

# SEND Coffee afternoon

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024

# What is SEMH?

- ▶ Social, emotional and mental health refers to children and young people with additional needs who have difficulties with managing their emotions and behaviours. This can be affected by the environment, difficult life experiences and attachment.
- ▶ Some children and young people may struggle to communicate emotions verbally and can use their behaviour as a way to share feelings with the people around them. This behaviour can be challenging to those around them or may also present as withdrawing/avoidance.
- ▶ Understanding the social and environmental context can be useful in identifying triggers for different emotions. This might be recognising physical sensations associated with different emotions, recognising triggers, identifying when and how to use emotion regulation strategies and building their self-esteem.
- ▶ For children and young people who struggle to understand their own emotions, experiencing intense emotions can be frightening. Reassuring children and young people by normalising their experience of emotions can support them with feeling safer.

# How does this present?

- ▶ The child or young person may present with needs at home and/or school. These may include:
  - Increase in frequency of behaviours that challenge
  - Becoming more withdrawn
  - Easily distracted
  - Changes in appetite (eating more or less than normal)
  - Changes in sleep (sleeping more or less)
  - Avoiding particular situations
  - Heightened emotional responses
  - Increase in irritability
  - Increased reporting of physical symptoms (headaches, stomach aches) which are medically unexplained
  - Difficulty communicating emotions
  - Reporting of low mood/anxiety/panic attacks
  - Reporting of thoughts of self-harm or suicidal thoughts
  - Increase in social and interpersonal difficulties

# How do we support children with SEMH needs at S Primary school?

## Specialist support

Reduced timetables - this has to be agreed with Bucks CC and parents.  
CAMHS referrals which are signposted to Barnados Buddies, CBT and Talking therapies.  
Everlief Advice clinics - with clinical psychologist- anonymous advice for individual children through class teachers.  
Woodlands outreach supportB  
Bucks

## Individual support

Small group/individual zones of regulation  
EBSA work/resources for individuals  
'Kind Kites' - children have a named adult that they can talk to in the year group (mental health first aider).  
Family support service referral  
CAMHS referral  
ELSA support - run by trained Emotional Literacy support assistant  
Incredible 5 point scales  
Roots and fruits analysis  
Report cards  
Behaviour trackers  
Therapeutic play  
Visual resources/timetables to support organisation/transitions/independence and to reduce anxiety.  
Social stories/comic strip conversations

## Universal support

Additional emotional check ins with children  
Classroom buddy  
Talk around feelings during PSHE  
Zones of regulation displays in classes  
Reasonable adjustments - e.g. coming into school via a different entrance,  
Sitting on a chair in class/assembly,  
First Aid mental health boxes in year groups  
Prefects helping out with younger years - BUDDY MENTOR  
TALKING ABOUT FEELINGS IN YEAR GROUP ASSEMBLIES  
TALK ABOUT - group intervention

# CAMHS resources

## Anxiety diary

Fill in this diary over the next week whenever you notice a strong feeling of anxiety. It can help you spot patterns or triggers for your anxiety. This can help you improve the way you manage those situations and your response.

Write down:

- **The day and time you felt anxious** (regardless of whether you are completing the diary the same day, or afterwards)
- **What were you doing?** Describe what was happening, who was there (it could be just you) and where it happened
- **What thoughts were you having?** Write down exactly what you thought, and don't be embarrassed!
- **How did this make you feel?**

An example is included below

Day & Time	What were you doing?	What were your thoughts?	How did you feel?
2.4.20	Getting myself ready for school	I am sure I have forgotten something	Hot, racing heart, sweating

## Control your anxiety

When you notice yourself becoming anxious do something to make yourself feel better.

Keep an open mind and try some of these ideas to find out what works for you.

### Relaxation exercises

Many famous celebrities, athletes and musicians use relaxation exercises to help them prepare for challenges. Relaxation involves tensing each of the major muscle groups in your body and then releasing the tension. Tensing the muscles helps them to relax.

There are several audio guides that will take you through the process of tensing and relaxing your muscles. If you don't have one you can follow the instructions below.

- Choose a time when you won't be interrupted. Find a quiet, warm place and turn your phone off. Lie down or sit comfortably. You may want to shut your eyes but if you want to keep them open that's fine.
- Tense each muscle group twice. Tense it enough so that it feels tight but don't hurt yourself.
- Start by taking 5 deep breaths. Slowly breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth
- Now turn your attention to your feet and curl up your toes. Scrunch them up, count to 5 and release them. Notice the difference between tension and relaxation. Tense them again
- Move your attention to your legs and tense your calves by pointing your toes towards your knees. Count to 5, release the tension and notice the difference between tension and relaxation.
- Tense your thighs by pushing the back of your legs against the chair or bed.
- Move to your stomach and tense this by sucking in your stomach and pushing your belly button towards your spine.
- Focus on your arms and hands and tense them by making a tight fist and curling your arms up towards your shoulders.
- Now tense your back by arching your spine and pushing your shoulder blades together. Count to 5, relax and notice the difference between tension and relaxation.

- Return your attention to your breathing and enjoy this relaxed feeling for a few minutes.

### Quick Relaxation

There may be times when you don't have time to tense and relax each of your muscles. A quicker way of doing this is to tense each of the major muscle groups together.

Tense your muscles, hold them for 5 seconds and as you breathe out let them go and notice the tension fade away. Repeat this and enjoy that nice calm feeling for a couple of minutes.

- **Arms and hands:** Clench your fists and push your arms towards your shoulders
- **Legs and feet:** Push your toes towards your knees, gently raise your legs and stretch them out in front of you
- **Stomach:** Suck your tummy in
- **Shoulders and neck:** Push your shoulders up towards your ears and pull your shoulder blades together
- **Face:** Screw up your face, squeeze your eyes and jaw tightly, and push your lips together.
- The more you practice the easier you will find this.

### Physical activity

A natural way of tensing and relaxing your muscles is through physical activity. Activity can also improve your mood. When you exercise, your brain produces chemicals which make you feel good.






You can do as little or as much physical activity as you want. The idea is to do enough to release the tension in your body. Think about the exercise you enjoy. It could be anything like



# Zones of regulation

BLUE ZONE	GREEN ZONE	YELLOW ZONE	RED ZONE
 sad  tired	 happy  calm	 frustrated  worried	 angry  terrified
 sick  bored	 feeling ok  ready to learn	 silly  excited	 yelling  hitting
I can try...  stretch	I can try...  drink water	I can try...  deep breaths	I can try...  take a break

1,178 x 651

BLUE ZONE	GREEN ZONE	YELLOW ZONE	RED ZONE
   	   	   	   
Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly	Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	Mad/Angry Terrified Yelling/Hitting Elated Out of Control

# EBSA



## EMOTIONALLY BASED SCHOOL AVOIDANCE GUIDANCE

### PRIMARY

Pupil version

### Mapping the Landscape of Your School

#### 1. The Physical Environment

- Look carefully at the map of your school
- Use the highlighter pens to mark how the areas on the map make you feel.  
Green = I feel calm and relaxed in this space  
Yellow = I feel anxious/uncomfortable in this space  
Red = I would like to avoid this space as it makes me very anxious

- For the areas that you have coloured red, what makes you feel unsafe?

- What might the school do to help you feel safer in your 'red' areas?

#### 2. The Social Environment

During the school day children work with their class and talk to other children and adults. Sometimes this can be fun but sometimes we can feel anxious about being with other people. What things that you do with other people make you happy or upset you?



1	Coming into school in the morning.	<input type="range"/>
2	Hanging up my coat or putting my bag in the cloakroom	<input type="range"/>
3	Going into the classroom when the children are all moving round	<input type="range"/>
4	Finding my job to do when I come in	<input type="range"/>
5	Finding a place where I can sit	<input type="range"/>
6	Carpet times	<input type="range"/>
7	Lining up with my class	<input type="range"/>
8	Choosing times	<input type="range"/>
9	Going out to play	<input type="range"/>
10	Sitting in the dining hall with other children	<input type="range"/>



# Next steps for us as a school.....

- ▶ Identifying members of staff as 'Kind kites' for children to go to when they are worried/angry etc.
- ▶ These members of staff will have additional training in form of mental health first aid training (16 members of staff)
- ▶ Trauma and attachment training via the virtual school
- ▶ Parent survey is live till 31<sup>st</sup> March
- ▶ Parent forum to discuss and identify areas to develop in terms of children wellbeing. Parents to identify next steps and help embed within the school community.
- ▶ Wellbeing governor: Laura Atherton
- ▶ Continue to raise awareness and signpost to specialist help where appropriate.
- ▶ Re - launch 'zones of regulation'
- ▶ SEN shout outs in newsletter - useful information for parents



# How can you help?

## **Following a routine**

Allow them to set clear boundaries and routines

Discuss any changes in routine so they have time to prepare

## **Making time for wellbeing**

Allocate a calm or safe space

Try relaxation techniques – for example, breathing techniques, imagery, meditation and mindfulness.

Encourage wellbeing skills – including a healthy diet, good sleep hygiene, regular exercise and spending time in nature.

## **Exploring emotions**

Use scales by asking them to rate their mood from 1 to 10 as this can be helpful if they struggle to articulate emotions

Try the zones of regulation approach - which can help with articulating emotions verbally

Use words and pictures to explore emotions, to assist with the development of emotional literacy

Use body mapping to link physical sensations with emotions to develop their understanding and recognition of them

## **Behaviour**

Praise and reward them for appropriate behaviour

Give them opportunities for positive social interactions such as turn-taking and sharing

Let your child's class teacher know if there is a change in behaviour.

# Useful websites

## CAMHS

<https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/self-care/>

## Online videos

## YOUNG MINDS

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/how-to-talk-to-your-child-about-mental-health/>

## EBSA

<https://familyinfo.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/improving-your-childs-school-attendance/emotionally-based-school-avoidance-epsna/epsna-guidance-for-parents-and-carers/>

## MIND

<https://www.mind.org.uk/for-young-people/> - 11-18.

# Your views

- ▶ Questions/suggestions?