



Supporting children with Social, Emotional or Mental Health Needs at Blackhorse Primary School

What is Social, Emotional or Mental Health (SEMH) in children?

A child may have SEMH needs if they find struggle in one or more of these areas:

- Their social and emotional functioning.
- Their ability to regulate their behaviour.
- They display signs of poor mental health (Anxiety, Depression, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Hypervigilance, self-harm etc).

How are children with SEMH needs supported at Blackhorse?

Early intervention is the most effective way to ensure that children overcome issues relating to their Social, Emotional or Mental Health. At Blackhorse, we aim to support children as soon as issues become apparent so that the child can learn effective strategies to successfully overcome them.

The school has the following provision available to support children:

On-site school Counselling

The school employs our own, fully-trained Therapist and Counsellor: Sara Aladeff. She can provide one off advice and support for children in dealing with a small or short-term issue, or can provide structured, longer-term bespoke programmes for children who have more complex needs. Staff and parents can refer children to Sara if they have a concern. Children can also refer themselves to 'Mrs A' (as they call her) by putting a note in the post-box on her door. Sara is often supported by Stanley, the school's Therapy dog.

Contact the School Counsellor here: sara.alhadeff@blackhorsepri.org.uk

On-site Nurture Intervention

The school also employs a full-time Nurture Teacher, Carie Stansby, to run bespoke interventions throughout the week. Following a referral from a teacher or parents, a [Boxall Profile Assessment](#) is completed to identify the need of the child. Children will then attend focused sessions which address these needs. This intervention usually lasts 6-12 weeks. Mrs Stansby starts each day with a breakfast nurture group, aimed at supporting children who find transitioning into school difficult. She then leads small group sessions focus on developing children's resilience, and/or their emotional and behavioural regulation. The nurture teacher also offers short-term academic support for individual children in Meadow Class (the Nurture classroom) to help them focus on learning.

Contact the Nurture Teacher here: Carie.Stansby@blackhorsepri.org.uk

Parental Support

The school has a trained Family Support Officer, Emma Touzalin, who works with families in a number of ways, including supporting them when their child has SEMH needs. Emma can provide practical advice and support on routines, boundaries and supporting mental health needs at home. She also creates and runs 'Early Help Action Plans' (EHAPs); a tool for understanding a problem and bringing different support together around clearly defined goals.

Contact the Family Support Officer here: Emma.Touzalin@blackhorsepri.org.uk

Inclusion & Mental Health Support

The school has a designated Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCO), Claire Deacon, who is responsible for creating and monitoring clear plans for all children with additional needs, including children with SEMH needs, and an Inclusion Leader, Jacqui Taylor, who leads the Inclusion Team throughout the school, including Resource Base. In addition, the school has a Mental Health Lead, Rebecca Wise, who attends multi-agency networks and is ELSA accredited. The SENDCO will work with parents to draw up clear plans of how a child's SEMH needs will be supported in school. When behaviours are leading to frequent deregulations (times when the child's behaviour results in school rules being broken), the SENDCO will create an Individual Behaviour Plan which will focus on strategies and provision to improve the behaviours, small incentives to meet these expectations, and clear boundaries and sanctions which explicitly tell the child what will consistently happen if dangerous or disruptive behaviours occur. Every child, especially those with SEMH needs, thrive on clear rules and boundaries and all children (no matter what their needs) are supported and expected to behave safely and respectfully around school.

Contact the SENDCO here: Claire.deacon@blackhorsepri.org.uk

Other support available:

Bespoke Mentoring

The school can offer bespoke mentoring to support children with SEMH needs. This is delivered by Progressive Sports (who provide our school Sports Coaches). This is a structured programme which supports children with managing emotions and regulating their behaviour.

Farm therapy

The school has its own horticulture teacher, Simon Evans, and a 'school farm'. This area is often used as a planned resource to support children with SEMH needs.