

Planning lessons on abuse in relationships for Key Stages 3 and 4: Guidance and suggested approaches

This document provides suggestions, examples and illustrations of how to talk approach the challenging issue of abuse in relationships through PSHE education. This should be addressed as part of a planned programme of PSHE education as set out in our [National Programme of Study](#) and in line with [our joint advice with the Sex Education Forum and Brook on sex and relationships education](#). It should also be delivered in line with your Sex and Relationships Education policy. We have provided guidance on how to draw up your SRE policy [here](#).

Introduction

Abuse can come in many forms. It can be physical, emotional/psychological, sexual or financial. It can be occasional or persistent. It can be 'low level' or extreme. It can be hidden to everyone except the abused or be widely known to others. It can involve violence, abusive language, be coercive or controlling. It is almost always an issue of power.

It is essential that lessons looking at abuse lead to clear information about local support services and strategies open to people who are experiencing abuse or are anxious that others may be experiencing abuse in whatever form it takes.

It is essential to discuss the care these professionals will take, whilst being realistic that things may get more complicated before, hopefully, they get better.

This material needs very careful preparation and a good knowledge of your pupils' previous experiences if it is to avoid taking young people either into bad memories or, worse, current experiences. We can only offer an outline for each session and it is essential that you consider how to edit the structure and language to fit your own school context. We have deliberately included a lot of material for you to adapt.

Supporting material

You may find it helpful to visit '[This is abuse](#)' where you will find short video clips. The full versions are available on You Tube – search for '*This is Abuse full version adverts*'. These are very explicit and should not be used without careful planning and a consideration of their impact on young people. They are intended for a key stage 4 audience.

We also draw up [Expect Respect teaching material produced by Women's Aid and the Home Office](#).

Key principles when dealing with abuse in PSHE education

PSHE education is about learning, not therapy and we need to be clear about our role. What PSHE education can offer is an opportunity to 'put the spotlight of learning' specifically on abuse in

relationships and give 'quality time' to exploring this issue. When planning this learning it is worth deconstructing what children and young people who are experiencing abuse need:

- They need to know and believe what they are experiencing is unacceptable – because many do not.
- They need to know and believe they have a right for it to stop – because many do not.
- They have to believe it is not their fault – because many abused children and young people blame themselves.
- They need to believe it can stop – because many do not.
- They need a language, a strategy and above all the confidence to initiate the action necessary to either make it stop or to get help – and this is hard when you are in a relationship that is constantly 'putting you down' or making you feel afraid.
- They have to weigh up the good and not so good components of the relationship – because abusers can be very skilled at balancing affection with abuse.
- They have to be willing to live with the consequences of it stopping – because they might have to give up a relationship that they feel strongly about.

Bystanders or witnesses have similar needs. They also need to recognise their responsibilities.

Safeguarding

This material is intended to support learning not to encourage disclosure by young people. However we cannot control what young people may choose to share with us in a classroom. For this reason it is vital that ground rules are negotiated before doing this work and boundaries around confidentiality clarified. It is important to stress that whilst the lesson may not be the ideal place to share personal experiences you are always available to listen and to help any child who has any concerns following these sessions.

If a young person gives you any reason what-so-ever to feel that they are or even could be at risk it is essential that the school's safeguarding policy be followed.

Session 1: Looking at relationships

The first set of material we have provided considers abuse in a teenage relationship.

Relationships are 'emotional' and therefore seldom 'rational' and teenage relationships can be very intense. Just because everyone else can see someone needs to get out of a relationship, it doesn't follow that they are able or willing to leave. Telling someone there are *'loads more boys/girls out there'* can be hard to believe when your own self-esteem has been damaged.

Because of this we need to work with the 'bystanders', in this case often the abused person's friends. We need to explore that delicate boundary between 'minding your own business' and recognising that, as fellow human beings we have a responsibility, if not to intervene directly then to tell someone who might be able to help. This is difficult enough for adults.

What is important to explore is that we might have no responsibility for our feelings. Emotions such as anger and jealousy can come unbidden. Emotions that are not expressed can build up over time and damage a relationship. What we are responsible for however, are our choices and the behaviours that follow from those feelings.

It is also important not to inadvertently 'victim blame'. It is easy to focus on what the 'victim' could have done differently to avoid this and what they could say and do now. It is equally important to explore the responsibilities and behaviour of the perpetrator. At no point should we make anyone subject to abuse feel the fault or blame lies with him or her. For this reason, it is considered best to avoid the term 'victim', in favour of 'target' when discussing bullying or abuse.

We strongly recommend these are not used as 'one off sessions' but that it be part of a theme looking at 'relationships', 'bullying' or 'personal safety' or even identified as a theme that might be visited again when (if) concern arises.

It is worrying that some young men feel that verbal and physical abuse of their partners is acceptable and perhaps even more worrying that many young women feel that they may 'deserve' this abuse if they are the cause of their partner's anger or believe there are circumstances where emotional and physical assault is excusable. We have separated out two issues, physical and emotional abuse and coercion into having sex, although the two may well be components of a single abusive relationship.

It is impossible to say what keeps someone in an abusive relationship. What is 'common sense' to an outsider may feel very different to the person being abused within the relationship. Love is a complex emotion. It is unusual for a relationship to be abusive in the early stages (although the warning signs may be present) simply because it is easier to 'walk away' - the potential abuser risks losing the other person. Just 'leaving' can become more difficult if the abuse emerges over time. The relationship has now become established and since *'he wasn't like this before'* there is a danger that the injured partner feels *'it must be something I am doing'* or *'It is just temporary, he will be different again soon. I just have to put up with it.'*

We take the position that all forms of emotional and physical abuse are totally unacceptable, regardless of circumstance or culture. It is also important to recognise that emotional and physical abuse can take place in same sex relationships (there is evidence of increased vulnerability) and may also be perpetrated by women on men, though this is considerably more rare. We focus on male abuse of females here, but urge consideration of widening this if appropriate or necessary in class

discussions. Finding support in these scenarios can be difficult for the person who is experiencing the abuse.

This is an area of learning where it might be useful to involve the local professionals responsible for helping abused people both in planning and teaching this work.

Key Questions

- *What do I want and expect from a healthy relationship?*
- *What behaviours are unacceptable in a relationship?*
- *If I am (or someone I care about is) in an abusive relationship, can I recognise it early enough?*
- *Do I know what to say and do?*
- *Do I know how to get help if I feel I am (or someone I care about is) being abused?*

Part One

There are two steps in this session before we start to look at unhealthy relationships. Realistically you might want to break this into two lessons.

This first discussion could be a pair or small group discussion.

The first focus is:

- what makes a *good* relationship - what are its characteristics, and how do the people behave to each other? ...
 - when they feel good? ...
 - when they feel bad? ...
 - when **one** of them feels bad?

The second focus is:

- how do people **feel** in a close, healthy relationship
- how do *you* feel (or expect to feel) in a close, healthy relationship?
- how would you *not* want to feel?
- what might make you feel like that? (*Look for both words and behaviour*)
- what might make you feel even worse in a relationship?
- what could happen that would make you feel that way? (*Look for both words and behaviour*)

Collect some up and build a consensus, perhaps on flip chart sheets under the headings

1. 'We want to feel...'
2. 'We need to be treated...'
3. 'We have a right to...'

If necessary explore the difference between wants, needs and rights in a relationship. Is it okay to leave or end a relationship without giving a 'cause' or 'reason'? Because we can enter into and leave relationships remind the group they don't have to *justify* ending a relationship! If you are

uncomfortable or unwilling to meet all the other person's wants and needs or feel you are unwilling to meet what they perceive as their 'rights' is the relationship one that you should end or leave?

One of the key areas to explore is that of caring for and being cared for by another person. When we do this we make ourselves vulnerable. Their behaviour or language affects us differently and more powerfully than that of those we don't care so much about. Their approval matters more than the approval of others.

If we know someone cares for us, their vulnerability gives us power. Does this bring a responsibility to protect him or her both physically and emotionally?

Part Two

Explain to the pupils having positive relationships with other people is great. Having people we care about, trust and feel safe with and who care about us, trust us and feel safe with us is part of being a fulfilled human being. Some people are casual friends, some are close friends and some we might think of as partners, if not already, then perhaps in the future. Some people however find themselves in a relationship where their partner is either physically or emotionally hurting them. Other people may say *'Why do they stay together? He or she must be mad!'* but leaving or ending a relationship is not always easy.

The person being hurt may hope the other will change, or may simply have very strong feelings, caring deeply for the person who is hurting them. Abusive relationships are not always consistently abusive and can fluctuate between great kindness and care and moments of sudden extreme abuse or violence followed by remorse. Some relationships maintain a constant 'low level' of relentless emotional abuse ranging from actual threats to a steady stream of 'put downs'.

In this session we are going to explore one example of an abusive relationship, and think about what others see as the obvious or 'right' thing to do and what might get in the way of this person doing it.

In pairs, think about these conversations.

Observer's view

'So then Micky hit her!'

'What, punched Diane?'

'Well, no, not a punch more like a slap really but it must have really hurt.'

'They have been going out for months. What did she do?'

'Well they were out together and Diane got talking to Rob and laughing with him. Micky just lost it, he really shouted at her and then he slapped her.'

'Well that was a bit out of order!'

'I agree. Hitting her was really bad!'

'No! I meant she was out of order mucking about with Rob!'

Victim's view

'So Micky slapped you?'

'Yes. It really hurt. He was ever so upset afterwards. He burst into tears and begged me to forgive him. He says it will never, ever happen again.'

'So... are you going to?'

'What?'

'Forgive him.'

'Well... I suppose I was being a bit thoughtless mucking around with Rob when I was out with Micky. He gets really jealous when I talk to any other boy. He says it's because he really loves me and he can't bear the thought of me with someone else. I do get a bit thoughtless sometimes and he gets really angry.'

'So has he hit you before?'

'Only once... or perhaps twice... and it was probably my fault, or at least as much my fault as his. It's only because he really loves me. When we first started going out he was really sweet and kind and caring. It is only recently he has been like this and it's only been a couple of times. Most of the time is really lovely.'

In the first scenario

- What do you think these two are feeling?
- What questions might you want to ask them?
- How do you feel about what happened?
- Who was 'out of order'?
- Do you feel Micky's behaviour acceptable or unacceptable?
- Do you feel Diane's behaviour with Rob is acceptable or unacceptable?
- Is hitting someone ever appropriate? *(Responses to this critical question may warrant some gentle probing. It may help to let the class explore it a bit for themselves rather than outlawing hitting straight away, unless the class do. Work in pairs, initially, may encourage more ideas to be expressed and examined. If need be, suggest they compare this issue with the school's policy on bullying. However, try to leave the class in no uncertainty about the unacceptability of physical abuse.)*
- Is there a difference between understanding how someone feels whilst finding their subsequent choice of behaviour/actions unacceptable?
- Is 'understanding' the same as 'approving' or 'accepting'?
- Should Diane and Mickey do anything? Do either of them have any responsibilities to act?
- Is this a criminal offense? *(Note to teacher – Yes, it is assault.)*
- What might be the consequences of ignoring this event?
- What could they/should they do?

In the next section, you may choose simply to continue facilitating the group's discussion of the scenarios and the issues they raise. A second option is to find two people willing to role-play Mickey and Diane, and to put themselves in a 'hot seat', in role, to answer questions from the class as they think Diane and Mickey might answer. The class may then want to discuss these newly-generated extensions to our scenarios.

Additional players may volunteer to take over a role, if they feel they have a different response to contribute, or a different mind-set for the character, which may throw more light on Mickey's motivation and behaviour or Diane's feelings or reaction.

NOTE: It is vital to 'de-role' all players afterwards, asking them to make eye-contact with the class, state their *real* names, and say at least one way in which they are different from Mickey/Diane.

In the second scenario

Pupils could explore

- What questions might you want to ask Diane?
- How do you think she might answer?
- What questions might you want to ask Micky?
- How do you think he might answer?

- Is it okay for Micky to feel angry or jealous? (This is the opportunity to explore the issue of how whilst we can't control or be responsible for our feelings we have to take responsibility for the consequences of the actions that we take that may come from those feelings.)

- What do you feel about what Diane is saying?
- Is she right to forgive him?
- Do you think he means it when he says it will never happen again? (*Is his apology genuine? Could it be an attempt to keep Diane from leaving?*)
- Even if Mickey means his apology *now*, do you think abuse is *likely* to happen again? Why?

- What advice would you give to Diane?
- What might stop Diane leaving Micky if this is what she wants to do?
- What might help Diane to leave Micky if this is what she wants to do? what does she need?

- Is it possible that Micky does love Diane?
- Is it possible to love someone and still hurt them?
- Do you feel this is how you understand love?
- Should Diane stay in the relationship or leave?
- Is there any way in which Diane could help Mickey?

- Do you think he is aware, perhaps deep down, that he may pose a threat to any girl he feels deeply for?
- Bearing Micky's remorse in mind, what options does he have, to try to make sure he never repeats what he did to Diane?
- What advice would you give to Micky?

- Why do you think Micky didn't slap Diane for the first time until they had been going out for a while?

- Would you describe this relationship as one in which Diane can feel cared for, safe, trusted?
- Would you describe this relationship as one in which Micky can feel cared for, safe, trusted?
- How would you describe this relationship?

Look for descriptions that suggest:

Possessive/controlling – (misuse of power)

Jealous

Damaging

Poisonous

- What do you think might happen if Diane and Micky stay together?
- Micky and Diane's relationship involved physical abuse. Could someone abuse someone's feelings without ever physically hurting them (emotional abuse)?

How might someone do this?

Look for:

- Humiliating them in front of friends
- Damaging their self esteem by undermining their confidence
- Constant criticism
- Controlling their partner's choices
- Restricting their partner's choice

Is this acceptable or unacceptable?

What advice would you give someone who is suffering this type of abuse?

(Alternatives to this session include the use of 'Park Bench' or 'Sorted' from *Health for Life 15-16*. Each offers a simple way to present young people with a dilemma and invite them to generate a solution.)

Reflection

Think about important relationships you have. Do you feel cared for, safe and trusted? If not, what could you do? Who could you speak to?

If you suspected someone you cared about was in an abusive relationship what realistically could you say or do which might help? What would you advise them to say or do? How might you support them?

Session 2: Emotional Abuse

Key Questions

*How should we treat someone we care about when we are with our friends?
When does 'messing about' become abuse?*

The first session focused on physical abuse. A similar structure could be used to deconstruct and explore a different scenario this time looking at emotional abuse. For example

'What's up? You look really miserable?'

'It's Sam. I don't know what to do.'

'So... what's the problem?'

'When we are out with our mates Sam keeps saying things like telling people I am really stupid. Every time I try to say something Sam ridicules me. Everyone likes Sam and they all join in laughing. I hate it. It makes me feel really stupid and small. Sam wasn't like this when we first started going out but now I dread meeting up with our friends.'

'So... have you said anything?'

'Yes, but Sam just laughs and tells me I am being too sensitive. Sam says everyone thinks it is funny and I suppose Sam's right. Maybe I am just being too sensitive. When it is just the two of us it's great. Sam is really sensitive, caring and affectionate and I don't want to break up because we get on so well when we are on our own.'

Imagine you had overheard this conversation.

- Why might Sam be behaving like this? (Look for an abuse of power – hurting someone to gain popularity with others.)
- Is Sam's behaviour acceptable? (If yes explore 'why' and if no challenge with 'why not?')
- Is this 'abuse'? (If the response is 'no' or 'not really' ask if someone is being hurt.)
- When you read this did you see Sam as a boy or girl?
- Could it be either?
- Does it make a difference?

You could now add these lines.

'So... will you break up with Sam?'

'Sam is so popular. I am scared that if I did no one would understand. No one would go out with me after that! They would think there is something wrong with me!'

- What do you think?
- Is this true?
- Is this a reason to stay together?

Imagine the person who is upset notices you.

- They ask you what you think they should do?
- What would you say?
- What might help them to follow your advice?
- What might stop them?

You could move this a little closer to the pupils by exploring;

Is this sort of behaviour acceptable to you and your friends? If you noticed this sort of thing happening among your friends, what would you feel? If you noticed it happening is it easy to challenge? What could you say? What could you do?

In what other ways could one person 'emotionally abuse' another? (For example making someone worry about them by deliberately not meeting them on time.)

Session 3 Coercive abuse

Key Questions

Do I know the difference between caring and controlling? What do I understand by the term 'coercive control'?

This dialogue starts to explore coercive control. (See also short video material on the 'This is abuse website – see the clip 'School' - <http://thisisabuse.direct.gov.uk/>)

'That's the fifth time your phone has gone off in five minutes!'

'I know, its Gerry. He keeps ringing and texting me. It was nice when we started going out, you know, texting and ringing one another all the time.'

'So what's the problem?'

'Well, he keeps wanting to know where I am and who I am with.'

'So just ignore him!'

'I tried that but he got really cross with me, actually I got a bit scared he shouted so much, and besides he says he only does it because he cares about me and wants to know I am safe. The other day he took my phone and looked at all my calls asking who I was ringing and who was ringing me.'

'So, you coming out tonight? We thought we would all have a girl's night out!'

'No, I'd better not. Gerry texted to say wants me in tonight in case he comes over.'

'That's a real shame, we hardly ever see you since you started going out with Gerry!'

Imagine you had overheard this conversation. Explore these questions.

- Why do you think Gerry is behaving in this way?
- What could he be thinking and feeling?
- How do you think his partner is feeling?
- Is Gerry caring?
- Is Gerry controlling? (What do they feel about the words 'in case he comes over')?
- How else might people try to control others?
- Is this okay?
- How might it feel to experience this type of controlling behaviour?
- Is it ever okay to behave in a way that makes your partner feel scared of you?
- Is it okay to ever feel scared of your partner's behaviour towards you?

If either of these characters asked for your advice – what would you say?

If you could talk to Gerry what would you say?

If a friend of yours told you they were either treating someone else in this way or were being treated like this – what would you say? What could you do???

If this behaviour continues what do you think might happen in the future?

What responsibilities do we have towards our partners?

If you experienced this or thought someone you care about is experiencing this, what would you say? Do? Who could you tell?

Session 4 Domestic Abuse

Key Questions

Would I recognise when someone I care about might be in need of support?

How could I help if I thought someone I care about is being hurt in their own home – perhaps by people they love?

The sessions above start by looking at relationships between individuals. The next set of material widens abuse by exploring abuse in families. This adds layers of complexity. Apart from the conflicting emotions this abuse can create the consequences of asking for help can be far reaching. Although it is painful to leave an abusive teenage relationship, leaving or risking devastating your family is incredibly hard for many people. Apart from the emotional consequences there are practical issues such as where and how and how will we live, where will the money come from?

This session needs to be planned very carefully and it is important to know your pupils and be aware of any previous history that might leave a pupil vulnerable. It is very possible that pupils in your class will have experienced domestic violence. It should only be explored as part of a planned programme and with a class that has had time to ‘form’ as a cohesive and supportive group. It is important to revisit and reinforce ground rules – especially over confidentiality. This could be a good session to team teach with a professional specialising in domestic abuse or providing this as a follow up. This session ends with a critical question about confidentiality. It is really important to explore it.

Session purpose

The majority of us live with people who really care for us and for one another. Occasionally most families have rows, sometimes really big rows, this happens when people live together and is a way of ‘letting off steam’. Because people love one another it usually calms down again. Not all families are like this. In this session we are going to explore unhealthy relationships’, when someone is acting in a way that hurts others and continues to do so.

Some of you might find this session a little difficult. If there is a time when you don’t want to take part any further then let me know. If you feel you might want to talk to someone let me know.

Into action

This could be a whole class discussion or small group work. If different groups look at different situations allow time for class discussion following each group’s feedback.

‘You know I think something is going on with Sasha.’

‘What, ‘quiet Sasha’, the one who is always hanging around in the library?’

‘Well, I had to stay late and she was still in the library. It was almost like she didn’t want to go home.’

‘Maybe she just likes books?’

‘I was walking down her street a few nights ago and she was just standing outside her house and was still there much later when I went back. It was freezing cold and wet. It looked like she didn’t want to go in. She looked really embarrassed when she saw me.’

If you overheard this conversation what would you be thinking? Does this feel all right? If they turned to you and asked you opinion what would you say?

Now imagine you sat down with Sasha and she told you;

'They row all the time. It never stops. I hate it when he comes home. I can't do anything right. He screams at me. He hits mum and sometimes me. I can't tell anyone. It will make things worse. If I get home really late it might be over.'

- What would you feel hearing this?
- What are all the possible feelings Sasha might be having?
- What would you say? Why?
- What could happen if Sasha follows your advice?
- What could happen if she doesn't
- What could you do?
- What should you do?
- Who could help?

'Mark is really over the top, he is always acting like a clown.'

'Yeah, he's great. But did you see that bruise on his face? He is such an idiot. He told us how he was climbing some scaffolding for a laugh and fell!'

'I bet his parents weren't amused!'

'What are they like, his parents?'

'Don't know, never met them. Have any of you ever met them? Ever been round his house? What none of us?'

If you overheard this conversation what would you be thinking? Does anything feel odd? If they turned to you and asked you opinion what would you say?

Imagine you spoke to Mark and he told you;

'I pretend everything is all right. As long as my friends keep laughing they won't any questions. I can't do anything right at home. It is never good enough. When the rest of my family come over, she always humiliates me. They think it's funny. It's always been like it. I was never good enough at anything. She really lost it with me last night. She hit me hard, it really hurt. What can I say? Who can I tell? What if it all gets worse? She is my mum!'

- What would you feel hearing this?
- What are all the possible feelings Mark might be having?
- What would you say? Why?
- What could happen if she follows your advice?
- What could happen if she doesn't
- What could you do?
- What should you do?
- Who could help?

'Hi Jane, is that your mum's new boyfriend? He seems really great! He is really easy to talk to and he seems to really know what's going on! He knew everything about that new group, you know their CD that's gone straight in at the top. It must be so cool having him come round every night!'

'Yeah, he's great. 'It's just that sometimes he'

'What?'

'Nothing. Forget it.'
'You okay?'
'I said forget it. It's nothing.'

If you overheard this conversation what would you be thinking? Does anything feel wrong? If the first character turned to you and asked your opinion what would you say?

Imagine you could speak with Jane and she told you

'He scares me. I think he scares my mum. I hate the way he looks at me. I hate it when he touches me. I think mum knows but she seems scared to say anything. I am scared I might come home from school and he will be there on his own. He is really strong. What can I do? Who can I tell? What could happen to mum?'

- What would you feel hearing this?
- What are all the possible feelings Jane might be having?
- What would you say? Why?
- What could happen if Jane follows your advice?
- What could happen if she doesn't?
- What could you do?
- What should you do?
- Who could help?

Collect up all the feelings these young people might be having.

Look for

- Frightened – explore all the things that might frighten them – encourage pupils to go beyond 'getting hurt' or 'someone else getting hurt'. Who? How?
- Confused – what might they be confused about? Can you have conflicting emotions – can you love someone while still being scared of them? Can you have more than one emotion? Can they pull you in different directions?
- Powerless – in what way?
- Trapped – How?

How might all these feelings make it difficult to ask for?

- What responsibilities do we have? If any of these young people demanded that we don't tell anyone should we respect this or do we have a responsibility to tell someone?
- Who could we tell?
- What could happen if we tell someone?
- What could happen if we don't?

Extension – Confidentiality

Now imagine that after your conversation with Sasha, Mark or Jane they said to you,

*'You mustn't tell anyone what I told you! I could get into real trouble; you **must** promise me not to say anything to anyone! It will be all right!'*

- What would you say?
- What would you do?
- If you do decide to tell someone what could happen? Soon? In the future?
- If you don't decide to tell someone what could happen? Soon? In the future?
- If you do decide to tell someone – who would it be? Why?
- What is the *easy* thing to do?
- What is the *right* thing to do?

It is important to allow time for this discussion. It is important for pupils to recognise that this is a very difficult situation and there is no 'easy' answer. They now know a person is at risk. Will it get better or is this just something we hope so that we do not have to do something?

Is it better to let someone down in the short term in order to protect them from a greater harm in the future?

Session 6 – Unwanted intimacy

Key Issues

A question of feeling uncomfortable or being pressured into something you don't want to do.

In the introduction you will find websites that offer very powerful material to explore sexual abuse but this is more appropriate for key stage 4. This material has been designed for key stage 3. Whilst children are just as vulnerable we may find it easier to explore feelings than actions or behaviour. It is often how others behave that makes us feel uncomfortable or worse frightened. What young people need to learn is that being made to feel uncomfortable or frightened by another person (especially an adult) is wrong and that they should talk to someone as quickly as possible. This is not easy. It can take a great deal of courage to just start the process of 'opening up' to another person. These sessions should explore this.

Session purpose

Have you ever been in a position where someone is making you feel uncomfortable? What is that feeling like? Where do you 'get it'? Is it in your shoulders? Is it in your stomach? Does it make you shudder? What do people do to make us feel uncomfortable? In this session we are going to explore this a little further.

Imagine someone about your age and who lives round here told you,

I hate it when they get too close to me. It makes me feel really odd. I can't explain it; it just feels 'creepy'.

Do you have any questions you would like to ask them? Is this abuse? Why? What would you say to them? How would you advise them? Who could they tell? Would it be easy to tell?

Does this feel familiar to you? Are there some people you like being really close to, some people that you like being with but would feel a bit odd if they got too close and some people who you prefer to keep their distance?

If they know someone feels uncomfortable if another person gets too close what do you think they should they do? If you could talk to each person, what would you say?

Into action

Are there some people you are happy touching you? Perhaps giving you a cuddle? Holding your hand? Giving you a kiss?

Imagine someone about your age and who lives round here told you,

'They keep trying to touch me. They try to put their arm round me. I don't want them to. I say I don't like it but they say 'it's all right', we're mates! They say I am been odd! May be I am?'

How do you think they are feeling? Is this abuse? Why? What would you say to them? Are they being odd? Who is responsible? How would you advise them? Who could they tell? Would it be easy to tell?

NB If the pupils say '*It depends who they are*', explore why. Does it matter who they are?

Imagine someone about your age and who lives round here told you,

'He tried to kiss me. I turned away. He didn't like it. He looked really angry. I just don't want to kiss him! He said I wasn't normal!'

How do you think they are feeling? Is this abuse? Why? Do you have any questions you would like to ask them? What would you say to them? Are they normal? Who is responsible? How would you advise them? Who could they tell? Would it be easy to tell? How could you help them?

Reflection

Is it ever okay to make someone feel uncomfortable? If someone knows that something is making someone feel uncomfortable or frightened is it ever okay to continue to do it? If we knew someone was being made to feel like this do we have a responsibility to do something or tell someone? What? Who?