



The Federation of Tavernspite and Templeton CP Schools

Our ELSA Provision

ELSA provision at the Federation of Tavernspite and Templeton Schools

There will always be children in schools facing life challenges that can adversely affect 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.

Both schools within our federation have fully qualified Emotional Literacy Support Assistants, trained by Educational Psychologists to plan, and deliver programmes of support to pupils 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 and arts and craft. ELSA sessions take place in our 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 emotion
- Self-esteem
- Social skills
- Friendship skills
- Anger management
- Loss and bereavement

How does ELSA work?

Children are referred for ELSA support by their class teacher, senior leaders and/or parents, following discussions with the additional learning needs co-ordinator. Areas of concern are identified by the professionals involved, allowing the ELSA to plan support sessions to help the child develop new skills and coping strategies to deal with whatever challenges they may be facing.

Supporting – not fixing

ELSAs are not there to fix children's problems. What we can do is provide emotional support. We aim to establish a warm, respectful relationship with a pupil and to provide a reflective space where they can 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 recognize when issues are beyond the level of expertise that could reasonably be expected of an ELSA. The Educational Psychologist that works with our school would be able to offer advice on suitability or nature of ELSA involvement in complex cases.

ELSA Interventions

- **Communication intervention** - supports child communication including; listening skills, tone of voice, loudness/quietness of voice, emotion, gestures/body language, eye contact, whole body listening, reflecting back and silent listening.
- **Self-esteem building** - these sessions aim to enhance children's self-esteem and build their confidence. These sessions consist of activities which aim to encourage the creation of a positive image of themselves; allow the child to identify what is special to them; share their ideas and opinions and celebrate their strengths, successes and achievements.
- **Anger Management intervention** - helps children who struggle to regulate their emotions. It promotes awareness of feelings associated with anger and the consequences of angry outbursts; working to establish the triggers to help manage anger and utilise calming down strategies.
- **Chill Skills (anxiety and worries intervention)** - is useful for children who struggle to regulate their emotions or suffer high levels of anxiety. It uses psychology-based techniques, aimed at helping children to calm down in school. This '**Anxiety and Worries Intervention**' covers emotions, relaxation, calming down techniques and learning objectives around anxiety and worries.

Children learn about emotions during each session and will also learn relaxation and calming techniques through the 'relaxation time'. This knowledge and these skills will help them to become more emotionally literate. Children learn how to challenge negative thinking patterns, scale and explore their worries and 'talk back' to their worry monsters.

- **Loss and grief (bereavement and separation)** - these sessions are aimed at helping children to cope with the death of a loved one but can be adapted to help children whose parents are separating/divorcing. Each child may react differently to the loss of a loved one, so these sessions will be flexible to meet their individual needs.

This support enables the child to:

- Discuss their feelings and give the child the opportunity to share memories and information about their loved one and
- Create artwork to reflect their memories.
- Provide an opportunity to create a memory box to store precious memories.
- Identify important people in their life which can help them to cope.
- Learn coping strategies and calming down techniques.

- **Emotions Games and Activities** - This intervention, which is particularly useful for young children, covers the four basic emotions: happy, sad, angry and scared. Children are helped to recognize and name these emotions, understand what they mean and describe them. Enhancing children's emotional intelligence will raise their levels of motivation, self-awareness, empathy, social skills and emotion regulation.
- **Friendship and Social Skills Intervention** - this is aimed at children who find it difficult to initiate and/or maintain friendships or struggle to cooperate with others. The sessions include activities which encourage the children to understand their feelings and those of others and promote peaceful conflict resolution.

Social skills are an essential part of life, so developing these early helps children to interact appropriately with others and assist them to build positive relationships with their peers. These sessions consist of a variety of games and activities which aim to encourage turn-taking, enhance speaking and listening skills, encourage concentration, understand actions and consequences, and encourage empathy, develop cooperation and collaboration with others.

So, what do the children think?!

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

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

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

"In ELSA I feel safe to talk about my mum dying and all of the sadness."

"It has helped me a lot with my anger and my problems in the playground and at home."

"ELSA time helps me to feel calmer and more ready to learn."

"I like going to talk about my feelings and helping me know when I'm getting angry."