

SEMH Definition Visual

“Challenging, disruptive or disturbing” Behaviour
 EG anger, aggression
 Withdrawal, defiance, avoidance
 Lack of engagement
 Leaving seat/class/school
 Isolation, self harm, substance misuse
 Eating disorders, physical symptoms
 Toileting issues, sexualised behaviour

Driven by

Anxiety
 Fear
 Insecurity
 Frustration

Underlying Issues

Low level of resilience
 Inability to trust self and others
 Feeling emotionally and physically unsafe
 Low self esteem
 Lack of confidence (often masked by outward appearances)
 Seeking relationships (often described as attention seeking)

Stemming from

Insecure attachment;
 Mental health need such as anxiety, conduct disorder, depression
 Issues with executive function, hormone regulation, sensory processing, motor skills, sleep, digestion, heart rate

Due to (Primary SEMH Need)

Unresolved trauma or unmet emotional needs, affecting the child’s internal view of themselves and/or others, which adversely impacts on self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, social skills and the ability to empathise with another. They have difficulties making and maintaining relationships and recognizing and engaging in socially acceptable behaviour.

May be as a result of: abuse, neglect, exploitation, unidentified or unaddressed additional need, unmet Parental needs, complicated bereavement or loss, exposure to criminal activity.

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Stemming from

Lack of understanding or being understood
 Social interaction difficulties
 Being unwell
 Feeling different from others. Being unable to meet others’ expectations
 Bullying
 Worrying about family members

Due to (not a primary SEMH need)

Speech and language or communication difficulty	Sensory impairment eg hearing, sight
Dyslexia, learning needs	Developmental delay, failure to thrive
Social care or parenting need	Side effects of medication
Issues around identity or self image	ASC
Medical Need	