What is an ELSA?

ELSA’s are Emotional Literacy Support Assistants. They are a specialist teaching assistant who are trained and regularly supervised by the Educational Psychology Service. They are a member of school staff who has experience working with children across the age ranges in school.

An ELSA is a warm, nurturing person whose aim is to support children in feeling happy and to fulfil their potential, both educationally and emotionally.

The aim of the intervention they provide is to build your child’s emotional development and help them manage their feelings throughout life’s challenges. They will work on building self-esteem and resilience amongst other things.

Please talk to your child’s class teacher in order for them to discuss the referral process with you if you have concerns about your child.



Individual Sessions

If, after discussion, we think that your child meets the criteria to be involved with the ELSA, your child might be offered individual sessions.

This would mean between 6 – 8 sessions initially and they can vary in time according to the age of your child.

Example session

**Emotional check in**

This is a chance to talk about feelings and how they are on the day.

**Main activity**

The ELSA will plan activities to meet targets that have been set. This will be something that the family, school and where appropriate the child, will agree needs to be worked on. It will be something that the child is currently finding tricky e.g. Your child might have low self-esteem and the ELSA will work on building your child’s strengths and recognising what they do well.

**Relaxation**

Relaxation exercises will be taught to help get your child ready to go back into class.

**Review**

Your child will be able to reflect on what they have done and recognise their strengths, boosting their self-esteem.

Group Sessions

Group sessions may be offered if it is felt that this is the most appropriate way of addressing the needs that have been identified.

Your child will be offered 6 to 8 sessions initially and they can vary according to the age of your child.

The sessions will be planned by the ELSA to meet the needs of the child.

Example session

**Emotional check in**

This is a chance to talk about feelings and how all involved are feeling on the day.

**Warm up activity**

A game of activity that will help the group relax and feel safe.

**Main activity**

This is similar to the individual sessions but there will be an emphasis on developing skills relating to working or communicating with others. This will help with friendships, co-operation skills, social interaction and develop a greater sense of belonging. An objective or target will be set for the group which they will be able to work towards during the session.

**Relaxation**

Relaxation exercises will be taught to help get your child ready to go back into class.

**Review**

The children will be given the chance to reflect on the session and talk about what they have learnt.

Who to contact…

If you think your child needs help or could benefit from ELSA sessions please contact

Your child’s class teacher or the SENCo.

You can do this by speaking to your child’s class teacher directly, leaving a message with office staff to arrange a phone call or emailing office@woodlandgrange.leics.sch.uk titling the email ELSA referral request.

ELSA’s can help with…

Loss and bereavement

Understanding emotions

Self esteem

Social skills

Friendship difficulties

Relationships

Managing feelings

Anxiety

Bullying

Conflict

Emotional regulation

Growth mindset

ELSA

Emotional

Literacy

Support

Assistant

Our school’s ELSA is Mrs Cave