

ELSA

EMOTIONAL LITERACY SUPPORT ASSISTANT

What is Emotional Literacy?

- ▶ Emotional literacy can be defined as the ability to recognise, understand, handle and appropriately express your emotions (Sharp 2001) Emotional literacy involves:
- ▶ being aware of the emotions you are experiencing.
- ▶ understanding why you might be feeling that way.
- ▶ knowing the most effective way for expressing your feelings and being able to put it into action.
- ▶ understanding and taking into account the feelings of others, then adjusting your response accordingly.

When is extra support useful?

- ▶ ELSA can be provided to support pupils experiencing a number of issues. This can include the following;
- ▶ Low self-esteem
- ▶ Difficulties with anger management
- ▶ Attachment issues
- ▶ Unstable home/school life
- ▶ Difficulties dealing with a range of emotions
- ▶ Difficulties self-calming

Crisis situations

- ▶ ELSA can also be used effectively to help a pupil cope during a crisis. This could include the death of a family member, divorce or separation, or a loved one having a serious illness.
- ▶ In these situations a referral would be acted upon immediately and the pupil given a block of sessions to help them during the crisis. Sessions could be extended if needed due to nature of crisis.
- ▶ There are resource packs to help a pupil with their situation.

ELSA sessions

- ▶ Pupils usually attend a block of between 7-10 sessions lasting 30 minutes each.
- ▶ At the end of the block the sessions will be evaluated and a decision made on whether the pupil requires further sessions.
- ▶ The sessions are 1:1 and take place in a quiet space away from the classroom.
- ▶ The sessions are confidential unless information needs to be shared for safeguarding issues.
- ▶ A contract is drawn up between pupil and ELSA trainer and referred to at start of each session. (see example)

Typical ELSA session

- ▶ The sessions are very informal with the aim of providing the pupil a safe, comfortable place in which they can express themselves.
- ▶ Each session begins with the sharing of the contract and check in of how we are feeling. Biscuits are also shared!
- ▶ Depending of the nature of the issue a related activity then normally takes place. These activities are not too demanding academically.
- ▶ Activities such as playing games, craft, yoga, stories, puppet work can take place in a session – led by the pupil's interests.
- ▶ It is beneficial if the pupil is verbal as very difficult to do otherwise.

Referral of pupil

- ▶ Teachers can referral pupils for sessions using referral forms and in consultation with ELSA trainer (see example)
- ▶ Consultations to take place with the individual teachers to complete referral forms and outline session targets.
- ▶ ELSA trainer will carry out ongoing evaluations to determine number of sessions needed and issues to be addressed.
- ▶ ELSA trainer will outline 3 aims to be worked on during the block of sessions (see example)

Questions?

- ▶ Thanks for listening!
- ▶ Feel free to ask any questions.

I don't want to be at the mercy of my emotions. I want to use them, to enjoy them, and to dominate them



Oscar Wilde

 www.brainquotes.org

Emotional Quotes