

# Establishing a safer teaching and learning environment in the PSHE classroom

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# Ingredients for a safer teaching & learning environment?



Trust, openness,  
respect and inclusion

Knowing your  
pupils

Ground rules /  
working agreement /  
class contract



Wider  
communication

Policies

## Negotiating ground rules

- 'Think, pair, share' discussion
- Group brain storm and discussion/sorting activity
- Sharing an existing list and adapting/adding to it
- *If I wanted to share my ideas or ask a question, it would help if I knew the group:*
  - would ...*
  - would not ...*

Refer back to the ground rules regularly (not just in the initial session) to reinforce them and renegotiate/adapt if necessary.

## Ensure these are included...

- **Openness but without personal stories**
- **Keeping the conversation in the room**
- **A non-judgmental approach**
- **The right to pass (& not putting people 'on the spot')**
- **Making no assumptions**
- **Listening to others (& commenting on what's said, not the person who said it)**
- **Use of appropriate language**

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Seating plan?

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## ‘Distancing’ the learning from the learner

- Stories/scenarios
- Film/DVD/TV clip
- Photos
- Puppets
- Language: *“Imagine someone of about your age who lives near you and goes to a school just like ours...”*

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## Handling questions appropriately

- Have an 'Ask it basket' / anonymous question box  
(if concerned about a question, ask anyone whose question wasn't answered to come and see you after)
- Be conscious of the message you give the rest of the group
- Know what to do when faced with a tricky question.....

- **Value the question:** thanks; praise; check you've understood.
- **Buy time if necessary:** explain you don't know the answer/are not sure how best to answer and that you will find out more and respond later. (*Do you need to consult senior colleagues? What's the school policy? Is there a potential safeguarding issue?*)
- **What do *they* think** the answer is?
- **Consider the appropriate response.** E.g:
  - short, simple answer to the whole class;
  - answer them privately after the lesson;
  - Value the Q /thank but explain it goes beyond today's learning objectives and we will be learning more about this later/can talk about it later.

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