A framework of understanding and responding to children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties

Specialist Learning Services
September 2013
A framework of understanding and responding to children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties

The aim of this document is to set out shared understandings around social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD), in order to develop a framework that can be used to develop and reflect upon practice within schools, the Pupil Referral Service and specialist settings. Based on an agreed understanding we will make a clear offer to schools about the support we can offer in relation to meeting the social, emotional and behavioural needs of children.

Positive Relationship Framework

A child’s environment and the adults responsible for their learning and care have a profound impact upon their emotional health and well-being. We understand that the relationships between a child and their parents are of fundamental importance in setting the foundations of emotional health and providing continuing emotional well-being.

We know that a child experiencing good emotional health approaches their learning with confidence, having a direct impact on attainment. If we focus on the importance of relationship and think about the experiences we provide for our most vulnerable children we can generate the lasting resilience to become a confident learner.

Positive relationships are fundamental to improving outcomes for all our children. Research shows that children who have already experienced positive relationships with significant others are more likely to display the confidence and skills needed to engage with the social and learning opportunities presented at school. Research also shows that we can encourage emotional wellbeing, social skills and positive behaviour through relationships, where adults help children to understand, manage and express their feelings. When we focus on the importance of relationship we can think about the opportunities we provide for children experiencing social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and how they can be best differentiated and targeted.

We can think about this in terms of ‘waves’ or ‘provision maps’ where the focus is on high quality provision for all children (see diagram) and appropriately targeted support and interventions for those children with additional needs.

We have identified the following waves as a reference to the type of provision available.

Wave 1 - Positive Nurturing Ethos

In the context of positive relationships and a nurturing environment the majority of children respond to clear boundaries and expectations and learn effectively. Most children who start school have experienced positive models of relationship with their parents. These models are internalised and children and are able to engage with staff and peers in a confident way to optimise learning experiences. The majority of children will respond to a positive school ethos where they are respected and understood.

Support in relation to developing a nurturing ethos may include:
- Training in relation to Nurture and Relationship
- Helping a school audit its provision for children experiencing SEBD
- Working with a Partnership of Schools to share good practice
- Helping a school work towards standards within Kirklees Inclusion Quality Standard (KIQS)
- Helping a school look at the needs of Looked After Children

**Wave 2 - Additional Support**

Within the context of a positive nurturing ethos some children will need additional opportunities to access support in relation to their social, emotional and behaviour needs. Because of the importance of relationships, work around social, emotional and behavioural difficulties is most likely to be successful within the existing relationships and systems that exist in the school context.

Additional Support may include:
- Formative assessment and identification of pupil’s additional needs
- Reflective discussions with parents to find opportunities for collaboration around emotional well-being
- Increased opportunities to talk to adults in school
- Social skills programmes to help relationships with their peers
- Restorative approaches to encourage an appreciation of the impact of behaviour
- Support in understanding boundaries and expectations
- Support with the social and emotional aspects of learning

**Wave 3 - Targeted Support**

Because of the complexity of their needs, some children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties will need support to be more personalised and targeted. This is likely to be most successful through planned and regular opportunities for children to engage and strengthen existing relationships.

Within these relationships we can develop spaces and opportunities to undertake work to increase their emotional well-being, self-esteem and social skills.

Targeted Support may include:
- Greater access to consistent positive relationships (Key Worker System)
- Access to a nurturing provision
- Support for parents to reflect upon their relationships with the child
- Opportunities for the child to reflect on the impact of their behaviour on those around them
- A consultation with staff from Specialist Learning Services

**Wave 4 – Targeted Intervention**

Some children may have a high level of emotional difficulties which make it very difficult for them to engage with positive relationships in their school setting. They may need a targeted intervention where they have access to adults who are experienced in working with children who need a high level of emotional support.

Targeted Intervention may include:
- A placement in a Nurture Group
- Support from an allocated Inclusion Worker
- A placement at a Pupil Referral Unit
Offering Support within this Framework

Within specialist learning services our purpose is to work collaboratively with schools and parents to identify and meet the relationship needs of children who are struggling to manage in school.

- To support these children in their school communities as this is where their most important relationships are and will continue to be.
- To support schools to nurture at least one stable key relationship with an adult for the vulnerable child, in school.
- To support school staff to plan experiences for the child which will allow them to increase their self-confidence and their self/other-awareness. This will often be through scaffolding for their success in curriculum.
- To work alongside parents and professionals to increase the child’s positive experience across different contexts (i.e. home, community), through the Common Assessment Framework and other multi-agency approaches.
- To support schools to audit their capacity to develop the resilience and improve the life-chances of vulnerable children in their care. Through consultation, perhaps in pyramids of schools working collaboratively, we can devise training which meets the needs of staff and children.

Pyramid of waves of support

Wave 1: Positive Nurturing Ethos
Wave 2: Additional Support
Wave 3: Targeted Support
Wave 4: Targeted Intervention
Appendix

This appendix document is to be used alongside the Framework of Understanding. It provides reference to the principles, underlying values, good practice and types of provision that should be available at each wave. This is not a comprehensive checklist of all interventions, but can be used to put together packages of personalised support for pupils. Additional and targeted interventions must be built upon high quality whole school practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wave</th>
<th>Types of provision</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wave 1</td>
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</table>
| Positive Nurturing Ethos | - An ethos which celebrates the achievements of all, with regular opportunities for recognition at whole school, class, group and individual level  
- An inclusive culture with respect for all, that includes the Kirklees Inclusion Quality Standards - KIQS  
- Good home and school liaison which promotes a collaborative culture of parental involvement e.g. postcards home  
- A focus on promoting the emotional well-being of the whole school community through school ethos, vision and principles  
- Opportunities for staff to reflect on practice in relation to meeting children’s social, emotional and behavioural needs e.g. models of peer mentoring among staff  
- Systems to promote pupil voice, e.g. school council, peer meditation  |
| What a school provides for all pupils to develop positive relationship, emotional well-being, social skills and positive behaviour | **Social**  
- Staff that have a sound understanding of children’s social and emotional development, evidenced through whole school training logs  
- Evidenced opportunities within the curriculum to develop collaborative working skills  
- Appropriate reflection upon classroom organisation and relationships, e.g. groupings, seating plans  
- Opportunities to develop class cohesion, e.g. class charter  
- A range of provision at lunch times and break times which cater for wide range of interests/needs  
- Adults and pupils that model positive social interaction, e.g. expectations for the start of the day in terms of greetings  
- Explicit teaching around keeping safe in relation to the internet, particularly social media e.g. Facebook  
- Regular contact with parents and carers at Parents Evenings |
### Emotional
- Regular planned opportunities for pupils to share feelings with others within the curriculum and in specific contexts such as circle time
- Explicit teaching to develop children’s awareness and capacity to reflect on their own emotions and feelings of others e.g. feelings fans, emotion thermometers.

### Behaviour
- A positive behaviour policy that encourages pupils to take responsibility for their actions
- A structured predictable environment where expectations about behaviours are made explicit
- Restorative approaches for developing and managing relationships and addressing difficulties when they occur
- Clarity about structure and timings of the school day e.g. visual timetables, personalised planners
- Whole school, group and class reward systems are used consistently
- Planning and preparation around transitions and transfers e.g. change of year groups

### Supported Learning
- Social and emotional aspects of learning are recognised in curriculum planning
- Children’s learning is understood developmentally with learning opportunities being appropriately differentiated
- The developmental value of play is acknowledged within classroom practice
- All learning activities are appropriately differentiated
- Pupils receive regular positive feedback regarding their learning

### Trigger Points
**Examples of when a school or setting may consider exploring a child’s difficulties further and planning an intervention**
- A pupil appears to be needing a high level of adult support to understand expectations about behaviour
- A pupil regularly appears upset or distressed in the school setting
- A pupil is experiencing social and emotional barriers to learning, e.g. anxiety
- A group of pupils appear to be having a high level of disagreements or conflict
- Concerns are being shared between school and home about a child’s emotional well-being
- A pupil does not appear to be responding positively to school reward systems
- A pupil is experiencing a period of significant transition or change e.g. family breakdown
Wave 2
Additional Support (School Action)

What a school might provide for pupils that need some extra support in relation to their social, emotional and behaviour needs.

### Relationships
- Staff in school that are able to apply an understanding of a child’s emotional needs with reference to the wider contexts of home, school and the community
- The establishment of a working relationship with the family, with regular opportunities to share and reflect upon the child’s needs
- Increased opportunities for the pupil to work with nurturing adults in a planned way e.g. daily meet and greet, focused small group work
- Opportunities for staff training around nurturing principles
- Senior management teams to acknowledge that working with children with emotional needs can be rewarding and challenging and provide support and training for staff, e.g. solution-circles, group consultation
- Further encouragement of the positive relationships the pupil already has within school

### Social
- Opportunities to develop, build, sustain, appropriate relationships and friendships with their peers, e.g. Circle of Friends, The Good Classmates Programme
- Support to develop communication skills e.g., Socially Speaking, Social Use of Language Programme (SULP), Narrative Groups
- Adult led structured lunch and break-time activities to develop appropriate play with peers
- A range of safe places a pupil can access at unstructured times, either alone or with peers

### Emotional
- Adult led activities that support the recognition and regulation of their emotions, e.g. time with a learning mentor, pastoral support, Silver SEAL
- Regular planned opportunities for the pupil to explore their feelings with a nurturing adult within school
- A safe base within school to speak to staff about worries or concerns e.g. learning mentor room,

### Behavioural
- Adult mediation to resolve conflict with others through structured approaches including restorative practice
- Planned opportunities for the pupil to work with an adult and reflect on both positive and negative aspects of their behaviour in relation to others and within certain contexts
- Personalised visual timetables and supported use of personalised planners
- Enhanced preparation to support within school transitions and transfers
- Personalised reward systems that motivate and build self-esteem. It will be important to negotiate these with the child and ensure that they continue to be meaningful
- Careful use of specific praise, with staff displaying sensitivity about the best way of offering positive feedback to a child
- Behavioural targets recorded through an IBP, IEP, Report card or Provision Map. These should be reviewed with a parent or carer regularly (minimum half-termly)
- Whole staff or core staff (SENCo, learning mentor, inclusion manager) training on specific aspects of engaging pupils experiencing social and emotional difficulties
- School may make a referral to their Parent Support Advisor to focus on emotional regulation and behaviour management at home

**Supported Learning**
- A thorough assessment of strengths and difficulties with targeted interventions recorded in an IEP and/or Provision Map
- Acknowledgement that vulnerable children will need additional support to take risks within learning and build resilience.
- Support to access opportunities activities outside/beyond the formal curriculum, for example breakfast clubs, after school clubs
- An assessment of a child’s social and emotional development and potential barriers to learning, e.g. Boxall Profile

**Trigger Points**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of when a school or setting may consider involving outside agencies to develop a more personalised package of support for a pupil</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Concerns from internal monitoring that despite regular support and intervention the child is still experiencing significant difficulties</td>
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<td>- The pupil behaves in a way that puts them at risk of exclusion</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Parents or Carers express significant concerns about aspects of the child’s behaviour</td>
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<td>- The pupil appears to be finding it difficult to engage with the support being offered at Wave 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Evidence of wider community concerns following reports of antisocial behaviour.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Staff involved with the child feel they require some specialist support in understanding the child’s difficulties (Pupil Referral Service / Educational Psychology / Child and Adolescent Mental Health)</td>
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Wave 3
Targeted Support (School Action Plus)

What a school might provide for a pupil that has significant difficulties in relation to their social, emotional and behaviour needs. This support would be personalised and targeted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationships</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Access to a key worker who is able to support the pupil in recognising and</td>
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<tr>
<td>understanding their emotional responses, providing a level of attunment and</td>
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<tr>
<td>emotional containment at certain times of the day.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Access to a nurturing curriculum where a strong emphasis is placed on</td>
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<tr>
<td>helping pupils to develop an understanding of emotions and different emotional</td>
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<tr>
<td>responses within a safe environment e.g. Nurture Group, personalised</td>
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<tr>
<td>nurturing curriculum.</td>
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<th>Social</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Targeted adult support and supervision during social times and parts of</td>
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<tr>
<td>the day where there is less structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Careful consideration around activities that may depend on the pupil</td>
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<tr>
<td>working collaboratively with others</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Careful consideration around groupings, with staff having a good</td>
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<tr>
<td>understanding of relationship dynamics</td>
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<tr>
<td>• A thorough assessment of the pupil’s language and communication skills</td>
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<tr>
<th>Emotional</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Consistent access to a nurturing adult who is able to help the child</td>
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<tr>
<td>recognise their emotional triggers and begin to develop strategies for</td>
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<tr>
<td>managing stress and anxiety</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Structured interventions that deal with issues such as attachment and</td>
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<tr>
<td>help to address underlying psychological and emotional issues, e.g. Nurture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Access to adults who have accessed training around attachment and</td>
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<tr>
<td>understand how a child’s early experiences impact on their current</td>
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<tr>
<td>emotional well-being</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Access to specific mentoring or counselling such as school nurse, school</td>
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<td>counsellor or play therapy</td>
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<th>Behaviour</th>
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<tr>
<td>• A positive behaviour programme that is appropriately differentiated to</td>
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<tr>
<td>recognise the pupil’s level of understanding e.g. Behaviour Recovery</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Staff working with the pupil to have experience in managing behaviours</td>
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<tr>
<td>which can present considerable challenges in a school environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Close liaison between all the staff working with the pupil so that they</td>
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<tr>
<td>can respond a consistent manner and recognise strategies which may be</td>
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<tr>
<td>helpful at times when behaviour becomes challenging to manage</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Detailed records of the pupils behaviour including an analysis of the</td>
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<tr>
<td>context of incidents and plan to prevent future difficulties arising</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Opportunities to regularly engage in restorative conferences as a way of</td>
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<tr>
<td>addressing conflict and difficulty</td>
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Opportunities to regularly engage in restorative conferences as a way of addressing conflict and difficulty.
### Supported Learning
- Staff that have accessed training regarding specific learning difficulties e.g. specific language difficulties
- Opportunities for the pupil to access learning in a supported environment e.g. Learning Support Centre
- Individualised learning packages are put in place to support the pupil's individual needs e.g. reading recovery
- Learning audit is undertaken to identify any gaps in learning that need to be addressed e.g. gaps in mathematical understanding

### Targeted
- SMART and personalised targets to develop individual's social, emotional and behavioural skills, e.g. IEP, IBP, Boxall Profile
- Plans are consistently implemented and regularly reviewed with relevant staff, parents and the child
- Children's views are incorporated into their target setting and the review process

### Trigger Point
Examples of when a school or setting may consider involving outside agencies to develop a specialist package of support for a pupil
- The pupil is not able to reach personalised targets in relation to their social and emotional development
- The pupil regularly displays behaviour that places themselves and others around them in danger
- The pupil displays high levels of distress in the school setting
- The pupil has difficulty engaging with support offered in the school setting
- The pupil experiences formal exclusions from school
- Staff and outside agencies feel that the pupil's difficulties are exceptional and long-standing
- The pupil's difficulties are having an impact on their attendance
### Wave 4

**Targeted Individual Intervention**

What might need to happen for pupils displaying a high level of difficulty in relation to their emotional well-being, social skills and behaviour.

| Relationships | Staff that have access to a key worker who is able to support the pupil in recognising and understanding their emotional responses, providing a level of attunement and emotional containment throughout the school day. |
| Relationship | Staff that have a high level of experience and expertise in working with children with complex social, emotional and behavioural needs. |
| Relationship | Staff that have access to high quality, regular supervision within the school setting, alongside advice from specialist professionals, e.g. Educational Psychologist. |

#### Social

- Social interactions that are be supported and supervised, particularly during less structured times.
- Social groupings that are very carefully considered and reflected upon during each teaching session.

#### Emotional

- Environments that are carefully managed by consistent adults with a high level of experience of working with pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- Access to a therapeutic space within the school environment which the pupil can access if they feel they need some time to reflect on their emotions. This could be a calm outside garden space, or a quiet room with opportunities for the pupil to access activities that they find calming, e.g. listening to particular music.
- Access to therapeutic activities led by adults, e.g. Theraplay.

#### Behavioural

- Staff that have training in de-escalation techniques and positive handling, e.g. Team Teach.
- Learning environments where there are secure physical boundaries.
- Risk assessments for different activities.
- A high level of adult support being available for activities that the pupil may find particularly challenging.

#### Supported Learning

- A thorough assessment of learning needs undertaken by a specialist teacher or Educational Psychologist.
- Flexibility to offer one to one teaching when needed, as well as one to one adult support within a small group activity.
- Consideration given as to whether the pupil’s additional needs would make a Statutory Assessment of Special Educational Needs (SEN) appropriate.

#### Targeted Intervention

- A multi-agency approach to setting targets and planning interventions.
- Regular multi-agency review meetings involving all relevant professionals.
- Consideration given to placement in a specialised setting e.g. Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), SEBD Special School.