



Mental health and behaviour in schools

November 2018

[Mental Health and Behaviour](#)



This guidance is for school staff and applies to all schools.

It gives advice on:

- how to create a whole school culture, including promoting positive mental health
- understanding the link between mental health and behaviour
- how to identify children with possible mental health problems
- where and how to put in place support, including working with external agencies where required

It also provides links to sources of further support and guidance.



Latest updates



Published 16 June 2014

Last updated 12 November 2018

Updated with information about school responsibilities, and how to identify behaviours that may be related to a mental health problem. Also working with other professionals and external agencies, and where to find extra support.



Latest updates



- When schools suspect a pupil has a mental health problem, they should use the graduated response process (access-plan-do-review) to put support in place. There are a number of identification and measurement tools, such as the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and Boxall Profile, which can support this process.



ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences)



3.17 The balance between the risk and protective factors set out above is most likely to be disrupted when difficult events happen in pupils' lives. These include:

- **loss or separation** – resulting from death, parental separation, divorce, hospitalisation, loss of friendships (especially in adolescence), family conflict or breakdown that results in the child having to live elsewhere, being taken into care or adopted, deployment of parents in armed forces families;
- **life changes** – such as the birth of a sibling, moving house or changing schools or during transition from primary to secondary school, or secondary school to sixth form;
- **traumatic experiences** such as abuse, neglect, domestic violence, bullying, violence, accidents or injuries; and
- **other traumatic incidents** such as a natural disaster or terrorist attack. Some groups could be susceptible to such incidents, even if not directly affected. For example, schools should ensure they are aware of armed forces families, who may have parents who are deployed in areas of terrorist activity and are surrounded by the issues in the media.

3.18 It is important that schools provide support to pupils at such times, including those who are not presenting any obvious issues. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later, and can also prevent further problems (including mental health problems) arising. Further guidance on early help can be found in 'Working together to Safeguard Children' statutory guidance²⁵.



Sources of support and information



The online [pdf](#) has links to resources on:

- Creating a whole school culture
- Supporting and promoting positive mental health (including early intervention and supporting children through difficult life events)
- Information about mental health conditions, identification and measurement
- Commissioning services directly
- Working with parents
- Supporting children with medical conditions



Boxall profile



About The Boxall Profile

The Boxall Profile is an invaluable resource for the assessment of children and young people's social, emotional and behavioural development.

The two-part checklist, which is completed by staff who know the child and young person best, is quick — and, very importantly, identifies the levels of skills the children and young people possess to access learning. Many children in school are insecure about their worth, often not able to articulate their feelings. Instead they show their discomfort by withdrawal, achieving much less than they could, not making good relationships.

Others may act out their feelings of anger and failure by minor or major acts of disrupting the progress of others. Whatever the behaviour, the result is that they do not get positively engaged in education. Understanding what lies behind this can make all teachers much more confident in their class management, which is where the Boxall Profile comes in.

The Boxall Profile helps with:



Early identification and assessment

Supporting staff to develop their observational skills and their understanding of children and young people's difficulties.



Target setting and intervention

Setting individualised, achievable targets that reinforce target behaviour and skills.



Tracking progress

Helping staff review children and young people's target behaviour.

<https://boxallprofile.org/#more>



Boxall online



How The Boxall Profile Online Works

There are two Boxall Profile Tests - one for children (nursery/primary school pupils), and the other for young people (secondary school students), which the Online Boxall Profile automatically sets according to the date of birth inputted by the member of staff. On completion, the scores of each individual student are compared to the standardised emotional literacy scores of "competently functioning" children of a similar age group.

Individualised, achievable targets for social and emotional aptitudes are then set for the student which are reviewed and re-assessed periodically. Both profiles have two sections, each consisting of a list of 34 descriptive items.

Section I: Developmental strands

This measures progress through the different aspects of development in the student's early years- the first assessing the child and young person's organisation of their learning experiences, the second, their internalisation of controls.

Section II: The diagnostic profile

This consists of items describing behaviours that inhibit or interfere with the child's satisfactory involvement in school- self-limiting features, undeveloped behaviour and unsupported development. They are directly or indirectly the outcome of impaired learning in the earliest years. The earlier such children are identified the greater the hope of being able to address and remediate their social, emotional and behavioural difficulties by offering patient and supportive teaching.



2015.4 Individual Learning Plan

1 Targets 2 Strategies 3 Resources 4 Criteria 5 View

+ Add another target - Save as PDF Print

TARGETS

- A** Gives purposeful attention
Is adequately competent and self-reliant in managing his/her basic personal needs
Does not arise
- 0** Disengaged
Oblivious of people and events; doesn't relate; is 'out of contact and can't be reached'
To some extent
- A** Literacy
Can read subtitles on a foreign film

STRATEGIES

- Create a photo booklet with pictures of the different stages such as folding clothes, washing hands etc.
- Daily fine motor control exercises using games and activities.
- Proprioception exercises and games
- Watch subtitled YouTube videos

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- Gives attention for X minutes
- Shares an activity/equipment with another child for X minutes
- Listens without interrupting for X minutes

NOTES

You can add (non-identifiable) comments about this target here... Save Note

You can add (non-identifiable) comments about this target here... Save Note

You can add (non-identifiable) comments about this target here... Save Note

+ Add another target -

RESOURCES

60 Mindful Minutes

Author: Tina Rae

One of the simplest ways to get into a mindful state is to simply sit down on a chair, close your eyes and begin to focus on your breathing. As you sit still, relaxed but also alert, you can then direct your attention to the sensation of each inhalation and exhalation, and also become aware of the feeling of air as it enters and then leaves your mouth or nostrils. It is whilst doing this that other thoughts will enter into your mind. The idea is to become aware of such intrusions; noting each of these in turn without judgement and then simply letting them pass. This is one of the key elements of the programme and the skill that is largely focused on in the "60 Mindful Minutes Programme" for young children.

nurturegroups.org