



IntegratED

Supporting the whole child:

Reviewing the evidence for whole child development
in the context of the English education system

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Whole child development & social and emotional learning

Introduction

Learning is more than a matter of willpower, it is social, emotional, and academic.

This is all the more true for children living in, or who have experience of, adversity e.g. poverty, poor mental health, special educational needs, or chaotic home lives. Their ability to succeed in school depends as much on having their basic needs holistically identified and supported as it does on academic knowledge.

Whole child development reflects this principle and supports the development of all aspects of a child. It recognises that a child's experiences, emotions, and relationships all contribute to their development and academic attainment, and more broadly to their future health, lifestyle and wellbeing.

Whole child development goes beyond academic knowledge.

”

It understands that healthy childhood development does not take place in a vacuum, but rather across a wide ecosystem of support around a child including family, friends, school and community. Often associated with concepts like social and emotional learning (SEL),

Whole child development

whole child development includes SEL, but is broader than SEL itself. It is much wider and captures a myriad of domains.

The research in this space from international organisations, like the Harvard Centre for the Developing Child and the OECD, all highlight the benefits of whole child development for all pupils, but especially the most vulnerable.

Whole child development goes beyond academic knowledge alone and incorporates broader interpersonal and social skills and values. While academic performance is an important outcome, success in school and life requires more than a sole focus on attainment. It requires an approach which integrates academic performance with other domains of whole child development.*

Whole child development is not at odds with high academic expectations, in fact, education systems which integrate whole child development strategies are shown to increase academic achievement and help children to overcome adversity.

This report seeks to provide a practical resource for educators who wish to learn more about whole child development. It is hoped that this report will help practitioners to embed whole child development into the English education system. To that end, this report provides a summary of some of the leading research into whole child development, explores teacher awareness and attitudes towards whole child development in England, and details extant research and case studies from the English context on how whole child development can help to promote better outcomes for children.

This report will be split into three parts:

1. **Models:** A compilation of models for whole child development and social and emotional learning which evidence the basis for whole child development.
2. **Polling:** An analysis of survey data which examines how teachers in England understand and approach whole child development.
3. **Impact:** A compendium of case studies illustrating whole child development in the classroom and the associated outcomes for children.

Note

This report examines the evidence base for whole child development and SEL. It aims to make the case for embedding whole child development in the English classroom setting. When reading this report, there are two major caveats to bear in mind.

First, the term whole child development is extremely wide-ranging. This makes identifying studies that relate to whole child development, quantifying outcomes and assessing teacher attitudes more complicated but not impossible.

Second, much of the literature is dominated by an international – particularly US – perspective, meaning there is little England-specific data to rely on (outside of our teacher polling).

Whole child development (WCD): an umbrella term to describe a holistic, developmentally informed approach to ensuring children develop into well-rounded individuals.

Social and emotional learning (SEL): an educational method which aims to encourage pupils' social and emotional wellbeing within the school curriculum. Social and emotional learning is one aspect of WCD.

WCD / SEL and positive outcomes: WCD and SEL are associated with positive outcomes for cognitive and educational wellbeing, physical health, social and emotional health, and material factors. For more information please refer to section three of this report.

WCD / SEL and adversity: Strong, supportive relationships with adults can help the most disadvantaged children overcome adversity. By building environments that support child development, we can ensure that children reach their potential, become responsible citizens and lifelong learners. For further information please refer to the University of Notre Dame, The Global Center for the Development of the Whole Child Model.

School-level factors linked to effective WCD: Teachers staying with the same students for more than one year, high expectations matched by high support and positive reinforcement, and fostering positive attitudes toward experimentation, risk-taking, curiosity and creativity are examples of school-level factors. For further information please refer to the University of Notre Dame, The Global Center for the Development of the Whole Child Model.

* Recently published, The Report Challenging the False Dichotomy: An Evidence Synthesis, builds a strong case for decision makers and key stakeholders around the world to enhance and maintain political will towards holistic skills development within education systems. The report was overseen and prepared by Porticus, with inputs from the LEGO Foundation and Jacobs Foundation, alongside contributions from key partners and stakeholders across the global education sector. The report can be accessed here: <https://porticus.com/en/articles/article-placeholder-i3596-education-systems-should-strive-for-the-holistic-development-of-students>

Models

Overview

Whole child development is an umbrella term to describe a holistic, developmentally informed approach to ensuring children develop into well-rounded individuals. Whole child development recognises that all children, particularly those facing extreme adversity, require developing a range of knowledge, skills, experiences, and core values that will enable them to engage as productive and ethical citizens.¹

What each child needs will vary according to their context, and, as such, definitions of whole child development and associated applications differ.

Whole child development places equal value on all aspects of a child's wellbeing – social, emotional, physical, intellectual, spiritual and creative. Therefore, embedding whole child development into education sees the child as

a whole, prioritising their full development to ensure they become lifelong learners that can thrive throughout life.²

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is one of the most recognised aspects of whole child development. It refers to skills and attributes like curiosity, persistence and empathy. While important, it should not be mistaken for whole child development, which is much broader.

The following section explores how leading institutions in this area define whole child development, their evidence bases, and associated outcomes. The models outlined in the following section begin with four models of whole child development and five models of SEL. For clarity, the whole child development and SEL models are grouped separately, each group in alphabetical order.



Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), Measuring What Matters



Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, Whole Child Approach to Education



Learning Policy Institute, Educating the Whole Child



University of Notre Dame, The Global Center for the Development of the Whole Child



Education Endowment Foundation



Harvard, EASEL Laboratory



The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) SEL Framework



The OECD's Survey on Social and Emotional Skills (SSES)



University College London

Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), Measuring What Matters³

How is whole child development defined?

ACER defines whole child development as “a holistic development approach which aims to create the conditions within education systems and school communities to develop the whole child, physically, socially, emotionally, and academically, with the active engagement and support of the community”.⁴

Whole child development recognises that “the wider community, including schools and families, also play a crucial role in cultivating the set of skills and competencies necessary to help children and youth grow and achieve their full potential”.⁵

ACER’s 2019 Measuring What Matters: Insights on the values of whole child development report, attempted to answer, among other things, how the 21 sites included in the study define whole child development. In answering this, ACER developed the conceptual framework set out below.⁶

It should be noted, however, that it is not intended as a comprehensive list, and the conceptual framework is intended to develop as further studies are conducted.



Porticus & ACER, 2020. “Measuring what matters: Insights into the value of whole child development”.
[Accessed via: https://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1046&context=monitoring_learning]

A holistic development approach which aims to create the conditions within education systems.

”

Whole child development conceptual framework key themes and terms⁷

Whole child development key themes and terms cited in the literature and MWM programmes	
Health	Values
Hygiene	Acceptance of others and their differences (empathetic, kind, caring and fair)
Nutrition	Consideration
Physical and mental well-being	Honesty, trustworthiness
Physical development	Integrity
Physical fitness	Respect for others
	Respect for rules
	Self-respect
	Understanding, tolerance, and inclusion
Safe environments	Spirituality
Caring school community	Compassion
Connected and belonging	Faith
Trust	Hope
	Mindfulness/Awareness
Student engagement	Academic knowledge
Attitudes	Arts
Adaptability	Digital literacy
Curiosity	Information literacy
Differentiate instruction	Languages
Engaging with others	Literacy (reading and writing)
Imagination	Mathematics and numeracy
Inclusive learning environment	Science
Initiative	
Motivation	
Open-mindedness	
Perseverance	
Personal responsibility	
Adult support	Life skills
Encouraging, interesting and personable teachers	21st century competencies
High expectations – attendance, success, behaviour	Collaboration
High quality teaching and teachers	Communication
Holistic development of individuals	Creative thinking
Nurturing individual personalities/attitudes/values	Global competencies
Nurturing learning environments	Metacognition (memory, reasoning, self-regulation)
Personalised learning environments	Problem-solving
Positive and caring adults – personal interest in each child and their success	Transferable skills
	Transversal competencies

Whole child development key themes and terms cited in the literature and MWM programmes

Academically challenging learning

Academic excellence
Curriculum that challenges students
Further education and career ready
Higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills
Learning a second language and culture

Social and emotional learning

Coping skills
Emotional self-regulation
Empathy
Establishing and maintaining positive relationships
Identity
Resilience
Responsible decision making
Self-efficacy
Self-reflection

Community (family, school, community, and global community)

Citizenship Community engagement Diversity Global citizen
History of indigenous peoples
Migration background
Promotion of peace
Relationships (families, friends)

What is the evidence base?

The Measuring What Matters report aimed to establish a deeper understanding of the ways that holistic development is defined and valued at an education policy level.⁹ The policy level analysis established the extent to which sites working with existing Measuring What Matters initiatives valued, integrated and measured whole child development.⁹

This mixed-methods study involved a policy survey with 21 sites respondents and policy document analysis of secondary policy data across eight sites. The 21 sites included in the study are: Bhutan, Bogotá, Cambodia, Denver, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Helsinki, Hiroshima, Honduras, Houston, Manizales, Mauritania, Moscow, Nepal, Ottawa, Panama, Senegal, Sintra, Gambia and Vietnam.¹⁰

What is the relationship between whole child development and adversity?

The study recognises that conditions of adversity caused by factors such as poverty, conflict, displacement or social exclusion of various kinds can have a profound impact on children's education and development.¹¹

Groups of children and youth facing adversity in these sites were broadly categorised by the following factors¹²:

Social and emotional: Children affected by abuse (e.g. mental, emotional, physical or sexual), trauma, bullying or suicide.

Cultural: Children belonging to specific cultural/ethnic groups.

Geographic: Children living in rural areas, areas affected by conflict and war, refugees, community violence or those that have been displaced.

Poverty: Children experiencing poverty and economic hardship, those not in school or subject to child labour.

Gender: Girls' education and gender identity.

Special educational needs: Children with special needs or a mental or physical disability.

Models

The top three priority groups were children with special needs, children not in school and those experiencing abuse or trauma.¹³

How is whole child development embedded?

To embed whole child development at a policy level, ACER¹⁴ recommends:

- Developing a clear definition of whole child development
- Strong policy enabling frameworks
- Integrating whole child development into the curriculum
- Prioritising investment in teacher training and pedagogy
- Strengthening parental and community engagement
- Developing robust evaluation and monitoring systems

What is the relationship between whole child development and positive outcomes?

The study found that the primary motivation for investing in whole child development is the anticipation of the positive impact on the holistic development of a child.¹⁵

The key reasons for investing in whole child development included:

- Improving academic outcomes for students.
- Increasing completion rates for secondary school students.
- Improved longer-term life outcomes.
- Increased student participation and engagement with school, increased inclusion of previously excluded students, and reduced absentee and truancy rates.
- Increased student resilience.
- Increased parental engagement with schools.

Participants wanted to increase resilience and create more inclusive education systems for pupils previously excluded from education. Specific emphasis was given to improving the overall wellbeing of students and safety at school.

School-level factors linked to strong/weak whole child development

The main challenges for implementing whole child development were policy constraints (a lack of understanding of whole child development), teacher training, and resource constraints (such as financial constraints and difficulties monitoring progress).¹⁶

Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, Whole Child Approach to Education¹⁷

This starts by creating environments of belonging and connection for students and adults to engage and thrive.



How is whole child development defined?

According to the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, whole child development “honours the humanity of each teacher and student and is critical to equitably preparing each student to reach their full potential. This starts by creating environments of belonging and connection for students and adults to engage and thrive.”¹⁸

Chan Zuckerberg’s conceptualisation of whole child development has been summarised through the Comprehensive Student Development Framework which sets out six domains for development. Domain definitions are set out in the infographic and table to the right.

Domain	Definition
Academic Development	This includes the four core content areas: mathematics, literacy, science, and social studies, as well as the subjects included in most requirements for a diploma, like art, health, and physical education.
Cognitive Development	Skills related to attention, perception, and memory. These are the skills we draw upon to learn and retain knowledge like executive function, visual, and auditory processing, reasoning, and short and long-term memory.
Social Emotional Development	Skills and mindsets involved in the social process of learning and development. This domain includes social and emotional factors with links to well-being and academic success, like healthy adult attachment, stress management, self-regulation, and resilience.
Physical Health	Nutrition, fitness, and sleep, as well as vision, hearing, and dental health.
Mental Health	A state of well-being demonstrated by the ability to realise potential, cope with stress, work toward goals, and make meaningful social contributions and connections.
Identity Development	The values that shape an individual’s sense of purpose. This is built on an understanding of how community and culture shapes an individual’s identity.

What is the evidence base?

The Chan Zuckerberg Initiative was founded in 2015 to help solve some of society's toughest challenges. Its mission is to build a more inclusive, just, and healthy system for everyone.¹⁹

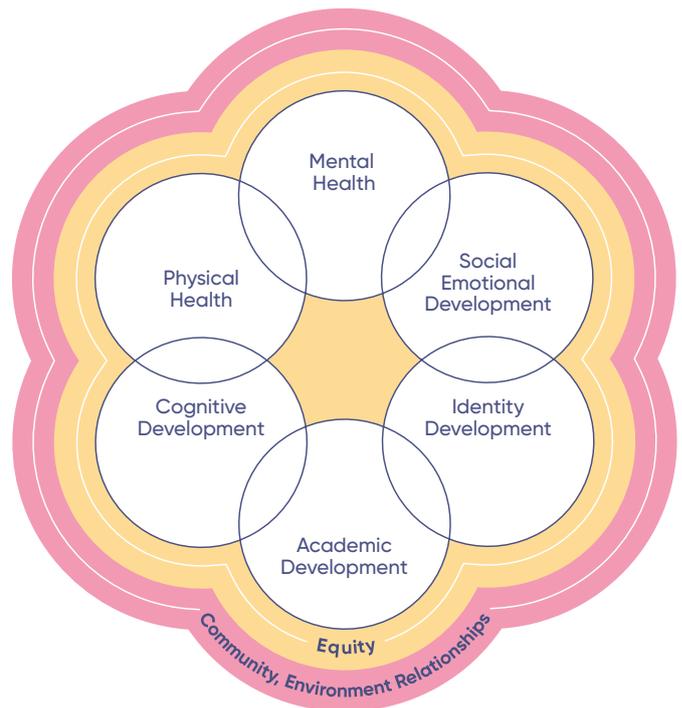
The organisation is committed to ensuring that "every child enters adulthood with the skills and abilities they need to reach their full potential – and each teacher is equipped with the mindsets, tools and practices they need to support their students' learning and development".²⁰

Through a combination of grant-making, impact investing and collaboration, they hope to take an evidence-based approach to learning, and to identify "exemplary practices which are helping to improve student outcomes".²¹ In 2019, the organisation announced \$5 million USD funding for research into effective school practices to support the whole child.²²

In early 2020, the Chan Zuckerberg Institute published the profiles of 10 schools that are using whole child development, expanding the definition of success beyond academics to "more fully consider the developmental needs of the whole child".²³ One of these school profiles is explored in depth below.

These schools showed that when student success is defined beyond academic attainment, and expanded to include identity, physical, mental, and emotional factors as per the whole child development framework above, students thrive.

Full case studies are available on the Chan Zuckerberg foundation website [here](#).



Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, 2022. [Webpage accessed via: <https://chanzuckerberg.com/education/whole-child-approach-to-education/>.]

How is whole child development embedded?

*Citizens of the World Charter (CWC) Mar Vista*²⁴

CWC Mar Vista, an elementary school in Los Angeles, has adopted a robust definition of student success that includes academic, socio-emotional, identity and cognitive development. In addition, their 11 'graduate dispositions' make up a set of longer-term skills, habits and mindsets they believe are necessary for students to successfully navigate, and contribute to, life after school.

The 11 dispositions span three strands and include:²⁵

- **Self:** self-understanding, self-efficacy, critical thinking and adaptability.
- **Together:** connection, collaboration, cultural competency and empathy.
- **World:** systems thinking, global advocacy and lifelong learning.

In respect of each graduate disposition, CWC has created a set of measurements and user-friendly rubrics which staff, pupils, and families can use to gauge progress against each graduate disposition.

Core elements of their approach include instructional tools and school culture that reflects this broad definition of success, diverse by design environments, a focus on developing 'citizens of the world', strong classroom communities and comprehensive staff development.

CWC's California schools (of which Mar Vista is one), outperform their peers in Los Angeles and across California. According to state-wide assessments, out of approximately 6,000 elementary schools in the Los Angeles region, CWC Los Angeles students ranked in the top 8% in maths and the top 12% in English language arts.

What is the relationship between whole child development and adversity?

- Citizens of the World Charter schools had high proportions of children living in low-income families. 31-66% of children at these schools were eligible for free or reduced lunches.²⁶

What is the relationship between whole child development and positive outcomes?

Children at Citizens of the World Charter (CWC) outperform their peers in Los Angeles and across California academically.²⁷

- Out of 600 elementary schools in LA, CWC students ranked in the top 8% for maths and top 12% for English language.
- All CWC schools outperformed the LA average for academic attainment in maths and English language.
- At-risk students with mentors are 55% more likely to enrol in college and 130% more likely to hold leadership positions than their unmentored peers.

Learning Policy Institute, Educating the Whole Child²⁸

How is whole child development defined?

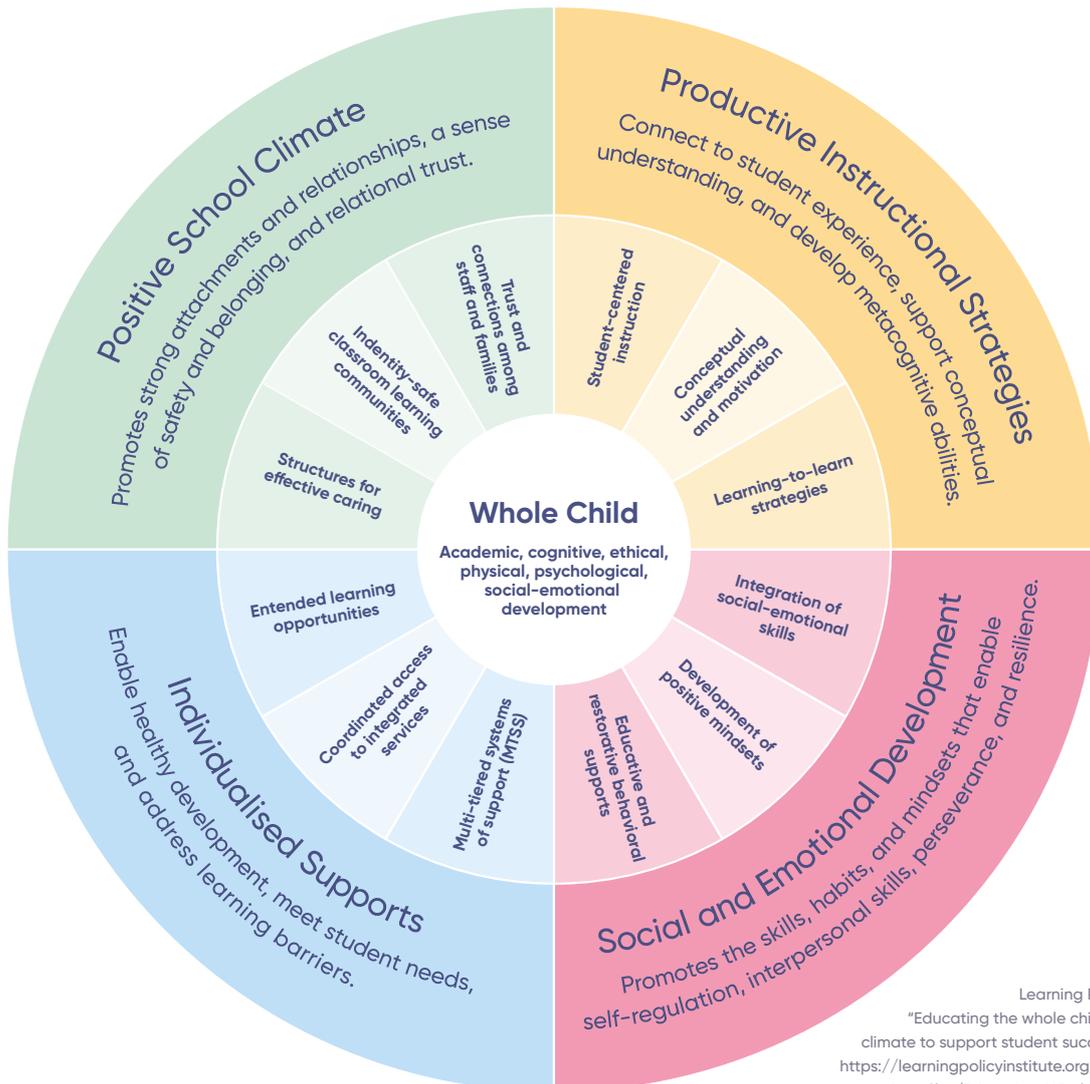
The Learning Policy Institute exists to advance evidence-based policies that support empowerment and equitable learning for every child.

Their 2018 report, *Educating the whole child: Improving school climate to support student success*, offers the following explanation of whole child development²⁹:

- Novel information of human development from the field of neurodevelopment establishes secure attachment as a vital factor in learning, affirming relationships, rich, hands-on learning experiences, and explicit integration of social, emotional, and academic skills.³⁰

- A positive school environment supports students' growth across all the developmental pathways—physical, psychological, cognitive, social, and emotional—while it reduces stress and anxiety that create biological impediments to learning³¹.
- Such an environment takes a “whole child” approach to education, seeking to address the distinctive strengths, needs, and interests of students as they engage in learning.³²

Their framework, containing greater detail, is set out below.

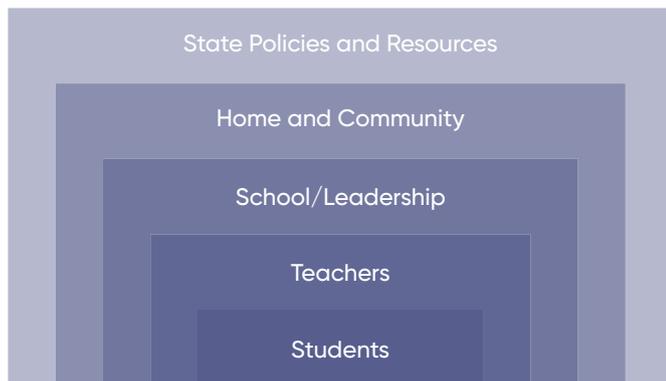


Learning Policy Institute, 2018. "Educating the whole child: Improving school climate to support student success". [Accessed via: https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Educating_Whole_Child_REPORT.pdf]

Models

Furthermore, whole child development acknowledges the interrelationships between all areas of development and alters school policies and procedures to support them.³³ This includes, for example, access to nutritious food and healthcare, restorative disciplinary practices, secure relationships and learning opportunities that engage students interests and improve their self-confidence.

The Whole Child Ecosystem



Educating the whole child takes a neuroscience approach to whole child development, and distills the key tenets therein as follows³⁴:

- **Development is malleable.** As the brain is always growing and changing in response to experience and relationships, people can always learn new skills.
- **Variability in human development is the norm, not the exception.** Each child develops at their own pace.
- **Human relationships are essential for health development and learning.**
- **Learning is social, emotional and academic.**
- **Children actively construct knowledge** based on their social contexts, relationships and experiences.

What is the evidence base?

The Learning Policy Institute's *Educating the whole child* report is based on, and describes, key findings from the science of learning and development. The school conditions and practices that should derive from this science, and the policy strategies that could support these conditions and practices on a wide scale.

How is whole child development embedded?

- Building a positive school and classroom climate.
- Using social and emotional learning to shape positive student behaviours.
- Developing instructional strategies that support self-directed learning, motivation, and competence.
- Creating individualised support that meets students' needs, including those relating to trauma and adversity.

What is the relationship between whole child development and positive outcomes?

- A report reviewing 78 school climate studies published since 2000 found that a positive school climate can reduce the negative effects of poverty on academic achievement.³⁵
- A literature review of 327 school climate studies found that support for student psychological needs and academic accomplishment results in higher grades, higher test scores, an increase in motivation to learn, and is associated with strong interpersonal relationships, communication, cohesiveness, and belongingness between students and teachers.³⁶
- A strong academic climate enabling student learning and achievement is promoted by high expectations, organised classroom instruction, effective leadership, and teachers who believe in themselves and promote mastery learning goals.³⁷
- Support for student psychological needs and academic accomplishment is reflected in higher grades, test scores, and increased motivation to learn and is associated with strong interpersonal relationships, communication, cohesiveness, and belongingness between students and teachers.³⁸
- The structural features of the school, such as school size, physical conditions, and resources, can also impact student achievement by shaping students' daily experiences of personalisation, a sense of caring, and the curriculum and instruction they experience.³⁹

What is the relationship between whole child development and adversity?

School practices can either exacerbate or buffer the effects of childhood adversity.⁴⁰

- When adversity is severe or ongoing, or when the counteracting effects of stable relationships are missing, the stress response system remains activated, and the body stays in 'high alert'.
- Traumatic or strongly emotional events can simultaneously influence the regulation of emotion (e.g., feelings of depression or anxiety), physical phenomena (e.g. heart rate or adrenaline production), attention, and cognition (e.g. executive functioning and memory).
- Adverse childhood experiences such as growing up in poverty, instability in the home, familial incarceration or illness can "affect sustained and focused attention, making it difficult to remain engaged in school".⁴¹
- Chronic stress can "have a negative effect on the chemical and physical structures of a child's brain, causing trouble with attention, concentration, memory, and creativity."⁴²
- Compared to white students, students from ethnic minority background experience a less positive school climate, for example less favourable experiences of safety, connectedness, relationships with adults, and opportunities for participation.⁴³
- If students from groups that have been evaluated negatively in society, e.g., those from racial or ethnic minorities, do not know whether a school is safe and welcoming for them, many will assume it is unsafe. As a result, they can assume a state of hypervigilance and defensiveness. When their sense of threat is activated, they are "more likely to respond to a seemingly innocuous correction or interaction with a disproportionately negative response."⁴⁴

School-level factors linked to effective whole child development

Effective whole child development includes:

(i) School climate

- “Teacher-student relationships, including aspects such as warmth, acceptance, and teacher support” are the most important elements of school climate contributing to increased achievements.⁴⁵

(ii) Meeting additional needs

- Supporting students with their mental health and academic performance is associated with “higher grades, test scores, and increased motivation to learn”, which, in turn, are associated with “strong interpersonal relationships, communication, cohesiveness, and belongingness between students and teachers.”⁴⁶

(iii) Supportive relationships

- Warm, caring, supportive student-teacher relationships, as well as other child-adult relationships, are linked to better school performance and engagement, greater social competence, and willingness to take on challenges.⁴⁷
- Students who have supportive, strong, and trusting connection with adults, including at least one “committed relationship with a close advisor or mentor” are more likely to finish school and succeed academically.⁴⁸
- Such relationships are particularly beneficial for students at greater risk of poor outcomes, with nurturing relationships helping them to develop “emotional, social, behavioural and cognitive competencies foundational to learning”.⁴⁹

(iv) Cultural competency

- Students living in adverse conditions in particular benefit from learning in “identity safe” environments and under conditions where there is a connection between school and their own cultural contexts and experiences.⁵⁰
- Children perform best in conditions of high support and low threat. Adults who appreciate and understand a child’s experiences and desires can offset stereotypes, promote positive attitudes and behaviours, and build confidence to support learning.⁵¹

(v) Parental engagement

- Building strong relationships between the school and the family improves academic outcomes for students. According to research from 100 Chicago elementary schools, parental engagement was key to steep improvements in mathematics and student motivation and participation in schools with strong parental involvement.⁵²

- In a series of meta-analyses designed to determine the impact of parental involvement on the academic outcomes of ethnic-minority children, significant positive effects were found for parental involvement on academic achievement for children in all grades, preschool through 12th grade.⁵³

Ineffective whole child development

(i) Depersonalised contexts

- The design of secondary schools in the US is at odds with the needs of its adolescent pupils as it “de-emphasises personal connections with adults and focusses on competitive rankings of students”.⁵³ During a period of sensitive growth, adolescents need, more than ever, to develop a strong sense of belonging, connection, and personal identity.⁵⁴
- In particular, depersonalised contexts disproportionately damage those student that are experiencing the effects of “poverty, trauma, discrimination, and bias without supports to enable them to cope and become resilient”. Without adequate relational support, depersonalised contexts “interfere with learning, undermine connections, and impede opportunities for youth to develop skills to succeed.”⁵⁵

(ii) Punitive environments

- A punitive environment undermines learning by increasing anxiety and stress, placing extra demands on working memory and cognitive resources, which drains energy available to engage in classroom tasks.⁵⁶

University of Notre Dame, The Global Center for the Development of the Whole Child⁵⁷

How is whole child development defined?

The Global Center for the Development of the Whole Child is based out of the University of Notre Dame and collaborates with researchers and practitioners to ensure the social, emotional, cognitive, physical and spiritual wellbeing of children and adolescents in low-resource and fragile settings around the world.⁵⁸

According to the Global Center for the Development of the Whole Child, whole child development “engages a broad spectrum of support systems, including family, school, and community, to ensure children and youth reach their full potential. It equally values all aspects of a child’s well-being—social, emotional, physical, intellectual, spiritual, and creative—to ensure they become active citizens and life-long learners.”⁵⁹

Whole child development seeks to identify and align interventions that support positive human relationships, meet basic needs, and promote the skills and aptitudes required to succeed from childhood through to adulthood in a given social and economic context.⁶⁰

Whole child development comprises four key principles set out in the table shown to the right.⁶¹

Engages a broad spectrum of support systems, including family, school, and community, to ensure children and youth reach their full potential.

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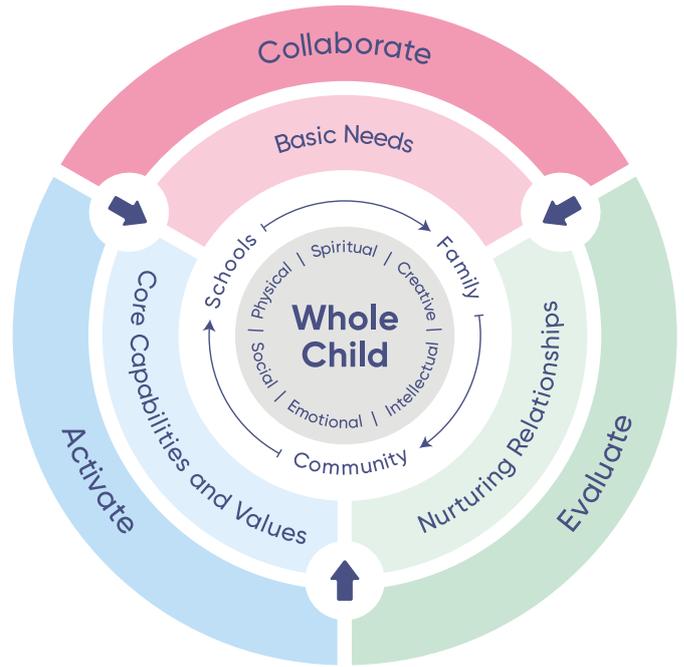
- 1 Children’s development happens simultaneously across different spaces (e.g. family, school and the wider community).
- 2 The quality of each of these environments matters.
- 3 We support whole child development when we invest in solutions that work in environments that support child development (e.g. health, nutrition, early childcare, education, and protection).
- 4 Taking a whole child development approach is particularly important for children growing up in severe adversity. By building environments that support child development, we can ensure that children reach their potential, become responsible citizens and lifelong learners.

What is the evidence base?

The Global Centre for Development of the Whole Child works with researchers and practitioners across the globe to ensure the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive wellbeing of children in conflict-affected and low-resource settings.⁶²

This research spans a range of low- and middle-income regions including but not limited to Haiti, Kenya, Colombia, Peru, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and India.⁶³

Whole child development approaches are contextualised to the given setting and research is translated into tools to enhance learning programmes and policies, and to activate communities and systems around a child.⁶⁴



How is whole child development embedded?

The Global Center for the Development of the Whole Child recommends taking the following steps to embed whole child development:⁶⁵

- Regularly checking in with students and parents through advisory programmes.
- Engaging in self-reflective classroom practices, e.g. recording lessons to identify what worked well and what could be improved.
- Strengthening connections between the school and home e.g. through home visits and regular parent-teacher meetings.
- Creating inter-professional learning opportunities among staff and peer learning across departments.
- Identifying existing programmes that support and engage teachers, families, and community actors.



What is the relationship between whole child development and adversity?

- Around 200 million children live below the poverty line and/or are educationally stunted.⁶⁶ They don't attend school or attend for fewer years than their peers. They are disproportionately affected by violence and are more likely to be exploited – an estimated 1 billion children are victims of violence every year.⁶⁷
- Children experiencing adversity are at increased risk of low educational achievement, behavioural issues and poor mental and physical health outcomes later in life.⁶⁸
- Strong, supportive relationships with adults can help the most disadvantaged children overcome adversity.⁶⁹

What is the relationship between whole child development and positive outcomes?

- Whole child development equally values all aspects of a child's wellbeing—social, emotional, physical, intellectual, spiritual, and creative. A "whole child" is more likely to break the cycle of poverty, find employment, give back to their communities, and live healthy lives.⁷⁰
- Children experiencing adversity are at increased risk of low educational achievement, behavioural issues, and poor mental and physical health outcomes later in life.⁷¹
- Improved school performance and learning.⁷²
- Executive function and visuospatial skills are also necessary for performing many early motor assessments, and these skills, along with motor coordination, may contribute to academic achievement through multiple pathways.⁷³
- Higher performance on measures of attention, inhibition, and other executive functions in the preschool years is associated with later academic achievement.⁷⁴
- Adult ratings of a school-age child's capacity to complete specific tasks were highly predictive of school grade completion and adult literacy scores; however, this finding was true only for girls.⁷⁵
- An analysis of three longitudinal datasets in low- and middle-income countries also showed that cognitive scores in the age range four to eight years predicted later school achievement and grade attainment.⁷⁶

School-level factors linked to effective whole child development⁷⁷

- Whole child development strategies and practices in the classroom.
- Teachers staying with the same students for more than one year, also known as 'looping.'
- Morning meetings to discuss and debate current events and engage students in conversation.
- Including and welcoming students' experiences into the classroom and making it clear that all students are valued.
- Curriculum content focused on 'real-world learning' and lessons that are culturally relevant for students from all backgrounds.
- High expectations matched by high support and positive reinforcement.
- An understanding of the students' neighbourhoods and communities to build cultural competency and to understand students' lives outside of school e.g. community walks.
- Restorative justice practices that encourage students to take responsibility for their actions and relationship with peers and students.
- Incorporating student voice so that students plan, monitor and evaluate their own tasks, giving them agency in their learning.
- Flexible pace and time for lesson plans and activities, allowing student to work at their own pace.
- Group work and peer collaboration to build teamwork skills.
- Fostering positive attitudes toward experimentation, risk-taking, curiosity, and creativity.
- Being open to new ideas and seeing things from the perspective of children.

Education Endowment Foundation⁷⁸

How is social and emotional learning defined?

According to the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), SEL interventions aim to enhance pupils' decision-making skills, interaction with others, and their emotional regulation skills, rather than focusing directly on the academic or cognitive elements of learning.⁷⁹

The EEF identifies two key ingredients for effective SEL.



What is the evidence base?

The EEF's SEL toolkit strand contains 54 studies that explore the efficacy of SEL interventions.⁸⁰

How is SEL embedded?

SEL interventions can span different contexts including relationships with peer groups, teachers, family, or community. At the school level, effective SEL is characterised by SEL interventions that can be targeted at three levels, including:

- School e.g. developing a positive school ethos which aims to support a greater engagement with learning.
- Universal e.g. those which include the whole class and generally take place in the classroom.
- Targeted e.g. specialised programmes that use elements of SEL or that target students with specific social or emotional needs.

The EEF identifies two key ingredients for effective SEL: (i) staff knowledge and professional development and (ii) embedding SEL approaches into educational practices. Further, the degree to which teachers are committed to the approach is important.

What is the relationship between SEL and adversity?

- Research suggests that children from more disadvantaged backgrounds have weaker SEL skills on average than their more affluent peers. Lower SEL skills, moreover, are linked to poorer mental health and lower academic achievement.⁸¹

What is the relationship between social and emotional learning and positive outcomes?

Academic outcomes

- Successful SEL interventions may add up to an additional four months academic progress over the course of the year.⁸²
- Intervention targeted at secondary school pupils tend to be more effective, with an average of five additional months progress made compared to an average four month gain for primary schools.⁸³
- Gains tend to be higher for literacy outcomes (approx. 4 months) compared to mathematics (approx. 3 months).⁸⁴

Social outcomes

- SEL interventions which focus on improving social interaction are typically more successful than those focusing on personal and academic outcomes, yielding on average six months additional progress compared to four.⁸⁵
- SEL interventions have "an identifiable and valuable impact on attitudes to learning and social relationships in school."⁸⁶

While SEL interventions are "almost always perceived to improve emotional or attitudinal outcomes", it is important to note that not all interventions are equally effective at raising attainment.⁸⁷

Harvard, EASEL Laboratory⁸⁸

How is social and emotional learning defined?

Comparative frameworks

The Ecological Approaches to Social Emotional Learning (EASEL) Laboratory at Harvard University has developed a helpful tool for understanding the commonalities between different frameworks for defining non-academic skills.

EASEL set up the Taxonomy Project to address the challenge that the term social and emotional learning is often used as a catch-all to describe many different approaches to supporting the development of non-academic skills, such as the development of 21st century skills or soft skills, character development and conflict resolution skills.⁸⁹

Academics, researchers, and policy makers often use different terminology to define a similar set of non-academic skills that support learning. In order to promote these skills in young people, it is essential to be able to apply these constructs within programmes and interventions and accurately measure and evaluate the effect of them on children's skill progression.⁹⁰

Yet, the existence of conflicting and often overlapping definitions makes it hard to accurately measure and compare constructs.

In response to this challenge, Explore SEL was developed by the Taxonomy Project. This is a site that can be used as a navigation tool for the field of social and emotional learning and non-academic skills.⁹¹ The site provides tools and resources that support the user to make connections between definitions and frameworks, enabling more clarity around the commonalities and ultimately informing decision making.

SEL domains

The Ecological Approaches to EASEL at the Harvard Graduate School of Education explores the effects of high quality social-emotional interventions on the development and achievement of children, youth, teachers, parents, and communities.⁹²

Researchers at EASEL have identified six SEL domains, each with specific skills or 'sub-domains': cognitive, emotion, social, values, perspective and identity.

More information on each domain is set out in the table below.⁹³

Domains	Skills
Cognitive	The Cognitive domain includes the basic cognitive skills required to direct behaviour toward the attainment of a goal. Skills in this domain are involved in tasks that require you to concentrate and focus, remember instructions, prioritise tasks, control impulses, set and achieve goals, use information to make decisions, and more.
	Specific skills in this area include: Attention Control, Working Memory & Planning, Inhibitory Control, Cognitive Flexibility, and Critical Thinking.
Emotion	The Emotion domain includes skills that help you recognise, express, and control your emotions as well as understand and empathise with others. Skills in this domain are important not only for managing your own feelings and behaviour, but also for interacting with and responding to others in prosocial ways.
	Specific skills in this area include: Emotion Knowledge & Expression, Emotion & Behaviour Regulation, and Empathy & Perspective-taking.

Domains	Skills
Social	The Social domain includes skills that help you accurately interpret other people's behaviour, effectively navigate social situations, and interact positively with others. Skills in this domain are required to work collaboratively, solve social problems, build positive relationships, and coexist peacefully with others.
	Specific skills in this area include: Understanding Social Cues, Conflict Resolution & Social Problem-solving, and Prosocial & Cooperative Behaviour.
Values	Values includes the skills, character traits/virtues, and habits that support you to be a prosocial and productive member of a particular community. It encompasses understanding, caring about, and acting upon core ethical values; the desire to perform to one's highest potential; and the habits required to live and work together with others as a friend, family member, and citizen.
	Specific values in this area include: Ethical Values, Performance Values, Intellectual Values, and Civic Values.
Perspective	Your perspective is how you view and approach the world. It impacts how you see yourself, others, and your own circumstances and influences how you interpret and approach challenges in your daily life. A positive perspective can help you protect against and manage negative feelings to successfully accomplish tasks and get along with others.
	Specific perspectives in this area include: Optimism, Gratitude, Openness, and Enthusiasm/Zest.
Identity	Identity encompasses how you understand and perceive yourself and your abilities. It includes your knowledge and beliefs about yourself, including your ability to learn and grow. When you feel good about yourself; sure of your place in the world; and confident in your ability to learn, grow, and overcome obstacles, it becomes easier to cope with challenges and build positive relationships.
	Specific competencies in this area include: Self-knowledge, Purpose, Self-efficacy & Growth Mindset, and Self-esteem.

Cognitive Skills

Attention control:

The ability to attend relevant information and goal-directed tasks while resisting distractions and shifting tasks when necessary, such as listening to the teacher and ignoring kids outside on the playground.

Inhibitory control:

The ability to suppress or modify a behavioural response in service of attaining a longer-term goal by inhibiting automatic reactions like shouting out an answer while initiating controlled responses appropriate to the situation such as remembering to raise one's hand.

Working memory and planning skills:

Working memory refers to the ability to cognitively maintain and manipulate information over a relatively short period of time, and planning skills are used to identify and organise the steps or sequence of events needed to complete an activity and achieve a desired goal.

Cognitive flexibility:

The ability to switch between thinking about two different concepts to thinking about multiple concepts simultaneously, or to redirect one's attention away from one salient object, instruction, or strategy to another.

Critical thinking:

The ability to reason, analyse, evaluate, and problem solve.

Emotion Skills

Emotional knowledge and expression:

The ability to recognise, understand, and label emotions in oneself and others (emotion knowledge) and to express one's feelings in contextually appropriate ways (emotion expression).

Emotional and behavioural regulation:

The ability to regulate the intensity and/or duration of one's emotions and emotional responses, both positive and negative (emotion regulation) as well as the ability to learn and act in accordance with expectations for appropriate social behaviour (behaviour regulation).

Empathy / Perspective taking:

The ability to understand another person's emotional state and point of view. This includes identifying, acknowledging, and acting upon the experiences, feelings and viewpoints of others, whether by placing oneself in another's situation or through the vicarious experiencing of another's emotions.

Social Skills

Understanding social cues:

The process through which children interpret cues from their social environment and use them to understand the behaviours of others.

Conflict resolution / Social problem solving:

The ability to generate and act on effective strategies or solutions for challenging interpersonal situations and conflicts.

Prosocial / Cooperative behaviour:

The skills required to organise and navigate social relationships, including the ability to interact effectively with others and develop positive relationships. Includes a broad range of skills and behaviours such as listening/communication, cooperation, helping, community-building, and being a good friend.

Values

Ethical values:

The values and habits related to a concern for justice, fairness, and the welfare of others that enable one to successfully interact with and care for others according to prosocial norms.

Performance values:

The values and habits related to accomplishing tasks, meeting goals, and performing to one's highest potential that enable children to work effectively in accordance with prosocial norms. This includes values relevant to achievement contexts (eg. school, work, sports, etc.) and ethical contexts (e.g. continuing to do the right thing even in the face of temptation).

Civic values:

The values and habits related to effectively and responsibly participating in community life and serving the common good. This includes helping others, being an active and engaged member of one's community, and striving to make the world a better and more just place.

Intellectual values:

The values and habits that guide one's approach to the pursuit of knowledge and truth. This includes seeking out new information, investigating the truth, being able to admit error, thinking things through from all sides, and approaching tasks and problems in new and creative ways.

Perspectives

Optimism:

An approach to others, events, or circumstances characterised by a positive attitude and sense of hope about the future and one's ability to impact it.

Gratitude:

An approach to others, events or circumstances characterised by a sense of appreciation for what one has received and/or the things in one's life.

Openness:

An approach to others, events (especially those that involve change), circumstances, and ideas characterised by adaptability and acceptance.

Enthusiasm/Zest:

An approach to events or circumstances characterised by an attitude of excitement and energy.

Identity

Self-knowledge:

Developing and maintaining a coherent understanding and sense of oneself over time, including personality traits, interests, preferences, strengths, and weaknesses.

Purpose:

The existence of a purpose or drive motivated by something larger than oneself that shapes one's values, goals, behaviour, and plans for the future, this includes formulating and pursuing long-term life goals related to education/career, personal passions, and life purpose.

Self-efficacy/Growth-mindset:

A belief in one's ability to improve and succeed. This includes believing that improvement is possible with time and effort (i.e. growth mindset), that one has the ability to accomplish a task (i.e. self confidence), and that one has control of one's options and choices (i.e. agency).

Self-esteem:

A belief in one's own self worth. This includes feeling a sense of value and belonging as well as engaging in habits like extending kindness and understanding to oneself and having respect for one's body and health.

What is the evidence base?

The EASEL lab runs a number of projects exploring SEL in greater detail, including the SEL Analysis Project which looks inside leading SEL programmes to identify key features and attributes of SEL programming and makes general comparisons between approaches.⁹⁴

In 2017, the EASEL Lab published results from the first phase of this work in *Navigating Social and Emotional Learning from the Inside Out*, a guide designed to help schools and out-of-school time organisations better understand the content and focus of SEL programs for grades K-5.⁹⁵

What is the relationship between social and emotional learning and adversity?

- Children who have positive relationships with adults – those that are contextually and developmentally appropriate, reciprocal, reliable, and flexible – typically have more access to interactions that support SEL.⁹⁶
- Children exposed to adverse childhood experiences are more likely to exhibit challenges with executive functioning, social skills, and emotion regulation,⁹⁷ which are critical for success in school and other group learning environments.⁹⁸
- Some studies indicate that SEL programs have the largest impact on children who face the highest number of risks, suggesting that SEL may be particularly relevant and effective for children who have experienced trauma or who are exposed to numerous recurring stressors.⁹⁹

What is the relationship between social and emotional learning and positive outcomes?

The Inside Out Study evaluated 33 programmes and their associated outcomes.¹⁰⁰

The paragraphs that follow explore six programmes, each focusing on a different core SEL skill.

Models

Domain:

Cognitive

Programme:

Good Behavior Game at American Institutes for Research (GBG AIR)

How?

GBG AIR is a team-based classroom management strategy for early grades that “uses positive social reinforcement to promote positive behaviors related to student success.”¹⁰¹

To win the game, students have to follow a series of classroom rules, and any team that breaks fewer than 5 rules wins and receives prizes e.g. stickers or extra reading time. Sessions typically last between 10 and 40 minutes and are delivered three to five times per year. Teachers learn to use consistent and effective language for promoting prosocial behaviour during the context of the game and can run sessions during any subject or activity where students work independently from their teacher.

What were the positive effects?

The programme has been evaluated in 4 randomised control studies in the USA, and the results are summarised below.

Long term reported outcomes include:

- Lowered rates of drug and alcohol abuse/dependence disorders, smoking, and antisocial personality disorder in young adult males, particularly those that were identified as being more aggressive and disruptive in grade 1.¹⁰²
- Reduced rates of antisocial personality disorder and violent/criminal behaviour in young adult men who were identified as being more aggressive and disruptive in elementary school.¹⁰³
- Decrease in aggressive playground behaviour among students who scored high on aggression before the start of the intervention.¹⁰⁴
- Decrease in behavioural problems, increases in academic achievement in maths and reading (especially for boys) and less peer-reported aggression among boys.¹⁰⁵

Models

Domain:

Emotion

Programme:

Recognising, Understanding, Labelling, Expressing and Regulation Emotions (RULER)

How?

RULER is a systemic approach to SEL that supports school communities in understanding and appreciating the value of emotions, building and cultivating emotional intelligence and maintaining positive school climates.

The classroom curriculum for elementary school (kindergarten to grade 5) comprises 18 units per grade, and each unit includes four 45-minute lessons that can be taught over two weeks. The 18 units comprise 6 RULER units and 12 Feeling Words units. In the RULER units, students learn and apply the four RULER tools (Charter, Mood Meter, Meta-Moment, and Blueprint) that are designed to create classroom norms, build interpersonal emotional awareness, aid self-efficacy, promote empathy and perspective taking and rebuild communities after conflict.

The Feeling Words units each introduce a new 'feeling' word and lessons help students to understand the feeling more deeply and personally by connecting it to personal experiences using storytelling and discussion, book character analysis, exploring how historical and real-world people manage emotions, completing a creative project that visually represents the feeling, sharing feeling words with adults at home, and coming up with strategies to emotionally regulate in real-life situations.

What were the positive effects?

RULER has been evaluated in 4 studies in the USA, three randomised control trials and one quasi-experiment.

Reported outcomes include:

- More positive emotional climate; more emotion-focused interactions and cooperative learning strategies in class.¹⁰⁶
- Higher levels of classroom emotional support, instructional support, and classroom organisation.¹⁰⁷
- Higher adaptability scores (positive relationships, leadership, and studying); lower scores on school problems (attention and learning problems); higher English language Arts (ELA) and work habits/social development grades.¹⁰⁸
- Increased engagement in 6th grade and improved conduct in 7th grade.¹⁰⁹

Models

Domain:

Social

Programme:

Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS)

How?

The SSIS SEL edition is a SEL learning programme for 4 to 14-year-olds that includes tools and opportunities for teaching and assessing SEL skills. The SEL edition comprises 90 lessons across 30 units, with three lessons delivered per week over the course of the programme.

Each unit focuses on a specific skill and includes 6 role play opportunities for students to practice the SEL skill in question. Teachers introduce, explain and model the concept in six steps: tell, show, do, practice, monitor progress and generalise. Students discuss and practice the skill with their peers and the lesson ends with student-led self-evaluation and reflection on progress using their individual engagement records.

It is not a prescriptive set of skills, and teachers are encouraged to select the skills most relevant to their cohorts. They can do this using the programme's comprehensive screening tool which is aligned with the EASEL competency framework.

Lessons range from 20 to 30 minutes.

What were the positive effects?

The programme has been evaluated in four randomised control studies in the USA.

Reported outcomes include:

- Positive effect on empathy and engagement as well as improved academic motivation and engagement.¹¹⁰
- Increases in academic motivation and engagement particularly for students with lower initial levels of academic motivation and engagement.¹¹¹
- Social, communication, and cooperative skills, as well as responsibility, empathy, and engagement increased.¹¹²
- Students experience reductions in internalisation problems.¹¹³
- Overall, higher gains in classrooms with lower pre-test scores.¹¹⁴
- Teachers view the program positively and perceive the SSIS as a socially valid and feasible intervention for primary grades.¹¹⁵
- Teachers' ratings of ease of implementation and relevance/sequence were different across grade levels in the second year of implementation.¹¹⁶

Models

Domain:

Values

Programme:

Positive Action

How?

Positive Action is a programme for children in kindergarten to grade 12 that emphasises the link between thoughts, actions and feelings to promote positive self-concept alongside character development and SEL. The programme is based on the inference that students feel good about themselves when they are intrinsically motivated to engage in learning and become a better person.

The Positive Action kit includes 140 scripted lessons spanning 6 units to be delivered four times per week over 35 weeks. Lessons last 15 minutes on average and vary in nature, but typically include discussion-based activities, stories, games and worksheets.

What were the positive effects?

Positive Action has been evaluated in 13 states in the USA, and results from the five most recent randomised control trials are set out below.

- During elementary school, pupils are less likely to engage in violence and sexual activity or use alcohol or drugs.¹¹⁷
- Higher average scores on maths and reading tests, lower rates of absenteeism, and marginally lower rates of suspensions.¹¹⁸
- Less likely to use substances, less likely to engage in serious violence and bullying behaviour.¹¹⁹
- Lower levels of substance use at Grade 8.¹²⁰
- Teachers, parents and students reported improvements in school quality.¹²¹

Models

Domain:

Perspectives

Programme:

MindUP

How?

MindUP is a programme for children in kindergarten to grade 8 that offers a curriculum for SEL designed to be modelled by teachers in the classroom.

The programme integrates SEL with the concepts from the fields of neuroscience, mindfulness and positive psychology to help pupils develop skills such as self-regulation, focus and sustained attention while minimising stress and anxiety. The curriculum, published by Scholastic, includes 15 lessons delivered through four units of instruction. Lessons typically last 40 minutes and include a review, introduction, classroom practice, optional academic integration or life practice activities, and an assessment.

Teachers run 'Brain Breaks' three times a day comprising a short listening and breathing exercise to allow students to practice mindfulness outside of lessons.

What were the positive effects?

MindUP has been evaluated in four studies in the USA and Canada: three randomised control trial and a quasi-experiment.

The results are set out below.

- Improvements in peer-nominated positive social behaviours, improvements in maths, self-reported wellbeing and pro-sociality and reductions in peer-nominated aggressive behaviours.¹²²
- Teachers reported higher working memory and planning/organisation and higher scores on literacy and vocabulary assessments.¹²³
- Students who received the intervention demonstrated an improvement in adaptive skills and reduction in behavioural symptoms, internalising composite, and externalising composite outcomes.¹²⁴
- Decreases in executive functioning deficits among students who participated in MindUP.¹²⁵
- Students displayed an increase in passive on-task behaviours and a decrease in non-disruptive off-task behaviours.¹²⁶

Models

Domain:

Identity

Programme:

Girls on the Run

How?

Girls on the Run is designed to empower girls in grades three through eight to recognise their strengths and celebrate what makes them unique. Trained coaches lead small teams through a 10-week curriculum that is made up of discussions, activities and running games. The programme ends with a celebratory 5km event and includes a community services project.

What were the positive effects?

The programme has been evaluated in 9 studies in the USA, the results of the five most recent quasi-experimental studies are set out below.

- Greater ability to manage emotions, resolve conflicts, help others, and make intentional decisions; improved coach and teammate relatedness (i.e. getting along with, liking, feeling encouraged by, etc.) compared with girls in regular PE programmes.¹²⁷
- Higher body satisfaction; increased levels of physical activity.¹²⁸
- Gains in perceived physical appearance, self-esteem, and classmate support; for girls who started below average, stronger effects on all social, physical, and psychological attributes.¹²⁹
- Increased overall self-worth, improved self-perception of physical appearance and social acceptance.¹³⁰
- Improvements in self-esteem, body size satisfaction, and frequency of physical activity; gains in commitment to physical activity for girls aged 11 and older.¹³¹

School-level factors linked to strong/weak social and emotional skills

Strong SEL skills

- High-quality child-teacher relationships were shown to help students develop and use SEL competencies, protect students who are at greater levels of risk, and buffer against the effects of victimisation and adversity.¹³²
- Learning environments that are safe, secure, enriching, and characterised by positive relationships are more likely to promote development of SEL skills and mitigate against the effects of stress and trauma.¹³³
- Strong, positive relationships help develop self-regulation, a basic skill that is fundamental to multiple SEL domains.¹³⁴

The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) SEL framework¹³⁵

How is social and emotional learning defined?

CASEL, as the name suggests, is focused on social and emotional learning (SEL), a sub-set of whole child development.

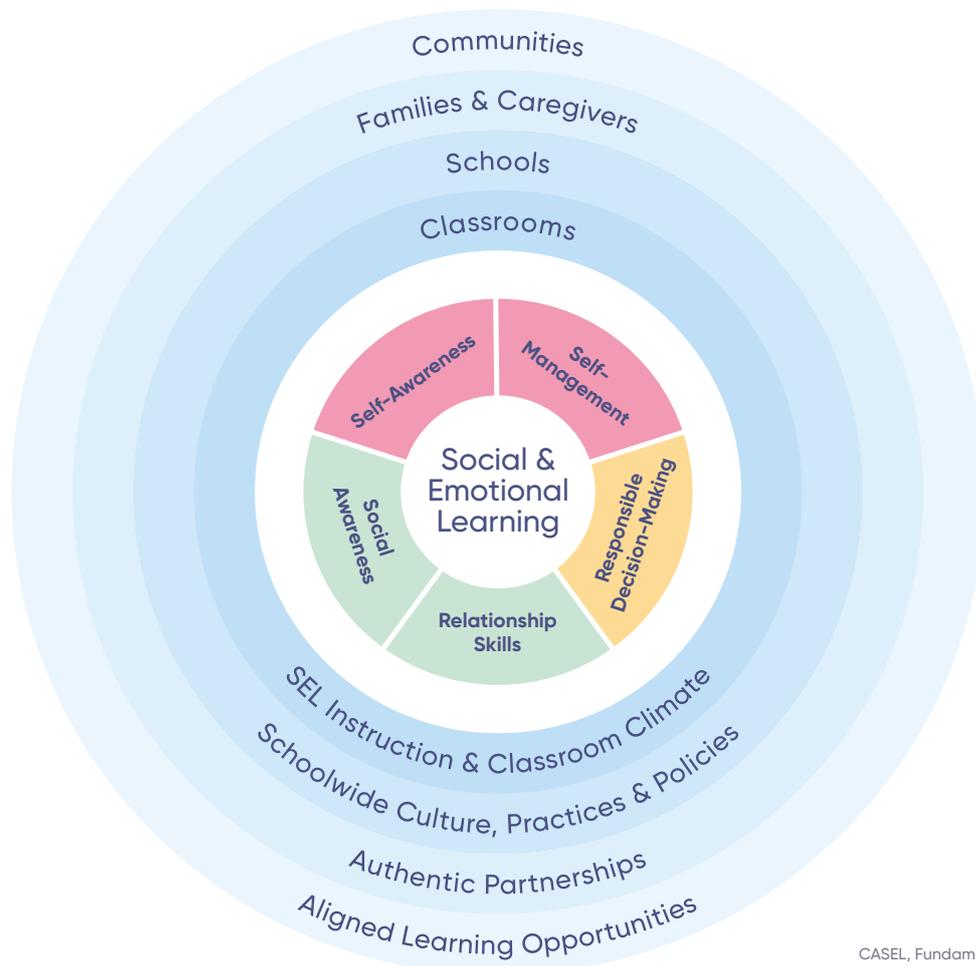
CASEL defines SEL as an integral part of education and human development.

SEL is “the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions”.¹³⁶

Their framework, the ‘CASEL Wheel’, helps cultivate skills and environments that advance students’ learning and development.¹³⁷

The ‘CASEL 5’, self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, and social awareness, can be taught and applied at various developmental stages from childhood to adulthood and across diverse cultural contexts.¹³⁸

The table on the next page sets these skills out in more detail.



CASEL, Fundamentals of SEL. [Accessed via: <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/>]

Models

Domains	Definition
Self-awareness	The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts and values and how they influence behaviour across contexts. This includes capacities to recognise one's own strengths and limitations with a well-grounded sense of confidence and purpose.
	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating personal and social identities • Identifying personal, cultural, and linguistic assets • Identifying one's emotions • Demonstrating honesty and integrity • Linking feelings, values, and thoughts • Examining prejudices and biases • Experiencing self-efficacy • Having a growth mindset • Developing interests and a sense of purpose
Self-management	The abilities to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviours effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations. This includes the capacities to delay gratification, manage stress, and feel motivation and agency to accomplish personal and collective goals.
	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing one's emotions • Identifying and using stress management strategies • Exhibiting self-discipline and motivation • Setting personal and collective goals • Using planning and organisational skills • Showing courage and taking initiative • Demonstrating personal and collective agency
Responsible decision-making	The abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behaviour and social interactions across diverse situations. This includes capacities to consider ethical standards and safety concerns, and to evaluate the benefits and consequences of various actions for personal, social and collective wellbeing.
	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrating curiosity and open-mindedness • Learning how to make a reasoned judgment after analysing information, data and facts • Identifying solutions for personal and social problems • Anticipating and evaluating the consequences of one's actions • Recognising how critical thinking skills are useful both inside and outside of school • Reflecting on one's role to promote personal, family, and community wellbeing • Evaluating personal, interpersonal, community, and institutional impacts

Models

Domains	Definition
Relationship skills	<p>The abilities to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups. This includes the capacities to communicate clearly, listen actively, cooperate, work collaboratively to problem-solve and negotiate conflict constructively, navigate settings with different social and cultural demands and opportunities, provide leadership, and seek or offer help when needed.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating effectively • Developing positive relationships • Demonstrating cultural competency • Practicing teamwork and collaborative problem-solving • Resolving conflicts constructively • Resisting negative social pressure • Showing leadership in groups • Seeking or offering support or help when needed • Standing up for the rights of others
Social awareness	<p>The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathise with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures and contexts. This includes capacities to feel compassion for others, understand broader historical and social norms for behaviour in different settings, and recognise family, school and community resources and supports.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking others' perspectives • Recognising strengths in others • Demonstrating empathy and compassion • Showing concern for the feelings of others • Understanding and expressing gratitude • Identifying diverse social norms, including unjust ones • Recognising situational demands and opportunities • Understanding the influence of organisations and systems on behaviour

The concentric circles that sit outside the CASEL 5 make it clear that effective SEL is everyone's responsibility. School-family-community partnerships coordinate SEL practices and establish equitable learning environments across all contexts.

What is the evidence base?

CASEL draws on multiple fields and sources and includes analyses of hundreds of studies that show SEL leads to positive outcomes relating to social and emotional skills, attitudes about self, school, civic engagement, social behaviours, conduct problems, emotional distress, and academic performance.¹³⁹

How is social and emotional learning embedded?

SEL-focused classrooms comprise the following three components:¹⁴⁰

- A supportive classroom environment: supportive classrooms help students to feel safe emotionally and physically and to feel motivated to learn. It is the foundation from which students are able to fully engage and take academic risks.¹⁴¹
- Integration of SEL into academic instruction: integrating SEL into day to day learning involves providing students with the opportunity to practice and reflect on their SEL skills alongside their academic learning.¹⁴²
- Explicit SEL instruction: explicit teaching of SEL skills gives students the chance to practice and reflect on their SEL competencies in developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive ways.¹⁴³

What is the relationship between social and emotional learning and positive outcomes?

Academic and behavioural outcomes

Results from a meta-analysis across 213 studies involving more than 270,000 students found that:¹⁴⁴

- SEL interventions that address the five core competencies increased students' academic performance by 11 percentage points, compared to students who did not participate.
- Students participating in SEL programmes demonstrated improved classroom behaviour, an increased ability to manage stress and depression, and more positive attitudes about themselves, others, and school.

Mental health outcomes

- A 2021 systematic review found that universal SEL interventions increase young people's SEL skills and reduce short-term experiences of depression and anxiety.¹⁴⁵

Lifetime outcomes

- There are statistically significant associations between SEL skills in kindergarten and key outcomes for young adults later in life. Specifically, early SEL development helped to reduce cost to the public purse including assistance, housing, police involvement, and detention.¹⁴⁶

Financial returns

- The value of SEL programmes is demonstrated in cost-benefit research. A 2015 report by Columbia University found an average return on investment for six evidence-based programs of 11:1, i.e. for every dollar invested there is an \$11 return.¹⁴⁷

The OECD's Survey on Social and Emotional Skills (SSES)¹⁴⁸

How is social and emotional learning defined?

The SSES survey by the OECD focuses on exploring a subset of whole child development termed 'social and emotional skills.'¹⁴⁹

Social and emotional learning (SEL) skills are defined as "a subset of an individual's abilities, attributes and characteristics important for individual success and social functioning. Together, they comprise a comprehensive set of skills essential for students to be able to succeed at school and fully participate in society as active citizens."¹⁵⁰

According to the OECD, SEL skills are malleable. They are "partly shaped by environments such as families, schools, peers, life events, and individual actions and perceptions".¹⁵¹

Howsoever they are called, SEL skills are not fixed for life. Rather, "biological and environmental factors, important life events, and individual effort are all factors that influence social and emotional skills throughout our lives."¹⁵²

The SSES groups SEL skills into five domains based on the Big Five personality traits.¹⁵³

In the SSES survey, each domain of the Big Five is represented by three skills, leading to a total of 15 skills. Two additional skills, self-efficacy and achievement motivation, are also included. The domains and skills are listed in the table on the next page.

Biological and environmental factors, important life events, and individual effort are all factors that influence social and emotional skills throughout our lives

”

Description of the skills included in the OECD’s Study on Social and Emotional Skills¹⁵⁴

Domains	Skills	Description	Behavioural examples
Open-mindedness (openness to experience)	Curiosity	Interest in ideas and love of learning, understanding and intellectual exploration; an inquisitive mind-set.	Likes to read books, to travel to new destinations. Opposite: dislikes change, is not interested in exploring new products.
	Tolerance	Is open to different points of view, values diversity, is appreciative of foreign people and cultures.	Has friends from different backgrounds. Opposite: dislikes foreigners or people from different backgrounds.
	Creativity	Generating novel ways to do or think about things through exploring, learning from failure, insight and vision.	Has original insights, creates valued art works. Opposite: acts conventionally, not interested in arts.
Task Performance (conscientiousness)	Achievement orientation	Setting high standards for oneself and working hard to meet them.	Enjoys reaching a high level of mastery in some activity. Opposite: lack of interest in reaching mastery in any activity, including professional competences.
	Responsibility	Able to honour commitments, and be punctual and reliable.	Arrives on time for appointments, gets chores done right away. Opposite: doesn't follow through on agreements/promises.
	Self control	Able to avoid distractions and sudden impulses and focus attention on the current task in order to achieve personal goals.	Postpones fun activities until important tasks are completed, doesn't rush into things. Opposite: is prone to say things before thinking them through. Binge drinking.
	Persistence	Persevering in tasks and activities until they get done.	Finishes homework projects or work once started. Opposite: Gives up easily when confronted with obstacles/distractions.

Domains	Skills	Description	Behavioural examples
Engaging with others (extraversion)	Sociability	Able to approach others, both friends and strangers, initiating and maintaining social connections.	Skilled at teamwork, good at public speaking. Opposite: can struggle in working with a larger team, avoids public speaking.
	Assertiveness	Able to confidently voice opinions, needs, and feelings, and exert social influence.	Takes charge in a class/team. Opposite: waits for others to lead the way, keeps quiet when disagrees with others.
	Energy	Approaching daily life with energy, excitement, and spontaneity.	Is always busy; works long hours. Opposite: gets tired easily without physical cause.
Collaboration (agreeableness)	Empathy	Understanding and caring for others and their well-being that leads to valuing and investing in close relationships.	Consoles a friend who is upset, sympathises with the homeless. Opposite: Tends to misinterpret, ignore or disregard other person's feelings.
	Trust	Assuming that others generally have good intentions and forgiving those who have done wrong.	Lends things to people, avoids being harsh or judgmental. Opposite: is secretive and suspicious in relations with people.
	Cooperation	Living in harmony with others and valuing interconnectedness among all people.	Finds it easy to get along with people, respects decisions made by a group. Opposite: Is prone to arguments or conflicts with others, does not tend to reach compromises.
Emotion regulation (emotional stability)	Stress resistance	Effectiveness in modulating anxiety and able to calmly solve problems (is relaxed, handles stress well).	Is relaxed most of the time, performs well in high-pressure situations. Opposite: most of the time worries about things, difficulties sleeping.
	Optimism	Positive and optimistic expectations for self and life in general.	Generally in a good mood. Opposite: often feels sad, tends to feel insecure or unworthy.
	Emotional control	Effective strategies for regulating temper, anger, and irritation in the face of frustrations.	Controls emotions in situations of conflict. Opposite: gets upset easily; is moody.
Compound skills	Self-efficacy	The strength of individuals' beliefs in their ability to execute tasks and achieve goals.	Remains calm when facing unexpected events. Opposite: avoids challenging situations.

What is the evidence base?

The SSES survey is currently the most comprehensive effort to collect reports from students, parents and teachers on the social and emotional skills of learners at age 10 and 15.¹⁵⁵

Ten cities participated in the study: Bogotá (Colombia), Daegu (Korea), Helsinki (Finland), Houston (United States), Istanbul (Turkey), Manizales (Colombia), Moscow (the Russian Federation – hereafter “Russia”), Ottawa (Canada), Sintra (Portugal) and Suzhou (People’s Republic of China). All cities are located in OECD countries, except Moscow and Suzhou, which are located in partner countries.¹⁵⁶

Data is collected from 3000 students in each of the two cohorts (ages 10 and 15). Sampling was a two-stage process: first, schools within a city were randomly selected, followed by randomly selecting students within those schools. The survey used a stratified random sampling of schools with the selection probability being proportional to school size.¹⁵⁷

What is the relationship between social and emotional skills and adversity?

On average, socio-economically advantaged students reported higher social and emotional skills than their socio-economically disadvantaged peers.¹⁵⁸

- Compared to students of low socio-economic status, students of high socio-economic status had much higher skills related to the domain of open-mindedness including tolerance, curiosity, creativity, as well as empathy, assertiveness, and self-efficacy.¹⁵⁹
- The smallest difference in stress-resistance skills between students of high and low-socio economic status was found.¹⁶⁰
- Students from wealthier families reported a stronger sense of fitting in well at school and better relationships with teachers than their worse-off peers.¹⁶¹
- Across both 10- and 15-year-olds, and in almost all cities, socio-economically advantaged students were more likely than socio-economically disadvantaged students to report that their teachers treated them more fairly more frequently, that they got on well with their teachers more frequently, and that their teachers were more frequently interested in their wellbeing.¹⁶²
- Better-off students also reported higher levels of life satisfaction and current psychological wellbeing compared to less economically advantaged students.¹⁶³
- Students from more disadvantaged backgrounds were less ambitious about their expectations for further education than their more advantaged peers. In fact, socio-economic status was the most significant correlate of students’ future educational aspirations.¹⁶⁴

- Overall, students of high socio-economic status felt significantly more confident in their own creative abilities and curiosity than students of low socio-economic status.¹⁶⁵

What is the relationship between social and emotional skills and positive outcomes?

Social and emotional skills have been found to be good predictors of educational, labour, and social outcomes.

Educational outcomes

- SEL skills are strong predictors for academic success beyond students’ backgrounds, age cohorts, and cities.¹⁶⁶
- The SEL skills most strongly correlated to school grades in reading, maths, and art are being intellectually curious and persistent.¹⁶⁷
- In 7 of the 9 cities, trust was positively related to maths grades for 15-year-olds after accounting for other factors.¹⁶⁸
- Motivation and self-confidence have strong influences over educational attainment.¹⁶⁹

Social outcomes

- After accounting for socio-economic status and gender, SEL skills were strongly related to students’ psychological wellbeing.¹⁷⁰
- Optimism shows the strongest and most consistent relationship with high life satisfaction across cities and ages, followed by trust.¹⁷¹
- Sociability, optimism, and cooperation are the SEL skills most strongly related to a students’ sense of school belonging.¹⁷²
- SEL skills are important drivers for mental health and labour market prospects.¹⁷³

Labour outcomes

- Between students of similar socio-economic backgrounds, educational expectations for higher education were most strongly related to their level of intellectual curiosity.¹⁷⁴
- Social and emotional skills are linked to children’s’ career aspirations. Students who aspire to become health professionals report higher levels of curiosity and cooperativity whilst students aspiring for careers within the armed forces or police force report being more energetic.¹⁷⁵

School-level factors linked to strong/ weak social and emotional skills

Strong SEL skills

- Student-teacher relationships are positively related to all SEL skills. Optimism, curiosity and achievement motivation, followed closely by co-operation and self-efficacy, are most strongly related to student-teacher relations.¹⁷⁶
- Curiosity and creativity are positively associated with a strong sense of belonging at school among 15-year-olds, and lower among students who reported being bullied.¹⁷⁷

Weak SEL skills

- Students' exposure to bullying is negatively related to almost all social and emotional skills.¹⁷⁸
- Exposure to bullying is most strongly linked to lower skills in the domains of emotional regulation (stress resistance, optimism, and emotional control) as well as trust.¹⁷⁹
- Students who reported higher exposure to bullying tended to report lower optimism, emotional control, stress resistance, and trust.¹⁸⁰
- Low SEL skills (low emotional regulation) correlates with higher test anxiety.¹⁸¹
- Less sense of belonging and weaker student-teacher relationships are associated with weak SEL skills.¹⁸²

University College London¹⁸³

How are social and emotional skills defined?

University College London (UCL), through its literature review for the 2015 report *Social and emotional skills in childhood and their long-term effects on adult life*¹⁸⁴, identified five groupings of social and emotional skills outlined below.

Skill	Description
Self-perception and self-awareness	This skill relates to a child's knowledge and perception of themselves, their confidence in their abilities and a belief in their efficacy in future tasks.
Motivation	This describes the reasons for which people strive towards their goals.
Self-control and self-regulation	This refers to how children manage and express their emotions, and their ability to overcome impulsiveness to pursue higher order endeavours.
Social skills	These skills encompass a child's ability and tendency to interact with others, to create and maintain relationships, and to follow social norms including behaviours. It also covers domains such as communication, kindness, empathy, sharing, and cooperativeness.
Resilience and coping	These skills are demonstrated where children adapt positively in the face of difficulties and stressful circumstances.

What is the evidence base?

Their 2015 report, *Social and emotional skills in childhood and their long-term effects on adult life*, conducted a literature review of the link between social and emotional skills in childhood and outcomes in later life, as well as conducting an analysis linking social and emotional and cognitive skills recorded at age 10 with experiences at age 42, using data from the British Cohort Study.

What is the relationship between social and emotional skills and adversity?

- Less affluent children exhibit more conduct and emotional problems on average compared to their better-off peers, and this gap appears very early in childhood. By age 3, poorer children display worse conduct than their better-off peers, and these differences persist throughout pre-adolescence (i.e., up to age 11).
- There are strong skill gaps associated with the following factors: low family income, unemployed parents, the family living in social housing, and the mother having been young at the cohort member's birth, all indicators of social disadvantage.
- The analysis strongly suggests that where there is poor parental mental health or other socio-economic disadvantages, "children are at greater risk of development of poor social and emotional skills."

What is the relationship between social and emotional skills and positive outcomes?

The table below sets out how the different social and emotional skill are positively (+) or negatively (-) associated with a range of adult outcomes, assessed using the British Cohort Study data.

Models

Child skill group	Adult outcome			
	Mental health & wellbeing	Labour market/ socioeconomic	Physical health & health behaviours	Other
Self-perceptions and Self-awareness	Wellbeing (+) Life Satisfaction (+) Malaise (-)	Income (+) Top Job (+) Wealth (+) Degree (+) Social Housing (-)	Self-rated Health (+) Obesity (-) Drinking (-) Smoking (-)	Partnership (+) Political Interest (+)
Self-control and Self-regulation	Life Satisfaction (+) Wellbeing (+)	Income (+) Top Job (+) Employment (+) Degree (+) Social Housing (-)	Self-rated Health (+) Drinking (-) Smoking (-)	Partnership (+) Political Interest (+) Parent (-) No. of Children (-)
Social Skills	Wellbeing (+) Life Satisfaction (+)	Income (+) Job Satisfaction (+) Social Housing (-)	Self-rated Health (+) Drinking (+)	Partnership (+) Parent (+)
Emotional Health	Wellbeing (+) Malaise (-)	Social Housing (+)	Smoking (+)	-
Cognitive Ability	Wellbeing (+)	Income (+) Top Job (+) Employment (+) Wealth (+) Social Housing (-) Job Satisfaction (-)	Self-rated Health (+) Obesity (-) Smoking (-) Exercise (-)	Partnership (+) Political Interest (+)

Note: Malaise = Mental Distress

Labour market & health outcomes

- Self-control and self-regulation in childhood are associated with “mental health, life satisfaction and wellbeing, qualifications, income and labour market outcomes, measures of physical health, obesity, smoking, crime, and mortality.”
- Self-awareness is related to several outcomes in later life including mental health, self-rated health, obesity, and unemployment. Self-esteem, meanwhile, is associated with both physical and mental health in adult life.

Non-labour market outcomes

- The research demonstrates that social skills are important predictors of non-labour market outcomes including mental health and wellbeing, healthy behaviours, and marriage in later life.
- Improvements in resilience, coping and motivation increase education attainment.
- The majority of SEL skills help predict educational success (exceptions being self-esteem, emotional health and sociability). However, for most outcomes, their association with childhood SEL skills was effectively independent of educational attainment.

Conclusion

The above chapter exemplifies nine leaders of whole child development. As whole child development is a holistic, developmentally informed approach to ensuring children develop into well-rounded people, it is contextual. SEL is one of the most acknowledged facets of whole child development. See references below to follow further information.

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Polling: Whole child development in English classrooms

While Section 1 provides an overview of some international definitions of whole child development, Section 2 aims to supplement this with insight into the English context by way of teacher polling.

The polling seeks to reveal what teachers understand by whole child development, how confident they feel delivering it, and the extent to which teachers feel their schools are engaging in whole child development practices.

It is divided into two parts and the results should be interpreted considering the broader global evidence set out in the previous section.

Part 1

Teachers' understanding of, and attitudes towards, whole child development.

Part 2

Teachers' understanding and attitudes towards specific aspects of whole child development including: parental engagement, resolving conflicts, cultural competency, neuroscience, SEL, metacognition, and mental health.

A note on polling

This polling took place in November 2021. On average, we received 7,000 responses to our Teacher Tapp polling, including responses from classroom teachers, middle leaders, senior leadership team members, and headteachers. We recognise the limitations of asking teachers to rate their own understanding.

Responses can include bias including social-desirability bias (where participants adapt their responses in order to be more socially desirable) and recall bias (where participants may not always recall past events objectively or correctly). Respondents may also hold higher or lower self-perceptions in confidence levels or in understanding of certain concepts than is the case. They may also misread or misunderstand the questions.

In order to reduce misunderstanding, we worked with Teacher Tapp experts and underwent several iterations to make sure the questions were as direct and clear as possible. With the large and established reach of Teacher Tapp polling, we are confident that the teachers who responded to our questions would have been comfortable in being candid in their views and responses. Anonymity of responses would have also helped teachers to be sincere in their responses.

Questions from the Teacher Tapp polling can be seen in the final section of the appendix.

We received 7,000
responses to our
Teacher Tapp polling.

”

Part 1: Whole child development overview

(a) Familiarity with the concept of whole child development

Teachers recognise the term whole child development.

Teachers were asked what terms they associated with the following definition of whole child development:

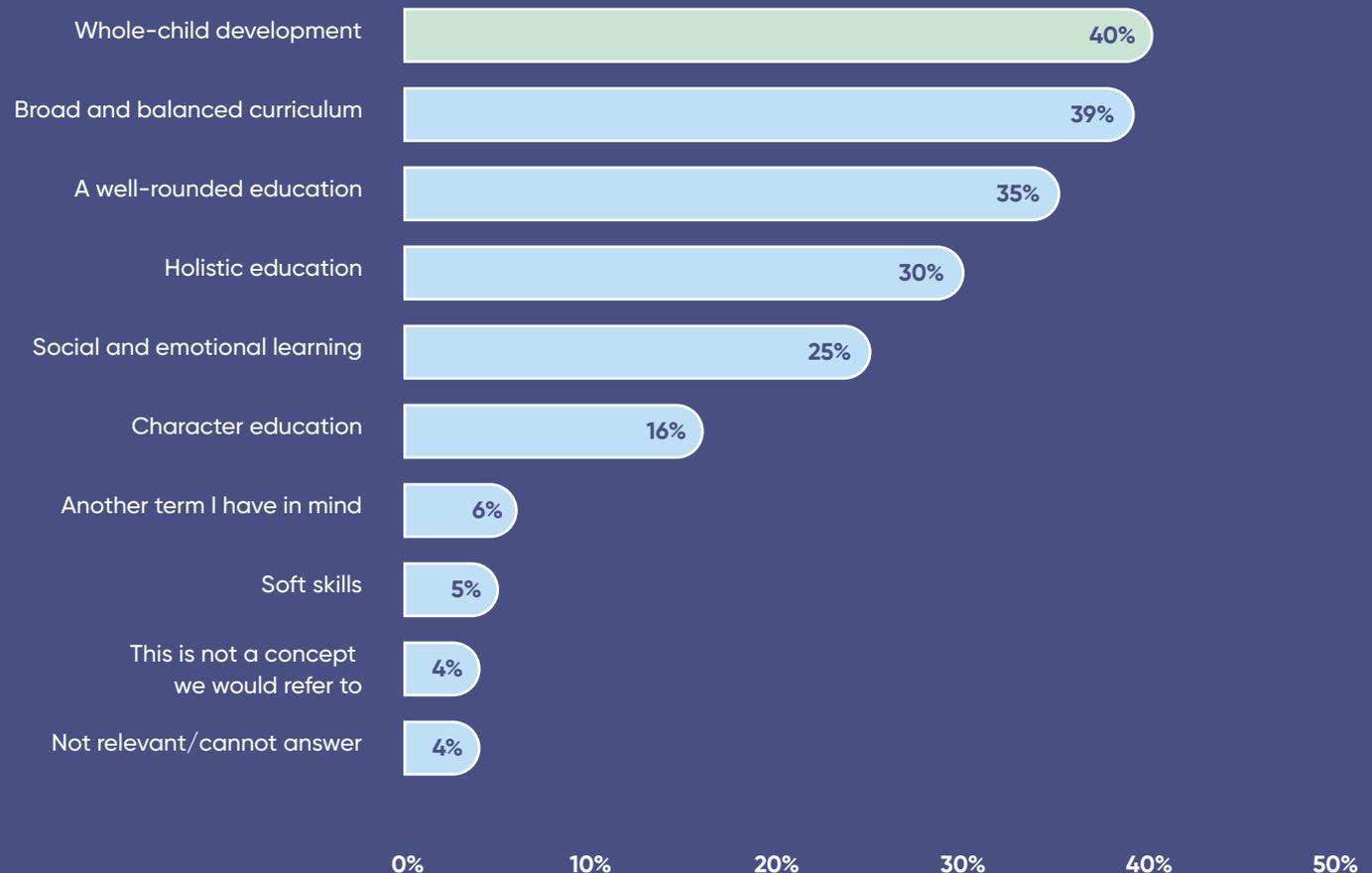
“A focus on developing all aspects of a person, including values, academic knowledge, life skills, and social emotional learning.”

From a 9-item list, where respondents could choose more than one option, whole child development was the most

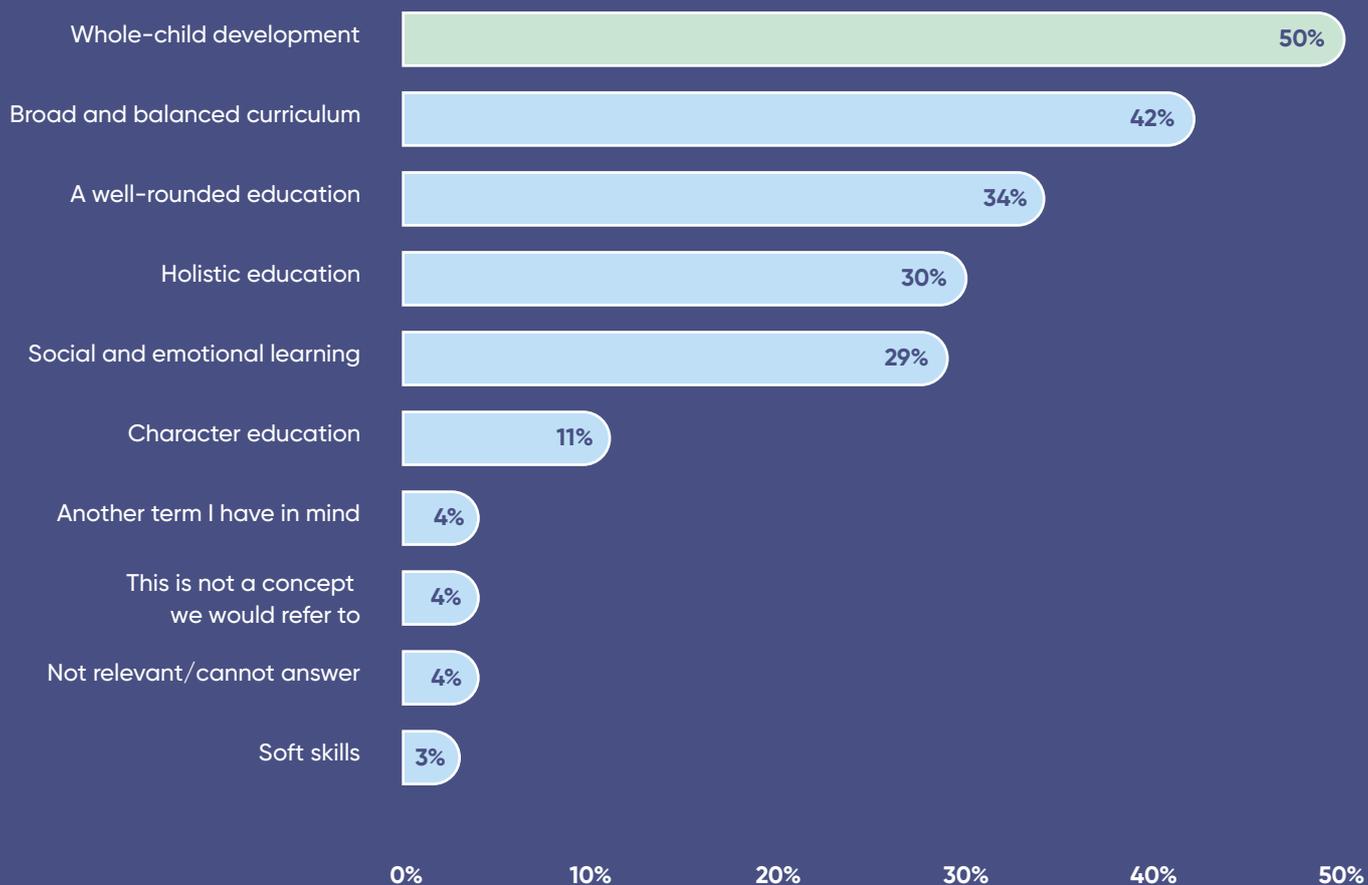
popular choice overall (40%), followed by broad and balanced curriculum (39%), and a well-rounded education (35%).

Results varied by education phase, with primary school teachers almost twice as likely to select the term ‘whole child development’ compared to secondary school teachers (50% vs 30%).

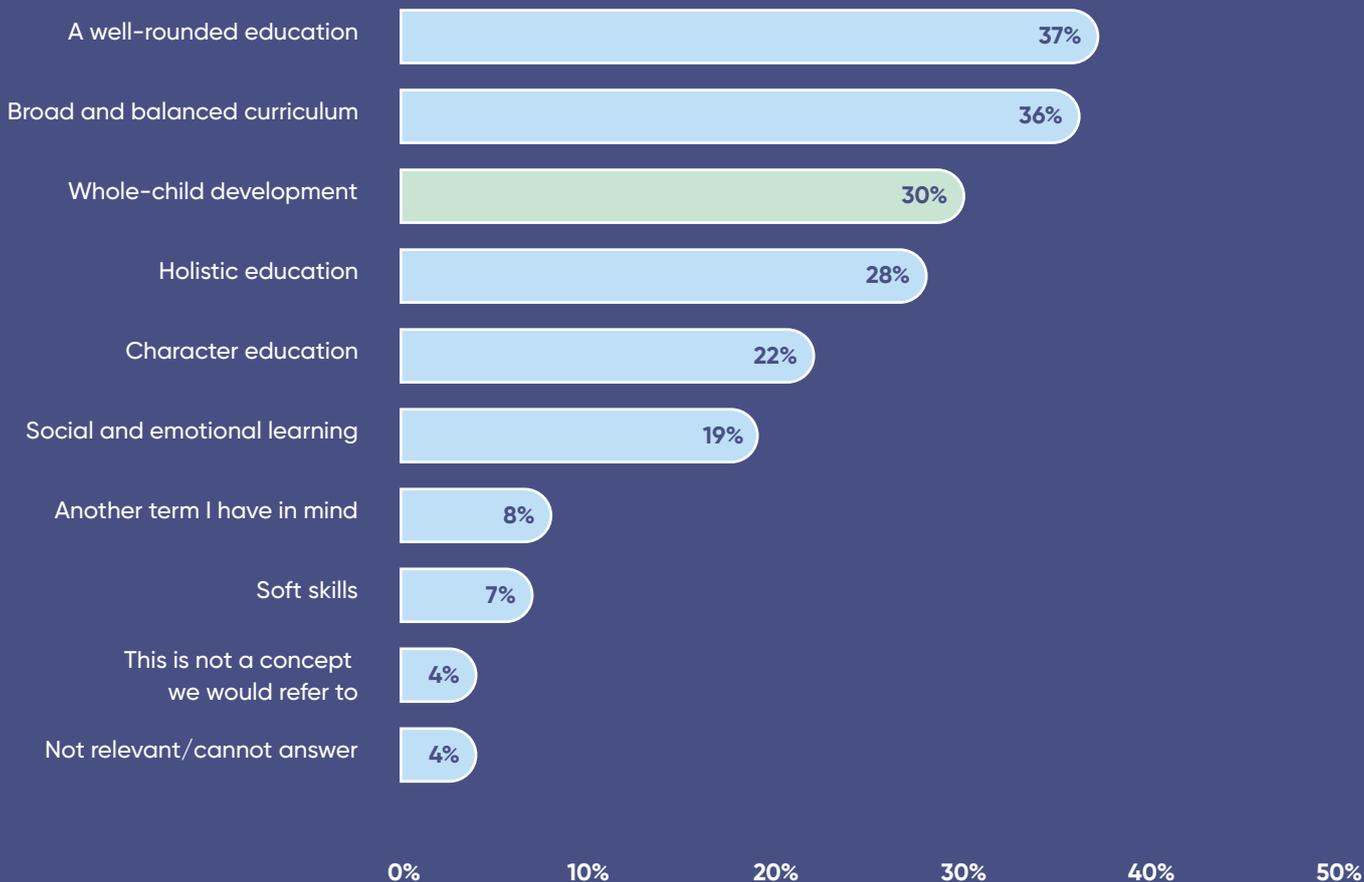
Whole child development is the concept teachers most recognise as the term that describes “a focus on developing all aspects of a person, including values, academic knowledge, life skills, and social-emotional learning”



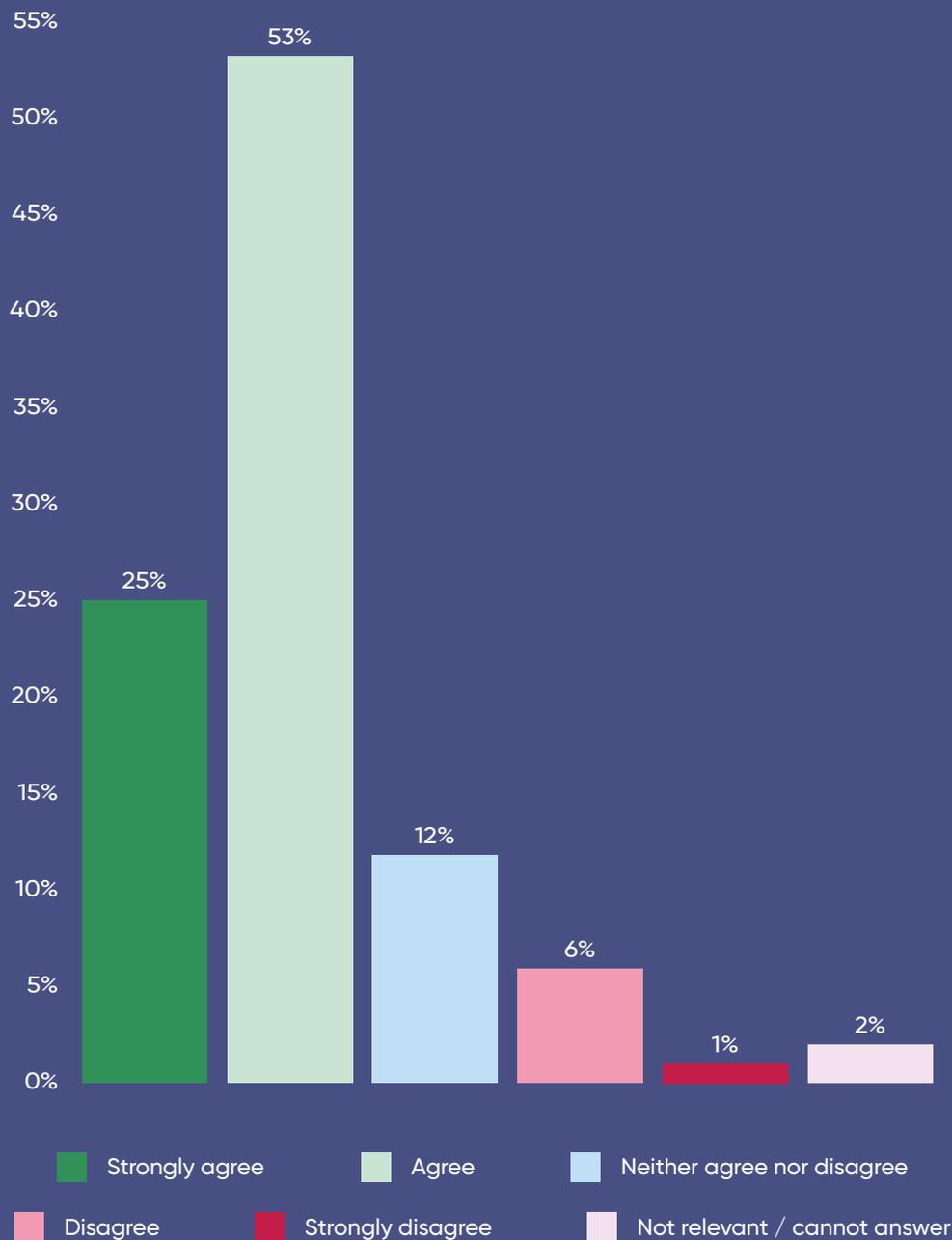
Half of primary school teachers recognise the term whole child development



Less than half of secondary school teachers recognise the term whole child development



Over three-quarters of teachers say that their school follows a whole child development approach to supporting pupils' needs



(b) Recognising the benefits of whole child development

Teachers believe that a whole child development is particularly beneficial for vulnerable pupils.

88% of secondary school teachers and 93% of primary school teachers agree or strongly agree that a whole child development approach has long-term beneficial impacts on all pupils, especially the most vulnerable.

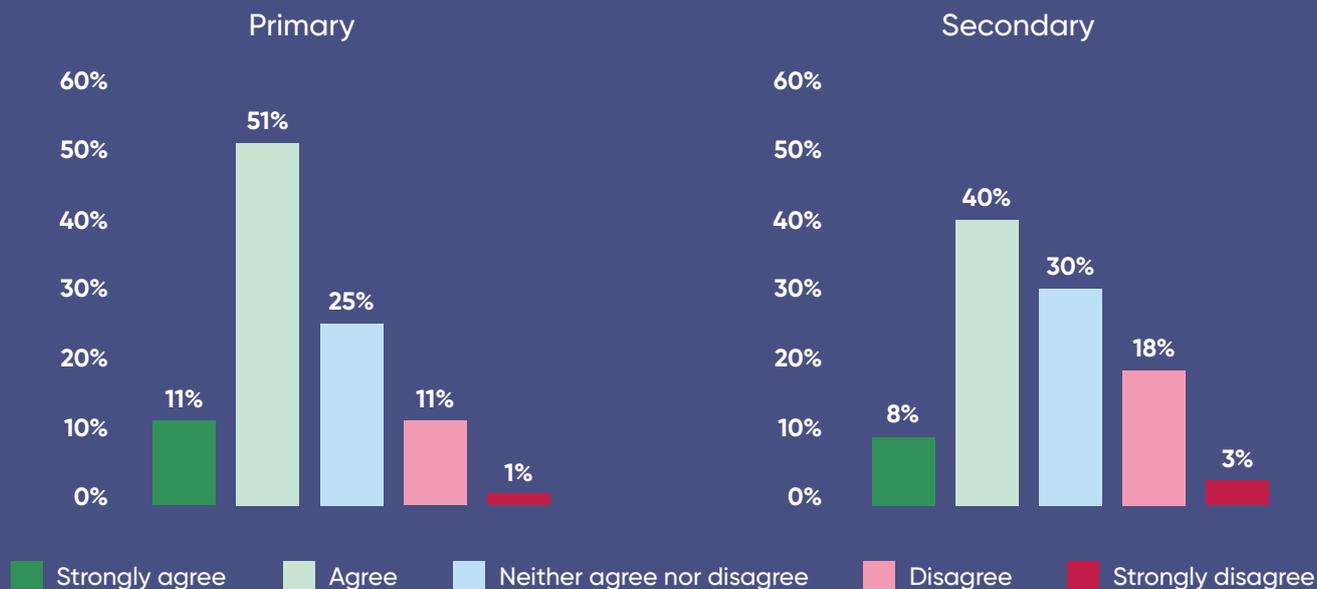
(c) Uptake across schools

The majority of teachers say their school follows a whole child development approach.

8 in 10 teachers (78%) agreed or strongly agreed that their school follows a whole-child approach to supporting pupils.

A higher proportion of primary school teachers agreed or strongly agreed compared to secondary school teachers (80% vs 73%).

Knowledge of a whole child development approach varies by education phase



(d) Understanding of whole child development

Over half of teachers are confident they understand whole child development.

Almost 6 in 10 teachers overall reported that they have a strong understanding of the whole child development approach.

Primary school teachers were more confident than secondary school teachers (62% vs 48%).

Conclusion

The above polling results explore teachers' understanding of, and attitudes towards, whole child development. Results vary by education phase, with primary school teachers almost twice as likely to recognise the term 'whole child development' compared to secondary school teachers. Teachers believe that whole child development is particularly beneficial for vulnerable pupils and 78% say that their school follows a whole-child approach to supporting pupils. The next section describes teachers' understanding and attitudes towards specific aspects of whole child development.

Part 2: Teacher attitudes and experiences in England

This section looks at teachers' attitudes, confidence, and best practice regarding a selection of whole child development domains. The results presented come from a Teacher Tapp survey of 7,000 teachers in England.

1. Parental engagement

What do teachers think about parental engagement?

Teachers believe that the purpose of parental/carer engagement is to support student engagement, inform parents about their child's progress, and to improve student outcomes.

- 83% of teachers believe that the purpose of parental engagement is to inform parents about their child's progress.
- 81% of teachers believe that the purpose of parental engagement is to improve student engagement.
- 80% of teachers believe that the purpose of parental engagement is to improve student outcomes.

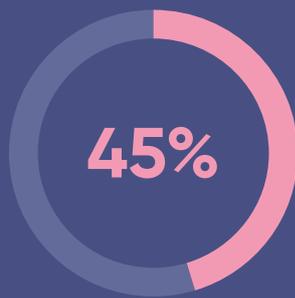
Under usual circumstances (i.e. non-Covid times), teachers primarily engage with parents when their child is disengaged to proactively build positive relationships with parents/carers.

- Almost a third of secondary school teachers (28%) only engage with parents/carers when a student is not completing work or misbehaving.
- Primary school teachers are more likely than secondary school teachers to proactively build relationships with parents/carers before an incident arises (82% vs 45%).
- Secondary school teachers are the most time poor; 27% cited a lack of time as a barrier to engaging with parents/carers compared to 8% of primary school teachers.

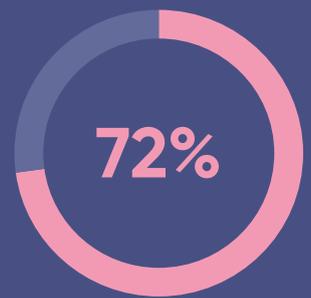
Primary school teachers are more likely than secondary school teachers to proactively build relationships with parents/carers before an incident arises (82% vs 45%).

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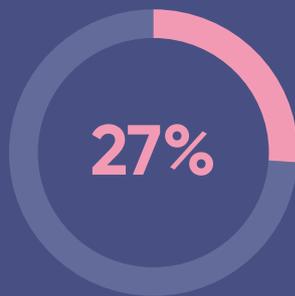
Primary school teachers are almost twice as likely to proactively engage with parents than secondary school teachers are



I proactively build positive relationships with parents/carers (before incidents arise)



I reach out to parents/carers of disengaged students when needed



I do not have time to engage effectively with parents/carers



I only really engage with parents/carers when the student is not completing work or misbehaving



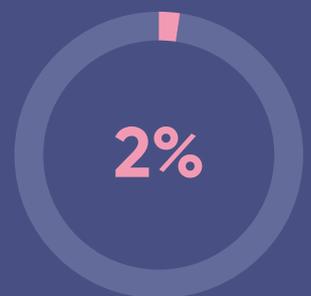
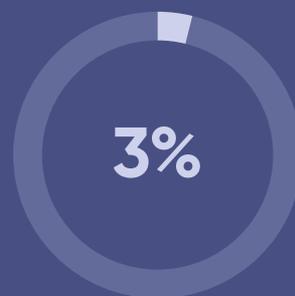
I would like more training on engaging with parents/carers



I would like the school to support me in engaging with parents/carers



It is primarily the responsibility of the pastoral staff to engage with parents/carers



Not relevant / cannot answer

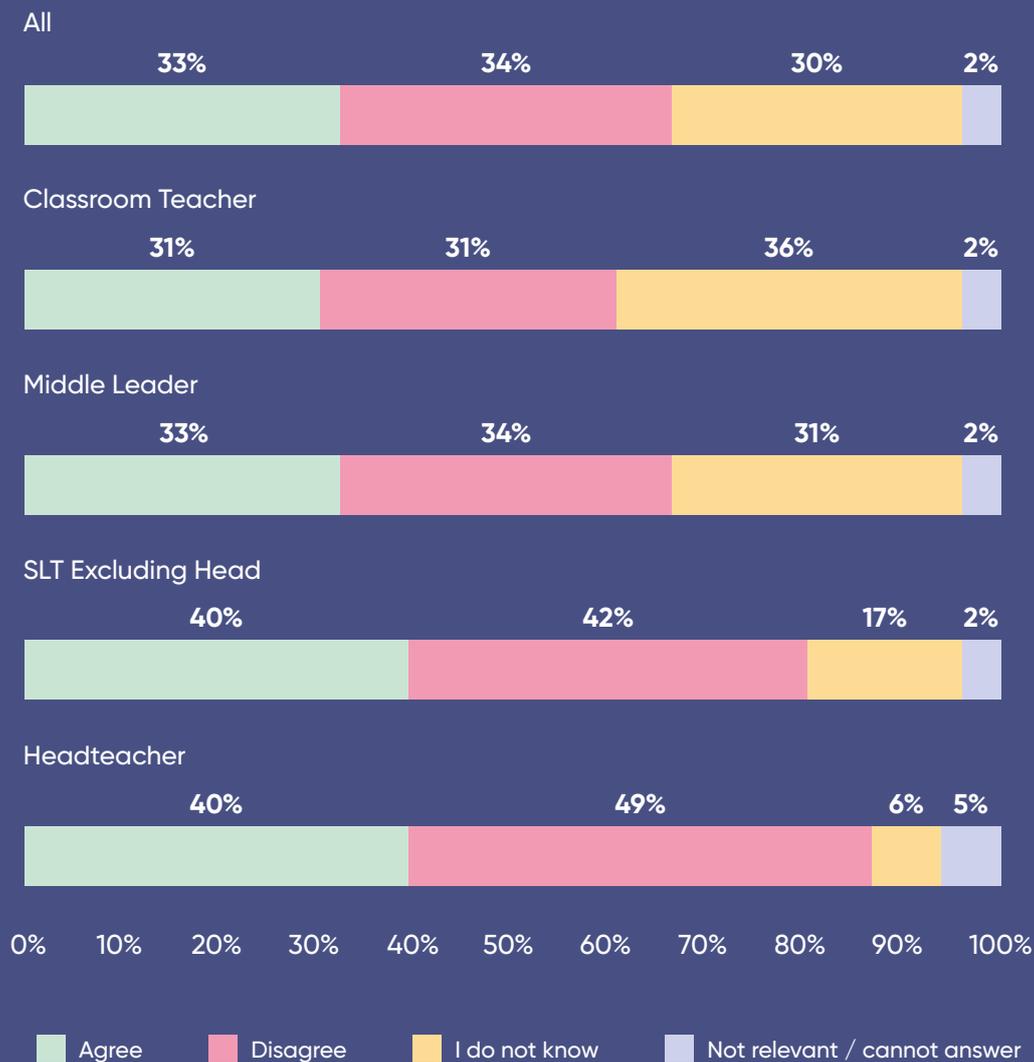
Primary Secondary

Polling: Whole child development in English classrooms

What are schools doing to support best practice in this area?

- One third of schools have a clear, coherent parental/carer engagement strategy.
- 15% of teachers have received training on parental engagement

Overall, teachers are more likely to report that their schools do not have a clear, coherent parent/carer engagement policy



2. Resolving conflicts arising from discrimination

How confident are teachers in this area?

The majority of teachers are confident identifying and resolving conflicts among students arising from discrimination based on physical disabilities (74%), different cognitive abilities (71%), and race (70%).

Teachers are less confident dealing with conflict relating to sexual preference and gender identity.

- 59% of teachers feel confident resolving disputes related to gender identity.
- 64% of teachers feel confident resolving disputes relating to sexual preference.

Polling: Whole child development in English classrooms

What are schools doing to support best practice in this area?

1 in 4 teachers would like more training in this area.

- Teachers were asked which areas, from a 9-point list, they would like more support in. 25% chose the 'identifying conflicts among students relating to discrimination.'

I am confident in my ability to identify and resolve conflicts among students arising from incidences of discrimination based on...		
Area of conflict	Primary teachers	Secondary teachers
Race/ethnicity	73%	66%
Gender identity	54%	62%
Sexual preference	56%	71%
Socio-economic status	66%	66%
Different cognitive abilities	75%	67%
Physical disabilities	78%	69%
Religion	72%	62%

3. Cultural Competency

How confident are teachers in this area?

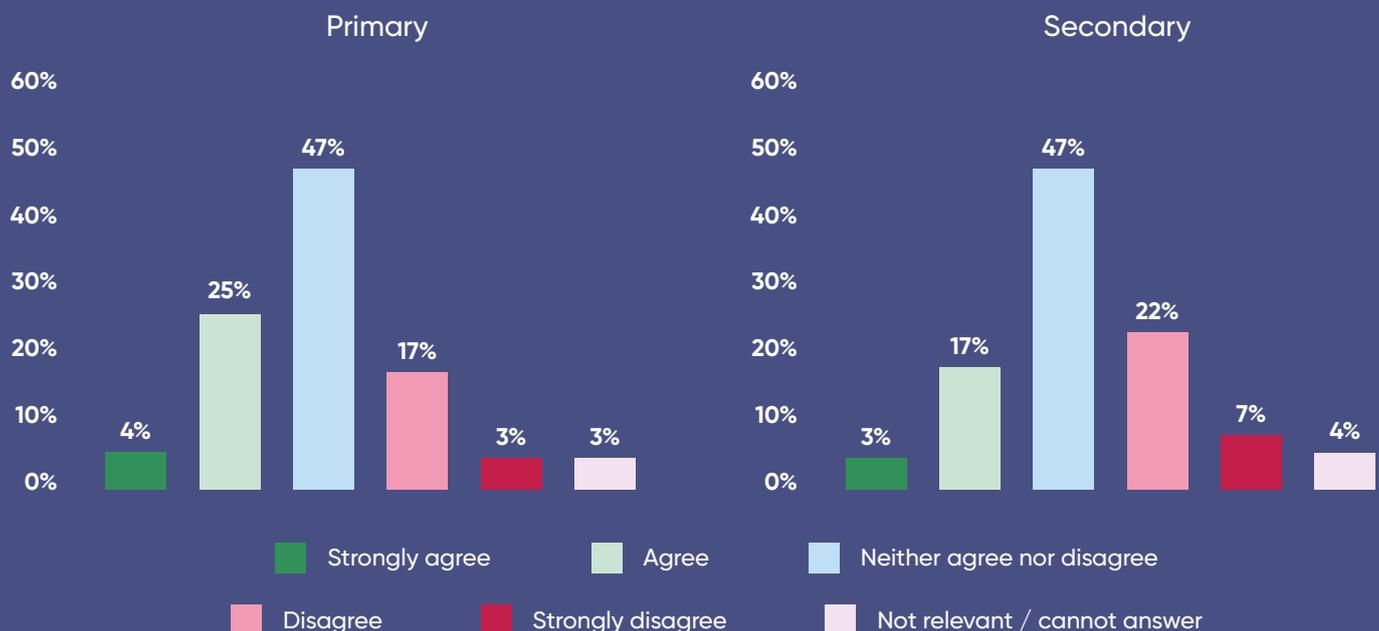
1 in 4 teachers would like more support working with people from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.

- From a 9-point list of areas teachers would like more support in, 25% selected 'working with people from diverse racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.'
- The desire for more training was greatest outside London: 28% of teachers in the South West and 28% of teachers in the North West wanted more support in this area compared to 20% of teachers in London.

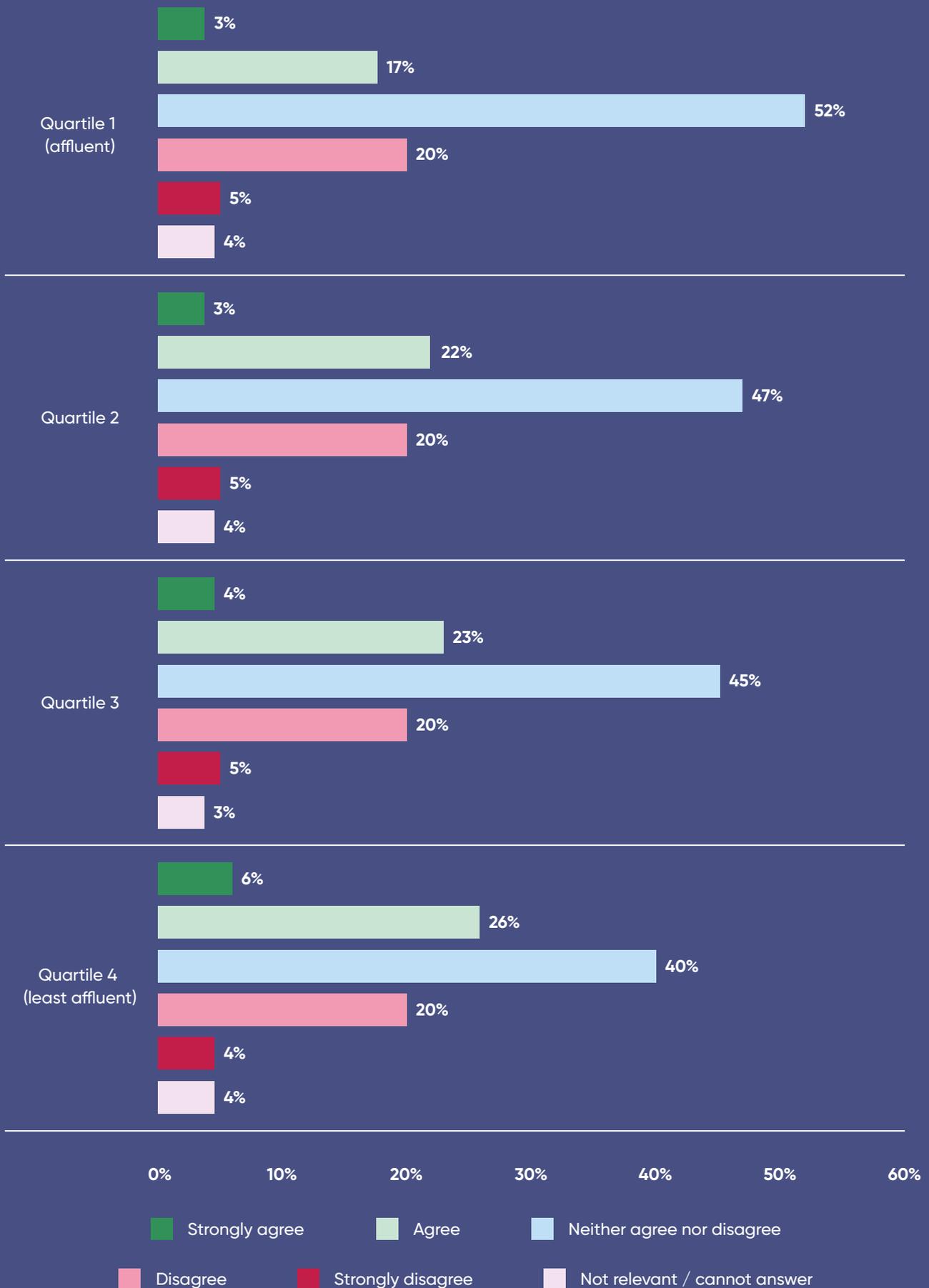
Almost half of teachers want more support around culturally responsive/relevant teaching.

- From the same 9-point list, 44% of teachers said they wanted more training on culturally responsive/relevant teaching.

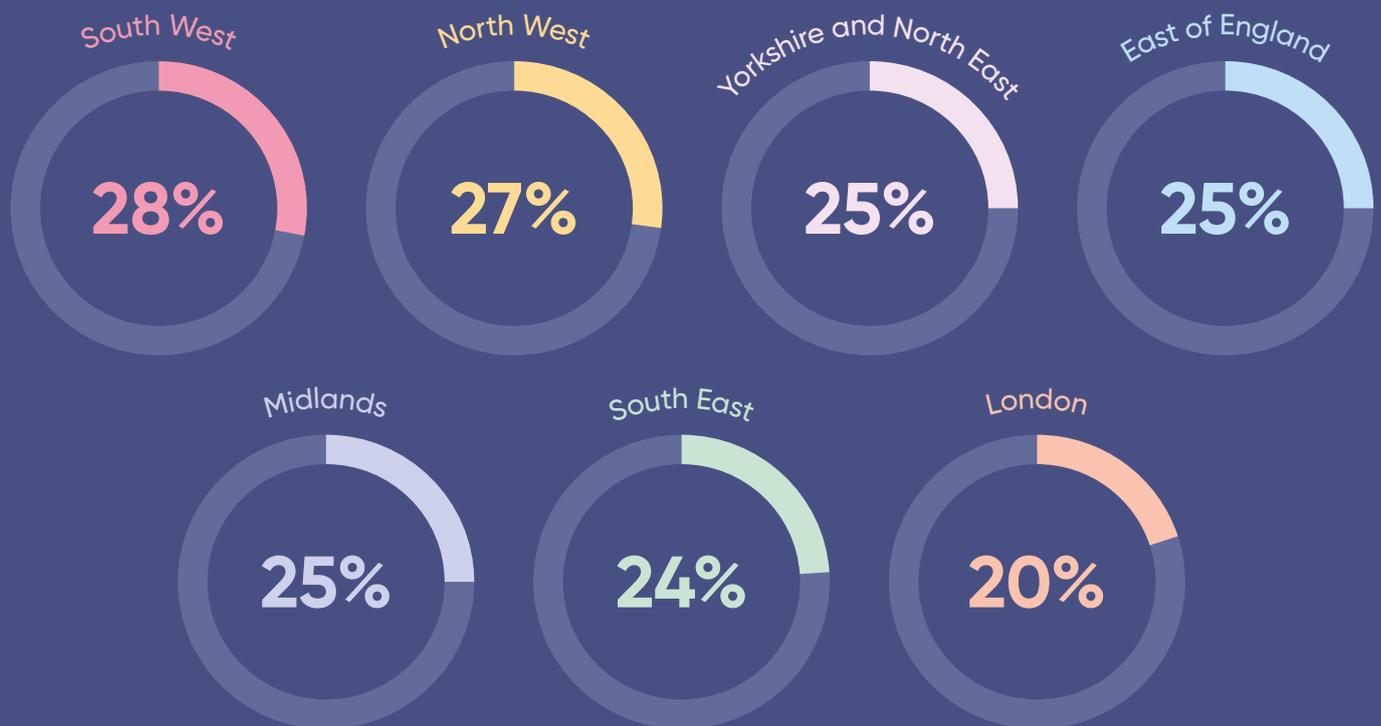
Culturally responsive teaching material is more commonly found in primary schools



Schools in the most deprived areas are more likely to have culturally responsive teaching material compared to schools in more affluent areas



Schools located in the South West and North West are the most likely to want more support for working with diverse student bodies



What are schools doing to support best practice in this area?

3% of teachers have received training on cultural competency.

One quarter of teachers report that their schools emphasise using teaching materials that reflect the culture and/or ethnicity of their students.

- 47% of teachers selected 'neither agree nor disagree' in response to the same question.
- Teachers based in schools serving the most deprived areas were the most likely to agree or strongly agree that their school uses ethnically diverse teaching material (32%) compared with those based in the most affluent areas (20%).

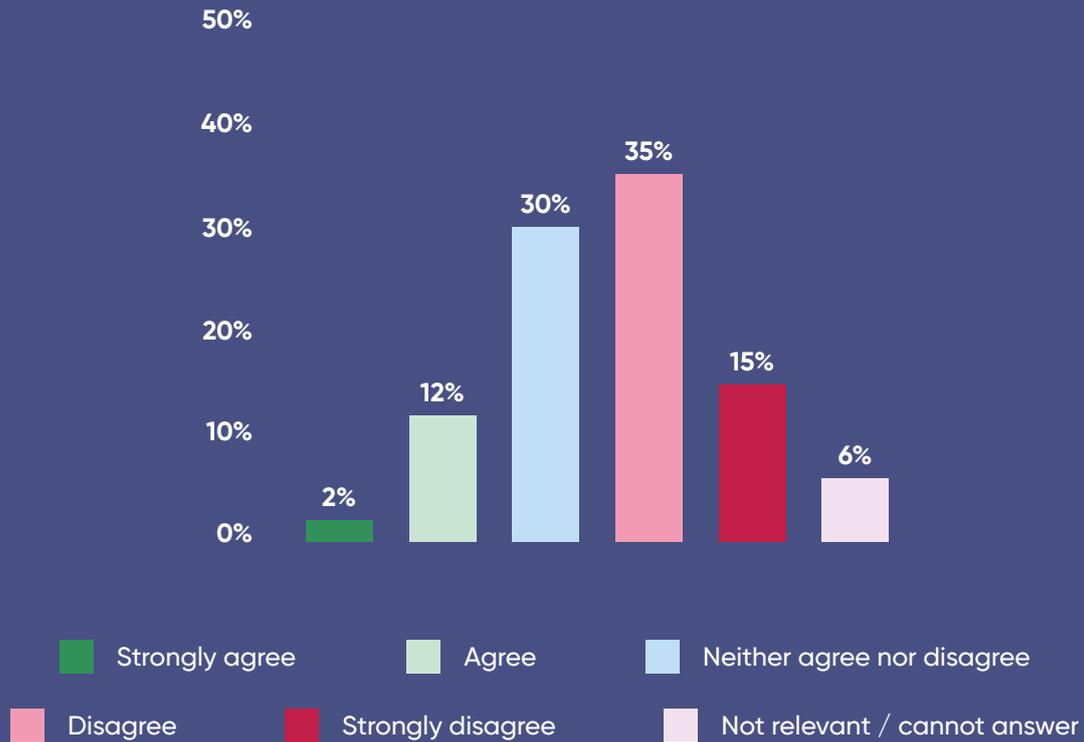
Culturally responsive teaching material is more commonly found in primary schools than in secondary schools.

- Almost 30% of primary school teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their school emphasises teaching materials that reflect their students' ethnicity / culture compared to 20% of secondary school teachers.

Almost 30% of primary school teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their school emphasises teaching materials.

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14% of teachers believe they have opportunities to examine their own cultural biases



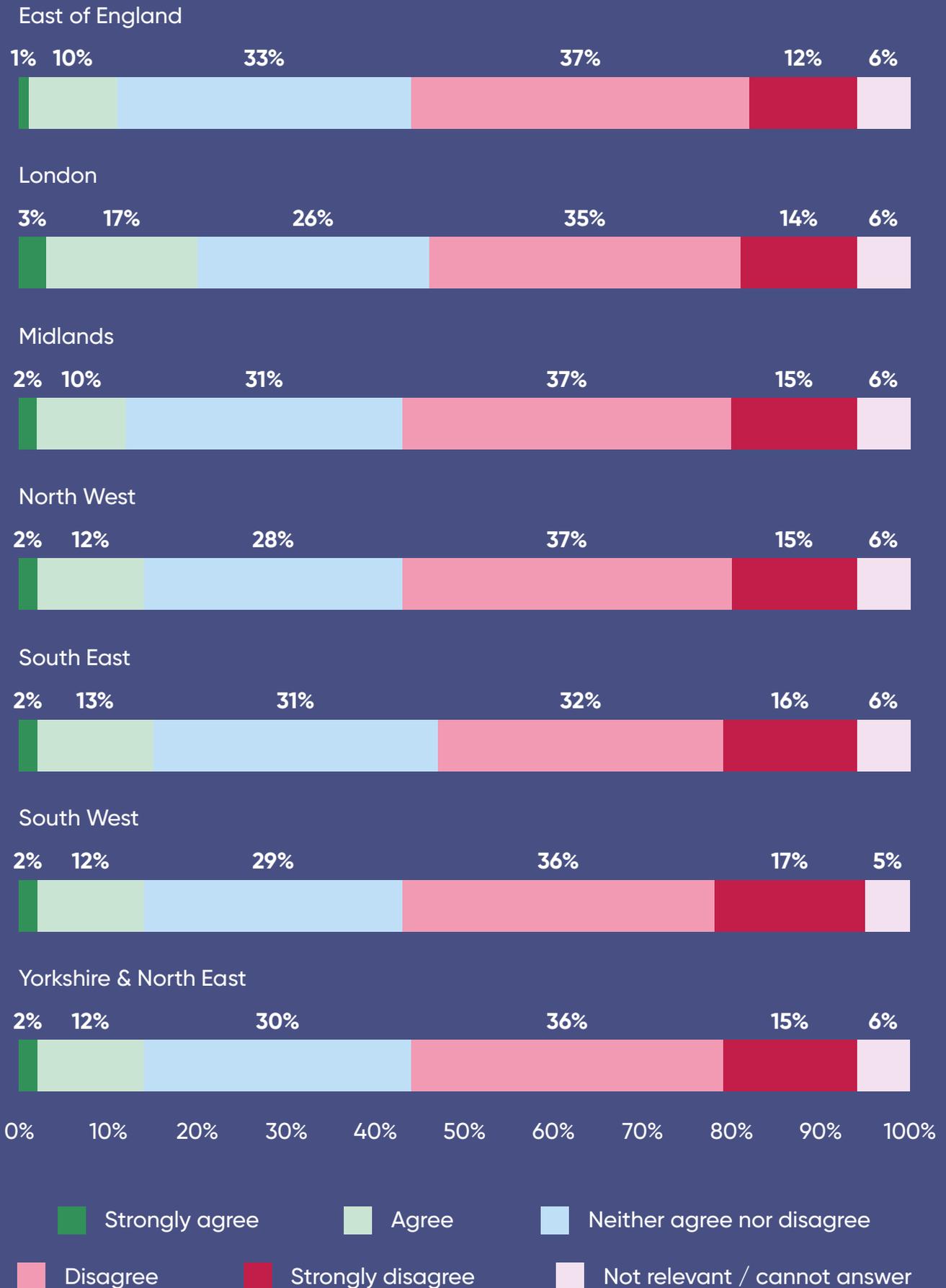
14% of teachers report that their school has opportunities for staff to examine their own cultural biases through professional development or other opportunities.

- 50% disagreed or strongly disagreed that their school offered opportunities to examine cultural biases.

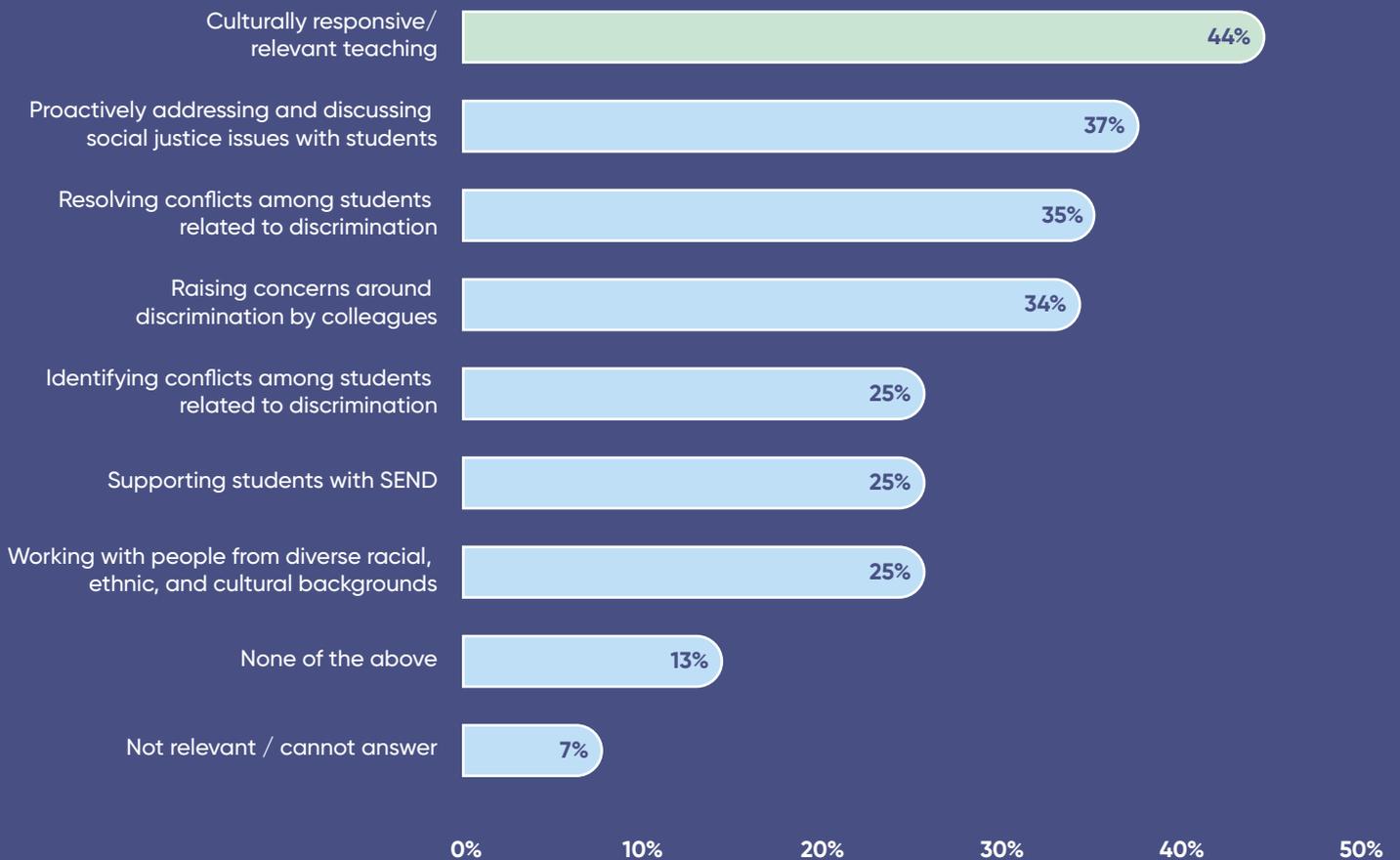
Culturally responsive teaching material is more commonly found in primary schools than in secondary schools.

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Teachers in London-based schools have the most opportunities to examine their cultural biases



Almost half of teachers want more support with culturally responsive/relevant teaching



4. A neuroscience approach

What do teachers think about a neuroscience approach?

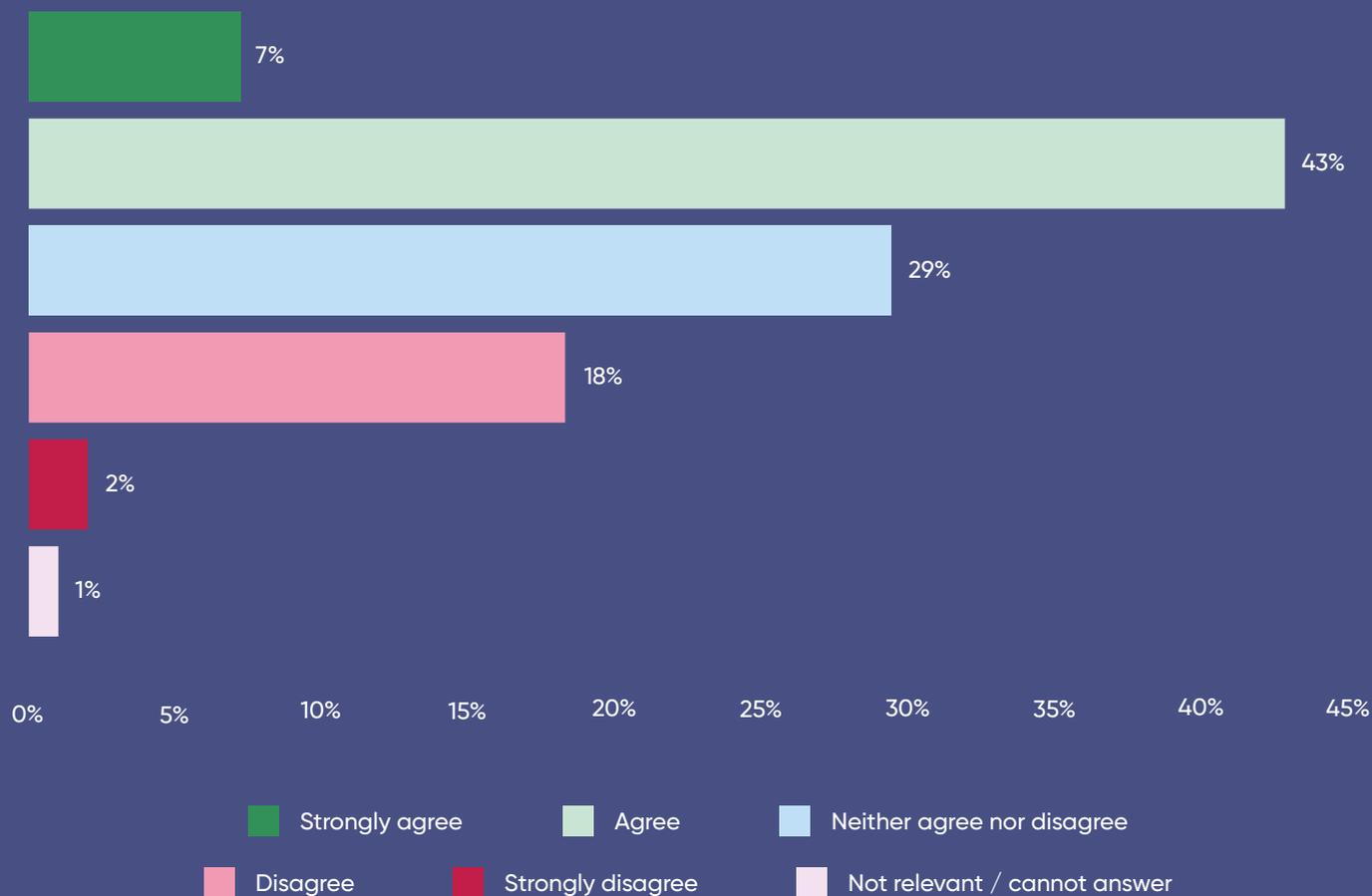
50% of teachers report they have a strong understanding of child and adolescent brain development for the age range they teach.

- When separated according to phase, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1 had the greatest proportion of teachers agreeing with the statement (63%), followed by primary school teachers (53%), and then secondary school teachers (45%).

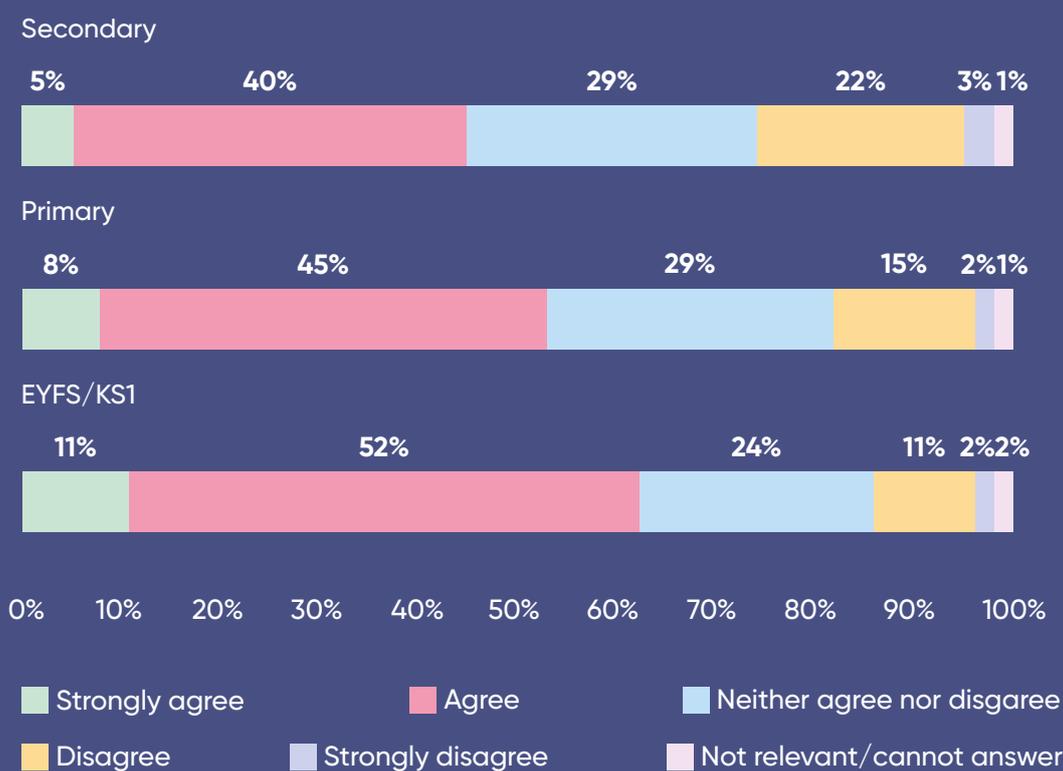
50% of teachers report they have a strong understanding of child and adolescent brain development.

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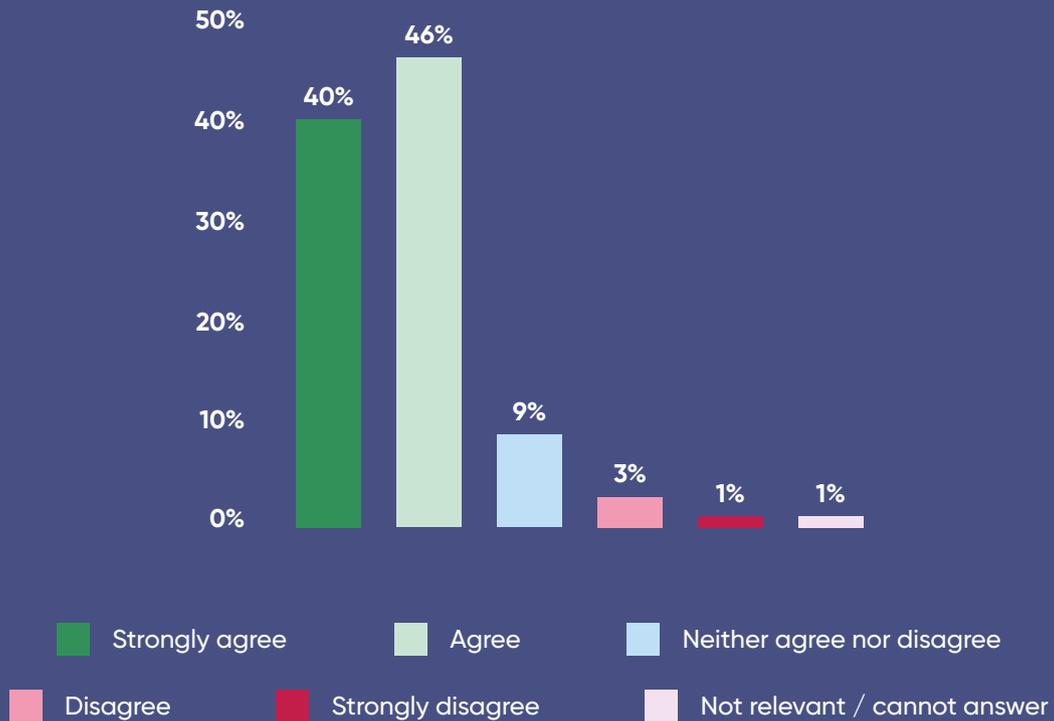
Half of teachers have a strong understanding of the child and adolescent brain



Knowledge of child brain development is strongest in early years and KS1 teachers



Almost 9 in 10 teachers agree that developing students' SEL skills should be a priority



What are schools doing to support best practice in this area?

- 20% of teachers have received training on adolescent brain development (12% primary and 26% secondary).

5. Social and emotional learning (SEL)

What do teachers think about SEL?

86% of teachers agree that developing students social and emotional learning skills should be a priority for all teachers.

- Around one third of teachers 'usually' incorporate SEL skills within their lesson. Primary school teachers do so more than secondary school teachers (77% vs 56%).
- Primary school teachers are more confident than secondary school teachers delivering opportunities for SEL (45% vs 32%).

How confident are teachers in this area?

4 in 10 teachers (39%) want to improve their ability to teach SEL skills.

What are schools doing to support best practice in this area?

25% of teachers have received training on SEL.

Primary school teachers are more confident than secondary school teachers delivering opportunities for SEL (45% vs 32%).



6. Metacognition

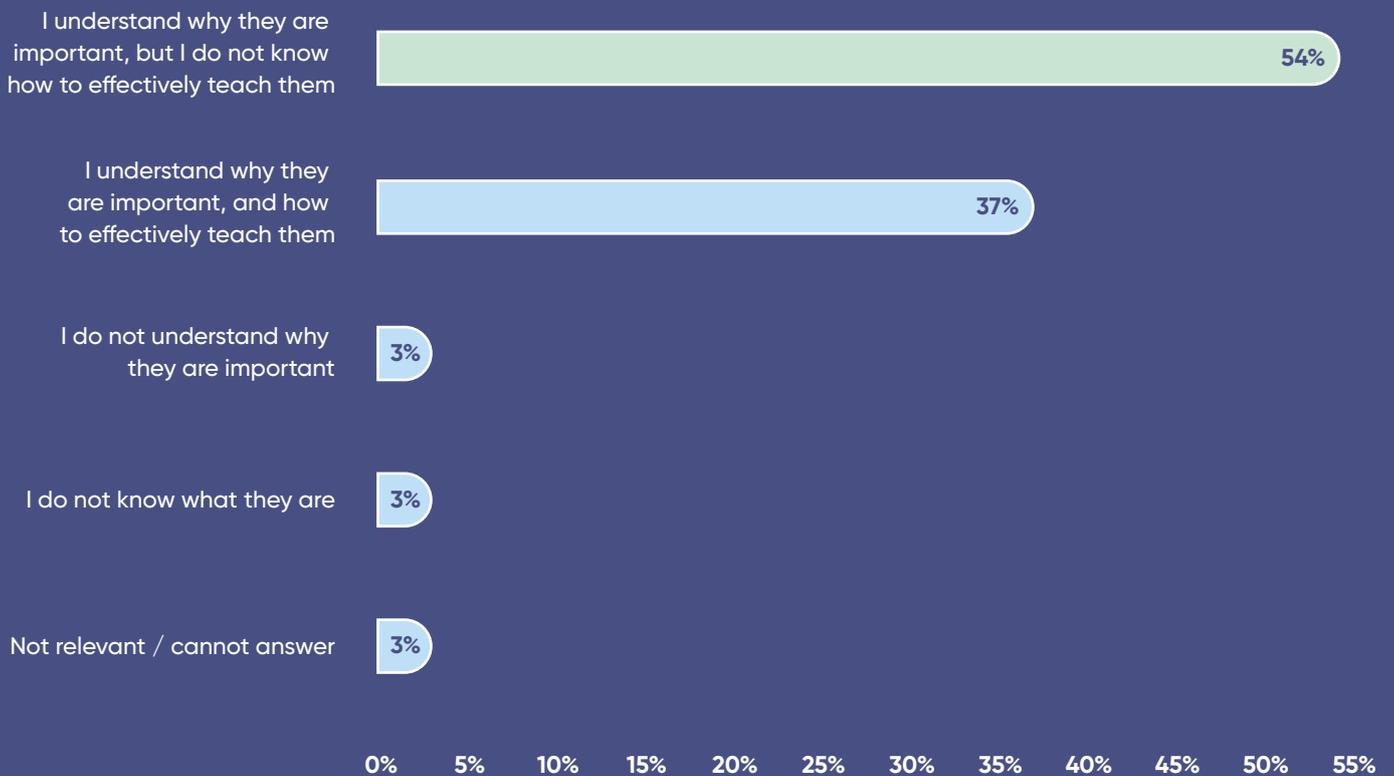
What do teachers think about metacognition?

Almost 4 in 10 (37%) teachers understand that metacognitive strategies are important and know how to effectively teach them.

How confident are teachers in this area?

Over half of teachers (54%) understand why metacognitive strategies are important but do not know how to effectively teach them.

Teachers understand why metacognitive strategies are important but fewer than half know how to effectively use them



7. Mental health

What do teachers think about mental health?

97% of teachers agree that supporting pupil mental health and wellbeing is a key component of whole child development.

- 23% of teachers agree or strongly agree that their school under-prioritises pupil mental health and wellbeing.
- Teachers in schools serving the most deprived children were more likely to agree that their school under-prioritises the area, compared to schools serving more advantaged intakes (28% vs 23%).

How confident are teachers in this area?

Almost 8 in 10 teachers (78%) feel confident identifying social, emotional and mental health needs in the classroom.

- Primary teachers are more confident identifying social, emotional, and mental health needs in the classroom than secondary school teachers (85% vs 66%).
- Almost 8 in 10 teachers feel confident supporting students with social, emotional, and mental health difficulties in the classroom.
- Primary teachers are more confident than secondary school teachers supporting students with social, emotional, and mental health difficulties in the classroom (72% vs 60%).

What are schools doing to support best practice in this area?

- Nearly half of teachers (48%) have received training on student mental health.
- A larger proportion of secondary school teachers have received training on mental health compared to primary school teachers (53% vs 41%).
- 35% of teachers reported that their schools work with alternative provision schools to support pupils with their mental health needs and 31% work with charities/the voluntary sector.

1 in 10 teachers say their school has a standalone mental health policy.

- 50% of teachers say their schools do not have a standalone mental health policy.

Conclusion

This chapter sheds light on teacher perceptions of whole child development and its significant qualities. Overall, though a majority of teachers recognise and understand whole child development and its defining characteristics, knowledge of a whole child development approach varies by education phase.

Training and policies surrounding whole child development factors range and, though the willingness is there, teachers do not always implement whole child development into the classroom.

Training and policies surrounding whole child development factors range.

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Impact:

Examining the link between whole child development and positive outcomes for children

This section explores the various domains of child wellbeing and presents the key pieces of research on how whole child development can improve outcomes for children across these domains.

One of the principal hopes for parents is for their child to reach his or her full potential in life. All children should grow up happy and healthy, while cultivating the skills and knowledge needed to live independently and thrive.

In line with such hopes, the OECD conceptual framework on wellbeing emphasises that children should be able to both enjoy a positive childhood in the here and now while developing skills and abilities that allow them to prepare for the future.¹⁸⁵

The framework is based on and derived from an in-depth review of research evidence on child wellbeing at different stages of childhood and associations with future life outcomes. With 60 years of experience with evidence-based policy analysis and economic data, the OECD has a reputation for providing reliable measures.¹⁸⁶

One of the principal hopes for parents is for their child to reach his or her full potential in life.

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Impact: Examining the link between whole child development and positive outcomes for children

While child wellbeing measurements often address different variables (material wellbeing, physical health, social, emotional, and cultural wellbeing, cognitive development, and educational wellbeing) as separate from one another, the OECD framework aims to overcome this shortcoming by capturing the relationships between all aspects of wellbeing.

The framework is child-centred, age and stage sensitive, reflects children's views and contemporary childhoods, captures stability and change in children's lives, addresses inequalities, and is responsive to the needs of children from diverse backgrounds or in vulnerable positions.¹⁸⁷ The multi-dimensional nature of the framework assessed children's environments, relationships, and other factors influencing wellbeing whilst emphasising age-sensitive concepts and children's personal perspectives. In doing so, this framework addresses both contemporary and future wellbeing.

The most up-to-date statistics on child wellbeing reveal that, compared to other OECD countries, the United Kingdom scores significantly below average in terms of children's life satisfaction, a sense of life purpose and meaning, self-efficacy, and has a higher proportion of children living with limitations due to health problems.¹⁸⁸ Child material deprivation, such as food and housing deprivation, is average compared to other countries. The numbers of children who expect to complete tertiary education and children who are NEET are also average.¹⁸⁹

These results are further substantiated in the findings from the Children's Commissioner's Big Ask.¹⁹⁰ This large survey of young people in England found that 20% of children are unhappy with their mental health, making it the top issue for children today. Furthermore, 16% of children are unhappy with their life at school.

Children recognise the importance of their future as 52% of 9–17 year olds report having a good education as one of their top future priorities and 69% said that having a good job or career was one of their main concerns for when they grow up.¹⁹¹

The state of wellbeing for children within the UK could be better understood by the OECD measure for wellbeing framework. This model can be utilised to better understand how a child's current wellbeing relates to future aspirations, providing policymakers with an in-depth understanding of the UK's below-average wellness scores.

Cognitive and educational outcomes

Cognitive and educational outcomes are some of the leading motivators for professionals to adopt a whole child approach.¹⁹² Whole child development recognises that a child's experiences, emotions, and relationships all contribute to their academic achievements. A meta-analysis of whole-school approaches to social and emotional learning suggests that there is a strong correlation between whole child development and academic attainment.¹⁹³

The following section describes several themes surrounding whole child development and educational outcomes. Table I features various international studies and metrics which report educational accomplishments as a positive result of whole child development.

At the University of Notre Dame, the Global Center for the Development of the Whole Child found that no single domain is the strongest predictor of both academic performance at school age.¹⁹⁴ Rather, the combination of social, emotional, spiritual, physical, intellectual, and creative domains improves school performance and learning.

Several studies suggest that the adaptation of whole child development in schools improves pupils' academic performance. A literature review from the University of Pittsburgh evaluated 327 school environment studies found that support for student psychological needs and academic accomplishment results in higher grades, test scores, an increase in motivation to learn, and is associated with strong interpersonal relationships, communication, cohesiveness, and belongingness between students and teachers.¹⁹⁵

Durlak and colleagues conducted a meta-analysis of 213 school-based SEL programmes which found an 11% increase in results of standardised achievement tests in association with schools with SEL improvement programmes.¹⁹⁶ The findings add to the growing empirical evidence regarding the positive impact of SEL programs.

Furthermore, research from the Education Endowment Foundation suggests successful SEL interventions may add up to an additional four months of academic progress over the course of the year.¹⁹⁷

A case study from the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, Whole Child Approach to Education¹⁹⁸ found pupils enrolled in Citizens of the World Charter schools, which include whole child development support, rank in the top eight percent for maths and top 12% for English language.¹⁹⁹

In other words, all Citizens of the World Charter schools outperform the Los Angeles average for academic attainment in maths and English language. Similarly, research from the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative found that at-risk students with mentors are 55% more likely to enrol in college and 130% more likely to hold leadership positions than their unmentored peers.²⁰⁰

The Australian Council for Educational Research published research that suggests that whole child development helps to reduce school exclusions and encourages attendance from previously excluded children.²⁰¹ Their research found an increase in student participation and engagement with school and an increase in the rates of primary and secondary school completion.²⁰²

School exclusion is associated with its own negative outcomes including low attainment, involvement with the criminal justice system, and greater risk of becoming not in education, employment, or training.²⁰³

Though there is a need for further investigation on the relationship between exclusion and whole child development, these findings suggest that whole child development encourages the reintegration of excluded children into school.

See the appendix for a compendium of the whole child development theories outlined in Part 1 and the education outcomes associated with each study.

Physical health outcomes

The following section describes several themes surrounding whole child development and physical health outcomes. Table II features various international studies and metrics which report positive physical health outcomes as a result of whole child development and the effects positive physical health outcomes have on other metrics of whole child development.

Robust evidence shows that interventions encouraged by the whole school approach have a positive impact in relation to outcomes including body mass index, physical activity, physical fitness, fruit and vegetable intake, tobacco use, and being bullied.²⁰⁴

Recognising the positive health outcomes, some schools adopt the whole child approach to provide pupils with the best possible outcomes. The Chan Zuckerberg Centre offers a case study of good practice for implementing physical health as a part of whole child development. The Girls Athletic Leadership School (GALS) fosters a whole child approach to education across one high school and three middle schools in Denver, CO and Los Angeles, CA. Core to GALS model is a daily class called "GALS Series," in which students encounter content and instruction explicitly designed to promote relational excellence, social-emotional awareness, and identity development.²⁰⁵

Physical health may influence other aspects of whole child development. For instance, there is a strong relationship between physical health and academic outcomes. A 2002 study observing 1,447 students found that higher attaining schools have greater levels of participation in physical activity and sports programmes than lower performing schools.²⁰⁶

Physical activity is also linked to improved classroom behaviour across the whole school.²⁰⁷ Research from Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) centre suggests that the extent of physical activity pupils engaged with at age 11 influenced academic performance across English, maths and science at age 11, 13, and final GCSE exam results.²⁰⁸

Further investigation from the US suggests the percentage of time girls spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity at age 11 predicted increased science scores at 11 and 16 years.²⁰⁹ A similar analysis from the UK suggests that pupils engaging in self-development activities, such as sport and physical activity, achieved 10-20% higher GCSEs.²¹⁰

Furthermore, a meta-analysis on development indicates a whole-school approach to healthy school meals, universally implemented for all pupils, improves academic attainment at key stages 1 and 2, especially for pupils with lower prior attainment.²¹²

Recognising the positive health outcomes, some schools adopt the whole child approach.

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The relationship between academic and physical wellbeing is somewhat reciprocal. Research from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavior Survey note connections between academic achievement and health behaviours such as sleep, alcohol and tobacco use, physical activity, and nutrition.²¹¹

See the appendix Table II for a compendium of the whole child development theories outlined in Part 1 and the physical health outcomes associated with each study.

Social and emotional health outcomes

Social and emotional health stems from feeling well supported from family and school, a sense of self-worth and purpose, and a high sense of life satisfaction.²¹² As a part of whole child development, social and emotional wellbeing help shape a child's future.

The following section describes several themes surrounding whole child development and social and emotional outcomes. Table III features various pieces of research and metrics which report social and emotional wellbeing as a positive result of whole child development.

As one of the key components for the whole child model, social and emotional wellbeing has a positive influence on other aspects of childhood. A 2010 Turkish study suggests pupils' sense of belonging to school is a key determinant of their wellbeing and is higher in schools where children feel safe and have lower levels of bullying.²¹³ These are also more likely to be high achieving schools.²¹⁴

The Early Intervention Foundation found that universal SEL interventions improve young people's social and emotional skills and mitigate symptoms of depression and anxiety.²¹⁵ This research reinforces social skills as an important predictor of non-labour market outcomes including mental health and wellbeing, health positive behaviours, and marriage in later life.²¹⁶

As outlined by the Harvard EASEL Laboratory,²¹⁷ children who partake in SEL programmes experience improved social and emotional wellbeing. Compared to a control group, children who complete the Good Behavior Game at American Institutes for Research programme have reduced rates of antisocial personality disorder and violent and criminal behaviour in young adult men who were identified as being more aggressive and disruptive in elementary school. Programme alumni also experience a decrease in aggressive playground behaviour among students who scored high on aggression before the start of the intervention.

Evaluations of the Positive Action programme suggest elementary school pupils who enrol are less likely to engage in violence and sexual activity or use alcohol or drugs. These pupils are also less likely to exhibit bullying behaviour.

Research from the Girls on the Run programme finds girls who engage in the programme have a greater ability to manage emotions, resolve conflicts, help others, and make intentional decisions. Increased overall self-worth,

improved self-perception of physical appearance, and social acceptance are also outcomes from the course.

The relationship between SEL and positive outcomes is clear. Findings from The Educational Endowment Foundation advise that lower SEL skills are linked to poorer mental health and lower academic achievement.²¹⁸ A longitudinal study of three low-income US cohorts found statistically significant associations between measured social-emotional skills in kindergarten and young adult public health outcomes.²¹⁹ This includes success in education, employment, the avoidance of criminal activity, substance use, and poor mental health.

Research from the Learning Policy Institute advocates for social and emotional wellbeing, which supports psychological needs, supports children in multiple areas of development. Findings suggest support for student psychological needs and academic accomplishment is reflected in higher grades, test scores, increased motivation to learn and is associated with strong interpersonal relationships, communication, cohesiveness, and belongingness between students and teachers.²²⁰

Children's social-emotional and self-regulatory skills facilitate school readiness.²²¹ A study from the United States found that positive teacher-student relationships enhance academic motivation and achievement in 607 academically at-risk first grade children.²²²

Nurturing social and emotional growth has implications for long term outcomes. Future likelihood of committing crimes and acts of violence is greatly influenced by social and emotional development in childhood such as externalising behaviour, social empathy, and effectively regulating emotions.²²³

See the appendix for a compendium (Table III) of the whole child development theories outlined in Part 1 and the social and emotional outcomes associated with each model.

Material Outcomes

The OECD measure for children's well-being describes material outcomes as experiencing food deprivation, severe housing deprivation, child-specific housing deprivation, and children who report not having internet connection at home.²²⁴ Table IV features various pieces of research and metrics which report material outcomes as influenced by whole child development.

There is extensive research on material deprivation as an effect on other aspects of the whole child framework. Factors such as poverty,²²⁵ chronic stress,²²⁶ and trauma can affect brain development²²⁷ to influence children's ability to focus attention, recall information, forward plan, and get along with others, thereby affecting their lifelong experiences, behaviour, and health.²²⁸ Socio-economic status is also a significant correlate of students' future educational expectations.²²⁹

Whole child development aims to nurture a child's academic, cognitive, social, emotional, physical and psychological well-being,²³⁰ therefore has the potential to mitigate the poor outcomes associated with material deprivation.

This effect is reflected throughout evaluations of SEL programmes. SEL courses have the largest impact on children who face the highest number of risks, suggesting that SEL may be particularly relevant and effective for children who have experienced trauma or who are exposed to frequent stressors.²³¹ These findings are echoed throughout research of SEL effectiveness among low socio-economic status pupils.²³² Contemporary research suggests that SEL interventions play a significant role in achieving academic success amongst children from low-income households.²³³

University College London research into long-term outcomes of SEL found strong links between social and emotional skills in childhood and later life labour market outcomes. Children with higher levels of self-perception and self-awareness had higher incomes and greater job satisfaction and reduced chances of unemployment. Emotional health had a positive link with wealth in adulthood. Similarly, children with greater social skills, resilience and coping skills, self-control and self-regulation and emotional health had a higher income compared to their peers.²³⁴

See the Table IV in the appendix for a compendium of the whole child development theories outlined in Part 1 and the material outcomes associated with each model.

Impact: Examining the link between whole child development and positive outcomes for children

Conclusion

The objective of this report is to provide educators with useful resources for enhancing their knowledge of whole child development, which is a comprehensive and developmental approach to fostering well-rounded individuals. It encompasses all aspects of a child's wellbeing, including social, emotional, physical, intellectual, spiritual, and creative dimensions. While social and emotional learning is a key component of whole child development, it is crucial to recognise that whole child development extends beyond these skills and attributes, encompassing a much wider range of factors.

In the first section, we provide a compilation of models for whole child development and social and emotional learning. Drawing upon examples from areas such as Australia, Latin America, Africa, South East Asia, India, the United Kingdom, and the United States, we outline the various contexts for the implementation of whole child development. As a comprehensive and developmentally informed strategy, whole child development emphasises the importance of ensuring that children develop into well-rounded individuals in a contextual manner.

The second chapter explores an analysis of survey data examining how teachers in England understand and approach whole child development. Findings suggest that, although over half of teachers agree that their schools follow a whole child development approach, primary school teachers are almost twice as likely to recognise the term whole child development compared to secondary school teachers. Almost 6 in 10 teachers overall reported that they have a strong understanding of the whole child development approach. Polling results also reflect teachers' attitudes, confidence, and best practice regarding a selection of whole child development domains. Though teachers recognise the importance of parental engagement, primary school teachers are almost twice as likely to proactively engage with parents as secondary school teachers. Almost half of teachers want more support with culturally responsive/relevant teaching. Furthermore, 4 in 10 teachers want to improve their ability to teach social and emotional learning skills. In general, training and policies surrounding whole child development factors range and, though the willingness is there, teachers do not always implement whole child development into the classroom.

The final section delves into the links between whole child development and positive outcomes for children. Using the OECD measure for wellbeing framework, we provide evidence for improved cognitive, educational, physical health, social and emotional health, and material outcomes. Evidence suggests that implementing a whole child approach is strongly correlated with higher academic attainment, higher grades, higher test scores, and an increase in motivation to learn. Further research indicates that whole child development also leads to positive outcomes in areas such as BMI, physical activity, fitness, fruit and vegetable consumption, and limiting tobacco use and bullying. SEL interventions also improve young people's social and emotional skills and mitigate symptoms of depression and anxiety. Whole child development aims to nurture a child's academic, cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and psychological well-being, and therefore has the potential to mitigate the poor outcomes associated with material deprivation. For further information on impact see below references and appendices.

The overall aim of this report is to offer resources to educators who wish to learn more about the whole child approach. In providing a summary of some of the leading research into whole child development and perceptions of whole child development in an English context, we outline how educators can help to promote better outcomes for children. As a point of reference, examples of whole child development from across the world are highlighted throughout this document.

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Appendix

Table I: Whole child development – cognitive and educational outcomes

The following tables include research on cognitive and educational outcomes (Table I), physical health outcomes (Table II), social and emotional outcomes (Table III) and material outcomes (Table IV).

Model Source/Title	Whole child development domains	Cognitive and Educational Outcomes
University of Notre Dame, The Global Center for the Development of the Whole Child ²³⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social • Emotional • Physical • Intellectual • Spiritual • Creative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argues that by applying whole child development we can combat adversity and, therefore, improve educational outcomes. Children experiencing adversity are at increased risk of low educational achievement, behavioural issues and poor mental and physical health outcomes later in life.²³⁶ • Improved school performance and learning.²³⁷ • Executive function and visuospatial skills are also necessary for performing many early motor assessments, and these skills, along with motor coordination, may contribute to academic achievement through multiple pathways.²³⁸ • Higher performance on measures of attention, inhibition, and other executive functions in the preschool years is associated with later academic achievement.²³⁹ • Adult ratings of a school-age child’s capacity to complete specific tasks were highly predictive of school grade completion and adult literacy scores; however, this finding was true only for girls.²⁴⁰ • An analysis of three longitudinal datasets in low- and middle-income countries also showed that cognitive scores in the age range four to eight years predicted later school achievement and grade attainment.²⁴¹
Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, Whole Child Approach to Education ²⁴²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health • Social emotional development • Physical health • Cognitive development • Identity development • Academic development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of 600 elementary schools in LA, CWC students ranked in the top 8% for maths and top 12% for English language. • All CWC schools outperformed the LA average for academic attainment in maths and English language. • At-risk students with mentors are 55% more likely to enrol in college and 130% more likely to hold leadership positions than their unmentored peers.

Model Source/Title	Whole child development domains	Cognitive and Educational Outcomes
<p>Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), <i>Measuring What Matters</i>²⁴³</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values • Spirituality • Life skills • Academic knowledge • Social & emotional learning • Health • Student engagement • Safe environment • Adult support • Academically challenging learning • Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving academic outcomes for students. • Increasing completion rates for secondary school students. • Increased student participation and engagement with school, increased inclusion of previously excluded students, and reduced absentee and truancy rates. • Increased student resilience. • Increased parent engagement with schools.
<p>Learning Policy Institute, <i>Educating the Whole Child</i>²⁴⁴</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive school climate • Individualised supports • Productive instructional strategies • Social and emotional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A report reviewing 78 school climate studies published since 2000 found that a positive school climate can reduce the negative effects of poverty on academic achievement.²⁴⁵ • A literature review of 327 school climate studies found that support for student psychological needs and academic accomplishment results in higher grades, test scores, an increase in motivation to learn, and is associated with strong interpersonal relationships, communication, cohesiveness, and belongingness between students and teachers.²⁴⁶ • A strong academic climate enabling student learning and achievement is promoted by high expectations, organised classroom instruction, effective leadership, and teachers who believe in themselves and promote mastery learning goals. • Support for student psychological needs and academic accomplishment is reflected in higher grades, test scores, and increased motivation to learn and is associated with strong interpersonal relationships, communication, cohesiveness, and belongingness between students and teachers. • The structural features of the school, such as school size, physical conditions, and resources, can also impact student achievement by shaping students' daily experiences of personalization, a sense of caring, and the curriculum and instruction they experience.

Model Source/Title	Whole child development domains	Cognitive and Educational Outcomes
<p>The OECD's Survey on Social and Emotional Skills (SSES)²⁴⁷</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open mindedness (openness to experiences) • Task performance (conscientiousness) • Engaging with others (extraversion) • Collaboration (agreeableness) • Emotional regulation (emotional stability) • Additional indices (achievement motivation and self-efficacy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEL skills are strong predictors for academic success beyond students' backgrounds, age cohorts and cities.²⁴⁸ • The SEL skills most strongly correlated to school grades in reading, maths and art are being intellectually curious and persistent. • In 7 of the 9 cities, trust was positively related to math grades for 15-year-olds after accounting for other factors. • Motivation and self-confidence have strong influences over educational attainment.²⁴⁹ • Low SEL skills (low emotional regulation) correlates with higher test anxiety. • Less sense of belonging and weaker student-teacher relationships are associated with weak SEL skills.
<p>Harvard, EASEL Laboratory²⁵⁰</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive • Emotion • Social • Values • Perspective • Identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-quality child-teacher relationships were shown to help students develop and use SEL competencies, protect students who are at greater levels of risk, and buffer against the effects of victimization and adversity.²⁵¹ • Learning environments that are safe, secure, enriching, and characterised by positive relationships are more likely to promote development of SEL skills and mitigate against the effects of stress and trauma.²⁵² • Strong, positive relationships help develop self-regulation, a basic skill that is fundamental to multiple SEL domains.²⁵³
		<p>Ruler:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher levels of classroom emotional support, instructional support, and classroom organisation. • Higher adaptability scores (positive relationships, leadership, and studying); lower scores on school problems (attention and learning problems); higher English language Arts (ELA) and work habits/social development grades. • Increased engagement in 6th grade; improved conduct in 7th grade.

Model Source/Title	Whole child development domains	Cognitive and Educational Outcomes
		<p>SSIS SEL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive effect on empathy and engagement as well as improved academic motivation and engagement. • Increases in academic motivation and engagement particularly for students with lower initial levels of academic motivation and engagement. • Overall, higher gains in classrooms with lower pre-test scores. • Teachers view the program positively and perceive the SSIS as a socially valid and feasible intervention for primary grades. • Teachers' ratings of ease of implementation and relevance/sequence were different across grade levels in the second year of implementation.
		<p>Positive Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher average scores on maths and reading tests, lower rates of absenteeism, and marginally lower rates of suspensions. • Teachers, parents and students reported improvements in school quality.
		<p>MindUp</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements in peer-nominated positive social behaviours, improvements in maths, self-reported wellbeing and pro-sociality and reductions in peer-nominated aggressive behaviours. • Teachers reported higher working memory and planning/organization and higher scores on literacy and vocabulary assessments. • Students who receive the intervention demonstrate an improvement in adaptive skills and reduction in behavioural symptoms, internalizing composite, and externalizing composite outcomes.²⁵⁴ • Decrease in executive functioning deficits among students who participated in MindUP. • Students display an increase in passive on-task behaviours and a decrease in non-disruptive off-task behaviours.²⁵⁵

Model Source/Title	Whole child development domains	Cognitive and Educational Outcomes
<p>The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) SEL Framework²⁵⁶</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness • Self-management • Social awareness • Relationship skills • Responsible decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEL interventions that address the five core competencies increased students' academic performance by 11 percentage points, compared to students who did not participate.²⁵⁷ • Students participating in SEL programs demonstrated improved classroom behaviour, an increased ability to manage stress and depression, and more positive attitudes about themselves, others, and school.²⁵⁸ • 11% increase in results of standardised achievement tests in association with schools with SEL improvement programmes.²⁵⁹
<p>University College London²⁶⁰</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-perception and self-awareness • Motivation • Self-control and self-regulation • Social skills • Resilience and coping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of the social and emotional skills we included in our research helped to predict educational success (exceptions being self-esteem, emotional health and sociability). However, for the majority of outcomes, their association with childhood social and emotional skills was effectively independent of educational attainment. • Improvements in resilience and coping and motivation increase education attainment.
<p>Education Endowment Foundation²⁶¹</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision-making skills • Interaction with others • Emotional regulation skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful SEL interventions may add up to an additional four months' academic progress over the course of the year. • Intervention targeted at secondary school pupils tend to be more effective, with an average of five additional months' progress made compared to an average four month gain for primary schools. • Gains tend to be higher for literacy outcomes (approx. 4 months') compared to mathematics (approx. 3 months').

Table II: Whole child development – physical health outcomes

Study Source/Title	Whole child development measures	Physical Health Outcomes
University of Notre Dame, The Global Center for the Development of the Whole Child ²⁶²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social • Emotional • Physical • Intellectual • Spiritual • Creative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children experiencing adversity are at increased risk of low educational achievement, behavioural issues and poor mental and physical health outcomes later in life.²⁶³
Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, Whole Child Approach to Education ²⁶⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health • Social emotional development • Physical health • Cognitive development • Identity development • Academic development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mental health domain draws from the definition provided by the World Health Organization: a “state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.”²⁶⁵ • The Girls Athletic Leadership School (GALS) fosters a whole child approach to education across one high school and three middle schools in Denver, CO and Los Angeles, CA. Core to GALS model is a daily class called “GALS Series,” in which students encounter content and instruction explicitly designed to promote relational excellence, social-emotional awareness, and identity development.²⁶⁶
Learning Policy Institute, Educating the Whole Child ²⁶⁷	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive school climate • Individualised supports • Productive instructional strategies • Social and emotional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole child development acknowledges the interrelationships between all areas of development and alters school policies and procedures to support them.²⁶⁸ This includes, for example, access to nutritious food and healthcare, restorative disciplinary practices, secure relationships and learning opportunities that engage students interests and improve their self-confidence.

Table III: Whole child development – social and emotional outcomes

Study Source/Title	Whole child development measures	Social and Emotional Outcomes
<p>Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), Measuring What Matters²⁶⁹</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values • Spirituality • Life skills • Academic knowledge • Social & emotional learning • Health • Student engagement • Safe environment • Adult support • Academically challenging learning • Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements in student wellbeing
<p>Learning Policy Institute, Educating the Whole Child²⁷⁰</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive school climate • Individualised supports • Productive instructional strategies • Social and emotional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for student psychological needs and academic accomplishment is reflected in higher grades, test scores, and increased motivation to learn and is associated with strong interpersonal relationships, communication, cohesiveness, and belongingness between students and teachers.
<p>The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) SEL Framework²⁷¹</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness • Self-management • Social awareness • Relationship skills • Responsible decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 2021 systematic review found that universal SEL interventions “enhance young people’s social and emotional skills and reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety in the short term.”

Study Source/Title	Whole child development measures	Social and Emotional Outcomes
University College London ²⁷²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-perception and self-awareness • Motivation • Self-control and self-regulation • Social skills • Resilience and coping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 2021 systematic review found that universal SEL interventions “enhance young people’s social and emotional skills and reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety in the short term.” • The research demonstrates that social skills are important predictors of non-labour market outcomes including “mental health and wellbeing, health behaviours, and marriage in later life.”
Education Endowment Foundation ²⁷³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision-making skills • Interaction with others • Emotional regulation skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower SEL skills, moreover, are linked to poorer mental health and lower academic achievement.

Table IV: Whole child development – material outcomes

Study Source/Title	Whole child development measures	Material Outcomes
Learning Policy Institute, Educating the Whole Child ²⁷⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive school climate • Individualised supports • Productive instructional strategies • Social and emotional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole child development aims to nurture a child’s academic, cognitive, social, emotional, physical and psychological well-being, and therefore has the potential to mitigate the poor outcomes associated with material deprivation.
The OECD’s Survey on Social and Emotional Skills (SSES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open mindedness (openness to experiences) • Task performance (conscientiousness) • Engaging with others (extraversion) • Collaboration (agreeableness) • Emotional regulation (emotional stability) • Additional indices (achievement motivation and self-efficacy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-economic status is a significant correlate of students’ future educational expectations.

Teacher Tapp Polling Questions

Set 1

1. In the context of your school, what term(s) would you use for this concept? "A focus on developing all aspects of a person, including values, academic knowledge, life skills and social emotional learning."

- a. Character education
- b. Holistic education
- c. Soft skills
- d. Whole-child development
- e. Social and emotional learning
- f. Broad and balanced curriculum
- g. A well-rounded education
- h. Another term I have in mind
- i. This is not a concept we refer to

2. A whole child development approach would have a long-term beneficial impact on all pupils

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

3. I have strong knowledge and understanding of the Whole Child Development approach:

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

Set 2

1. Whole child development is defined as 'a focus on developing all aspects of a child, including values, academic knowledge, life skills, social and emotional learning, and physical and emotional health'. My school follows a whole child approach to supporting pupils' needs:

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree
- f. Don't know

2. Supporting pupil mental health and wellbeing is a key component of whole child development

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree
- f. Don't know

3. My school under-prioritises pupil mental health and wellbeing

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree
- f. Don't know

4. Which of the following do you think describes 'social, emotional and mental health' needs?

- a. A wide range of social and emotional difficulties
- b. Diagnosable mental health conditions
- c. Both of the above
- d. Don't know

5. How confident do you feel identifying mental health needs in the classroom?

- a. Extremely confident
- b. Somewhat confident
- c. Not very confident
- d. Not at all confident

6. When you identify a child with mental health difficulties in the classroom, which other school staff or departments would you usually speak to?

- a. SENCO
- b. Senior mental health lead
- c. Safeguarding lead
- d. School nurse
- e. Pastoral team
- f. Head of year / form tutor
- g. Attendance team
- h. Behaviour team
- i. Other

7. How confident do you feel supporting students with mental health difficulties?

- a. Extremely confident
- b. Somewhat confident
- c. Not very confident
- d. Not at all confident

8. Have you received training on any of the following?

- a. Special educational needs and disabilities
- b. Attachment and trauma
- c. Adverse childhood experiences
- d. Toxic stress
- e. Adolescent brain development
- f. Cultural competency
- g. Parental engagement
- h. Contextual safeguarding
- i. Social-emotional learning
- j. None of the above

9. Does your school work with any of the following external agencies to support pupils with their mental health needs?

- a. Mental health support teams
- b. Child and adolescent mental health services
- c. Primary GP
- d. Alternative provision schools
- e. Charities / the voluntary sector
- f. Educational psychology team
- g. Early help
- h. Other

10. Does your school have a standalone mental health policy?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Don't know

11. Does your school's behaviour policy take account of students with mental health difficulties?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Don't know

12. Does your school's behaviour policy take a holistic approach to understanding children's needs and the underlying drivers of challenging behaviour?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Don't know

13. Do you think your students have worse mental health than before the pandemic?

- a. Yes - A lot worse
- b. Yes - A bit worse
- c. It has stayed the same
- d. No - Some improvement
- e. No - Large improvement

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