

# What is SEL?

## An introduction to *The PATHS® Programme for Schools (UK Version)* for Parents

*The PATHS® Programme for schools (UK Version)* is a Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programme which your child has been learning in school to develop vital mental health skills which they will need both now and in the future.

- First we learn to recognise our emotions and properly label them, thinking about how feelings feel in the inside and look on the outside.
- Next we learn techniques for self-regulation which helps us to manage our feelings and behaviours and achieve our goals.
- After this we consider how our feelings and behaviours can affect other people, helping us to develop our social awareness.
- This leads on to building better relationships and friendships both in and out of school, and helps us to work well with others.
- All of these skills combined help us to make responsible decisions in all areas of our lives, considering consequences and building resilience.



## Pupil of the day/ Complimenting

Every day a different person is chosen at random to be Pupil of the Day. The Pupil of the Day wears a special identifier and has special jobs and treats. They also receive compliments from their teacher and classmates and give themselves a compliment about things they are good at or the type of person they are. This really helps to build self-confidence and self-esteem and encourages pupils to be happy for other people. You can help by complimenting often at home, and saying 'thank you' when the children compliment you. Ask about the compliment list when it is brought home and you can add your own compliment at the bottom.

## Self-Awareness – Feelings

We learn to recognise when we are having different feelings and to name them. We learn that:

- **All feelings are OK** to have.
- There are some feelings we like to have and we call these **comfortable** feelings (happy, excited, proud).
- There are some feelings we don't like to have. We call these **uncomfortable** feelings (sad, scared, angry).
- **Uncomfortable** feelings act as a **warning signal** to let you know you have a problem to solve.
- **All feelings are OK** to have but the behaviour that comes from those feelings can be **OK** or **NOT OK**.

In Primary 1 and 2 we have some special friends who help us with this.



Twiggie the Turtle    Henrietta the Hedgehog    Daphne the Duck    Duke the Dog

You can help at home by talking about the feelings you are all having and discussing different characters' feelings when you read together.

## Self-Regulation (Do Turtle, 3 Steps for Calming Down)

Once we have learned to recognise our feelings we can start to learn how to control them.

In Primary 1 and 2, Twiggie helps us to do this by showing us how to 'Do Turtle'. When we feel a **strong uncomfortable feeling** we first tell ourselves to **STOP**. We then take a **long, deep breath** to help ourselves become calmer. Once we feel calm, we **say what the problem is and how we feel**. We can then start to solve our problem by discussing it.

In Primary 3 these three steps become the red light of our Control Signals. We can then start to think about making a good plan to solve our problem.

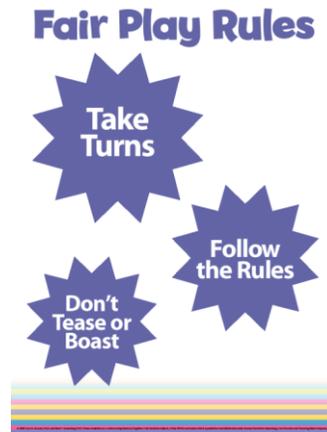


You can help at home by talking about times when you need to regulate your feelings and helping your children to regulate theirs when they need to.

# Friendships / Relationships

Learning how to understand our own feelings and other people's feelings helps us to build better relationships.

In Primary 1 and 2 we learn that friends play, friends help and friends share. Later we learn rules that help us to play fairly together and take turns, follow the rules and not to tease or boast.



We learn how our feelings and behaviour can affect other people's feelings and behaviour. This help us to work together really well in class and build stronger friendships outside class. You can help at home by playing games together that encourage good teamwork and co-operation.

# Problem-Solving

Learning to solve problems for ourselves is an important life skill. When we have a **strong, uncomfortable feeling**, it is a **signal** that lets us know we have a **problem** that may need to be solved. Once we have **helped ourselves to become calm**, we can then think more clearly about our problem.

- First we work out what the problem is and how we feel about it.
- Then we consider who else might be affected and how they might feel about it.
- We then come up with lots of ideas that we could use to solve our problem.
- We consider how each solution would affect everyone involved and consider the consequences.
- We then choose a solution that works out the best for everyone and try it out.
- If it doesn't work the first time, then we try another idea.

In Primary 6 and 7 the control signals poster becomes the 11 steps for problem solving.



You can help at home by helping your children through this process when they have a problem. You can also talk to them about some of the problems you might have and maybe they can help you too. It is really important to make sure we are **calm** before we try to solve our problems.