

## What to Expect

ELSA sessions predominantly take place in the Olive Tree room, which offers a calm, safe space for your child to feel supported and nurtured.

During each session, the ELSA will aim to build a secure, trusting relationship with your child whilst using a range of activities to keep sessions fun and engaging:

Games – Role-Play – Puppets  
Lego – Arts & Crafts  
Drawing & Talking

Each session will include:

- An emotional check-in, to see how your child is and how they have been feeling over the past week.
- A review of the previous session's content to see if any of the information needs to be revisited.
- Introduction of a new learning objective.
- An opportunity to practise coping strategies or relaxation techniques.

## How Does ELSA Work?

Your child may have been referred for ELSA support by their class teacher, senior leader or the SENDCo. Occasionally a child will approach the ELSA directly to ask for support.

We then identify and prioritise which children require 1:1 or group sessions for ELSA or explore alternative strategies and support available.

Once we have set an objective, the ELSA will plan support sessions to facilitate your child in developing new skills and strategies that allow them to manage social and emotional demands more effectively.

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ELSA's are not here to fix children's problems. What they can do is provide emotional support to children who need it. An ELSA will aim to establish a warm, respectful relationship with your child and to provide a reflective space where your child will be able to share their thoughts and feelings honestly.

St. Mary's CE Primary School



Learn Grow Achieve Flourish

# ELSA

## EMOTIONAL LITERACY SUPPORT ASSISTANT

If you would like to talk to someone about anything in this leaflet or you would like more information, please contact the school to speak with a member from the ELSA team.

## What is ELSA?

ELSA stands for Emotional Literacy Support Assistant. ELSA Support in school is a project designed to help schools support the emotional needs of their pupils.

ELSA is an initiative developed and supported by educational psychologists. It recognises that children and young people learn better and are happier in school, if their emotional needs are being supported and met.

An ELSA is a warm and caring person who wants to help your child feel happy in school and reach their potential educationally. Their aim is to remove any barriers to learning, to help your child be happy in school and at home.

ELSAs are supervised regularly by the Educational Psychologists who trained them. This is key to good practice and allows the ELSA to bring up any problems with a group of other ELSAs along with the Educational Psychologist.

Bespoke programmes of support are carefully planned and delivered to meet the additional emotional needs of the children they work with.

## What Support Do ELSAs Offer?

The majority of ELSA work is delivered on an individual basis but sometimes small group sessions are more appropriate, especially when supporting social and friendship skills.

An ELSA can provide support for a wide range of emotional needs including:

- Emotional Literacy
- Anger Management
- Anxiety
- Self-Esteem
- Relationships
- Conflict Resolution
- Social Skills
- Loss and Bereavement
- Transition / Change
- Coping Strategies
- Relaxation Techniques
- Resilience
- Bullying

## How Long Are Interventions For?

Sessions will usually happen once a week, for between 6-12 weeks and last from 45 minutes to 1 hour.

For those children who respond better to routine, weekly sessions can be scheduled at a regular time. This can help children to prepare and also to manage expectations.

Some children can find it difficult for ELSA support to end. When this happens the ELSA will often offer a softer, more graduated end to the support, to help the child adjust.

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Sometimes change cannot be achieved quickly and can be dependent on the context and complexity of the presenting issues. For children with complex or long-term needs it is unrealistic to expect an ELSA intervention to resolve all of their difficulties. With this in mind, support will be designed to target specific aspects of each child's individual needs.

If additional support is needed, the ELSA, along with the DSL, can help to organise or signpost your child to other agencies.