

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) – Reception Curriculum Framework

Educational Purpose

We develop children who understand themselves and others, build secure and positive relationships, increasingly regulate their feelings and behaviour, approach challenge with growing confidence, and develop the knowledge and independence needed to care for themselves and make healthy, safe choices.

Golden Threads

Feelings & Regulation	Independence & Challenge	Health & Self-Care	Relationships & Belonging
Children recognise and name feelings, understand that feelings can affect behaviour, and develop strategies to help manage strong feelings and respond to change.	Children develop confidence to make choices and approach challenge by having a go, keeping trying, trying another way and asking for help when needed.	Children learn about their own needs and develop the knowledge, habits and increasing independence needed to make healthy, safe choices and care for themselves.	Children develop a secure sense of belonging, recognise that others have feelings and needs, build positive relationships and increasingly contribute to a Calm, Kind and Polite community.

Knowledge = what children are taught to know and understand. Skills = how children increasingly apply that knowledge.

Strand	Typical Starting Points	DP1	DP2	DP3	End of Reception – ELGs
KNOWLEDGE I know...	Children may arrive with different experiences of routines, feelings, independence and relationships. They may use familiar words or actions to communicate needs and feelings and may rely on trusted adults for support.	• I know I belong to my class and school. • I know some words that describe feelings. • I know other people have feelings and needs too. • I know our school rules are Calm, Kind and Polite. • I know adults can help me when I need support. • I know washing my hands, using the toilet, dressing, eating and drinking are ways I care for myself. • I know adults help to keep me safe. • I know I can say when I need help or when something is not okay.	• I know feelings can affect what I do. • I know there are things I can do to help when I have a strong feeling. • I know other people may feel or need something different from me. • I know what Calm, Kind and Polite can look like in familiar situations. • I know there are different things that can help when something is difficult. • I know some choices help to keep me healthy and safe. • I know food, drink, rest, movement and hygiene help to keep my body healthy. • I know rules help people learn, feel safe and care for one another. • I know I can communicate my needs and boundaries, and other people have needs and boundaries too. • I know the taught strategies for strong feelings, challenge, relationships and change.	• I know different strategies can help with different feelings and situations. • I know other people can have different feelings and needs from me. • I know Calm, Kind and Polite help us to learn, feel safe and care for others. • I know healthy choices help me look after myself. • I know change can bring different feelings. • I know why familiar hygiene and self-care routines are important. • I know safe choices include noticing risk and asking a trusted adult for help. • I know another person's boundary should be listened to and respected. • I know familiar people and strategies can help me manage change.	SELF-REGULATION • Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly; • Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate; • 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. MANAGING SELF • Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge; • Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly; • Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices. BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS • Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others; • Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers; • Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.
Self-Regulation Children can...	• express a range of feelings through words, actions or behaviour. • seek comfort or support from familiar adults. • attend for short periods to experiences that interest them.	• name some familiar feelings, with support where needed. • communicate when I need help or support. • begin to use a familiar calming strategy with adult support. • attend to an adult for a short period and follow familiar routines and simple instructions.	• recognise and name a growing range of familiar feelings in myself and begin to recognise these in others. • increasingly communicate how I am feeling or what I need. • begin to choose from familiar strategies to help manage a strong feeling, with adult support when needed. • wait for a short time in familiar situations, with support when needed. • focus attention for increasing periods and follow familiar instructions involving two ideas or actions.	• recognise and communicate my feelings and increasingly notice how others may be feeling. • increasingly choose a familiar strategy to help with strong feelings, with adult support when needed. • wait and increasingly manage impulses in familiar situations. • shift attention to an adult and respond appropriately. • follow increasingly complex familiar instructions, building towards several ideas or actions. • I can talk about how a change makes me feel, ask questions and use familiar people or strategies to help me.	
Managing Self Children can...	• attempt familiar self-care routines with differing levels of support. • make simple choices. • show preferences and willingness to explore familiar or new experiences.	• settle into familiar classroom routines with support where needed. • begin to follow Calm, Kind and Polite in familiar situations. • have a go and return to something difficult with encouragement. • manage familiar personal-care routines with increasing independence.	• approach new activities with growing confidence and keep trying when something is difficult, with encouragement when needed. • follow familiar routines and Calm, Kind and Polite with increasing consistency. • manage familiar toileting, handwashing and dressing routines with increasing independence. • begin to make healthy and safe choices in familiar situations.	• try new activities and increasingly persevere with familiar challenges, using a familiar strategy or asking for help. • increasingly follow Calm, Kind and Polite and begin to talk about why rules are important. • manage familiar personal-care routines with increasing independence. • make healthy and safe choices in familiar situations.	
Building Relationships Children can...	• seek familiar adults and show interest in other children. • play alongside or with others. • communicate wants, needs and preferences in different ways.	• build relationships with familiar adults and begin to form friendships with peers. • join or take part in play with other children. • begin to take turns and respond to another child's ideas, with support where needed. • communicate simple needs and boundaries and seek adult help when difficulties arise.	• play cooperatively with other children for increasing periods, sharing ideas and taking turns with support when needed. • begin to recognise and respond when another person has a different feeling or need. • use words to communicate my own needs and boundaries. • begin to work through simple disagreements using familiar strategies, seeking adult help when needed.	• play and work cooperatively with others, listening and responding to their ideas. • increasingly notice and respond to how another person may be feeling or what they need. • communicate my needs and boundaries while listening to those of others. • use familiar strategies when difficulties arise with others, seeking adult help when needed.	
ESSENTIAL VOCABULARY	feeling – how we feel inside help – support we can ask for or give need – something important for our body, feelings or safety choice – deciding between things we can do	belong – to be part of a group or place calm – when our body and feelings are settled kind – using words and actions that care for others polite – speaking and behaving respectfully towards others respect – treating ourselves, other people and things with care	strategy – something I can do to help myself healthy – things that help our body and mind to be well resilience – keeping going when something is difficult teamwork – working together to do something goal – something I want to work towards	persevere – to keep trying when something is difficult boundary – something that helps us tell others what we are or are not comfortable with change – when something becomes different support – help that we give or receive excellence – trying to do our best and taking pride in what we do	

PSED Entitlement

Every child will:

- experience warm, responsive relationships and developmentally appropriate adult co-regulation;
- be explicitly taught and repeatedly practise strategies for strong feelings, challenge, relationships and change;
- have regular opportunities to name and communicate feelings, needs and boundaries;
- be supported to build positive relationships, cooperate, take turns and work through difficulties with others;
- develop confidence to make choices, have a go, keep trying, try another way and ask for help;
- be supported to develop increasing independence in familiar self-care routines and healthy, safe choices;
- experience Calm, Kind and Polite as explicitly taught expectations within everyday routines and relationships;
- experience planned direct teaching through Jigsaw PSHE alongside responsive PSED teaching through play, routines, relationships and real-life situations;
- be introduced to and revisit Respect, Teamwork, Excellence, Friendship and Resilience through meaningful lived examples;
- experience age-appropriate fundamental British values through having a voice, making choices, following agreed rules, communicating needs and boundaries, respecting difference and learning to live and work positively with others.

Explicitly Taught Strategies – I can use...

Strong feelings: notice → name → use or choose something that might help → ask for help

Challenge: have a go → keep trying → try another way → ask for help

Relationships: say what I need → listen → think about what might help → try to solve the problem → ask for help when needed

Change: talk about how I feel → ask questions → use people and strategies that help me

These strategies are explicitly modelled, practised and revisited. They describe the repertoire children are taught, not a checklist that children must use independently at a particular Development Point.

Jigsaw PSHE – Planned Direct Teaching

Developmental emphasis	Jigsaw Puzzles	Curriculum contribution
Autumn	BM – Being Me in My World CD – Celebrating Difference	Belonging, identity, class community, expectations, similarity and difference, respect, kindness and positive relationships.
Spring	DG – Dreams and Goals HM – Healthy Me	Goals, confidence, perseverance, resilience, feelings associated with challenge, healthy choices, safety and managing self.
Summer	RL – Relationships CM – Changing Me	Positive relationships, friendship, cooperation, recognising needs, coping with change and transition.

School Values, Expectations and Fundamental British Values

Calm, Kind and Polite are explicitly taught from the start and revisited throughout Reception.

Respect, Teamwork, Excellence, Friendship and Resilience are introduced, modelled, named and revisited in meaningful contexts across Reception. Children develop understanding through lived examples; they are not expected to recite formal definitions at a particular Development Point.

Fundamental British values are promoted through everyday experiences, relationships, routines, Jigsaw PSHE and the wider curriculum. Children experience age-appropriate principles of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs through having a voice, making choices, following agreed rules, communicating needs and boundaries, respecting difference and learning to live and work positively with others.

Assessment

Assessment should arise primarily through observation, interaction and children's participation across everyday routines, relationships, play and planned experiences rather than through isolated tasks.

Practitioners should notice what children increasingly know and can do over time, including how they:

- recognise, name and communicate feelings and needs;
- use or choose familiar strategies when feelings are strong, with support where needed;
- attend, wait and increasingly manage impulses in familiar situations;
- approach challenge, persevere, try another way and seek help appropriately;
- manage familiar personal-care routines with increasing independence;
- make healthy and safe choices in familiar situations;
- build positive relationships, cooperate, take turns and respond to others;
- communicate needs and boundaries and work through simple difficulties;
- respond to change using familiar people and strategies that help.

Assessment should recognise development over time and across contexts. Adult co-regulation and appropriate help-seeking remain valid parts of PSED development and should not be interpreted as evidence that a child is insecure.

Development Points support professional judgement and next-step planning; they are not fixed termly checklists. A child may demonstrate different Development Points across the three PSED strands.

Transition to Key Stage 1

By the end of Reception, children have developed individual foundations in understanding themselves and others, forming positive relationships, regulating feelings and behaviour, approaching challenge and making healthy, safe choices. Transition information shared with Year 1 identifies each child's strengths, developing needs, trusted relationships, effective co-regulation approaches, taught strategies and appropriate next steps. Year 1 provision should build on familiar language and routines, including how children communicate feelings and boundaries, manage strong emotions, solve relationship difficulties, respond to challenge and ask for help. Adults should continue to provide warm, responsive relationships and appropriate co-regulation while gradually supporting greater independence. Transition does not require every child to regulate emotions, manage relationships or meet challenges without support; familiar strategies, reasonable adjustments and responsive adult guidance should continue while children develop confidence and independence within the expectations of Key Stage 1.