



Safety ★ **Commitment** ★ **Aspirations**

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy

Approved by: Jonathan Hyde

Last reviewed on: December 2025

Next review due by: December 2026



At Mapledene, we are more than a school — we are a family. Rooted in our core values of

'Safety, Commitment, Aspirations'

We create a positive, inclusive, and ambitious learning environment where every child, staff member, and family feel safe, valued, and supported.

We believe children thrive when they feel secure, respected, and inspired. Through strong relationships and a nurturing culture, we build emotional security and mutual respect, enabling children to grow with confidence.

Our SEMH Policy reflects our commitment to wellbeing, inclusion, and positive relationships, fostering an environment where every individual feels understood, supported, and empowered to thrive socially, emotionally, and academically.

Working closely with parents, carers, and external partners, we ensure every child—regardless of background or need—has the right support to flourish. We celebrate diversity and promote kindness, teaching children to embrace differences and recognise their unique strengths. Every child is encouraged to contribute, helping us build a caring, inclusive community.

Our broad, creative curriculum is designed to spark curiosity, foster independence, and prepare children for life as responsible global citizens. With personalised support, enrichment opportunities, and access to the full National Curriculum, every child is empowered to achieve their academic, social, and emotional potential.

We promote a *Growth Mindset*, celebrating effort, resilience, and achievement, while encouraging children to take ownership of their learning journey. High expectations and aspiration give children the confidence, character, and skills they need to thrive—both now and in the future.

Our ethos is reflected in our motto:
BELONG, BELIEVE, BE YOU; ACHIEVE.

Linked policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Attendance
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy and Statement of Behaviour Principles Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

This policy is also linked to the following legal frameworks:

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Health and Social Care Act 2012
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2002
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Children Act 1989

This policy has been created with regard to the following DfE guidance:

- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'
- DfE (2016) 'Counselling in schools: a blueprint for the future'
- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disabilities code of practice: 0 to 25'

Aims

This policy outlines how Mapledene will promote the Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) of all our children and staff how we will support children and staff with SEMH difficulties.

Through the successful implementation of this policy, we aim to:

- Positively promote everyone's SEMH
- Ensure all children and staff with SEMH difficulties are identified and appropriately supported - minimising the risk of SEMH difficulties escalating.
- Promote equal opportunities for children and staff with SEMH difficulties.
- Eliminate prejudice towards children and staff with SEMH difficulties.
- Ensure the involvement of children (and their parents) and staff in decision-making
- Ensure collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support when required

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the SEMH of all of our children and staff.
- Ensuring arrangements are in place to support children and staff with SEMH difficulties.
- Appointing an individual governor or sub-committee to oversee the school's arrangements for SEMH.
- Ensuring there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible SEMH problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.
- Taking all necessary steps to ensure that children and staff with SEMH difficulties are not discriminated against, harassed or victimised.

The Headteacher

- Promoting the SEMH of all of our children and staff.
- Designating appropriate members of staff to be the Mental Health Lead and SENCO and coordinating provisions for children and staff with SEMH difficulties.
- Ensuring that the Mental Health Lead and SENCO have sufficient time and resources to carry out their functions.
- Identifying, assessing and organising provision for all children with SEMH difficulties, whether or not they have an EHC plan.
- Endeavouring to secure the special educational provision called for by a child's SEMH difficulties.
- Ensuring that those teaching or working with children with SEMH difficulties are aware of their needs and have arrangements in place to meet them.
- Ensuring that teachers monitor and review children's academic and emotional progress during the course of the academic year.
- Ensuring that staff members understand the strategies used to identify and support children with SEMH difficulties.
- Ensuring that procedures and policies for the day-to-day running of the school do not directly or indirectly discriminate against children or staff with SEMH difficulties.

- Establishing and maintaining a culture of high expectations and including children with SEMH difficulties in all opportunities that are available to other children.
- Consulting children, parents, health and social care professionals to ensure the needs of children with SEMH difficulties are effectively supported.
- Keeping parents and relevant staff up-to-date with any changes or concerns involving children with SEMH difficulties.
- Ensuring staff members have a good understanding of the mental health support services that are available in their local area, both through the NHS and voluntary sector organisations both for children and staff.
- Ensuring that staff know who to speak to if they are experiencing SEMH difficulties or think a colleague maybe experiencing such.
- Make adaptations to work load or/and roles in order to support staff members as appropriate.
- Provide staff with a nominated individual who staff experiencing SEMH difficulties can share their concerns with.
- Provide staff with a support service that they can self-refer to.
- Provide workshops for staff to support their own mental health and well-being.

The Mental Health Lead

The Mental Health Lead for children and staff is the Headteacher.

- Overseeing the whole-school approach to mental health, including how this is reflected in policies, the curriculum and pastoral support, and how the school engages children and parents with regards to children' mental health and awareness and also how staff are supported with their own mental health
- Collaborating with the SENCO, headteacher and governing board, to outline and strategically develop SEMH policies and provisions for the school.
- Coordinating with the PHSE lead to ensure PSHE, and SEMH, is taught across the school and that opportunities to further promote SEMH are identified.
- Coordinating with the SENCO and mental health support teams to provide a high standard of care to children who have SEMH difficulties.
- Providing professional guidance to colleagues about mental health and working closely with staff members, parents and other agencies, including SEMH charities.
- Leading mental health CPD.

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Collaborating with the governing board, headteacher and the mental health lead to determine the strategic development of SEMH policies and provisions in the school.
- Undertaking day-to-day responsibilities for the successful operation of the SEMH Policy.
- Supporting teachers in the further assessment of a child's particular strengths and areas for improvement, and advising on the effective implementation of support.
- Overseeing the outcomes of interventions on children' education and wellbeing.

- Liaising with parents of children with SEMH difficulties, where appropriate.
- Liaising with other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies.
- Liaising with the potential future providers of education, such as secondary school teachers, to ensure that children and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned.

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of the signs of SEMH difficulties and making the necessary referral to ChildWatch and/or the SENDCo, Mental Health Lead or the DSL or a Deputy DSL for children and the Headteacher for themselves or other members of staff.
- Planning and reviewing support for their children with SEMH difficulties in collaboration with parents, the SENCo and, where appropriate, the children themselves.
- Ensuring PSHE and its SEMH content is taught regularly and in line with the school's expectations.
- Planning lessons to address potential areas of difficulty to ensure that there are no barriers to every child achieving their full potential, and that every child with SEMH difficulties will be able to study the full national curriculum.
- Being aware of the needs, outcomes sought and how to support children with SEMH difficulties.

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children and staff to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included explicitly as part of our PSHE curriculum, as well as through the wider curriculum for our children and through staff training for our staff.

Mapledene positively promotes and takes part in whole school, local and national initiatives to highlight SEMH such as Place2Be's 'Children's Mental Health Week'.

Targeted support

Mapledene will offer support through targeted approaches for individual children or groups of children which may include:

- Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities.
- Targeted PSHE lessons and content.
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes'
- Mental health and wellbeing groups (Positive People)
- Therapeutic activities including art, Lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.
- Access to our Learning Mentor for bespoke interventions or one-to-one support
- Access to external counsellor/Play Therapist for children with more complex issues/needs.

Mapledene will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaires
- Emotional Literacy scales

Mapledene will offer support through targeted approaches for whole staff and individual staff members which may include:

- Whole school staff training in mental health and well-being
- Providing a nominated person as a point of contact to share concerns
- Provide staff with 'Staff Care' information for self-referral and further support
- Making reasonable adjustments to work load for individual members of staff experiencing SEMH difficulties

Identifying needs and Warning Signs

At Mapledene, staff are regularly trained in how to identify and share concerns which could indicate a SEMH difficulty. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns at the earliest opportunity to the SENDCo, to ChildWatch or where their concern is of a more serious nature, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or one of the Deputy DSLs for children or the Headteacher when concerns relate to staff:

Children - warning signs may include:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

Staff - warning signs may include:

- Changes in a person's 'usual' behaviour
- An increase in unexplained absences and sick leave, or conversely an increase in working long hours and staying late.
- Poor timekeeping.
- Physical symptoms such as headaches and back aches; constant tiredness, low energy levels.
- Changes in behaviour such as an increase in the consumption of caffeine, alcohol, cigarettes, sedatives, etc.
- Changes in performance - not getting things done, out of character errors, indecisiveness, memory problems, conflict with team members and/or manager.

- Unusual displays of emotion, irritability, erratic behaviour, anxiousness, tearfulness; changes in sleep patterns.

Signposting

In order to support parents of children at Mapledene, school will:

- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to if they have concerns about their child.
- Make our SEMH policy easily accessible to parents
- Ensure children and parents are aware and kept informed of mental health support services available from school, both internally and externally through our website, newsletters and Twitter account.
- Provide parents and carers with access to Early Help both internally and externally.
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health and well-being topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

In order to support staff at Mapledene, school will:

- Ensure that all staff are aware of who to talk to if they have concerns about themselves or another member of staff.
- Make our SEMH policy easily accessible to staff
- Ensure staff are aware and kept informed of mental health support services available from school, both internally and externally through training, email and regular updates.
- Provide staff with appropriate levels of support.
- Share ideas about how staff can support their own positive mental health and well-being and that of colleagues.
- Provide well-being workshops.

Working with other agencies and partners

Mapledene works proactively and in collaboration with other agencies to support children's social, emotional and mental health, This includes working in partnership with:

- Play Therapist
- School Nurse
- Child and School Support
- Communication and Autism Team
- Educational Psychologist
- Beacon (Behaviour Support)
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- Counselling services
- Family support workers

Mapledene ensures that children and parents are aware of the mental health support services available from the school, both internally and externally through its website, newsletters and its X account.

Mapledene also works with other agencies to support staff mental health through training and packages to promote positive mental health and well-being and to support staff experiencing SEMH difficulties.

Training

All staff receive regular training about recognising and responding to SEMH issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep children safe. Including in this, is how to share concerns through ChildWatch, with our SENDCo, Mental Health Lead or the DSL or a Deputy DSL.

Staff also receive regular training to promote positive mental health and well-being and to recognise and respond to SEMH issues in themselves and colleagues.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more children.

Over the course of 2025-2026, all staff (teachers and teaching assistants) will receive Children's Mental Health training, to better support all staff in recognising and support all children with ACES and their mental health.