

Unit 12 Sexuality

About the unit

This unit looks at sexuality. It helps pupils to explore what sexuality is, and consider how gender, relationships, the law and sexual orientation shape their views of themselves and the people around them.

By key stage 4 pupils should already have looked at personal identity and how they could contribute to the identity of the school and community. They will have examined similarities and differences among groups of people, and they should have an understanding and appreciation of diversity, including cultural and racial, and family composition.

This unit could lead to discussions on homophobic bullying. It could build on unit 8 'Bullying'.

The activities in this unit are designed to be flexible so that they can be adapted for the class, the whole school or individual pupils. It is important to establish clear ground rules for these activities (see the *Teacher's handbook* for more details).

This unit supports the Every Child Matters aims 'be healthy' and 'stay safe'.

Where the unit fits in

This unit addresses the following aspects of the key stage 4 non-statutory framework for PSHE:

Developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of their abilities

- 1b have a sense of their own identity and present themselves confidently in a range of situations
- 1d recognise influences, pressures and sources of help and respond to them appropriately

Developing a healthy, safer lifestyle

- 2a think about the alternatives and long- and short-term consequences when making decisions about personal health

Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people

- 3e be able to talk about relationships and feelings
- 3f deal with changing relationships in a positive way, showing goodwill to others and using strategies to resolve disagreements peacefully

Breadth of study

- 4b feel positive about themselves

Expectations

Expectations should be adapted according to the needs, age, key stage and maturity of the pupils. By the end of this unit most pupils should be able to:

- define sexuality and identify a range of features that contribute to a person's sexuality
- identify some of the effects that gender stereotypes might have on people's lives, and their own attitudes towards gender roles
- know some of the basic laws governing sexual choices and behaviours and identify how these could affect their lives
- demonstrate a variety of possible responses to someone who is open about their sexual orientation, and identify possible effects of those responses.

Teaching activities

1 What is sexuality?

Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Pupils should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ a definition of 'sexuality'■ that sexuality is a broad concept that affects many aspects of our lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Working as a whole class or in small groups, ask the pupils <i>What is sexuality?</i> and <i>What makes up a person's sexuality?</i> Example statements for discussion can be found in Appendix 1. Encourage the pupils to explain why they feel an example is or is not about sexuality. Remind them that this exercise is to prompt discussion and not to identify 'right' or 'wrong' answers. At the end of the exercise they should be able to conclude that all the statements can make up aspects of someone's sexuality.■ Alternatively, this could be a continuum line activity. Give small groups of pupils sets of cards containing the statements in Appendix 1. Ask the pupils to place the cards on a continuum line, with 'About sexuality' at one end and 'Not about sexuality' at the other. Remind pupils that this exercise is to prompt discussion and not to identify 'right' or 'wrong' answers. Once the pupils have placed their cards on the line, ask each group <i>What makes up a person's sexuality?</i> It may be helpful to suggest some headings under which the pupils can place their suggestions, eg <i>Bodies, Relationships, Self-esteem, Feelings, Culture</i>. Ask the pupils to define 'sexuality' in their own words and say why it is an important part of identity. They could use the World Health Organisation definition in Appendix 1.	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ identify a range of features that make up a person's sexuality■ define sexuality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ It is advisable for teachers to deliver this unit to a group they know well and to be aware of the sensitivities and issues that it could raise.■ This unit may bring up issues that pupils want to talk about in confidence. (See 'Developing a policy on confidentiality' in Section 2 of the <i>Teacher's handbook</i> for more information about this.)■ A common misinterpretation of 'sexuality' is 'homosexuality'. Make sure that pupils are clear about the difference, and give definitions if necessary. Try to make sure that they also know that sexual identity is part of sexuality.

Teaching activities

2 Gender roles

Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Pupils should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ that gender stereotyping exists■ that assumptions are made about gender roles■ about some of the effects of gender stereotyping on people's lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Ask the class to suggest words that describe different kinds of feelings and write suggestions on the board. Try to make sure that the following words appear in the list: bored, sad, aggressive, hurt, upset, tired, excited, jealous, irritated, angry, confused, happy, frightened, insecure, disappointed, hopeless, worried, confident.■ Divide the class into single-sex groups of between four and six pupils. Ask each group to consider this question for their sex: <i>Are there any feelings on the list that in British culture boys/girls are not meant to feel or to show? Why?</i> Take feedback from each group in turn. Discuss the results, identifying whether certain feelings are particularly hard for boys or girls to express or show, and why this might be. You could also explore which feelings are acceptable for boys or girls in different cultures.■ Reorganise the class into small mixed-sex groups. Ask the groups to write down common statements about the roles and/or behaviour of men and women. Examples are:<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Girls do better in exams than boys■ Boys who cry are gay■ All men and boys think about is sex■ Boys behave worse at school than girls■ Men are more rational than women■ Women are too emotional■ Women are better at expressing their feelings than men■ Women are better at managing their anger	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ identify their own attitudes towards gender roles■ identify some effects that gender stereotypes might have on a person's life	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The statements about role and behaviour are examples. You could use others, or pupils can suggest statements that they have heard.■ Link with work-related learning: statements relating to jobs and careers could be included. Pupils could discuss stereotyping that exists around so-called men's jobs and women's jobs. Materials from the Equal Opportunities Commission, including information about legislation on sex discrimination in the workplace, could help them with this work.

Teaching activities

2 Gender roles (continued)

Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities	Learning outcomes	Points to note
Pupils should learn:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Ask each group to discuss the following in relation to the statements.<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Does the group agree with the statement?■ What evidence is there for saying the statement is true or false?■ If a young person believed this statement about their own sex how might it affect their confidence and behaviour?■ Ask each group to read out their statements and responses to each question. Would they like to change any of these stereotypes? How could they minimise the impact of such stereotypes in school and on their lives?	Pupils:	

Teaching activities

3 The law

Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Pupils should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ about the laws governing sexual behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Head three sheets of large paper with:<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Something I know about sex and the law■ Something I'm not sure of about sex and the law■ A question I would like to ask about sex and the law <p>Ask the pupils to work in groups to write at least one thing on each sheet of paper.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Ask the groups of pupils to do the quiz in Appendix 2. As a class, work through the full answers. These are likely to raise a series of other questions that pupils can research later, if appropriate.■ Return to the three large sheets of paper and circle any statements or questions that are left to which no one knows the answers. Ask the pupils to suggest how these remaining statements/questions can be answered, <i>eg research in a library or on the internet, using leaflets from local or national services</i>. If appropriate, ask the pupils to carry out the research.■ Ask the groups to discuss the laws that affect their lives, and any responses they have to them. The groups should discuss the following sentence: 'If I could change any of these laws I would change... because...'	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ identify how their lives could be affected by laws relating to discrimination■ know some of the basic laws governing sexual choices and behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Do not worry if questions arise for which you do not have an immediate answer. This provides a good learning opportunity for pupils to research their own answers.

Teaching activities

4 Sexual orientation

Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Pupils should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ how different attitudes affect responses to someone's sexual orientation■ some of the consequences of these responses for relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Divide the class into small groups and ask each group to create a character, giving them a name, age and occupation. (There are examples in Appendix 3.)■ Tell the group that their character is approached by someone close to them, <i>eg friend, son, sister</i>, who tells them: 'I think I'm homosexual. I'm in love with another boy/girl. It's important to me that people know.'■ Ask the groups to discuss the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ If someone close to your character said this, how would your character feel?■ What might your character say to this person?■ Would your character be supportive or not? How would your character show this? <p>Ask each group to tell the class their character's responses and discuss the differences between all the characters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Ask the pupils to work in pairs to script a short scene or write a storyboard of the conversation between their character and the other person.■ Depending on the outcomes of the scripted conversations discuss:<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ how their character might have felt■ whether their character's feelings were different from their behaviour towards the other person■ how the person who said they were homosexual might have felt if the response was supportive	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ identify a variety of responses to someone who is open about their sexual orientation■ recognise the possible consequences of different responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Distancing techniques are used throughout this section to help pupils consider responses to gay/lesbian relationships without needing to express personal opinions. (See 'Setting ground rules' in Section 2 of the <i>Teacher's handbook</i> for more information.)■ The term homosexual has been used in this activity, but you may want to consider using the more inclusive term LGBT – lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered. You may also want to consider individuals who are born neither fully male or fully female.■ Some pupils may find it easier to envisage an imaginary character if they are given a photograph (from magazines or other media) to use as a focus alongside the character description. Avoid using photographs of celebrities and include a range of

Teaching activities

4 Sexual orientation (continued)

Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities	Learning outcomes	Points to note
Pupils should learn:		Pupils:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ how the person might have felt if the response was not supportive■ why homosexual people are sometimes rejected when others find out that they are not straight (heterosexual).		<p>types of people – men and women, people of different ethnicities, modes of dress, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Some pupils may voice strong feelings about homosexual people. Some pupils may have an opinion according to the teaching of their faith or cultural group. Be aware of these possibilities but also of diversity and equal opportunities commitments in the school policy.■ Some pupils may feel confused about their feelings or may already identify themselves as LGBT. It is important to be sensitive to the needs of all pupils in the class and work within the school's equal opportunities ethos. (See 'Handling sensitive and controversial issues' in Section 2 of the <i>Teacher's handbook</i> for more information.)

Links with other subjects

Citizenship

Developing skills of enquiry and communication

- 2a research a topical political, spiritual, moral, social or cultural issue, problem or event by analysing information from different sources, including ICT-based sources, showing an awareness of the use and abuse of statistics
- 2b express, justify and defend orally and in writing a personal opinion about such issues, problems or events
- 2c contribute to group and exploratory class discussions, and take part in formal debates

Developing skills of participation and responsible action

- 3a use their imagination to consider other people's experiences and be able to think about, express, explain and critically evaluate views that are not their own

Resources

- Equal Opportunities Commission – deals with sex discrimination and equal opportunities for men and women
- *Faith, values and sex and relationships education* by Simon Blake and Zarine Katrak (National Children's Bureau, 2002) – offers strategies for developing sex and relationship education policy within a multifaith society. It contains a comprehensive list of faith-related websites
- L8r – an educational project that consists of an interactive website and video episodes featuring six teenage characters. Themes covered include teenage pregnancy, parenthood and sexual health
- Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement (LGCM) – encourages friendship and support among lesbian and gay Christians. LGCM has a number of support groups for each of the Christian denominations
- National Healthy Schools Programme – helps schools develop a whole-school approach to promoting health and well-being. This makes sure that what is taught in the classroom is reflected and supported by the school ethos and environment. For more details see the *Wired for health* website
- Naz Project London – provides sexual health, HIV prevention and support services to South Asian, Middle Eastern, North African, Horn of African and Latin American communities, including counselling within the context of faith
- Schools Health Education Unit (SHEU) – offers evaluation and monitoring services to those concerned with the health and social development of young people
- *Sex and relationship education guidance* (DfES, 2000) – guidance for schools, teachers and governors that explains the legal requirements of sex and relationship education and suggests how to deal with sensitive issues
- *Sex and relationships education in schools* (Ofsted, 2002) – a survey of sex and relationship education and a guide to good practice. Appendix 1 contains learning outcomes for sex and relationship education at each key stage

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- Sex Education Forum – provides a range of publications and factsheets that promote good practice. It contains links to organisations such as Brook and the Family Planning Association (FPA), which provide their own resources for schools
 - *The Site* – provides factsheets and articles on issues that young people face, including sex and relationships and health and well-being
 - *Stand up for us* (DfES/DoH, 2004) – a resource that helps schools challenge homophobia in the school environment. Available on the *Wired for health* website
 - *Teachernet* – contains case studies of sex and relationship education practice across a range of schools, and includes information on provision of sex and relationship education to pupils with special educational needs
 - *Wired for health* – this website contains information for teachers and healthy schools coordinators on health issues. It includes four separate websites for pupils of different ages

The website addresses of these resources are on the PSHE pages of the QCA website (www.qca.org.uk/pshe/).

Care should be taken when encouraging children and young people to access websites.

Appendix 1

Example statements for discussion

Teachers may choose to use some or all of these, or create examples of their own. One way of sharing the statements is to print each one on a separate piece of card and distribute the cards around the class. Alternatively the statements could simply be presented in a list.

Fancying someone

Feeling good about yourself

Belonging to a particular faith

Choosing to be celibate

Having a sexual relationship

Having an argument

Being pregnant

Buying a CD

Watching a film

Getting drunk

Getting married

Putting on make-up

Washing hair

Driving a car

Choosing a pair of jeans

Mending cars

Squeezing a spot

Going to a sexual health clinic for a check-up

Being friends with someone of the opposite sex

Having or giving a massage

Going out with someone of the opposite sex

Lying on a beach in the sun

Watching TV

Eating chocolate

Dancing

Having a bath

Kissing

Having a ride on a big dipper

Going out with someone of the same sex

World Health Organisation working definition of sexuality, 2002

Sexuality is a central aspect of being human throughout life and encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and relationships. While sexuality can include all of these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, ethical, legal, historical and religious and spiritual factors.

Appendix 2

Young people and the law

Mark each statement true or false

	TRUE	FALSE
1. Parents have a legal right to withdraw a pupil at secondary school from any sex education that is not part of the science national curriculum.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. It is illegal for a school to teach about homosexuality.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. A 16-year-old can get married with the permission of their parent(s)/carer(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. A pharmacist/chemist is allowed to refuse to sell emergency contraception to a pupil under 16.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. A girl under the age of 16 cannot legally have an abortion.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. People of all ages can buy condoms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. If a 14-year-old goes to a family planning clinic or their GP for contraceptive services their parent(s)/carer(s) have to be told.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Schools may display information about local and national contraceptive services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. The age of consent for gay men is 18.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. If a 15-year-old pupil tells a teacher in confidence that they are having a sexual relationship, that teacher is legally bound to keep what has been said confidential.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Quiz answer sheet

1. True

Under the Education Act parents may withdraw their child from any sex education lessons that do not form part of the national curriculum. Less than 1 per cent of pupils nationally are withdrawn.

2. False

Teachers and pupils can openly discuss issues affecting lesbian and gay people. *Sex and relationship education guidance* (DfES, 2000) states that 'Young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs. ...Teachers should be able to deal honestly and sensitively with [questions about] sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support.'

3. True

Even though at 16 young people are not allowed to vote, see 18-certificate films or legally buy drinks in pubs, they may, with parental permission, get married.

4. True

A pharmacist/chemist may refuse to sell emergency contraception to anybody under the age of 16. However, many pharmacies have joined local schemes where they are able to provide emergency contraception to any young person free of charge, including those under 16. It is important that the pharmacist talks with the young person to make sure they understand what they are doing.

5. False

Under-16s can legally have an abortion, as long as the doctor thinks they're mature enough to make the decision. Doctors have to encourage the young woman to talk to her parent(s) or a trusted adult, because having an abortion is something that a person will need support for as well as time to consider.

6. True

There is no legal restriction on buying condoms at any age. However, you can also obtain them free of charge from a family planning clinic or a GP. You can seek help from a family planning clinic at any age.

7. False

The pill may be prescribed to a girl under 16 as long as the health professional believes the girl is mature enough to make her own decisions (using the 'Gillick competencies') and understands how to use it. The health professional may try to persuade the girl to tell her parents herself.

8. True

Schools may display information about local and national contraceptive services to their pupils. *Sex and relationship education guidance* (DfES, 2000) states that school should be a source of information about sexual health services.

9. False

The age of consent is the same for everyone. Whether people are heterosexual or homosexual, it is 16.

10. False

Teachers can never guarantee total confidentiality. Their code of conduct and school policies make it clear that they must report any information that leads them to think the young person may be in a risky or harmful situation.

Adapted from *More about life* by Lesley de Meza and Stephen de Silva (Forbes, 2004).

Appendix 3

Examples of characters

- 15-year-old boy
- 15-year-old girl
- Faith group elder, eg imam, priest, rabbi
- 60-year-old grandfather
- 60-year-old grandmother
- 35-year-old bouncer in a nightclub
- 45-year-old teacher (male or female)