

# ELSA



## Emotional Literacy

### What is Emotional Literacy?

Emotional literacy is the ability to recognize, understand, handle and appropriately express one's own emotions and to recognize, understand and respond appropriately to the expressed emotions of others. As with literacy in terms of reading where we are taught how to decode the letters and words on the page, using a variety of strategies in order to read them and extract meaning, so are we able to:

- learn how to decode the psychological signs and symbols within our selves
- to be able to read facial expressions
- pick up other non-verbal aspects of communication relating to others in order to become an emotionally literate person.

### Why do we need to be emotionally literate?

Research and experience both testify that the quality of our relationships has a real impact on our overall happiness and fulfillment.

- Having positive relationships helps us to cope better with life situations such as loss, frustration, disappointment and failure.
- How we feel influences how we think but also how we think about ourselves, other people and the world around us affects how we feel.
- Feeling, thinking and behaviour each interact with each other, and emotions have a core role to play in how we function as human beings.

### Areas covered by an EL intervention

For children in particular, there are five main areas to work on which cover personal and social competence. These are:

**Self-awareness** — Recognise feelings; observe yourself; relationship between thoughts, feelings and actions; self-appraisal; recognise patterns of feelings

**Managing feelings** — Resilience; responding to others; managing stress; managing energy; using intuition; finding ways to handle fears & anxiety

**Motivation** — Understand & choose goals; planning steps, overcoming obstacles; persevering; deferred gratification

**Empathy** — Observe, recognize & understand others' feelings; respect others' perspective; appreciate difference; ability to communicate warmth regarding others' feelings

**Social Skills** — Express feelings; be a good listener; negotiate; mediate; confront respectfully; apologise; sensitive feedback



### **Who delivers Emotional Literacy interventions?**

In Whitley Park Primary we have a number of teaching assistants who have been trained to be Emotional Literacy Support Assistants or ELSAs as we call them. They will work with either small groups or individual children during school time. This will run for a set number of weeks and the progress is monitored by use of pre and post assessments. The ELSAs are supervised by our Therapeutic Support Worker, Natilie Cocker

### **BUBBLE CHAT**

We also have a 'drop-in' service where children can self-refer for time with Natilie, the Therapeutic Support Worker, to discuss any emotional issues that have come up for them such as friendship worries, bullying, concerns about school or home etc. This is held in a private setting and is confidential. These half hour sessions are by appointment agreed by both teacher and pupil and on an ad-hoc basis.

**If you do not wish to have your children participate in any Emotional Literacy interventions, please let the school know in advance**