



ELSA

At Marsden Infant and Nursery School, we understand the importance of supporting children with their emotional needs.

What is emotional literacy?

- Understanding and coping with the feelings about ourselves and others,
- Developing high self-esteem and positive interactions with others,
- Being emotionally literate helps children focus better on their learning.

What is ELSA?

Empathises

Listens

Supports

Advises

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.

At Marsden Infant and Nursery School, we understand the importance of supporting children with their emotional needs. Our ELSA has been trained by an Educational Psychologist 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, using a range of activities such as games, role-play with puppets, or arts and crafts. ELSA sessions take place during the school day in our Blossom room, in a quiet



place away from the classroom, which provides a calm, safe space for the child to feel supported and nurtured.

In ELSA some of the areas we may work on are:

- 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 Teachers and Senior Leaders in collaboration with the SENDCo. Every half term, referrals are reviewed to identify and prioritise which children require a weekly programme for the next 6–8 weeks. With the programme aims in mind, we then plan support sessions to facilitate the pupil in developing new skills and coping strategies that allow them to manage social and emotional demands more effectively.

Supporting – Not Fixing

Remember, an ELSA is not there to fix children's problems. What they do is provide emotional support for children who require it.

Through these sessions, an ELSA aims to establish a warm, respectful relationship with a pupil and provide a reflective space where they are able to share honestly their thoughts and feelings.

It needs to be appreciated that 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 unrealistic to expect ELSA intervention to resolve all their difficulties, however support will be designed to target specific aspects of a child's need. Training and development of ELSAs is an ongoing process and wisdom is required to recognise when issues are beyond the level of expertise that could reasonably be expected of an ELSA.



A parent/carers can help by:

- Informing the school if there are any issues which may be affecting your child.
- Contacting your child's class teacher, the school ELSA Sharon Hirst or the SENDCo Sarah Whitehouse, if you have any questions.

ELSA Website:

- <https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/>