

Welcome

Hello and welcome to our school ELSA page!

We are pleased to be able to share information with parents about Emotional Literacy Support on the school website. On this page we aim to post ideas and helpful advice on how you can help your child; for example in areas such as empathy, self esteem or perhaps to pick up some tips about calming techniques. Parents and carers will be able to find out about recommended books which may be useful and links to other websites for some self-help at home. *Mrs Irene Shortt ~ ELSA based at Min School*

What is ELSA?

There will always be children and young people in schools facing life challenges that detract from their ability to engage with learning. Some will require greater support to increase their emotional literacy than others. ELSA is an initiative developed and supported by educational psychologists. It recognises that children learn better and are happier in school if their emotional needs are also addressed.

We are lucky enough to have one fully qualified Emotional Literacy Support Assistant at The Linden Centre Mini School. She has been trained by Educational Psychologists to plan and deliver programmes of support to pupils who are experiencing temporary or longer term additional emotional needs. The majority of ELSA work is delivered on an individual basis, but sometimes small group work is more appropriate, especially in the areas of social and friendship skills. Sessions are fun, we use a range of activities such as: games, role-play with puppets or arts and craft. ELSA sessions take place in our very own 'ELSA room' which provides a calm, safe space for the child to feel supported and nurtured.

In ELSA we aim to provide support for a wide range of emotional needs:

- ✓ Recognising emotions
- ✓ Self-esteem
- ✓ Social skills
- ✓ Friendship skills
- ✓ Anger management
- ✓ Loss and bereavement

How does ELSA work?

All children who attend Mini School receive daily ELSA support. With the programme aims in mind we then plan support sessions to facilitate the pupil in developing new skills and coping strategies that allow them to manage social and emotional demands more effectively.

Supporting - not fixing

Remember, our ELSA ~ Mrs Shortt is not here to fix children's problems. What she can do is provide emotional support. She aims to establish a warm, respectful relationship with a pupil and to provide a reflective space where they are able to share honestly their thoughts and feelings.

It needs to be appreciated that change cannot necessarily be achieved rapidly and is dependent upon the context and complexity of the presenting issues. For children with complex or long-term needs it is unrealistic to expect ELSA intervention to resolve all their difficulties, however support will be designed to target specific aspects of a child's need. Training and development of ELSAs is an ongoing process and wisdom is required to recognise when issues are beyond the level of expertise that could reasonably be expected of an ELSA. The Educational Psychologist that works with our Mini School would be able to offer advice on suitability or nature of ELSA involvement in complex cases.

So what do the children think?

On completion of their ELSA programmes, we ask the children to reflect on their experiences and to kindly leave us some feedback. Here are some of the lovely comments we receive:

"I like coming to ELSA, it makes me happy!"

"ELSA has been really fun and has helped me with making new friendships".

"ELSA has helped me with confidence".

"It has helped me a lot with my anger and my problems in the playground. I enjoyed it very much!".

"I enjoyed ELSA and I want to stay!".

"ELSA has helped me with bullying problems, making new friends and most of all to have fun!".

"ELSA has helped me to be more sensible in class".

Lunch Bunch Club

We run a lunch time club for children every day. The club is lots of fun, we do activities such as art, craft, games to promote social skills and sometimes we listen to music! We encourage plenty of talking, listening, good manners and making new friends all while building on new skills to help the children with the challenges that they face at school.

For the summer term, we will be focusing on transitions. Whether it be moving on to a new class in September and the many changes and challenges a new routine, classroom and teacher can bring - to the even bigger steps our oldest children will be facing when they move on to secondary school or a special school in September! We hope to be able help and make these transitions easier and something to look forward to rather than worry about!

