



## Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Primary Guidance

Developing a Whole-School Approach to Social and Emotional Learning supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of children in Northern Ireland primary schools



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## Introduction

This guidance accompanies CCEA 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). It 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; National Children's Bureau, 2015).

SEL recognises that learning is more than a cognitive process by also developing the social and emotional dimensions of learning.

Pupils' motivation, commitment, success and achievement in learning can be affected by their emotional state and their social relationships with others.

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 to learn.

Pupils also learn in social contexts, for example in the company of others, in school with their teachers and peers, and at home with the encouragement of their family or other carers.

SEL is therefore based on enabling pupils to develop the social and emotional competencies required for their personal development and to effectively engage with society.

This guidance is intended to support schools to develop SEL as an integral part of its whole-school approach to EHWB. It includes a suggested SEL Competency Framework based on the Northern Ireland Curriculum that primary schools can integrate into their current classroom practice to guide and support learning.

Schools can use the competency framework alongside SEL strategies to plan a whole-school approach to SEL, including aspects of its support for pupils such as pastoral care and extra-curricular activities.

This will support schools to develop key aspects of pupil EHWB referred to in the Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing in Education Framework (Department of Education and Department of Health, 2021, p. 9).

The core curriculum content associated with supporting pupil EHWB and developing SEL provision mainly sits within the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding area of learning and its statutory Statements of Requirement.

The SEL Competency Framework illustrates the range of opportunities the Northern Ireland Curriculum 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.



## What is Social and Emotional Learning?

SEL supports pupils to develop skills in the core competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making.

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.

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 positive 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 parents or carers and the wider community.

SEL is central to the aims and objectives of the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

## SEL Supporting Pupils' Emotional Health and Wellbeing

For the purpose of this guidance, Emotional Health and Wellbeing has been defined as:

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

SEL and EHWB are not the same. SEL can promote positive mental health in many ways. EHWB is influenced by the value and meaning a person places on their lives and the joy and happiness they gain from life.

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). By promoting responsive relationships, emotionally safe environments and skills development, SEL fosters important factors to protect against mental health risks.

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

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. [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).



### The Benefits of Social and Emotional Learning

The research highlights these benefits of a whole-school approach to SEL:

- improves pupil wellbeing as they understand their thoughts, feelings and behaviours;
- reduces mental health problems – fewer reports of pupil anxiety, stress and depression, and social withdrawal;\*
- improves attitudes and behaviours – greater motivation to learn, increased commitment to school, better classroom behaviour and more time devoted to schoolwork;
- raises standards of achievement for children who feel more secure, motivated and confident and are independent learners;
- reduces aggression and behavioural problems;
- allows emotive conversations and debates in a safe space;
- improves social and emotional competencies;
- reduces incidents of substance abuse; and
- encourages a variety of teaching methods and activities, providing pupils with a range of learning opportunities.

(Durlak et al., 2011).

\*SEL can reduce mental health problems, but SEL programmes are not designed to meet individual mental illness needs that require the support of a qualified mental health professional.

### SEL Supporting Trauma-Informed Practice

Trauma-Informed Practice supports teachers to recognise, identify and respond to the needs of pupils who have experienced adversity and trauma in their lives. (See CCEA Primary Guidance on Developing a Whole-Child, Whole-School, Whole-Community Approach to Emotional Health and Wellbeing.)

Individual trauma can result from a single event, or it can be from a prolonged threat to their safety, security or bodily integrity. Traumatic or adverse childhood experiences include physical or sexual abuse, neglect, the loss of a parent, carer or sibling or taking on adult responsibilities. The pupils' 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 person's brain development can be affected by traumatic experiences. These can negatively impact on their memory, behaviour, how they regulate emotions and build relationships and their ability to learn (NCB, 2019; Maynard et al., 2019).

As part of their approach to Trauma-Informed Practice, schools could work collaboratively with other EHWB support agencies to design targeted SEL programmes for pupils who have been identified as having mental health needs. SEL can support pupils who have experienced adverse childhood experiences to develop SEL competencies, knowledge and understanding to cope better 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 or issues are primarily covered through the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding area of learning.

### 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 of, for example, taking regular exercise, having a healthy balanced diet and good hygiene including care of their teeth and having enough sleep.

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 that involve others also supports pupils to develop social and cultural awareness and to build good relationships. Mental health is also affected by nutrition and diet.

### Safety

Personal safety is already part of the statutory curriculum requirements for PDMU. It is highlighted here to emphasise its importance to contributing to the pupils' EHWB. The feeling of being safe is important to pupils' sense of EHWB. If pupils feel 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 or behaviours and to make informed responsible decisions.

The PDMU curriculum also offers a medium to explore sensitive safety issues, such as domestic violence and sexual abuse, with pupils in an age-appropriate way that helps them to develop appropriate protective behaviours. [CCEA's Relationships and Sexuality Education \(RSE\) Hub](#) offers further information for schools on these issues.



## The CCEA SEL Competency Framework

CCEA has developed an SEL Competency Framework to support the development and implementation of a whole-school approach in 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](#) model.

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

  

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

**Figure 1 SEL framework**

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 that can be taught through all subjects to support pupils' EHWP.

It is important to note that the CCEA SEL competencies are not intended to replace any of the Cross-Curricular Skills or Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities. They enhance the opportunities provided by the Northern Ireland Curriculum 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 EHWP;

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- support a coherent and consistent whole-school approach to SEL (including a current PDMU programme);
- provide teachers with a common set of SEL competencies which they can integrate into their classroom practice to guide 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; and
- be used to develop pupil resilience.



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**Table 1. Definitions of SEL competencies**

SEL Competency	Definition
<b>Self-Awareness</b>	<p>The pupils' abilities to understand their thoughts, feelings, emotions and values, and their influence on their behaviour. It is their capacity to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reflect and assess their sense of self-identity;</li> <li>• recognise their strengths, limitations and potential;</li> <li>• develop a sense of self-worth and purpose; and</li> <li>• confidently express themselves.</li> </ul>
<b>Self-Management</b>	<p>The pupils' abilities to effectively manage emotions, thoughts and behaviour, and to achieve personal goals. It is their capacity to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be motivated, positive, optimistic and hopeful;</li> <li>• be resilient;</li> <li>• overcome challenges; and</li> <li>• manage stress and seek advice, when appropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Awareness</b>	<p>The pupils' abilities to understand others' perspectives, to be empathetic and compassionate and to value cultural diversity. It is their capacity to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand how their behaviour affects others;</li> <li>• adapt their behaviour; and</li> <li>• recognise the value of belonging to family, school and community.</li> </ul>
<b>Relationship Skills</b>	<p>The pupils' 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• express and manage their emotions in relationships;</li> <li>• effectively communicate and actively listen and respond appropriately to others;</li> <li>• be persuasive;</li> <li>• negotiate;</li> <li>• compromise; manage and resolve conflict; and</li> <li>• resist social pressures that may put them at risk.</li> </ul>
<b>Responsible Decision-Making</b>	<p>The pupils' abilities to make responsible, ethical, caring decisions about their behaviour and social interactions in different situations. It is the capacity to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and solve problems;</li> <li>• consider options and assess risk to their safety;</li> <li>• recognise the benefits and consequences of their actions to others and to their EHWP; and</li> <li>• appreciate the future impact of their decisions.</li> </ul>

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**Table 2. CCEA SEL Competency Framework**

Social and Emotional Learning Competency	Competency Components
	Pupils should be able to:
<b>Self-Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and recognise their own emotions and feelings;</li> <li>• recognise emotional triggers;</li> <li>• self-reflect and accurately assess their sense of self-identity;</li> <li>• recognise their own strengths and limitations;</li> <li>• value themselves for who they are; and</li> <li>• express their own views and opinions.</li> </ul>
<b>Self-Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• monitor and regulate thoughts, emotions and feelings;</li> <li>• manage thoughts, emotions, feelings and behaviour in a range of situations;</li> <li>• review and identify ways to improve learning;</li> <li>• set personal goals and targets, and monitor and review them;</li> <li>• organise and plan how to go about a task;</li> <li>• focus, sustain attention and persist to achieve success in an activity or task;</li> <li>• seek support and advice when necessary;</li> <li>• respond to feedback constructively;</li> <li>• exhibit positive motivation, hope and optimism; and</li> <li>• use coping strategies to deal with and overcome challenging situations.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and recognise others' emotions and feelings;</li> <li>• recognise and value cultural diversity;</li> <li>• respect the views and opinions of others and different perspectives;</li> <li>• understand and show empathy and compassion for others;</li> <li>• understand how their behaviour can affect others;</li> <li>• adapt behaviour and language to suit different people and situations; and</li> <li>• recognise the value of belonging, for example to a group, family, school or community.</li> </ul>

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Social and Emotional Learning Competency	Competency Components
<b>Relationship Skills</b>	<p>Pupils should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• recognise the qualities of healthy, respectful relationships;</li><li>• make friends, and build and maintain relationships with others;</li><li>• play an active and meaningful part in the life of the school and community;</li><li>• provide advice and support to others;</li><li>• take personal responsibility for working with others;</li><li>• manage and resolve conflict;</li><li>• manage and express emotions in relationships;</li><li>• listen actively and respond appropriately to others; and</li><li>• identify and manage peer pressure that may put them at risk.</li></ul>
<b>Responsible Decision-Making</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• identify problems;</li><li>• generate possible solutions and evaluate options to resolve their problem;</li><li>• try out alternative approaches to solving problems and evaluate outcomes;</li><li>• assess the risks associated with making decisions;</li><li>• make and justify ethical decisions; and</li><li>• demonstrate awareness of how their current decisions and choices may impact on their future.</li></ul>

## How are the Competencies Related?

The SEL components are grouped into five competencies 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 overlaps. This means teachers can make connections between the different competencies and focus on developing components from different competencies. Here 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 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 that may put them at risk.

## How the Northern Ireland Curriculum Supports Social and Emotional Learning

### Northern Ireland Curriculum Aims and Objectives

The Northern Ireland Curriculum supports the development of pupils' emotional health and wellbeing through its aim and objectives. The aim of the Northern Ireland Curriculum 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 child.

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 Primary Curriculum

There is a core body of knowledge in the Northern Ireland Curriculum which pupils should be taught. This will help them to understand and better 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 PDMU and Physical Development (Foundation Stage) or Physical Education (Key Stages 1 and 2).

Physical health includes physical activity, healthy eating, and diet and nutrition, while safety includes identifying and managing risks.

### Teaching and Learning

The teaching and learning of social and emotional competencies should be based on the Northern Ireland Curriculum pedagogy and approach to Personal Development and Mutual Understanding. It should:

- 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;
- use enquiry-based active teaching and learning approaches that motivate, engage and challenge pupils;
- encourage pupils to work both collaboratively and independently; and
- use ongoing observation of pupil learning and feedback to support pupil progress in their learning and developing SEL competencies.

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Some suggestions for active learning methodologies are highlighted in the table below. It has been adapted from CCEA's PDMU Guidance for Key Stages 1 and 2 (2007).

Learning Aim	Methodology
Learn to manage strong emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use puppets, symbols to show or their words to describe what they are feeling and ask for help</li> <li>• relaxation strategies such as calming breathing techniques, meditation, mindfulness and muscle relaxation</li> <li>• use self-regulation strategies such as <a href="#">zones of regulation</a></li> </ul>
Generate ideas quickly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• brainstorm</li> </ul>
Consider a specific situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• scenarios and role play</li> <li>• visitor technique</li> <li>• use story and picture books, short films and animations to illustrate situations</li> </ul>
Learn to negotiate, listen to and support each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• drama</li> </ul>
Promote co-operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• co-operative games</li> </ul>
Question information presented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use photographs or pictures as a stimulus</li> <li>• use media television advertisements</li> </ul>
Gather their own thoughts and take a viewpoint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• open-ended statements</li> </ul>
Express their own opinions, promote critical thinking and respect the views of others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• agree or disagree continuums</li> <li>• use presentation software that creates word clouds of their views</li> </ul>
Promote communication and critical thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circle time</li> <li>• Twos to Fours</li> <li>• Storytelling</li> </ul>
Represent ideas or concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collage work</li> </ul>
Explore issues of bias and stereotyping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freeze Frames</li> </ul>
Gather information, record findings and interpret data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hot Seating</li> <li>• Questionnaires and surveys</li> </ul>



## SEL Progression through Primary School

A SEL competency progression was developed to illustrate how each of the SEL competencies can develop through the different phases of primary school. (Appendix 1)

**Table 3. Links between SEL competencies and the Northern Ireland Curriculum**

SEL Competency	Areas of Learning and Skills	Attitudes/Dispositions	Primary Key Elements
<b>Self-Awareness</b>	PDMU Cross-Curricular Skill: Communication	Personal Responsibility Self-confidence Integrity Moral courage	Personal and Mutual Understanding Personal Health Moral Character Spiritual Awareness
<b>Self-Management</b>	PDMU Cross-Curricular Skill: Communication TSPC: Self- Management	Personal Responsibility Commitment Determination Resourcefulness Curiosity Flexibility	Personal and Mutual Understanding Moral Character Employability
<b>Social Awareness</b>	PDMU	Concern for Others Curiosity Community Spirit Respect Tolerance Openness to New Ideas	Mutual Understanding Citizenship Cultural Understanding Media Awareness Ethical Awareness Employability Education for Sustainable Development
<b>Relationship Skills</b>	PDMU Cross-Curricular Skill: Communication TSPC: Working with Others	Concern for Others Community Spirit Respect Tolerance Flexibility	Personal and Mutual Understanding Moral Character Citizenship Cultural Understanding

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SEL Competency	Areas of Learning and Skills	Attitudes/Dispositions	Primary Key Elements
<b>Responsible Decision-Making</b>	PDMU Cross-Curricular Skill: Communication TSPC: Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making	Personal Responsibility, Openness to New Ideas Concern for Others, Community spirit, Respect Integrity Moral Courage	Personal Health Moral Character, Citizenship Ethical Awareness Employability Education for Sustainable Development

## 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 their self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship and decision-making competencies and their 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 Teaching SEL Competencies

The following questions may be useful for planning:

- What EHWP needs do our pupils have?
- How should we integrate SEL into any school policies and to our current provision for PDMU so it is connected across the curriculum?
- What are the pupils' experiences and learning outcomes?
- How will you ensure pupils, parents and staff understand the link between SEL and EHWP?
- What social and emotional skills do we want to prioritise?
- 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?
- How will SEL be promoted through the school ethos?
- What staff training or professional development is required?
- How will the development and implementation of SEL be monitored? Who will have oversight?
- How will the impact of SEL on pupils' EHWP be assessed?
- How will SEL be evaluated? How often?

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

- Outcomes for Learners – What evidence is there that pupils are developing intellectually, socially, emotionally, physically, morally and spiritually?
- Quality of Provision – How integral is care and welfare to learning and teaching in our school?

### Using Assessment to Support Pupils' SEL

The focus of assessment should be using formative assessment 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 pupils find it useful.

Progression in SEL, like progression in PDMU, is unlikely to be linear. Personal rates of development are not and cannot be standardised.

You need to ensure that any assessment of SEL is concerned with pupils' ability to demonstrate the skills that are being learned and practised.

Teachers could use these 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
- Role plays.

Encouraging pupils to talk about and reflect on activities and situations they have been involved in will also help them to learn to use their judgement when considering:

- what they have done;
- what the consequences were;
- how they felt about it;
- what they might want to do differently in future; and
- how they might go about achieving changes.

### What is Resilience?

There are various interpretations of resilience. These 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 and recover more quickly from illness. They are 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 or a safe space. Resilience is more than having the capacity to cope with adversity.

To develop resilience, pupils 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 with parents or 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. Personal circumstances should be considered as elements such as relationships, social issues and poverty may have impacted on pupils' prior learning and may have impaired the development of coping skills. These pupils are most likely to need additional support to develop their resilience.

Social and Emotional Learning and resilience building strategies should be considered at key transition points such as moving at the end of Key Stage 2 to a post-primary setting.

### 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 that 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 4 shows the components of resilience and examples of how they can be supported through EHWB and SEL curriculum provision.



**Table 4 Factors that contribute to resilience and how schools and SEL can develop pupils' resilience**

<p><b>Factors that contribute to resilience</b> (NCB, 2020)</p>	<p><b>The school's EHWP programme can support pupils to develop resilience by:</b></p>	<p><b>SEL can support pupils to build resilience by:</b></p>
<p><b>At least one stable committed relationship</b> 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"> <li>• pastoral care programme and support from their class teacher</li> <li>• a positive and welcoming school environment</li> <li>• supportive approachable staff – willing to listen to and help a pupil</li> <li>• extracurricular provision, sports, clubs and societies.</li> </ul>	<p>developing pupils' competency to build relationships with others, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognise the characteristics and value of respectful relationships</li> <li>• make friends and build and maintain relationships with others</li> <li>• learn how to work with others</li> <li>• manage and resolve conflict</li> <li>• manage and express emotions in relationships</li> <li>• listen actively and respond appropriately to others</li> <li>• identify and resist social pressures which may put them at risk.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Basic needs met</b> These include pupil safety, security, shelter, food, clothes, health care 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"> <li>• safeguarding and child protection policies and practice;</li> <li>• healthy eating initiatives and provision of school breakfast and lunches;</li> <li>• educational provision;</li> <li>• working collaboratively with other agencies to identify and address health and welfare concerns.</li> </ul>	<p>Developing pupil's competency to understand what their basic needs are and how these can be met.</p>

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<b>Factors that contribute to resilience</b> (NCB, 2020)	<b>The school's EHWB programme can support pupils to develop resilience by:</b>	<b>SEL can support pupils to build resilience by:</b>
<p><b>Develop physical health</b> 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"> <li>• Curricular provision – PDMU, PE, including adapting curricular provision to meet the needs of all pupils with and without a disability*</li> <li>• Extracurricular activities – individual and team physical activity</li> <li>• Healthy eating and provision of school breakfast and lunch</li> <li>• Outdoor learning whenever possible.</li> </ul>	<p>Developing pupils' competency to acknowledge and sustain physical health</p>
<p><b>Self-efficacy</b> 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"> <li>• Involving pupils in the planning process for classroom learning</li> <li>• Regular feedback on the pupils' learning</li> <li>• Support from their class teacher</li> <li>• Participation in pupil voice and leadership opportunities such as the school council.</li> </ul>	<p>Developing pupils' self-efficacy</p> <p>Responsible decision-making:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify problems</li> <li>• Generate possible solutions and evaluate options to resolve their problems</li> <li>• Try out alternative approaches to solving problems and evaluate outcomes</li> <li>• Assess the risks associated with making decisions</li> <li>• Make and justify ethical decisions</li> <li>• Be aware of how their current decisions and choices may impact on their future.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Factors that contribute to resilience</b> (NCB, 2020)</p> <p><b>Executive function</b> This refers to self-management competencies such as planning, organising, self-regulating and managing emotions. These competencies enable us to better cope with stress.</p>	<p><b>The school's EHWP programme can support pupils to develop resilience by:</b></p> <p>The school helps the pupil to develop executive function, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curricular provision – learning about learning, for example the PDMU theme of 'Learning to Learn'</li> <li>• Extracurricular activities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SEL can support pupils to build resilience by:</b></p> <p>Developing pupils' executive function</p> <p>Self-management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor and regulate thinking and emotions or feelings</li> <li>• Manage thoughts, emotions or feelings and behaviour in a range of situations</li> <li>• Review and identify ways to improve learning</li> <li>• Seek support and advice when necessary</li> <li>• Respond to feedback constructively</li> <li>• Use coping strategies to deal with and overcome challenging situations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social connections with peers and community</b> Making social connections with others can help children 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"> <li>• A school and classroom environment in which children feel fairly treated, safe, close to others and part of the school</li> <li>• Curricular provision – possible additional programmes such as Young Enterprise or engaging in activities within Shared Education Partnerships</li> <li>• Extracurricular activities</li> <li>• Participation in pupil voice and leadership opportunities such as the school council.</li> </ul>	<p>Developing pupils' competency to build social connections with their peers and community</p> <p>Social awareness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and recognise others' emotions or feelings</li> <li>• Recognise and value cultural diversity</li> <li>• Respect the views and opinions of others, and different perspectives</li> <li>• Understand and show empathy and compassion for others</li> <li>• Understand how their behaviour can affect others</li> <li>• Adapt behaviour and language to suit different people and situations</li> </ul>

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Factors that contribute to resilience (NCB, 2020)	The school's EHWP programme can support pupils to develop resilience by:	SEL can support pupils to build resilience by:
<p><b>Optimism and hope</b> Being optimistic and hopeful helps children 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"> <li>• School ethos</li> <li>• Curriculum provision including real life and fictional narratives that show change is possible in PDMU, Language and Literacy, The Arts, The World Around Us</li> <li>• Activities beyond their own classroom</li> <li>• Extracurricular activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise the value of belonging, for example to a group, family, school, or community.</li> </ul> <p>Relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playing an active and meaningful part in the life of the school and community</li> <li>• Providing advice and support to others.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sense of purpose</b> Having a sense of purpose helps to motivate children 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"> <li>• School climate/ethos and culture – high expectations of all pupils and all pupils knowing as individuals they all have value</li> <li>• Extracurricular activities</li> <li>• Class and school celebration events</li> <li>• Formative feedback from teachers.</li> </ul>	<p>Developing pupils' competency to exhibit optimism and hope</p> <p>Self-awareness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and recognise own emotions</li> <li>• Recognise emotional triggers.</li> </ul> <p>Self-management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibit positive motivation, hope, and optimism.</li> </ul> <p>Developing pupils' sense of purpose links to many of the SEL competencies such as being self-aware:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect and accurately assess their sense of self-identity</li> <li>• Recognise own strengths and limitations</li> <li>• Value themselves for who they are</li> <li>• Express own views and opinions.</li> </ul>

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Factors that contribute to resilience (NCB, 2020)	The school's EHWP programme can support pupils to develop resilience by:	SEL can support pupils to build resilience by:
<p><b>Supporting parents/carers to develop resilience</b> 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"> <li>• Regular home – school communication</li> <li>• Parent learning events</li> <li>• Signposting parents who require additional support</li> <li>• Working with outside agencies such as the Education Welfare Service.</li> </ul>	<p>Self-management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set personal goals and targets and monitor and review them</li> <li>• Organise and plan how to go about a task</li> <li>• Focus, sustain attention and persist to achieve success in an activity or task.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Supporting parents/carers to develop resilience</b> 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"> <li>• Regular home – school communication</li> <li>• Parent learning events</li> <li>• Signposting parents who require additional support</li> <li>• Working with outside agencies such as the Education Welfare Service.</li> </ul>	<p>Supporting the competency of parents/carers to help develop their own and their child's resilience</p>



## How can Social and Emotional Learning Support Pupils Develop Resilience?

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 5) and the second is the **7Cs** model (Table 6).

### **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:

- people who love and care for them;
- inner strength; and
- self-efficacy.

#### **I have – the people the pupil 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 the pupil's inner strengths, for example:**

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

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**Table 5**

SEL Competency	I am	I have	I can
<b>Self-Awareness</b>	<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 or feelings.</p> <p>I can self-reflect.</p> <p>I can recognise my emotional triggers.</p>
<b>Self-Management</b>	<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 or feelings.</p>
<b>Social Awareness</b>	<p>I am respectful towards others.</p> <p>I am aware of others' emotions or 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 or feelings.</p> <p>I can share personal experiences with others.</p> <p>I can behave appropriately in different social situations.</p>
<b>Relationship Skills</b>	<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>
<b>Responsible Decision-Making</b>	<p>I know what it is fair.</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 that contribute to developing young people’s resilience (Ginsburg and Jablow, 2005). Table 6 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 7Cs model.

**Table 6**

7Cs of Resilience	SEL Competencies
<p><b>Competence</b> Pupils’ competencies need to be acknowledged. They need to be given opportunities to practice and develop them.</p>	<p><b>Teachers can provide pupils with a range of opportunities to develop and practice the following SEL competencies:</b></p> <p><b>Self-Management</b> – 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 a wellbeing journal and/or chart.</p> <p><i>Specifically:</i> <i>Pupils need to recognise and understand that they will face challenges throughout their life. Learning about some of the life challenges they may face (such as friendship issues, loss or family breakdown), will help to develop their competence to be able to cope and understand such situations, if they should happen. (I am ...)</i></p>
<p><b>Confidence</b> Confidence helps pupils to trust in their own abilities and judgements. Pupils build confidence when they succeed in activities.</p>	<p><b>Self-Awareness</b> – builds self-confidence by developing pupils’ sense of self-identity and self-worth and ability to recognise their potential, achieve success and express their views.</p> <p><i>Specifically:</i> <i>Pupils 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 on 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.</i></p> <p><b>Self-Management</b> – builds pupils’ self-confidence by developing their ability to regulate and manage their emotions or feelings and behaviour, and to set and achieve personal goals and targets.</p>

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7Cs of Resilience	SEL Competencies
<p><b>Connection</b> 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><b>Social Awareness</b> – 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><b>Relationship Skills</b> – 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:</i> <i>Building secure relationships and identifying protective factors is important in helping a pupil to build on 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 so that, should adversity occur, the pupil realises they have a wide circle of people who can provide support for them.</i> <i>(I have ...)</i></p>
<p><b>Character</b> 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><b>Self-Awareness</b> – develops pupils’ sense of self-identity and their ability to identify their values and sense of right and wrong.</p> <p><i>Specifically:</i> <i>Pupils should explore the characteristics that make them the person they are, the values they have 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><b>Social Awareness</b> – 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><b>Responsible Decision-Making</b> – develops pupils’ ability to make responsible decisions and to consider the consequences of their decisions.</p>

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7Cs of Resilience	SEL Competencies
<p><b>Contribution</b> 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><b>Social Awareness</b> – develops pupils’ ability to recognise and value cultural diversity, respect the views and opinions of others and show empathy and compassion for others.</p>
	<p><b>Relationship Skills</b> – develop pupils’ motivation, and their ability to play an active and meaningful part in the life of the school and community.</p>
	<p><b>Self-Management</b> – 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><b>Responsible Decision-Making</b> – 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><b>Coping</b> Pupils who can effectively use a range of coping strategies are better prepared to deal with life’s challenges.</p>	<p><b>Self-Management</b> – 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> <i>Pupils should learn some coping strategies. Pupils can develop self-management through basic techniques such as calming breathing techniques or undertaking physical activity. (I can ...).</i></p>
<p><b>Control</b> 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 or carers make all the decisions, pupils are less likely to develop a sense of control.</p>	<p><b>Responsible Decision-Making</b> – develops pupils’ ability to make choices, to enable them to make decisions with confidence.</p> <p><i>Specifically:</i> <i>Pupils should learn about responsible decision-making. This is related to resilience; the pupil needs to have opportunities to have as many opportunities as possible to make decisions and reflect on their choices. (I can ...)</i></p>
	<p><b>Self-Management</b> – 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

[American Institutes for Research](#)

[Anna Freud Centre:](#)

[Self-Care](#)

[Australian Childhood Foundation publication: Making Space for Learning Trauma Informed Practice in Schools](#)

[BoingBoing Resilience and Research Practice: Mental Health Resilient Therapy Toolkit](#)

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

[CCEA:](#)

[Active Teaching and Learning Methods Key Stages 1 and 2](#)

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

[RSE Hub](#)

[Childline](#)

[Education Authority:](#)

[Safeguarding and Child Protection](#)

[Nurture Advisory & Support Service](#)

[Edutopia:](#)

[Tips for Teaching Realistic Optimism](#)

[Minding Your Head](#)

[Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Social and Emotional Development lesson plan](#)

[Childcare Technical Assistance Network: Trauma-informed SEL toolkit](#)

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

[Northern Ireland Social Care Council Learning Zone:](#)

[Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma Informed Practice](#)

[Impact of Trauma on Brain Development](#)

[Pathway 2 Success free social and emotional learning resources](#)

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### Positive Action:

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

[Social and Emotional Skills](#)

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

### Resilient Educator:

[Mindfulness Activities for the Elementary Classroom](#)

[Teach Thought: 5 Strategies for Incorporating Social-Emotional Learning into your Classroom](#)

[Time to Change](#)

[Transforming Education: Trauma-Informed SEL Toolkit](#)

[Trauma Informed Schools UK](#)

UK Trauma Council:

[Childhood Trauma and the Brain](#)

[UNESCO: SEL for Everyone](#)

Young Minds:

[Adversity and Trauma-Informed Practice](#)

[Prioritising Wellbeing in Schools](#)

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

[Bend Don't Break](#)



## Appendices

### Appendix 1: SEL Suggested Competency Progression from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 3 (Key Stage 3 statements are provided for comparison.)

Self-Awareness	Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1
	Pupils are able to:	Pupils are able to:
Identify and recognise own emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify some basic feelings such as happiness, calmness, sadness, anger, frustration, fear, surprise or nervousness</li> <li>Talk about experiences or memories that made them feel safe, loved, happy and healthy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about a range of feelings they have experienced</li> <li>Describe and name positive feelings</li> </ul>
Recognise emotional triggers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be aware of how their emotions can affect their brain, body and behaviour</li> <li>Talk about how they felt before some situations or experiences and why</li> <li>Talk about what they think when they experience some of their emotions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognise some of their emotional responses</li> <li>Compare their feelings before and after some situations or experiences</li> <li>Recognise how their emotions can affect their thinking and their ability to make good decisions</li> </ul>
Self-reflect and assess their sense of self identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about things they enjoy doing</li> <li>Talk about what they like about themselves</li> <li>Identify some things that makes them a good person</li> <li>Be aware of some positive influences in their lives</li> <li>Be aware that as they grow up, they will think differently about who they are</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about their likes and dislikes</li> <li>Identify some things about their personality that makes them unique</li> <li>Recognise some beliefs they hold</li> <li>Talk about positive influences in their lives</li> <li>Recall some changes in their ideas about who they are</li> </ul>
Recognise own strengths and limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about what they are good at</li> <li>Identify some things they find difficult to do or learn</li> <li>Recognise how thinking positively makes them feel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe things that they are good at and things that they find difficult.</li> <li>Recognise that being positive can help them to overcome difficult situations</li> </ul>

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Self-Awareness	Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1
Value themselves for who they are	<p>Pupils are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View themselves positively</li> <li>• Identify things they are confident about</li> <li>• Talk about their achievements and success</li> <li>• Know that their views are valued and listened to</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe what makes them feel good about themselves</li> <li>• Talk about how being confident makes them feel</li> <li>• Talk about what they believe they can achieve and do</li> <li>• Recognise that expressing their views helps others understand who they are and their needs</li> </ul>
Express own views and opinions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about how they speak to people in different situations</li> <li>• Develop confidence when speaking to others</li> <li>• Use familiar words appropriately to express their views and opinions</li> <li>• Use a friendly tone</li> <li>• Speak so that they can be heard and understood</li> <li>• Be aware that body movements are a type of communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware of audiences and different ways of addressing them</li> <li>• Show increasing confidence when expressing their views and opinions Use a general vocabulary to express their views and opinions</li> <li>• Use some different tones of voice</li> <li>• Speak slowly and clearly so that they can be understood</li> <li>• Be aware of how they use body language to appear more confident when speaking to others</li> </ul>



# Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Primary Guidance

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Self-Awareness	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
	Pupils are able to:	Pupils are able to:
Identify and recognise own emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly communicate their emotions and feelings, such as happiness, disappointment, sadness or guilt, to others</li> <li>Talk about why they sometimes have stronger feelings than others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-reflect on their emotions and feelings</li> <li>Use appropriate vocabulary to express their emotions and feelings</li> <li>Identify the intensity of their emotions and feelings</li> </ul>
Recognise emotional triggers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand that emotional triggers are anything that causes them to have an emotional reaction</li> <li>Predict how they might feel in familiar situations</li> <li>Discuss decisions they made that were influenced by their emotions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate awareness of some emotional responses that emotional triggers stimulate</li> <li>Predict their possible emotional responses to some experiences or in some situations</li> <li>Demonstrate awareness of how their emotions and feelings may affect their ability to make reasoned decision</li> </ul>
Self-reflect and assess their sense of self identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List their main interests and hobbies</li> <li>Describe some of their personality traits</li> <li>Explore their sense of values</li> <li>Talk about what or who has influenced who they are</li> <li>Describe how their sense of self-identity has changed since beginning primary school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe their main interests and preferences</li> <li>Describe their personality</li> <li>Identify their values</li> <li>Identify key influences on their self-identity</li> <li>Recognise that their sense of self-identity can change over time</li> </ul>
Recognise own strengths and limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appreciate some of their strengths and weaknesses</li> <li>Recognise some of their limitations</li> <li>Recognise the value of having a positive outlook</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify strengths, areas for development and limitations</li> <li>Develop a growth mindset</li> </ul>

# Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Primary Guidance

Developing a Whole-School Approach to Social and Emotional Learning supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of children in Northern Ireland primary schools



Self-Awareness	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
Value themselves for who they are	Pupils are able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Express their sense of self-worth</li> <li>Recognise ways that they can build confidence</li> <li>Recognise the importance of self-belief</li> <li>Recognise the value others place on their views</li> </ul>	Pupils are able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Value their uniqueness</li> <li>Express confidence in their capabilities and potential to succeed</li> <li>Affirm belief in themselves</li> <li>Recognise their views are important</li> </ul>
Express own views and opinions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adapt ways to express their views in different situations or for different audiences</li> <li>Show confidence when expressing their views and opinions to different audiences</li> <li>Use an expanding vocabulary and appropriate tone when expressing their views and opinions</li> <li>Speak slowly and clearly so that they can be understood</li> <li>Display confidence by practising and using some aspects of body language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate awareness of audience and context</li> <li>Confidently and clearly express their views and opinions in familiar and unfamiliar circumstances</li> <li>Use appropriate language and tone when expressing their views and opinions</li> <li>Use pauses and allow silence when expressing their views and opinions</li> <li>Display confidence through their body language, for example facial expressions, good posture, making eye contact or not fidgeting</li> </ul>

# Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Primary Guidance

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Self-Management	Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1
	Pupils are able to:	Pupils are able to:
Monitor and regulate thinking and emotions or feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be aware of some of their thoughts, emotions and feelings at different times</li> <li>Know that it's important to tell someone if they are feeling stressed or upset</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make a habit of reflecting on experiences and their thoughts, emotions and feelings</li> <li>Use breathing exercises to help manage their thoughts, emotions and feelings</li> </ul>
Manage thoughts, emotions or feelings and behaviour in a range of situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify their thoughts and feelings in some situations</li> <li>Talk about situations where their behaviour was affected by their emotions and feelings</li> <li>Be aware of expected behaviour in different situations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about their thoughts and feelings in a range of different situations</li> <li>Reflect on how they behave in situations when they are emotional</li> <li>Begin to take responsibility for their behaviour and use learned strategies to help them do this</li> </ul>
Review and identify ways to improve learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about their learning</li> <li>Identify what they enjoy learning about and what they find difficult</li> <li>Ask questions to improve their learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make a habit of reflecting on their learning</li> <li>Make a list of their strengths and areas for improvement in their learning</li> <li>Seek advice from their teacher about how to improve areas of their learning</li> </ul>
Set personal goals and targets and monitor and review them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about their ambitions and what they need to do to achieve them</li> <li>Recognise their progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set a few achievable personal goals and targets</li> <li>Comment on their progress</li> </ul>
Organise and plan how to go about a task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognise that a task is often made up of different parts</li> <li>Talk about the resources they might use to complete a task</li> <li>Talk about how long it might take to complete a task</li> <li>Recognise the importance of planning work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the parts of some basic tasks</li> <li>Select appropriate resources from a list</li> <li>Identify what they need to consider when estimating how long it might take to complete a task</li> <li>Produce a basic plan with a few steps to complete a simple task</li> </ul>

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Self-Management	Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1
	Pupils are able to:	Pupils are able to:
Focus, sustain attention and persist to achieve success in an activity or task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay attention when completing activities or tasks</li> <li>• Show willingness and seek help to complete activities or tasks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay increasing attention when completing activities or tasks</li> <li>• Show persistence to successfully complete activities or tasks</li> </ul>
Seek support and advice when necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know it is okay to ask for help when they feel unsafe or upset</li> <li>• Name the safe/important people they can go to for help</li> <li>• Ask for help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand why it is okay to ask for help</li> <li>• Talk about the different sources of support and advice available in the school</li> <li>• Ask for help</li> </ul>
Respond to feedback constructively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about their feedback</li> <li>• Ask for feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value others' feedback</li> <li>• Identify how they can use feedback to improve learning</li> </ul>
Exhibit motivation, hope, and optimism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show enthusiasm</li> <li>• Talk about their hopes and aspirations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate a can-do attitude</li> <li>• Appreciate that having a hopeful and optimistic outlook can help improve their wellbeing</li> </ul>
Use coping strategies to deal with and overcome challenging situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about some difficulties they have faced</li> <li>• Talk about how they coped in a challenging situation</li> <li>• Practise a few coping strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify some things which can make a situation challenging</li> <li>• Share ideas about what they can do to overcome challenging situations</li> <li>• List and plan to use different coping strategies</li> </ul>

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Self-Management	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
	Pupils are able to:	Pupils are able to:
Monitor and regulate thinking, emotions and feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record some of their thoughts, emotions and feelings</li> <li>Practice positive thinking about themselves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognise their thoughts and emotions/feelings</li> <li>Use some strategies to regulate their thoughts and emotions/feelings</li> </ul>
Manage thoughts, emotions or feelings and behaviour in a range of situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore connections between situations and their thoughts, emotions/feelings</li> <li>Understand how their behaviour can be affected by their thoughts, emotions and feelings</li> <li>Display positive behaviour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognise that their thoughts, emotions and feelings can change, depending on the situation</li> <li>Demonstrate awareness that behaviour can change as a response to these thoughts, emotions and feelings</li> <li>Use strategies to help display appropriate behaviour</li> </ul>
Review and identify ways to improve learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflect on their learning and identify some strengths and some areas that they could improve</li> <li>Talk about practical ways to improve areas of their learning</li> <li>Do one thing to help improve one area of their learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss and review their learning and identify areas for improvement</li> <li>Consider different ways that they might use to improve aspects of their learning</li> <li>Identify a few actions they will take to improve their learning</li> </ul>
Set personal goals and targets and monitor and review them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set a few appropriate personal goals and targets</li> <li>Check their progress</li> <li>Regularly discuss their progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set some appropriate personal goals and targets</li> <li>Regularly monitor their progress</li> <li>Regularly review their progress</li> </ul>
Organise and plan how to go about a task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify different parts of a task</li> <li>Identify possible steps involved in completing a task</li> <li>Identify the resources and discuss if it would take a shorter or longer time to complete a task</li> <li>Produce a plan to complete a simple task</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breakdown tasks into component parts</li> <li>Recognise sequential processes involved in completing a task</li> <li>Identify the resources and estimate the time required to complete a task</li> <li>Produce a plan to complete a simple task</li> </ul>

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Self-Management	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
	Pupils are able to:	Pupils are able to:
Focus, sustain attention and persist to achieve success in an activity or task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show that they can concentrate on completing activities and tasks</li> <li>• Demonstrate persistence by not giving up and overcoming setbacks to see something through to its end</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain focused attention when completing activities and tasks</li> <li>• Demonstrate persistence by completing activities and tasks</li> </ul>
Seek support and advice when necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware of some issues that they may need help with</li> <li>• List the people in the school that they can go to for support and advice</li> <li>• Ask for support and advice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise when they need help</li> <li>• Demonstrate awareness of sources of support and advice</li> <li>• Ask for support and advice</li> </ul>
Respond to feedback constructively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay attention to feedback</li> <li>• Identify some actions they could take in response to feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond positively to feedback</li> <li>• Ask questions about the feedback</li> </ul>
Exhibit motivation, hope, and optimism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do something positive to improve their emotional health and wellbeing</li> <li>• View challenging situations with optimism and hope</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibit motivation to take positive actions to improve two aspects of their emotional health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Demonstrate an optimistic and hopeful outlook in their daily lives</li> </ul>
Use coping strategies to deal with and overcome challenging situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore what made some situations they experienced challenging</li> <li>• Talk about coping strategies that they found helpful</li> <li>• Respond positively to setbacks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise challenging situations</li> <li>• Use at least two coping strategies to deal with and overcome challenges</li> <li>• Demonstrate persistence to overcome challenges</li> </ul>

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Social Awareness	Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1
	Pupils are able to:	Pupils are able to:
Identify and recognise others' emotions and feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use their listening and observation skills to sense others' feelings</li> <li>• Identify the signs of some basic emotions or feelings</li> <li>• Be aware sometimes it can be difficult to tell what people are feeling</li> <li>• Know that people sometimes do not show their real emotions or feelings</li> <li>• Be aware that people may experience emotions or feelings differently</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise when friends are feeling happy, worried, sad, angry, afraid or lonely</li> <li>• Recognise some ways people display their emotions or feelings</li> <li>• Be aware sometimes people may not want to show their emotions or feelings</li> <li>• Give some reasons why people may not want to show their real emotions or feelings</li> <li>• Understand that others may feel differently to them</li> </ul>
Recognise and value cultural diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about the different cultures they are exposed to in their school and community</li> <li>• Include new people in their play, games and sports</li> <li>• Be aware that people have different ways of celebrating their culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise and show respect for different cultures</li> <li>• Make friends with new pupils and welcome them into their friendship groups</li> <li>• Be aware of cultural events across the world especially those celebrated in their school</li> </ul>
Respect the views and opinions of others and different perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an understanding of what it means to be biased</li> <li>• Talk about examples of being biased, for example only boys can play with cars and tractors or only girls can play with dolls</li> <li>• Listen carefully to others' views and opinions</li> <li>• Begin to use questions so that they can better understand others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise that some of the views and opinions they hold may be biased</li> <li>• Explore how being biased might influence their views about others</li> <li>• Be interested in how others think by listening attentively to others' views and opinions</li> <li>• Ask some relevant questions to find out more about the views and lives of others</li> </ul>

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Social Awareness	Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1
	Pupils are able to:	Pupils are able to:
Understand and show empathy and compassion for others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen carefully and acknowledge what others are saying</li> <li>Tell friends about some personal experiences</li> <li>Think about how others might be feeling</li> <li>Understand why it is important to care about others</li> <li>Help a friend with a problem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen attentively and respond appropriately to others</li> <li>Share personal experiences that showed empathy for others</li> <li>Talk about how they might feel if they swapped places with a child in difficult situation, for example someone who is a refugee, in poverty or homeless</li> <li>Show concern for others' wellbeing</li> <li>Support others who need help</li> </ul>
Understand how their behaviour can affect others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand that they can choose how to behave</li> <li>Be aware of how their behaviour can affect others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Show a sense of personal responsibility for their behaviour</li> <li>Identify examples of how their behaviour affects others</li> </ul>
Adapt behaviour and language to suit different people and situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be aware of how they should behave in some different situations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adapt their behaviour to suit some familiar situations</li> </ul>
Recognise the value of belonging, for example to a group, family, school or community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about why they like being part of a group</li> <li>Identify some groups they are part of</li> <li>Talk about how being part of the school community makes them feel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List some good points about being part of a group</li> <li>Explore the idea of belonging within groups</li> <li>Be aware of how having a sense of belonging can benefit their wellbeing</li> </ul>



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Social Awareness	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
	Pupils are able to:	Pupils are able to:
Identify and recognise others' emotions and feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be sensitive to others' feelings</li> <li>• Sense others' emotions or feelings</li> <li>• Identify some signs they might look for to tell when people are not expressing the real emotions or feelings</li> <li>• In different situations comment on the reasons why someone might not show their real emotions or feelings</li> <li>• Appreciate that others may not feel the same as them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate awareness of how others express their emotions and feelings through facial expressions, body language, non-verbal cues and verbal communication</li> <li>• Identify and recognise others' emotions and feelings, for example happy, sad, worried or angry</li> <li>• Recognise when others may be not showing their real emotions and feelings</li> <li>• Demonstrate awareness of why others might not display their real emotions and feelings</li> <li>• Acknowledge how others' emotions and feelings may differ from their own</li> </ul>
Recognise and value cultural diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about some benefits of living in a diverse community</li> <li>• Look for opportunities to include new pupils in their play, games and sports</li> <li>• Show interest and be involved in school cultural celebrations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the benefits of living in a culturally diverse community and society</li> <li>• Encourage inclusiveness when participating in group activities</li> <li>• Participate in celebrations of cultural diversity</li> </ul>
Respect the views and opinions of others and different perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify possible bias in their views and opinions</li> <li>• Comment on how bias might influence their views about others</li> <li>• Concentrate and listen carefully to others' views and opinions</li> <li>• Ask relevant questions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate awareness of their own bias and how this might influence their perception of others</li> <li>• Actively listen to others' views and opinions</li> <li>• Ask questions to develop their understanding</li> </ul>

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Social Awareness	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
	Pupils are able to:	Pupils are able to:
Understand and show empathy and compassion for others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show interest in what others are saying by engaging in the conversation to learn more</li> <li>• Share some personal experiences where they displayed compassion</li> <li>• Place themselves in another child's position and describe life from that child's perspective</li> <li>• Show others that they care about their wellbeing</li> <li>• Perform an act of kindness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively listen to and encourage others to share their thoughts, emotions and feelings</li> <li>• Share personal experiences with others</li> <li>• Empathise with others by placing themselves in the position of another</li> <li>• Show empathy by acknowledging others' concerns</li> <li>• Demonstrate compassion for others</li> </ul>
Understand how their behaviour can affect others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate an increasing sense of personal responsibility of their behaviour</li> <li>• Talk about how their behaviour can positively and negatively affect others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take personal responsibility for their behaviour</li> <li>• Demonstrate awareness of how their behaviour can impact on others</li> </ul>
Adapt behaviour and language to suit different people and situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate appropriate behaviour in different situations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behave appropriately in a range of situations in the company of different people</li> </ul>
Recognise the value of belonging, for example to a group, family, school or community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise some benefits of being part of a group</li> <li>• Explore the idea of a sense of belonging within different groups</li> <li>• Recognise the value of having a sense of belonging</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the benefits of being part of a group</li> <li>• Show awareness of belonging, for example to a group, family, school or community</li> <li>• Demonstrate awareness of how a sense of belonging makes them feel</li> </ul>

# Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Primary Guidance

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Relationship Skills	Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1
	Pupils are able to:	Pupils are able to:
Recognise the qualities of healthy, respectful relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about their relationships with family and friends</li> <li>• Talk about what makes these relationships special</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify some qualities of a positive family relationship and friendships</li> <li>• Identify some benefits of having healthy, respectful relationships</li> </ul>
Make friends, and build and maintain relationships with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make new friends</li> <li>• Be aware of how to keep their friendships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to other pupils that they would like to get to know</li> <li>• Talk about what makes their friendships last</li> </ul>
Play an active and meaningful part in the life of the school and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show an interest in school life</li> <li>• Actively participate in classroom activities</li> <li>• Recognise the importance of having their views heard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about their involvement in school life</li> <li>• Find out what opportunities there are to be more involved in school life</li> <li>• Know that all children have a right to speak out and be heard on all matters affecting their education</li> </ul>
Provide advice and support to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware when their friends need help</li> <li>• Help their friends when they are having a difficult time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify ways they can help others</li> <li>• Give helpful advice to others who may need help</li> </ul>
Take personal responsibility for work with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a contribution to completing a piece of group work</li> <li>• Know that it is okay to make mistakes</li> <li>• Take on a role in group work</li> <li>• Make suggestions to help the group progress their work</li> <li>• Talk about what they did to help the group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep their word, do something they agreed to in group work</li> <li>• Recognise that making mistakes is part of learning</li> <li>• Volunteer to take on a role in group work</li> <li>• Show others in the group what they need to do to complete a task</li> <li>• Talk about the value of their contribution to the group</li> </ul>

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Relationship Skills	Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1
	Pupils are able to:	Pupils are able to:
Manage and resolve conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about what causes arguments with friends</li> <li>• Be aware of how arguments and falling out can affect their friendships</li> <li>• Talk about what they can do to be friends again after falling out</li> <li>• Show compromise to reach agreement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List some causes of arguments with their friends and others</li> <li>• Talk about what happens when they argue or strongly disagree with their friends and others and how this affects their relationships.</li> <li>• Be aware of ways to rebuild and strengthen their relationships with others</li> <li>• Reach agreement through discussion, finding things in common and seeking a win-win solution</li> </ul>
Manage and express emotions in relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware of different emotions or feelings they may have for their best friend, other friends and family</li> <li>• Talk about the ways they express their emotions or feelings to a close friend, a parent or carer and a teacher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify their emotions or feelings in some different relationships</li> <li>• Compare how they might express their emotions or feelings to a close friend and to someone they do not know very well</li> </ul>
Listen actively and respond appropriately to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know how to listen well</li> <li>• Show others that they are listening to them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay attention and listen carefully to others' views and opinions</li> <li>• Respond to others' views and opinions by asking a few questions and making a few comments</li> </ul>
Identify and manage peer pressure that may put them at risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise when others are trying to make them do things they do not want to do or that they know are wrong</li> <li>• Be aware of some ways others may try to influence them</li> <li>• Be aware of behaviour that is a risk to their safety and wellbeing</li> <li>• Know that it is okay to say no, if friends ask them to do something they are uncomfortable with</li> <li>• Know when to ask for help and who they can ask</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand what peer pressure is</li> <li>• Share their experiences of how peers have tried to influence them</li> <li>• Identify situations where their behaviour presents a risk to their safety and wellbeing</li> <li>• Talk about situations where they should say no, stop, or I'll ask</li> <li>• Seek advice and support from others on ways to manage peer pressure</li> </ul>

# Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Primary Guidance

Developing a Whole-School Approach to Social and Emotional Learning supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of children in Northern Ireland primary schools



Relationship Skills	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
	Pupils are able to:	Pupils are able to:
Recognise the qualities of healthy, respectful relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe some qualities in positive family relationships, friendships, and relationships with others</li> <li>Explain the benefits of having healthy, respectful relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognise the qualities of healthy, respectful relationships, for example parents/carers, family, friends or sexual relationships</li> <li>Recognise the importance of having healthy, respectful relationships</li> </ul>
Make friends, and build and maintain relationships with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make a point of building some new friendships</li> <li>Identify some of their values which have helped them to build lasting relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate contact with others and build friendships</li> <li>Demonstrate their capacity to maintain relationships with others</li> </ul>
Play an active and meaningful part in the life of the school and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Join a school club or society and/or participate in an extracurricular activity</li> <li>Make a positive contribution to the local community</li> <li>Have their views heard about their education beyond the classroom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actively engage in school life, for example join clubs or societies, or support others</li> <li>Actively support the local community, for example join youth or community groups or non-governmental organisations, or volunteer</li> <li>Seek opportunities to have their voice heard, for example participate in the school's pupil council</li> </ul>
Provide advice and support to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look for the signs that suggest someone may need help</li> <li>Respond positively to others who need help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognise when others may need advice or support</li> <li>Willingly advise and support others, for example by actively listening to their concerns, being empathetic and offering practical advice and support</li> </ul>
Take personal responsibility for work with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree and complete some group work actions</li> <li>Be aware of their mistakes and what they might do differently</li> <li>Take on new or unfamiliar roles in group work</li> <li>Sometimes take the lead in group work</li> <li>Weigh up the value of their contribution to the group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow through on their commitments to the group</li> <li>Acknowledge and learn from their mistakes</li> <li>Take on different roles to meet group needs</li> <li>Lead on aspects of group work</li> <li>Evaluate their contribution to the group</li> </ul>

# Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Primary Guidance

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Relationship Skills	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
	Pupils are able to:	Pupils are able to:
Manage and resolve conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give some reasons for conflict in their relationships with others</li> <li>• Comment on how arguments can negatively affect their relationships with friends and others</li> <li>• Use some strategies to reach agreement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the causes of conflict in their relationships and social situations</li> <li>• Identify positive and negative outcomes of conflict</li> <li>• Reach agreement using persuasion, negotiation and compromise</li> </ul>
Manage and express emotions in relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect on how they feel in relationships with friends, family, teachers and other pupils</li> <li>• Talk about how they might express their feelings differently depending on the relationship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate awareness of how their emotions and feelings may be different, depending on the relationship</li> <li>• Express their emotions and feelings appropriately in a range of relationships</li> </ul>
Listen actively and respond appropriately to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concentrate on listening to others' views and opinions and use body language to show engagement</li> <li>• Respond to others' by acknowledging their views and opinions, by asking appropriate questions making some relevant comments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen actively and demonstrate interest in others' views and opinions</li> <li>• Respond appropriately to others' views and opinion</li> </ul>
Identify and manage peer pressure that may put them at risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise different influences and groups that can affect their views, feelings and behaviours</li> <li>• Identify ways peers can influence them</li> <li>• Comment on the risks of doing something they know is wrong or dangerous</li> <li>• Discuss examples of peer pressure and strategies for dealing them</li> <li>• Seek advice and support from others on ways to manage peer pressure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify situations where they feel peer pressure to behave in certain ways</li> <li>• Recognise the methods their peers are using to influence them</li> <li>• Recognise the risks associated with conforming to peer pressure</li> <li>• Use some strategies to manage peer pressure</li> <li>• Seek advice and support from others on ways to manage peer pressure</li> </ul>

# Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Primary Guidance

Developing a Whole-School Approach to Social and Emotional Learning supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of children in Northern Ireland primary schools



Responsible Decision Making	Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1
	Pupils are able to:	Pupils are able to:
Identify problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify problems faced by characters in, for example, stories, animations or puppet shows and make associations with some of the problems they have in their own lives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify some problems they face in their lives, in schoolwork and learning, friendships and relationships, for example fitting in with others or feeling bullied, feeling lonely, keeping a secret</li> </ul>
Generate possible solutions and evaluate options to resolve their problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know that there is often more than one way to solve a problem</li> <li>Talk about a few options and choose the one they think is most likely to solve their problems or those of fictional characters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share their problems and find some ways to solve them</li> <li>Consider the pros and cons of possible options to solve their problems</li> </ul>
Try out alternative approaches to solving problems and evaluate outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try out two different ways to solve a problem</li> <li>Compare two approaches to solve a problem and say which was best</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try out a few approaches to solve different problems</li> <li>Consider how some different approaches to problem solving worked out for them or for others</li> </ul>
Assess the risks associated with making decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know that there are rules at home, school and in the community that they should follow to keep safe and healthy, for example using medicines and home safety, road and outdoor safety, limiting sweets and fizzy drinks to avoid tooth decay or telling an adult if they feel unsafe</li> <li>Listen to stories or role-play scenarios where they can recognise actions and choices that might put their own or others' safety, health or wellbeing at risk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand how their choices can lead to situations that place their and/or others' safety, health or wellbeing at risk</li> <li>Identify some risks to the safety, health or wellbeing in different situations to themselves and others</li> </ul>

# Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Primary Guidance

Developing a Whole-School Approach to Social and Emotional Learning supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of children in Northern Ireland primary schools



Responsible Decision Making	Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1
	Pupils are able to:	Pupils are able to:
Make and justify ethical decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about everyday decisions they make such as who they include in games or play, friendly or unfriendly language they use to others or whether to share treats or toys with others</li> <li>• Talk about whether their decisions were good or bad</li> <li>• Talk about why they made their decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make some decisions about their schoolwork and learning</li> <li>• List some points that made their decisions good or bad</li> <li>• Explain why they made their decisions</li> </ul>
Demonstrate awareness of how their current decisions and choices may impact on their future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a sense of responsibility for making decisions but know they can ask for help</li> <li>• Be aware of how some decisions and choices they make might affect them in the future</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show that they can be responsible for making decisions but know they can ask for help</li> <li>• Talk about how some decisions and choices might affect their future</li> </ul>



# Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Primary Guidance

Developing a Whole-School Approach to Social and Emotional Learning supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of children in Northern Ireland primary schools



Responsible Decision Making	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
	Pupils are able to:	Pupils are able to:
Identify problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify some problems they face in their lives, in schoolwork and learning, friendships and relationships, for example being distracted in lessons, fitting in with others or feeling bullied, dealing with conflict, feeling lonely, keeping a secret, difficult home situation, missing loved ones due to bereavement or family breakups, balancing home life and work with time spent gaming or online.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify some problems they face in their lives, for example schoolwork and learning, relationships, lack of confidence or bullying</li> </ul>
Generate possible solutions and evaluate options to resolve their problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Propose realistic solutions to some problems</li> <li>Weigh up options to resolve some of their problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generate possible solutions to some problems</li> <li>Evaluate possible options to resolve their problems</li> </ul>
Try out alternative approaches to solving problems and evaluate outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore different approaches to solve problems</li> <li>Weigh up their approaches and outcomes of problem solving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use different approaches to solve problems</li> <li>Evaluate the outcomes of their approaches to problem-solving</li> </ul>
Assess the risks associated with making decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make decisions by weighing up the risks in some situations to their own or others' personal safety, physical health or emotional health and wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess the risks associated with making some decisions, for example to their personal safety, physical health or emotional health and wellbeing</li> <li>Assess the associated risks, for example to their personal safety, physical health or emotional health and wellbeing, to others through making some decisions,</li> </ul>
Make and justify ethical decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make some decisions about their schoolwork, learning and social life</li> <li>Reflect on whether their decisions were good or bad</li> <li>Give some reasons to support their decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make some decisions</li> <li>Consider whether their decisions are good or bad</li> <li>Justify their reasons for making certain decisions</li> </ul>

# Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Primary Guidance

Developing a Whole-School Approach to Social and Emotional Learning supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of children in Northern Ireland primary schools



<b>Responsible Decision Making</b>	<b>Key Stage 2</b>	<b>Key Stage 3</b>
Demonstrate awareness of how their current decisions and choices may impact on their future	Pupils are able to:	Pupils are able to:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recognise that it is important to make responsible decisions because they may impact on their future and how to ask for help and support in making decisions</li><li>• Give some examples of their how their decisions and choices might affect them in the future</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrate awareness of the importance of making responsible decisions and how they can impact on their future</li><li>• Explain how decisions and choices that they make may affect their future</li></ul>



## Appendix 2: Glossary of Key Terms

Emotional Health and Wellbeing Terms	Definitions from new guidance
Relationship Skills	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	The pupil's ability to overcome the challenges they face throughout their lives, or their capacity to bounce back from adversity.
Responsible Decision- Making	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 EHWP, and the future impact of their decisions.
Self-awareness	The pupil's ability to understand their thoughts, feelings/emotions and values, and the influence these have 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	When the pupil has confidence in themselves and their abilities
Self-efficacy	When the pupil believes in their capabilities and their ability to perform in specific tasks
Self-esteem	When the pupil has belief and confidence in their value
Self-identity	How a pupil perceives themselves
Self-management	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.
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 and Emotional Learning (SEL) Primary Guidance

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Emotional Health and Wellbeing Terms	Definitions from new guidance
Social Awareness	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.

