

How can Jigsaw support children's spiritual development?

Spiritual development can be very hard to define as every adult involved in “assessing” it will have their own personal views about what it is. How can we label or identify what a child may perceive as a spiritual experience? Will all adults see the same opportunities for spiritual development and therefore maximise them or allow them to occur? The first thing which is clear, is that without planned opportunities, spiritual development is less likely to “happen”. The second thing is that there must be enough time allowed in the curriculum for those unplanned moments to be enjoyed so that teachers are not always so pressed to rush through their teaching that children's wonder at falling snow or a bird or animal at the window, has to be forsaken.

Difficult though it is to define, definitions do exist which schools can use to provide commentary against. As part of their definitions of the four aspects of SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural) education, Ofsted state the following

The spiritual development of pupils is shown by their:

ability to be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's faiths, feelings and values

sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them

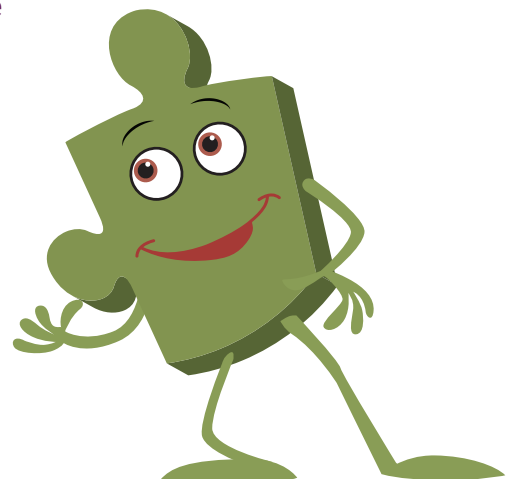
use of imagination and creativity in their learning

willingness to reflect on their experiences.

(Ofsted Definition of Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural aspects of learning 2016)

We will look at these in turn with regard to Jigsaw PSHE and also the wider opportunities and implications of promoting spirituality within our schools.

As a senior leader in a Church of England school, and as part of the Senior Leadership Team for SMSC, embedding and developing spirituality had always been of particular interest to me. We enacted a research project to determine how we could best achieve this so that both adults and children spoke the same language regarding spiritual development. This article therefore draws on that personal experience and research, which included the use of PSHE as a vital tool, as well as citing how Jigsaw can contribute significantly to the children's spiritual development.





It is interesting to note that while one definition would be useful, Ofsted explain how spiritual development **is shown**. In my own experience, we found that both staff and children could give examples of what a spiritual moment or experience “**might look like**” which was a far more useful working tool than some kind of defined attainment target! Therefore we will take the Ofsted descriptors in turn and demonstrate how they might be allowed opportunities, particularly through Jigsaw PSHE, but also how these planned occasions could also be transferred into other areas of school life.

“ability to be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people’s faiths, feelings and values”

This section of the Ofsted definition falls into two parts.

The first is the child’s ability to reflect on their own beliefs that inform their perspective on life. Ofsted make it clear these beliefs may be “religious or otherwise” and whilst it is possible and probable that a particular religious or world view may impact on a child’s perspective, we can take the wider view that a human being is challenged to (re)evaluate what they might believe every day. This doesn’t mean that anybody’s religion or worldview is being challenged, per se, but things like friendship break-ups or bullying could rock a child’s belief in themselves. Learning new information to make our young people more discerning and less vulnerable to e.g. social media influences may also challenge their beliefs. For example, within Jigsaw, we look at photographic enhancements which are commonly seen on the internet to help our young people recognise that other people may not be as perfect as they would like to portray. This challenges their belief that what they are seeing is real. Some young people have had their self-esteem lowered by either believing the myth of what others are posting, or by being the victims of cyber-bullying. Therefore it is vital that the spiritual side of our children is developed so that they understand how valuable and precious they are as spiritual individuals, no matter what label clothes they wear, what celebrities they follow or how many “friends” they may have on social media. This is largely addressed in the “Relationships” and “Changing Me” puzzles in Jigsaw in an age appropriate way (although elements are also apparent within the other Puzzles as there are always opportunities for them to consider their relationships), and because we always focus on the child’s relationship with themselves as a priority, they learn to appreciate themselves as unique individuals. This gives them the time and space to reflect on their own beliefs and perspectives as part of that introspection.

Some examples of planned opportunities can be seen in our overview below:

Age Group	Being Me In My World	Celebrating Difference	Dreams and Goals	Healthy Me	Relationships	Changing Me
Ages 3-5 (F1-F2)	Self-identity Understanding feelings Being in a classroom Being gentle Rights and responsibilities	Identifying talents Being special Families Where we live Making friends Standing up for yourself	Challenges Perseverance Goal-setting Overcoming obstacles Seeking help Jobs Achieving goals	Exercising bodies Physical activity Healthy food Sleep Keeping clean Safety	Family life Friendships Breaking friendships Falling out Dealing with bullying Being a good friend	Bodies Respecting my body Growing up Growth and change Fun and fears Celebrations
Ages 5-6	Feeling special and safe Being part of a class Rights and responsibilities Rewards and feeling proud Consequences Owning the Learning Charter	Similarities and differences Understanding bullying and knowing how to deal with it Making new friends Celebrating the differences in everyone	Setting goals Identifying successes and achievements Learning styles Working well with a partner Tackling new challenges Identifying and overcoming obstacles Feelings of success	Keeping myself healthy Healthier lifestyle choices Keeping clean Being safe Medicine safety/safety with household items Road safety Linking health and happiness	Belonging to a family Making friends/being a good friend Physical contact preferences People who help us Qualities as a friend and person Self-acknowledgement Being a good friend to myself Celebrating special relationships	Life cycles – animal and human Changes in me Changes since being a baby Differences between female and male bodies (correct terminology) Linking growing and learning Coping with change Transition
Ages 6-7	Hopes and fears for the year Rights and responsibilities Rewards and consequences Safe and fair learning environment Valuing contributions Choices Recognising feelings	Assumptions and stereotypes about gender Understanding bullying Standing up for self and others Making new friends Gender diversity Celebrating difference and remaining friends	Achieving realistic goals Perseverance Learning strengths Learning with others Group co-operation Contributing to and sharing success	Motivation Healthier choices Relaxation Healthy eating and nutrition Healthier snacks and sharing food	Different types of family Physical contact boundaries Friendship and conflict Secrets Trust and appreciation Expressing appreciation for special relationships	Life cycles in nature Growing from young to old Increasing independence Differences in female and male bodies (correct terminology) Assertiveness Preparing for transition
Ages 7-8	Setting personal goals Self-identity and worth Positivity in challenges Rules, rights and responsibilities Rewards and consequences Responsible choices Seeing things from others’ perspectives	Families and their differences Family conflict and how to manage it (child-centred) Witnessing bullying and how to solve it Recognising how words can be hurtful Giving and receiving compliments	Difficult challenges and achieving success Dreams and ambitions New challenges Motivation and enthusiasm Recognising and trying to overcome obstacles Evaluating learning processes Managing feelings Simple budgeting	Exercise Fitness challenges Food labelling and healthy swaps Attitudes to body image Keeping safe and why it’s important online and off line Scenarios Respect for myself and others Healthy and safe choices	Family roles and responsibilities Friendship and negotiation Keeping safe online and who to go to for help Being a global citizen Being aware of how my choices affect others Awareness of how other children have different lives Expressing appreciation for family and friends	How babies grow Understanding a baby’s needs Outside body changes Inside body changes Family stereotypes Challenging my ideas Preparing for transition



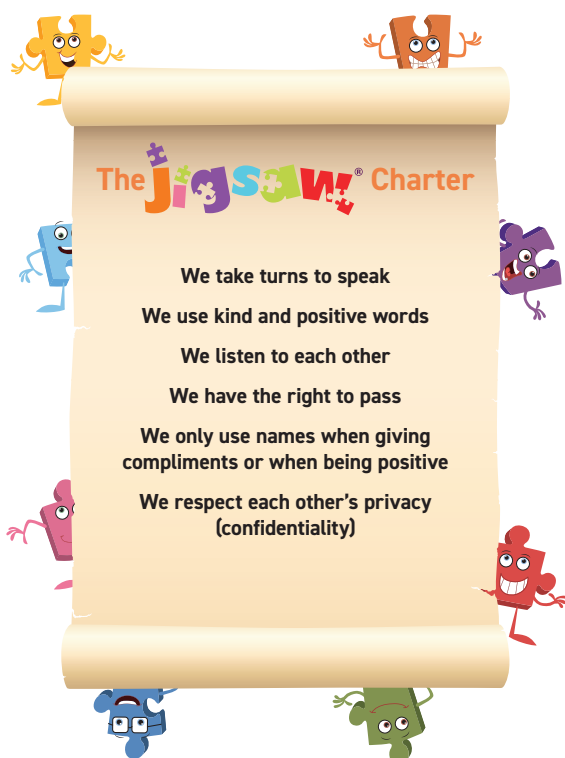
Age Group	Being Me In My World	Celebrating Difference	Dreams and Goals	Healthy Me	Relationships	Changing Me
Ages 8-9	Being part of a class team Being a school citizen Rights, responsibilities and democracy (school council) Rewards and consequences Group decision-making Having a voice What motivates behaviour	Challenging assumptions Judging by appearance Accepting self and others Understanding influences Understanding bullying Problem-solving Identifying how special and unique everyone is First impressions	Hopes and dreams Overcoming disappointment Creating new, realistic dreams Achieving goals Working in a group Celebrating contributions Resilience Positive attitudes	Healthier friendships Group dynamics Smoking Alcohol Assertiveness Peer pressure Celebrating inner strength	Jealousy Love and loss Memories of loved ones Getting on and Falling Out Girlfriends and boyfriends Showing appreciation to people and animals	Being unique Having a baby Girls and puberty Confidence in change Accepting change Preparing for transition Environmental change
Ages 9-10	Planning the forthcoming year Being a citizen Rights and responsibilities Rewards and consequences How behaviour affects groups Democracy, having a voice, participating	Cultural differences and how they can cause conflict Racism Rumours and name-calling Types of bullying Material wealth and happiness Enjoying and respecting other cultures	Future dreams The importance of money Jobs and careers Dream job and how to get there Goals in different cultures Supporting others (charity) Motivation	Smoking, including vaping Alcohol Alcohol and anti-social behaviour Emergency aid Body image Relationships with food Healthy choices Motivation and behaviour	Self-recognition and self-worth Building self-esteem Safer online communities Rights and responsibilities online Online gaming and gambling Reducing screen time Dangers of online grooming SMART internet safety rules	Self- and body image Influence of online and media on body image Puberty for girls Puberty for boys Conception (including IVF) Growing responsibility Coping with change Preparing for transition
Ages 10-11	Identifying goals for the year Global citizenship Children's universal rights Feeling welcome and valued Choices, consequences and rewards Group dynamics Democracy, having a voice Anti-social behaviour Role-modelling	Perceptions of normality Understanding disability Power struggles Understanding bullying Inclusion/exclusion Differences as conflict Difference as celebration Empathy	Personal learning goals, in and out of school Success criteria Emotions in success Making a difference in the world Motivation Recognising achievements Compliments	Taking personal responsibility How substances affect the body Exploitation, including 'county lines' and gang culture Emotional and mental health Managing stress	Mental health Identifying mental health worries and sources of support Love and loss Managing feelings Power and control Assertiveness Technology safety Take responsibility with technology use	Self-image Body image Puberty and feelings Conception to birth Reflections about change Physical attraction Respect and consent Boyfriends/girlfriends Sexting Transition
Ages 11-12 (Scotland)	Personal identity What influences personal identity Identify personal strengths How do others see me? Group identity My growing sense of personal identity and independence Online and global identity Expectations	Assertiveness Prejudice and discrimination My values and those of others Challenging stereotypes Discrimination in school How prejudice and discrimination fuels bullying Being inclusive	What are my dreams and goals? Steps to success Coping when things don't go to plan Rewarding my dreams Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation Keeping my dreams alive How dreams and goals change in response to life	Healthy choices about my emotional health Managing stress Managing my choices around substances Managing my nutritional choices Medicines and immunisation Healthy choices about physical activity and rest/sleep	My changing web of friendships Support I need now and in the future Developing positive relationships What external factors affect relationships, e.g. media influences? Assertiveness in relationships The changing role of families	My changing body and feelings What is self-image? Coping during times of change My changing ways of thinking Managing my changes in mood Moving forwards into my next year of education

Whilst these examples may not be exhaustive, they clearly demonstrate how opportunities can be provided which encourage an

“ability to be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life”.

The second part of this strand of the definition discusses how spiritual children are evidenced through

“their interest in and respect for different people's faiths, feelings and values”.



The Jigsaw Charter, which underpins every lesson at the very least, and, in many of our settings, is the behaviour standard across the school, ensures that every child understands how to show respect for what their peers are feeling or what they may believe and value. Even in lessons where different points of view are encouraged, and issues may be debated, the Charter is always revisited and its expectations reinforced. This ensures that children feel enabled to freely express their faith, feelings and values in an environment of mutual respect.

The Celebrating Difference puzzle specifically looks at how we might differ in many ways, but that there are human and spiritual elements in us all where we can find a connection and empathy with each other, no matter how much the world might find difference a cause for conflict. The children learn to be interested in what makes us all unique from as young as 3 years old (“Being special” - see overview above) and this includes the way we embody our beliefs, feelings and values. For children 7 years and over, elements of the Equality Act are examined within this puzzle which again ensures that the faiths, feelings and values of others are respected.



Schools with Jigsaw embedded into their everyday life will also invoke the charter in other lessons, for example, Religious Education. This ensures that children understand that the respect we discuss in Jigsaw PSHE permeates into other areas of school life and supports schools in ensuring that all differences in faiths and beliefs are celebrated and respected.

“sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them”

From the expectations of the Early Years Foundation Stage (especially prevalent in Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Understanding the World), children experience the excitement of learning new things about themselves, others and the world around them. Through the topics explored in Jigsaw PSHE, this continues into ages 5-11 as different topics are taught and revisited throughout their primary life. Recorded evidence of children we have interviewed has demonstrated this with children describing with excitement how they have learnt about their own feelings and emotions, how their bodies work, and how to consider other people's feelings and views, right up to empathy with children from other countries who may have to go to work at a young age or walk miles to school in order to gain an education. They describe how this has made them value themselves and the opportunities they have and how they appreciate their situations. (See our video of children in Wales describing these learning topics).



A fascination in learning about the world around them does not have to stop in the classroom. **Jigsaw Outdoors** has added to the Jigsaw Suite of Programmes by providing an extra lesson piece per year group, per puzzle, which celebrates the natural world and further encourages this enjoyment in learning about it whilst using activities such as Calm Me or Mindful Movements to encourage the children to have a calm and spiritual experience whilst in this setting.

These opportunities can also be optimised by schools at other moments e.g. looking at the natural world during play times, or pointing out certain natural phenomenon in your own area such as birds and wildlife. It often only takes awareness rather than direct teaching to inspire the fascination. In my own school, we discovered how many children were enthralled by our local birds, so I would name the breed and tell them a little about them when on playground duty (e.g. how magpies will chase a bird of prey), and the children took it upon themselves to report back to me when they had seen this happening. I often found even the most boisterous children would be quietly watching the tree-line for any signs of activity and this was something they cited during a survey where we asked them when they felt most spiritual.

“use of imagination and creativity in their learning”

Children can be inspired to be creative by many stimuli. The important thing is that they get exposed to or learn about the widest variety possible. Within Jigsaw, we have produced the highest quality pictorial or graphic resources to ensure that children have the best possible opportunity to examine or experience something which might inspire them. Teachers are also prompted to make or supply other more tactile resources so that dual coding is reinforced e.g. in the 5-6 Being Me In My World, Jigsaw Jack has a treasure chest. This enables the children to imagine that they also have a treasure chest in their minds/imaginings which can store positive feelings such as pride in something they have achieved.



Calm Me time also encourages the use of imagination. Scripted sessions in some year groups encourage the children to imagine different scenarios e.g. a calm place, somebody who makes them smile, how it would feel to achieve their goal. By using their imagination, the children can make more visual these abstract concepts (such as feeling a sense of achievement). This can help them to persevere towards their goal, and also helps them know they have an internal, spiritual world.

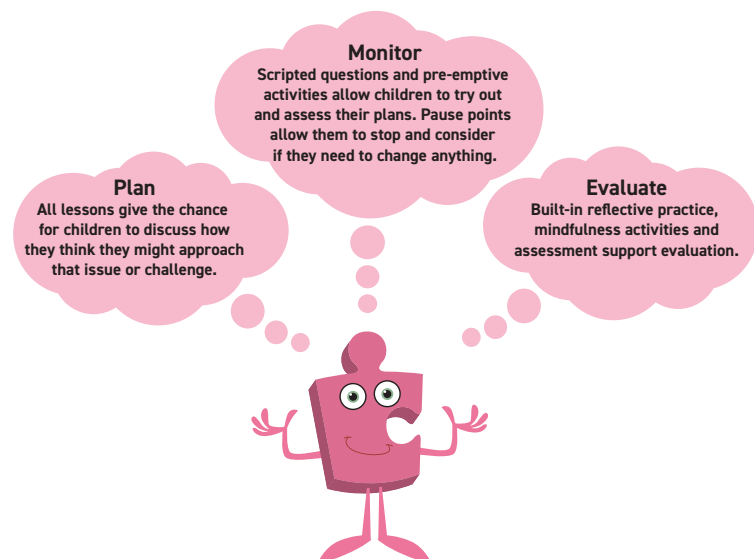
Within all puzzles, children are also encouraged to be creative. For example, some year groups have the challenge of designing something such as a garden or playground, using a set budget in Dreams and Goals. Others consider or imagine what their nightmare school and their dream school might look like in Being Me in My World. These creative scenarios allow the children to experiment with “what if” situations in a low-risk environment and use their imaginations as widely as they wish to.

In our research project, we found that art and music were cited as great spiritual stimuli. Some children cited the school visits to a local art gallery as something they had found particularly spiritual, and it was sometimes the scale of the picture as well as the subject, which they found so inspiring. Looking at a complete wall-sized picture entitled Anno Domini (by Edwin Long (1829–1891)) which shows Mary and Joseph entering Egypt, and the Egyptian life all around them, one child empathised immediately with the artist in how long it must have taken to paint the detail he had included. Others were excited to see aspects of Egypt they had learnt about in previous history topics, being used “in real life” in the hands of the children in the picture. They felt they could now imagine their use much more clearly, and put themselves in the place of the Egyptian children who were playing with them.

Other children would often talk about how singing made them feel uplifted. Whilst the Jigsaw songs are fun to sing and further embed the learning, please don't forget the feel-good factor of singing and music. The words are meaningful to the children and can inspire them in their own right, as well as bringing together the class or school as a community, engendering a sense of belonging when singing them which can also allow for some euphoria.

“willingness to reflect on their experiences.”

Good pedagogy always allows reflection time in order to embed what has been learnt. Learning theories such as metacognition require the need for reflective time in order that the learners have the chance to consider the way they have learnt as well as what they are learning. Giving our learners the prompts and time to reflect is vital to the metacognitive process. Jigsaw can help this throughout the phases:





Learning how to be reflective is a vital stage in becoming more spiritual. Without those quiet moments, it is impossible to be alive to what is happening in the present moment. Within Jigsaw, these elements are present throughout our mindfulness practice. We teach mindfulness in the following ways:

Content taught in lessons

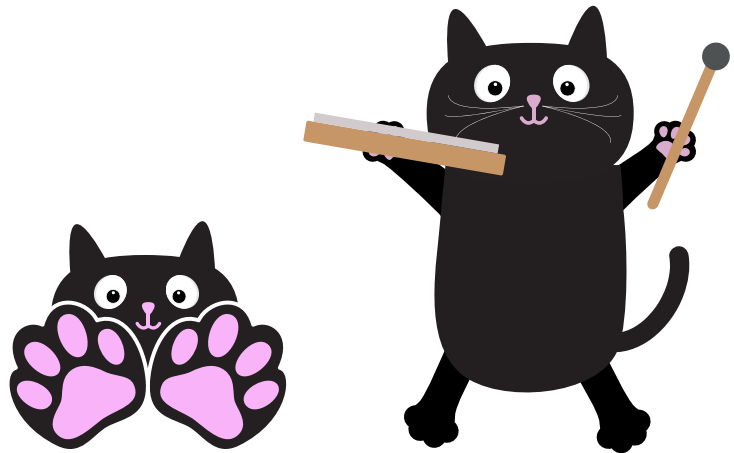
(thoughts, feelings, action, sequence)

Calm Me/Mindfulness Practice

Breathing techniques
Awareness exercises
Visualisations

Pause (Paws) Points (Ages 3-11/12)

with Jigsaw Jerrie Cat



Reinforced through Assemblies (Ages 3-11/12)


Our Assemblies for Being Me in My World introduce the children to the concept of the mindfulness practice in Calm Me plus the ability to stop and pause whenever they feel it would support them, which can be initiated by the teacher using the pink paws of Jerrie Cat.

Reflection time is also embedded into the plenary of every Jigsaw piece. Help Me Reflect is a vital tool for allowing the children to consider the experiences they have learnt about during the lesson and consider their next steps for learning. Although this section was initially a reflective, self-assessment process, it has developed into an opportunity for the children to record their reflections not only in direct relation to the learning intentions for the lesson, but also for anything else which the content has raised for them on a more personal or spiritual level.

The elements of Jigsaw cited here are not exhaustive. Spirituality is embedded throughout and practitioners will also have their own means of ensuring that chances are taken and the opportunities are exploited when they arise. What we have aimed to do is to give you a flavour of how this can occur, both within your Jigsaw lessons and in the wider life of the school.

AH September 2022

My Next Learning Steps



My Reflections

