

# **INCLUSIVE | MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**

## **SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH (SEMH) POLICY**

<b>DOCUMENT DETAIL</b>	
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## Contents

Statement of intent.....	3
Legal framework .....	3
Roles and responsibilities .....	3
Introduction .....	5
Our Approach: Eight Principles for Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing .....	5
Creating a supportive whole-school culture.....	6
Staff training.....	6
Pastoral support.....	6
Individual and group interventions.....	7
Identifying need and monitoring impact.....	7
Support for all stakeholders.....	7
Related Policies .....	7
Monitoring and review .....	7

## Statement of intent

This policy outlines how the Inclusive Multi Academy Trust meets its duty to provide high-quality education to all pupils, including those with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties.

Our aims:

- Promote positive attitudes toward pupils with SEMH difficulties
- Eliminate prejudice and promote equal opportunities
- Ensure early identification and appropriate support
- Prevent escalation of SEMH difficulties

We work collaboratively to ensure:

- Pupil and parent involvement in decision-making
- Early identification of needs
- Multi-agency collaboration
- Pupil and parent choice and control over support

## Legal framework

This policy complies with all relevant legislation and guidance including:

### Legislation:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Health and Social Care Act 2012
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2002
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Children Act 1989

### Guidance:

- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'
- DfE (2023) 'Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'
- DfE (2016) 'Counselling in schools: a blueprint for the future'
- DfE (2015) 'SEND code of practice: 0 to 25'

## Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board is responsible for:

- Setting the strategic direction for SEMH support across all schools in the trust
- Ensuring adequate resources are allocated for SEMH provision

The Local Governing Committee is responsible for:

- Fully engaging pupils with SEMH difficulties and their parents when implementing policies
- Monitoring provision for pupils with SEMH difficulties at school level
- Ensuring the school is compliant with relevant SEMH legislation

The school's leadership team is responsible for:

- Creating a preventative, safe environment that promotes wellbeing
- Ensuring only trained professionals diagnose mental health conditions
- Educating staff about how adverse childhood experiences affect pupils
- Equipping staff to identify pupils with potential mental health difficulties
- Establishing efficient referral processes for early intervention
- Coordinating with external agencies for specialist support
- Using SEND resources appropriately for mental health support

- Ensuring mental health concerns are considered within safeguarding procedures

**The headteacher is responsible for:**

- Ensuring staff awareness of and provision for pupils with SEMH needs
- Ensuring regular monitoring of pupils' academic and emotional progress
- Allocating sufficient resources for the SENCO role
- Reviewing teaching quality for at-risk pupils annually
- Training staff in SEMH identification and support strategies
- Preventing discrimination against pupils with SEMH difficulties
- Maintaining high expectations for all pupils including those with SEMH needs
- Consulting with professionals, pupils and parents about SEMH support
- Keeping stakeholders informed about SEMH concerns
- Ensuring staff know about local mental health services

**The Hertfordshire Designated Mental Health Lead is responsible for:**

- Overseeing whole-school mental health approaches
- Collaborating with SENCO and SLT on SEMH policy development
- Coordinating care for pupils with SEMH difficulties
- Advising on resource allocation for SEMH support
- Liaising with external agencies and mental health services
- Providing guidance to colleagues about mental health
- Making appropriate external referrals when needed
- Monitoring intervention outcomes
- Communicating with parents about SEMH matters
- Coordinating with other schools and professionals
- Supporting transition planning
- Leading mental health CPD
- Completing the Hertfordshire Mental Health Leads training and mental health first aid training
- Boxalls are completed

**SENCO responsibilities:**

- Daily SEMH Policy implementation
- Supporting teachers with pupil assessment and intervention

**DSL responsibilities:**

- Providing support and advice to staff
- Addressing safety and welfare concerns
- Coordinating with Hertfordshire Designated Mental Health Lead on safeguarding matters

**All staff responsibilities:**

- Recognising SEMH difficulties
- Understanding links between mental health and safeguarding
- Recognising impacts of adverse childhood experiences
- Understanding support frameworks
- Reporting concerns appropriately

**Teaching staff responsibilities:**

- Planning support collaboratively
- Maintaining high expectations for all pupils
- Removing barriers to achievement
- Monitoring progress and development of the Boxall profile

The school works with Mental Health Support Teams who bridge between school and specialist services.

## Introduction

Children's emotional health influences their learning, physical health, and future wellbeing. Schools play a vital role in supporting mental health through tailored approaches that foster readiness to learn.

Our school follows the 'Six Principles of Nurture':

- All behaviour is communication
- Nurture is essential for wellbeing
- Language is vital for communication
- Learning is understood developmentally
- Classrooms offer a safe base
- Transitions are important in children's lives

Our schools have successfully worked toward the National Nurturing Schools Award.

## Our Approach: Eight Principles for Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing

We follow the eight principles for whole-school mental health approach as outlined in government guidance:



1. **Leadership and management** (central): Strategic oversight of mental health initiatives
2. **Curriculum, teaching and learning**: Mental health integrated into teaching
3. **Student voice**: Pupil input into mental health approaches
4. **Staff development**: Training for mental health support
5. **Identifying need and monitoring impact**: Regular wellbeing assessment
6. **Working with parents/carers**: Family collaboration
7. **Targeted support**: Specialised interventions
8. **Ethos and environment**: Positive school atmosphere

The school has a designated Hertfordshire Designated Mental Health Lead, Mental Health First Aider and Deputy Mental Health First Aider and participates in the Mental Health Support Team scheme.

## Creating a supportive whole-school culture

Senior leaders will communicate their vision for good mental health with the whole community. The school will:

- Teach mental health through PSHE and RSHE
- Provide counselling when needed
- Use positive classroom management techniques
- Develop pupils' social skills
- Work closely with parents
- Implement peer support systems
- Our Behaviour Policy includes anti-bullying measures and graduated responses for mental health-related behaviours. We ensure pupils know where to access support for themselves or concerns about others.
- Curriculum organisation
- Our curriculum promotes emotional health through:
  - Quality first teaching with appropriate challenge for all
  - Encouraging problem-solving and self-assessment
  - Participation in school and community events
  - Clear rewards and consequences system
  - Student voice opportunities in class
  - Promoting cooperation and critical thinking
  - Solution-focused conflict resolution
  - Daily therapeutic practices
  - Protective behaviours within PSHE
  - Embedded nurture principles
  - Social competence development
  - Building resilience and coping strategies
  - Well-planned transitions between year groups/schools

## Staff training

The SLT will ensure all teachers understand pupils' SEMH needs and promote CPD for:

- Recognising mental health symptoms
- Identifying concerning behaviours
- Following referral processes
- Supporting pupils with SEMH difficulties

Staff will receive training to:

- Promote good mental health throughout the school
- Identify pupils needing support
- Recognise suicide risk factors and warning signs
- Know available support pathways
- Understand impacts of adverse childhood experiences

## Pastoral support

We pride ourselves on the care given to all pupils. Our methods include:

- Taking a therapeutic approach to behaviour support
- Responding positively to emotional/behavioural needs
- Communicating effectively with parents
- Supporting the SENCO's strategic role
- Providing staff CPD in therapeutic approaches
- Integrating wellbeing throughout the curriculum
- Having clear identification systems
- Liaising with external agencies when needed

## Individual and group interventions

For children needing emotional wellbeing support, we offer targeted interventions both proactively and reactively. We use the Boxall Profile assessment tool for all children as part of our assessment cycle. This helps identify areas for development and suggests supportive strategies. Strength and Difficulties questionnaires may be used for specific interventions when needed.

## Identifying need and monitoring impact

The school has clear systems for identifying and supporting pupils with SEMH needs through:

- Regular Boxall Profile assessments for all pupils
- Strength and Difficulties questionnaires when appropriate
- Teacher observations and referral procedures
- Parent consultations
- Data analysis of attendance, behaviour and achievement
- Multi-agency collaboration

We monitor the impact of interventions through:

- Pre and post intervention assessments
- Pupil voice
- Parent feedback
- Staff observations
- Academic progress review

This approach ensures early identification and appropriate, timely intervention for pupils with SEMH needs.

## Support for all stakeholders

Pastoral support extends to the whole school community:

- **Staff support** includes line management structures, performance appraisal, open-door policy with headteachers, access to counselling through Schools Advisory Service, and regular Staff Council meetings
- **Family support** includes open-door policy, home visits for new students, parent workshops on curriculum and wellbeing, regular communication, adult education opportunities, and targeted support through Families First Assessment when needed

## Related Policies

- Behaviour
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Anti-Bullying
- Attendance
- SEND
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Administering Medication
- eSafety

## Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed every three years by the Trust Executive Team.