



## The White Horse Federation SEMH Involvement

### TWHF - SEMH Support Team

The SEMH Support Team, part of The White Horse Federation is a service that supports schools with pupils that may present with Social, Emotional or Mental Health needs.

We operate as an *independent* service dedicated to assisting adults in educational settings by offering practical advice and strategies that complement the existing support provided by schools.

Our primary objective is to equip schools with strategies that facilitate students' emotional regulation, thereby ensuring they are 'ready to learn.' Based in Swindon, our service also provides support to educational settings in Wiltshire, Oxford, and Berkshire. With over twenty years of experience, we have successfully supported thousands of students within The White Horse Federation and in external settings. We operate across various educational stages, including Early Years, Primary and Secondary. Our team comprises of a number of Teachers, qualified SENCos, and Outreach Advisors, all of whom bring specialised expertise in Social, Emotional, and Mental Health.

### How does it work?

1. A school may recommend or request that a referral to our service be made, providing the parent or guardian has provided and returned the relevant consent form.
2. Once we receive and process the referral, a member of our team will reach out to the school to arrange a consultation, typically with the school's SENCo. This helps us gain insight into the pupil's current situation and context. The team member will also meet with the teaching and support staff who work with the pupil.
3. We will conduct a series of observations to assess the pupil's experience at school. This will include observing their interactions with peers and adults, as well as evaluating the existing support, environment, and provisions already in place for them.
4. After completing these observations, we will provide a report to the school that includes:
  - Our observations
  - Any emotional assessments conducted
  - Information shared by the school
  - Suggested strategies to support the pupil
5. Following the report, a review meeting will be scheduled with the school, typically within 3-6 weeks, depending on the referral. If the pupil shows progress with emotional regulation, the SEMH Support Team will close the referral. If additional support is needed, we may refer back to the school or signpost them to other agencies, such as the Local Authority or other specialist support agencies.

We hope this leaflet helps clarify how our service operates and our focus on enhancing your child's outcomes. Below, we've included some frequently asked questions that may address any further questions you may have.

## FAQS

### **Will the SEMH Support Team work with my child?**

Generally, no. Evidence suggests that working closely with school staff who currently support the pupil, are often best positioned to have impact. We also find that building trust with a pupil can take time and inevitably, further down the line, that work must come to an end, which some pupils find very challenging.

### **Will my child be told about the observation?**

No, our service will not tell your child we are planning to observe. This would likely cause feelings of anxiety for the pupil. We would also ask that school staff do not 'prepare' pupil's ahead of an arranged observation, as this can cause a 'biased' observation. However, as a parent/guardian this is your choice. However, we would ask you to consider the impact this may have on your child.

### **Will parents/guardians be kept up to date?**

Yes, via the school SENCo. The SEMH Support Team support hundreds of settings, therefore we request that should you require any updates you arrange directly with the school SENCo.

### **Can I have a copy of the report?**

Yes, however the report will be provided to school directly. If you would like a copy of this, please speak to your school SENCo. We cannot post or send reports to parental email addresses as they cannot be sent securely. Please speak to your SENCo if you would like a copy.

### **Who will have access to my child's information?**

Once referred, the SEMH Support Team will have access to information shared by school about your child. This information is considered highly sensitive. All members of staff on the SEMH Support Team have enhanced DBS checks and comply with The White Horse Federation GDPR compliance policy.

### **Can I speak to the team member involved with my child?**

Yes, upon request via the school. The SENCo can request that the team member contact you to answer any further questions you may have. This will usually take place by phone or in school depending on availability.

### **Who will the report be shared with?**

The school SENCo, Teacher(s), support staff and The White Horse Federation Inclusion Team (please see consent form via your school SENCo). This ensures that staff working with your child have access to the advice which aims to support your child. Occasionally, we receive requests from the Local Authority to share our advice. This typically tends to be when the Local Authority are considering or issuing an EHCP. However, other agencies, such as Social Care may also ask for our report in order to support a child providing, they are already involved.

### **Will you do home visits or work in the home?**

No, we are a school-based service. We do not directly support parents or conduct home visits.

### **I have a question that's not listed here – who do I speak to?**

Please contact your school SENCo and they can arrange a time for us to call you to answer any further questions you may have.