

Emotional support and well-being

As a school we recognise that children learn better and are happier if their emotional needs are also addressed. There will always be children and young people facing challenges in their life that detract from their ability to engage with learning and some will require greater support to increase their emotional literacy than others. In school we have access to a range of support through our PSHE lessons, Social and Emotional interventions and therapeutic work run by trained professionals.

Often one of the first steps in supporting children's emotional needs is for them to work with an ELSA.

What is ELSA?

Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) is an initiative developed by educational psychologists to support children who are experiencing temporary or longer-term emotional needs. At Rosherville we are lucky to have a qualified Emotional Literacy Support Assistant, Mrs Rana, who has been trained to plan and deliver programmes of support to pupils with a range of needs. She facilitates children in developing new skills and coping strategies that allow them to manage social and emotional demands more effectively.

The majority of ELSA work is delivered on an individual basis, but occasionally, some group work is more appropriate, especially in areas of social and friendship skills. Sessions are fun and include a range of activities such as: games, role-play, feelings stones, cards, books, arts and crafts etc. and take place in a calm, safe space where the child can feel supported and nurtured.

ELSAs are not there to fix children's problems. In ELSA we aim to provide support for a range of emotional needs including:

- Recognising emotions
- Self-esteem
- Social skills
- Friendship skills
- Anger management
- Loss and bereavement
- Family illness or separation

How does it work?

Children are usually referred for ELSA support by their class teacher or a Senior Leader. Mrs Rana will assess the pupil and if it is felt that additional support is needed then a letter will be sent home to parents/carers asking for consent. Once consent is given Mrs Rana will set a programme objective and work with the child for one session a week for an initial period of six weeks.

Review

After the six sessions the objective will be reviewed and in liaison with parents/carers further sessions will be added where necessary.

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 may be that a referral for further therapeutic work is necessary e.g. Drawing and Talking sessions, work with our Counsellor or for very complex cases a referral to an outside agency. This will be discussed with parents/carers and the Educational Psychologist that supports our ELSA work will also be able to offer advice on suitability or the nature of our ELSA involvement in complex cases.