

WHAT IS SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)?

Self Awareness

Understanding your emotions, thoughts and values. Children learn to recognise and name their feelings and understand how these influence behaviour.



Self-Management

Managing emotions, behaviour and impulses in different situations. Children develop strategies for regulation, resilience and coping with challenges.

Social Awareness

Understanding others' feelings, perspectives and experiences. Children build empathy and respect diversity within the classroom and beyond.



Relationship Skills

Building positive and supportive relationships. Children learn communication, cooperation and conflict resolution skills.

Responsible Decision-Making

Making thoughtful and ethical choices. Children consider consequences, solve problems and act responsibly in social situations.



BUILDING BLOCKS

Supporting School Communities to Develop the Building Blocks of Well-being



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CORE PRINCIPLES OF SEL

Supporting children to develop emotional awareness, relationships and responsible decision-making in everyday school life.

What is SEL?

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process through which children develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to understand emotions, build relationships and make responsible decisions.



Why SEL Matters

Children's learning, behaviour and relationships are deeply connected to their emotional well-being. SEL supports academic success, mental health and positive engagement in school life.

The 5 Core SEL Competences

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Relationship skills
- Responsible decision-making

These skills form the foundation for lifelong well-being and success.



SEL in Practice

SEL is not a separate lesson. It is embedded in everyday interactions, including how teachers respond, guide behaviour and support relationships throughout the school day.



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CORE PRINCIPLES OF SEL

The Teacher's Role

Teachers create emotionally safe environments where children can:

- Express feelings
- Build trust
- Learn from mistakes
- Develop empathy

Every interaction is an opportunity to model SEL.



How SEL is Developed

Children learn SEL when they are supported to:

- Recognise and regulate emotions
- Build friendships and resolve conflict
- Develop resilience and motivation

Structured support helps make these skills visible and intentional.

Impact on Children

SEL leads to:

- Improved academic performance
- Better behaviour
- Stronger relationships
- Increased emotional well-being

Children become more confident, empathetic and ready to learn.



SEL & Play

Approaches like play therapy can support SEL by helping children to express emotions, explore relationships and practice decision-making in safe ways.



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SEL 5 CORE COMPETENCES



SELF AWARENESS

Recognising emotions, thoughts and personal strengths helps students to understand themselves and build confidence in different situations.



SELF-MANAGEMENT

Students regulate emotions, manage stress and stay motivated when facing challenges or working towards personal goals.



SOCIAL AWARENESS

Understanding others perspectives, showing empathy and respecting diversity helps students to navigate social situations more effectively.



RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Communicating clearly, listening actively and cooperating with others supports positive interactions and conflict resolution.



RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

Students consider consequences, evaluate choices and act responsibly in ways that support themselves and others.



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STAGES IN SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT



01

EARLY CHILDHOOD
(0-2 YEARS)

Building trust and emotional bonding. Children begin to express emotions and react to their surroundings.

02

PRE-SCHOOL YEARS
(3-5 YEARS)

Developing identity and first peer interactions. Children learn rules and begin to show empathy.



03

SCHOOL AGE
(6-12 YEARS)



Building self-confidence and social skills. Children learn to cooperate, resolve conflicts and understand others' perspectives.

04

ADOLESCENCE
(13-18 YEARS)

Searching for identity and independence. Forming deep relationships and developing complex decision-making skills.



05

EARLY ADULTHOOD
(19+ YEARS)



Consolidating emotional stability and responsibility. Ability to maintain long-term relationships and face life challenges.



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THE SEL TREE OF SKILLS

LEAVES ●

Skills like communication, empathy, managing emotions in school settings and cooperation appear in daily behaviours

BRANCHES ●

Core competences grow including self awareness, self management, social awareness, relationships and responsible decision making

TRUNK ●

Consistent routines, guidance and modelling behaviours support students as they build emotional awareness and behavioural regulation

ROOTS ●

Safe, inclusive environments and supportive relationships provide the foundation for social and emotional learning development



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KNOWING OUR EMOTIONS



Share the Joy

Feel your energy rise! Celebrate what makes you smile and share that positive spark with others.



Manage Worry

When your mind races, take a slow breath. Focus on one small thing you can handle right now.



Expect the Unexpected

Pause and process the news before you react to your first impulse.



Feel Proud

Stand tall and celebrate your hard work. Confidence is built by acknowledging your own achievements.



Face your Fear

It is okay to feel shaky. Naming your fear and asking for support makes you feel much braver.



Express Dislike

This feeling protects you. Use your words to explain clearly what feels unfair or wrong to you.



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SEL WHEEL OF WELL-BEING



Self-Awareness

Understanding one's emotions, thoughts and values.

Children learn to recognise and name their feelings and understand how these influence behaviour.

Self-Management

Managing emotions, behaviour and impulses in different situations. Children develop strategies for regulation, resilience and coping with challenges.



Social Awareness

Understanding others' feelings, perspectives and experiences. Children build empathy and respect diversity within the classroom and beyond.

Relationship Skills

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Responsible Decision-Making

Making thoughtful and ethical choices. Children consider consequences, solve problems and act responsibly in social situations.

How the Wheel Works

These five areas are interconnected. Together, they support children's well-being, learning and positive participation in school life.



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FINDING MINDFUL MOMENTS



Take a breath.
Raise your hand.
Choose calm words.



A smile, a kind word
or helping a friend
creates a mindful moment.



Walk calmly.
Notice your steps.
Feel your body moving.



Sit quietly.
Count 1...2...3 breaths.
Let your body relax.



How do I feel?
What do I need right now?
It's okay to ask for help.



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GRATEFUL FOR GRATITUDE

Grateful for Learning

Every lesson helps us grow and discover new ideas. Being thankful for learning reminds us that education shapes our future.



Grateful for Quiet Moments

Quiet reading moments help us focus and reflect. Being thankful for peaceful time strengthens concentration, independence and confidence in our learning journey.

Grateful for Curiosity

Asking questions and trying new things builds confidence. Gratitude for curiosity encourages growth, creativity and a positive attitude towards learning.



Grateful for Effort

Progress comes from practice and patience. Being thankful for our effort helps to build resilience and confidence, even when learning feels challenging.



Grateful for Creativity

Creativity helps us to express thoughts and emotions. Appreciating our imagination strengthens emotional awareness and allows us to share ideas confidently.



Grateful for Small Moments

Small positive moments like a smile... a story... a kind word, remind us to notice the good in every day.



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KINDNESS IS KEY!

A simple guide to making the world a better place,
one moment at a time



Show gratitude

Say thank you and mean it. Name the specific thing you appreciate. It makes people feel seen.
"You made a difference."

Help without asking
Don't wait to be asked.
Notice what someone needs and offer it before they have to ask.
"Can I help with that?"



Choose to forgive
Forgiveness is for you, not just the other person. Let go of resentment and reclaim your peace.
"I choose peace over pain."

Be patient
Patience is not passive.
It's the active choice to stay calm when things go slowly.
"Take your time. I'm here."



Smile genuinely
A real smile reaches the eyes. It signals safety, warmth and openness to connect.
"It's free. Use it often."



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EMPATHY IN ACTION

Step into their Shoes

Empathy begins when you imagine the world from another person's perspective. Think about how they might be feeling in their specific situation.

Active Listening

Give your full attention. Listen not only to what is being said but also to the tone of voice. Small nods show that you are truly present and care.



Validate Emotions

You don't have to agree with someone to acknowledge their feelings. Using phrases like "I can see why that's hard for you" builds a bridge of trust.

Read Body Language

Pay attention to facial expressions and posture. Often, someone's eyes or shoulders tell a different story than their words.



Withhold Judgment

Avoid jumping to conclusions. Everyone has a story that we don't know. Stay curious and open-minded instead of being critical.



Kindness in Motion

Empathy is a verb! Once you understand someone is struggling, offer help. A simple "Are you okay?" or a small gesture can change their whole day.



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COMPROMISE OVER CONFLICT

01

Focus on interests

Positions are what people say they want. Interests are why they want it. The real path forward lives in the interests. "What matters most to you?"



02

Create options together

Brainstorm freely without judging. More options on the table means more room for everyone to give and take without feeling cheated. "What if we tried it this way?"



03

Separate the person and the problem

Attack the problem, never the person. Personal attacks trigger defensiveness and shutdown all dialogue. "The issue is X, not you."



04

Use objective criteria

Ground your decisions in facts, standards or past precedent, not in who speaks loudest or who is most stubborn. "Let's look at the data."



05

Listen first

Understand the other side fully before you defend your own view. Most conflicts deepen because no one feels heard. "Tell me more about that."



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