

Let's talk about healthy relationships:

friendships and conflict (11-13) lesson plan (SEND)

Lesson plan (SEND-adapted)

This two-part lesson builds on the assembly and provides an opportunity for video and scenario-based learning to explore how conflicts arise in friendships, how emotions influence behaviour and how students can respond in a positive and respectful way. Students will also consider how conflict can affect their mental wellbeing and learn strategies to manage situations effectively.

The resource includes simplified language, additional structure and more supported activities for students who may benefit from these approaches. Teachers should use their knowledge of individual students to consider whether any further adjustments are needed. Some activities already offer different ways for students to take part, including opportunities for discussion, movement and quiet reflection. The slides can be edited to provide further adaptation where needed.

Timings

The lesson is split into two parts, each designed to take approximately 40–50 minutes. Suggested timings are provided as a guide and can be adapted to support effective delivery in your setting.

You may want to spend longer exploring particular videos or discussions, depending on the needs of your group.

Resources

- Lesson slides
- Printed copy of the lesson structure slide (slide 3), optional
- Pictures/symbols to support the story slides, if used with this group
- Post-it notes / whiteboards (optional)
- Pens/pencils

Key vocabulary

Disagreement, conflict, boundary, peer pressure, respect, wellbeing, mental health

Learning Outcomes (LO)

You will explore how conflicts can arise in friendships and learn strategies to manage disagreements and communicate respectfully while looking after your own wellbeing.

Across the two lessons, students will have the opportunity to:

- learn how arguments can start between friends
- notice how feelings affect what we say and do
- practise ways to deal with conflict calmly
- find out who we can talk to for support

Ground rules

We recommend that you establish ground rules around respectful listening and confidentiality. For further guidance, please see the [PSHE Association's guide to handling complex issues safely in the classroom](#).

If you have any concerns during the session about a student's safety or wellbeing, follow your setting's safeguarding policy and procedures.

Terminology

As this lesson series focuses on friendships, it is important to recognise that these may look and feel different for individual students. Students may have relationships with peers that they do not consider to be friendships, or may understand the term 'friendship' differently. Where helpful, explore this terminology with students and adapt the language to reflect their experiences.

Slide	Notes
2	Learning outcomes Introduce the learning outcomes for the lesson, explaining that students will explore how conflict can arise in friendships, how feelings can affect responses, strategies for managing disagreements, and where to go for support.
3	Lesson structure (overview) Introduce students to the different parts of the lesson so they know what to expect. Briefly talk through each part, then keep the slide visible throughout the session. Refer back to it as you move through the lesson and mark off each section as it is completed.
4	Check-in "How are you feeling?" This is an opportunity for teachers to check in with how the students are feeling after the learning so far, find out whether anyone needs any additional support and remind students group agreement.
5	Today's words Six key words with definitions: Disagreement, Conflict, Boundary, Peer pressure, Respect, Wellbeing. Introduce one word at a time. Keep coming back to these words through the lesson, as this helps students recognise and use them later, especially 'boundary' and 'peer pressure', which come up again later in the session.
6	What might we value in a friendship? Invite students to suggest words or ideas about what someone might value in a friendship, using visual prompts or choices where helpful. Reinforce that people may value different things. Explain that when something we value feels affected, this can sometimes lead to difficult feelings or disagreements, linking to the next slide
7	What is a disagreement? Introduce the four key ideas about disagreements and conflict one at a time, pausing after each to check understanding. Ask students to give a thumbs up if it makes sense or explain the idea in their own words. Reinforce that disagreements are a normal part of friendships and that how we respond to them matters.
8	What do you think? (Activity) Use a simple thumbs up/thumbs down activity to explore students' views about feelings, communication, misunderstandings and boundaries in friendships. Read each statement aloud, one at a time, and ask students to show whether they agree or disagree. Students do not need to explain their choice.
9	Conflict online vs in person
10	Online or in person? Explore how disagreements can feel different in person and online or in a group chat. Read through the examples in each column and discuss the differences with students. Invite them to suggest another example if appropriate. Draw attention to how facial expressions and tone of voice can help us understand what someone means, and why online messages can sometimes be easier to misunderstand.
11	What is a boundary? Introduce what a boundary is and help students connect the idea to their own experiences. Read the definition and example aloud, then invite students to think of something they are comfortable with and something they are not comfortable with. Accept simple examples and reinforce that boundaries can be different for different people. Explain that the next few slides will explore a situation where someone's boundary is tested.

Slide	Notes
12	Story – step 1 of 3 Devon is with a group of friends. Someone makes a joke about them. A few people laugh. Devon laughs too, but it doesn't feel good. How might Devon feel here? Read the story part aloud. Use pictures or symbols alongside the text if that's part of your usual practice with this group. Then ask the question and give students 30–60 seconds of thinking time before asking for answers. Accept any response, e.g. a spoken answer or writing. Do not reveal the next part of the story yet — the situation builds gradually, which is part of showing how a small moment can grow into something bigger. Draw out feelings like embarrassed, unsure, or uncomfortable. Reassure students it's common to laugh along even when something doesn't feel good — that doesn't mean their feelings are wrong.
13	Story – step 2 of 3 Later, Devon see the same joke in the group chat. More people are laughing at it. Devon feels embarrassed and angry. What could Devon do here? Read the story part aloud, then give 30–60 seconds thinking time before asking for answers. Draw out ideas such as: telling someone how it made you feel, asking them to stop, messaging a friend privately, or taking a break from the chat. This is a good moment to link back to the 'boundary' vocabulary card.
14	Story – step 3 of 3 Devon sends an angry message back. More people join in. It turns into an argument. At school, things feel awkward. What could help now? Read the story part aloud, then give 30–60 seconds thinking time before asking for answers. Draw out ideas such as: talking to a trusted adult, taking a break from the chat, or talking face to face with the friend once everyone is calmer. Reassure students that situations like this are common, and things can get better by using helpful strategies, reaching out for support and allowing time and space for things to settle.
15	In the group chat – What could Kai say? Students read a scenario where someone sends a message about another person that makes Kai feel uncomfortable and consider how they could respond. Read the two example responses and ask students to choose the one they think Kai could use, or come up with their own. Reinforce that there is no wrong choice and that responding calmly and clearly can help address the situation before it develops into conflict.
16	A friend got it wrong – What could Nia say? Students read a scenario where Nia's friend has misunderstood something she said and consider how Nia could respond. Read the two example responses and ask students to choose the one they think Nia could use or come up with their own. Reinforce that there is no wrong choice and that responding calmly and clearly can help address misunderstandings before they develop into conflict.
17	Stuck in the middle – What could Reza say? Students read a scenario where Reza is being encouraged to join an argument and consider how he could respond. Read the two example responses and ask students to choose the one they think Reza could use, or come up with their own. Reinforce that there is no wrong choice and that responding calmly and clearly can help prevent the situation from developing into further conflict.
18	Looking after your wellbeing
19	How might this feel? Introduce how disagreements can affect our wellbeing and how we feel day to day. Read through the examples and invite students to think about feelings they may experience during a disagreement. Reinforce that these feelings are a normal response and can change over time. Explain that there are things we can do to help, and that if difficult feelings become too much or do not go away, it is important to talk to someone and seek support.

Slide	Notes
20	Looking after yourself Introduce strategies that can help students manage conflict and look after their mental health and wellbeing. Read through each strategy and briefly discuss how it might help in a difficult situation. Ask students to suggest any other strategies they could use and encourage them to think about which approaches might be helpful for them.
21-27	Responding to conflict (choose a scenario) Please note: There are five video scenarios available. Select the one you feel is most appropriate for your group, based on your own judgement. Introduce the chosen scenario and give students time to consider how the person might feel and what they could do. Watch the video together, pausing or replaying where helpful. Afterwards, ask students to compare their initial ideas with the responses shown in the video and discuss any similarities or differences.
28	Advice for handling conflict
29	Advice video Students watch a short advice video and listen to the strategies and suggestions shared by other students. Afterwards, invite students to reflect on the advice and identify any ideas they found helpful or might use themselves.
30	My top tip (Activity) Students create their own piece of advice for another student about managing disagreements or conflict. Ask them to choose one of the sentence starters and complete their top tip. Encourage them to draw on strategies explored during the lesson, ideas from earlier discussions and advice shared in the video.
31	Reflecting on our learning
32	What we covered today Use a visual recap to revisit the key learning from the lesson: disagreements are normal; feelings affect how we react; we can set boundaries; we can ask for help. Work through each idea and reinforce that disagreements are normal, feelings can affect how we respond, we can set boundaries, and we know when and how to seek support.
33	What will I remember? Use a short reflection to help students bring together the key learning from the lesson and consider what it means for them. Ask students to think, say or write one thing they learned, a question they still have, and one strategy they could try in the future. Use their responses to check understanding and reinforce the main messages from the lesson.
34	People who can help you Use this slide to help students identify who they can turn to if they are worried about a friendship or need support. Talk through the different sources of support and invite students to think about who they could speak to. Reinforce that friendships can sometimes feel difficult or change, particularly as friendship groups develop, and that they do not have to manage worries on their own. Please note: Teachers can edit this slide to include relevant school or local signposting information.

