



ELSA support at Thornhill Primary School

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.

As a school we have ELSA trained staff, we are lucky enough to have qualified Emotional Literacy Support Assistants and we know the value and benefit this provides our children. They have 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 a calm, safe space where the child 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?

Children are usually referred for ELSA support by their class teacher, Senior Leaders or the SENCo. Children will received a weekly programme for 6-8 weeks. With the programme aims in mind the support sessions are planned to facilitate the pupil in developing new skills and coping strategies that allow them to manage social and emotional demands more effectively.

ELSAs are not there to fix children's problems but they can provide tools and skills and support with emotional literacy. Children respond differently and changes may not happen quickly. 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.

If you would like to find out more about this please speak with Miss McCabe or Mrs Harrison.