



Introduction

Links to the Revised Early Years Foundation Stage¹

The 'Supporting Personal Social and Emotional Development through SEAL' resource consists of 21 inspirational, practical and ready to use stories, each with a range of development activities for key-worker groups and plenaries. Beautifully illustrated, the stories and activities are designed to support children in achieving the Early Learning Goals in the prime area of personal, social and emotional development outlined in the revised Early Years Foundation Stage (2012). These include:

- Self-confidence and self-awareness
- Managing feelings and behaviour
- Making relationships

The use of the resource will also support children in acquiring the dispositions and skills of 'Active Learning – Motivation' (one of the three characteristics of effective learning outlined in the revised framework), which involves:

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Written by the Head Teacher of an early years setting in Wales, the resource is also fully compatible with the Welsh Early Years Foundation Phase (Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity), and the Northern Irish Foundation curriculum (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding).

¹ Also the Early Years Foundation Phase in Wales, and the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding foundation curriculum in Northern Ireland.

The learning outcomes for PSED outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (and equivalent elsewhere), are closely aligned to the skills, knowledge and understanding developed through the SEAD (Social and Emotional Aspects of Development for the early years) and SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) materials².

The structure of the resource

As many early years settings use the whole-school/setting approach recommended by SEAL and the seven whole-school/setting themes, the resource is structured to reflect these themes (New Beginnings, Getting on and falling out, Say no to bullying, Going for goals!, Good to be me, Relationships and Changes) with three curriculum stories and linked activities for each theme.

However, the resource is also suitable for use by settings not using the SEAL framework, as Early Learning Goals are listed alongside SEAL learning outcomes at the beginning of each story to support teachers in implementing the EYFS/EYFP.

The resource is organised into three sections:

- Introduction
- The curriculum materials (3 stories per theme, each with associated activities, illustrations and resource sheets where appropriate)
- Additional resources (for use throughout the school day)

² The SEAL and SEAD materials can be accessed via the archives of the DfE standards website webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk or through logging onto www.sealcommunity.org which is a not for profit organisation supporting the use of SEAL in schools and early years settings.

What is included in the resource?

All the materials listed below can be found on the CD-ROM included with this file, to enable you to print off as many of each component as you require. In addition, all the materials can be photocopied for use within the purchasing organisation.

- Three scripted, interactive stories for each of the 7 SEAL themes, and suggested small group activities for key-worker groups to follow up the stories and achieve the learning outcomes.
- Two high quality A4 colour illustrations to accompany each story. These beautiful illustrations can be displayed on the interactive whiteboard or printed off to show children.
Note that the hard copies provided in this file are black and white, but full colour versions are available on the accompanying CD-ROM.
- Additional resources to accompany the activities suggested for many stories.
- A selection of useful general resources (in 'Additional Resources'), including 'Rules for SEAL Time', feelings pictures, templates for making feelings fans and feelings 'stick' puppets, for use both in SEAL sessions and throughout the rest of the day.





Using the stories and activities

The twenty one stories and associated activities are constructed according to principles of best practice, consistent with the revised Early Years Foundation Stage (and other Foundation curricula), and in achieving SEAL learning outcomes. It is suggested that the whole group take part in the initial story-time, then split into smaller key-worker led groups to carry out the activities. A plenary activity and reflection are included for each story.





Resources to support story-telling and activities

The resources to support the story-telling and subsequent activities are listed for each story on the introductory page. The use of puppets and similar toys is highly recommended, to enhance the impact of the stories and activities, and it is suggested that you make a collection of puppets and toys to support the sessions. The list of suggested puppets is reproduced below and in the 'additional resources' section (to print off and use as an aide-memoire in the classroom). Within the list of resources needed, the puppets are numbered according to the table below.

Number	Name of puppet or toy	Description
1	Seren Seal	A cuddly SEAL puppet that can make a variety of facial expressions
2	Toby	A young boy puppet
3	Rosie	A young girl puppet
4	Jim	A young boy puppet
5	Marisha	A young girl puppet
6	Shoni Salmon	A cuddly fish toy or puppet
7	Kate	A young girl puppet
8	Baby Tom	A baby doll or puppet
9	Robbie Rabbit	A cuddly rabbit toy or puppet
10	Saniyyah	An Asian doll or puppet (female)
11	Jason Yong	A Chinese doll or puppet (male)

- Music  is suggested for playing as children enter and leave the story-telling environment.
- Motivational and inspirational quotes  are suggested to accompany each story. These are intended for adults, and could be

displayed in the staff room or around the school/setting, as a reminder of the current focus.

- Each story begins with an introduction  which places the story within a context meaningful to the children.
- The stories are interactive, and children encouraged to join in, where indicated .
- Each story ends with an invitation for the children to find a 'still quiet place inside themselves' during a period of silence for internal reflection . It is suggested that a candle be lit (or some other aid to reflection) during this time, to reinforce the significance of this 'special' time.
- After the story, it is suggested that children work in their key-worker groups using the suggested activities, and then come together  for a plenary.

Please note that in order to fulfil requirements for the stories to be considered acts of collective worship, settings will need to include their own individual practices for worship if appropriate, or make alternative arrangements.

Good practice in using the resource

Social and emotional learning is most successful when both the heart and the head are engaged through the learning opportunities provided in the setting.

Some types of stimuli and activities we know to be more effective than others for learning and teaching in this area – for example, activities that are interactive and draw on children's own experiences are more likely to encourage children to remember and apply what they know than being taught or 'told about' a feeling or strategy. Dance, music, drama, art and stories are good vehicles for exploring and learning about different feelings, and for developing a range of creative skills and strategies in the area of social and

emotional learning. Children need opportunities to link the subject matter to their own experiences, and to make sense of it, 'shaping' it in their own way. They need to be listened to, as well as to listen and they need opportunities to interact, ask questions, participate and share thoughts and feelings.

A key principle of the EYFS has always been that children need to be seen as unique individuals and enjoy positive relationships and enabling environments in order to learn and develop. In order to achieve these aims, it will be important to consider the following:

- Children need to feel safe within a supportive and encouraging environment – this requires trust and openness on the part of the teacher and learner, and takes time to build. Don't rush things.
- Some children will feel threatened by the subject matter of social and emotional learning which is primarily themselves and the other people in their world. Work gently with them and allow them to proceed at their own pace, joining in when and where they feel comfortable – and remember, changes happen on the inside before they become apparent on the outside!
- Make sure that all children get a chance to use and celebrate their different skills, talents, learning styles and intelligences through the learning opportunities you provide.
- It is important not to tell a child what they are feeling. When discussing their own feelings or using a picture or a story to introduce or build personal social and emotional knowledge and understanding, allow the child to tell you what sense they make of it, before making your own suggestions.
- Use every opportunity to generalise the children's learning – use everyday occurrences as 'teachable moments' to reinforce and put into practice what children have learnt. Be unstinting in your celebration and praise of their attempts to put the learning into

practice, and recognise and comment on the changes you see in the children and the school/setting community.

- Remember that, although what children do and learn in the adult-led activities in your setting is important and necessary, of even greater importance is how they are helped to apply new learning in their own child-initiated activities and interactions in the setting, and in their home and community.
- Involve as many parents, carers and community groups in what you are doing as possible, using whatever opportunities present themselves, and working pro-actively to encourage participation. You could hold parents' curriculum evenings and produce leaflets on SEAL so that parents and carers gain a better understanding to support their child's wellbeing.

ALERT - A WORD OF CAUTION

The subject matter involved in supporting personal social and emotional development relates specifically and uniquely to the individual. When discussing feelings and the circumstances that give rise to them, it is inevitable that some children will find areas of the work challenging and potentially distressing for a variety of reasons. Teachers and other adults will need to be sensitive to the individual circumstances of the children in their care (e.g. a focus on 'change' might be particularly difficult for refugees and asylum seekers; while looking at 'family' and 'identity' might raise challenging issues for looked-after children). Make sure that opportunities are available to talk through any issues that arise, or might arise, in response to the materials, with colleagues and other professionals where appropriate. All adults in contact with children should be aware of the school/setting and local authority protocols with regard to disclosures, and feel confident about the appropriate action to take.