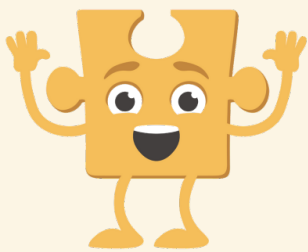
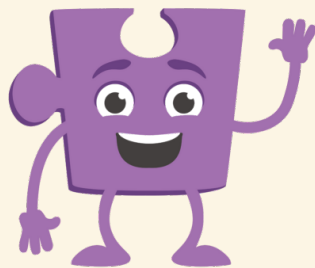




How does Jigsaw support Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) in the EYFS?



30th September 2026



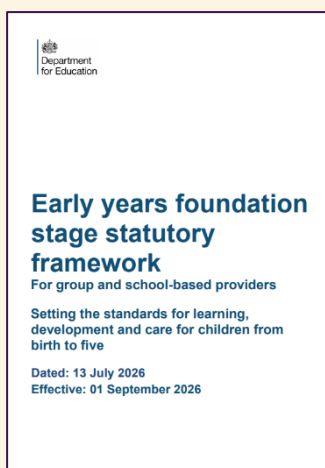
How does Jigsaw support PSED in the EYFS?

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) is one of the three prime areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, all of which contribute towards achieving a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). PSED underpins children's wellbeing, relationships and learning.

This document refers to the Department for Education's [EYFS statutory framework](#) for group and school-based providers, effective from September 2026, alongside [Development Matters \(2023\)](#) and [Birth-to-Five Matters \(2026\)](#), non-statutory curriculum guidance.

The EYFS statutory framework (2026) states:

'Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to



lead healthy and happy lives and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs

independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.' (EYFS Framework, 2026)

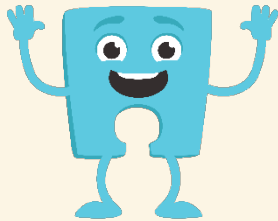
Jigsaw PSHE embeds these aspirations into 36 sessions (Pieces) for both Nursery (3-4) and Reception (4-5). Learning themes are returned to and developed each year through 6 half-termly units called Puzzles.

Please note the acronyms used below e.g. 'Celebrating Difference' (CD), which align with the mapping in the table at the end of this document:

- Being Me in My World (BMIMW)
- Celebrating Difference (CD)
- Dreams and Goals (DG)
- Healthy Me (HM)
- Relationships (RL)
- Changing Me (CM)

The sessions (Pieces) include inclusive and engaging whole-class and/or group experiences, with opportunities to extend and revisit the learning through play, indoors and outdoors.

Jigsaw Friends, Calm Me time and Pause Points



Jigsaw Jenie provides a familiar friend for Nursery and Reception, supporting continuity between the two age ranges. Jenie can act as a talking object and a distancing tool, allowing children to explore a character's feelings and choices without having to share personal experiences (unless the child chooses to).

Jigsaw Jerrie Cat offers a visual reminder to pause, notice and think. Practitioners can use his paws to introduce Pause Points, helping children become more aware of what they are feeling and what is happening around them.



Calm Me time, supported by the Jigsaw Chime, introduces opportunities to notice breathing, feelings and bodily sensations. Each Calm Me time includes an age-appropriate script for practitioners to follow, with deliberate repetition to build familiarity and a progression across the year. Adults model and gently support participation, allowing time for children to become familiar with the practices and adapting them to children's communication, developmental and sensory needs. Where scripts include visualisation, practitioners are encouraged to provide relevant first-hand experiences so children have something familiar to draw on.

Jigsaw is underpinned by mindfulness philosophy. Mindfulness is woven throughout Jigsaw. With sensitive adult guidance and repeated practice, Calm Me time and Pause Points can support children's developing emotional awareness, self-regulation and wellbeing.

Supporting the whole child

We believe that emotional and mental health are fundamental to learning, relationships and life. A sense of identity, the feeling of belonging, coupled with inner strength, calm and resilience are essential for success.

The prime areas of development

The three prime areas of learning - Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, and Physical Development - are central to children's development and provide the foundations for learning across the EYFS.

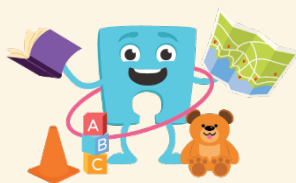
While PSED is the core focus of Jigsaw's EYFS programme, learning experiences encompass all seven areas of learning and development. These naturally overlap, with adult-led sessions and continuous and enhanced provision providing opportunities for children to explore and develop interconnected skills.

For example, Communication and Language is supported through small-group and whole-class conversations, 'talk buttons' within provision, and a language-rich environment enriched by suggested stories. Physical Development is supported through opportunities for movement, dance, actions and outdoor play. These experiences allow children to develop their communication and physical skills alongside their confidence, emotional awareness and relationships.

'The three Prime areas are interconnected, operating not as isolated domains but as an integrated system. Development in each of the Prime areas affects the others. As babies and children develop their sensory abilities and movement, they can perceive and engage with others and so develop in PSED. Engaging with others spurs more physical activity, and is the beginning of communication and language, which in turn helps build relationships, understanding of feelings and learning about health and physical wellbeing. When early years environments intentionally support all three prime areas, children develop the holistic readiness required for learning across the Specific areas of learning and development.' (Birth-to-Five Matters, 2026)

Learning through play and interaction

Children in the early years learn through play, observing others, adult modelling, guided learning and direct teaching. Jigsaw EYFS introduces and revisits ideas through conversation, stories, songs, movement and shared activities. Learning introduced through whole-class or group experiences continues through child-initiated play and adult-supported experiences within continuous and enhanced provision.



'Let Me Play' is an important part of the EYFS lesson structure, placing a strong emphasis on purposeful, child-led play that supports the Jigsaw learning intentions. Each Puzzle includes a 'Let Me Play' document with suggested opportunities for continuous and enhanced provision, indoors and outdoors.

Practitioners are advised to use their professional knowledge of the children in their care to adapt these ideas to their setting and the children's interests, developmental stages and needs.

'Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time.' (EYFS statutory framework, 2026)

Supporting the Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL)

While the areas of learning describe *what* children learn, the Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL) describe how they learn through:

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Thinking Creatively and Critically

‘Play and self-initiated activities are ideal opportunities to build Characteristics of Effective Learning.’ (Birth-to-Five Matters, 2026)

Each Jigsaw ‘Let Me Play’ document links suggested indoor and outdoor enhancements to these characteristics, helping practitioners extend the learning from each Piece through play. For example, in Being Me in My World, children can explore favourite toys, create self-portraits, make emotion faces using natural materials, and work together in games and shared activities. These suggestions provide starting points for children to explore, become involved and develop their own ideas. Resources can remain available beyond the lesson (Piece), so children have time to return to their interests, consolidate learning and take their play in new directions.

The documents also provide language to model and open-ended prompts such as ‘I wonder...’, ‘What do you think...?’ and ‘How can we...?’. These support practitioners to extend children’s thinking, help them express ideas and consider possibilities together. Talking Tins offer another way for children to share their thoughts and listen to others within provision.

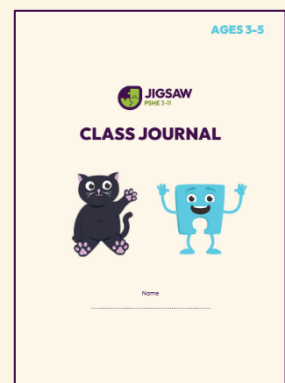
Practitioners are encouraged to follow children’s interests, using the suggested resources flexibly to invite exploration and sustain engagement, while allowing children to make choices and shape their own learning.

Celebrating and revisiting learning – Jigsaw Journal

Jigsaw recommends that Early Years classes have a whole-class Jigsaw Journal to showcase and celebrate learning from PSED sessions, alongside children’s child-initiated play and exploration.

Practitioners are encouraged to capture children’s thoughts, feelings and ideas in their own words, scribing what they say to show that their contributions are valued. The Journal provides opportunities for children to revisit experiences, reflect on their learning and share it with others.

The Jigsaw Journal should be accessible to all children within the classroom or setting, so they can explore and refer to it beyond the Jigsaw sessions.



Working in partnership with families

Jigsaw encourages practitioners to involve parents and carers in children's learning, creating opportunities to share experiences and revisit ideas at home. This partnership helps practitioners understand each child's interests, needs and experiences.

Each Puzzle includes a home learning overview with suggested play-based activities and discussion ideas to support the Puzzle theme. Families are invited to share children's learning and experiences at home through the school or setting's usual communication channels, for example through an online learning journal, photographs or a shared diary.

Development Matters highlights the importance of working with families:

'It is important for parents and early years settings to have a strong and respectful partnership. This sets the scene for children to thrive in the early years.'

(Development Matters, 2023)

Supporting development towards the Early Learning Goals (ELGs)

The ELGs describe the expected level of development at the end of Reception. Jigsaw contributes to the rich experiences, relationships and interactions through which these capabilities develop. Practitioners draw on their knowledge of each child to plan appropriate support and, at the end of Reception, make a holistic, best-fit judgement against the ELGs.

The three PSED Early Learning Goals (ELGs) are:

- Self-Regulation
- Managing Self
- Building Relationships

The tables below set out what children at the expected level of development will demonstrate for each ELG, alongside details of how Jigsaw supports their development. The best-fit Piece examples identify where learning intentions closely align with aspects of each ELG statement. These skills are also developed and practised across all six Puzzles through shared routines, adult interaction, Calm Me time, Pause Points, and continuous and enhanced provision.

LG: Self-Regulation		
Children at the expected level of development will:	Jigsaw supports by:	Best-fit Pieces
Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.	Children explore feelings from the beginning of the programme. In 'Being Me in My World', Nursery children learn how happy and sad feelings can be expressed and consider other people's feelings when working together. Reception children begin to recognise and manage their feelings. In 'Relationships', Reception children explore the impact of unkind words, while both ages learn to use Calm Me time to manage their feelings. Across the programme, adult modelling, Calm Me time and Pause Points provide repeated opportunities to notice feelings, pause and practise responding thoughtfully, with adult support.	Nursery (3-4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BMIMW - P2 • BMIMW - P3 • RL - P5
		Reception (4-5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BMIMW - P2 • RL - P4 • RL - P5 • CM - P4 • CM - P5
Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate.	The 'Dreams and Goals' Puzzle gives children opportunities to set simple goals, work towards them and keep trying when something is difficult. Alongside this, shared activities and play provide opportunities to practise waiting for a turn or sharing with others. Calm Me time and Pause Points introduce practices for noticing feelings and pausing before acting, supporting children's developing ability to control immediate impulses.	Nursery (3-4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DG - P2 • DG - P3
		Reception (4-5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DG - P2 • DG - P3
Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.	Jigsaw provides repeated opportunities to listen and respond during adult-led conversations, stories and shared activities. Calm Me time invites children to listen to the Jigsaw Chime and follow the practitioner's guided script, while Pause Points provide opportunities to pause during an activity, listen and respond. Adult-guided activities within 'Let Me Play' provision can offer opportunities to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions, with practitioners modelling, repeating and adapting instructions to children's needs.	Nursery (3-4) and Reception (4-5) These skills are also developed and practised across all six Puzzles through shared routines, adult interaction, Calm Me time, Pause Points, and continuous and enhanced provision.

ELG: Managing Self		
Children at the expected level of development will:	Jigsaw supports by:	Best-fit Pieces
Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge.	The 'Dreams and Goals' Puzzle helps children explore challenges and develop perseverance. Nursery children learn what a challenge means and practise keeping trying until they can do something. Reception children explore how perseverance helps them manage and overcome challenges and reflect on a time when they continued until they achieved their goal. 'Let Me Play' opportunities allow children to try unfamiliar activities and develop their own approaches, with adults offering encouragement and adapting support to help children become increasingly confident and independent.	Nursery (3-4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DG – P1 DG – P2 DG – P3
		Reception (4-5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DG – P1 DG – P2 DG – P3
Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly.	'Being Me in My World' supports children in understanding the school/ setting rules and why we have them, and the right of children to learn and play. They consider the impact of their behaviour on others and the need for everyone to work together to ensure that they have a safe and happy learning environment.	Nursery (3-4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BMIMW – P4 BMIMW – P5 BMIMW – P6
		Reception (4-5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BMIMW – P4 BMIMW – P5 BMIMW – P6
Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.	The 'Healthy Me' Puzzle helps children understand healthy food choices and practise handwashing, including why it matters before eating and after using the toilet. Children also explore the importance of sleep and ways to help themselves settle to sleep. 'Changing Me' revisits things children can do and foods they can eat to make healthier choices. Adult modelling and opportunities within continuous and enhanced provision help children apply this learning and develop independence in everyday personal-care routines.	Nursery (3-4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HM – P3 HM – P4 HM – P5 CM – P2
		Reception (4-5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HM – P3 HM – P4 HM – P5 CM – P2

ELG: Building Relationships		
Children at the expected level of development will:	Jigsaw supports by:	Best-fit Pieces
Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others.	Children practise taking turns to speak and listen to others, using Jigsaw Jenie as a talking object during group discussions. Shared activities and 'Let Me Play' opportunities provide contexts for children to work and play together, with adults modelling sharing, turn-taking and resolving disagreements. 'Being Me in My World' explicitly explores working with others. In 'Relationships', Nursery children learn to work together and Reception children consider ways to solve problems others.	Nursery (3-4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BMIMW – P3 RL – P6
		Reception (4-5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BMIMW – P3 RL – P3
Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers.	Jigsaw provides opportunities for adults and children to share conversations, stories and play. When adults respond warmly and sensitively, these experiences can help build trust and positive relationships. In Nursery, 'Healthy Me' helps children identify their safe adults and know who they can turn to for help. 'Celebrating Difference' and 'Relationships' explore making friends, being a kind friend and maintaining friendships. Shared activities and 'Let Me Play' provision give children opportunities to put these ideas into practice, with adult support.	Nursery (3-4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CD – P5 HM – P6 RL – P2 RL – P3
		Reception (4-5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CD – P5 RL – P2 RL – P6
Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.	Jigsaw helps children consider both their own needs and those of others. 'Being Me in My World' explores other people's feelings, kindness and using gentle hands. 'Celebrating Difference' and 'Relationships' help children express themselves when someone is unkind, while Reception children also consider how to be a kind friend and the impact of unkind words. 'Dreams and Goals' introduces kind words to encourage and support others. Through discussion and play, adults model listening, noticing when someone needs help and responding with care, while supporting children to communicate their own needs.	Nursery (3-4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BMIMW – P3 BMIMW – P4 CD – P6 DG – P4 RL – P4
		Reception (4-5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BMIMW – P4 CD – P5 CD – P6 DG – P4 RL – P4