

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Post-Primary Guidance

Developing a Whole-School Approach to Social and Emotional Learning

Supporting the Emotional Health and Wellbeing of Young People in
Northern Ireland Post-Primary Schools





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Introduction

This guidance accompanies CCEA Post-Primary Guidance on Developing a Whole-Child, Whole-School, Whole-Community Approach to Emotional Health and Wellbeing (EHWB) and should be read in conjunction with this document. This guidance is intended to support school principals, school leaders and staff to develop and implement the Children and Young People’s Emotional Health and Wellbeing in Education Framework (Department of Education and Department of Health, 2021). The guidance is based on research evidence which shows that developing and implementing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) as part of a whole-school approach can support and improve pupil EHWB (Durlak et al., 2011; Goldberg et al., 2019; NCB, 2015).

SEL recognises that learning is more than a cognitive process. Pupils learn in a social context: in the company of others, in school with their teachers and peers, and at home with the encouragement of family members. Pupil learning is also affected by their emotional state. If they are happy they are more likely to engage with their learning, whereas if they are stressed or worried they will not be in the right frame of mind for it. Pupil’s motivation, commitment, success and achievement in learning can be affected by their social relationships with others and their emotions. SEL focuses on developing the social and emotional dimensions of learning alongside cognition. SEL is therefore based on enabling pupils to develop the social and emotional competencies and knowledge and understanding required for their personal development, and to effectively engage in society as active citizens, and in further and higher education and employment.

This guidance is intended to support schools to develop SEL as an integral part of its whole-school approach to EHWB. It provides an SEL Competency Framework based on the Northern Ireland Curriculum (NIC). Schools can use the competency framework alongside SEL strategies to integrate and teach SEL throughout all subjects and other areas of provision, such as pastoral care and extra-curricular activities. This will support schools to develop key aspects of pupil’s EHWB referred to in the Children and Young Peoples’ Emotional Health and Wellbeing in Education Framework (Department of Education and Department of Health, 2021, p. 9).

The SEL competency framework enhances the range of opportunities the NIC provides to develop the Cross-Curricular Skills and Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities. The SEL competencies can be developed alongside other curriculum skills and capabilities.

The core content associated with supporting pupil EHWB mainly sits within Learning for Life and Work (LLW) and in particular Personal Development (PD) and through meeting the statutory requirements at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. Schools may wish to revise their content to take pupil EHWB issues and needs into account. Schools may also wish to consider teaching EHWB-related content through other subjects.



What is Social and Emotional Learning?

SEL can be defined as the processes and methods used to develop pupils' competencies which are at the centre of the teaching and learning process. Developing these competencies will enable pupils to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to develop a healthy sense of self-identity, effectively manage emotions, build resilience, develop self-efficacy, and achieve personal and collective goals. SEL competencies promote the pupil's voice and encourages them to express their emotions and show respect and empathy for others. They support pupils to develop and maintain supportive relationships and to make responsible ethical decisions (CASEL, 2020). SEL involves teaching SEL competencies alongside knowledge and understanding about a range of issues, including those related to their physical health and safety. SEL teaching and learning strategies are child centred and promote equity, pupil voice and agency. They focus on creating a safe and trusting learning environment, building relationships, and collaborative learning. SEL strategies include enquiry-based active teaching and learning approaches and formative assessment to support pupil progress. SEL programmes also provide opportunities for teachers to engage with parent/carers and the wider community.

SEL Supporting Pupils' Emotional Health and Wellbeing

Research evidence shows that one of the main ways schools can improve the emotional health and wellbeing of their pupils is by developing a purposeful, well-planned and implemented approach to SEL as an integral part of its whole-school approach to EHWB (Goldberg, et al., 2019; NCB, 2015).

For the purpose of this guidance, EHWB has been defined as:

*The positive aspects of mental health to include **emotional, psychological and social** wellbeing (DE and DH; 2021).*

In addition to the emotional, psychological and social aspects of a young person's wellbeing, it is also important that schools consider the interrelationship between these aspects of wellbeing with the young person's physical health and safety.

EHWB is influenced by the value and meaning a person places on their lives and the joy and happiness they gain from life. A person's EHWB is affected by how they feel about themselves, the quality of their relationships with others and their ability to manage emotions and deal with challenges. Good mental health is not just about the absence of mental health problems such as anxiety or depression. Good mental health is associated with positive characteristics such as self-worth, resilience, being able to cope with challenges, good relationships and enjoying living. Numerous research reports show that whole-school SEL programmes can effectively support pupils' EHWB by enabling them to develop social and emotional competencies associated with the positive aspects of mental health (Weare and Nind, 2011).

SEL Supporting Trauma-Informed Practice

Trauma-Informed Practice (TIP) supports teachers to recognise, identify and respond to the needs of pupils who have experienced adversity and trauma in their lives (See CCEA Post-Primary Guidance on Developing a Whole-Child, Whole-School, Whole-Community Approach to Emotional Health and Wellbeing p.11). Individual trauma can result from a single event, or it



can be from a prolonged threat to their safety, security and bodily integrity. Traumatic or adverse childhood experiences include physical or sexual abuse and neglect, the loss of a parent/ carer or sibling, or taking on adult responsibilities. The pupil's experiences can be worsened by their circumstances and by social inequalities and social injustice, for example poverty or discrimination. These experiences are potentially traumatic and have a long-lasting impact on their EHWB (Bunting et al., 2019). Research shows that a young persons' brain development can be affected by traumatic experiences, which can negatively impact on their memory and behaviour and their regulating of emotions, building relationships and ability to learn (NCB, 2019; Maynard et al., 2019).

As part of the schools' approach to TIP, schools could work collaboratively with other EHWB support agencies to design targeted SEL programmes for pupils who have been identified with mental health needs. SEL can support pupils who have experienced adverse childhood experiences to develop SEL competencies, knowledge and understanding to better cope with their experiences. SEL also provides a platform for pupils to build good relationships and to develop their self-confidence, self-esteem, self-worth, self-efficacy, agency and resilience.

Physical Health and Safety

In addition to developing SEL social and emotional competencies, pupils also need to understand the importance of being physically healthy and safe, and how this can influence their EHWB. Physical Health and Safety key concepts and related topics/issues are primarily covered through the Personal Development and Home Economics components of Learning for Life and Work and Physical Education. However, Physical Health and Safety and other PD key concepts can also be taught through other subjects. While the content for EHWB is not new to the Northern Ireland Curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4, schools should review their schemes' work to provide learning opportunities to develop SEL competencies.

Physical Health

Good physical health is more than just the absence of disease. Pupils need to understand that good physical health depends on making informed responsible decisions about lifestyle choices. The lifestyle choices a pupil makes when they are young may impact on their adult life as their choices become good behaviours and habits, such as taking regular exercise, or bad ones, such as eating junk food. Pupils should understand the benefits, for example, of taking regular exercise, having a healthy balanced diet, and getting enough sleep. They also need to understand how to avoid preventable diseases such as obesity or cardiovascular disease. Research shows that a higher level of EHWB is associated with improved immune response, increased longevity, cardiovascular health, slower disease progression and reproductive health (Howell et al., 2007). Research also shows that young people who participate in physical activity are more likely to have higher levels of EHWB and feel happy. Young people's physical activity is associated with increased self-esteem, improved concentration, more positive behaviour and lower levels of anxiety and depression (Public Health England, 2013). Participation in physical activities or sports which involve others also supports pupils to develop social and cultural awareness and to build good relationships. Physical health is also affected by nutrition and diet.



Safety

Personal safety is already part of the statutory curriculum requirements for PD. It is highlighted here to emphasise its importance to contributing to the pupils' EHWP. The feeling of being safe is important to pupils' sense of EHWP. If a pupil feels safe, they are less likely to feel worried and anxious and more likely to feel happy (ONS, 2020). To feel safe, pupils need to be safe, and know that they are safe. Pupils therefore need to know and understand possible threats to their safety. They need to be able to assess the risks associated with certain activities/behaviours and to make informed responsible decisions.

The Benefits of SEL

The research highlights the following benefits of whole-school approach to SEL:

- Improves pupil wellbeing as they understand their thoughts, feelings and behaviours
- Improved attitudes and behaviours – greater motivation to learn, increased commitment to school, more time devoted to schoolwork, and better classroom behaviour
- Allows emotive conversations and debates in a 'safe space'
- Reduction in aggression and behavioural problems
- Improved social and emotional competencies
- Improved academic achievement
- Reduction in mental health problems – fewer reports of pupil anxiety, stress and depression, and social withdrawal
- Reduction in substance abuse
- Encourages a variety of teaching methods and activities providing pupils with a range of learning opportunities across all subjects.

(Durlak et al., 2011).

The CCEA SEL Competency Framework

CCEA have developed a SEL Competency Framework to support the development and implementation of a whole-school approach in post-primary schools to SEL and to contribute to the overall EHWP of pupils. The SEL Competency Framework consists of five SEL competencies: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationships, and Responsible Decision-Making (Figure 1). The CCEA SEL Competency Framework is based on the [Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\) model](#).

Figure 1.

SEL Self-Awareness	SEL Self-Management	SEL Social Awareness
Identifying emotions Accurate self-perception Recognising strengths Self-confidence Self-efficacy	Impulse control Stress management Self-discipline Self-motivation Goal setting Organisational Skills	Understanding emotions Empathy/Sympathy Appreciating diversity Respect for others



SEL Relationship Skills	SEL Responsible Decision- Making
Communication	Identifying problems
Social Engagement	Analysing solutions
Relationship Building	Solving problems
Teamwork	Evaluating
	Reflecting
	Ethical responsibility

These SEL Competencies are defined in Table 1 and the SEL Competency Framework is shown in Table 2. Teachers may already be familiar with the terms and language used in SEL competencies and their components. This is because they have been drawn from elements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum. The SEL Competency Framework now makes explicit the competencies which can be taught through all subjects to support pupils' EHWB.

It is important to note that the CCEA SEL competencies are not intended to replace any of Cross-Curricular Skills or Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities. They enhance the opportunities provided by the NIC to develop skills and personal capabilities by adding a focus on SEL.

The CCEA SEL Competency Framework is intended to:

- Support schools to develop and implement the Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing in Education Framework (DE and DH, 2021)
- Be used in ways that contribute to the pupils' overall EHWB
- Support a coherent and consistent whole-school approach to SEL
- Provide teachers with a common set of SEL competencies which they can integrate into their classroom practice to support learning
- Be used to support Trauma-Informed Practice and Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Be used to develop SEL competencies alongside knowledge and understanding related to aspects of Emotional Health and Wellbeing (EHWB)
- Enable pupils to apply their learning to support their EHWB
- Support pupils to develop SEL competencies and demonstrate progress
- Be used in ways to complement the Cross-Curricular Skills and Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities
- Be used to develop pupil's resilience.



Table 1. Definitions of SEL Competencies

SEL Competency	Definition
Self-Awareness	The pupil’s abilities to understand their thoughts, feelings/emotions and values, and their influence on their behaviour. It is their capacity to reflect and assess their sense of self-identity, to recognise their strengths, limitations and potential, and to develop a sense of self-worth and purpose, and confidently express themselves.
Self-Management	The pupil’s abilities to effectively manage emotions, thoughts and behaviour, and to achieve personal goals. It is their capacity to be motivated, positive, optimistic and hopeful, to be resilient, to overcome challenges, to manage stress and seek advice when appropriate.
Social Awareness	The pupil’s abilities to understand others’ perspectives, to be empathetic and compassionate and to value cultural diversity. It is their capacity to understand how their behaviour affects others, to adapt their behaviour, and to recognise the value of belonging to family, school, and community.
Relationship Skills	The pupil’s abilities to build and maintain good healthy supporting relationships with individuals and diverse groups, to work collaboratively and support others and actively engage in school and community life. It is their capacity to express and manage their emotions in relationships, to effectively communicate and actively listen and respond appropriately to others, to be persuasive, to negotiate, to compromise, to manage and resolve conflict, and to resist social pressures that may put them at risk.
Responsible Decision-Making	The pupil’s abilities to make responsible, ethical, caring decisions about their behaviour and social interactions in different situations. It is the capacity to identify and solve problems, to consider options and assess risk to their safety, and the benefits and consequences of their actions to others and to their EHWP; and the future impact of their decisions.



Table 2. CCEA SEL Competency Framework

Social and Emotional Learning Competency	Competency Components
	Pupils should be able to:
Self-Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and recognise their own emotions and feelings • Recognise emotional triggers • Self-reflect and accurately assess their sense of self-identity • Recognise their own strengths and limitations • Value themselves for who they are • Express their own views and opinions
Self-Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and regulate thoughts, emotions and feelings • Manage thoughts, emotions, feelings and behaviour in a range of situations • Review and identify ways to improve learning • Set personal goals and targets, and monitor and review them • Organise and plan how to go about a task • Focus, sustain attention and persist to achieve success in an activity or task • Seek support and advice when necessary • Respond to feedback constructively • Exhibit positive motivation, hope and optimism • Use coping strategies to deal with and overcome challenging situations
Social Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and recognise others' emotions and feelings • Recognise and value cultural diversity • Respect the views and opinions of others and different perspectives • Understand and show empathy and compassion for others • Understand how their behaviour can affect others • Adapt behaviour and language to suit different people and situations • Recognise the value of belonging, for example to a group, family, school or community



Relationship Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognise the qualities of healthy, respectful relationships• Make friends, and build and maintain relationships with others• Play an active and meaningful part in the life of the school and community• Provide advice and support to others• Take personal responsibility for working with others• Manage and resolve conflict• Manage and express emotions in relationships• Listen actively and respond appropriately to others• Identify and manage peer pressure that may put them at risk
Responsible Decision-Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify problems• Generate possible solutions and evaluate options to resolve their problems• Try out alternative approaches to solving problems and evaluate outcomes• Assess the risks associated with making decisions• Make and justify ethical decisions• Demonstrate awareness of how their current decisions and choices may impact on their future.

How are the Competencies Related?

The SEL competencies are grouped into five strands to make them explicit, highlight their importance, and allow teachers to focus on developing different competency components. However, conceptually and in practice, the development of these competencies overlap. This means teachers can make connections between the different competencies and focus on developing competencies from different strands. The following are three examples.

Example 1: Developing self-management competencies can also include self-awareness competencies. The self-management competency (setting personal targets and monitoring and reviewing them) can also be developed alongside the self-awareness competencies, for example recognising their own strengths and limitations, and also recognising their potential and capabilities.

Example 2: Developing social awareness competencies can also include relationship competencies. The social awareness competencies (understanding and showing empathy and compassion for others and understanding other points of view and different perspectives) can contribute to relationship competencies, for example making friends, and building and maintaining relationships with others.

Example 3: Developing responsible decision-making competencies such as reflecting on options, weighing up pros and cons, and assessing the risks associated with making a decision can be connected to developing relationship skills such as identifying and resisting social pressures which may put them at risk.



How the Northern Ireland Curriculum (NIC) Supports Social and Emotional Learning

NIC Aims and Objectives

The NIC supports the development of pupils' emotional health and wellbeing through its aim and objectives. The aim of the NIC is to *empower young people to achieve their potential and make informed responsible decisions throughout their lives*. The rationale behind the aim is based on supporting the pupils' emotional health and wellbeing through schools' curricular provision of child-centred holistic education and the social, emotional and cognitive development of the young person. The translation of the curriculum objectives into school policies and practice enables pupils to develop the knowledge, understanding, and social and emotional competencies, including skills and attitudes that are required for personal development as active citizens and as contributors to the economy and environment.

The Post-Primary Curriculum

There is a core body of knowledge which pupils should be taught that will help them to better understand and to cope with some of the issues they may face in their daily lives and to help support their EHWB. There is no additional SEL content. The SEL core content, including physical health and safety, is based on schools meeting the statutory requirements for LLW and PE at Key Stages 3 and 4. Physical health includes physical activity, healthy eating, and diet and nutrition, while safety includes identifying and managing risks.

The Northern Ireland Key Stage 3 Curriculum also provides structure and flexibility for teaching SEL competencies alongside core content through the curriculum key elements and all subjects. SEL competencies should also be taught through **all subjects** alongside subject knowledge and understanding (Table 3). The NIC also promotes attitudes and dispositions such as optimism, self-belief, concern for others, and community spirit, which contribute to the development of SEL competencies. At Key Stage 4 SEL competences can be developed through teaching courses leading to qualifications.

Teaching and Learning

The teaching and learning of social and emotional competencies should be based on the NIC pedagogy and:

- Be learner-centred and meet individual learning needs
- Involve and engage pupils in the learning process
- Provide a range of appropriate opportunities for pupils to acquire and develop SEL competencies alongside subject knowledge and understanding
- Use enquiry-based active teaching and learning approaches that motivate, engage and challenge pupils
- Encourage pupils to work both collaboratively and independently
- Use assessment to support pupil progress in their learning and to develop SEL competencies



SEL Progression from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4

A SEL competency progression pathway was developed to illustrate how each of the SEL competencies progress across Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 (Appendix 1).

Table 3. Links between SEL Competencies and the NIC

SEL Competency	Subjects and Skills	Attitudes/Dispositions (All subjects)	Key Stage 3 Key Elements (All subjects)
Self-Awareness	LLW in particular Personal Development CCS: Communication	Personal responsibility, Self-confidence, Integrity, Moral courage	Personal and Mutual Understanding Moral Character Spiritual Awareness
Self-Management	LLW in particular Personal Development CCS: Communication TSPC: Self-Management	Personal Responsibility, Commitment, Determination, Resourcefulness, Curiosity, Flexibility	Personal and Mutual Understanding Moral Character Employability
Social Awareness	LLW in particular Personal Development and Local and Global Citizenship	Concern for others, Curiosity, Community Spirit, Respect, Tolerance, Openness to New Ideas	Citizenship, Cultural Understanding, Media Awareness, Ethical Awareness, Employability, Sustainability
Relationship Skills	LLW in particular Personal Development and Local and Global Citizenship CCS: Communication skills TSPC: Working with Others	Concern for Others, Community spirit, Respect, Tolerance, Flexibility	Personal and Mutual Understanding Moral Character, Citizenship Cultural Understanding
Responsible Decision-Making	LLW in particular Personal Development CCS: Communication TSPC: Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making	Personal Responsibility, Openness to New Ideas, Concern for Others, Community Spirit, Respect, Integrity, Moral Courage	Moral Character, Ethical Awareness



Whole-School Approach to SEL

A whole-school approach to SEL needs to be well-planned and designed. The aim of a whole-school approach to SEL is to support pupils' EHWP by developing pupils' self-awareness, self-management, and social awareness, relationship and decision-making competencies and knowledge and understanding about EHWP. This approach promotes positive EHWP while also helping to reduce the risk of pupils developing EHWP problems. These, in turn, can lead to more positive behaviour, better peer and teacher relationships, fewer conduct problems, less emotional distress and improved academic performance (Durlak et al., 2011; Greenberg et al., 2003).

Planning

Schools should adapt an integrated approach to developing SEL through the curriculum and subjects through other provision such as pastoral care, and promote SEL through the school ethos.

Planning: Questions to Consider

The following are some questions that may be useful for planning:

1. What EHWP needs do our pupils have?
2. Is SEL currently a teaching and learning focus in all subjects?
3. Is SEL referred to in any school policies?
4. What does this look like in practice?
5. What are the pupils' experiences and learning outcomes?
6. Will SEL or part of it be new to the school?
7. How will you ensure pupils, parents and staff understand the link between SEL and EHWP?
8. Which would be the preferred option when developing SEL across the school:
 - a) developing SEL strategies and competencies in all subjects alongside subject knowledge and understanding, with the EHWP-related content being delivered through LLW; or
 - b) developing SEL strategies and competencies in addition to broadening the teaching of EHWP topics beyond LLW into all subjects; or
 - c) is there an alternative option?
9. What are the implications of the above decision? Some examples might include pupil benefits, staff willingness, expertise, training, resources, or costs?
10. What social and emotional skills do we want to prioritise?
11. What support provision do we need to put in place for pupils who require additional support, particularly those who are vulnerable? Who will monitor this?
12. How will SEL be developed throughout other areas of provision?
13. How will SEL be promoted through the school ethos?
14. How and when is a curriculum mapping activity going to take place?
15. How is SEL going to be linked to academic content?
16. What staff training/professional development is required?
17. How will the development and implementation of SEL be monitored? Who will have oversight?
18. How will the impact of SEL on pupils' EHWP be assessed?
19. How will SEL be evaluated? How often?



[The ETI Inspection and Self Evaluation Framework](#) includes the following questions to assist schools in identifying how they are addressing SEL:

- Outcomes for Learners: How do we ensure that pupils are developing intellectually, socially, emotionally, physically, morally and spiritually?
- Quality of Provision: How do we ensure a taught, high-quality pastoral programme that meets the pupils' social, emotional and cognitive needs?

Developing SEL through the curriculum

All subjects can use the CCEA SEL Competency Framework for planning and integrating these competencies into their subject scheme of work. The competencies should be made visible, and taught and modelled alongside subject knowledge and understanding, using enquiry-based active teaching and learning approaches. The SEL competencies should also be taught alongside the Cross-Curricular Skills and Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities. When planning, teachers are encouraged to provide opportunities to promote pupils' voices and to develop and reinforce their SEL competencies.

There is also a core body of content which supports SEL and is essential for developing pupils' knowledge and understanding about the importance of EHWB and how to maintain and improve their own EHWB. While much of the content related to developing pupil knowledge and understanding about EHWB tends to sit within LLW, it does not mean that this is the only subject which it can be taught through. EHWB topics/issues can also be taught through other subjects.

Personal Development

Most of the content will sit within PD. At Key Stage 3 this can be covered through the CCEA InSync programme which is developed around ten themes which reflect the development of the whole person and address the statutory requirements for Personal Development. The themes also cover aspects of physical health and safety. The ten themes in the InSync programme are:

- Health and the Whole Person
- Feelings and Emotions
- Managing Influences and Making Decisions
- Self-Concept (Self-Identity)
- Managing Change
- Morals, Values and Beliefs
- Learning about Learning
- Safety and Managing Risk
- Relationships and Sexuality
- Drugs Awareness

Other components of LLW and Physical Education also contribute to developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of EHWB.



Local and Global Citizenship

LGC contributes to developing pupils' understanding of human and children's rights and the UNCRC. This would be important in promoting their understanding of the relationship between children's rights and EHWB. LGC promotes inclusion, diversity and equality and building good relationships. It develops pupils' social awareness and understanding of their role in society and the importance of participating in school and community life.

Home Economics

Home Economics develops pupils' understanding of the importance of having a healthy lifestyle and making responsible lifestyle choices regarding diet and food. It develops their understanding of relationships, home and family life, all of which are essential to their EHWB.

Employability

Employability help pupils to assess their personal skills, qualities, achievements and areas of interest; to assess their strengths and limitations to set personal goals and targets; and to think about their future. This encourages pupils to self-reflect and to think about the decisions they make, and the impact on their lives, and contributes to their sense of purpose and EHWB.

Physical Education

Physical Education contributes to pupil's physical health by promoting the benefits of physical activity to their EHWB. PE supports pupils to develop an active healthy lifestyle. PE provides pupils with regular, frequent and appropriate physical activity opportunities.

Useful Links

[CCEA InSync](#)

[CCEA Relationships and Sexuality Education \(RSE\) Hub](#)

[CCEA UNCRC Hub](#)

[CCEA Active Citizenship](#)

Key Stage 4

SEL competencies can also be taught through subject qualifications alongside knowledge and understanding. The main content related to EHWB sits within LLW. This is a statutory Area of Learning/Subject at Key Stage 4. However, many schools may address this statutory requirement through CCEA Entry Level and GCSE LLW qualifications. Other subjects which have a strong focus on EHWB are CCEA GCSE in Health and Social Care, CCEA GCSE Home Economics: Food and Nutrition, and CCEA Entry Level Life Skills and Extended Life Skills.

Developing SEL through Other School Provision

SEL can be integrated and developed through the schools' other provision, such as its pastoral care programme. SEL can be developed in class or tutorials, in extra-curricular clubs and societies, and through other initiatives such as peer support, Take Five Steps to Wellbeing, and building resilience.



Pastoral teams have an important role to play in developing pupils' EHWB. In their pastoral roles, teachers are likely to be in regular contact with parents/carers, and it is through these relationships with parents/carers and the pupil that they gain an insight into the pupil's abilities, relationships, and EHWB concerns. This will help the teacher to make decisions about how they can best support the pupil. One of the ways teachers can do this is by using SEL strategies to help pupils build self-confidence, self-esteem, relationship skills and resilience, and to use coping strategies.

Through a school's pastoral care system, it is likely that many outside agencies will support pupils with their SEL. Quite often, if a pupil needs additional support, school staff will source input from counselling services, mentors, or other programmes running in the local community. The Education Welfare Service can work with schools to refer pupils who are disengaged to programmes which will help them to develop their self-awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making.

Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues

It is likely that some the issues related to EHWB will be sensitive or controversial, particularly those around relationships and sexuality education (RSE). It is important that teachers are aware of this, and are also prepared to deal with sensitive or controversial issues which can emerge unplanned from discussion. Teachers should also take the CCEA [Relationships and Sexuality Education](#) guidance into account, which highlights sensitive issues. Teachers may find the following links helpful. Teachers should also be aware of their school's child protection and safeguarding policies.

Useful Links

[CCEA Teaching Controversial Issues](#)

[CCEA GCSE Teacher/Student Guidance Learning for Life and Work: Teaching Controversial and Sensitive Issues](#)

[Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance: An Update for Post-Primary Schools](#)

Developing SEL through the School Ethos

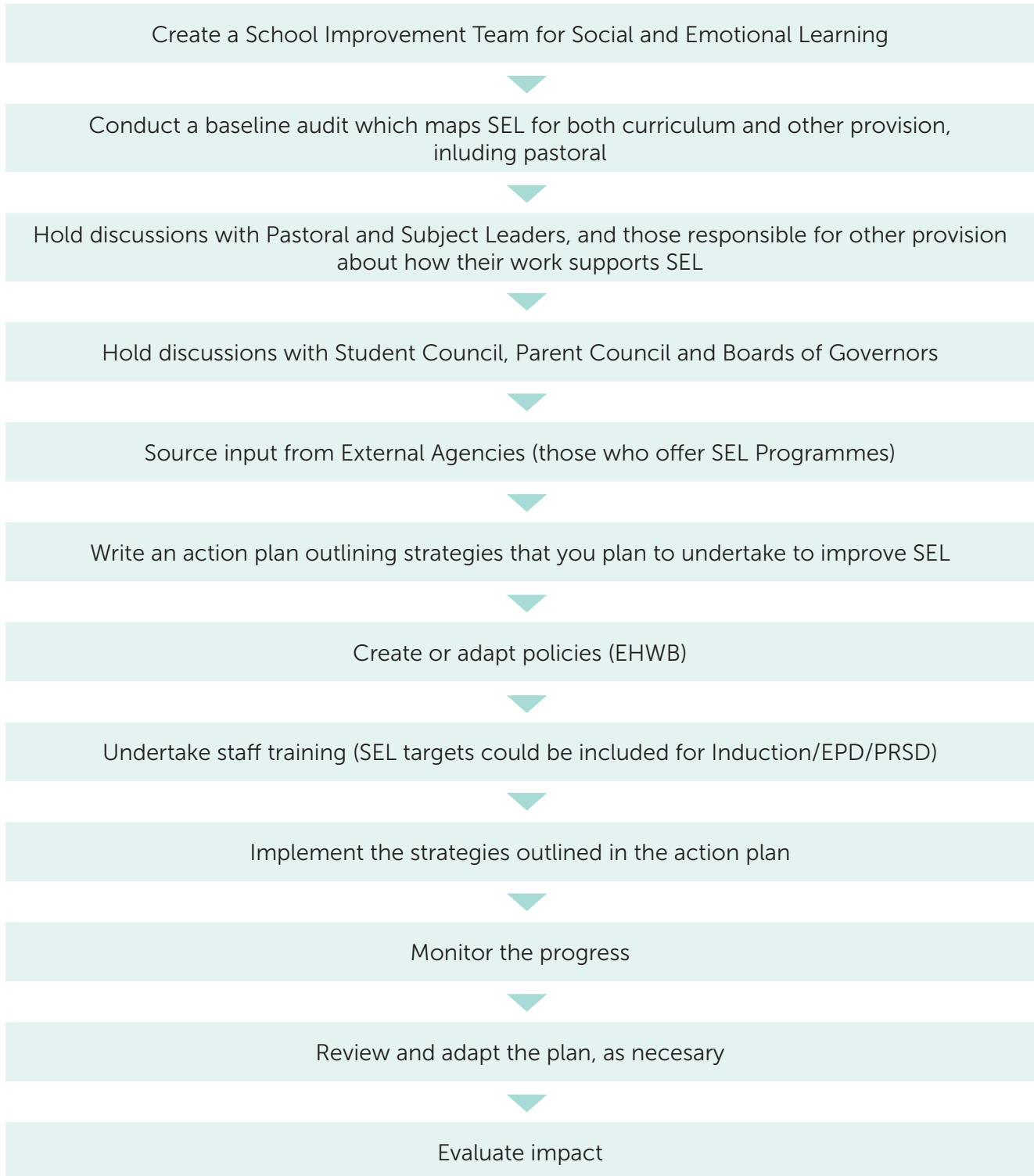
School ethos plays an important role in promoting and connecting whole-school SEL practices. The school ethos should promote SEL and its importance to supporting children's rights-based approach to EHWB by making the connection between SEL to children's rights and EHWB visible. The school ethos can promote positive EHWB and encourage pupils feel comfortable to share their EHWB issues. The school ethos can also promote the use of a shared language which pupils can use to express their views. A shared language can be illustrated in displays of pupil work, signs and posters and through ongoing conversations around EHWB. This will help pupils to see the bigger picture: the fact that SEL is not just confined to classroom learning. The school ethos helps to create school norms and standards of behaviour and can show how, through a shared SEL language, pupils and teachers can build positive relationships and support one another.



Whole-School Approach to Social and Emotional Learning

Figure 2 outlines the possible steps involved in developing a whole-school approach to SEL.

Figure 2.





Planning Teaching SEL Competencies

Teachers should consider the following when planning teaching SEL competencies:

- Teacher should be aware and prepared to teach issues which are sensitive or controversial. They should anticipate that sensitive and controversial issues will emerge unplanned from discussions.
- Teachers should be familiar with their school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies, and know how to respond to a pupil's disclosure of potential safeguarding or child protection issue.
- Teachers should recognise that there can often be stigma associated with poor mental health. They should support the idea that 'It's ok, not to be ok'.
- Teachers should be aware of Trauma-Informed Practice and how trauma and adverse childhood experience can impart on pupils' EHWB. They should know their pupils and be aware of those who may have been affected by trauma or adverse childhood experiences, and those diagnosed with specific mental health problems. Teachers will need to adjust their teaching to meet their needs.
- Teachers must recognise that the pupils' emotional state can vary throughout the day and this can impact upon their willingness to engage in activities. They should give consideration to vulnerable children and topics being covered.
- Teachers should be aware of their own emotional state and how this can affect how pupils respond.
- Teachers are encouraged to establish ground rules, and to encourage positive behaviour.
- The classroom environment should be safe, welcoming and calm.
- The lesson should be well-planned, giving pupils time to reflect. It should finish with a well-planned plenary, giving pupils the opportunity to debrief.
- Pupils should feel comfortable in the lesson and not feel pressured into sharing their feelings or participating in activities which may cause anxiety. Pupils should share only information that they feel comfortable sharing. They should be reminded of a 'confidentiality clause' which means that if a member of staff is concerned about their welfare, they will need to share these concerns with the Safeguarding Team.
- Teachers should remind pupils frequently of the support network which is available to them, for example family, friends, pastoral support in school, and others they may wish to seek help from.

Ten SEL Strategies

Teachers can use and adapt the following ten examples of SEL strategies to develop pupils' SEL competencies.

1. Create a Safe, Secure, Caring and Trusting Learning Environment

This is an essential first step in creating a safe space where pupils feel able to express and share their emotions/feelings. The school can nurture a culture of empathy and compassion. Creating a safe climate for discussion depends on building good teacher/pupil relationships. Over time pupils will build trust with their teacher and peers, and develop the confidence and willingness to discuss their emotions/feelings. Teachers can involve pupils in creating classroom procedures and routines.



2. Develop a Shared Language and Understanding

It is important that all teachers develop and use a common SEL language with pupils. Teachers can progressively introduce and explain the SEL terms and competencies and how they relate to pupils' EHWB. Teachers can build pupils' SEL vocabulary by having pupils keep a wellbeing journal. Pupils can record new SEL and EHWB terms. Pupils can create wall displays and posters of key terms and their meanings. These can be displayed throughout the school. This will help pupils to develop their communication skills and vocabulary, and to use appropriate language to express their emotions/feelings in different situations.

3. Support Pupils to Self-Reflect

Teachers can develop pupil's metacognitive abilities to support self-reflection by focusing on the social and emotion dimensions of learning and development. Teachers will need to build in time in their lessons to allow for this pupil self-reflection. They can show pupils how they can use their inner voice to monitor, regulate and manage their thoughts, emotions and feelings in a range of situations. Teachers can stress to pupils the importance of being honest with themselves and how self-reflection can help them to develop as a person. This can help them to positively respond to compliments, feedback and criticism. Teachers can model self-reflection by, for example, reviewing a lesson or past experience, and explaining their thinking processes and their emotions/feelings at that time. Teachers can provide examples of different situations – learning, relationships, making decisions, and the types of questions pupils might ask themselves. Pupils can then create their own self-reflection questions. Self-reflection helps pupils to be self-aware and promotes a growth mindset by helping pupils to realise their capabilities and potential.

4. Promote Positive Thoughts and Positive Actions

Teachers can encourage pupils to think positively and teach pupils to be optimistic and hopeful. Teachers can use examples to show pupils that setbacks are temporary and changeable. Teachers can encourage pupils to engage in positive self-talk. Pupils can keep a record in their wellbeing journal of the things that make them feel safe and happy, for example events, people, smells, sounds, music, art, or books. They can make a list of all the things they are good at and what makes them happy about themselves. They can research positive quotes and create their own posters and wall displays. Teach pupils to be optimistic and hopeful by providing scenarios and framing them in a positive way. The teachers can support pupils to focus on positive outcomes rather than the things that might go wrong, or on the worst-case scenario. Pupils can self-reflect and draw on their own experiences. They can consider what they thought would happen, what actually occurred, and how they felt before and after the experience. Teachers can use literature and media sources to provide contemporary or historical examples of people and in particular young people who have demonstrated optimism and hope. Pupils could complete a character analysis and describe their positive traits. Pupils can explore how these people's actions influenced positive change and affected others. Positive thinking and being optimistic and hopeful builds resilience by developing pupil's self-efficacy and their ability to overcome setbacks and challenges. Positive thinking helps pupils to manage negative emotions/feelings and stress and to recognise their strengths. It also empowers pupils to take greater control of their lives.

Teachers can encourage pupils to take positive actions which will improve their EHWB. Pupils can discuss their lifestyles and research positive actions they might take to improve their EHWB. They could plan some positive actions in their wellbeing journal. They could do this by setting personal goals and targets, and monitoring their progress. This could also be a record of their emotional journey. These could be positive actions to improve their physical



health, for example taking regular physical exercise, participating in sports, or improving their diet. Positive actions might include joining school clubs, voluntary work in the community and acts of kindness. This also provides opportunities for pupils to make connections and build relationships with others. Taking positive action also contributes to building resilience. This can help to improve the pupil's physical health and self-efficacy and their ability to build relationships. Taking positive action can give them a sense of purpose and motivate them to set and achieve personal goals. This also helps pupils to realise their capabilities and potential and experience successes. Teachers should also make the connections between positive thinking, positive actions and EHWB. Pupils can draw on their experiences to explore how positive thinking can lead to positive actions and reflect on their emotional journey.

5. Wellbeing Journal

Pupils could create a personal wellbeing journal. They could create this online or use video. The teacher could guide them on its structure and headings and what type of experiences they might record. Pupils could also use their wellbeing journal to record new SEL/EHWB terms. Teachers can encourage pupils to regularly self-reflect and write down their experiences, their thoughts, and emotions/feelings. This could include social situations and relationships which made them feel happy or distressed. Teachers could give pupils time at the end of the week to review their journal entries and to reflect on what they now think and feel about their experiences. This will help pupils recognise how their emotions/feelings can change over time and to develop their sense of self-identity. This also will help pupils to make social and emotional connections between themselves and others.

6. Model SEL Competencies

Teachers can model SEL competencies by demonstrating what these might 'look like' in real life. This allows pupils to observe expected actions before putting them into practice. For example, teachers could model effective planning and organising a task. They could provide an example of a task and the steps required to complete it. Teachers could discuss how they set personal goals and how they will improve their practice. Teachers could model problem-solving strategies by showing how they would gather and select information before drawing conclusions. Teachers could also use videos for modelling SEL competencies, for example teachers could show videos of people behaving respectfully towards others. This could be followed by discussion, and pupils demonstrating ways they can show respect towards others.

7. Use a Range of Enquiry-based Active Teaching and Learning Methods

Teacher can use a range of enquiry-based active teaching and learning methods which are motivating and challenging. Enquiry-based learning involves framing learning as a question or a problem, for example: what are the risks to your personal safety of using social media? How does physical activity support your EHWB? What strategies can you use to manage your emotions? Teachers can use active teaching and learning methods such as mind maps, think-pair-share, consequence wheel, SWOT analysis, freeze-frame and others. Enquiry-based learning helps pupils to understand learning as a process. It can be used to explore the social and emotional aspects of learning, for example pupils could self-reflect after completing an activity by assessing their strengths and limitations, and thinking about what they might do differently next time. Pupils could also reflect on how their emotions/feelings and attitudes influenced their performance.

8. Construct Social Narratives and Scenarios and use Role Play

Teachers can provide some examples of narratives of social situations and characters, for example, they could explore responses to peer pressure and making responsible decisions.



The teacher could model this activity. Pupils could work in small groups to create their own scenarios and role plays. Pupils could use iPads and iMovie to create and share short videos which could be used for class discussion. This would help pupils develop relationships and decision-making competencies. Scenarios and role play could also be used to develop other competencies, for example the focus could be on developing Self-Management and organising and planning a role play.

9. Support Collaborative Working and Problem-Solving

Teachers can set pupils problem-solving tasks, including research. The teacher can provide options for activities, challenges and tasks that capture different interests. Pupils can negotiate and agree on their roles. Pupils take responsibility for completing parts of the task. Pupils are encouraged to share ideas, ask questions, and listen to and respect and value others' views. The teacher can encourage pupils to think aloud by asking effective questions for example, why did you decided to.... instead of.... ? What do think will happen if.... have you thought about? Pupils are involved in making collaborative decisions. They can present, discuss and evaluate options and make collaborative decisions about how they will undertake the task. Pupils can agree on expected outcomes. They can monitor their progress and provide evidence of their achievements. Pupils can use peer and self-assessment strategies to evaluate their learning and performance.

10. Develop Pupils' Coping Strategies

Pupils will have good and bad days and they will respond to the stresses of their daily lives in different ways. Often this is an unconscious response. Teaching pupils coping strategies help them to recognise and anticipate and deal with stressful situations. Coping strategies help pupils to manage their thoughts, emotions/feelings and behaviour during times of stress. Coping strategies also builds pupils' resilience by enabling them to overcome setbacks and challenges in their lives. Teachers can model coping strategies and share their experiences of using coping strategies. Teachers can also create social narratives of challenging situations, ask pupils which coping strategies they might use, and explore possible outcomes. Coping strategies might include:

- Talking to a friend, parent/carer
- Taking time out
- Setting boundaries
- Engaging in positive self-talk
- Meditation
- Mindfulness
- Breathing exercises
- Grounding.



Developing SEL Competences in Subjects

The following tables four to eight illustrate how SEL competencies can be developed using examples of teaching and learning activities throughout all subjects. The SEL competencies could be a focus of a lesson and translated into a learning outcome.

Table 4

Self-Awareness	
Area of Competency	Teaching Activities
Identify and recognise own emotions and feelings	English: Pupils could keep a wellbeing journal. They could self-reflect and record their emotions/feelings at particular times. They can add new words to describe their emotions/feelings to their vocabulary and use these words when expressing their emotions/feelings. They could comment on the intensity of their emotions/feelings and explore the reasons for their emotions/feelings. Pupils can think about their emotional experiences after recording them – do I feel any different? If so, why? Pupils could think about what their response to reading their journal in ten years might be. This activity will help pupils understand that emotions and feelings can be complex, and that they may experience different emotions and feelings simultaneously.
Recognise emotional triggers	Learning for Life and Work (Personal Development): Pupils could explore their emotional responses to emotional triggers in a discussion activity about their fears and anxieties. Pupils could watch videos which explore peoples' common fears such as heights, spiders and enclosed spaces, and identify their thoughts, emotions/feelings. Pupils can explore situations that are likely to trigger certain emotional responses and discuss their responses. Pupils could consider their emotions/feelings in these situations and how they might affect their ability to make reasoned decisions. They could carry out research to find out more about emotional triggers and how they can cause emotional responses. This activity will help pupils to understand their emotional triggers, to anticipate how they might feel in certain situations, and prepare them for managing their emotions/feelings.
Reflect and assess their sense of self-identity	Information Technology: As a homework project, pupils could create a blog (perhaps using Microsoft Sway). They could display their interests and express their personality and preferences. Pupils could create a people tree to identify those who are more likely to support them, and to explore their values and influences on their self-identity. They can focus on their personality and what makes them who they are. Pupils can update their blog and people tree over a series of lessons. This activity will help pupils to understand how their values and key influences affect their thoughts, feelings and behaviours and their sense of self. It also shows pupils how their sense of self-identity can change over time.



Self-Awareness	
Area of Competency	Teaching Activities
Recognise own strengths and limitations	<p>Physical Education: Pupils participate in a sporting activity and evaluate their ability and performance. They could work in groups to create criteria to assess their ability and performance against. Pupils can use self- and peer-assessment activities to discuss their ability and performance and identify strengths, areas for development and limitations. Pupils are encouraged to think of creative strategies which will help them improve and adapt and develop an 'I can' attitude (growth mindset). Pupils could also consider how their attitudes and emotions/feelings can impact on their ability and performance in terms of strengths.</p>
Value themselves for who they are	<p>History: Pupils can study a person of historical significance to understand how that person's viewpoint or actions influenced change. They can also undertake web-based research and analyse source materials.</p> <p>The pupils could consider and discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did that person know that they were doing the 'right' thing? • Was that person's uniqueness valued by themselves and others? Why? • Did they have self-confidence? • How did the person show belief in their capabilities and potential to succeed? • What would the world look like if that person had not existed (valuing uniqueness)?
Confidently express own views and opinions in unfamiliar circumstances	<p>Drama: Pupils could create and participate in a group performance exploring a sensitive topic. When planning their performance, pupils should consider audience and purpose. During their performance they should clearly communicate their ideas using appropriate language and tone, and use pauses and silence for effect. They can demonstrate confidence through their body language, for example being relaxed, having good posture, using facial expressions and maintaining eye contact with the audience. To gauge the audience reaction to the performance, they can participate in a class discussion and question and answer session.</p>



Table 5

Self-Management	
Area of Competency	Teaching Activities
Monitor and regulate thinking and emotions/feelings	Form Class: Teachers can use form time for SEL activities and to promote positive EHWB. This could include in a 'circle time' activity once per month with a focus on times when they were happy or did something that made them feel good. Pupils could update their wellbeing journals and identify things they would like to share with others. Teachers could also use this time to develop and practice coping strategies such as mindfulness and breathing exercises. Ask students to identify where they're holding stress in their bodies. This can be tense shoulders, a frown, or even a bouncing leg! Guide them through releasing stress for a more balanced body.
Manage thoughts, emotions/feelings and behaviour in a range of situations	Music: Pupils could study a range of musical pieces and discuss how the music helps to invoke different emotions or feelings. Pupils can consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What thoughts and emotions/feelings do you think the composer wanted the listener to experience? • How does the piece make you feel? What emotions does it stir? • If a person was to dance to the music, what would this look like (behaviour)? • What situation do you think the piece would appropriately represent? • How might someone react to the piece being played? • Should the piece be played during certain events/situations? What would happen if it was played in the wrong situation? • How does listening to music support your EHWB?
Review and identify ways to improve learning	Learning for Life and Work (Employability): Pupils should participate in a class discussion about their collective strengths and limitations. Pupils could then complete an individual learning review where they identify their strengths and areas for improvement in a range of subjects. They can consider and select different approaches that they might use to improve aspects of their learning.
Set personal goals and targets and monitor and review them	Careers: Pupils could discuss different careers and identify the one that interests them most. Pupils could research the career and find out what skills, qualities and qualifications are required. Pupils could write down some actions they would need to take to prepare them for applying for their career choice. They could set appropriate goals and realistic achievable targets, for example, pupils could identify the skills need to improve, and the qualifications and grades they require. Pupils could monitor, review, and update their progress in their journal. They could also highlight their emotions and feelings associated with achieving success in some of their actions.



Self-Management	
Area of Competency	Teaching Activities
Organise and plan how to go about a task	Business Studies: Teachers can work with pupils to complete an enterprise task. Teachers could involve pupils in setting a task that has different parts. Pupils could work in pairs or groups to break the task down into component parts. They can identify the different stages required to successfully complete the task. They can then plan how they will complete the task. They could also set themselves success criteria for the task and judge their performance against these. When planning they will also need to consider roles and responsibilities, resources, and deadlines. This will help pupils learn the necessary planning and sequential processes associated with setting up their business.
Focus, sustain attention and persist to achieve success in an activity or task	Home Economics: Pupils could watch a celebrity chef programme or YouTube video and ask pupils to write down what the chef had to make, and what made their task difficult. The teacher could prompt pupils to think about the importance of being able to sustain their attention and persist with the task, even when there are distractions. Pupils could then complete a task that requires them to demonstrate this competency. For example, pupils complete a cooking task which requires maintained focused attention. Pupils can demonstrate persistence when following the recipe and avoid becoming distracted when surrounding events in the classroom may interrupt them.
Seek support and advice when necessary	Art: Pupils seeking support and advice when necessary could be framed as part of a general discussion around the importance of seeking help in relation to EHWP, and then applied to the art activity. Teachers can discuss the importance of asking for help when they need it. Everyone needs support from others at some time. They can point out that if they are struggling and remain silent it's difficult for other people to notice they are having difficulties. Even when people notice you are struggling with something, they may not want to interfere, so will wait until you ask them for help. Teachers give pupils a challenging activity that is likely to require help from the teacher or other pupils. Pupils are told they should ask for help if they need it but to think about what they are having difficulty with and what or who could help them. As a plenary activity, pupils self-reflect and share what they found difficult, what did they require help with, who helped them, and what they learned from this. This could be developed further to promote EHWP. Pupils could create posters about seeking help: this could include sources of support in the school.



Self-Management	
Area of Competency	Teaching Activities
Respond to feedback constructively	Maths: Teachers regularly provide written or oral feedback to pupils on their work. Pupils are encouraged to view feedback positively and discuss feedback with their teacher. Pupils are given time to think about the feedback and encouraged to think about and ask at least one question about their feedback that will help them to improve their learning. Pupils could seek clarification about the feedback means, and ask what they could do to improve an area of their mathematics.
Exhibit motivation, hope, and optimism	Physical Education: Teachers could show a YouTube clip or video which illustrates how sports people and athletes demonstrate motivation, hope and optimism. Teacher could talk about the importance of motivation, hope and optimism in inspiring sports performance. They could show pupils a coaching programme which includes training for the mind. Pupils could focus on developing positive thoughts such as motivation, hope and optimism when participating in physical activities. They could do mindfulness or mediation before participating in an activity. After the activity they could self-reflect and assess if this helped to improve their ability or performance or made them feel better.
Use coping strategies to deal with and overcome challenging situations	Learning for Life and Work (Local and Global Citizenship): Pupils could explore using coping strategies to manage personal conflict situations and bullying. The teacher could give pupils scenarios of challenging situations or pupils could work in groups to create their own scenarios. This might include an outline of the situation and what made it challenging and how this situation made them feel. Pupils could explore coping strategy options and their impact. Pupils could self-reflect on their thoughts, feelings and emotions during the situation and afterwards. Pupils could write tips for other young people faced with a similar situation.



Table 6

Social Awareness	
Area of Competency	Teaching Activities
Identify and recognise others' emotions/feelings	<p>Drama: Pupils could watch a live or recorded drama performance. Pupils could make notes on how the characters expressed their emotions/feelings through facial expressions, body language, non-verbal cues and verbal communication. Consider whether the performers are showing their real emotions/feelings. In addition, compare and contrast the emotions/feelings that they are experiencing as a member of the audience: do their emotions/feelings mirror the performers?</p>
Recognise and value cultural diversity	<p>Modern Languages: Pupils could investigate how language represents cultural diversity. They could research different languages to find out. This could be part of a project about the origins, evolution and diversity of languages. Pupils can consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did language develop and when? • How many languages are there around the world? • How did different languages evolve? • What languages are similar and different? • What language in the world is spoken the most? And least? • What language do you like best, and why?
Respect the views and opinions of others, and different perspectives	<p>RE: Pupils consider the different types of discrimination and why people discriminate against others. Pupils work in groups and participate in a lifeboat activity. In the scenario, ten people are stranded on an island. They have found a lifeboat, but it only holds six people. They can use the lifeboat to reach a nearby inhabited island to get help. Each pupil is assigned one of the ten characters. Pupils assigned the same character work together. Each character has to present an argument for securing a place on the lifeboat. Following on from this, provide the pupils with a more detailed background of the people who need a space on the lifeboat. Does their selection change? This activity will help highlight personal bias and give pupils an understanding of how this might influence their views about others. Facilitate a class discussion where pupils identify how different experiences and stereotypes may influence their perception of others.</p>



Social Awareness	
Area of Competency	Teaching Activities
Understand and show empathy and compassion for others	<p>Geography: Pupils could explore immigration and refugees and what the difference is. If it is appropriate, they could watch Paddington Bear (First Film) to explore these topics. Pupils could use the internet to source some images and stories about immigrants and refugees, or watch a news clip. Pupils could write a short piece about the photo. They could place the photo on the centre of a piece of flipchart paper. They could put themselves in the place of the person or people in the photo and write down short sentences or words around the photo to show their emotions and feelings as that person. Pupils could participate in a Conscience Alley activity. They could (in turns) take on the role of being a refugee, while others share views they have about refugees (CCEA Key Stage 3 Active Teaching and Learning Methods p. 16). Pupils could follow this with a discussion on how they could demonstrate compassion. See Children in Crossfires' Lessons on Forgiveness and Compassion.</p>
Understand how their behaviour can affect others	<p>Form Time: The teacher and pupils could discuss the importance of positive behaviour and how the school promotes it. Pupils could create their own positive behaviour policy. They could then review and compare the school's positive behaviour policy (the teacher could adapt this to highlight the main points) with theirs. They could discuss the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does people's behaviour affect their EHWP and that of others? • What is the type of behaviour expected in school at all times? • Who is responsible for behaviour (focusing on personal responsibility)? • What would happen if someone's behaviour was not as expected? • Who does their behaviour impact? • How does behaviour impact on others?
Adapt behaviour and language to suit different people and situations	<p>Modern Languages: Pupils can examine the role of people's behaviour and language to communicate ideas with others. Pupils could create a table to show comparisons between people's behaviour and language in different countries. Pupils could provide examples of how their behaviour and language changes with different people or in different situations, for example with family, close friends, strangers, at a job interview, or giving a presentation. Pupils could discuss what behaviour and language tells people about a person.</p>



Social Awareness	
Area of Competency	Teaching Activities
Recognise the value of belonging, for example to a group, family, school, community	<p>Learning for Life and Work (Local and Global Citizenship): Pupils can consider how their school promotes inclusion and diversity. They could produce their own inclusion policy. This could include making newcomers feeling welcome. Pupils could explore the different groups people belong to and give reasons why people join certain groups. Pupils could create a collage to show the benefits of belonging to a family, the school and community (<u>CCEA Key Stage 3 Active Teaching and Learning Methods</u> p. 14) or they could create a collage to show how belonging to one of these groups makes them feel. Pupils could discuss how having a sense of belonging affects their sense of EHWB.</p>



Table 7

Relationship Skills	
Area of Competency	Teaching Activities
Recognise the qualities of healthy respectful relationships	Home Economics: Pupils could produce a Creative Matrix (CCEA Key Stage 3 Active Teaching and Learning Methods p. 19) which illustrates the qualities and importance of having healthy respectful relationships, for example parents/carers, family, friends, or sexual relationships.
Make friends and build and maintain relationships with others	Learning for Life and Work (Personal Development): Pupils work in pairs and write down five features of good relationships on post-its. They can place these on a wall display and discuss what makes a good relationship. Pupils could participate in a Back-to-Back activity with a partner (CCEA Key Stage 3 Active Teaching and Learning Methods p. 8) to find out how well they know each other. Each pupil picks another pupil from the class, without telling anyone who this is. They write down some clues to give to their partner about the pupil they have selected. Their partner has to guess who this is from the clues. Teachers can facilitate discussion around how well they know each other. Pupils could be encouraged to make a new friend in the class and to keep in contact for at least a week. After the week, pupils can discuss how easy or difficult it was to stay in touch. They could talk about what they learned about their new friend. They could self-reflect and assess how good they are at maintaining relationships and friendships. Pupils could discuss the importance of relationships and friendships to their EHWB.
Play an active and meaningful part in the life of the school and community	Extra-Curricular Activities: Pupils should actively engage in school life, for example, joining clubs/societies, or supporting others. They could also actively support their local community by joining a local youth group (perhaps shared in assembly). Pupils may seek opportunities to have their voice heard, for example by participating in the Student Council, demonstrating their commitment to participating in school life, and influencing decisions which affect other young people.
Provide advice and support to others	Music: Pupils can participate in a group composition task. They can recognise when others may need advice or support, and willingly advise or support them by actively listening to their concerns, being empathetic, and offering practical advice and support. The group should work together to support each other and use individual strengths and talents.



Relationship Skills	
Area of Competency	Teaching Activities
Take personal responsibility for work with others	<p>Technology and Design: Pupils can work in groups to plan, design and manufacture a product. They can agree on goals and targets. Pupils can agree on what work needs to be completed, on the roles and responsibilities required, and the deadlines which need to be set to complete parts of the task. Individuals should be encouraged to identify what work needs to be done and take responsibility for completing parts of the task, for example notetaking, research, collating information, design, and stages of manufacturing. Pupils can demonstrate personal responsibility by being reliable, supporting others and meeting the commitments they have made to completing actions.</p>
Manage and resolve conflict	<p>Learning for Life and Work (Local and Global Citizenship): Pupils could discuss the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does personal conflict mean? Give examples. • Why does conflict occur? • What effect can personal conflict have on a young person's EHWP? • Why is it important to find ways to manage and resolve conflict? • Can you think of situations where you experienced conflict? Discuss how you responded. What could you have done differently? <p>The questions above could be used for a Carousel activity (CCEA Key Stage 3 Active Teaching and Learning Methods p. 12). Pupils could create and participate in personal conflict scenarios, while others observe and suggest ways to resolve the problem. Pupils could participate in a restorative-practice role play.</p>
Manage and express emotions in relationships	<p>History: Pupils could consider a significant historical event, and then create roles of the key actors in this. Pupils could work in groups and create tableaus (CCEA Key Stage 3 Active Teaching and Learning Methods p. 67) to represent the event. In their character poses they could show their character's emotions and feelings. Before this, pupils could research how people show their emotions and feelings in facial expressions and body language. Pupils could take photographs of the tableaus and present them on a wall display. They could also research historical photographs of events and people and analyse what key actors might be thinking and feeling, and why.</p>
Listen actively and respond appropriately to others	<p>Form class: Each pupil could give a short presentation using an item or props to show what makes them happy. Pupils should actively listen, remember five points, and ask one question from the presenter. The presenter can also ask others questions to see if they were listening and what they understood. They could take photos or keep a video record of their presentations and create a class happiness calendar.</p>



Relationship Skills	
Area of Competency	Teaching Activities
Identify and manage peer pressure which may put them at risk	<p>Learning for Life and Work (Personal Development): Working in groups, pupils should give examples of peer pressure. They can use a consequence wheel template to write down the risks associated with each example to them and to others (<u>CCEA Key Stage 3 Active Teaching and Learning Methods</u> p. 17). Pupils can write down the different ways peers might try to influence them, for example fear, persuasion, threats, intimidation, coercion, ridicule, or reward, and the strategies they could use to manage peer pressure. Pupils could discuss how peer pressure makes them feel and how it can affect their EHWB.</p>



Table 8

Responsible Decision-Making	
Area of Competency	Teaching Activities
Identify problems	Learning for Life and Work (Personal Development): Complete a Card Ranking activity (CCEA Key Stage 3 Active Teaching and Learning Methods p. 11) identifying ten problems young people face. Examples include schoolwork and learning, relationships, lack of confidence, or bullying. Pupils rank the problems in order of priority to resolve/address and justify their reasoning. They could also use the internet to research examples of challenges which young people have faced and how they have overcome them.
Generate possible solutions and evaluate options to resolve their problems	Home Economics: Pupils could discuss the importance of diet and nutrition to contributing to a healthy lifestyle and EHWP. Pupils could explore healthy diet options and dietary guidelines, for example the Eatwell Guide and Eight Tips for Eating Well as a tool to achieving a balanced diet. They could work in groups and produce a fact sheet about nutrition and a balanced healthy diet. They could participate in a Think, Pair and Share activity (CCEA Key Stage 3 Active Teaching and Learning Methods p. 70) to provide information about the factors that influence individual energy requirements. Pupils could work in groups to research and provide options for people with different dietary and energy requirements, for example a young athlete or sports person, a pregnant woman, a young teenager, or an elderly person.
Try out alternative approaches to solving problems and evaluate outcomes	Science: Pupils could work in groups to research a global problem, for example the Climate Crisis, or the Antibiotic Resistance Crisis. Create a fact sheet that summarises the issues and explores the options to solve the problem. Alternatively, the teacher could give the pupils a problem scenario which also presents them with options, for example, which source of energy is the best option for a country? They could consider the country's economy status and whether it is relatively rich or poor, what resources the country has (including technology and labour), the country's population, and various other factors. Pupils could research the advantages and disadvantages of using different types of energy. They could complete the Consider All Factors template (CCEA Key Stage 3 Active Teaching and Learning Methods p. 10) and provide justified solutions. Pupils could self-reflect and write down some notes about what they were thinking during the task and what ideas they had to solve the problem. Teachers could move the conversation from science to life in general, and ask pupils why being able to solve problems is important, and how can this help their EHWP.



Responsible Decision-Making	
Area of Competency	Teaching Activities
Assess the risks associated with making decisions	<p>Technology and Design: Pupils undertake a practical task where they make an item using tools. They could complete the Jigsaw activity (CCEA Key Stage 3 Active Teaching and Learning Methods p. 41). They should consider the risk of using these tools, and any other health and safety concerns. Prior to undertaking the practical task, pupils should discuss the risks involved and agree to a suitable set of class rules.</p>
Make and justify ethical decisions	<p>English: Pupils could conduct a character analysis of a character from a book they have read. Pupils could focus on the decisions the character made, and whether or not they were ethical. Pupils could provide a short report which outlines examples of ethical/unethical decisions, and comment on their decisions. They could explore the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were the decisions good or bad? • Why did the character make those decisions? • What were the consequences, for them and for others? • How did the circumstance influence their decisions? <p>Pupils could share how reading the book made them feel and think about the character. They could post their views on a graffiti board. This could be followed by Think, Pair and Share activity (CCEA Key Stage 3 Active Teaching and Learning Methods p. 70). Pupils could create <i>what would you do if ...</i> questions. They can ask each other the questions, exploring the idea of morality. Pupils could reflect on why making ethical decisions is important, and how their decisions impact on themselves and others.</p>
Be aware of how their current decisions and choices may impact on their future	<p>History: Pupils could research historical figures and investigate key decisions they made which had a significant impact on others or world events. Pupils could identify critical decisions and choices they made, and suggest what might have happened if they made a different decision. Pupils can work in pairs and write down ten decisions they have either recently made or will make, and how they might impact on the lives. Pupils can rank their decisions in order of importance.</p>



Using Assessment to Support Pupils' SEL

Pupils progress in the SEL competencies and can be assessed and reported in the same way as for the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities. Formative assessment (Assessment for Learning) should be an integral part of the teaching and learning process. The focus of assessment is to support pupil progress in developing SEL competencies. This involves teachers and pupils identifying what pupils are good at and what they could improve on and identifying practical strategies that pupils could use to help them develop. Given that SEL seeks to build pupil confidence, self-esteem and motivation, it is important that assessment is framed in a positive way and is seen by pupils as being useful. Teachers could use the following assessment approaches to support pupil progress in SEL:

- Teacher observation
- Peer and self-evaluation
- Pupil survey – questionnaires and self-rating scales
- Effective questioning techniques
- Written and oral feedback
- Through role plays.

Useful Links

[CCEA Assessment for Learning: A Practical Guide](#)

[CCEA Assessment for Learning for Key Stage 3](#)

[Cambridge Assessment International Education – Getting started with Assessment for Learning](#)

[We Are Teachers – 15 Ways to Know When Your Students Aren't 'Getting' It: A Guide to Formative Assessment](#)

What is Resilience?

While there are various interpretations of resilience, they commonly refer to the pupil's ability to overcome the challenges they face throughout their lives or the capacity to bounce back from adversity.

Why is Resilience Important to Pupils' Emotional Health and Wellbeing?

Resilience is strongly related to pupils' EHWB. Pupils who have developed resilience are better able to deal with the difficulties and adversities they face in life. Resilience is also about pupils being able to cope with the stress they face in their daily lives. Resilient pupils are more likely to have higher levels of EHWB, to be physically healthy, recover more quickly from illness, and less likely to engage in risky behaviours. Resilience is also associated with pupils' higher levels of academic performance and achievement and with improved employment prospects (Public Health England (PHE), 2014).

However, resilience is not a quality everyone is born with. Not all pupils are resilient; some may be more resilient than others. Resilience is also affected by the socio-economic conditions in which pupils live. Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to have lower levels of



resilience (PHE, 2014). Pupils who have suffered adverse childhood experiences are particularly vulnerable. They may not have been safeguarded by the protective factors associated with developing resilience such as belief in themselves; a feeling of belonging; supportive, trusting relationships; and a safe space. Resilience is more than having the capacity to cope with adversity.

If pupils are to develop resilience, they also need access to a network of caring, supportive individuals including teachers and classroom assistants; parents, carers, and family; and educational and health professionals from other support agencies. At the school level this can be achieved by school leaders and teachers engaging with pupils and working collaboratively with parents/carers and professionals in other agencies.

In recent years, with the added pressures of social media, it is essential that pupils are taught ways to build their resilience. A young person's personal circumstances should be considered as elements such as relationships, social issues and poverty may have impacted upon their prior learning and may have impaired their development of coping skills. These young people are most likely in need of additional support in developing their resilience.

Social and Emotional Learning and resilience building strategies should be considered at key transition points such as Year 7 to Year 8. If resilience is included as part of SEL at this early stage of post-primary school, then it normalises the learning experience and provides early interventions for all pupils.

Developing Resilience through a Whole-School Approach to EHWB and SEL

The research shows that the SEL competencies by themselves are not enough to fully support pupils to develop resilience (NCB, 2020). There are other components of resilience which also need to be considered. A whole-school approach to EHWB can support pupils to build resilience by ensuring that SEL is referenced in school policies and fully implemented practice. Table 9 shows the components of resilience, and examples of how they can be supported through EHWB and SEL curriculum provision.



Table 9. Factors which contribute to resilience and how schools and SEL can develop pupils' resilience

Factors which contribute to resilience (NCB, 2020)	The school's EHWB programme can support pupils to develop resilience by:	SEL can support pupils to build resilience by:
<p>At least one stable committed relationship Often pupils find this relationship within the family. However, others do not.</p>	<p>Building relationships with others, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastoral care program and form tutor support • School councillors • Supportive approachable staff – willing to listen to and help the young person • Extra-curricular provision, sports, clubs and societies. 	<p>Developing pupil's competency to build relationships with others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the characteristics and value of respectful relationships • Make friends and build and maintain relationships with others • Take personal responsibility for work with others and evaluate their own contribution to the group • Manage and resolve conflict • Manage and express emotions in relationships • Listen actively and respond appropriately to others • Identify and resist social pressures which may put them at risk.
<p>Basic needs met These include pupil safety, security, shelter, food, clothes, healthcare and education. These are the foundation for building the competencies required for resilience.</p>	<p>The school helps to meet pupils' basic needs, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding and child protection policies and practice • Healthy eating initiatives and provision of school breakfast and lunches • Educational provision • Working collaboratively with other agencies to identify and address health and welfare concerns. 	<p>Developing pupil's competency to understand what their basic needs are and how these can be met.</p>



Factors which contribute to resilience (NCB, 2020)	The school's EHWB programme can support pupils to develop resilience by:	SEL can support pupils to build resilience by:
<p>Develop physical health Physical health is strongly linked to EHWB and includes diet, nutrition and regular exercise. Young people need to understand the importance of physical health to be able make healthy lifestyle choices.</p>	<p>The school helps to develop pupils' physical health, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curricular provision – PE, LLW, HE • Extra-curricular activities – individual and team sports • Healthy eating and provision of school breakfast and lunches. 	<p>Developing pupil's competency to acknowledge and sustain physical health.</p>
<p>Self-efficacy This is the young person's belief in their ability to overcome challenges and achieve their goals.</p>	<p>The school helps the pupil to believe in themselves, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra-curricular activities to aid them in identifying and developing their talents • Regular feedback on the pupils' learning • Pastoral care program and form tutor support • Participation in student voice and leadership opportunities such as Student Council. 	<p>Developing pupil's self-efficacy. Responsible decision-making:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify problems • Generate possible solutions and evaluate options to resolve their problems • Try out alternative approaches to solving problems and evaluate outcomes • Assess the risks associated with making decisions • Make and justify ethical decisions • Be aware of how their current decisions and choices may impact on their future.
<p>Executive function This refers to self-management competencies such as planning, organising, self-regulating and managing emotions. These competencies enable young people to better cope with stress.</p>	<p>The school helps the pupil to develop executive function, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra-curricular activities • Curricular provision – learning about learning, for example LLW • Pastoral care program and form tutor support • Year group events such as study skills. 	<p>Developing pupil's executive function. Self-management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and regulate thinking and emotions/feelings • Manage thoughts, emotions/feelings and behaviour in a range of situations • Review and identify ways to improve learning • Seek support and advice when necessary • Respond to feedback constructively • Use coping strategies to deal with and overcome challenging situations.



Factors which contribute to resilience (NCB, 2020)	The school's EHWB programme can support pupils to develop resilience by:	SEL can support pupils to build resilience by:
<p>Social connections with peers and community Making social connections with others can help young people develop a sense of belonging.</p>	<p>The school helps the pupil to build social connections with peers and community, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastoral care program and form tutor support – belonging to a form class/house group • Assemblies/Activities beyond their form class • Curricular provision – possible additional programmes through individual subjects such as Entwined Histories or Young Enterprise • Extra-curricular activities • Participation in student voice and leadership opportunities such as Student Council. 	<p>Developing pupil's competency to build social connections with their peers and community.</p> <p>Social awareness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and recognise others' emotions/feelings • Recognise and value cultural diversity • Respect the views and opinions of others, and different perspectives • Understand and show empathy and compassion for others • Understand how their behaviour can affect others • Adapt behaviour and language to suit different people and situations • Recognise the value of belonging, for example to a group, family, school, or community. <p>Relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing an active and meaningful part in the life of the school and community • Provide advice and support to others.
<p>Optimism and hope Being optimistic and hopeful helps young people to recognise that while past events can't be changed, they don't have to define their future.</p>	<p>The school helps the pupil to build optimism and hope, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School ethos • Pastoral care program and form tutor support – belonging to a form class/house group • Assemblies/Activities beyond their form class • Curricular provision such as Geography, LLW, RE, History • Extra-curricular activities. 	<p>Developing pupil's competency to exhibit optimism and hope.</p> <p>Self-awareness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and recognise own emotions • Recognise emotional triggers. <p>Self-management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibit positive motivation, hope, and optimism.



Factors which contribute to resilience (NCB, 2020)	The school's EHWB programme can support pupils to develop resilience by:	SEL can support pupils to build resilience by:
<p>Sense of purpose Having a sense of purpose helps to motivate young people to pursue their interests and achieve their goals.</p>	<p>The school helps the pupil to have a sense of purpose, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School climate/ethos and culture – high expectations of all pupils • Pastoral care program and form tutor support • Curricular provision such as LLW/Careers • Extra-curricular activities • School celebration events such as Prize Day. 	<p>Developing pupil's sense of purpose links to many of the SEL competencies such as being self-aware.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect and accurately assess their sense of self-identity • Recognise own strengths and limitations • Value themselves for who they are • Express own views and opinions. <p>Self-management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set personal goals and targets and monitor and review them • Organise and plan how to go about a task • Focus, sustain attention and persist to achieve success in an activity or task.
<p>Supporting parents/carers to develop resilience Parents/Carers sometimes need support to become more resilient themselves. Working with parents builds their capability to support their child to develop resilience.</p>	<p>The school helps support parents/carers to develop resilience, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular home/school communication • Parent learning events • Signposting parents who require additional support • Working with outside agencies such as the Education Welfare Service. 	<p>Supporting the competency of parents/carers to help develop their own and their child's resilience.</p>



How can Social and Emotional Learning Help Pupils Develop Resilience?

Post-primary schools may already be using various frameworks, models and strategies to teach resilience in their classrooms. This guidance does not promote the use of any one model for developing resilience; rather, the guidance is intended to illustrate how SEL competencies can be developed through different models, or can be used to develop a bespoke model. The following are two examples of how SEL competencies contribute to resilience models. The first is the I have, I am, I can resilience model (Table 10) and the second is the 7Cs model (Table 11).

I have, I am, I can Resilience Model

The I have, I am, I can resilience model is based on the idea that when young people are faced with adversity or challenge, they draw from three sources of resilience. These are:

- I have people who love and care for me.
- I have inner strength.
- I have self-efficacy.

I have – the people the young person has a strong attachment to, for example:

- I have people around me who love and care for me.
- I have people who are always there for me and want me to succeed.
- I have people who give me guidance and support.

I am – draws on their inner strengths, for example:

- I am a person who cares about others.
- I take responsibility for my actions.
- I am hopeful.

I can – draws on the young person's ability to act, or what they can do, for example:

- I can confidently express my views to others.
- I can manage my emotions.
- I can seek help when needed.

A young person who is resilient will have at least two of these components. A young person may feel loved and cared for (I have), but if they do not have inner strength they will lack resilience. A young person with self-efficacy (I am) but limited ability to manage their emotions (I can) will also lack resilience. On the positive side, the young person and teacher can together identify aspects of resilience that can be developed.

Useful links

[I have, I am, I can \(Grotberg, 2007\)](#)

[Bend Don't Break](#)



Table 10

SEL Competency	I am	I have	I can
Self-Awareness	<p>I am happy.</p> <p>I am unique.</p> <p>I am respectful towards others.</p>	<p>I have friends in school that I can talk to about my feelings.</p> <p>I have teachers who will help me to understand myself.</p> <p>I have parents who love me for who I am.</p>	<p>I can express my emotions/feelings.</p> <p>I can self-reflect.</p> <p>I can recognise my emotional triggers.</p>
Self-Management	<p>I am determined to achieve my goals.</p> <p>I am optimistic.</p> <p>I am aware of how my behaviour can affect others.</p>	<p>I have friends who encourage me to achieve my goals.</p> <p>I have teachers who motivate me to achieve my goals.</p> <p>I have parents who want me to succeed.</p>	<p>I can organise and plan my work.</p> <p>I can monitor and regulate my emotions/feelings.</p>
Social Awareness	<p>I am respectful towards others.</p> <p>I am aware of others' emotions/feelings.</p> <p>I am compassionate.</p>	<p>I have friends who respect me.</p> <p>I have teachers who help me to understand myself and others.</p> <p>I have friends, parents and family who give me a sense of belonging.</p>	<p>I can recognise others' emotions/feelings.</p> <p>I can share personal experiences with others.</p> <p>I can behave appropriately in different social situations.</p>
Relationship Skills	<p>I am a caring person.</p> <p>I am dependable.</p> <p>I am good at making friends.</p>	<p>I have friends who I trust.</p> <p>I have teachers who support me.</p> <p>I have adults around me who make sure I am safe.</p>	<p>I can build good relationships with others.</p> <p>I can help others.</p> <p>I can resolve relationship problems.</p>
Responsible Decision-Making	<p>I am ethical.</p> <p>I am aware of the importance of making responsible decisions.</p>	<p>I have friends who can advise me.</p> <p>I have teachers who can help me to think about making decisions.</p> <p>I have parents who I can ask for help when making important decisions and choices.</p>	<p>I can find ways to solve problems.</p> <p>I can assess risks to my personal safety.</p> <p>I can make responsible decisions.</p>



The 7Cs Resilience Model

The 7Cs model of resilience identifies seven components which contribute to developing young people’s resilience (Ginsburg and Jablow, 2005). Table 11 illustrates the relationship and connections between the 7Cs resilience model and the SEL competencies. Examples of SEL competencies are used to illustrate how they can contribute to developing components of resilience in the 7 Cs model.

Table 11

7Cs of Resilience	SEL Competencies
<p>Competence Pupil’s competencies need to be acknowledged. They need to be given opportunities to practice and develop them.</p>	<p>Teachers can provide pupils with a range of opportunities to develop to develop and practice the following SEL competencies in all subjects:</p> <p>Self-Management – develops pupils’ sense of self-efficacy. Teachers can acknowledge pupils’ successes, praise their achievements, and provide positive feedback. Pupils can keep a record of their achievements in their wellbeing journal.</p> <p><i>Specifically:</i> Young people need to recognise and understand that they will face periods of adversity throughout their life. They should consider the value of perspective, for example: a bereavement does not equate to failing a test. Learning about some of the life challenges they may face (such as relationship breakdowns or bereavements), will help to develop their competence to be able to cope and understand such situations, if they should happen. (I am...)</p>
<p>Confidence Confidence helps pupils to trust in their own abilities and judgements. Pupils build confidence when they succeed in activities.</p>	<p>Self-Awareness – builds self-confidence by developing their sense of self-identity and self-worth and ability to recognise their potential and to achieve success and to express their views.</p> <p><i>Specifically:</i> Young people should learn how to be self-aware. They should acknowledge their self-esteem, self-confidence and self-worth. This then provides a foundation for them to build upon and set goals. They can learn about risk- taking behaviour and become more confident about the decisions they make. They can learn to manage and adapt to changes in their lives, and learn from their experiences and mistakes.</p> <p>Self-Management – builds pupils’ self-confidence by developing their ability to regulate and manage their emotions/feelings and behaviour, and to set and achieve personal goals and targets.</p>



<p>Connection Connections with other people, schools, and communities provide a security and a support network for pupils. This helps pupils to develop independence while recognising that they can draw on support.</p>	<p>Social Awareness – develops pupils’ understanding of others and groups in society and helps them to make connections with others by being empathic and compassionate. Pupils’ sense of belonging to different groups enables them to recognise people within these groups as part of their support network.</p> <p>Relationship Skills – develops pupils’ understanding of healthy, caring relationships and their capacity to build and maintain different types of relationships. This provides pupils with a wider circle of people who can support them, especially when they face adversity or challenges in the lives.</p> <p><i>Specifically: Building secure relationships and identifying protective factors is important in helping a young person to build upon their resilience. They should learn about the different types of relationships and characteristics of healthy relationships. Relationships between family members, friends, peer groups and their wider community should be considered: that way, should adversity occur, the young person realises that they have a wide circle of people who can provide support for them. (I have...)</i></p>
<p>Character Character is about pupils having a clear sense of right and wrong. This helps them to develop a caring attitude towards others and to ensure that they make responsible decisions.</p>	<p>Self-Awareness – develops pupils’ sense of self-identity and their ability to identify their values and sense of right and wrong.</p> <p><i>Specifically: Young people should learn about the type of person that they are and the type of person they wish to become. This includes learning right from wrong, and the characteristics of healthy relationships, values, and beliefs. Reflecting on their choices and behaviours can help them to build resilience. This links to many other SEL competencies. (I am...)</i></p> <p>Social Awareness – develops pupils’ understanding of the important relationship between self and others, and how their behaviour can affect others. Pupils develop the capacity to show respect, empathy and compassion.</p> <p>Responsible Decision-Making – develops pupils’ ability to make responsible ethical decisions and to consider the consequences of their decisions.</p>
<p>Contribution Making a positive contribution to their school, community and society can help pupils to gain a sense of purpose and motivate them to make decisions and take actions to make a difference.</p>	<p>Social Awareness – develops pupils’ ability to recognise and value cultural diversity, respect the views and opinions of others, and to show empathy and compassion for others.</p> <p>Relationship Skills – develop pupils’ motivation, and their ability to play an active and meaningful part in the life of the school and community.</p>



	<p>Self-Management – develops pupils’ ability to manage themselves and their behaviour, and encourages them to take positive action to contribute to their school, community and wider society.</p> <p><i>Specifically:</i> Young people should have a sense of purpose and understand how they can contribute, not only to society as a whole, but also to individual situations. Often, if a young person does not respond well to a situation and needs to develop self-management, it can make the situation worse. If a young person learns appropriate responses, then they will have the ability to manage their thoughts, feelings and behaviours. (I can...)</p>
<p>Coping Pupils who can effectively use a range of coping strategies are better prepared to deal with life’s challenges.</p>	<p>Responsible Decision-Making – develops pupils’ ability to make responsible decisions. They gain an understanding that their decisions can influence change. By building their capacity to take action, they can make a positive difference to the lives of others.</p> <p>Self-Management – develops pupils’ ability to use coping strategies to deal with and overcome challenging situations. This enables them to exhibit positive motivation, hope and optimism (when appropriate).</p> <p><i>Specifically:</i> Young people should learn coping strategies and how to care for themselves should something ‘go wrong’. If a young person has not been taught emotional literacy and how to cope with stress, then they will find it difficult to regulate their emotions when faced with challenges. Young people can develop self-management through basic techniques such as mindfulness or undertaking physical activity. (I can..) Having perspective on a situation is also a useful area of understanding.</p>
<p>Control When pupils realise they can control the outcomes of the decisions, actions and behaviour they are more likely to have confidence in their ability to deal with setbacks and overcome challenges. On the other hand, if teachers, parents/ carers make all the decisions, they are less likely to develop a sense of control.</p>	<p>Responsible Decision-Making – develops pupils’ ability to make choices, to enable them to make decisions with confidence.</p> <p><i>Specifically:</i> Young people should learn about responsible decision-making. This is related to resilience; the young person needs to make choices on how to respond/ behave in difficult circumstances they may face. A young person may decide to take action to solve the problem; however, they should understand that they cannot control others’ responses. (I can...)</p> <p>Self-Management – develops pupils’ ability to control their actions and behaviour to help them gain the confidence they need to deal with setbacks and overcome challenges.</p>



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Useful Links

[Act for Youth: Self-Awareness](#)

[Act for Youth: SEL Strategies](#)

[Action Mental Health](#)

[American Institutes for Research](#)

[Anna Freud Centre](#)

[Anna Freud Centre: Self-Care](#)

[Anna Freud Centre: Youth Wellbeing](#)

[Australian Childhood Foundation](#)

[Aware](#)

[BoingBoing](#)

[Cambridge Assessment international Education – Getting started with Assessment for Learning](#)

[CASEL \(2020\) SEL is...](#)

[CCEA Active Teaching and Learning Methods Key Stage 3](#)

[CCEA Assessment for Learning: A Practical Guide](#)

[CCEA Assessment for Learning for Key Stage 3](#)

[CCEA Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance: An Update for Post-Primary Schools](#)

[CCEA RSE Hub](#)

[CCEA Teaching Controversial Issues](#)

[CCEA GCSE Teacher/Student Guidance Learning for Life and Work: Teaching Controversial and Sensitive Issues](#)

[Childline](#)

[Education Authority: Safeguarding and Child Protection](#)

[Education Authority: A Pupil Pathway: A Resource for Teachers to Support Shared Education](#)

[Education Development Trust](#)

[Edutopia](#)



[Mind](#)

[Minding Your Head](#)

[Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education](#)

[National Centre on Afterschool and Summer Enrichment Resource Library](#)

[National Institute for Health and Care Excellence](#)

[Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People](#)

[Northern Ireland Social Care Council: Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma Informed Practice](#)

[Northern Ireland Social Care Council: Impact of Trauma on Brain Development](#)

[Parents Reach Out: Coping Skills](#)

[Pathway 2 Success](#)

[Positive Action: Social and Emotional Learning in the Classroom](#)

[Positive Action: Social and Emotional Skills](#)

[Positive Action: Teaching Self-Awareness to Students](#)

[Prodigy Action](#)

[Resilient Educator](#)

[Safeguarding NI](#)

[Samaritans: Self-help](#)

[Samaritans: Coping Strategies](#)

[Student Minds](#)

[Teach Thought](#)

[Time to Change](#)

[Transforming Education](#)

[Trauma Informed Schools UK](#)

[UK Trauma Council](#)

[UNESCO](#)



[WHO \(2020\) Definition of Mental Health](#)

[Young Minds](#)

[Young Minds: Adversity and Trauma-Informed Practice](#)

[Young Minds: Prioritising Wellbeing in Schools](#)



Appendices

Appendix 1: SEL Competency Progression from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4

These are examples of what progression in each of the SEL competencies might look like across the key stages.

Self-Awareness	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
	Pupils should be able to:	Pupils should be able to:
Identify and recognise their own emotions and feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-reflect on their emotions and feelings • Use appropriate vocabulary to express their emotions and feelings • Identify the intensity of their emotions and feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly use a range of self-reflection techniques to develop greater awareness of their emotions and feelings • Share their emotions and feelings • Understand that emotions and feelings can be complex and that they may experience different emotions and feelings simultaneously, for example fear and excitement
Recognise emotional triggers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate awareness of some emotional responses that emotional triggers stimulate • Predict their possible emotional responses to some experiences or in some situations • Demonstrate awareness of how their emotions and feelings may affect their ability to make reasoned decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand emotional triggers and the ways they influence physiology, thoughts and behaviour • Predict their possible emotional responses to a range of experiences or in a range of different scenarios • Understand how their emotions and feelings may impact on their ability to make reasoned decisions
Self-reflect and accurately assess their sense of self-identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe their main interests and preferences • Describe their personality • Identify their values • Identify key influences on their self-identity • Recognise that their sense of self-identity can change over time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess their interests and preferences • Accurately assess their personality and identify key character traits • Understand how their values influence their thinking and behaviour • Explore the influences on their self-identity • Explore how their self-identity might change over time



Self-Awareness	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
	Pupils should be able to:	Pupils should be able to:
Recognise their own strengths and limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify strengths, areas for development and limitations Develop a growth mindset 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate knowledge of their strengths and limitations Demonstrate a growth mindset Evaluate their ability and performance in activities or tasks
Value themselves for who they are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value their uniqueness Express confidence in their capabilities and potential to succeed Affirm belief in themselves Recognise that their views are important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the significance of being unique Demonstrate confidence in their capabilities and potential to succeed Demonstrate belief in themselves Understand that their views can influence change
Express their own views and opinions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate awareness of audience and context Confidently and clearly express their views and opinions in familiar and unfamiliar circumstances Use appropriate language and tone when expressing their views and opinions Use pauses and allow silence when expressing their views and opinions Display confidence through their body language, for example facial expressions, good posture, making eye contact and not fidgeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gauge the audience's reaction to expressed views and opinions Effectively communicate in a way that engages the audience Effectively use language and tone when expressing their views and opinions Use pace for effect and allow silence when expressing their views and opinions Demonstrate authenticity and confidence through planned and controlled use of body language.



Self-Management	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
	Pupils should be able to:	Pupils should be able to:
Monitor and regulate thoughts, emotions and feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise their thoughts, emotions and feelings Use some strategies to regulate their thoughts, emotions and feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly monitor their thoughts, emotions and feelings Use appropriate strategies to regulate their thoughts, emotions and feelings
Manage thoughts, emotions, feelings and behaviour in a range of situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise that their thoughts, emotions and feelings can change, depending on the situation Demonstrate awareness that behaviour can change as a response to these thoughts, emotions and feelings Use strategies to help display appropriate behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand why their thoughts, emotions and feelings can change, depending on the situation Understand the connection between thoughts, emotions, feelings and behaviour Select and use strategies to help display appropriate behaviour
Review and identify ways to improve learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss and review their learning and identify areas for improvement Consider different options that they might use to improve aspects of their learning Identify a few actions they will take to improve their learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate their learning in range of subjects and identify and prioritise areas for improvement Assess options to improve their learning Use strategies to improve their learning
Set personal goals and targets, and monitor and review them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set some appropriate personal goals and targets Regularly monitor their progress Regularly review their progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a process for setting, monitoring, reviewing and recording progress against personal goals and targets Take responsibility for setting goals and SMART targets Routinely monitor and record their progress Routinely assess their progress
Organise and plan how to go about a task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Break down tasks into component parts Recognise sequential processes involved in completing a task Identify the resources and estimate the time required to complete a task Produce a plan to complete a simple task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and prioritise the sequential processes involved to complete a complex task Identify the most efficient and practical way to complete a complex task Produce a plan to complete a complex task



Self-Management	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
	Pupils should be able to:	Pupils should be able to:
Focus, sustain attention and persist to achieve success in an activity or task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain focused attention when completing activities or tasks • Demonstrate persistence by completing activities or tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustain focused concentration when completing activities or tasks, even in the presence of distractions • Demonstrate persistence by completing activities or tasks, even those that are challenging or may not interest them
Seek support and advice when necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise when they need help • Demonstrate awareness of sources of support and advice • Ask for support and advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the benefits of asking for timely advice • Ask for support or advice from the person best placed to provide it
Respond to feedback constructively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond positively to feedback • Ask questions about the feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond positively to feedback and constructive criticism • Seek clarification on how to act on feedback
Exhibit motivation, hope and optimism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibit motivation to take positive actions to improve two aspects of their emotional health and wellbeing • Demonstrate an optimistic and hopeful outlook in their daily lives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibit motivation to take positive actions to improve several aspects of their emotional health and wellbeing • Use strategies to help them develop an optimistic and hopeful outlook in their daily lives
Use coping strategies to deal with and overcome challenging situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise challenging situations • Use at least two coping strategies to deal with and overcome challenges • Demonstrate persistence to overcome challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess what makes a situation challenging • Use a range of appropriate coping strategies to deal with and overcome challenges • Demonstrate self-belief in their capacity to overcome challenges.



Social Awareness	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
	Pupils should be able to:	Pupils should be able to:
Identify and recognise others' emotions and feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate awareness of how others express their emotions and feelings through facial expressions, body language, non-verbal cues and verbal communication • Identify and recognise others' emotions and feelings, for example happy, sad, worried or angry • Recognise when others may be not showing their real emotions and feelings • Demonstrate awareness of why others might not display their real emotions and feelings • Acknowledge how others' emotions and feelings may differ from their own 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the different ways others might express their emotions and feelings • Accurately gauge how others may be feeling • Sense when others are not expressing their real emotions and feelings • Understand why others may not express their real emotions and feelings • Compare and contrast their emotions and feelings to those of others in response to experiences or situations
Recognise and value cultural diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the benefits of living in a culturally diverse community and society • Encourage inclusiveness when participating in groups, for example in school or sports • Participate in celebrations of cultural diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the benefits of living in a culturally diverse community and society • Actively promote inclusiveness when participating in groups, for example in school or sports • Contribute to and participate in celebrations of cultural diversity
Respect the views and opinions of others and different perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate awareness of their own bias and how this might influence their perception of others • Actively listen to others' views and opinions • Ask questions to develop their understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess personal bias and understand how this might influence their views about others • Respond appropriately to others' views and opinions • Engage in conversations to better understand others



Self-Management	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
	Pupils should be able to:	Pupils should be able to:
Understand and show empathy and compassion for others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively listen to and encourage others to share their thoughts, emotions and feelings Share personal experiences with others Empathise with others by placing themselves in their position Show empathy by acknowledging others' concerns Demonstrate compassion for others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively listen and show concern for others who share their thoughts, emotions and feelings Share personal experiences, when appropriate, with others Empathise with others who are experiencing challenges in their lives by placing themselves in their position Show empathy by responding appropriately to others' concerns Demonstrate compassion for others who are experiencing challenges in their lives
Understand how their behaviour can affect others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take personal responsibility for their behaviour Demonstrate awareness of how their behaviour can impact on others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate personal responsibility for their behaviour Assess how their behaviour can affect others
Adapt behaviour and language to suit different people and situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behave appropriately in a range of situations in the company of different people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapt their behaviour to suit a range of situations in the company of different people
Recognise the value of belonging, for example to a group, family, school or community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the benefits of being part of a group Show awareness of belonging, for example to a group, family, school or community Demonstrate awareness of how a sense of belonging makes them feel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the benefits of being part of a group Demonstrate understanding of the importance of feeling a sense of belonging, for example to a group, family, school or community Recognise the positive feelings associated with a sense of belonging.



Relationship Skills	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
	Pupils should be able to:	Pupils should be able to:
Recognise the qualities of healthy, respectful relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise the qualities of healthy, respectful relationships, for example with parents/carers, family, friends, or sexual relationships Recognise the importance of having healthy, respectful relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the qualities of healthy and respectful relationships in families, friendships, peer groups and sexual relationships Discuss the value of being in healthy, respectful relationships
Make friends, and build and maintain relationships with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate contact with others and build friendships Demonstrate their capacity to maintain relationships with others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively seek to make new and inclusive friendships Demonstrate their capacity to maintain relationships and overcome challenges to their relationships
Play an active and meaningful part in the life of the school and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively engage in school life, for example by joining clubs or societies, or supporting others Actively support the local community, for example by joining youth or community groups or non- governmental organisations, or volunteering Seek opportunities to have their voice heard, for example by participating in the school's pupil council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate commitment to active participation in school life Demonstrate commitment to supporting the local community Seek ways to have their voice heard in the school and community, and influence decisions that may affect young people
Provide advice and support to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise when others may need advice or support Willingly advise and support others, for example by actively listening to their concerns, being empathetic, and offering practical advice and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate awareness of others' needs Actively seek to advise and support others Use a range of strategies to advise and support others



Relationship Skills	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
	Pupils should be able to:	Pupils should be able to:
Take personal responsibility for work with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow through on their commitments to the group Acknowledge and learn from their mistakes Take on different roles to meet group needs Lead on aspects of group work Evaluate their contribution to the group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate commitment to achieve group goals or targets Demonstrate a willingness to admit mistakes, change their mind, and try different approaches Take on different roles or work to meet group needs Demonstrate leadership, for example providing direction, or engaging and inspiring others Regularly evaluate their performance in group work
Manage and resolve conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the causes of conflict in their relationships and social situations Identify positive and negative outcomes of conflict Reach agreement using persuasion, negotiation and compromise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take time and assess the possible causes of conflict in their relationships and social situations Generate and evaluate potential responses to and consequences of conflict Use strategies including persuasion, negotiation and compromise to effectively manage and resolve conflict
Manage and express emotions in relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate awareness of how their emotions and feelings may be different, depending on the relationship Express their emotions and feelings appropriately in a range of relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accurately gauge how their emotions and feelings change in different relationships Effectively manage their emotions and feelings in a range of relationships, showing sensitivity for others
Listen actively and respond appropriately to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen actively and demonstrate interest in others' views and opinions Respond appropriately to others' views and opinions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate curiosity and open-mindedness when listening to others Give considered responses to others' views and opinions



Relationship Skills	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
	Pupils should be able to:	Pupils should be able to:
Identify and manage peer pressure that may put them at risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify situations when they feel peer pressure to behave in certain ways • Recognise the methods their peers are using to influence them • Recognise the risks associated with conforming to peer pressure • Use some strategies to manage peer pressure • Seek advice and support from others on ways to manage peer pressure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess situations where they feel peer pressure to behave in certain ways • Anticipate and evaluate the methods their peers are using to influence them • Consider the risks associated with conforming to peer pressure • Use strategies to effectively manage peer pressure • Access appropriate sources of advice and support on ways to manage peer pressure.



Responsible Decision- Making	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
	Pupils should be able to:	Pupils should be able to:
Identify problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify some problems they face in their lives, for example schoolwork and learning, relationships, lack of confidence or bullying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and prioritise the problems they face in their lives, for example schoolwork and learning, exam stress or relationships
Generate possible solutions and evaluate options to resolve their problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate possible solutions to some problems Evaluate possible options to resolve their problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate realistic solutions to the problems which concern them the most Evaluate appropriate options to resolve their problems
Try out alternative approaches to solving problems and evaluate outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use different approaches to solve problems Evaluate the outcomes of their approaches to problem-solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trial alternative problem-solving strategies Evaluate which strategies were successful in terms of outcomes
Assess the risks associated with making decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the risks associated with making some decisions, for example to their personal safety, physical health, or emotional health and wellbeing Assess the associated risks to others through making some decisions, for example to their personal safety, physical health or emotional health and wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the risks associated with making a range of decisions in different scenarios, for example to their personal safety, physical health or emotional health and wellbeing Assess the associated risks to others through making a range of decisions, for example to their personal safety, physical health or emotional health and wellbeing
Make and justify ethical decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make some decisions Consider whether their decisions are good or bad Justify their reasons for making certain decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make decisions in response to a range of different scenarios Consider the ethical implications of their decisions Provide a justified argument for making certain decisions
Demonstrate awareness of how their current decisions and choices may impact on their future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate awareness of the importance of making responsible decisions and how they can impact on their future Explain how decisions and choices that they make may impact on their future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the importance of making responsible decisions and how they can impact on their future Assess how decisions and choices that they make may impact on their future.



Appendix 2: Glossary of Key Terms

Glossary of Key Terms	
Emotional Health and Wellbeing	As defined in new guidance.
Relationship Skills	are the pupil's ability to build and maintain good healthy supporting relationships with individuals and diverse groups, to work collaboratively and support others, and actively engage in school and community life. These skills include their capacity to express and manage their emotions in relationships, to effectively communicate and actively listen and respond appropriately to others, to be persuasive, negotiate, and compromise, to manage and resolve conflict, and to resist any social pressures that may put them at risk.
Resilience	is the pupil's ability to overcome the challenges they face throughout their lives, or their capacity to bounce back from adversity.
Responsible Decision-Making	is the pupil's ability to make responsible, ethical, caring decisions about their behaviour and social interactions in different situations. It is their capacity to identify and solve problems, to consider options and assess risk to their safety, the benefits and consequences of their actions to others and to their EHWB, and the future impact of their decisions.
Self-awareness	is the pupil's ability to understand their thoughts, feelings/emotions and values, and their influence on their behaviour. It is their capacity to reflect and assess their sense of self-identity and to recognise their strengths, limitations and potential, and to develop a sense of self-worth and purpose and confidently express themselves.
Self-confidence	is when the pupil has confidence in themselves and their abilities.
Self-efficacy	is when the pupil believes in their capabilities and their ability to perform in specific tasks.
Self-esteem	is when the pupil has belief and confidence in their value.
Self-identity	is how a pupil perceive themselves.
Self-management	is the pupil's ability to effectively manage emotions, thoughts and behaviour, and to achieve personal goals. It is their capacity to be motivated, positive, optimistic and hopeful, to be resilient, to overcome challenges, to manage stress and to seek advice when appropriate.



Glossary of Key Terms	
Social and Emotional Learning	SEL can be defined as the processes and methods used to develop pupils' competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationships skills and decision-making. These competencies are at the centre of the teaching and learning process. Developing these competencies will enable pupils to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to develop a healthy sense of self-identity, effectively manage emotions, build resilience, develop self-efficacy and achieve personal and collective goals.
Social Awareness	is the pupil's ability to understand others' perspectives, to be empathetic and compassionate, and to value cultural diversity. It is their capacity to understand how their behaviour affects others and to adapt their behaviour, and to recognise the value of belonging to family, school and community.

