

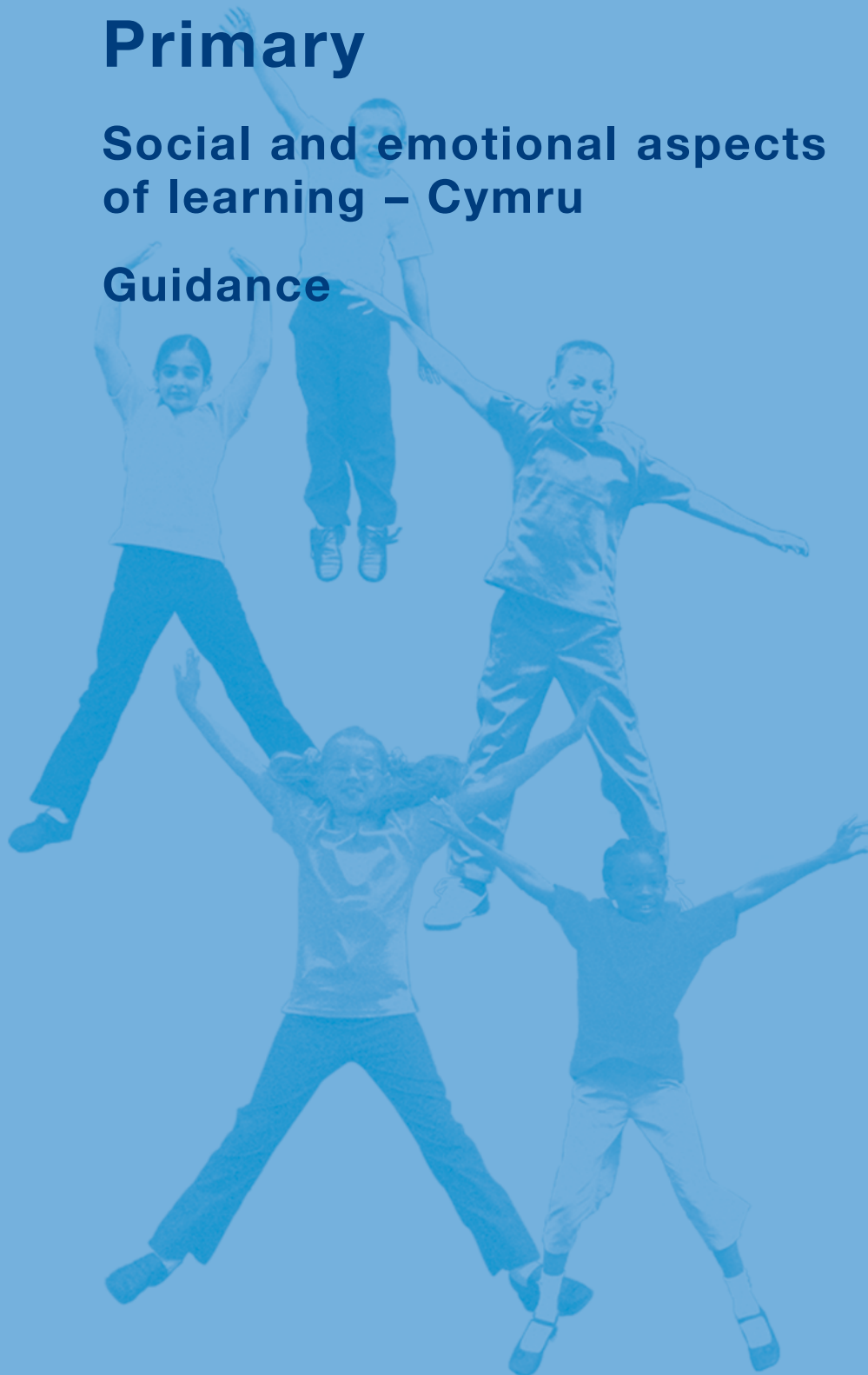


Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

# Primary

## Social and emotional aspects of learning – Cymru

### Guidance



**Headteachers, teachers  
and practitioners in  
funded Foundation  
Phase settings, primary  
schools, special  
schools, and local  
authority and Children's  
Services staff**

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## **Disclaimer**

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## Preface

The *Primary: Social and emotional aspects of learning – Cymru* (SEAL Cymru) materials are based on original materials produced by the Department of Education and Skills. These SEAL Cymru materials have been adapted and translated for use in Wales.

This publication aims to support settings and schools in promoting the progress and achievement of all learners. This inclusive education is an ongoing process concerned with ensuring equality of educational opportunity by accounting for and addressing the diversity present in schools.

It is underpinned by *Inclusion and Pupil Support: the National Assembly for Wales Circular No. 47/2006* (available at [www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills) in the 'Publications' section under 'Circulars').

A key purpose of this guidance is to act as a framework for inclusion to promote meeting the needs of all learners within an inclusive whole-school approach.

Teachers will need to adapt the materials further for individual pupils. Some examples of this have been provided. These are examples only – the particular choice of learning objectives, teaching styles and access strategies lies with the informed professionalism of the practitioner/teacher, working with support staff, parents/guardians and the pupil.

SEAL Cymru is also underpinned by the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF) (available at [www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills) in the 'News' section). This is the means by which the Welsh Assembly Government aims to raise pupil achievement overall, reduce variation in achievement within and between different groups of pupils, schools and local authorities, and diminish the link between attainment and socio-economic circumstances. SEAL Cymru fits into the School Effectiveness Framework by enabling children and young people to develop their full potential by acquiring skills, knowledge, understanding and attitudes to become socially and personally active citizens and lifelong learners.

The implementation of SEAL Cymru in schools was also one of the key recommendations of the National Behaviour and Attendance Review (NBAR) commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government to improve behaviour and attendance in schools (available at [www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills) in the 'Publications' section under 'Guidance and Information').

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## Introduction

### What is this resource and who is it for?

It consists of:

- a guidance booklet
- a set of resources to deliver seven whole-school themes, each consisting of an assembly to launch the theme and teaching ideas and materials for class-based follow-up at Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2
- an additional set of differentiated resources for small-group work with pupils who need extra help to develop their social, emotional and behavioural skills
- a set of staff-development activities and information sheets to accompany each theme
- a set of activities for families to use at home to accompany each theme
- a Whole-school resource file (posters, photographs, photocopiable resources and PowerPoint presentations).

The resource aims to provide settings and schools with an explicit, structured whole-curriculum framework for developing all children's social, emotional and behavioural skills. Such an approach makes a significant contribution to whole-setting/school provision for personal, social and emotional development in the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2.



The resource is intended for the whole school community. Its use is likely to be coordinated by the headteacher, together with the personal and social education (PSE) or healthy schools coordinator, or the school's lead behaviour professional. It will be delivered mainly by practitioners/teachers throughout the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2. In all settings/schools, all the adults who have contact with children – practitioners/teachers, lunchtime staff and support staff – need to be aware of the vocabulary used and the key ideas, for example, about solving problems, that are introduced to the children.

## What are the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) and why should we focus on them?

Various terms are used nationally and internationally to describe social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL)<sup>1</sup>, including personal and social development; emotional literacy; emotional intelligence; social and emotional competence; and social, emotional and behavioural skills.

It may be helpful to consider five broad social and emotional aspects of learning:

-  self-awareness
-  managing feelings
-  motivation
-  empathy
-  social skills.

These aspects are often considered to fall into two categories – the personal (for example, self-awareness) and the interpersonal (for example, social skills).



<sup>1</sup> Please note that while SEAL in the context of this resource stands for the social and emotional aspects of learning, SEAL is also the name for the Society for Effective Affective Learning ([www.seal.org.uk](http://www.seal.org.uk)).

## What are social, emotional and behavioural skills?

Within each of the social and emotional aspects of learning there are a number of individual **skills**. An early skill within the aspect of ‘empathy’, for example, would be to see something from someone else’s point of view – perhaps being able to see the ugly sisters’ point of view in *Cinderella*. In the ‘managing feelings’ aspect of learning, an early skill would be to be able to recognise and label a feeling and to be able to share it with another person, and a later skill would be to be able to use self-distraction or self-calming strategies in order to reduce its intensity.

Individual skills within each social and emotional aspect of learning are listed in each phase-based booklet. They take the form of ‘I can ...’ statements and represent the range of skills, knowledge and understanding that a pupil might demonstrate having accessed the learning opportunities within the resource.

Social, emotional and behavioural skills underlie almost every aspect of school, home and community life, including effective learning and getting on with other people. They are fundamental to school improvement.

Where pupils have good skills in these areas, and are educated within an environment supportive to emotional health and well-being, they will be motivated and equipped to:

- be effective and successful learners
- make and sustain friendships
- deal with and resolve conflict effectively and fairly
- solve problems with others or by themselves
- manage strong feelings such as frustration, anger and anxiety
- be able to promote calm and optimistic states that promote the achievement of goals
- recover from setbacks and persist in the face of difficulties
- work and play cooperatively
- compete fairly, and win and lose with dignity and respect for competitors
- recognise and stand up for their rights and the rights of others
- understand and value the differences and commonalities between people, respecting the right of others to have beliefs and values different from their own.

Most social, emotional and behavioural skills are developmental and change over time. For example, if we think about the experience of loss, we know that pupils’ capacity to manage the feelings involved, and the range of strategies at their disposal, will be very different in the early years than, for example, their experience at the age of 11. We cannot therefore ‘teach’ these skills as a one-off. There is a need to revisit and develop the concepts, skills and understanding over time, building on what has been learned previously.

The materials in this SEAL Cymru resource aim to support settings and schools in this process.

There are also differences in the ways that emotions may be valued, experienced and displayed across cultures. This is discussed further in the section on 'Culture, religion, gender and other individual difference' (see page 33). The need to make pupils' individual experiences central to the learning is promoted throughout the resource.

A broad range of evidence is now available to support claims for the effectiveness of work to develop pupils' social, emotional and behavioural skills, in a number of areas:

- greater educational and work success
- improvements in behaviour
- increased inclusion
- improved learning
- greater social cohesion.

Recently, research has focused in particular on the beneficial effects of focusing on social and emotional aspects of learning (within a supportive setting or whole-school environment) not just in terms of pupils having better goal-setting skills, social interactions and conflict resolution skills, but in terms of improved academic performance.

This, of course, comes as no surprise. We only have to imagine trying to learn a new skill when our brain's processing capacity is fighting for space against strong emotion – for example, rage with the driver who just cut us up at the traffic lights, or raw excitement following the news that we have just won the lottery.



As important as our ability to manage strong uncomfortable emotions, is our ability to promote calm and optimistic states of mind that facilitate learning.



The central role that the emotions play in every learning experience is one of the key findings of recent research. Much learning, moreover, takes place within a social context. Before pupils can begin to tackle the cognitive demands of any task, they need to be able to address the social and emotional components that accompany the activity.

## How does this relate to what we are doing already?

Most settings and schools are clearly already doing much to promote social and emotional learning as a key aspect of their setting or school culture. They may do this through:

- the whole-school environment
- the Foundation Phase, Personal and Social Development, Well-being and Cultural Diversity Area of Learning
- Key Stage 2, *Personal and social education framework for 7 to 19-year-olds in Wales*
- the approach to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- *Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales*
- opportunities across the school curriculum, particularly religious education (see *National exemplar framework for religious education for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales*)
- the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes (WNHSS)
- other initiatives such as circle time, self-esteem approaches, peer mediation, and commercially available schemes that specifically teach social, emotional and behavioural skills
- the extra support provided for pupils whose behavioural, social or emotional development is of concern.

There are clear areas of overlap between this resource and all these strands of work. The most relevant links to the following documents are highlighted within these materials:

- Foundation Phase, Personal and Social Development, Well-being and Cultural Diversity Area of Learning
- Key Stage 2, *Personal and social education framework for 7 to 19-year-olds in Wales*
- *Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales*.

Good practice in school personal and social education (PSE) and good practice in the development of SEAL Cymru will cover broadly similar skills, **with PSE also covering a broader range of topics or areas not specifically addressed through the SEAL programme**. The development of skills such as being able to defer gratification, take responsibility for one's own actions, understand and deal with peer pressure, act assertively, feel positive about oneself, defer gratification, and manage an increasingly complex range of feelings can be seen as generic 'building blocks' which underlie pupils' ability to achieve many of the aims detailed in the PSE framework.

To be successful, effective PSE and social, emotional and behavioural skills development require<sup>2</sup>:

- a high profile and value placed upon the outcomes at every level of school practice
- a shared understanding that it is the responsibility of the whole-school community to promote and foster social, emotional and behavioural skills and pupils' personal and social development
- a taught curriculum which is structured, progressive and that enables skills to be revisited and developed at different chronological ages
- a cross-curricular approach that reinforces the skills, knowledge and understanding taught through the explicit curriculum plan
- an emotionally safe and positive environment that is consistent with the taught curriculum
- school-wide sharing of aims, language and agreed strategies, for example, for calming down, conflict resolution, problem solving, and for talking about and managing feelings
- a structured and progressive whole-staff training programme that develops skills, and provides the experiences and information that lead to confidence in supporting pupils' social and emotional learning
- a parental-involvement programme.

The SEAL Cymru resource is built on the premise that each setting/school should find its own way into, and use for, the materials, drawing on the setting/school's own particular character. Some, for example, may choose to develop pupils' social, emotional and behavioural skills through core basic and foundation subjects, using the ideas provided for subject lessons. Others may have a strong tradition of daily circle time, and choose to use this as the main vehicle for addressing the themes and skills developed in the materials; others may be working on a Healthy School action or using an existing commercially available resource and would use these as their main implementation vehicle.

The resource is intended to supplement, not replace, the effective work that many settings and schools are already doing to develop social, emotional and behavioural skills. It is offered either as a set of additional activities and resources to support what is already going on in school, or as a stand-alone framework and resource into which other similar work can be slotted.

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 1.

## What does this resource offer the setting/school?

The resource offers:

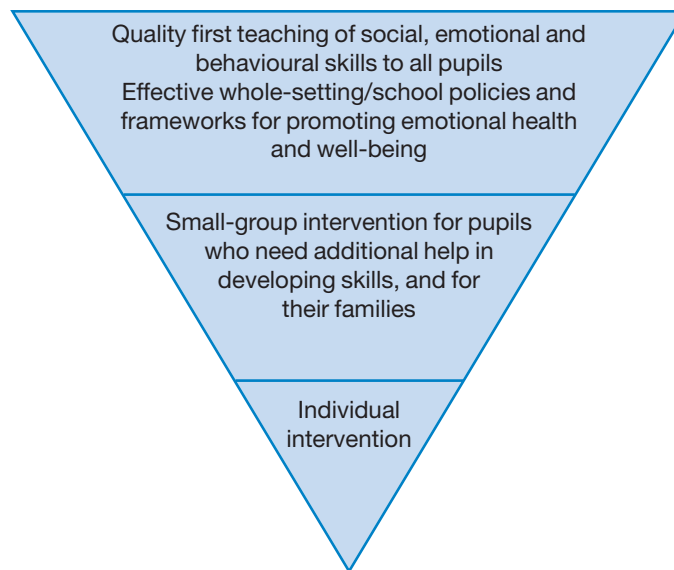
- an explicit, structured, whole-curriculum resource for developing the social, emotional and behavioural skills of **all** pupils (not just those whose behaviour or poor social skills cause problems), using current curricular arrangements
- a spiral curriculum which revisits each theme (and the skills associated with that theme) offering new ideas yearly, so that a child entering the school in the Foundation Phase and leaving at the end of Year 6 will have experienced each theme (at an appropriate level) each year; pupils can therefore demonstrate progress in the key social, emotional and behavioural skills as they progress
- a means of enhancing PSE
- assemblies/Foundation Phase group times on a clear SEAL theme
- suggestions for work around each assembly/Foundation Phase group time theme in each year group, from the Foundation Phase through to Year 6 – the aim is that different age groups work on different aspects of the shared theme, and can return in a follow-up assembly to present their work and reflect together on their learning
- the potential to teach pupils how to develop and use thinking skills and feelings together to guide their behaviour, using, for example, taught calming-down, problem-solving and conflict management techniques
- the potential to reach a shared understanding and use of these strategies across the setting/school, the home and the community
- a potential whole-setting/school focus for noticing and celebrating positive behaviours (for example, for a set period of time ‘catching pupils being kind’ or ‘catching pupils resolving an argument well’). This includes the whole setting/school community – pupils, parents/guardians, caretaker, office staff and lunchtime supervisors, as well as practitioners/teachers and teaching assistants – who can all nominate a pupil for celebration using the usual setting/school system.

## How does the resource relate to pupils with difficulties in this area?

It is generally acknowledged that any framework that involves a focus on the social and emotional aspects of learning will be unlikely to have an impact unless there is an explicit focus within the school/organisational environment on emotional health and well-being. There is also little doubt that there will always be a number of pupils who, for whatever reason, find that they need additional support in this area.

The image in Figure 1 may be helpful at this point.

**Figure 1**



At the top of the inverted triangle are the whole-setting/school initiatives that focus on creating an environment of emotional health and well-being, and a whole-setting/school approach to the development of pupils' social, emotional and behavioural skills. At the base are those interventions we use with individuals whose difficulties in this area prompt us to provide individualised and often multi-agency support. The more effective the provision made for all pupils (at the top of the inverted triangle), the fewer there will be who need the more individual support at the base.

This resource pack is part of the provision at the top of the triangle. It aims to provide a universal entitlement for all pupils to learn and practise social, emotional and behavioural skills within a spiral curriculum framework that allows them to progress in a structured and hierarchical fashion.

Supplementary materials are provided in the pack for pupils who may need additional help in small groups, but the main focus is on a universal entitlement to school-based social and emotional learning for **all** pupils.

## How is the resource organised?

This downloadable resource is organised into seven themes:

- Theme 1 *New beginnings*
- Theme 2 *Getting on and falling out*
- Theme 3 *Say no to bullying*
- Theme 4 *Going for goals!*
- Theme 5 *Good to be me*
- Theme 6 *Relationships*
- Theme 7 *Changes.*

Each theme consists of:

- staff development activities relevant to the theme (the **Purple** set)
- a theme *Overview* (including links to personal and social education, the skills framework and the Welsh Network Healthy Schools Scheme, and expected learning outcomes for pupils at each of four colour-coded levels) and a whole-school assembly/Foundation Phase group time script and questions (and ideas for varying it each year) to launch a series of classroom-based activities on the theme
- suggested learning opportunities and lesson plans for developing pupils' social, emotional and behavioural skills through the theme, at each of three colour-coded levels:
  - **Blue** set: Foundation Phase Elements 1–4
  - **Yellow** set: Years 3 and 4
  - **Green** set: Years 5 and 6(Practitioners/teachers will need to use their professional judgement, however, to decide which activities are developmentally appropriate for their pupils, and how to 'mix and match' when working in mixed-age classes.)
- differentiated learning opportunities intended for small-group work with pupils who need additional help in developing their social, emotional and behavioural skills (the **Silver** set)
- activities for families to do together at home (the **Gold** set).

A Whole-school resource file consisting of:

- posters for the classroom
- 'feelings' photocard
- photocopiable teacher/practitioner reference/resource material
- PowerPoint presentations.



The conclusion of each assembly/Foundation Phase group time should give pupils the opportunity to reflect in silence on what they have explored and to think of how this will apply to their own lives. Sitting in reflective silence is an important skill that can be taught and learned. If pupils have not previously practised this skill, make the time short (about one minute) to begin with, and extend it gradually to no more than three minutes. Using a candle to help this reflection is very effective. Pupils can watch the flame or close their eyes. Blowing out the candle signals that the thinking time is over. To mark the end of the assembly/Foundation Phase group time, pupils can shake hands with or smile at those nearest to them before they leave.

The assemblies, like other aspects of the work on the social and emotional aspects of learning, aim to develop pupils’:

- spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness through encouraging their sense of identity and self-worth
- morality through the teaching of principles that aim to guide behaviour
- social skills through highlighting the importance of living and working co-operatively in small and large groups within an ethnically diverse society
- culturally through giving pupils opportunities to explore their own and others’ cultural values and assumptions.

For some children in the Foundation Phase it may not be appropriate to use assemblies to introduce the theme. Practitioners should use their own judgement as to whether a whole-setting/school assembly or class/group gathering, or a mixture of these, is the more appropriate place to introduce themes. The suggested activities should work effectively whatever context is used.

Particular thought will need to be given with the assembly stories to supporting children at the earlier stages of learning English or Welsh as an additional language, and children with additional learning needs (ALN) who have difficulties in understanding complex language. Strategies might include the following:

- introducing each story in a small group setting before the assemblies, using the illustrations supplied in the Whole-school resource file and giving opportunities for paired talk and peer discussion
- pre-listening activities such as predicting what the story will be about through exposure to the title, first line of the story or a key illustration – children can then go on to predict the words they expect to hear in the story or what questions they think the story may answer
- creating simplified audio stories and/or illustrated text stories using children’s illustrations or other visual presentations, accompanied by simplified speech or text in English/Welsh and/or other languages, or in symbols
- recording the stories in languages used in the school and community
- active listening exercises during the assembly story, such as having an illustrated list and listening out for these words in the story, or sequencing the supplied illustrations as the story unfolds
- follow-up work after hearing the stories, including sequencing picture cards of events and making cartoon strips, story maps or timelines.

## How are the links made to the curriculum and other aspects of setting/school life?

In each theme overview there is a section entitled 'Links and crossovers'. Links are made with related areas in other initiatives, such as the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes (WNHSS).

Attention is also drawn to themes which link particularly well with established initiatives such as peer mediation (links to Theme 2 *Getting on and falling out*) and buddying schemes/circles of friends (links to Theme 1 *New beginnings*).

Specific links to the personal and social education framework and the skills framework are made in the introductory section to each colour-coded theme set.

Teachers will have many ideas on how to link their teaching to other work they are doing in English/Welsh, mathematics, science, history, geography, art and design, music, design and technology, ICT, PE and RE.



## An overview of the themes and structure of the resource



Timings are suggested that tie into the setting/school year (for example, *New beginnings* in September and *Going for goals!* in January). The suggested timings are not fixed and settings and schools may want to work on them at different times, for example, to reflect the festivals of different religions and cultures. Settings and schools also need to be aware that within the suggested sequence of themes later work sometimes builds on key concepts taught earlier in the year. For this reason, if settings and schools reorder the themes in the first year of using them, they will need to be aware of these key concepts (for example, the peaceful problem-solving process), and plan how they will specifically address them in preparation for work on the theme of their choice.

Theme number and suggested time of year	Theme title	Key social and emotional aspects of learning addressed
1. September/October	<i>New beginnings</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Empathy</b></li> <li>• Self-awareness</li> <li>• Motivation</li> <li>• Social skills</li> </ul>
2. November/December	<i>Getting on and falling out</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Managing feelings</b></li> <li>• Empathy</li> <li>• Social skills</li> </ul>
3. One to two weeks in the autumn term (to coincide with national anti-bullying week in November)	<i>Say no to bullying</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Empathy</b></li> <li>• Self-awareness</li> <li>• Social skills</li> </ul>
4. January/February	<i>Going for goals!</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Motivation</b></li> <li>• Self-awareness</li> </ul>
5. February/March	<i>Good to be me</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Self-awareness</b></li> <li>• <b>Managing feelings</b></li> <li>• Empathy</li> </ul>
6. March/April	<i>Relationships</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Self-awareness</b></li> <li>• <b>Managing feelings</b></li> <li>• Empathy</li> </ul>
7. June/July	<i>Changes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Motivation</b></li> <li>• <b>Social skills</b></li> <li>• Managing feelings</li> </ul>

### The importance of making the SEAL Cymru resource part of a whole-setting/school approach

When the SEAL resource was piloted in England, the external evaluation team found that ‘for the resource to work well, it is important that the whole school community engage with the materials’. For maximum impact, all the classes in the school will be thinking about the same ideas and using a shared language over the same period of time.

The use of the resource needs also to be embedded within a whole-setting/school approach and environment that supports emotional health and well-being. For all schools that belong to the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes (WNHSS), Mental and Emotional Health and Wellbeing is one of the seven topics that need to be covered as part of the National Quality Award. SEAL Cymru could provide an element of that.

Some of the factors that research has identified as essential to success include:

- senior management commitment to the principles and understanding of the implications
- setting/school systems that make sure that all individuals feel valued and listened to
- positive relationships in the setting/school: adult–child, child–child, adult–adult
- teacher (or practitioner) insight and knowledge into the emotional factors that affect learning
- clear and consistently implemented policies on behaviour, bullying, race equality and inclusion
- high professional standards
- skilful teaching that arouses pupil interest and motivates
- proactive work with parents/guardians
- the active involvement of pupils themselves.

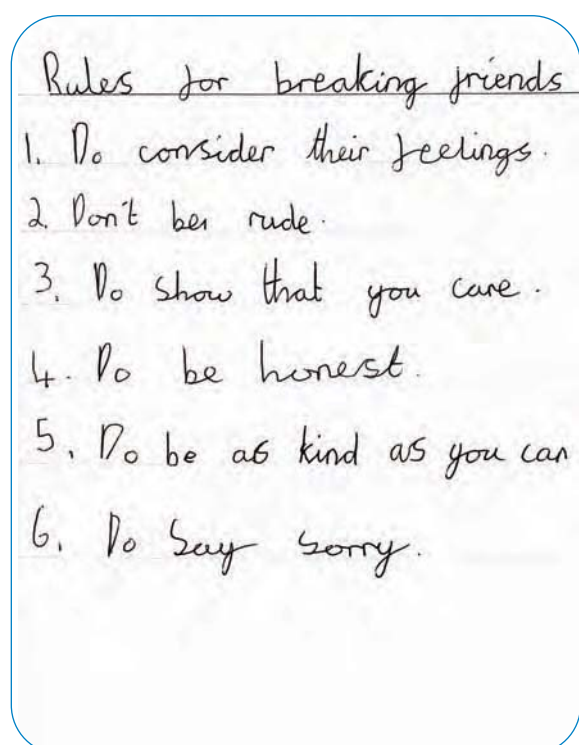
Settings and schools planning to use these materials will want to make sure that as far as possible all these conditions are in place.

Schools might like to explore the WNHSS Assessment Tool available from local Healthy School Schemes Coordinators.

## Planning the curriculum: issues to consider

The decision to use the SEAL Cymru materials will require a careful process of strategic planning. This should support a review of the school's overall PSE provision and should therefore involve the PSE coordinator and healthy school coordinator, and be taken after discussion with governors and with their full support.

Senior managers and the person with everyday responsibility for SEAL will need time for planning the implementation of the resource. Subject coordinators should be involved in this process as the resource is curriculum-wide. Feedback should be sought at each stage from other staff, pupils and parents/guardians.



It is likely that there will be overlaps with what is happening already in the setting/school and these need to be identified and the resource dovetailed with what is already in place. Helpful questions to ask yourself are suggested below.

- What are our needs and priorities regarding the development of social, emotional and behavioural skills (taking into consideration the unique character of our setting/school and local geographic area)?
  - What is the current state of social, emotional and behavioural skills development and how is it being achieved?
  - What is working well for us in this area?
  - What are the gaps in current practice?
  - How is progress ensured (and assessed) in this area?
- What could be changed/dropped/added in the light of this new resource? In particular:
    - should the resource be used as an organising framework into which other SEAL work can be fitted, or should the resource be nested within the current arrangements for the delivery of PSE?
    - what staffing and timetabling issues arise?
    - how will the assemblies be slotted into our existing framework for assemblies and acts of collective worship?
    - how can we ensure that our provision meets the needs of all our pupils?
  - If the SEAL Cymru activities provided are to be delivered as separate sessions as a follow-up to assembly/Foundation Phase group time, where will we locate these sessions? Will it be in existing time for PSE, for example? Or within circle time? Or at another time?

- How do the suggested curriculum activities fit in with our schemes of work?
- How can we ensure that subject coordinators are involved in planning?
- How can we ensure that pupils understand the purpose of work to develop their social, emotional and behavioural skills, and are involved in planning?
- How will we involve parents/guardians in our plans?
- What sources of support will we draw on?
- What initial and ongoing training will be necessary?
- What resources might we need?
- How will we reflect all this in our School Development or Improvement Plan?

### Professional development for staff

As with the introduction of any cross-curricular resource, planning may need to include professional development for school staff. The development of pupils' social, emotional and behavioural skills involves both the formal and informal curriculum, and it is therefore important that aspects of the professional development opportunities include all setting/school personnel (lunchtime supervisors, caretaker, secretarial and administrative staff, and any other staff who have direct contact with the pupils).

The resource includes a number of sets of materials (the Purple sets) for flexible use within school to meet the professional development needs of all school staff. The sets consist of:

- an introductory set in Theme 1 *New Beginnings* about developing social, emotional and behavioural skills as a whole-school approach
- a theme-by-theme set of ideas to support staff as they work on that theme with their class groups.

The introductory set of ideas aims to enable all members of staff in school to feel confident, competent and enthusiastic about work on social and emotional aspects of learning. The ideas can be used as part of an in-service day or used within staff meetings.






They cover issues such as the following.

- What are the social and emotional aspects of learning and why should we focus on them?
- What are social, emotional and behavioural skills?
- What are we already doing in school and how will this resource add value to current practice?
- What is the purpose, structure and key content of the resource? How does it involve parents/guardians?
- What are the things that everyone in school will be doing?
- How does this work relate to teaching and learning and how will it work in practice in the classroom and outside?

The theme-by-theme Purple sets of ideas and information can also be used by schools in staff meetings, twilight sessions or within INSET days. They provide an opportunity for staff to explore the theme content, understand some underlying concepts and make links between their own experiences and those the pupils may bring to the work.

Professional development activities should emphasise the essential role of all staff in modelling the social, emotional and behavioural skills that the materials seek to develop in pupils. A useful training activity is to work in pairs or small groups to generate ideas on the adult behaviours and language that promote pupils' skills in each of the social and emotional aspects of learning, as in Figure 2 (below).

**Figure 2**

Social and emotional aspects of learning	Adult behaviour and language that helps to develop pupils' individual social, emotional and behavioural skills within each aspect
Self-awareness 	
Empathy 	
Managing feelings 	
Motivating ourselves 	
Social skills 	

As staff work with the curriculum materials, they may also identify specific training needs on approaches such as circle time or communities of enquiry, that lend themselves particularly well to work on developing pupils' social, emotional and behavioural skills.

## Gathering resources

Settings/schools might want to identify books from their school library to support each SEAL theme, and keep them in a central place. The Whole-school resource file contains a list of useful texts for each theme, and the Southampton library service provides a regularly updated web-based list of English language texts that link to particular emotions. This can be found online at [www.nelig.com](http://www.nelig.com)

Local library services may provide appropriate books in English and Welsh, and you may also find relevant English and Welsh language resources listed online at [www.gwales.com](http://www.gwales.com)

In one school which has used the resource as a framework to organise current practice and resources, the PSE coordinator has placed a large box for each theme in the staffroom. At staff meetings and in the course of their teaching, staff place any book or resource they find relevant to a theme in the box – or if they continue to need the resource they record it as a reference. Contributions are briefly discussed at staff meetings.

## Getting started

In addition to the work with all staff on key concepts and whole-setting/school context, the management team will need to plan:

- one or more staff meetings prior to the theme 'launch', to ensure consistency and staff knowledge, understanding and confidence through use of Purple set activities
- a 30-minute assembly (or shorter Foundation Phase group time) to launch each theme
- dedicated sessions to develop social, emotional and behavioural skills in each class for each theme, delivered flexibly in whatever format is decided by the setting/school (this is when the outlined activities can be used) – schools have found it effective to suggest a minimum amount of time to be spent on developing social, emotional and behavioural skills in each class over the half-term (around four hours has proved to be a workable amount of time) and to give teachers flexibility about how, what and when; they will also see possibilities for extending the ideas across the wider school curriculum
- a follow-up assembly to share work undertaken and success in achieving learning outcomes.

## Parental involvement

Parents and guardians are the key to developing pupils' social, emotional and behavioural skills. They are the experts on their own child, and their knowledge about their child's developing skills can provide enormously valuable information about what is working and what is needed.

It is essential to involve parents and guardians when introducing the approaches described in these materials. They should be consulted on initial planning and asked for their views as the work develops.

One useful approach is to engage groups of pupils in preparing a presentation of their work to develop social, emotional and behavioural skills for a parents' evening or other meeting. Showing DVDs of pupils taking part in these activities is another good 'draw' for such events.

Many schools have launched their work on the curriculum materials with a specially planned workshop for parents/guardians that explores the skills pupils will be developing. Ideas for such a workshop can be found in the Whole-school resource file.

In all the themes in the curriculum materials there are ideas for activities pupils can do at home with their families, to support their work in school and build on the partnership with parents/guardians that has been established.

Parents/guardians can contribute to work to develop social, emotional and behavioural skills in classes (for example, where visitors are involved in speaking about their experiences) and be invited to take part in the assemblies that launch and conclude each theme. They will be interested in the whole-setting/school focus for noticing and celebrating achievement, and may want to have a similar focus at home. They will also be interested in key concepts, such as the problem-solving strategy that pupils learn, and need to know the rationale that underpins them.

Newsletters, the annual school profile or governors' report to parents/guardians and information in the setting/school's brochure are other vehicles for ongoing communication.

In all of this it is essential to be aware of the diversity in the parent/guardian group, and choose approaches that reach out to all parents/guardians – regardless of their language abilities, values and experiences of education. It is necessary to challenge assumptions that some groups will not be interested in what the school has to offer. There may be a need for extra encouragement or support to enable them to be actively involved – family learning initiatives, for example, can often provide necessary bridges to diverse groups. Demystifying education and explaining, sometimes to targeted groups, how parents/guardians can support their children in developing social, emotional and behavioural skills is vital in overcoming fears and other hidden barriers.

## Involving children

One of the key outcomes of successful work to develop social, emotional and behavioural skills is independent and autonomous children who are able to take ownership of their learning and behaviour. Achievement of these outcomes will depend on how the school as a whole promotes pupil participation.

When teaching social, emotional and behavioural skills the practitioner/teacher should be constantly asking themselves how they can encourage children to take ownership. Ideas might include:

- involving children fully in the decision to implement the SEAL curricular approach, and making sure they, as well as adults, understand the purpose of the work and the hoped-for outcomes
- involving them in the identification of criteria that demonstrate success
- involving them in the evaluation of their learning
- providing choice as to how activities and tasks are completed and information presented
- encouraging them to determine their own questions for enquiry and debate
- using behaviour management techniques that encourage children to make a choice about their behaviour
- providing opportunities for children to determine class and playground rules and routines, and ground rules for the activities to develop their social, emotional and behavioural skills
- providing opportunities for children to explore how they might establish a classroom environment and ethos that promotes good learning and emotional well-being.

School councils encourage children to take part in decision-making within the whole-school context. These are most effective when they are supported by regular class councils or circle time that provide a forum for class and school issues to be discussed.



## Teaching social, emotional and behavioural skills

### Teaching and learning styles

The learning opportunities suggested in this resource have been devised so that social and emotional learning forms the subject matter of learning intentions set out by the practitioner/teacher. This is the part of the curriculum where social, emotional and behavioural skills are made explicit ('taught'). These classroom sessions complement the rest of the pupils' setting/school experiences where social, emotional and behavioural skills are more likely to be implicit – 'caught'.

A range of teaching strategies is used to motivate both those who learn primarily through verbal channels and those whose preferred learning style may be more visual or kinaesthetic. Much of the learning will necessarily take place through experiential activities, as developing social, emotional and behavioural skills involves engaging the heart as well as the head. Many of the suggested learning opportunities are exploratory and open-ended to reflect the nature of much of the subject matter. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning, and to enquire together to ensure that they reach a deeper and more meaningful understanding of the complex issues involved in developing social, emotional and behavioural skills. They are also encouraged to learn through participating in groups of different sizes, and problem solving together.

Wherever possible, practitioners/teachers will want to relate the subject matter of the classroom sessions not just to the assembly/Foundation Phase group time, but to recent, concrete experience – a playgroup pupil who fetched an adult when he noticed a new pupil was distressed, for example, or an incident in the playground or a dispute in class. A personal story or object of interest can also generally be counted upon to promote pupils' active engagement.

## The structure of the teaching sessions

Sessions have deliberately been presented as a series of flexible, related learning opportunities, to allow for a variety of learning and teaching styles.

There are several approaches that lend themselves to promoting SEAL work. One that is familiar to many practitioners/teachers, and may be established within the setting/school already, is circle time. Ideas for circle games and rounds are given for each theme. These are used as warm-ups to create a climate where pupils feel free to share feelings and experiences. Guidance in implementing circle time can be found through local Healthy School Scheme Coordinators or in English at [www.circle-time.co.uk](http://www.circle-time.co.uk)

After the ideas for circle time come learning opportunities to match the intended learning outcomes of the theme. These include some that would be suitable for a whole-class approach and some which pupils could engage in independently, in pairs, small groups or individually. Symbols in the materials indicate which of these applies.

Whole class  Pairs  Small groups  Individual 

When planning their teaching, practitioners/teachers will want to draw on ideas for whole class, group or individual work to ensure a balance, just as they would for any other lesson.

Some examples of how they have planned their lessons in this way are given in Figures 4 and 5.

**Figure 3**

SEAL Cymru Planning : Year 5 <i>Getting on and falling out</i>						
Day	Whole-class activities	Group activities with differentiation when necessary	Resources	Plenary	Main learning objectives	Evaluation
12 Nov 40 mins	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use circle game 'Thunderstorm' as a warm up</li> <li>2. Show seven photos from pack to illustrate different feelings listed on first page of Green set. Invite pupils to give ideas as to which feelings might be shown – scribe on board.</li> <li>3. Explain feeling line task – model my own anger line. 10 mins.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Divide class into seven groups – mixed gender. Remind about our cooperative group working rules.</li> <li>2. Give each group a photo showing the feeling they need to use. Stress that they need to do activity without talking.</li> <li>3. HK to work with MH group and give them anger photo as MH already done work on this. 5 mins. Check LI and SP understand the task and include in group with pupils who can express their ideas clearly.</li> <li>4. Group then compares their lines and elect spokesperson to feed back to class. 10 mins.</li> <li>5. Feedback to class. 10 mins.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Green set, Theme 2: Year 5</li> <li>2. Seven photos from pack.</li> <li>3. Plain paper and coloured crayons.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Talk about differences between lines showing the same feeling.</li> <li>2. Discuss why some lines were easier for us to guess.</li> </ol>	<p>To improve our ability to label a feeling.</p> <p>To be able to express what different feelings are.</p> <p>To work co-operatively with others.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Decided to allow pupils to use more than one colour on their lines – red and black used on anger lines.</li> <li>2. Pupils asked if they could guess feeling shown in each group's lines. Worked well and used in plenary.</li> <li>3. Make display of lines with sticky note over 'feeling' word. See if other pupils can guess the feeling drawn. Put on SEAL board.</li> </ol>

Figure 4

Ask the pupils the following questions.

- How can we improve the time we are all moving?
- What did it feel like to help others?
- What did it feel like to be helped?

**Rounds**

When I help other people I feel ...

When other people help me I feel ...

\* My friends are special to me because ...

I think it is unfair when ...

I would like ...

(20 mins)

15 November

1. Do this as Circle.
2. Scribe pupils' ideas and discuss how these show qualities.
3. Move on to discuss key qualities, below

**Learning opportunities: key qualities in a friend**

**Intended learning outcome**

I can tell you lots of ways to give 'friendship tokens' to other people.



In the class group recap on what it takes to be a good friend. You might want to use some of the 'friendship' photocards from the Whole-school resource file. What qualities do we look for in our friends, and what do we offer to friends? Remind pupils of the assembly story and how people in the story gave each other friendship tokens. Are the same things important in a friend now that you are in Year 4 as when you were in Reception – do we use the same sort of friendship tokens?

do in 3's (10 mins)



Ask pairs or individual pupils to produce a story or comic strip, role play or talk that illustrates how one of the qualities they have identified has been important to them in the past, or might be in a fictional situation. What is the best friendship token they have ever received or given? *Plenary Choose 2 groups to perform. Discuss which qualities shown.*



Alternatively ask the pupils to write a poem or story using one of the qualities as a title.

*one group took bullying theme – we will need more discussion about when to include an adult.*

**Evaluation**

**Learning opportunities: understanding anger**

**Intended learning outcomes**

I understand why it is important to calm down before I am overwhelmed by feelings of anger.

I can tell you some ways I can stop myself being overwhelmed by feelings of anger.

I know how it feels to be overwhelmed by feelings of anger.

We had some pupils with ALN who found the abstract idea of friendship tokens problematic. We found a way to make the concept more concrete by spraying buttons with gold paint and giving each pupil five buttons to give away as friendship tokens – for example, when someone did something nice for them and they wanted to say thank you. We kept the supply topped up so that everyone always had five. The pupils could see how the more that were given out, the more there were in the class.



Many of the suggested classroom sessions include a group challenge – a timed small-group activity with a defined product or outcome.

All the materials include a set of questions to promote reflection and enquiry.

The questions designed for enquiry and reflection are open-ended: even if the teacher has a definite view about what they think the answer might be, they should encourage pupils to express their own views and provide evidence and examples to support them.

There are different ways to use the questions but to get started the teacher might like to run a group enquiry (details of this approach can be found in English at [www.sapere.net](http://www.sapere.net)). In a true group enquiry a pupil or small group of pupils choose questions that they would like to discuss – because they may initially find this difficult, the materials provide some questions as starting points. The teacher writes these (or the pupils' own ideas for questions) on the whiteboard or flipchart and facilitates a discussion that involves the whole group. The teacher helps them to think more deeply about the issues involved, to check understanding of the vocabulary and to provide examples and evidence for their views.

The 'pair, share, square' approach is also helpful. Following a little individual reflection, pupils work in pairs to discuss what they think the key issues within the question are and what they think the answer might be. Each group then pairs up with another pair to share their ideas and to discuss the question further, before sharing their favoured view with the whole group.

In Elements 1 and 2 of the Foundation Phase the questions for reflection and enquiry are designed for use while adults work with the children in the setting/school. Other questions might be added and they might be pinned on the wall as a prompt.

Particular thought will need to be given to how to include children in the early stages of learning a language, either English or Welsh in the questions for reflection and enquiry. The language involved, such as conditionals ('could/would/should') and abstract generalisations, is likely to be particularly difficult for them. It may be helpful to begin each reflection and enquiry with a reference back to a concrete situation that they have already collaboratively experienced.

After the questions for reflection and enquiry there are suggestions for review and pupil evaluation. These could form a plenary, drawing out key learning points, checking understanding and asking the question – have the intended learning outcomes been met? It is also often appropriate to end positively by asking children to make a personal statement about something they will/can do as a result of achieving the intended learning outcome.

At the beginning of any teaching session, it is suggested that teachers talk to the children clearly about the intended learning outcomes for the session (what they will learn, expressed in child-friendly language), and together come up with success criteria – how they will know if they have achieved the intended outcome. For example, if the intended learning outcome is to ‘have a number of strategies for making other people feel good’, the class might agree that ‘We will know we have succeeded if we can list three ways in which we can do this’.

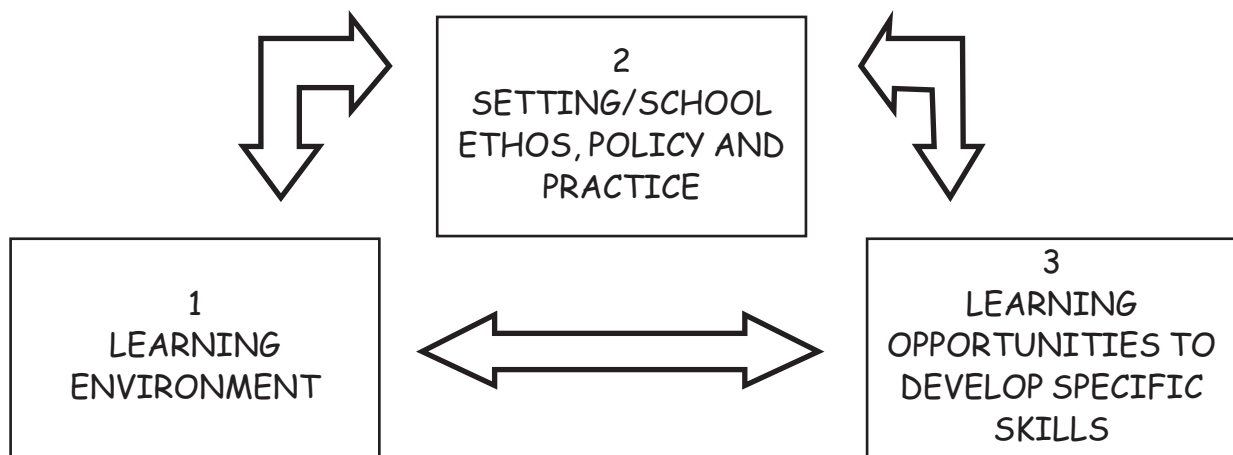
### Using the materials in the Foundation Phase

The SEAL Cymru curriculum materials are designed to be used across the whole school, including the Foundation Phase. They are intended to support important elements of Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity as described in the *Foundation Phase: Framework for Children’s Learning for 3 to 7-year-olds in Wales*. It should provide for progression and consistency with social and emotional learning for children aged 3 to 7 years using Elements 1 to 4 in the Blue set.

The curriculum materials as a whole recognise that children learn about social, emotional and behavioural skills across the whole day and that the setting/school’s climate and environment are crucial to effective learning. The materials draw therefore on a number of approaches (Figure 5) that are interlinked and support children’s learning and development in a holistic way:

1. developing the learning environment
2. developing the ethos and practice to support the social and emotional aspects of learning across all areas of the curriculum
3. planning learning and teaching opportunities which develop specific skills.

**Figure 5**



The materials are not prescriptive but provide a menu of ideas that might be helpful when promoting the aspects of learning highlighted in a particular theme. In the Foundation Phase materials (the Blue sets) the type of learning and teaching is indicated in the following way, to help with the practitioner/teacher’s planning.



- Adult-led – where language and ideas are specifically introduced and developed by the practitioner.



- Child-initiated – where learning is child-initiated, supported by adaptations to the learning environment and social interaction which promote particular avenues of exploration and discussion.

## Culture, religion, gender and other individual differences

It is important to treat all pupils as individuals and not make assumptions as diversity occurs within as well as across cultural groups. This can be in relation to the appropriateness of different behaviours, the encouragement or discouragement of expressing certain emotions and issues of what constitutes personal space.

As an example, certain cultures regard direct eye-contact between a young person and a more senior member of society as extremely ill-mannered. When discussing facial expressions denoting emotions, teachers will need to be sensitive to such issues.

Teachers will need to be aware of the influence of culture, religion, gender and other individual differences when working with the activities in this resource. (It needs to be considered that there is diversity between cultures.)

While no teacher is likely to be an expert in all the cultural conventions and expectations of all the cultures that may be represented within a community, it is important that such issues are raised and addressed sensitively.

Examples of differing cultural norms that may affect work to develop social, emotional and behavioural skills are not hard to find. In some cultures that place great value on community and the role of a greater good, some of the underlying premises within Theme 4 *Going for goals!* may appear rather individually focused and run counter to what pupils from these cultures may learn within the family or community.

Another example might be the work within Theme 5 *Good to be me* on the positive feeling 'proud', which may conflict with beliefs in some cultures or religions that pride is a sin.



Pupils need to know that it is safe and appropriate (indeed valuable) to say, 'In my home we do/did it this way ...', or 'If I did that, my parents would think ...'. Within a safe environment that values and celebrates cultural diversity, it is important that teachers find ways of finding out where differences lie, and model interest and respect.

One aspect of cultural difference that all pupils will need to understand is that of appropriate behaviour between contexts – for example, the playground as opposed to the setting/school. The activities to develop social, emotional and behavioural skills will support the teacher in ensuring that pupils understand that some behaviours are appropriate in some contexts, but quite unacceptable in another, and to recognise when this is the case.

Pupils with ALN or disabilities will also have different experiences in relation to social, emotional and behavioural learning. Those with a sensory impairment, for example, will have particular ways of recognising and understanding others' emotions, and this needs to be recognised and valued when discussing facial expressions, body language and voice tones. Pupils on the autistic spectrum will have particular difficulty with self-awareness, managing feelings and empathy, so that the teachers who work with them need to avoid inappropriate expectations. For those with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties, teachers can look at the guidance provided at [www.wales.gov.uk/personalandsocialeducation](http://www.wales.gov.uk/personalandsocialeducation). They may need to plan ways of providing the pupil with sensory experiences linked to the whole-class focus – for example, a bag of objects that relate to key events in a story told to the pupils. To ensure access, teachers and teaching assistants could use symbol software to support assemblies and stories used in class.

With appropriate scaffolding of this kind it is likely that pupils with a range of ALN will benefit significantly from the explicit teaching of social, emotional and behavioural skills and the opportunities for supported practice and generalisation.

Pupils who are learning a language may need particular support. This can include visual cues, repeated patterns of language, clearly signposted sections to the progress of the lesson and opportunities and structures to share their existing knowledge and experiences. Situations where they are not able to participate and achieve because success is wholly dependent on fluency in a language can be particularly damaging to their confidence, and hence to the development of the social, emotional and behavioural skills that the SEAL Cymru materials seek to promote.

Teachers will want to think carefully about identifying the best groupings for language learners according to the task and learning outcomes, ensuring, for example, good language role models, good behaviour/interaction role models, and opportunities to speak their home language. Teachers will also want to be aware of the needs of pupils newly arrived to the country, who may not have experienced some learning styles that are commonplace in our schools, such as learning through play, collaborative learning, trying out ideas and learning through discovery.

Throughout the materials there are examples of how teachers have scaffolded the learning of pupils with ALN or language difficulties, or of those from different cultures. These are not comprehensive, but are intended to provide a model for teachers' own annotations of planning.

Boys and girls are likely to respond differently to some of the activities, and may find different areas more or less difficult. Teachers will need to be sensitive to these potential differences, and to the fact that the expression of emotion, talking about feelings and being seen to be empathetic and caring tend to be seen as feminine traits, with the consequence that boys may actively reject them rather than risk potential ridicule from peers and criticism at home. Teachers will need to be aware of these issues during the planning and delivery stages and it would be useful for settings and schools to have developed a consistent response to them. Positive male role-models are a useful source of countering such responses, and examples for situations, stories and role play should, wherever possible, engage the interest and motivation of boys.

## Ensuring inclusion

Practitioners/teachers and managers can ensure that the SEAL Cymru resource supports the setting/school in fulfilling aspects of the 'Including all learners' statement (found at the front of all national curriculum subject Orders and frameworks) and complies with the setting/school's race equality and anti-bullying policies, by:

- explicitly tackling relevant issues through the assemblies, the learning opportunities provided within sessions to develop social, emotional and behavioural skills and related formal or informal curriculum-based work, for example:
  - encouraging pupils to recognise, understand, celebrate and respect similarities and differences between people
  - challenging stereotyping, prejudice and bullying in all its forms
  - using teaching styles within the setting/school that ensure that all pupils feel safe to contribute and that their contribution is valued
- ensuring that the needs of all pupils are planned for when delivering the school curriculum and that the curriculum is made accessible for all, for example:
  - using a range of teaching approaches to maximise learning for pupils with different learning styles
  - ensuring that subject matter builds on all pupils' cultural experiences and interests
  - using materials that show positive images of race, religion, gender, disability and sexual orientation
  - ensuring pupils with a high degree of mobility, absenteeism or additional learning needs (including those who have understanding in advance of their language abilities) are able to access the material
  - building on community languages.

A community where social, emotional and behavioural skills are seen as important and where pupils practise these skills creates a caring environment based upon empathy and the valuing of individual difference. This is essential if a setting/school is to become an inclusive learning environment where all forms of discrimination are actively combated.

### Assessing pupils' progress

There are no formal arrangements for assessing individual pupil's progress in developing social, emotional and behavioural skills included with this resource. Within each theme overview, however, there are descriptions for each age group of what pupils will know, understand and be able to do following the successful completion of work on the theme. For children in the Foundation Phase these descriptions will contribute to assessments of progress within the Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity Area of Learning as described in the *Foundation Phase: Framework for Children's Learning for 3 to 7-year-olds in Wales*. For pupils in Key Stage 2, the descriptions will contribute to judgements teachers make about pupils' progress within PSE.

Practitioners/teachers are encouraged to share clear intended learning outcomes and devise, with pupils, success criteria to test if these have been met at the beginning and plenary of each session. The assessment and monitoring of pupils' learning is therefore continuous and formative. In this way pupils know that they are making progress in developing important skills. They and others learn to value and celebrate their achievements in this as well as more academic areas of work.

Clearly, where a pupil is having significant difficulty in making progress in their social and emotional learning, despite an appropriate environment and learning opportunities, the setting/school's usual arrangements for identifying concerns would be used.

### Monitoring and evaluating impact

Settings and schools may wish to consider how they will monitor and evaluate the impact of using the curriculum approach suggested in these materials. They may want to use some sort of 'before' and 'after' measures of pupils' behaviour and learning, or evaluate the impact the work may have had on staff well-being, or classroom and setting/school ethos. There are some tools for such monitoring and evaluation available, and these are listed in Appendix 3.

## Generalising the learning

Little of value would be learned if the focus on social and emotional aspects of learning within a setting/school was limited to an occasional assembly/Foundation Phase group time and a couple of follow-up sessions. It is essential that what is learned is not tied to specific situations but is generalised to different contexts. It has been clearly demonstrated that pupils need to practise newly acquired skills.

Opportunities within each theme aim to provide the routine, regular and predictable work required to develop specific skills across the curriculum, and reinforce these skills by pupils' real life experiences across the whole school. To help pupils generalise to real-life situations, teachers might consider the following:

- post questions arising from the assembly/Foundation Phase group time around the setting/school with opportunities for pupils/parents/staff to add their thoughts – these could be shared at the final 'revisiting' assembly
- ensure that all setting and school staff make frequent reference to, for example, the calming-down or problem-solving strategy, encouraging the use of these strategies and praising accordingly
- as adults, model social, emotional and behavioural skills and the calming-down/ problem-solving strategies/feeling identification process, etc. – stating the process out loud can be particularly effective for modelling (again, with due regard to the age of the pupils)
- be on the lookout for examples of when the pupils use social, emotional and behavioural skills and draw attention to them whenever they are found (as appropriate to their age – 'Shahnaz is sharing her gel pens with Lloyd; she knew he was feeling sad')
- use key strategies taught through the resource throughout the day for real incidents in the classroom or playground (for example, problem solving or 'peaceful problem solving' for resolving conflict)
- make frequent reference to posters and visual aids displayed around the setting/school
- display the focus of any whole-setting/school system for noticing and celebrating achievement in the setting/schools's reception area, dinner hall, etc.
- encourage all adults to make reference to social, emotional and behavioural skills throughout the day and encourage pupils to reflect upon how well they have worked and played together.

## Using the materials in the classroom

The materials provided represent a selection of learning opportunities to achieve specific learning outcomes for use in the classroom. They will be used flexibly according to the strategic plan adopted by the setting/school as a whole. They can be used in a 'pick and mix' approach to supplement an existing scheme, as they stand in their entirety, or as a series of starting points to springboard further work in the area.

If the materials are being used as they stand, following the assembly/Foundation Phase group time which launches the theme, the practitioner/teacher will need to refer to:

- the theme overview (which includes expected outcomes for pupils)
- the relevant activity set (there are four sets in each theme, colour-coded according to the stage or year group of the pupils) which describe ideas for developing the theme through the curriculum
- suggestions for follow-up activities.

Practitioners and teachers will also find it useful to have to hand photocopiable resources and posters from the Whole-school resource file. These include:

- *Are we ready for circle time?* – a poster to support the effective use of circle time
- *Feelings detective* – a poster to display in every classroom, that represents a process pupils can use to identify and name a feeling they or others are experiencing
- *Problem solving* – a poster to display in every classroom, that helps pupils stop and think about an alternative course of action when there is a problem between people
- *Peaceful problem solving* – a poster to display in every classroom, that helps pupils resolve conflict
- *Ways to calm down* – resource sheet
- *Emotional barometer* – photocopiable template, designed so that pupils can express the strength of a particular feeling, and the effect of interactions on their own emotional 'temperature'
- *Feelings fan* – photocopiable template, designed so that pupils can indicate a feeling they (or characters in the stories and scenarios in the materials) are experiencing
- *Working together self-review checklists* – to support effective group work.

Pupils are introduced to these strategies and tools in Theme 1 *New beginnings* and Theme 2 *Getting on and falling out*.

New pupils and staff members will need to be introduced to some or all of these strategies and tools.

Finally, everyone using the SEAL Cymru materials will need to be aware of the guidance on teaching sensitive issues in Appendix 2 (page 41).

## Appendix 1: Principles and features of effective SEAL programmes<sup>1</sup>

### General principles: ensuring the effectiveness of SEAL programmes

- Give work on emotional and social competence and well-being a high priority.
- Link work on behavioural and emotional problems with work on emotional and social competence and well-being.
- Take a holistic approach.
- Ensure coherence, teamwork and a multi-professional approach.
- Involve parents/guardians and communities.
- Start early, target early and take a long-term, developmental approach.
- Create and support environments that promote emotional and social competence and well-being.

### Specific features of programmes for teaching and learning social, emotional and behavioural skills

Programmes need to:

- provide learning opportunities that make social, emotional and behavioural skills their explicit focus
- ensure learning opportunities are participative, experiential and empowering
- use a step-by-step approach with opportunities for revisiting and building upon skills in a developmentally appropriate way
- help learners generalise to real life
- use a positive approach
- use active methods
- use whole-class circle time and meetings
- use cooperative groupwork and peer-education
- ensure congruence with the rest of the school
- develop themed programmes that link with the generic programme.

<sup>1</sup> This research summary comes from *What works in developing children's emotional and social competence and well-being?* DfES Research report 456 (2003) by Katherine Weare and Gay Gray, The Health Education Unit, Research and Graduate School of Education, University of Southampton.

## Appendix 2: Teaching of sensitive issues

Learning from real-life experiences is central to personal and social development. Through the delivery of broad, balanced, relevant programmes of PSE, opportunities for learners to consider sensitive issues will arise inevitably. Through exploration of such issues, pupils develop interpersonal skills such as:

- listening attentively in different situations and responding appropriately
- considering others' views to inform opinions, and making informed decisions and choices
- expressing opinions and justifying a personal standpoint
- taking part in debates and voting on issues
- identifying and assessing bias and reliability, e.g. evaluating messages from the media
- developing strategies for resolving conflict.

### Potentially sensitive issues

Although any PSE topic can prove sensitive to particular individuals, issues that are likely to be contentious are those that deal with moral and ethical values and beliefs, those that arouse strong feelings, and those that have a personal, social or political impact. They are usually complex issues on which people often hold strong views and embedded attitudes based on different experiences, interests and values. Such issues might include:

- bullying
- cultural values
- politics
- personal lifestyle choices
- relationships, including issues such as sexual health, sexual exploitation and forced marriage
- sexuality
- conflict, including issues such as domestic violence
- family lifestyle and values
- health and well-being, e.g. obesity, anorexia, self-harm
- legal matters, e.g. antisocial behaviour orders
- financial issues, including issues such as debt, poverty
- unemployment
- bereavement.

## Delivery of sensitive issues

Well-planned, high quality PSE sessions help pupils to access balanced factual information from a range of sources, and enable them to become more aware of alternative viewpoints. In delivering sensitive issues in PSE and PSE-related activities, such as SEAL, teachers need to:

- establish a respectful learning environment in which pupils can express a point of view that may differ from those held by their peers
- ensure that pupils have access to balanced information and to differing views to enable them to clarify their own opinions; this may include contributions made by visitors
- decide how far they are prepared to express their own views, bearing in mind that they must work within the agreed framework of the school's mission statement/values
- avoid reinforcing stereotypes or creating tension between pupils
- take due care of the needs of individual learners when tackling personal, social or cultural identity issues, for example, when working on the concept of loss and change in relationships where a pupil has recently experienced bereavement
- judge when to allow pupils to discuss issues confidentially in groups and when to support by listening into those group discussions.

## Ensuring confidentiality

Pupils may make personal disclosures during PSE sessions, either in class or to individual teachers. For example, they may disclose that they, their friends or relatives are using illegal drugs. Schools must have a confidentiality policy which outlines clearly for teachers their legal and professional roles and responsibilities.

Specific guidance about confidentiality in respect of sex and relationship education can be found in the *Sex and relationships education in schools – Guidance March 2010* (available at [www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills) in the 'Curriculum and Assessment' section under 'The school curriculum for Wales' then 'Sex Education').

Teachers should make it explicit that there is no pressure on pupils to disclose personal experiences in PSE lessons and must ensure that they know that teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Equally, if a pupil wishes to discuss an important personal concern, teachers should make sure that they are aware of confidential sources of support, both within and beyond school. This would include encouraging pupils to talk to their parents/guardians.

Teachers with responsibility for delivering PSE need to feel confident in:

- handling sensitive issues that may arise
- dealing sensitively with, and following up appropriately, individual or group disclosures made in a classroom setting
- working within school confidentiality guidelines
- knowing what to do in the case of a potential safeguarding issue.

Specific guidance about safeguarding children in education can be found in the *Welsh Assembly Government Circular 05/2008 – Safeguarding Children in Education: The role of local authorities and governing bodies under the Education Act 2002* (available at [www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills) in the ‘Publications’ section under ‘Circulars’).

## The need for balance

There is an absolute need to ensure balance when discussing sensitive issues in PSE. This could mean that every individual PSE lesson offers balanced coverage of an issue or it could mean that balance is provided over a whole topic. Equally balance could mean that it is the teacher’s responsibility to give an opposing view more prominence if media coverage or the overall class perspective is somewhat one-sided or narrow.

The need for balance should not prevent a clear stand against discrimination. Common values and legal frameworks require that there are views and behaviours that should not be tolerated, for example, racism, bullying (including homophobic bullying), violence and cruelty are never acceptable and should be challenged.

Teachers can avoid bias in PSE by:

- involving pupils in establishing ground rules for PSE sessions to create a classroom climate in which issues can be discussed openly
- opening up opportunities for all pupils to contribute their views to group or class discussions
- helping pupils to distinguish opinions and value judgements from facts
- trying not to highlight particular facts or evidence in a way that gives it a greater importance than other equally relevant information
- giving equal importance to conflicting views and opinions
- actively encouraging pupils to challenge and offer alternative interpretations of information
- challenging a consensus of opinion that emerges too easily.

## Avoiding political indoctrination

Teachers are not allowed by law to promote partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in schools. The Education Act 1996 sets out the statutory requirements that require school governing bodies, headteachers and local authorities to take all reasonably practical steps to ensure that, where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

## Teaching contemporary issues

PSE provides excellent opportunities for pupils to discuss local and global contemporary issues and events, for example, pupils may be influenced by information and images they see in the media. Addressing current issues does present practical considerations, for example:

- having to adjust schemes of work and lesson plans at short notice
- limited time to raise staff awareness of the issues and develop appropriate teaching resources
- pupils may feel so strongly about an issue that they wish to take some form of action – the ‘Active citizenship’ theme encourages pupil participation in school and community issues, and schools need clear guidelines regarding the support, if any, pupils can expect from teachers to make their voice heard.

## Appendix 3: Monitoring and evaluating impact

Settings/schools may want to use both quantitative and qualitative tools to evaluate the impact of their work on the social and emotional aspects of learning. Some suggested tools are given below.

Impact measures	Tools
Changes in pupils' behaviour and attendance, and the standards they achieve in their learning	<p>A reduction in numbers of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• setting/school defined behaviour 'incidents'</li> <li>• pupils experiencing more than one fixed term exclusion</li> <li>• lunchtime exclusions</li> <li>• bullying incidents</li> <li>• racist incidents</li> </ul> <p>Authorised, unauthorised and total absence</p> <p>Standards achieved in the core subjects</p>
Changes at whole-setting/school level, as perceived by pupils, parents/guardians and staff	<p>Settings and schools could use the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes (WNHSS) Assessment Tool which considers emotional health as one aspect of the healthy school. This is available from local Healthy School Scheme Coordinators.</p> <p>Within the WNHSS National Quality Award, Mental and Emotional Health and Well Being is one of seven health topics. The relevant publication and support for its use is available from local Healthy School Scheme Coordinators.</p>
Pupils evaluating their own learning and thinking	<p>A number of teacher-friendly and pupil-friendly assessment tools provided as an appendix to <i>How to develop thinking and assessment for learning in the classroom</i> (available at <a href="http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills">www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills</a> in the 'Curriculum and Assessment' section under 'Developing thinking and assessment for learning: Development programme').</p> <p><i>Listening to learners</i> consultation toolkits are designed for use within settings/schools to identify the experiences and views of pupils in relation to the key aspects of their curriculum experiences (available at <a href="http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills">www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills</a> in the 'Curriculum and Assessment' section under 'Listening to learners').</p>
Reviewing outcomes and success criteria	
Reviewing the process used	<p>The publication <i>Why develop thinking and assessment for learning in the classroom?</i> is also available at the above web address.</p>

You can download this publication and obtain further information at:  
[www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills)

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