

**Cost**  
**£££££**

**Evidence strength**  


**Impact (months)**  
**+4**

**Effect size**  
**0.28**

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## *What is it?*

Interventions which target social and emotional learning (SEL) seek to improve pupils' interaction with others and self-management of emotions, rather than focusing directly on the academic or cognitive elements of learning. SEL interventions might focus on the ways in which students work with (and alongside) their peers, teachers, family or community.

Three broad categories of SEL interventions can be identified:

- universal programmes which generally take place in the classroom;
- more specialised programmes which are targeted at students with particular social or emotional needs; and
- school-level approaches to developing a positive school ethos, which also aim to support greater engagement in learning.

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## *How effective is it?*

On average, SEL interventions have an identifiable and valuable impact on attitudes to learning and social relationships in school. They also have an average overall impact of four months' additional progress on attainment.

Although SEL interventions are almost always perceived to improve emotional or attitudinal outcomes, not all interventions are equally effective at raising attainment. Improvements appear more likely when SEL approaches are embedded into routine educational practices and supported by professional development and training for staff. In addition, the implementation of the programme and the degree to which teachers are committed to the approach appear to be important.

SEL approaches have been found to be effective in primary and secondary schools, and early years settings.

Improving students Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is an effective approach to develop their overall wellbeing and academic achievement. Studies in the Arab world have not yet investigated the association of these variables but have focused, instead, on the reasons behind social and emotional difficulties for K-12 students.

In Egypt, the lack of recreational facilities and closed communities especially in rural areas and family socio-economic status were behind the increased social and emotional difficulties especially among adolescents. In Jordan, authoritative and permissive parenting style were factors that have a negative association with kindergarten students emotional intelligence. As a result, children could not manage their emotions and had lower self-esteem.

To date, educators, mostly teachers, views about SEL are not examined. That is why, literature lacks data around the best effective teaching strategies to improve SEL. Furthermore, teachers' understanding about these skills and how they can integrate them in their instruction for the benefit of students is very limited. When these have been explored, researchers have recommended that curriculum designers create textbooks that are based on social and emotional learning and include certain life skills that teachers can incorporate into their everyday educational practices. For instance, in an experimental study conducted in a private school Lebanon in 2014, primary students who were taught based on the Social Decision-Making Skills Curriculum (SDSC) gained greater benefits on their emotional intelligence and prosocial behaviors in comparison with their peers in the control group.

Lastly, researchers are recommended to conduct comparative analyses to examine the most effective social and emotional interventions programs and determine their impact on students' academic, communication, and language skills. Experimental studies are highly needed in this area to determine the causal relationship between these variables in order to imply causality. Longitudinal studies are also needed to have a better understanding about the psychosocial determinants of adolescent behavioral and emotional problems.

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## *How secure is the evidence?*

There is extensive international research in this area, including a number of meta-analyses. More research has been undertaken in primary than in secondary schools, and a number of studies have specifically evaluated the impact on pupils who are low-attaining or disadvantaged.

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## *What are the costs?*

The main financial cost of implementing a whole-school social and emotional learning approach will be the cost of professional development. In EEF-funded programmes, the average cost of professional development is well under 80.0 GBP (102.9 USD, 73.0 JOD) per pupil. However, targeted programmes are likely to be much more expensive, so the overall average cost is rated as moderate.

*Costs originally calculated in GBP; USD and JOD calculated via oanda.com on 22/09/20.*

As yet there is no information about local costs.

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## *What should I consider?*

How will you link the teaching of social and emotional skills with academic content?

How will you provide appropriate professional development for teachers and other school staff to effectively support SEL approaches?

How will you ensure that you support all staff to consistently apply aspects of SEL more widely in school and embed them in routine school practices?

How will you sensitively target social and emotional approaches to benefit at-risk or vulnerable pupils?

The impact on attainment of social and emotional aspects of learning is not consistent, so it is important to evaluate the impact of any initiative. Have you considered how you will do this?

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