

Police in Classrooms

Submission date 25/06/2025	Recruitment status Recruiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered <input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
Registration date 10/07/2025	Overall study status Ongoing	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input type="checkbox"/> Results
Last Edited 07/07/2025	Condition category Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

The purpose of the study is to evaluate a new PSHE curriculum, which has been created by the PSHE Association. Four new units have been designed, each comprising three lessons. The first and the third lessons are taught as normal by a PSHE teacher, and the second lesson is taught by a local police officer. Different units have been designed to be at the appropriate level for different year groups.

Year 7: Unit 1 - Personal safety

Year 8: Unit 2 – Drugs and the law

Year 9: Unit 2 - Drugs and the law OR Unit 3 - Violence prevention

Year 10: Unit 3 – Violence prevention OR Unit 4 – Knife crime

We want to find out a few things about the new curriculum:

1. Will the lessons change how pupils feel about the police?
2. Will the lessons change pupils' behaviour or wellbeing?
3. Will the lessons change what pupils think is right and wrong?
4. Will the lessons change whether or not a pupil is involved in a crime?

To answer these questions, we are running a Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT), where some year groups are randomly assigned to the treatment group and will receive the new lessons, and other year groups are assigned to the control group and have their PSHE lessons as normal. All students will complete a survey before and after the lessons.

Who can participate?

Mainstream state-funded schools in the areas covered by Greater Manchester Police or Hertfordshire Police are eligible to take part. Parents/guardians have the opportunity to opt their children out of completing surveys.

What does the study involve?

Year groups 7-10 in participating schools will be assigned to the treatment group or the control group. If a year group is treated, they will have three of the new PSHE lessons. The first and the last lesson will be taught by their usual PSHE teacher, while the second lesson will be taught by a police officer. If a year group is assigned to be a control, they will have their PSHE lessons as normal.

All students in years 7-10 will complete a survey before and after any teaching takes place. Questions in the survey are about students' strengths and difficulties, what they think is right and wrong, what they think about police, and demographic questions.

Students, school staff, parents, and police officers will also be asked to take part in interviews and/or focus groups, to enhance our understanding of participants' thoughts and feelings about the police and the curriculum.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Benefits:

1. Schools will have access to all lesson plans, slides and resources developed by the PSHE Association
2. Schools will have a strengthened relationship with their local police force
3. Schools will receive a school-level report of data directly related to the school

Risks:

1. Some students may find receiving teaching from a police officer or some of the survey questions about the police uncomfortable
2. Students will spend about 15 minutes taking the baseline survey and 15 minutes taking the endline survey
3. Parents will be asked to give opt-out consent, so there is a risk that parents miss the information sheet or fail to opt their child out when they would have wished to
4. We will be collecting demographic information, so if a student has a very rare combination of characteristics, they may be identifiable in our dataset

Where is the study run from?

Hertfordshire Police, Greater Manchester Police, and Avon and Somerset Police (UK)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

August 2024 to December 2026

Who is funding the study?

Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) (UK)

Who is the main contact?

Prof. Michael Sanders, michael.t.sanders@kcl.ac.uk

Contact information

Type(s)

Scientific, Principal Investigator

Contact name

Prof Michael Sanders

Contact details

The Policy Institute

22 Kingsway

London

United Kingdom

WC2B 6LE

+44 (0)20 7848 2749

michael.t.sanders@kcl.ac.uk

Type(s)

Public

Contact name

Ms Julia Ellingwood

Contact details

The Policy Institute
22 Kingsway
London
United Kingdom
WC2B 6LE
+44 (0)20 7848 2749
julia.ellingwood@kcl.ac.uk

Additional identifiers

EudraCT/CTIS number

Nil known

IRAS number**ClinicalTrials.gov number**

Nil known

Secondary identifying numbers

HR/DP-24/25-45765

Study information

Scientific Title

Police in Classrooms

Acronym

PiCl

Study objectives

This study aims to evaluate the effects of police officers teaching a new PSHE curriculum designed by the PSHE Association to pupils aged 11 - 16 years on pupils' emotional and behavioural difficulties, offending and victimhood rates, delinquent beliefs, trust and confidence in the police, confidence in seeking help from police, deterrence (change in behaviour), and school attendance.

Ethics approval required

Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)

Approved 17/12/2024, King's College London SSHL Research Ethics Subcommittee (3rd Floor, 5-11 Lavington Street, London, SE1 0NZ, United Kingdom; +44 (0)2078483871; rec@kcl.ac.uk), ref: HR/DP-24/25-45765

Study design

Cluster randomized controlled trial

Primary study design

Interventional

Secondary study design

Cluster randomised trial

Study setting(s)

School

Study type(s)

Efficacy

Participant information sheet

Not available in web format, please use our contact details to request a participant information sheet.

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Police-taught PSHE lessons for students in years 7-10

Interventions

Year groups 7-10 at participating schools will be randomized into the treatment or control groups. The researchers are using a cluster, stratified randomisation, whereby the cluster is a year group and stratified by school. They used the block randomisation function (block_ra) from the R randomizr package: https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/randomizr/vignettes/randomizr_vignette.html. Two year groups at each school will be in the control group and two year groups in the treatment group.

The control group will have their PSHE lessons as they usually would.

The treatment group will receive one age-appropriate unit of lessons from a new PSHE curriculum designed by the PSHE Association. The units comprise three lessons, with the second lesson taught by a police officer.

Intervention Type

Behavioural

Primary outcome measure

Pupils' emotional and behavioural difficulties, as measured by the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), before and after teaching takes place

Secondary outcome measures

1. Offending and victimhood rates, measured using police crime data, in the year before and the year after the teaching takes place
2. Delinquent beliefs, measured using the Delinquent Beliefs Scale, before and after teaching takes place
3. Trust and confidence in the police, measured using the Perceptions of Police Scale before and after teaching takes place
4. Disclosure and help-seeking behaviour, measured using bespoke pupil survey questions,

before and after teaching takes place

5. Deterrence (change in behaviour), measured using bespoke survey questions such "Has this lesson made you feel more confident to talk to the police about the law and safety? Yes/No/Unsure", asked before and after teaching takes place

6. School attendance, measured using school administrative data, in the year before and after teaching takes place

Overall study start date

15/08/2024

Completion date

31/12/2026

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

1. Attending a mainstream school in the areas covered by one of Avon and Somerset Police, Greater Manchester Police, or Hertfordshire Police, where the school has chosen to take part in the study
2. Be in years 7, 8, 9, or 10
3. Have parental consent to complete student surveys

Participant type(s)

Learner/student

Age group

Child

Lower age limit

11 Years

Upper age limit

15 Years

Sex

Both

Target number of participants

24160

Key exclusion criteria

1. Participants attend a school that has not chosen to take part in the trial
2. Participants' parent/guardian opts them out of completing surveys
3. Participants are not in years 7, 8, 9, or 10

Date of first enrolment

01/02/2025

Date of final enrolment

31/12/2025

Locations

Countries of recruitment

England

United Kingdom

Study participating centre

Hertfordshire Constabulary HQ

Stanborough Road
Welwyn Garden City
United Kingdom
AL8 6XF

Study participating centre

Greater Manchester Police Force HQ

Northampton Road
Manchester
United Kingdom
M40 5BP

Study participating centre

Avon and Somerset Police

Valley Road
Portishead
Bristol
United Kingdom
BS20 8JJ

Sponsor information

Organisation

King's College London

Sponsor details

The Policy Institute
22 Kingsway
London
England
United Kingdom
WC2B 6LE

+44 (0)20 7848 2749
info.xgt@kcl.ac.uk

Sponsor type

University/education

Website

<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/index.aspx>

ROR

<https://ror.org/0220mzb33>

Funder(s)

Funder type

Charity

Funder Name

Youth Endowment Fund

Alternative Name(s)

YouthEndowFund, YEF

Funding Body Type

Private sector organisation

Funding Body Subtype

Trusts, charities, foundations (both public and private)

Location

United Kingdom

Results and Publications

Publication and dissemination plan

Protocol, pilot, and efficacy reports to be published on the Youth Endowment Fund website.
Planned publication in a peer-reviewed journal.

Intention to publish date

31/12/2027

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The data sharing plans for the current study are unknown and will be made available at a later date

IPD sharing plan summary

Data sharing statement to be made available at a later date