



The mindful approach to PSHE

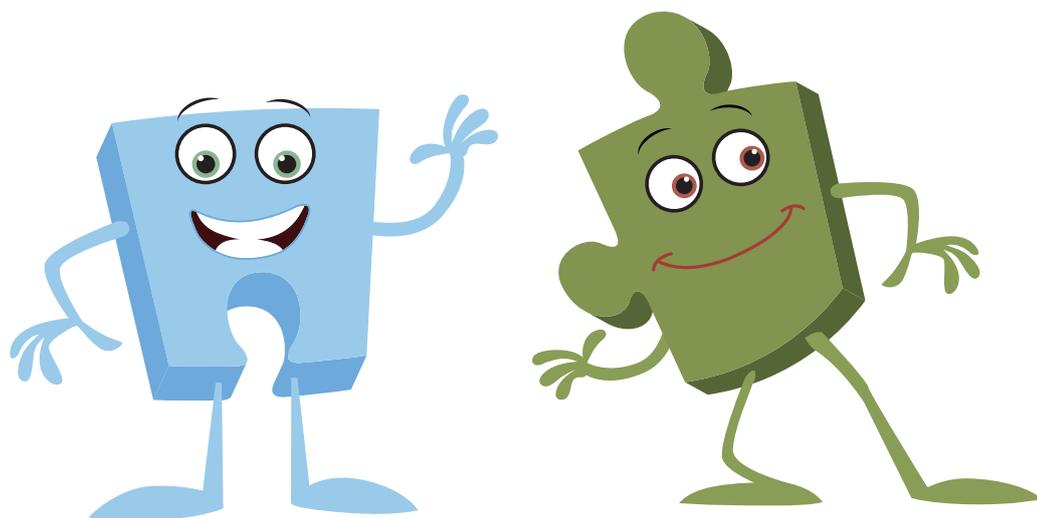
The 4 Rs and Jigsaw

Building Learning Power (sometimes referred to as the 4 Rs) is an approach that is based on the work of Professor Guy Claxton (www.buildinglearningpower.co.uk) and it aims to help young people to become better learners, both in school and out – a tenet that echoes neatly with the aims of Jigsaw.

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For both of these philosophies or programmes, it is about creating a culture in classrooms – and in the whole school – that systematically encourages habits and attitudes which enable children to face difficulty and uncertainty calmly, confidently and creatively. Undeniably, Jigsaw teaches children how to deal with difficult situations, emotions and experiences with a sense of quiet, with self-assurance and with imagination.

It's not just in PSHE lessons either. Children who are more confident of their own learning ability learn faster and learn better, which is why Jigsaw uses teaching strategies that are varied and mindful of preferred learning styles. They (the children receiving Jigsaw), concentrate more, think harder and find learning more enjoyable. They do better in assessments.



The 4 Rs below better prepare children for an unpredictable future. Today's schools need to be educating not just for exam results but for lifelong learning. In order to thrive in the 21st century, it is not sufficient to leave school with only a collection of qualifications and certificates: children need to have learnt how to be tenacious, capable and resourceful, imaginative and logical, self-disciplined and self-aware, collaborative and inquisitive.

Resourcefulness

Managing your learning | Developing and organising ideas | Working with people

In Jigsaw, children develop an interactive menu of learning methods (displayed through various parts of the lesson, such as Open my mind and Tell me or show me) and children and their peers assess their confidence and effectiveness in these. Children are encouraged to be ready and able to learn in different ways using both internal and external resources effectively, and to call on different ways of learning as needed.

This is demonstrated in each series of six Pieces (lessons) in Jigsaw, where learning builds and develops. In each Puzzle (unit), this learning culminates in an end product/outcome, for example, a display, a fashion show, a presentation, a video/film, a concert, or an exhibition. This way, each Piece of learning adds to the process of creating the end product, giving the learning an additional purpose, rather than being an end in itself. Children will know what they are working towards early in the Puzzle, adding motivation to their work and learning the skills of working with others. Since the end products necessitate cooperation and collaborative work, this also develops social skills and a sense of pride in its achievement. It also allows the opportunity to showcase Jigsaw work with parents and carers, and brings the whole school community together.

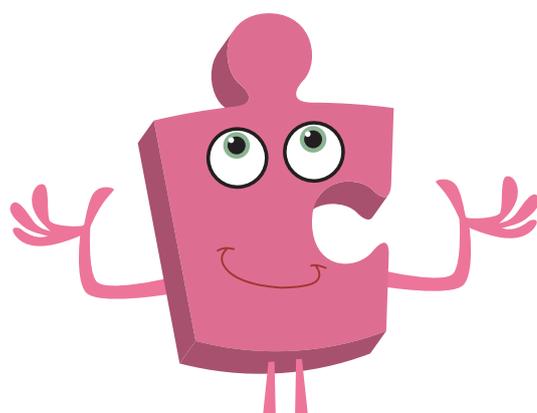
Resilience

Understanding yourself as a learner | Staying motivated | Being persistent

Children constantly develop new ways of working out what to do when they get stuck and are assessed according to how effectively they apply them and share them with others. The mindfulness taught through Jigsaw enables children to cope with their feelings and improve their sense of resilience. Put simply, mindfulness is the ability to observe your thoughts and feelings as they arise, in the present moment, without judgement. This level of awareness enables children to 'catch' their thoughts and feelings before these carry them along and lead to choices and actions that may not help them or their learning.

Being mindful can be learnt, and takes practice, hence the Calm Me time, which, as well as relaxing the body and calming the mind, also enhances this awareness of thoughts and feelings in the present moment.

Catching your thoughts and feelings as they arise gives you the choice of how to respond to them e.g. if a child is struggling with his numeracy he can be aware of his thoughts and feelings and ask for help. However, if his thoughts and feelings (e.g. 'I can't do this, I am rubbish, everybody else can do it, I am stupid...') carry him along, this could lead to consequences that don't help him learn at all.



Reflectiveness

Noticing | Questioning | Distilling experiences

Self-awareness is the cornerstone of reflectiveness. Adopting the skills of reflection can be a challenge for some children, which is one of the reasons why Jigsaw uses Calm Me time. Using the Jigsaw Chime and the Calm Me exercises is an easy introduction to techniques which help children relax their bodies and calm their minds, reaching an optimum state for learning. The aim is to bring children's awareness/attention to the present moment and, in so doing, let go of other thoughts that might be scurrying around the mind which distract from focusing on the learning of this lesson. This then allows them to start to notice, to question safely and to absorb new experiences into their current knowledge.

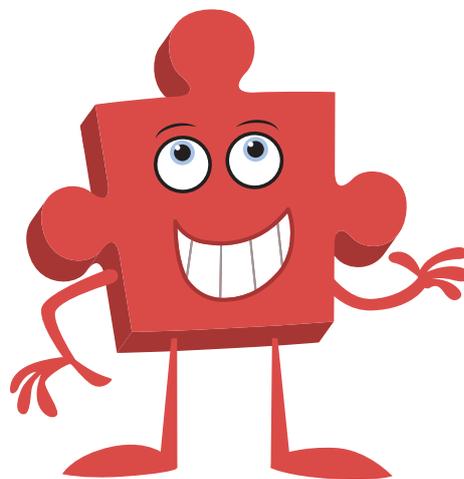
Reciprocity

Interdependence | Collaboration | Empathy and listening

With focus on the social aspects of learning, children learn their place in the class and in the wider society; they understand how to manage their strong feelings and how these may differ from others; and they can 'walk' in someone else's shoes, feeling the benefit of others' experiences and viewpoints. The specific content of Jigsaw in several of the units helps children to adopt these skills and open their minds and broaden their frames of reference.

For example, the unit of 'Being Me In My World' covers a wide range of topics, including a sense of belonging, welcoming others and being part of a school community, a wider community, and a global community; it also looks at children's rights and responsibilities, working and socialising with others, and pupil voice.

In addition, the unit 'Celebrating Difference' focuses on similarities and differences and teaches about diversity, such as disability, racism, power, friendships, and conflict; children learn to accept everyone's right to 'difference', regardless of their circumstances or choices; and most year groups explore the concept of 'normal'; bullying – what it is and what it isn't, including cyber and homophobic bullying – is an important aspect of this Puzzle.





Each Jigsaw lesson focuses on the social aspects of learning too, via the Connect Us activities. Learning is a collaborative process as well as an individual process, but can be hindered if the social skills needed for collaboration are limited. Connect Us is a chance to build social skills and is a key part of the Jigsaw Approach. It focuses on specific social skills and enables the children to get to know each other more and build their social skills. It also marks the start of the Jigsaw Piece (lesson), separating it clearly from the previous lesson in a fun and inclusive way.

The 4 Rs and Jigsaw share a clear social, moral and philosophical rationale. They place the development of spiritual, cultural and psychological characteristics at the centre of education and promote the unequivocal standpoint that these features are of the highest value to children growing up in an ever-changing world. And both make the assurance that these characteristics are wholly capable of being systematically taught, practised and learnt.

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October 2014

