

WELL Project: Case Study

Montreal Primary School

Supporting pupils through WELL funded training of an Emotionally Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)

Summary

Applying the EEF guide to implementation our exploration identified an opportunity and a priority to ensure that we build on the way we work to identify and support pupils to overcome emotional barriers to learning. By accessing the training provided by WELL to train an Emotionally Literate Support Assistant (ELSA), we have successfully increased internal capacity, and have developed a sustainable approach to support the emotional needs of our pupils when they need it. The impact of our first phase on four pupils, including 3 disadvantaged, gives us confidence that the ELSA approach is effective.

Focus

Taking into account levels of deprivation and emotional health needs, evidenced by number of referrals to outside agencies, we identified a priority to increase internal school capacity and expertise to support identified pupils with low self-esteem and weaker engagement in learning.

Action taken

We took the time to talk to all staff and consider barriers to learning - school refusers/pupil progress etc.

We explored the best options to make the change sustainable and as a result we were able to identify a TA with the buy in of all staff. The emphasis was actual capacity that can be utilised when required- not leaving this as an issue for one individual in school.

We identified the Active ingredients that would be required (EEF Guide to implementation):

- Whole school buy in and ownership (EEF Making Best Use of TAs)
- Prioritising and ensuring time is protected by all.
- Prioritised dedicated physical space within the school.
- Identifying the right pupils at the right time. Teachers and TAs working together.
- Identifying the pupils - TAs and Teachers working together not in isolation.
- We protected ELSA sessions for four pupils. 3 were disadvantaged.(PP) 1 SEND no EHCP

Pupil A also a young carer - Focus on opening up about home and management of routines - engagement in learning

Pupil B - significant home challenges - behaviour challenges/relationships with adults - historical high levels of yellow cards.

Pupil C - Separation anxiety and moved schools several times - complex home life.

Reluctance to engage in learning and anxieties about home issues. Focus has been on prevention of situations reaching crisis point and quality dialogue at a time when child is open to reflections.

Pupil D - significant home life challenges, including bereavements. Impact on reading .

Results

Attendance rates high for the 4 pupils

Relationships with adults have improved in school. ‘ R can now verbalise actions he could take in given situations and recall events in a calm way referencing work he has done with the ELSA.’

‘K looks forward to his ELSA time - it has become the highlight of his week. He is beginning to put his strategies into place and knows how to follow routines for his emotion self-management’

Improved links with EP.

For Pupil B, Reduction in yellow cards linked to behaviour - Reduced by 33.3% based on year-on-year comparisons.

For pupil C , Routines now in place and arrives in lessons more promptly - lost learning from 15 mins per lesson on average to 5 minutes.

Pupil D opened about feelings and behaviours are improving as a result. Has a voice and feels listened to.

Impact on TA confidence - now modelling for students etc.

The children speak highly of the ELSA -

K often refers to it as his “favourite part of the week” and talks about going to ELSA.

L - opens up and says he can talk to a trusted grown up in the ELSA time.

Next Steps and Conclusions

ELSA provides the trusting conversations pupils need within school -. Having and ELSA enables the school to target support from other services more effectively. This is because we have built an interna sphere of confidence.

By being more informed, we are working effectively as a team across the school

We are therefore using WELL grant to further increase our ELSA capacity and training another TA to support this work. Without WELL, this would not be possible.

We are scaling up and we are moving to 6 children receiving the support.