



SEMH (Social, Emotional Mental Health) Policy

Date updated – October 2024

Lead – Callum Kinnaird

Status - Current

Prepared by – Callum Kinnaird and
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Review date – October 2026 or
sooner if legislation is updated

Introduction

Best Futures promotes positive learning and independence, engaging children in a broad and balanced curriculum combining academic and enrichment opportunities whilst providing specialist nurturing support with SEMH at its core.

Best Futures school Social, Emotional and Mental Health Policy (SEMH Policy) informs the work we do to support pupils in our school who may face personal, social and/or emotional challenges in their lives. These challenges invariably impinge on their ability to function effectively in a school environment and can have a negative impact on their learning.

As a specialist SEMH Independent School, we place an emphasis on creating a nurturing environment for our pupils that maximises their chances of fulfilling their potential. Staff recognise their fundamental roles and responsibilities in creating a nurturing environment for our pupils.

All staff have been trained in areas relevant to SEMH and adhere to the following six principles of nurture:

The Six Principles Of Nurture

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally.
2. The classroom offers a safe base.
3. The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
4. Language is a vital means of communication
5. All behaviour is communication
6. The importance of transition in children's lives

Ref: Lucas,S., Insley,K. and Buckland,G. (2006) *Nurture Group Principles and Curriculum Guidelines Helping Children to Achieve*, The Nurture Group Network.

SPOT Assessment (SEMH Positive Outcomes Toolkit)

The SEMH Positive Outcomes Toolkit was designed and created by Claire Gordon, SAS Key Stage Team, to be used by school staff and SENCOs to support the Assess, Plan, Do, Review Process of the Graduated Approach for SEMH. SPOT Assessments take place termly.

The SPOT Assessment focuses on four areas:

- Emotional aspects
- Independence and resilience
- Behaviour for learning
- Social Awareness and relationships

The Performance Indicators for Value Added Target Setting Profile

The Performance Indicators for Value Added Target Setting Profile is an invaluable resource for the assessment of children and young people's Personal, Social and Emotional Development. It fulfils our nurturing ethos by enabling staff to understand pupils developmentally and that all language is a vital means of communication.

PIVATS 5 is used to assess pupils during the first 6 weeks of attendance. A profile is established, and next steps identified.

To ensure we apply Nurture approach to our work at Best Futures we:

- Ensure our classrooms are staffed by adults who have and promote a positive attitude towards parents/carers. All children are allocated a caseworker to support and encourage their involvement in activities supportive of the nurture approach and work holistically with parents/carers and relevant agencies.
- Encourage multi-agency approaches to support children and parents.
- Ensures placements are determined based on ongoing assessments using the Performance Indicators for Value Added Target Setting Profile. SPOT Assessment and other appropriate curriculum.
- Provide a warm, welcoming and educational environment, that incorporates aspects of both home and school and where children feel accepted and valued.
- Provides opportunities for social learning through cooperation and play in a group.
- Offer support for positive emotional, social and cognitive development at the level of need for each child, by responding to them in a developmentally appropriate way.
- We can offer SEMH 1:1 and/or group interventions in a calm and safe environment.

Staff Responsibilities

Teachers, HLTA's and Case workers

Responsibilities are:

- Liaison with outside agencies, Schools, Academies, SEND department, Commissioned services.
- Monitoring and reviewing of pupil support plans and Education Health and Care plans.
- Plan, do and review and any assessment process for pupils.
- Curriculum development through a thematic approach using Cornerstones differentiated to varying abilities within groups.
- Supported by PSED (Personal, Social, Emotional Development) using PIVATS 5 to assess and set targets
- To ensure National Curriculum differentiation supported with Cornerstones and PIVATS 5 to suit the needs of the pupil.

Teaching Assistant

The learning mentors are responsible for:

- The daily management and delivery of learning.
- Keeping appropriate records.
- Contributing to the curriculum and the development of play.
- Follow Performance Indicators for Value Added Target Profiles, pupils support plans and IBMP with the key staff and agencies.
- Planning and making practical activities.
- Liaising with the key staff and other relevant agencies.

Teachers

Pupils are grouped according to their appropriate developmental stage.

Each child has a file which contains:

- Individual Behaviour Management Plan (IBMP)
- Pupil Support Plans
- Pupil progress summary tracker
- Attainment and EHCP target review

Curriculum

Our curriculum is designed to give our pupils opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge through a variety of interesting contexts, experience the challenge and enjoyment of learning, develop and demonstrate their creativity and learn within a coherent and progressive framework. Our curriculum is also designed to positively impact our pupils' well-being through developing their confidence and self-esteem, learning to respect themselves and others and recognising that people are good at different things.

These principles are at the heart of our curriculum, and we believe the best way to support this is through an engaging, sequential and aspirational project-based curriculum which ensures a progression of skills and knowledge.

Equality and Values

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

We would offer SEMH sessions to suit the child's needs.

We recognise that there could be a potential impact that prejudice, discrimination and stigma can have on our pupil's mental health and wellbeing. We approach this in our positive and inclusive environment, offering non-discriminatory SEMH support to suit the child's needs.

To tackle, reduce and prevent the potential impact on pupils' mental health and wellbeing we have a variety of proactive work which we have listed a few examples below, but for more information on this, please see our Equalities, PSHE and Promoting Fundamental British Values Policies.

Example 1:

To further develop pupils understanding of the different types of families, eg 2 Dad's, 2 Mum's, Single parent, kinship care, CLA (Child Looked After). As a school we review the library to ensure that we have a mixture of fiction books which cover a wide type of different types of families. To be aware and always discuss different types of families, particularly during celebrations. The success criteria would be that pupils are aware of different family types and are accepting of this.

Example 2:

To reduce the incidence of hostile attitudes and behaviours towards, and between, disabled and non-disabled pupils. We include specific teaching on this with the schools PHSE curriculum. We promote positive role models from the disabled community. Disability sports to be integrated into the school PE curriculum. Our Success Criteria for this is that incidents of this type of discrimination are reduced.

Example 3:

To promote cultural development and understanding through a rich range of experiences both in and beyond school, we have a yearly theme calendar of enrichment and cultural events in addition to arranged visits and visitors from a wide range of cultural back grounds and communities recorded in the curriculum mapping documents. Success outcomes are that pupils express a positive multi-cultural attitude and to be welcoming to visitors or community members of different backgrounds, communities and cultures.

Further policies linking to this SEMH Policy are:

- Positive Management of Behaviour
- PSHE
- Curriculum
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Equalities
- Anti-bullying
- Promoting Fundamental British Values

Executive Principal	Dawn Best	Signature	<i>D H Best</i>	Date:	April 25
Deputy Principal	Jayne Dodd	Signature	<i>J Dodd</i>	Date:	Sept/2024

CIC Board	Rose Best	Signature	<i>Rose Best</i>	Date:	21/10/2024
SEMH Lead	Callum Kinnaird	Signature	<i>C. Kinnaird</i>	Date:	Sept 2024