



# Social and Emotional Support at The Mill Academy





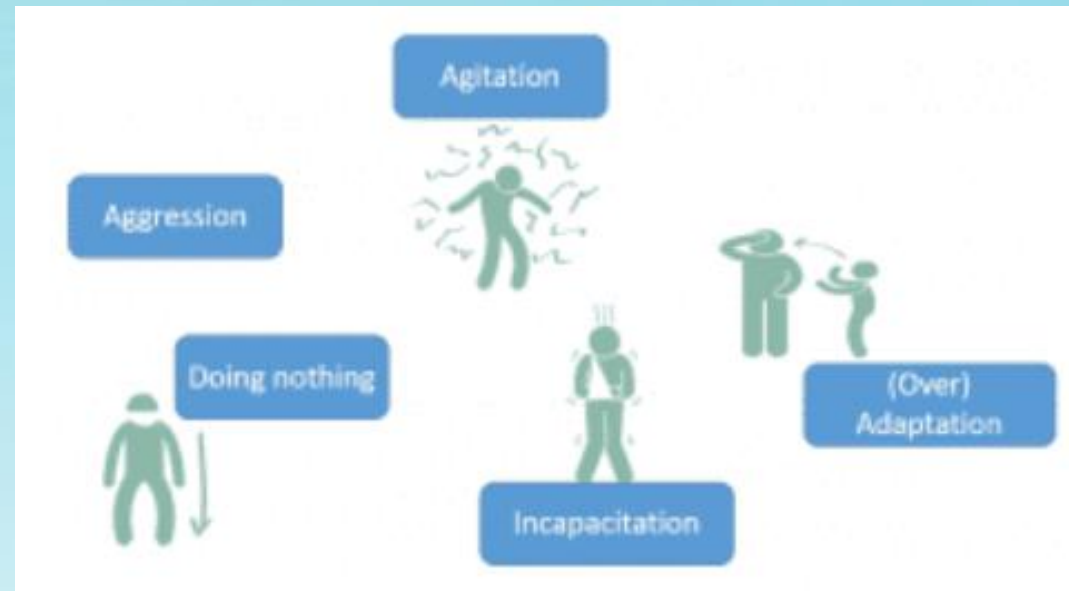
At The Mill Academy, we want all of our children to be the best that they can be, both academically and socially and emotionally. We have a clear focus on social and emotional education to ensure that children develop high levels of social and emotional skill and, as a result, have access to life and learning in as many contexts as possible.

At times our children may struggle socially and emotionally and this may show in their behaviours. They may not display the behaviours that we might normally expect for a child of their age.



Children may display a range of behaviours that communicate their social and emotional distress.

We may see these behaviours at home, at school or in both settings.



## What is the Thrive Approach?



Thrive Approach is a dynamic, developmental and trauma-sensitive approach to meeting the emotional and social needs of children. We now know more than ever before about what helps to develop healthy curious minds and happy confident and creative children.

The Thrive Approach is informed by established developments in neuroscientific research. It is underpinned by a theoretical base in child development theory, transactional analysis and attachment theory, creativity, play and the arts. At the heart of the Approach lies the understanding that children's behaviour represents a form of communication – of their underlying needs. If we can recognise and meet these needs, children are able to flourish and learn. However, if we neglect or ignore these needs, children's development is likely to be stunted and their learning inhibited. Thrive doesn't ask what has happened in a child's past. Thrive asks what they are telling us about their developmental needs and how to address them.



A Thrive Action Plan is a plan of activities tailored to support a child's identified social and emotional learning targets. The activities are one-to-one and small group play and arts-based activities designed to help the child feel better about themselves; become more resilient and resourceful; form trusting, rewarding relationships; be compassionate and empathetic; and/or be able to overcome difficulties and setbacks.

Activities might include playing in the sand, cooking, painting, model making, exploring difficult situations through role-play or comic strips, playing strategy games or projects focusing on the child's own interests. Action Plans are shared with parents who are encouraged to do some of the activities at home with their child. Action Plans are reviewed regularly to monitor the progress children have made.

Positive relationships are at the heart of Thrive.

We use these relationships, together with play and creative activities, to give children key experiences at each different stage of their development.

Repetition of these activities supports their development, helping them to:

- feel good about themselves and know that they matter
- increase their sense of security and trust
- increase their emotional well-being
- improve their capacity to be creative and curious
- increase their self-esteem and confidence to learn
- learn to recognise and regulate their feelings
- learn to think before behaving in a certain way
- ...and much more.

At The Mill Academy, we're committed to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing.

- Mrs Beckett is our Senior Mental Health Lead accredited by Leeds Beckett Carnegie School of Education.
- Miss Glyde, Mrs Littlewood, Mrs Mehanovic and Mrs Land-Noble are Licenced Thrive Practitioners.
- Miss Crossley and Miss Glyde have completed the Place2Be Mental Health Champion training.

We believe a whole school approach to the topic is paramount and ensure all stakeholders are educated about mental health and wellbeing, in addition to being offered support at both a whole school and individual level. Mrs Beckett works with children and families, as well as working with outside agencies to locate support and education for pupils.

Our environment aims to promote wellbeing for both pupils and staff. We have a fully resourced Thrive space, a sensory space and an immersive suite in addition to our classrooms and intervention spaces. Our curriculum is designed to support mental health and wellbeing and includes: RSHE sessions focussing on the topic, Mental Health assemblies and celebrate Mental Health awareness days.

