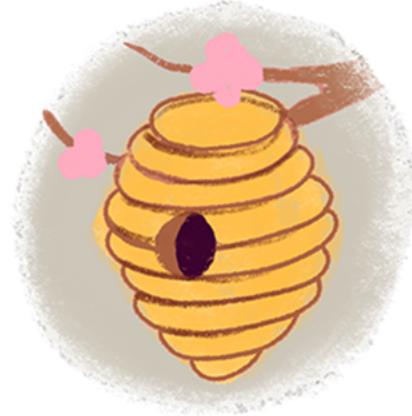




# ELSA

## Emotional Literacy Support Assistant



Created by Elsa-Support





# What is an ELSA?



- An ELSA is an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant.
- An ELSA is a school-based support role, designed to support pupils with emotional and social needs.
- ELSAs are usually experienced Teaching assistants who have had additional training by Educational Psychologists.
- ELSAs work with individual pupils or small groups, using activities and strategies to help pupils build resilience, emotional literacy and coping mechanisms.





# Supervision



ELSAs attend supervision with the Educational Psychologists that trained them. This is a group supervision with peers and an Educational Psychologist.

- **Supervision provides a space for ELSAs to discuss the challenges they face in their work with pupils. This could include discussing specific cases, sharing experiences, and receiving advice on how to handle difficult situations.**
- **Regular supervision ensures that ELSAs are using effective strategies and interventions. It also helps them stay updated with the latest research and best practices in emotional literacy and support.**
- **Working with pupils who have emotional and social needs can be challenging and sometimes emotionally taxing. Supervision offers ELSAs a chance to reflect on their experiences and receive emotional support from their supervisor and peers.**
- **Supervision sessions often include training elements where ELSAs can learn new techniques, tools, and approaches to better support the pupils they work with.**
- **Supervision also plays a role in ensuring that the ELSA is working within safe and ethical boundaries, particularly when dealing with sensitive issues.**





# Scope of Practice



- The scope of practice for an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) is defined by the specific training they receive and the intended purpose of their role within a school setting.
- ELSAs are trained to support pupils with emotional and social needs, but their scope is limited to certain types of interventions and support activities.
- ELSAs should work within the scope of practice to ensure the safety of the pupils they are working with.
- ELSAs work closely with teachers, parents, and sometimes external agencies, but they do not replace these roles. Their work is a complementary part of a wider support system.
- Whilst maintaining confidentiality is important, ELSAs must follow school policies regarding safeguarding and are required to report any concerns about a pupil's welfare.
- The support provided by ELSAs is often short-term and focused on specific goals. Long-term therapeutic needs are beyond their scope and should be referred to appropriate services.





# ELSA Relationship



- ELSAs are warm, kind and caring people who want to make pupils feel happy in school and to reach their potential socially, emotionally and academically .
- ELSAs understand the barriers to learning that some pupils might have and can help support them with this.
- ELSAs can support the pupil's emotional development and help them cope with life's challenges. They can help pupils find solutions to their problems.
- Relationships are key in helping pupils and young people to feel safe and nurtured. ELSA is about creating a reflective space for the pupil.
- A strong, trusting relationship between an ELSA and the pupil is essential for creating a safe and supportive environment where the pupil feels comfortable expressing their emotions.

ELSA  
Characteristics

**Personal Characteristics of an ELSA**

**EMPATHY**  
An ELSA needs to deeply understand and empathise with the emotional experiences of the children they work with

**PATIENCE**  
Dealing with children's emotions requires patience to listen attentively and actively, to support them as they navigate their feelings.

**CREATIVITY**  
Using creative methods and activities to engage children in emotional literacy sessions helps keep them interested

**RESILIENCE**  
Being able to remain calm and composed in challenging situations is crucial, as they often deal with sensitive issues and Big EMOTIONS.

**FLEXIBILITY**  
Adopting strategies and approaches based on the individual needs and progress of each child.

**POSITIVE OUTLOOK**  
A positive attitude and outlook can inspire hope and optimism in children, helping them see challenges as opportunities for growth.

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# Areas of Support



- Loss and bereavement
- Emotional Literacy
- Self-esteem
- Social Skills
- Friendship issues
- Relationships
- Managing strong feelings
- Anxiety and worries
- Bullying
- Conflict
- Emotional Regulation
- Growth Mindset
- Social and therapeutic stories
- Problem solving



Friendships



Bereavement



Strong emotion



Self esteem



Worries





# Referrals



This is the process through which pupils are identified and recommended for support from an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA). The referral process is crucial in ensuring that the right pupils receive the appropriate emotional and social support.

## Identification of Need

- Teachers may notice when a pupil is struggling with emotional or social issues, such as anxiety, low self-esteem, difficulties in making friends, or issues with big feelings. They may identify a pupil who could benefit from ELSA support based on their observations in the classroom.
- Sometimes, parents might express concerns about their child's emotional well-being or social interactions. They may request additional support through the school.
- In some cases, older pupils may recognise they need help themselves.
- Referrals may come from outside agencies.

ELSA Referral Form				
Date	11th July 2024	Name of pupil	Alexander Mackintosh	Class Teacher
Reason for concern (Anything of all that is relevant to why you believe there may be a problem)	Alexander is finding it difficult to play with friends at the moment. He gets angry very easily and cries with frustration. Lots of children in the class don't want to play with him. He is also struggling with his work because he seems to be constantly upset.			
Parental concerns (Have the parents expressed any concerns?)	Parents say that Alexander is crying a lot at home too. Recently his cat died and they think this might be impacting on his behaviour at the moment.			
Suggested targets to work on (What do you believe might help the pupil?)	The opportunity to talk about his recent bereavement.			
Any measures you have tried or are planning to try in class? Would you like advice?	I have tried talking to him and he doesn't know why he is upset and angry all of the time. I tried giving him some calming time in the calming corner. Yes any advice would be gratefully received.			
Impact on learning/behaviour Choose the number 1 is a little 10 is a lot	5		Urgency Choose the number 1 is not urgent 10 is very urgent	8

Example  
referral form





# Example of Assessment and Planning



Here are examples of planning and assessment sheets that can be used for ELSA intervention.

Individual Planning Overview			
Name:	Pupil Target:		
Date:	Objective	Key vocab	Activity

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Overview for six sessions

ELSA INDIVIDUAL SESSION PLAN			
Date:	Pupil's name:	Session:	
Pupil's target:			
Learning outcome(s) for the session:			
Key Vocabulary:			
Resources needed:			
Welcome and emotions check-in:			
Warm up:			
Review of previous session:			
Core activity:			
Relaxation/ mindfulness:			
Review of session:			
Next steps:			

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Individual session plan

Social Skills				
EXAMPLE				
Skill	Ability			
	1 Very Poor	2	3	4
Able to give eye contact and maintain eye contact			✓	✓
Can ask for help if needed			✓	✓
Shows good listening skills		✓		
Able to instigate friendships	✓			
Able to maintain friendships	✓			
Uses good manners, such as 'please', 'thank-you' and 'excuse me'			✓	
Aware of personal space and keeps an appropriate distance from others	✓			
Can share and take turns		✓		
Understands what it means to tell lies, and tries to be honest			✓	
Shows respect for others			✓	
Shows respect for property		✓		
Can follow instructions	✓			
				GRAND TOTAL 31

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON SOCIAL SKILLS, INCLUDING ANY PARENTAL CONCERN

Jason's parents say he struggles with friendships in school and out of school. He becomes quite obsessed with one child and will get too close and invade their space. He doesn't seem to understand how to be a good friend.

Targets:

1. Jason will know 3 ways of instigating friends when playing with other children
2. Jason will use 3 qualities of being a good friend when playing with other children
3. Jason will show awareness of personal space when playing with other children

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Assessments

Social & Emotional Support Assessments Summary				
Jack Jones	Pre-Assessment	Post-Assessment	Potential Max Value	Difference
Anger	7	19	25	12
Anxiety	15	20	25	5
Emotional Awareness	25	36	55	11
Friendship & Relationships	28	31	50	3
Growth Mindset	29	34	35	5
Independence	28	35	40	7
Self-esteem	39	53	60	14
Social skills	41	45	60	4

Comments/Notes on Impact:

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Excel assessments





# Typical ELSA Session



- There would be a welcome for the pupil along with an emotional check in. How do they feel today?
- A warmup or icebreaker game or activity would be played. This part is important because it helps the pupil to feel relaxed and feel safe.
- The main activity would follow where the ELSA would be teaching something to help the pupil with their target. The ELSA would also review what was learnt last time to see if the pupil has remembered and if they used the skill taught.
- There would be a relaxation exercise to help the pupil be ready for class and a quick review on what the pupil has learnt that session. At this point the ELSA may ask the pupil to do something for next time. eg. practise star breathing when feeling angry



Visual timetable of a session



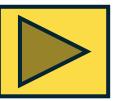


# Reactive Support



There may be times when it is appropriate for an ELSA to respond immediately to a pupil's needs. This would be reactive support.

- A pupil who suddenly becomes upset or angry in class may need support from an ELSA. The ELSA may help with coping/calming skills.
- Conflict with their peers, the ELSA may help the pupil reflect on what happened and develop strategies for resolving the conflict.
- If a pupil receives distressing news e.g. a family member ill, or a pet has died. The ELSA can provide immediate support to help them cope with their big emotions.
- If a pupil is upset after being bullied, an ELSA can help the pupil and come up with a plan to address the bullying.
- Conflict at home. A pupil may witness conflict at home and come to school upset. An ELSA can use active listening to support the pupil.
- A pupil who has fallen out with their best friend and is upset. The ELSA may help the pupil explore their feelings and develop strategies to mend the friendship.





# Parent Communication



ELSA communication with parents is important and here are some of the reasons why:

- Ensures strategies used at school are reinforced at home, leading to more effective outcomes.
- Parents provide insights into their child's behaviour outside school, helping ELSAs tailor support more effectively.
- Good communication allows early identification and proactive intervention of emerging issues.
- Parents can reinforce emotional literacy skills at home, helping their child apply and internalise what they've learnt.
- Builds trust between parents and the ELSA, fostering a collaborative approach to the pupil's emotional development.
- Enables tracking of the pupil's progress and adjustment of strategies based on feedback from home.





# Example Resources



Strength cards

Puppets

Digital resources and Apps

Affirmation cards

Scenario cards

Emotion journals or diaries

Worksheets and workbooks

Games

Music

Sand play

Guided meditation

Emotion cards and charts

Calming jars or glitter bottles

Art and crafts

Lapbooks

Small world toys

Lego bricks

Books and stories

Role play

Mindful colouring





# Final Thoughts



- ELSAs provide a safe space for pupils to explore and understand their emotions, fostering overall well-being.
- Every pupil is unique, and ELSAs tailor their approaches to meet individual needs, ensuring that each pupil receives the support they require.
- Effective communication between ELSAs, parents, teachers, and other professionals is vital for ensuring a cohesive support system for each pupil.
- ELSAs are able to both plan and respond, addressing issues before they escalate and providing immediate support if needed.
- Recognising and celebrating even small victories can significantly boost a pupil's confidence and motivation to continue their emotional growth journey.

## Questions?

Please feel free to ask any questions or discuss further.

