EASTERN
EDUCATION
GROUP

Social, Emotional, Mental Health Strategy (SEMH)			
Current Status:	Operational	**Last Review:**	Dec 2025
Roles Responsible for Review:	Group Head of Welfare and Safeguarding	**Next Review:**	July 2027
Roles Responsible for Review:		**Originated:**	Sept 2019
Approved by:	SET Curriculum	**Committee:**	
Type of Policy:	Staff / Students / External	**Quality Assured by:**	Policy Team

1. Introduction

1.1. This policy applies to all staff and any other personnel associated with Eastern Education Group (EEG), which includes:

- Abbeygate Sixth Form College
- Chalk Hill
- Duke of Lancaster School
- Exning Primary School
- One Sixth Form College
- Priory School
- Stanton Primary School
- Stone Lodge Academy
- Sunrise Academy
- West Suffolk College (including all PPL centres)

The Mental Health of Children and Young People in England 2023 report, found that 20.3% of eight to 16-year-olds had a probable mental disorder in 2023. Among 17 to 19-year-olds, the proportion was 23.3%, while in 20 to 25-year-olds it was 21.7%. In this survey participants were also questioned about eating disorders for the first time since the 2017 survey. In 2023, 12.5% of 17 to 19-year-olds had an eating disorder, an increase from 0.8% in 2017. Between 2017 and 2023, rates rose both in young women (from 1.6% to 20.8%) and young men (from 0.0% to 5.1%) in this age group. The survey also found 5.9% of 20 to 25-year-olds had an eating disorder, while eating disorders were identified in 2.6% of 11 to 16-year-olds, compared with 0.5% in 2017 – with rates in 2023 four times higher in girls (4.3%) than boys (1.0%).

1.1. Schools and Colleges have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their students, by developing approaches tailored to the particular needs of their students. Taking a coordinated and evidence-informed approach to mental health and wellbeing in colleges can also help foster readiness to learn.

1.2. All schools are under a statutory duty to promote the welfare of their pupils and students, which includes preventing impairment of children's health or

development and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. Full details are set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) statutory guidance.

Promoting children and young peoples mental health and wellbeing.pdf

2.   Aims

2.1   Early intervention to identify issues and provide effective support is crucial. The School / College role in supporting and promoting mental health and wellbeing can be summarised as:

a) Prevention: creating a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole student population, and equipping students to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching students about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this teaching through activities and ethos.

b) Identification: recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible.

c) Early support: helping students to access evidence informed early support and interventions.

d) Access to specialist support: working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment. There is good evidence to support the association between good mental health and education engagement and academic achievement. The benefits to preventing mental health problems in children and young people from arising, and intervening early where they do, can be significant for schools. For example, it may result in improved attainment, attendance, reductions in behavioural problems, as well as happier, more confident, and resilient young people.

The following diagram is a widely used model[1] and represents eight principles to promote SEMH at Eastern Education Groups schools and colleges. Each of these principles is then extended upon in the sections that follow:

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[1] Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing – A whole school and college approach (2020)

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The diagram shows "Leadership and Management that support and champions efforts to promote emotional health and wellbeing" at the centre, surrounded by:
- An **ethos and environment** that promotes respect and values diversity in line with fundamental British values
- **Curriculum, teaching and learning** to promote resilience and support social and emotional learning
- Enabling **Student Voice** to influence decisions
- **Staff development** to support their own wellbeing and that of students
- **Identifying need** and monitoring the impact of **interventions**
- **Working with parents/carers**
- **Targeted support** and appropriate referral.

3. Leadership and Management

3.1 Aim:
- To ensure a knowledge-rich curriculum is complemented by the development of character traits and fundamental British values that will help our students succeed.
- To review this strategy annually to ensure the aims are responsive, remain relevant to and they are led by identified student need.

3.2 As a senior leadership team (SLT) we are committed to ensuring that all our students:

- Feel valued.
- Have a sense of belonging.
- Can talk about their problems.
- Are able to further develop a wide range of skills and character traits (in the short time they are with us) to overcome barriers to learning.
- Can achieve and succeed.

3.3 We also recognise that support from the SLT is essential in ensuring that this SEMH strategy becomes embedded and developed across all EEG schools and Colleges. We have dedicated governors so that we can champion this 'organisation – wide' practice and monitor the development of the strategy

across each year.

3.4   We will ensure that our relevant policies, procedures, and improvement plans, make reference to our commitment to improving SEMH of our students to ensure that actions then become integrated, sustained and monitored.

4.   Ethos and Environment

4.1   Aim:

- To continue to develop our staff and student wellbeing programmes across EEG.

5.   We know that we have a very positive working environment for staff and students. This is reflected consistently in both the feedback in both student and staff surveys and in our student voice sessions. Students also comment in student voice on the excellent relationships they have with staff and how 'support is everywhere'.

6.   Curriculum Teaching and Learning

5.1   Aim:

- To continue to develop our extended learning offer for students both in and out of the classroom.

- To continue to develop collaborative working opportunities that improve self-awareness and improve resilience.

5.2   Students who study at EEG in our colleges are carefully supported to make the right choices from the application stage. This level of personalised support given by staff continues through enrolment and into curriculum areas throughout their studies at the College. Our students' levels of engagement are high (as reflected in attendance figures and results) and this is also due to their programme being relevant to them and their future choices.

5.3   There are a range of social and emotional learning opportunities in the curriculum offer at EEG schools and Colleges and this is further enhanced by our Enrichment offer which is reviewed annually. This is also complimented by the Tutorial and PSHE programmes which develop social and emotional skills through a range of activities which are relevant to their age and stage. These opportunities to develop social and emotional learning have the potential to help with the skills needed for good academic progress and for health and wellbeing.[2]

5.4   Underpinning this is clear emphasis on 'taking responsibility for your own learning' which is supported by the approach of all staff. We have a clear policy in relation to Student Behaviour and this also enables students to take responsibility for their own actions and learn from it.

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[2] Social and emotional skills in childhood and their long-term effects on adult life (2015)

7.   Student Voice

6.1   Aim:

- To continue to develop our Student Rep role in our colleges.
- Review our Student Voice Strategy annually with students in schools

6.2   We recognise that Student Voice is an important part of developing and improving anything we do here at EEG. We also know that involving students in decisions that impact on them can benefit their emotional health and wellbeing by helping them to feel part of their learning environment and the wider community. As a result, we are continually looking at ways that ensure that Student Voice is reflected across all areas of EEG.

6.3   We are developing focus groups, ambassadors, student reps and have student surveys each year and these provide us with much needed information to continually improve on what we do.

8.   Staff development

7.1   Aim:

To create a 'menu' of SEMH training and development opportunities across the academic year. The themes will be determined by current student issues e.g., anxiety, eating disorders, SEND.

7.2   We recognise that it is important for our staff to access training to increase their knowledge of emotional wellbeing and to equip them to be able to identify mental health difficulties in the students they work with. This includes having safeguarding leads with high visibility so staff know who to refer a student to.

7.3   In addition, we recognise the importance of staff taking care of their own well-being and at EEG, as the employer, encourage and support staff to look after their physical and mental health. To this end, we offer various activities and opportunities for staff to engage in to assist their well-being. The College also invests in an Employee Assistance Programme and works closely with Occupational Health to support our staff. (*Please see the Staff Absence Policy for more information*).

9.   Identification and Intervention

8.1   Aim:

- To develop our analysis of discrete groups, subsequent interventions, and the impact this then has on achievement.

8.2   We closely and rigorously monitor the achievement of all students, and we do this through our Progress Review cycle in college and also by closely monitoring attendance, and reporting on wellbeing data. This data enables us to see if there are any groups that are not making the progress they should be. We can identify need at this level and then look to make the appropriate intervention at

either a curriculum support or personal support level (or sometimes both).

10. Working with parents

9.1 Aim:

- To hold parental feedback sessions to explore what else we (staff, students, and families) could do more of in order to promote SEMH to enable improved resilience.

9.2 We recognise that the journey through education can be difficult for some young people. As a result, we look to build a relationship with students and their parents from when they apply to us right through to when they study with us at Abbeygate. We encourage parental contact and more sensitive issues are usually relayed through the SAM.

Appendix 1 - Resources

Revision History – Social Emotional Mental Health Policy (SEMH)

Revision date	Reason for revision	Section	Changes made
Sept 2020	SAT review	rubric	Title change of person responsible for review
			Change of review date
		All	Reference to One changed to SAT or the college
February 2023	Annual Review	rubric	Change of person responsible
		Throughout	Wording adjusted throughout to closer match other ECG colleges
December 2025	Annual Review	Throughout	Standardised to EEG version and made whole EEG policy

11.   Appendix 1 - Resources

Alcohol

https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/check-the-facts/health-effects-of-alcohol/mental-health/alcohol-dependence

Anxiety

http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/anxiety-and-panic-attacks/

Bereavement

https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/feelings-symptoms-behaviours/feelings-and-symptoms/grief-bereavement-loss/

Building Well-Being Together

http://www.thinkavellana.com

Confidence and self esteem

http://www.thesource.me.uk/health/confidence-and-self-esteem/

Coping with eating disorders

https://www.b-eat.co.uk/

Catch 22 - Family support and intervention

http://www.catch-22.org.uk/expertise/young-people-and-families/

Drugs and Alcohol addiction

http://www.talktofrank.com/

https://www.turning-point.co.uk/

Effects of Depression and Bullying on Young People - Inspire Suffolk

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xt0_mTFAAns

Feeling frustrated

http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/anger/

Health in Suffolk

https://www.livewellsuffolk.org.uk

Information and advice for young people in Suffolk

http://www.thesource.me.uk/

Mental health and emotional wellbeing

https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/

Smoking

https://quitnow.smokefree.nhs.uk/?gclid=CjwKEAiAoIK1BRCRiMqphvnlwlwSJAAOebPM7b
3pRoLH3r2Y6zeyBSl5xwQGBeTBhk50ft6Jtjq6gxoCUQPw_wcB

Self Injury

http://www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk/

http://www.harmless.org.uk/

https://www.selfharm.co.uk/

Sexual Health

http://www.icash.nhs.uk/

Tattoos and Piercings

http://www.thesource.me.uk/health/tattoos-and-piercing/

Understanding your sexuality

http://www.thesource.me.uk/health/sexuality/

Young Men's health

http://www.thesource.me.uk/health/young-men-s-health/