



John 15 v 12: 'My commandment is this: Love each other as I have loved you.'



Pupil Wellbeing at Farnsfield St Michael's C of E Primary School

At Farnsfield St Michael's, we believe that good mental health, and wellbeing, leads to children experiencing a positive, and happy, time at school. As a result of this, we offer a number of opportunities to support our children, to enable them to thrive, both at school and at home, through a wide range of SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) interventions.



ELSA



ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) is an initiative that has been developed, and is supported by, Educational Psychologists. It recognises that children learn better, and are happier in school, if their emotional needs are also addressed.

We are fortunate to have a qualified ELSA, at St Michael's. Mrs Lloyd has been trained by Educational Psychologists to plan, and deliver, programmes of support, to pupils who are experiencing temporary, or longer term, emotional needs. She attends termly supervision meetings, to anonymously discuss cases and glean additional wisdom, and resources, to support her role in school.

Sessions are fun, using a range of activities such as: games, role play, puppets, arts and craft. ELSA sessions take place in 'The Lounge', which provides a calm, safe space for the child to feel supported and nurtured.

ELSA aims to provide support for a wide range of emotional needs, including:

- Recognising emotions
- Self-esteem
- Social skills
- Friendships
- Anger management



Staff refer pupils for ELSA throughout the year, with referrals regularly reviewed, to identify, and prioritise, which children require the weekly sessions of this programme, which lasts for about 6-8 weeks. We have a waiting list, but Mrs Lloyd will be in touch when there is a space available for your child to start their sessions. We require the completion of the parental consent form before your child can begin the programme. Even though this is a programme run in school, Mrs Lloyd is always



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willing to offer resources to be used at home too, to support her work. She can also offer feedback at the end of the sessions, if desired.

For more information, please visit: www.elsa-support.co.uk

Loss and Bereavement



Mrs Turner has had training, and experience, in supporting children who have suffered from loss and bereavement. We have a wealth of books, and materials, to offer support to children and families.

Please do let us know if your child has experienced a loss or bereavement, we are unaware of, as we would love to be able to support children and families, during these difficult times.

Doodle Time

Doodle Time is a twelve-week therapeutic drawing, and talking, programme, which aims to support children's educational, social and emotional development. At St Michael's, we are fortunate to have three members of staff that have been trained by an art therapist, to deliver these sessions: Mrs Blount, Mrs Cargill and Mrs C Taylor. Doodle Time sessions all take place in 'The Lounge', which is a safe and calm environment, without the daily hustle and bustle of school life.



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Unlike ELSA, Doodle Time is much more child led. Children meet with their trained member of staff, once a week, for 30 minutes, to draw, sketch and talk together. It is a special one-to-one time, just for them; a time to talk, and think about life, growing up, friendships, feelings and things happening at school or home. We hope that this time will benefit children in many ways with: confidence, self-esteem, happiness, focus, concentration and developing a rich vocabulary for feelings.



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At the end of the sessions, your child will bring home their work. We advise that you take the lead from your child, if they wish to share, and talk about, their work with you. This may not happen straight away, but, eventually, they may want to share the experience with you. As with ELSA, if we have any concerns, or you want to chat about how things have gone, we can do so. All the trained staff attend supervisions, with a trained art therapist, where cases are discussed confidentially, and advice can be sought, when needed.

Nurture

Despite being a national programme, we don't necessarily follow the same model as Nurture groups across the country but have our own model for what works for us. The concept is based around six key principles.



Nurture groups address the social, emotional and learning needs of individual pupils by providing the necessary help to remove their barriers to learning. There is great emphasis on emotional literacy, language development and communication. Pupils are immersed in an accepting and warm environment, that helps pupils develop positive relationships, with both staff and peers.

The aim of our Nurture groups are to help the children to develop socially, and emotionally, learning through play-based activities, and in turn cope better in the classroom environment and increase their academic progress.

We have three Nurture groups running at St Michael's, with each group running for one afternoon a week. We have Busy Bees, Rising Stars and Shooting Stars. The groups usually have no more than 10 children in them, at a time, and always have at least two adults running the sessions, which have been carefully planned and prepared, with the children in the group in mind. Before starting the sessions, class teachers carry out an assessment on the children called the Boxall Profile, which helps the team to identify key areas that the children need to develop. The children's progress will be tracked throughout, and at the end of, their time in Nurture.

Some children may spend just one term in a Nurture group, whilst others may spend more time, depending on their needs and the progress that they are making. This will be through discussions with the class teachers, parents and the TA team leading the group.

The Busy Bees group use the story 'The Colour Monsters'. Each colour monster represents a feeling, which we use to help the children focus on expressing and sharing feelings, in an





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appropriate way, learning through play and creative activities, outdoor learning and developing positive social interaction with others.



The Rising Stars group is modelled around 'The Social Detective' and 'Listening to My Body' books, which also focus on expressing and sharing feelings, in an appropriate way. Activities help children to understand the concepts around expected and unexpected behaviour, eyes and body in the group and comfortable and uncomfortable feelings, and how to spot these in themselves

and others. Again, learning is done through play and creative activities, outdoor learning and developing positive social interaction with others. We also begin to introduce self-regulation techniques such as body breaks and figure of eight breathing.

The Shooting Stars group is modelled around a concept called the 'Zones of Regulation'. This is where the children are able to identify their mood/feelings in four key colours: green – ready to go; blue – going slow; yellow – fast and wiggling; and red – frustrated or angry. By teaching the children about these key emotions, it enables them to express themselves better and work on the best self-management, when experiencing these feelings. The group models their sessions around these concepts through role play, creativity, life skills and play. We also work on the concept of positive and negative consequences which are related to the choices they make.

They also explore self-regulation techniques that will help a child in times of stress, such as breathing, or body breaks, which they can use anytime and anywhere.



Nurture sessions are delivered by some of our Teaching Assistant team, who have been appropriately trained, to support children's social and emotional needs. The staff who deliver these sessions are: Mrs Blount, Mrs Cargill, Miss Hope and Mrs Lloyd. They are supported by some other additional adults.



Foresters

In addition to our Nurture groups, we also offer Forest School-style Nurture sessions, through our self-developed Foresters programme. Foresters enables children



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to participate in positive experiences, and learn a variety of skills, in a different environment.

The Foresters ethos is designed to have key themes running through it. This is to enable children to be treated as:

- Equal, unique and valuable;
- Competent to explore and discover;
- Entitled to experience appropriate risk and challenge;
- Entitled to choose, initiate and drive their own learning and development;
- Entitled to experience regular success;
- Entitled to develop positive relationships, with themselves and others;
- Entitled to develop a strong, positive relationship with their natural world.

During Foresters sessions, children participate in a variety of activities, such as: den building, making crafts from nature's gifts, play games and learn how to use a variety of tools to cut wood (with supervision).

Sessions take place whatever the weather, so children need to be prepared for sessions, with wellies, a waterproof coat, hat, gloves etc.

Mrs Brooks and Mrs Turner are our specially trained Teaching Assistants, who deliver our Foresters sessions.



Watch Me Rise

This 12-week programme has been developed as a resilience mentoring scheme, based on the research by Hart, Blincow and Thomas 2007. The programme aims to develop the 7 C's, which are the individual components that link together to form resilience. These components are character, confidence, competence, control, coping, connection, and contribution. Extensive research has clearly identified a link between improved resilience and both performance and enjoyment, within the school environment and everyday life. The aim and objective is to help children to flourish at school, boosting academic, and sporting, achievement and helping them to enhance their overall school experience.

The programme will help to: identify interests, talents and aspirations, understand responsibility, improve life and problem-solving skills, make healthy life choices and goal setting.



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The aims of the Watch Me Rise programme are:

- To improve happiness;
- To help children manage their feelings;
- To identify hopes and aspirations for the future;
- To highlight how their contribution can benefit others;
- Helping them to build connections with others;
- To help children manage stressful situations;
- To help children flourish.

Mental wellbeing is crucial to a child's development and the implementation of this programme will help to support this and result in improved confidence, leading to a greater success socially, sportingly and academically. The programme recognises the importance of embracing, and celebrating, a child's achievements, as this can help inspire confidence and competence, as well as continued commitment towards future success, both in and out of the classroom.



Mr Yates leads our Watch Me Rise sessions, and the children will work in a small group, alongside their peers.

Brighter Futures

This is a sports mentoring programme, with the aim of improving schoolwork, behaviour and raising self-esteem. The mentoring programme is delivered by ex-professional footballers and at St Michael's we have Jack as our mentor.



Like many of our other programmes in school, the sessions usually last for 12 weeks, but they could last for longer, if in the best interests of the individual child. The aim is to provide support, and activities, that develop the skills, confidence and capabilities of each child.

These sessions are not just for children who enjoy sport, they are for anyone who might benefit from some mentoring and encouragement. Each session involves looking at a goal that the child wants to achieve, thinking about how they might achieve that goal and, through the mentoring relationship, supporting the child, along the way. Sharing school work, talking, playing games and building positive relationships, helps each child to grow in confidence and motivation.





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So what next?

Making a referral

Referrals for all of our SEMH interventions are made in the same way, either through class teachers, SENDCo, Personal Development lead or by parents.

We hold a waiting list for each of these and, through discussion, decide which programme might be best suited for the child's needs. For some children, over their time with us, they may take part in one, or more, of these interventions.

If you feel that your child would benefit from one of these programmes, then please speak with their class teacher, in the first instance.

Supporting – not fixing

Remember, these programmes are not there to 'fix children's problems', but, what we can do, is provide emotional support.

We aim to establish a warm, respectful relationship with the children and provide a reflective space, where they are able to share honestly their thoughts and feelings.

For children with complex, or long term, needs, it is unrealistic to expect these interventions to resolve all their difficulties. If we feel, at the end of the sessions, your child may need further support, through another avenue, we would discuss this with you.

What do parents and children say?

"It was brilliant for my daughter"

"ELSA was very successful"

"Wonderful team, wonderful help!"

"It has given a common language to discuss concerns and a safe place to talk about any anxieties and problems"

"ELSA is really fun and I now have lots of ideas to help me"

"It's great to have someone to talk to when you are feeling upset"

"I loved my time with Jack, it was so different to being in the classroom"