

## Article 2: Tapping into SEAL

An interest in social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) is nothing new, but in recent years there has been an explosion of thinking and research in this area, which has resulted in far more attention being paid to social and emotional skills in education, in the workplace and in society as a whole. Gardner (1983) developed the idea that there are many ways to be intelligent, including being intelligent about our own emotions (intra-personal intelligence) and those of others (interpersonal intelligence).

Goleman (1996) popularized the term 'emotional intelligence' in his book of the same name and made the case that emotional and social abilities are more influential than conventional intelligence for all kinds of personal, career and school success. Since this book appeared in the mid-1990s, work has developed at an extraordinary pace, in psychology, neuroscience, education and other disciplines.

This work has demonstrated, from a variety of perspectives that social and emotional skills are at the heart of positive human development, effective social groups and societies, and effective education.

SEAL is now being integrated into the curriculum at Key Stages 2, 3 & 4 with an aim to creating a more socially aware young person. It is becoming a critical part of PSHE teaching especially, given the focus on social issues.

Learning that puts the social and emotional environment at the centre of the experience, lends itself perfectly to theatre in education. Theatre allows students to view a topic in a social and emotional context.

However, it is important that the theatrical experience uses the scenarios cleverly to not just make impact but to springboard into further learning. Our approach is to use additional scenarios throughout the workshop and teaching resources to constantly put the learning in context, and enable the learners to focus on the social and emotional drivers for our behaviours, be it with regards to road safety, sexual health, alcohol, the list goes on.

Whatever your project, we view tapping into SEAL methodology is not only a good fit, but essential in ensuring schools can really make the best use of the theatre intervention. By ensuring the event and the teaching resources are linked to SEAL, along with other curricular links, the easier it is to integrate the project into mainstream teaching practice. From a student perspective, continuity in the language of delivery from both ourselves and their normal lessons simply helps them make quicker connections with the learning.