Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

Universal Provision – Quality First Teaching (QFT)

Description of Need

Some of the following may be present at least some of the time:

- Reluctant to start tasks and/or to sustain attention to them or tends to need adult support and affirmation to attempt things that would appear to be within their grasp.
- Overly-worried about making mistakes, easily frustrated and prone to giving up.
- Reluctant to accept help e.g. actively ignoring offers of assistance.
- Appears to lack motivation for certain learning activities.
- A negative response to his/her work or to themselves.
- Can be unfocused and distracted by peers, equipment or their own thoughts.
- Can be restless and/or acting/speaking without apparently thinking first.
- Distracting of others and/or looking for affirmation by acting the fool.
- Appears socially unskilled and not to be able to interact at an age-appropriate level with peers sometimes resulting in isolation from them.
- Easily led.
- A tendency to put others down and/or take part in a bullying dynamic.
- Has been on the receiving end of bullying from individuals or groups.
- Tending to need to set the terms for work or relationships.
- Evidence of low mood.
- More agitated during transitions or unexpected change.
- Quiet and withdrawn, particularly in some situations.
- Difficulties in responding confidently to redirection.
- Occasionally rude to staff or peers e.g. through sarcastic tone of voice, rolling their eyes or dismissive body language.
- Poor self-regulation, quickly angry and/or tearful.
- Reticence about attending the setting or distress on transition to it.

Assess and Plan

Trying to understand what is underlying the presenting difficulty in terms of immediate and wider environmental triggers and past experiences in the home or educational setting.

- Building up background information by talking with the individual, parents/carers and previous/current teachers.
- Documentation of needs in a Pupil Passport
- Observation in class or outside the class – ideally by someone who is not directly responsible for the lesson at the time. There should be a focus on the individual and the responses of others to him/her
  - What may be inadvertently reinforcing inappropriate behaviour and what seems to promote appropriate behaviour?
- Consideration of other areas of special educational need and disability which might be impacting on social, emotional and mental health including difficulties which may not be sufficiently great to be targeted in their own right but which affect wellbeing.
- Consideration of any immediate care needs or safeguarding concerns that need to be addressed e.g. through an Early Help Assessment.
- Planning of reasonable adjustments that need to be made at home and in the educational setting to address triggers and maintenance factors in the provision (see below).
- Agreement with all, especially the individual concerned, on one or two targets for change.
## Universal Provision – Quality First Teaching (QFT)

Where there is resistance to accepting the need for change, it may be helpful to:
- Be highly specific about the area for concern;
- If appropriate engage the individual in what others may be thinking about the issues;
- Remind the individual of past success in changing and times when they have not had the problem and engage them in believing that s/he has alternatives;
- Reflect back anything that indicates acceptance that their response to a situation creates a problem for them;
- Help the individual to identify future aspirations and the impact of behaviour on these.

### A focus on outcomes:
- An outcome should be agreed with all based on:
  - Severity;
  - Frequency;
  - How realistic it is for the individual to be successful.
- Agreement with the individual of what replacement behaviours would look like in concrete terms, building on the individual’s suggestions.
- An understanding from the individual what needs to happen differently within the wider environment to support him/her in making changes.
- Identification with the individual as to how s/he will know that s/he is succeeding.
- Communication with all relevant teaching and pastoral staff and parents to ensure reinforcement of progress towards making changes.

Consideration of assessment tools that may be helpful in identifying and understanding needs and measuring the success of interventions e.g.
- *Southampton Emotional Literacy assessment and Intervention pack*;
- *SDQ* (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire);
- *PASS* (Pupil Attitudes to Self and School);

Advisor Education of Vulnerable Children; Consultant Attendance and Behaviour and/or Educational Psychologists are able to advise on systemic, whole-school approaches; Educational Psychologists can advise on issues relating to individuals at this level.

## Do – Intervention and support

These approaches are likely to benefit all those in the setting though greater emphasis may need to be placed on selected approaches depending on the needs of an individual at a particular time.

### WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACHES TO SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

**Ethos**
- A warm and accepting whole-setting culture reflected in school and class vision statements, staff meetings, staff and school development plans and day-to-day interaction.

The culture and ethos will foster language, day-to-day actions and structured activities to promote:
- *Growth Mindsets* in staff and young people with a focus on learning, encouragement for reflection and self-evaluation and that it is safe to make mistakes and that they promote learning.
Universal Provision – Quality First Teaching (QFT)

- **Emotion Coaching** – i.e. the validation of emotions and support for the development of a feelings vocabulary to enable everyone to identify and work constructively with positive and negative feelings.
- Collaborative working between staff as well as students.
- A **Solution-focused** culture in which staff and students are encouraged to look for solutions and the role they can play in these rather than an over-focus on problems.
- The language of rights and responsibilities for others’ rights; ensuring individuals understand the need for balance between the two.
  - Within this framework, promotion of a culture of collective responsibility for everyone’s emotional wellbeing; an expectation that all will act if they see it being compromised for one.
- Opportunities for inclusion of all in curriculum and extra-curriculum activities including clubs and trips outside the setting.

### Systems and policies

Agreed and consistently applied policies and systems that address:

- Identification of whole-school strengths and difficulties using a whole tool audit tool which can link to audits of individual staff.
- Identification and addressing of the needs of more emotionally vulnerable individuals e.g. through questionnaires to pupils or a survey of staff’s concerns. [Link](#)
- **Solution-focused** approaches to address aggression and bullying such as Restorative Practice.
- Embedded peer mentoring and/or buddy systems
- Additional monitoring of at-risk individuals such as those with disrupted family life, those who have experienced abuse, those with wider SEN, LAC or those from other minority groups.
  - Provision for those who are known to arrive in school unfed.
- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies which contain guidance for proactively addressing incidents of inappropriate behaviour and/or bullying calmly, fairly and proportionately and being mindful that bullying often involves many actively or passively engaging.
  - Ensuring it is easy for concerns to be reported including but not only anonymously.
- Feedback to and from parents with opportunities to share good news as well as difficulties that may need addressing.
- A proactive approach to giving and eliciting feedback and planning with previous/settings.
- Opportunities for individuals to communicate if they are feeling more vulnerable e.g. through identified and trusted pastoral staff.
- Clear lines of communication around the needs of all individuals.
- Staff have access to information and resources such as this graduated approach.
- A member of the senior management team to champion social, emotional and mental health and staff teams working closely with him/her.
- Positive expectations for behaviour expressed in concrete terms, including visuals.
  - Pupils should be involved in the development of them and have opportunities to explicitly agree to them.
  - They and the reasons for them should be explicitly taught and regularly reinforced.
### Universal Provision – Quality First Teaching (QFT)

- Transgressions explicitly linked to the expectation through assertive reminders before moving on.
- Consideration given to an “Expectation of the Week”.

### Staff emotional wellbeing and resilience

- Specific and timely appreciation of the work of staff.
- A focus also on efforts to promote inclusion for more vulnerable individuals.
- Senior leaders are accessible and staff concerns about wellbeing are listened to, their concerns explored constructively and any necessary follow-up actioned.
- Informal and formal face-to-face feedback opportunities.
- Surveys with a focus on staff wellbeing.
- Access to mentoring and peer supervision.
- Consideration given to solution circles for peer supervision.
- A comfortable staffroom which enables whole-school and one-to-one interactions with easily accessible refreshment facilities.
- Normalising the sharing of good practice.
- Training and coaching opportunities including activities to promote their own emotional resilience.
- Promotion of wider activities in the community that promote emotional and physical wellbeing.

### School environment

- Displays promote and reinforce the emotionally healthy ethos, systems and policies for staff and pupils.
- Resourcing for small-group and individual interventions around social skills and emotional literacy by appropriately trained staff.
- Access to supervised safe-areas during unstructured times of the day.

### APPROACHES TO ADDRESS WHOLE-CLASS AND INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

#### Physical environment

**Seating positions:**

- Consideration given to seating overall – tables where individuals are more likely to interact when group work is the objective versus everyone facing the front when an individual task focus is required.
- Consideration of who sits with whom taking into account promotion of positive peer relationships, likelihood of disruption.
- Consideration of where individuals are positioned in relation to the teacher.
  - Under the teacher’s nose for reassurance/engagement/monitoring and intervention
  - At the back to make it harder for the individual to turn round to talk to peers or to distract the teacher and or control interaction with the teacher.
- Consideration given to likely distractions through line of gaze and/or what is on the desk – some distractions may provide comfort for some individuals whilst for others they are significant barriers to learning.

**Access to alternative seating:**

- If the individual finds it hard to sit still on the floor provision of a chair or special cushion.
Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

### Universal Provision – Quality First Teaching (QFT)

- Some individuals are more productive doing written work whilst standing rather than sitting.
- Chairs with names on can be helpful for some who are anxious about sharing a seat.
- Consideration of supervised time-out areas for the individual – ideally within the classroom.
- Work displays to include the particular individual's work.
- Ensuring safe places during unstructured times and minimising of blind spots around the school.
- Access to helpline numbers and useful websites on notice boards.

### Staffing

- Main provision from class teacher and setting’s pastoral staff with additional monitoring and intervention to identify and implement reasonable adjustments for particular individuals.
- All relevant staff (including cover teachers) briefed around the individual’s particular needs, outcomes being targeted and approaches in order to appropriately respond to incidents and provide reinforcement for small steps of progress towards the outcome. Pupil passports are a helpful vehicle for this.
- All teaching staff should trained and alert to the likely underlying causes of problematic behaviour such as anxiety, low self-esteem or social isolation and tackle these, not just the presenting behaviours.

### Curriculum

**Building secure relationships:**

- Opportunities to touch-base positively with all individuals, particularly the more vulnerable ones at the start, during and end of lessons; exchanging a greeting, taking a quick interest in how they are doing more generally and using it as an opportunity to mood-check.
- Awareness of what particularly motivates individuals with opportunities to plan activities and incentives to capitalise on this.

**A calm and ordered learning environment with clear and consistent routines and expectations expressed positively:**

- Consideration of tasks to give a focus at the start of the lesson.
  - Colouring for younger individuals, writing the date and LO or estimating a minute with their eyes closed for older ones.
  - Only starting to speak to the class, when the whole class is quiet; praising those who are already ready to learn, clapping, raising an arm to signal a focus on the front.
- Colour-coded expectations of noise levels: silent, whisper working, partner voice, outside voice.
- Preparation for changes to activities or routines.
  - A visual timetable to show the structure of the day and individual lessons.
- Explaining expectations and directions with one and only one clear reason; multiple reasons dilute the strength of them, especially when given under questioning.
- Individualised *social stories* may help to reinforce expectations for the anxious student.
Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

**Universal Provision – Quality First Teaching (QFT)**

**Promotion of a growth mind-set:**
- A focus on effort and learning outcomes rather than work output on its own.
  - Encouragement for the individual to self-evaluate with solution focused questions around what has contributed to a successful approach to learning and learning itself.
    - An individual is more likely to internalise praise they have given to themselves.
    - Reminders of coping strategies and previous success in dealing with a situation.
    - Ensuring mistakes are modelled as normal and as a learning opportunity.

**Opportunities for success:**
- Ensuring that work is differentiated at a level that the individual can access independently, confidently and successfully.
  - Being alert to additional emotional barriers to tackling work independently.
  - Reduced and concrete language is often helpful for anxious individuals and those with language difficulties.
- For the emotionally dependent individual it may be appropriate to:
  - Check proactively for understanding when work is set before anxiety can build up. This helps to maintain some control of dependence.
  - Break tasks down and agree time frames for short bursts of independent work with a promise to touch-base at short, defined intervals e.g. 5 mins (visual timers may be helpful).
  - Provide a set number of tokens per lesson which can be traded for help from the teacher.
- Provision of additional responsibilities for the individual to raise esteem within the group and as an outlet for additional energy.
- Catching the individual being good:
  - Finding exceptions to negative behaviours however small.
  - Clear, concrete feedback – agreement/judgement used as to whether this feedback is better given publicly or privately.
  - Ensuring the individual attributes success to his/her own efforts.
- If using incentives, these should be immediate where possible, even if in the form of a raffle ticket, token, sticker or promissory note.
- Opportunities for the children to verbalise their achievements together – relating to kind acts, effort and achievement; curriculum-based, unstructured times and extra-curricular.
- Promoting a feelings vocabulary and responding to strong emotions
- Modelling and normalising references to one’s own and others’ feelings.
- Stories, role play and art work which explore feelings.
- Games to promote feelings-word generation, miming or words associated with feelings.
- Consideration to feelings diaries.
- **Emotion coaching**
  - Observing and reflecting back emotions to validate them for the individual and to help them to recognise and label them for themselves.
  - Using this as the first step for joint problem solving – “You are obviously very upset about this. Let’s look at what we can do about it together.”
- The use of a **feelings thermometer** e.g. on the wall or on a laminated sheet with advance agreement with students about what strategies will be used at different temperatures.
### Universal Provision – Quality First Teaching (QFT)

- Limited choices for individuals who find choice overwhelming.
- Managed ignoring of emotional shutdowns may be appropriate, to give space to recover and self-regulate.

### Friendships and peer relations:

- Monitoring of peer relationships and adjustments to groupings to promote friendships for the individual. Everyone needs at least one person they can call a “friend”.
- Monitoring to ensure that the individual is not being systematically excluded, provoked or scapegoated.
- Group work to promote positive relationships with peers; this may need adult facilitation.
  - Stories and drama activities building on some of the knowledge, skills and attitudes being targeted for the individual.
- Frequent public praise; problems addressed privately.

### Promoting engagement:

- Red, green, orange fans to indicate whether I know, I don’t know or I’m not sure instead of hands up.
- Positive use of the individual’s name to promote engagement and acceptance e.g. “As Luke said…”
- Finding safe levels of proximity when giving help, possibly helping another but inviting the individual to observe.
- The use of visual cues to indicate when help is needed e.g. red/green cards on the desk.
- Sound buttons to remind the individual of the task.
- Adjusting tasks to attention span.
  - Individual and whole-class timers can help and verbal reminders of how long is left.
- Teaching self-monitoring once per day for 2 weeks then once every other day for 2 weeks:
  - A timer is set to vibrate at intervals of 5m-15m.
  - When the timer vibrates, the individual:
    - Reflects how s/he has been doing;
    - Evaluates what s/he might have done differently;
    - Plans what s/he will do in the next time interval;
    - Ticks a sheet to record that they have done this.
  - Review of the activity at the end of the lesson
- Computer-based learning can be helpful because they are interactive and give immediate feedback on progress.
- Consideration given to headphones, music or even white noise to reduce distractions and promote focus.
- Opportunity for the individual to teach another.

### Harnessing impulsive/hyperactive behaviours:

- The use of lollypop sticks with individual children’s names on them for choosing who will respond.
- Managed movement breaks during the lesson with ground-rules for them (not
### Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Universal Provision – Quality First Teaching (QFT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>disrupting other individuals).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Access to fiddle toys or agreement to doodling when explanations are given if an individual appears to be calmer but able to listen doing this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Practising a stop, look/listen, think, do routine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Squeezing a ball five times before responding.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Responding to specific behaviours but avoiding unnecessary challenge:
- Managed ignoring of low-level inappropriate behaviour.
- Distraction rather than direct confrontation.
- Visual rather than verbal prompts.
- Redirection using the individual’s name and expressed in terms of what *is* required rather than what is not required.
  - Ensuring time and space for compliance.
- The language of choice e.g. the choice to do it now or over break or the choice to do the drawing first and then the writing or vice versa.
- Necessary consequences should first be indicated with warnings and where possible there should be no carry over and a fresh start every day – this ensures a direct link to the original behaviour and reduces the build-up of resentment.
  - A sliding scale of consequences which are proportional and relate to the original behaviour.
  - Consideration to engaging the whole class in drawing up the scale of behaviours and their consequences at the start of the school year.
  - Separation of any rewards and sanctions used i.e. rewards once earned cannot be lost as a sanction and vice versa.

#### Addressing specific incidents:
- Finding out from the individual *what has happened* in a situation, what they are thinking or feeling.
  - “What happened?” is more concrete and therefore more helpful than “Why?”
- Drawings or discussions about what has been said or done and work backwards to what the individual might have been thinking or feeling and/or others may have thought and felt can be helpful instead.
- Consideration of what could be done differently another time; if the individual struggles to think what he/she would do differently consider what someone else might do instead.
- Practising solutions through role play or comic strip conversations.
- Praise for any examples that are seen of the individual putting learning into practice.

#### Confident attendance:
- Bringing of an agreed transitional object into the setting and opportunities to make links with home during the day e.g. making something to show a parent later.
- Phone calls home on first day of absence to ensure that the parents and young person understand that they belong at the setting and are “missed”.
- Ensuring that adults retain control of decisions being made around attendance and that consistent messages are given by parents and school through close liaison.
- Bearing in mind that difficulties related to anxious school attendance can escalate rapidly if not nipped in the bud.
Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

**Universal Provision – Quality First Teaching (QFT)**

**Organisation:**
- A list of what is needed for a task.
- Mnemonics for things that have to be remembered.
- Discussion of strategies that can be used to promote organisation at home.
  - Timetable of equipment needed on the fridge.
- Checking that homework has been recorded and/or taken home.
- Awareness that some pupils find this very difficult and adjustment of expectations accordingly.

Addressing related SEN which may be impacting on self-esteem, mood and motivation (see other relevant sections of the Graduated Approach).

**Additional resources-Universal provision-see additional document**

**Review**

- A **solution-focus** in daily/weekly monitoring and reviews with the individual with reinforcement of all steps to progress.
- Messages home which focus on the positives.
- A formal review at least once a term while the problems persist. This should involve parents and at least in part individual with a focus on what is working so that everyone can build on success.
- Consideration as to whether there is a need to move up to the next stage of the process, building on what has worked but introducing more intensive approaches based on a greater understanding of needs.
- Agreement of further outcomes.

**Desired outcomes**

These must be realistic and ideally should be more specific and according to the individual’s starting levels and expectations for the group. One or two outcomes should be targeted at a time. These are just quite general examples:

- Listens calmly to the teacher and/or others in the class and responds by putting his/her hand up.
- Follows class routines and engages with adult-directed tasks independently.
- Increased willingness and confidence to attempt tasks independently and persevere even when work presents a level of challenge.
- Asks for help appropriately.
- Talks about self in positive terms.
- Reflects on learning positively.
- Demonstrates a sense of belonging in the class by choosing to talk about themselves with a member of staff or a peer.
- Interacts positively with peers and adults e.g. initiating/responding to overtures of friendship.
- Has an identified reciprocal friendship within the class.
- Evidence of positive interaction from peers.
- Engages in sustained and purposeful play.
- Shows curiosity for learning and enjoyment for being in setting.
- Deals assertively with a level of frustration and even provocation
- Verbally articulates his/her own feelings.
### Universal Provision – Quality First Teaching (QFT)

- Acknowledges the feelings of others.
- Takes another’s point of view even when s/he does not agree with it.
- Describes socially appropriate behaviour and things s/he can do to support this.
- Engages in joint problem solving around social, emotional needs.
- Resolves disagreements calmly.
- Admits to and learns from mistakes.
- Demonstrates less anxiety and feels safe in following instructions on the first time of asking.
- Makes transitions between activities calmly and compliantly.
- Separates from parents and enters setting calmly.
- Uses speech in interactions with individuals/staff in setting.
- Organises his/her work and equipment and hands in completed homework.
- Respects the property of school and others’ personal property.
Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

SEN Support

Description of need

Despite reasonable adjustments as part of QFT some of the following persist:

- Can be oppositional when some tasks are set.
- Highly dependent on adult support to start or sustain attention.
- High levels of anxiety about work or relationships often manifest as quite controlling behaviour.
- Disaffected by learning.
- Communicates negative feelings largely non-verbally.
- Frequently distracted during whole-class teaching to the extent of often not knowing what they need to do and getting little work done.
- Restless to the extent that this is quite disruptive to their own learning and the learning of others.
- Actively resists transitions and these can be a trigger for aroused behaviour.
- Great difficulty in finding anything positive to say about themselves or others.
- Uncooperative with peers and putting barriers in the way of their learning.
- Overtly rude to staff and/or peers when aroused.
- Sometimes physically aggressive to peers in unstructured times.
- Bullying of other vulnerable individuals, particularly but not only in a ringleader capacity.
- Rejected by peers.
- On the receiving end of bullying by one or more of their peers.
- Unhappy and joyless.
- Frequently shuts down and appears overwhelmed.
- Very quiet with limited verbal communication in setting.
- Signs of deliberate self-harm.
- Lying or stealing.
- Evidence of substance abuse outside setting which impacts on engagement in setting.
- Poor attendance because of anxiety about attending setting.
- Easily upset and even angered in response to even implied criticism.
- Reluctant to engage in discussions about changing behaviour.
- Shows little sign of empathy.
- A diagnosed neurodevelopmental condition which impacts on learning.

Assess and Plan

A greater understanding of the nature of the difficulties should now be available based on what has worked and what has not based on the previous cycle(s) of APDR at the previous stage. In addition:

- The SENCO or other staff with pastoral roles may be involved in more specific assessments such as:
  - Structured or semi-structured classroom observations which might help to identify antecedents, behaviours and consequences and/or the frequency of specific behaviours. NB it should give consideration to others’ behaviours too.
- **Person-centred approaches** to understanding and meeting the individual’s needs
  - Accepting the young person, showing empathy and listening with attentive body language and reflecting their thoughts and feelings.
  - Paraphrasing and summarising to check understanding.
Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

**SEN Support**

- A Blob Tree or **Ideal Self exercise** can help to open up discussion and explore issues from an alternative perspective.
- **Motivational interviewing** "Conversations to improve behaviour and learning; Rollnick, Kaplan and Rutschman (2016)" and **Solution-focused** questions to explore the individual’s willingness to change and/or their own solutions
  - Continued partnership with parents to try to promote consistency in both home and educational setting.
  - A **pastoral support plan** and/or provision map including targeted outcomes and evidence-based interventions; progress is carefully assessed, tracked, monitored and evaluated.
  - An individual **risk assessment** may be appropriate if the individual’s social and emotional issues are likely to impact on safety within setting or on trips outside it.
    - The emphasis of this should be on how to make adjustments to include the individual in all activities.
  - Individual’s needs discussed with appropriate other agencies such as Educational Psychology and Longford Park (Primary) with consideration of a more in-depth assessment of factors that are influencing the individual’s emotional health and wellbeing.
    - The individual may benefit from assessment by Speech and Language Therapy, SEN Advisory Service or Occupational Therapy.
  - The impact of early trauma e.g. witnessing or experiencing domestic violence, should not be underestimated in considering triggers and planning interventions.
  - Consideration of possible associated mental health issues including ADHD or attachment difficulties and/or language and communication difficulty including an Autistic Spectrum Condition and/or learning difficulty. Referral to specialist health agencies as required.
  - Consideration of safeguarding issues that may need to be addressed including involvement of Social Care if appropriate.
  - Consultation with Attendance and Behaviour Support if exclusion is under consideration.

**Do – Intervention and support**

The choice of approaches depends on the presenting problem and the understanding of the underlying needs it communicates. It is assumed at this level that a more individualised programme will be required and possibly targeted interventions to develop specific skills relating to social and emotional needs.

**Physical classroom environment**

- Seating considerations as suggested under QFT.
- Access to a personalised working area and/or time out area within the classroom that the individual may choose to use as time out or to work away from distractions.
- Use of earphones, ear-defenders and/or music.
- Access to a box of quiet activities to support self-calming when aroused. Concrete rhythmic activities can help to soothe such as counting, colouring, sorting, knitting, building, copying and sequencing.
- Keeping exits clear when this is considered necessary.

**Staffing**

- Main provision from class teacher with support from SENCO.
Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

SEN Support

- Some additional pastoral support from form tutor or members of the pastoral team ensuring that the individual touches base at a personal level with an identified key adult on a daily/twice weekly basis as needed.
  - The person should be able to listen non-judgementally to the thoughts and feelings that the individual conveys and support them in identifying strengths and developing strategies to address difficult situations.
- Some input from additional adult to provide targeted interventions individually or part of a group under the direction of teacher.
- Consideration of school-based interventions from EP/ school-based CAMHS worker/Longford Park outreach team.

Curriculum approaches

As for QFT – building on what has worked previously and the individual’s own motivation for change. In addition closer monitoring and more targeted interventions to include some or all of the following:

Significant anxiety (often at the heart of problems in schools):
- Acknowledgement and empathy for the strength of the thoughts and feelings and physiological discomfort.
- Normalisation of anxious responses by making links between thoughts, feelings, physical reactions and behaviours.
- Discouragement for avoidance behaviours alongside promotion of self-calming ones.
- Encouragement for experimentation – “I wonder what will happen if you do this?”
- Depending on the type of anxiety, be mindful that reassurance can inadvertently reinforce it by promoting the thought process that if reassurance is necessary then the fear must be valid.
- “What is the worst that can happen?” discussions may be helpful if the fear is not very rational.
- Supporting the individual to mentally rehearse how success will look and feel.
  - Take things in small steps
- The use of distractions and promotion of self-distraction

Teaching and practice in mood control and relaxation skills and devising an agreed signal that acts as a cue for using these when needed. These might include:
- Guided visualisations
- Calm (diaphragmatic) breathing
- Stroking an object
- Self-calming scripts

Difficulties with self-regulation

- As for anxiety above with further cognitive behavioural approaches to link thoughts, feelings, bodily responses and actions. Help individuals to reflect:
  - On ways thoughts, feelings, bodily responses and actions may have led to unhelpful outcomes, linking the way that the four work together.
  - How they can tune into and re-programme these to develop strategies that could be applied for more positive outcomes.
  - Puppets may be helpful in re-enacting scenes and/or practising scripts for next time to develop confidence and skills.
SEN Support

When the individual is highly aroused, administration of consequences or discussion is likely to escalate things.

- The focus is keeping everyone safe and allowing the arousal to de-escalate ideally away from further triggers.
- Strategies to seek help may be important e.g. sending another individual to the office with a pre-arranged message.
- Consequences can be discussed once the individual is fully calm (generally at least 20 minutes after an incident).

Resilience in general:

- Ensuring a context for skills being covered in interventions with opportunities for them to be acknowledged and generalised in the classroom and around school.
- A project on the importance of mistakes for learning supported through stories and examples from history.
- Forest schools and outdoor learning opportunities.
- Nurture groups.
- Mindfulness interventions.
- A short-term personalised curriculum

Peer relationships (often at the heart of problems):

- Direct work on friendship skills, practising the skills with immediate peers i.e. those with whom the individual will be practising them.
  - A circle of friends approach may be appropriate if the individual seems actively isolated from their peer group.
- Access to buddy systems.
- Differentiated activities during lunchtimes involving other individuals to ensure that these are an opportunity to promote social inclusion not a barrier to it.
- Practising games-playing with highly structured games with clear rules and concrete outcomes.

For one specific problem behaviour that occurs frequently:

- A Kid's Skills programme may be appropriate to work jointly with the child to identify and replace the behaviour with an alternative behaviour.
- A response-cost system may be helpful.
  - The individual starts the day with 20 marbles in a jar which represents 20 minutes doing something they like at the end of the day. Every time the unwanted behaviour occurs then a marble is removed.
    - This should be done calmly and supported by positive reinforcement for the absence of the behaviour or replacement by a positive behaviour.
  - This only works if the target allows for at least 5 marbles left at the end of the day; otherwise we are setting the individual up to fail.
- Social stories are effective, particularly where there is evident anxiety.

Lying and stealing:

- Avoidance of questions which invite lies, minimising attention to them but provided one is
confident of the truth, calmly correcting and then moving on.

- Minimising opportunities to lie or steal and if it does happen, taking calm but firm action to enable the individual to put right the wrong and then moving on.
- In both instances it is important not to interrogate, lecture or promote shame for the individual since these are likely to reinforce the behaviour rather than reduce its likelihood and if done publicly invite scapegoating by peers.

**Bullying behaviour**

- It can be hard to change the behaviour of the main protagonist by just working with them and/or the individual who is being bullied who is often disempowered by their experiences. Enlisting the active and more passive bystanders in joint problem solving and active support can be the key.
  - The Support Group Approach, Restorative Practice and Pikas Method of Shared Concern are all effective, non-punitive approaches to enlisting bystander support.
  - Close monitoring is important; sustained provocation can be subtle and hidden and instead, adults often see the bullied individual’s ineffective and sometimes provocative response.

**Reluctance to speak/selective mutism:**

- As for anxiety above
- Spending time together (possibly when others are not around) but with no direct questions or direct pressure to speak.
- Spending time with the young person and someone with whom they can talk
  - Initially “ignoring” them, then after a time observing them, in due course neutrally commenting on something that has been said, then asking a question through the other person before finally attempting to engage the young person directly.
  - If at any point the young person withdraws, stepping back.
- Opportunities to speak voluntarily or even just vocalise if s/he feels able and ensuring time for the individual to reflect and respond if s/he can but with no pressure to do so.
  - Promotion of peer interactions away from the prying ears of adults
  - Responding to progress calmly without drawing attention to the fact that you have noticed any changes
- Creative approaches to continuing to engage them with learning and checking for this engagement despite reticence with speech.

**Anxious school refusal:**

- As for anxiety above
- Calm but firm reassurance to normalise attendance.
- Differentiated arrival arrangements including the availability of someone to personally meet the individual positively at reception, acknowledge worries, engage briefly and escort him/her calmly to class.
- Discussion of strategies to use when anxious and encouragement when they are successfully applied.
- Books and stories to help them to understand their feelings around separation and transitions more generally.
- Identification of specific barriers, addressing them if possible.
- Temporarily modifying or easing of homework if needed.
Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

**SEN Support**

- A gradual approach to full-time attendance with adults deciding when the student is able to attend for longer.
  - Additional opportunities to reengage with peers and teachers if needed.
- Identification of ways to keep up or catch up with the curriculum and avoid situations of work being too difficult on return.
- Contingency planning for when things become overwhelming
  - Access to an identified key adult and time out if needed though with monitoring/review that this is not overused.
- Liaison with parents over protocols to ensure calm arrival in school and immediate feedback for non-attendance.

**Chronic low mood:**

- Additional time to welcome the individual and engage with him/her to promote a sense of belonging to the school community.
- Listening to the individual and how s/he is feeling.
- Praise and encouragement.
- Opportunities for success through small achievable steps.
- Encouragement of activities that will promote physical exercise, positive social interactions and being outside.
- Labelling of experiences in positive terms.

**Anorexia or bulimia:**

- As for low mood but with avoidance of any comments about food, appearance or uninvited comments about the disorder itself.

**Intentional self-harm:**

- Ensuring that it is raised calmly and sympathetically.
- Listening to what the person has to say and reflecting back the feelings behind the words.
- Identifying triggers and considering ways to reduce and mitigate these within the educational setting.
  - If the individual can identify alternatives to self-harm or ways to minimise it e.g.
    - Pinging an elastic band against their wrist, squeezing an ice cube.
    - Doing something useful e.g. tidying up a cupboard.
    - Doing something mentally engaging e.g. a puzzle or on-line game.
    - Doing something else to release tension such as hitting a cushion or kicking a ball or pushing against a wall as hard as they can.
    - Agreeing that when the urge comes they will wait at least 15 minutes before acting on it.
- Treating self-harm as a problem to be solved jointly rather than a shameful secret.
  - Do not make them promise not to do it again.
- Finding out what support the individual would like for themselves.
- Referral to other agencies if there is any question that the individual is contemplating or actually putting himself/herself at risk.

In all of the above, ensuring close liaison and consistency with home.

**Recommended resources-see additional document**
Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

SEN Support

Review

- Regular informal reviews of progress as well as a formal review at least once a term. These should involve parents and at least in part individual with a focus on what is working so that everyone can build on success.
- Consideration as to whether the approaches are working and the individual is making progress and at what stage social and emotional issues will be monitored in the future, bearing in mind what is working and what is not and a greater understanding of needs.
- Consideration of further outside agencies – Education, Health or Social Care that it may be appropriate to involve in assessment and intervention.
- Agreement of further outcomes.

Desired outcomes
These are general outcomes based on the ways that resilient individuals present in the setting. At this level of need, desired outcomes for an individual need to be expressed in much smaller achievable steps to ensure opportunities for success, based on current understanding of what is realistic and in discussion with the individual. No more than one or two outcomes targeted at a time would be appropriate.

- For at least 10 minutes in each lesson, s/he is able to listen calmly to the teacher and/or others in the class and respond by putting his/her hand up or other class system.
- Increased willingness and confidence to attempt tasks independently and persevere even when work presents a level of challenge.
- Asks for help appropriately at least 75% of the time.
- Reflects on his/her own learning positively at least once per day.
- Interacts positively with peers and adults.
- Has an identified reciprocal friendship within the class.
- Daily evidence of enjoyment for learning and being in setting.
- Shows that s/he can able to express strong feelings in a measured way at least once per day.
- Shows s/he can respond assertively to a level of frustration and even provocation.
- Verbally articulates his/her own feelings and even acknowledges those of others at least twice a week.
- Demonstrates a greater willingness to acknowledge his/her difficulties and identify at least one target for change and strategies to address it.
- Shows that s/he can engage in joint problem solving around social, emotional needs.
- Applies some self-calming strategies in approaching challenging work/social situations.
- Conversation indicates at least one socially appropriate/age-appropriate interest.
- S/he attributes more positive motives to self and others.
- With aids and/or interventions makes transitions between most activities calmly and compliantly.
- Has formed a secure attachment to at least one adult within the school.
  Organises work and equipment and hands in completed homework.
Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

SEN Support in School – High Level of Need (The following needs to be tried before considering a referral for EHC Needs Assessment)

Description of need

Despite additional interventions at Setting Support over a period of time the individual’s difficulties have escalated and s/he is:

- Regularly very oppositional when tasks are set.
- Highly anxious about many aspects of setting life.
- Actively resistant to transitions.
- Agitated much of the time.
- Rarely engaged in whole-class teaching.
- Regularly disruptive to the learning of others.
- Persistently rude to peers and/or adults.
- Physically aggressive even in the classroom.
- Proactively and persistently belittling or physically aggressive to peers, encouraging others to do the same.
- A persistent poor attender.
- Selectively mute in setting.
- Engaging in regular self-harming behaviours.
- Regularly misusing alcohol and drugs.
- Sexually inappropriate behaviour within the setting.
- Has a mental health difficulty which impacts significantly on their learning and/or that of others.
- Very resistant to seeing his/her behaviour as a problem.

Assess and Plan

- As above, reviewing if there is further consideration of underlying factors that have not previously been considered and which might indicate alternative/additional approaches to be planned.
- If not sought already, assessment by the Educational Psychology Service or other specialist agency would be strongly indicated at this stage to support the APDR cycle further and consider alternative perspectives to the barriers to curriculum access.
- Referral to Healthy Young Minds or the NDP/ADHD diagnostic pathways may be indicated in order to understand better the young person’s presenting difficulties.
- Referral to Speech and Language Therapy may be indicated if there are concerns about Social Communication or if Selective Mutism persists.

Do – Intervention and support

Depending on presenting need and understanding of factors contributing to it, there needs to be further focus on the approaches identified above, with an increase in intensity and diversity of approaches, depending on need before considering a referral for EHC Needs Assessment.

Classroom environment

- Mainstream classroom setting as above.
- In discussion with the individual and parents, consideration of differentiated provision for particular lessons or activities which appear to be a particular source of anxiety. An
SEN Support in School – High Level of Need (The following needs to be tried before considering a referral for EHC Needs Assessment)

understanding that such arrangements are temporary.

- There may also be increased interventions some of which may be outside the class in a safe, private area.
- It may be appropriate to give the individual some space; isolating or
- Ignoring the individual should be avoided since this can be highly threatening with anxious individuals.

Staffing

- Main provision from class teacher though it may be considered appropriate for assistance to be available to reinforce QFT strategies more intensively. Teaching assistants should be clear about their role and focus with the individual and seen as a whole-class resource to pre-empt over-dependence.
- Ongoing small group or one to one adult input to practise skills.
- Daily access to a nominated key adult to provide emotional support, promote resilience and meet the individual's attachment needs.
- It may be appropriate for staff to be trained in de-escalation and positive handling strategies.
- All staff should be briefed on the needs of the individual and supported to apply consistent approaches to their needs including promoting a sense of belonging and being valued through positive incidental encounters about school.
- Staff working with individuals with significant levels of social, emotional and mental health needs need support themselves through access to training and regular mentoring. It can be exhausting and challenging to their mental health.
- Access to external agencies providing therapeutic support such as CBT, play therapy, art therapy and person-centred counselling.

Curriculum and approaches

- Access to more intensely focused additional interventions and a greater range of differentiated QFT approaches would be appropriate.
- Opportunities for the individual to build up positive relationships with teachers away from the whole class situation.
- Trying to stay calm and to respond to the meaning of the behaviour not the feelings it evokes.
- Ensuring contingency arrangements identified in the risk assessment are in place to ensure safety for the individual, peers or adults.

Resources

As above-see additional document

Review

- As above ensuring that relevant outside agencies are involved as appropriate.
- Celebrate successes but if problems are still significant consideration given to a request for an Education Health and Care Plan with clarity as to what is to be achieved from it.

Desired outcomes

On the whole these are likely to be similar to those in the earlier sections only broken down into
### SEN Support in School – High Level of Need (The following needs to be tried before considering a referral for EHC Needs Assessment)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>even smaller steps if necessary to ensure opportunities for success.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If interventions by specialist agencies are in place to address specific mental health needs, it would be appropriate to agree outcomes for that involvement in advance.