provide markers.</li> </ul>
10 mins	<b>Discussion:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage students in a small group discussions and reflections on their chosen qualities and safe spaces.</li> <li>• Ask students to discuss what they feel comfortable sharing, reminding them of community agreements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible community agreements.</li> </ul>
20 mins	<b>Interactive Scenario Discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students choose a card and as a group, collectively discuss the scenario and possible solutions.</li> <li>• Discussion on strategies for handling peer pressure and red flags in friendships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scenario cards</li> <li>• List of possible strategies for handling peer pressure and red flags</li> </ul>

5 mins	<b>Wrap Up Reflection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group reflection: What is something new you learn today about friendships?</li> <li>Invite students to share one thing they will do differently in their friendships.</li> <li>Emphasise the importance of talking to a trusted adult when feeling uncomfortable.</li> </ul>	
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#### Include Alternative Activities:

- Personal Reflection Journal – Students write a short reflection on a time they felt supported by a friend and a place they feel the safest.
- Individual Art Activity: Drawing or crafting a 'tree' showcasing the qualities of a good friend on each leaf and places students feel the safest on the trunk.

#### Include Baseline and Plenary:

- Baseline: Start with a brief discussion: "What makes a good friendship?"
- Plenary: Students complete the sentence: "A safe friendship means..."

#### Resources and Images:

- Possible definition of a good friend.
- Possible response of positive and negative qualities of a friend.
- Printable friendship tree and leaves template.
- Possible community agreements.
- Scenario cards and possible strategies for handling peer pressure and red flags.

#### Definition of a good friend:

- A friend is a *"person who you know well and who you like a lot, but who is usually not a member of your family."* (Cambridge Dictionary, 2025)

#### Possible responses to the one-word definition:

- Kind, loyal, honest, trustworthy, supportive, encouraging, fun, caring, respectful, fair.

#### Possible responses to positive vs. red flag qualities in a friendship

<b>Positive Friendship Qualities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listens to you.</li> <li>Respects your boundaries.</li> <li>Encourages you to be yourself.</li> <li>Stands up for you.</li> <li>Shares and takes turns.</li> <li>Is happy for your successes.</li> <li>Communicates honestly and openly.</li> </ul>	<b>Red Flag Friendship Qualities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pressures you to do things you don't want to do.</li> <li>Ignores or dismisses your feelings.</li> <li>Lies to you or about you.</li> <li>Controls who you spend time with.</li> <li>Makes fun of you or belittles you.</li> <li>Talks behind your back.</li> <li>Is only nice when they want something.</li> </ul>
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## Possible Community Agreements for Group Discussion:

\* The teacher may want to write these up for students to see during the discussion

**Respect:** Everyone's opinions and experiences are valued.

**Listen Actively:** Let's hear each other out, without interrupting.

**Be Kind:** Treat others how you want to be treated.

**No Judgment:** We all come from different experiences, and we're here to learn.

**Speak Up for Safety:** If something doesn't feel right, talk to a trusted adult.

**Confidentiality:** What is shared in discussion stays in discussion (unless it concerns safety).

## Scenario Cards:

<p><b>A friend keeps asking for your lunch money every day.</b></p> <p>Possible Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Saying no is okay.</li> <li>• Explain that you need your lunch.</li> <li>• Ask if they are okay or if they need lunch.</li> <li>• Encourage them to talk to a trusted adult if they need help.</li> <li>• Seek help from a teacher or trusted adult if they continue to ask or you think they may need support.</li> </ul>	<p><b>You see a friend being left out of a game during break time.</b></p> <p>Possible Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite the friend to join in.</li> <li>• Encourage others to include them.</li> <li>• Start a new game where everyone can participate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>A new student joins your class, but no one is talking to them.</b></p> <p>Possible Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce yourself.</li> <li>• Ask if they'd like to sit with you at lunch.</li> <li>• Invite them to join an activity to help them feel welcome.</li> </ul>	<p><b>A friend is pressuring you to do something you're not comfortable with.</b></p> <p>Possible Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Saying no is okay.</li> <li>• Stand firm in your decision.</li> <li>• Suggest an alternative activity.</li> <li>• Walk away.</li> <li>• Talk to a trusted adult if needed.</li> </ul>

Or as Role Playing:

### Strategies for Handling Peer Pressure and Red Flags in Friendships:

\* The teacher may want to write these up for students to see during the discussion

- **Say No with Confidence:** Use a firm but polite “No, I’m not comfortable with that.”
- **Give a Reason (If You Want To):** “I don’t think that’s a good idea because...”
- **Suggest an Alternative:** “Let’s do something else instead.”
- **Walk Away:** If the pressure continues, remove yourself from the situation.
- **Talk to a Trusted Adult:** If something feels wrong, ask for help.
- **Find Supportive Friends:** Surround yourself with people who respect your boundaries.
- **Practice Role-Playing Responses:** Prepare phrases for saying no to uncomfortable situations.
- **Use the Buddy System:** Have a friend with you who shares your values and can back you up.
- **Recognise Manipulation:** If someone makes you feel guilty or scared, that’s a red flag.
- **Block and Report (Online Situations):** If the peer pressure is happening online, block the person and report their behaviour.