

Social Emotional and Mental health needs (SEMH)

This section describes young people who have greater needs than most of their peers for support with their social and emotional development, mental health and wellbeing. It contains:

- **Descriptors to help identify young people with a social, emotional and mental health difficulty.**
- **Guidance on supporting young people with social, emotional and mental health needs.**

Young people who have difficulties with emotional and social development may find it hard to:

- make and maintain appropriate and healthy relationships,
- regulate their emotions.

Sometimes these difficulties will present in:

- withdrawn behaviour,
- challenging, over active or disruptive behaviour,
- being controlling.

These behaviours will be persistent and may indicate mental health issues such as anxiety or depression. It must also be recognised that behaviour is a child's first way of communicating, whether intentionally or not, that their needs are not currently being met.

Certain individuals and groups are more at risk of developing mental health problems than others. These risks can relate to the child themselves, to their family, or to their community or life events. **It is important to provide early intervention and support to prevent difficulties escalating.**

Young people can develop social, emotional and mental health needs for many reasons. Sometimes these are related to:

- Other learning needs, either as part of a condition or disorder, such as:
 - Attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) or attention deficit disorder (ADD)
 - Attachment disorder
 - Autism spectrum condition (ASC)
 - A pervasive developmental disorder that impacts upon their mental health and social and emotional wellbeing
 - A medically unexplained condition, such as being reluctant to speak
- A response to an unmet need, for example, a young person who has difficulty with communicating thoughts and ideas may find inappropriate ways to express him/herself.

- Sensory difficulties, pupils with which will require reasonable adjustments to help them adapt to the learning environment.
- A response to factors outside of the learning environment, such as early life trauma.

In the first instance it may be the young person's behaviour that raises concern. Such feelings may manifest themselves in range of ways, high activity and lack of concentration, "over reaction" to events, "shutting down", self-harm or angry outbursts. Risk factors are cumulative. Children exposed to multiple risks such as social disadvantage, family adversity, and cognitive or attention problems are much more likely to develop behavioural problems. DfE guidance outlines risk and protective factors on page 9.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/508847/Mental_Health_and_Behaviour_-_advice_for_Schools_160316.pdf

When young people display behaviour that is of concern, it is essential to try to address any underlying social or emotional need or mental health problem and not just the presenting behaviour. Close observation will help to show when and where the behaviours are triggered. Discussion with parents may help to explore what the young person may be communicating through this behaviour. Equally, behaviour patterns that differs to normal from those of their peers can be an indicator of underlying learning difficulties. For example, a child with a language difficulty may exhibit frustration when they are unable to communicate effectively or may find that physical aggression is a quicker way of making their needs known.

Assessment, planning and provision for a young person with social, emotional and mental health needs should be located within a whole school nurturing approach that includes an actively supported whole school behaviour policy, consistent use of positive strategies with training for all staff on these, and training where appropriate for positive handling. Difficulties that persist despite the support available at a universal level will require more bespoke arrangements with tight monitoring and frequent reviews.

Keystages 1, 2 & 3 Social, Emotional & Mental health	Name:
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	<i>A young person with a social, mental or emotional health need may:</i>	Date & year gp	Date & year gp
The young person may:	frequently display inappropriate, aggressive or withdrawn behaviour		
	struggles to engage in structured activities or to engage with learning.		
	appear to reject and/or be rejected/neglected by peers		
	have regression in his/her learning		
	display behaviour that is dangerous or damaging to him/herself, to others and to property		
	find it difficult to cooperate with instructions/ requests		
	disengage with learning and have a low concept of themselves as an effective learner		
	demonstrate a need to control the environment or relationships		
	struggle to regulate emotions, e.g. showing either heightened or withdrawn behaviour		
	take a long time to calm down and re-engage with learning		
	lack social skills required for group work and unstructured times		
	respond negatively to confrontation, demands, boundaries and authority		
	have low self-esteem		
	find it hard to feel accepted and remain calm		
	experience difficulties at transition points in the day		
	'see' / 'feel' danger / threat disproportionate to the situation		
experience high levels of anxiety that present as anger / unacceptable behaviour			
The young person needs support	<i>The young person needs support for most of the following:</i>		
	managing frequent inappropriate behaviours that occur in more than one setting		
	managing particular behaviours that occur in only one setting		
	managing frequent behaviours that impact on the learning of others		
	listening to and following instructions		
	settling and starting a task		
	sustaining concentration		
	completing tasks successfully		
	joining in with a group activity		
developing emotional regulation			

building and sustaining positive relationships with peers and/or adults		
developing the emotional resilience to find solutions		
recognising and understanding his/her own feelings and behaviours		
verbalising the reasons for his/her own feelings and behaviours		
managing anxiety,		
developing the ability to reflect on situations and find alternative behaviours		
developing social problem-solving skills		
accepting praise and showing pride in their achievements		
learning from constructive criticism		
repairing situations following difficulties		
developing social skills		
developing self-esteem and a sense of belonging		
Other factors to consider:		
school attendance, exclusion and behaviour records		
whether there are other agencies involved with the family		
whether there are things happening out of school that may impact on the young person's social, emotional and mental health.		
how the young person feels about themselves as a learner		
relationships with others – how they react socially and academically with them		
relationship with the curriculum – how accessible it is and how well they think they will learn		
previous experiences that affect the factors above		
other special educational needs		

Assessment and planning	Date
Further assessment will be required to identify more specifically the areas where the young person needs support. Ongoing assessment can be used to measure the impact of interventions. Assessment should incorporate pupil, family and school views. Useful assessments include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antecedent Behaviour Consequences checklist. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QCA behaviour checklist. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency tally charts. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timed observations of the young person in 2 or more different contexts. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home-school diaries. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) http://www.sdqinfo.com/ 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boxall Profile https://boxallprofile.org/ 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Help Assessment (EHA) https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/early-help-assessment-and-team-around-family 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For pupils with autism, Autism Education Trust (AET) Progression Framework https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/shop/pf-shop/ 	
For further advice with assessment and planning contact:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAMHS Single Point of Access (SPA) https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfordshire School Inclusion Team (OXSiT) https://www.oxsit.org.uk 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Psychology Service. http://schools.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/educational-psychology-service 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Community Support Service (LCSS) http://www.oscb.org.uk/professionals/early-help-locality-community-support-service/ 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘<i>Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools</i>’ (DFE updated 2018) outlines what a school can do to identify and support young people who may have an unmet mental health need. The risk and resilience section helps schools to consider the factors that put young people at risk. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Supporting Mental Health in Schools and Colleges</i> (DfE updated 2018) provides case studies on how individual schools have promoted positive mental health and well-being. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-mental-health-in-schools-and-colleges 	
For Looked After children, adopted and under special guardianship order contact the Virtual School (VSLAC) https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/virtual-school-looked-after-children-and-care-leavers-0-25	
The ATTACH team offer support to children and young people who are living away from their birth parents, including those living in foster care, kinship care, or in adoptive families http://schools.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/attach-team	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Health Service https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/school-health-nurses/ 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfordshire ADHD Guidance http://schools.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/attention-deficit-and-hyperactive-disorder-adhd 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For pupils who have physical difficulties with poor emotional regulation: Oxfordshire Children's Occupational Therapist Website https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/service_description/oxfordshire-childrens-occupational-therapy/ 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Inclusion Service works with schools and families to support school attendance and reduce exclusions. http://schools.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/education-inclusion-service 	
<p>Planning for a young person with a social emotional or mental health (SEMH) need will include:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Thinking ahead' about the planned learning each week and how the young person with an SEMH need will be supported to access it. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing an individual plan, e.g. Inclusion Support Plan, Individual Behaviour/Engagement Plan, or Pastoral Support Plan, that is tailored to support the young person's specific needs. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The adult support that may be required for maintaining progress with learning and for emotional and social co-regulation. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustments needed to reduce anxiety. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual or small group work to pre-learn, reinforce or work on specific targets. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the young person will sit for particular activities. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any support that is needed at lunchtimes and playtimes to help the young person to join in, perhaps as part of a small group or with a buddy. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk assessments relating to any health and safety issues. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a bespoke curriculum, e.g. planning for learning pathways and accreditation including vocational opportunities where appropriate at KS4. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 6 stages of crisis plan 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication passport that shows what a young person does /says. What this means and what support they need. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced transition planning for all year groups and planning for transition to post 16 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning for learning pathways and accreditation including vocational opportunities where appropriate post 16. 	
<p style="text-align: center;">Doing: strategies and resources</p>	
<p>The physical environment</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use quiet areas to give the young person calm down time. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it easy for a young person to work within the classroom environment without fuss or frustration; accessible resources, consistent place to hand in homework. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the young person is able to sit where they can focus on the adult and on the task in hand, e.g. this may be at the back of the classroom 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange a place where the young person can work for part of the day in a different environment when needed (eg a reciprocal arrangement with another class). 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support periods of transition and other key triggers times for the pupil. 	
Teaching and learning	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent approach across all teaching staff - shared strategies and responses. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use lead in time to prepare the young person for changes of routine. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use small group and whole class PSHE activities to develop self-esteem and confidence. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be clear about expectations and use specific strategies consistently. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly teach the young person to develop and use emotional literacy so that they can verbally communicate, understand and manage the feelings that they and others have. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all adults use positive, enabling language. Use a fresh start principle to encourage a warm welcome to each new session every day. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce appropriate behaviours through praise, celebration and reward systems. Encourage suitable alternatives to inappropriate behaviour, having fully considered the underlying causes 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider using restorative practices. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use buddies and peer mentors for support and modelling. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively support and monitor positive social interaction 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heightened pastoral support with regular sessions for the young person to 'check in' with a trusted member of staff through the day / week to discuss what is working well and provide support for issues that occur 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) for specific 1:1 work or small group work 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) resources, archived at: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110809101133/http://nsonline.org.uk/inclusion/behaviourattendanceandseal/seal 	
Beyond the classroom	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff should be aware of the implications of the young person's needs and how to respond appropriately. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support may be needed for the young person to access out of school activities including clubs, sports and trips. Information sharing, with consent of parents where appropriate can help the young person to participate successfully. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice, support and information for parents and carers are available from a range services and organisations. See Oxfordshire's Local Offer website (https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/special-educational-needs-and-disability-local-offer). 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SENDIASS Oxfordshire offers advice and support to parents, and can help parents, carers and professionals to work together to support the inclusion and achievement of children and young people with SEN. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about out of school activities including short breaks is also available from the Family Information Service Directory (FISD) via the Oxfordshire County Council Local Offer website. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diminishing Difference SEMH Provision Map – list of external providers. https://sites.create- 	

cdn.net/sitefiles/31/4/9/314937/OXSIT_Diminishing_Difference_Provision_Map_2017_2018V10.pdf	
Further Training for Staff	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NASEN online training module: http://www.nasen.org.uk/newsviews/newsviews.free-online-elearning-module-for-semh.html 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Inclusion Development Programme has useful support and resources: www.idponline.org.uk 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Support information resources, available from the NCB website, provide useful and detailed information for professionals and parents. https://www.ncb.org.uk/news-opinion/news-highlights/best-practice-framework-help-schools-promote-social-and-emotional-well 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced skills training materials for mainstream teachers of learners with behavioural, emotional or social difficulties can be found at http://www.advanced-training.org.uk/ 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NASEN online training module: http://www.nasen.org.uk/newsviews/newsviews.free-online-elearning-module-for-semh.html 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realistic Positivity: understanding the additional needs of children placed for adoption, and supporting families when needs are unexpected –National Children’s Bureau (NCB) and Council for Disabled Children (CDC) July 2018. https://www.ncb.org.uk/resources-publications/resources/realistic-positivity 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxford Brookes PG Cert Education - Understanding and Managing SEMH Difficulties https://www.brookes.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/pgcert-education---understanding-and-managing-semh-difficulties/ 	