

Social, Emotional, Mental Health Strategy (SEMH)			
Current Status:	Operational	Last Review:	
Strategy Owner:	Group Head of Welfare and Safeguarding	Next Review:	July 2026
Roles Responsible for Review:		Originated:	February 2025
Approved by:	Post 16 Curriculum and Quality	Committee:	Educational Excellence Committee
Type of Strategy:	Staff / Students / Governors / External	Quality Assured by:	Policy Team

1. Summary

1.1. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and any other personnel associated with Eastern Education Group Trust (EEGT), which includes:

- Chalk Hill
- Duke of Lancaster School
- Exning Primary School
- Priory School
- Stone Lodge Academy
- Sunrise Academy

2. Introduction

The Mental Health of Children and Young People in England survey <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2023/11/one-in-five-children-and-young-people-had-a-probable-mental-disorder-in-2023/>

2.1 (2020) found 16% (1 in 6) of children aged 5 to 16 years to have a probable mental health disorder, an increase from 1 in 9 in 2017¹.

2.2 The coronavirus pandemic has resulted in fundamental changes to the lives of children and young people. The Public Health England COVID-19 mental health and wellbeing surveillance report suggests that whilst some evidence shows that children and young people have generally coped well during the pandemic (March to September 2020), other evidence suggests that some children and young people, especially those with certain characteristics, such as those who are disadvantaged economically, females, and those with pre-existing mental health needs, appear to have experienced greater negative impacts on their mental health and wellbeing.

¹ [Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing](#)

- 2.3 Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their students, by developing approaches tailored to the particular needs of their students. Taking a coordinated and evidence-informed approach to mental health and wellbeing in schools can also help foster readiness to learn.
- 2.4 All schools are under a statutory duty to promote the welfare of their pupils and students, which includes preventing impairment of children's health or development and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Full details are set out in [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\)](#) statutory guidance.

3. Aims

- 3.1 Early intervention to identify issues and provide effective support is crucial. The school's role in supporting and promoting mental health and wellbeing can be summarised as:
- Prevention: creating a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole School population, and equipping students to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching students about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this teaching through School activities and ethos.
 - Identification: recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible.
 - Early support: helping students to access evidence informed early support and interventions.
 - Access to specialist support: working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment. There is good evidence to support the association between good mental health and education engagement and academic achievement. The benefits to preventing mental health problems in children and young people from arising, and intervening early where they do, can be significant for schools. For example, it may result in improved attainment, attendance, reductions in behavioural problems, as well as happier, more confident and resilient young people

The following diagram is a widely used model² and represents eight principles to promote SEMH at the school. Each of these principles is then extended upon in the sections that follow:



3.3 **Leadership and Management**

Aim:

- To ensure a knowledge-rich curriculum is complemented by the development of character traits and fundamental British values that will help our students succeed.
- To review this strategy annually to ensure the aims are responsive, remain relevant to and they are led by identified student need

3.3.1 As a senior leadership team (SLT) we are committed to ensuring that all our students:

- Feel valued,
- Have a sense of belonging,
- Can talk about their problems,

² [Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing](#)

- Are able to further develop a wide range of skills and character traits (in the short time they are with us) to overcome barriers to learning, and
- Can achieve and succeed.

3.3.2 We also recognise that support from the SLT is essential in ensuring that this SEMH strategy becomes embedded and developed across the school. We have a dedicated a governor so that we can champion this 'organisation – wide' practice and monitor the development of the strategy across each year.

3.3.3 We will ensure that our relevant policies, procedures and improvement plans, make reference to our commitment to improving SEMH of our students to ensure that actions then become integrated, sustained and monitored.

3.4 ***Ethos and Environment***

Aim:

- To continue to develop our staff and student wellbeing programmes at the school.

3.4.1 We know that we have a very positive working environment for staff and students. This is reflected consistently in both the feedback in both student and staff surveys and in our student results. Students also comment on the excellent relationships they have with staff and how 'support is everywhere' at the school. This is critical when we are reflecting on how we continue to engender a sense of belonging to and liking of the school by our students.

3.5 ***Curriculum Teaching and Learning***

Aim:

- To continue to develop our extended learning offer for students both in and out of the classroom.
- To continue to develop collaborative working opportunities that improve self-awareness and improve resilience

3.5.1 Students who apply to study at the school are carefully supported to make the right choices from the application stage. This level of personalised support given by staff continues through enrolment and into curriculum areas throughout their studies at the school. Our students' levels of engagement are high (as reflected in attendance figures and results) and this is also due to their programme being relevant to them and their future choices.

3.5.2 There are a range of social and emotional learning opportunities in the curriculum offer at the school and this is further enhanced by our Enrichment offer which is reviewed annually. This is also complimented by the Tutorial programmes which develop social and emotional skills through a range of

activities which are relevant to their age and stage. These opportunities to develop social and emotional learning have the potential to help with the skills needed for good academic progress and for health and wellbeing³.

3.5.3 Underpinning this is clear emphasis on 'taking responsibility for your own learning' which is supported by the approach of all staff. We have a clear policy in relation to Student Discipline and this also enables students to take responsibility for their own actions and learn from it.

3.6 ***Student Voice***

Aim:

- To continue to develop our Student Rep role.
- Review our Student Voice Strategy annually with students.

3.6.1 We recognise that Student Voice is an important part of developing and improving anything we do here at the School. We also know that involving students in decisions that impact on them can benefit their emotional health and wellbeing by helping them to feel part of the school and the wider community. As a result, we are continually looking at ways that ensure that Student Voice is reflected across all areas of the school.

3.6.2 We are developing focus groups, ambassadors, student reps and have student surveys each year and these provide us with much needed information to continually improve on what we do at the school.

3.7 ***Staff development***

Aim:

- To create a 'menu' of SEMH training and development opportunities across the academic year. The themes will be determined by current student issues e.g. anxiety, eating disorders.

3.7.1 We recognise that it is important for our staff to access training to increase their knowledge of emotional wellbeing and to equip them to be able to identify mental health difficulties in the students they work with. This includes knowing who to refer a student to at the school e.g. the safeguarding team.

3.7.2 In addition, we recognise the importance of staff taking care of their own wellbeing and EEG, as the employer, encourage and support staff to look after their physical and mental health. To this end, we offer various activities and opportunities for staff to engage in to assist their well-being. The school also

³ [Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing](#)

invests in an Employee Assistance Programme and works closely with Occupational Health to support our staff. (*Please see the Staff Absence Policy for more information*).

3.8 **Identification and Intervention**

Aim:

- To develop our analysis of discrete groups, subsequent interventions and the impact this then has on achievement.

3.8.1 We closely and rigorously monitor the achievement of all students at the school and we do this through our Progress Review cycle every term. This data enables us to see if there are any groups that are not making the progress they should be. We can identify need at this level and then look to make the appropriate intervention at either a curriculum support or personal support level (or sometimes both).

3.9 **Working with parents**

Aim:

- To establish a small working party with parents to explore what else we (staff, students and families) could do more of in order to promote SEMH to enable improved resilience

3.9.1 We recognise that the transition and next steps can be difficult for some young people. As a result we look to build a relationship with prospective students and their parents from when they apply to us right through to when they study with us.

4. **Resources**

info@inspiresuffolk.org.uk tel:0330 055 0033
NSPCC The UK children's charity NSPCC child line 0800 1111
jo@samaritans.org call 116123
Social Services Suffolk 0808 800 4005
Norfolk Social Services Telephone: 0344 800 8020 - this number is open 24 hours a day
Papyrus Call: 0800 068 41 41 Text: 88247 Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org

Revision History – Social, Emotional, Mental Health Strategy (SEMH)

Revision date	Reason for revision	Section number	Changes made
February 2025	EEGT Required	1 - 4	SEND Schools and Exning arrangements.