



# SEMH and Well Being Policy

**Policy Statement**

At Ferndale we believe our school is a family and that it is vitally important that everyone is safe and happy within it. We aim to provide an environment in which our children are secure and confident, irrespective of their protected characteristics, with Equal Opportunities for all. At Ferndale Primary School, we inspire creativity, high achievement and enjoyment and we celebrate diversity and individuality.

By expecting high standards of everyone we will make sure that:

- Our school is a fun and exciting place to learn;
- That we work on improving the 'key skills' for life;
- We are confident doing things on our own and as part of a team;
- We continue to be proud of being part of our school and celebrating success;
- We are safe and feel cared for

Our School's Values		Our School's Learning 9
Equality	Teamwork	
Respect	Honesty	

**Policy Aims**

**Through the success of our SEMH policy we aim to:**

- Create a calm, purposeful, caring, supportive, safe and happy learning environment where every child can realise their full potential
- Foster positive, caring attitudes towards everyone, where achievements are valued.
- Encourage each child to take responsibility for his/her own behaviour, leading to increasing independence and self-discipline.
- Create a consistent approach to behaviour management throughout the school.
- Work in partnership with parents in dealing with any SEMH issues.
- Encourage respect for individuals.
- Lead by example in the way that we treat each other and the children in our care

**Definition of SEMH**

## SEMH Policy

SEMH needs is an overarching term for children who demonstrate difficulties with emotional regulation and/or social interaction and/or are experiencing mental health problems.

Children and young people who have difficulties with their emotional and social development may have immature social skills and find it difficult to make and sustain healthy relationships.

These difficulties may be displayed through the child or young person becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as through challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour.

A wide range and degree of mental health problems might require specialist provision.

These could manifest as difficulties such as problems of mood (anxiety or depression), problems of conduct (oppositional problems and more severe conduct problems including aggression), self-harming, substance abuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Some children and young people may have other recognised disorders such as attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD), attachment disorder, autism, ARFID, pervasive developmental disorder, or pathological Demand Avoidance PDA), an anxiety disorder, a disruptive disorder or, rarely, schizophrenia or bipolar disorder.

### **Underlying Reasons**

Inappropriate / disturbing / challenging behaviours can be interpreted as a symptom or communication of an underlying need. In order to address such behaviours we must address these underlying needs. It is crucial to identify, understand and then address/support the underlying factors that impact on children and young people, such as Speech, Language and Communication Difficulties, attachment difficulties, unhelpful thought processes or learning needs. The majority of inappropriate / disturbing / challenging behaviours can be avoided, or at least significantly reduced and managed through proactively promoting and supporting positive social, emotional and mental health. The potential implications of unmet SEMH needs for education settings, individuals and their families are extreme. Due to the complex nature of difficulties with SEMH, measuring the impact of SEMH interventions is challenging. Whilst an individual's behaviour may be measured as one externalised indicator of their social, emotional and mental health, a true measure can only be gained through assessing the condition of their interrelated underlying needs.

We believe in early intervention and promoting positive mental health. Where concerning behaviour is displayed, the school's recording systems should identify children who need further support eg cause for concern forms.

### **What Inclusive, Effective Mental Health and Pastoral Interventions Mean To Us**

- A child centred approach – where the child stays at the centre of every conversation.
- We prioritise those who need our help most, but we intervene with all.
- Supporting and promoting positive approaches and strategies for everyone
- When children are here, we can support and educate them – attendance matters.
- Children learn best when there are clear rules and simple consequences.
- Staff teach best when there are clear rules and simple consequences.
- We use evidence-based practice for the majority of our interventions.

### **Supporting behaviour management**

We work as a team, and if necessary, will liaise with outside agencies to support children with difficulties managing their own behaviour due to SEMH needs. Staff support each other, through offering advice on strategies and through giving respite to the teacher and class for short periods of time.

### **Working with parents**

If we are to be successful in supporting a child to manage their own behaviour appropriately, we must work in partnership with parents. This is only effective if both parties communicate on a regular basis, keeping each other informed of any issues. We have a PSA (Parent Support Adviser) employed to support families and provide a link between home and school, using our family hub as a base. We expect that parents and carers are treated appropriately by other adults in school and would expect them to respond to staff appropriately while on the school premises. We will not tolerate poor behaviour towards staff and ultimately, reserve the right to 'ban' access of individuals if their behaviour is inappropriate. (Refer to Parent Behaviour policy)

### **Involving pupils**

A child centred approach is vital, we encourage our children to be responsible for their actions and to play a key part in improving their behaviour. Staff receive training on a variety of areas related to SEMH. Over time, we hope aspects around building resilience, using mindfulness strategies along with the support from SEMH Inclusion Support and CAMHs professionals (as part of the CAMHs MHST project) will help the children to become better at spotting and coping with their social and emotional needs. Staff have received training on Emotion Coaching, attachment issues and mindfulness. From this, staff are developing ways in which these approaches can be incorporated into the daily routines to encourage positive thinking within the pupils in class.

### **Curriculum – Healthy Minds, Happy Me, PSHE and SRE**

Within school the children follow the 'Healthy Minds, Happy Me Curriculum' which is underpinned by a positive psychology philosophy. It focuses on how positive mental health and emotional well-being can be developed and optimised for all young people. This is achieved through exposure and on-going opportunities in school that facilitate emotional self-awareness and support the development and learning of an attitude and skills that can promote resilience and emotional well-being.

There is a strong focus on the things that can be done to promote the mental health and emotional well-being of all pupils. Rather than focusing on difficulties and distress, it gently introduces relevant themes, done in fun and engaging ways, which are embedded into the school curriculum. See Appendices 1 and 2 where the curriculum themes are outlined in more detail.

### **Equal Opportunities and Inclusion**

We are committed to equality of opportunity for all our children, irrespective of protected characteristics. The effectiveness of our policy is monitored and any issues dealt with immediately. Refer to Ferndale's [Equality Policy](#).

The school aims to provide equal opportunities for all. All children have individual needs, many of which can be met within the normal environment of the classroom through a differentiated or adapted curriculum and using a variety of different teaching and learning approaches and experiences. For those pupils who have specific needs, we endeavour to provide a specialised curriculum but maintain inclusion where appropriate.

### **Roles and Responsibilities - In order to achieve the aims of this Policy**

#### **All staff should:**

- Follow the School's Behaviour Policy and hierarchy of rewards and sanctions consistently.
- Use adherence to the school Behaviour Charter as a measure of good behaviour.
- Remind children that they are responsible for their behaviour.
- Work in partnership with parents in dealing with any behavioural issue.
- Act as a role model for desired behaviour, treating all adults and children with respect.
- Ensure that each child has work appropriate to his/her level of ability.
- Receive updated training & reminders to support the delivery of positive behaviour strategies.

### **Pupils should:**

- Follow the School's Behaviour Charter
- Be aware of our rewards/sanctions and accept the consequences of the choices they make.
- Co-operate readily with all school staff.

### **Parents should:**

- Support the School's Behaviour Policy and hierarchy of rewards and sanctions.
- Help the children understand the Charter and the need for this in an ordered society.
- Work in partnership with the school to promote high standards of behaviour at all times.
- Ensure their child attends school regularly/punctually and notify the school of reasons for absence.
- Share with the school any events or influences outside school that may be impacting on their child's social, emotional and mental health.

### **Governors should:**

- Be aware of the behaviour policy, charter and understand what the school's expectations are with regard to pupil behaviour.
- Support the school's hierarchy of rewards and sanctions.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of this.

### **Expectations of Each Other**

- Keeping our notes up to date - CPOMs.
- All staff have read and understood section one of Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2025 and subsequent versions).
- Knowing our behaviour, attendance, safeguarding, SEND and other related policies
- Attending to our duties to support the wider school community.
- Attending meetings on time and prepared.
- Ensuring wave one pastoral work is evidenced - using CPOMs eg mentoring.
- Speaking to pupils, staff, parents, professionals and each other with courtesy, respect and understanding.

### **Key Principles - Setting good habits early**

We strive to help our children establish regular punctual attendance and good behaviour from the start, involving parents in the process.

### **Rewards Available to the children for following the school behaviour policy**

- Dojo Points
- Verbal praise; body language (smile, thumbs-up, nod) – specific to the child;

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- Stickers; star of the day; stamps; certificates; whole class awards e.g. extra playtime.
- Celebrations assembly - Learning 9 Merit of the week - certificate; Dojo Winner of the week- certificate; Attendance rewards
- Head Teacher awards eg values of the term
- Parent/teacher consultations – positive comments and reports; end of year reports - recognising good behaviour and attitude to school.

### **'Beyond the school gates'**

The rewards and sanctions apply not only in school, but also when a pupil is representing the school during and beyond school hours within the care of the school. This may include, when pupils are on school trips or if a child is competing in a school-based event off site. Where there is an instance of inappropriate behaviour 'out of school' (and not representing the school), we may intervene, where appropriate, in order to minimise the negative impact felt within school. We will seek to work with parents and members of the local community, including our PCSO (Police Community Support Officer) to achieve this if necessary. This is in line with our Behaviour policy.

### **Strategies to Support Inclusion**

We have a range of support mechanisms to help the inclusion of pupils with SEMH needs and enable their access to the National Curriculum and wider school life. These strategies are over and above the strategies that are used for the majority of pupils.

- Support from School's Mentor
- Support from School's Parent Support Adviser (PSA) and family hub
- Referral to PSA to help support family – Early Help Referral
- Inclusion Support SEND referral to Sandwell's Social, Emotional and Mental Health Team, who support pupils through:
  - Observing pupils and advising on new teaching and learning strategies
  - Supporting provision plans
  - any plan for children at risk of exclusion eg PPE support
  - Regular meetings with parents
  - Support in school
- Circle of Friends
- Anger management strategies
- Class profiles - looking at a child's behaviour in relation to the rest of the class
- Inclusion Support SEND referral to the Advisory Teacher for Learning - SEN K Plan formulated and strategies to support
- Inclusion Support SEND referral to the Educational Psychologist
- 1:1 support from the CAMHS MHST
- Referrals to external agencies – BEAM, KRUNCH, TESS, CAMHS, etc

### **Where there is a need to intervene**

If a child attacks another child or adult violently and is unable to calm down, then appropriate physical restraint may be necessary. On occasions, the child may need to be removed and taken to a safe space, a member of staff will then contact the child's parents/carers, although the situation may require a different approach depending on the age of the pupil and the context of the incident. CPI (Crisis Prevention Intervention) Training has been provided to specific staff and is updated regularly to ensure that techniques are appropriately employed. An incident book is completed and the situation discussed with the SLT, who will support staff and parents to consider how best to meet that child's and the school's needs. This might include the involvement of other agencies – Children's Social Services, Educational Psychology Service, SEMH Inclusion Support etc. **For further guidance, refer to the DFE Use of Reasonable Force (2011) DFE-00060-2011.**

## **SAFEGUARDING**

- Safeguarding pupils comes above everything else we do.
- All staff across the school have training annually with reminders throughout the year at briefings, staff meetings and inset days.
- All new staff have safeguarding training as part of their induction.
- All staff at the school recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, that they should have read and understood section one of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (and subsequent versions), that early intervention is key and that context matters.
- All notes are kept securely.

## **ATTENDANCE**

- All staff have a role to play in ensuring each child attends school.
- Staff support by providing first wave support, checking in with pupils who have poor or low attendance- key adults are those best placed with the relationships with the children.
- All of the Inclusion Team work to remove barriers to good school attendance.
- We work together, including with external agencies to address and remove barriers to school attendance.
- We prioritise pupils who are classed as vulnerable, be they disadvantaged, SEND pupils and pupils with SEMH needs, however, we are passionate about providing the same support to all pupils, irrespective of background.
- We follow the protocols which are in place, acknowledging that each child and situation is different and adjusting as required.

## **BEHAVIOUR**

- Good behaviour allows for teachers to teach and pupils to learn.
- We have a moral obligation to prepare young people for the rigours of work and life beyond education.
- We are here to educate the whole child, helping with their moral and personal development.
- We apply the protocols for each student, acknowledging that each child and situation is different and adjusting as required.
- We prioritise pupils who are classed as vulnerable, be they disadvantaged, SEND pupils and pupils with SEMH needs, however, we are passionate about providing the same support to all pupils, irrespective of background.
- We make reasonable adjustments for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities or vulnerable pupils.
- We have a support-based system; after each consequence comes a level of support.
- We involve parents in supporting their child to improve their behaviour.

## **PASTORAL CARE/MENTAL HEALTH**

- Pastoral support is driven by our intent statement
- We do not give up on any of our children and constantly seek ways to support them.
- Our interventions are directed by evidence-based practice.
- Our Inclusion Team are passionate about becoming experts in their field around pastoral and mental health support.
- We work with numerous external agencies to support our pupils.
- We recognise that early intervention is vital.
- We involve parents as appropriate in the support which we put in place.

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- Our interventions are assessed and evaluated, being presented to Governors termly for impact.
- The mental health of our pupils and staff is of the highest priority.

### Further Information

#### Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (and subsequent versions)

As research indicates, children with SEN and or a disability are more vulnerable to Safeguarding issues, therefore the Senior Leadership Team work closely with staff to monitor this and ensure the correct procedures are in place. (See Safeguarding and SEND Policy)

#### Vulnerable Groups

The Deputy Head and Inclusion Manager/SENCo identify other vulnerable groups of children throughout school. These may include FSM, Pupil Premium, More Able, LAC, EAL, ethnicity based and those with specific home circumstances, as well as SEND pupils. (See linked policies)

#### Other Linked Policies/Documentation include:

Our SEMH Policy underpins the working of the school. There are, however, specific links with other important school policies –Home School Agreement, Equality statement and policy, Health and Safety, Attendance and Special Educational Needs and Inclusion. Accessibility Plan , Attendance Policy, EAL Policy, Pupil Premium Policy, Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy, SEND Information Report. Local Offer, Anti-Bullying Policy, Positive Handling Policy

For further guidance, refer to the DFE SEMH and discipline in schools (2012).

The document Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) was reissued to schools in 2019 detailing the statutory guidance, placing a duty on schools to promote the welfare of children. This policy complies with the government guidance stated in the KCSIE 2019 document and subsequent updates (KCSIE September 2025)

**Policy Written Autumn 2025 by:**

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Next Review: Autumn 2028

Appendix 1

**Our School's PSHE Curriculum Themes Taught Across the School in Healthy Minds, Happy Me**



Theme	Description of topics	Themes addressed
All About Me	Helping pupils to celebrate difference and manage emotions in a safe and healthy way	Self-awareness, understanding feelings, self-esteem and self-regulation
Friendships	Supporting pupils to think about the importance of friendships and social relationships in relation to their own wellbeing	Considering other people's emotions and perspectives; working together, social problem-solving
Resilience and coping	Helping pupils to develop resilience, looking after themselves and cope with change	Conflict management, positive coping strategies, reframing failure, facing adversity, self/regulation and self-control, responsible decision-making, self-management
Belonging	Building a sense of belonging through the development of secure relationships.	Celebrating differences, attachment, respecting others, culture, belonging and caring support
<u>Being the Best Me I Can Be</u>	Encouraging pupils to be effective learners using their personal strengths.	Effective learning; setting, planning and reaching goals, creativity, encouraging mastery goals, high expectations
My Wider World	Helping pupils to understand their place in the community and promoting connectedness.	Being a member of a community, celebrating communities' differences and similarities and cultural awareness.



