

Social, Emotional, and Wellbeing

What you might see:

You might see a child who:

spends a lot of time on their own and appears withdrawn.

wants friends but finds it difficult to join in appropriately (e.g. becoming physical, taking over games, or upsetting others).

regularly falls out with other children and finds it difficult to repair friendships.

seeks attention from adults or peers in ways that appear immature (e.g. acting silly)

struggles to explain their needs and may go along with whatever others suggest.

expresses their needs in ways that seem bossy or controlling.

finds it difficult to understand other points of view or how their behaviour affects others.

finds it difficult to take turns in conversation.

interrupts others or speaks without thinking about how their words might affect people.

misreads social situations or misunderstands what others mean.

avoids joining in with others.

struggles with personal space.

speaks too loudly and finds it hard to adjust their voice for different situations.

Friendship and Social Skills

What you can try:

Reflective question: Before applying the strategies below, consider, 'what might this behaviour be communicating about their social development needs?'

- Use emotion coaching to label emotions, validate how they are feeling and help them understand why they may be feeling that way.
- Carry out emotion check-ins using visual tools to help pupils recognise and communicate their feelings.
- Practise emotional responses through role play.
- Use puppets to explore feelings and emotional situations.
- Use social scenarios to practise recognising and responding to emotions.
- Use photographs to help identify emotions. Discuss what someone might be feeling.
- Use video clips to explore emotional situations and discuss what may be happening internally.
- Provide small group support led by an ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) to help recognise emotions, understand triggers, develop empathy and manage feelings.
- Use evidence-based programmes such as Talkabout to develop emotional awareness and emotional literacy skills.
- Use personalised Social Stories to explain emotional experiences.
- Use Comic Strip Conversations to help them understand emotional situations and perspectives.
- Provide individual visual supports such as personalised feelings thermometers or emotion scales.
- Use structured approaches such as Brick-by-Brick or Lego Therapy to develop communication and cooperation skills.
- Create regular opportunities during the school day to talk about feelings and build emotional vocabulary.