

3rd November 2022

Supporting students' mental health and wellbeing through everyday interactions in school settings

This seminar will begin shortly



Anna Freud
National Centre for
Children and Families

@AFNCCF

Programme

Time	Details
16.30 – 16.35	Introduction – Jaime Smith , Programme Director – Schools Division
16.35 – 16.55	Presentation – Aleisha Clarke , Former Director of Evidence at EIF and Miriam Sorgenfrei , Senior Research Officer at EIF
16.55 – 17.10	Presentation – Jean Gross CBE
17.10 – 17.20	Presentation – Rahi Popat , Pastoral Support Officer, Keyham Lodge School
17.25 – 18.00	Q&A chaired by Jaime Smith
18.00	Closing remarks from Jaime Smith

Classroom wellbeing toolkit



Classroom wellbeing toolkit

Simple ways to support secondary students' mental health



Share your thoughts with us

schoolsinmind@annafreud.org

@AFNCCF

#ClassroomWellbeing

A practical toolkit for secondary school teachers

Developing the Classroom Wellbeing Toolkit

Dr Aleisha Clarke, Miriam Sorgenfrei



Anna Freud
National Centre for
Children and Families



**EARLY
INTERVENTION
FOUNDATION**

Promoting young people's mental health and wellbeing

Mental health of young people is our future

Growing opportunities and challenges for young people in an increasingly complex society – pandemic, population migrations, economic uncertainties, sustainability of ecosystem and climate change

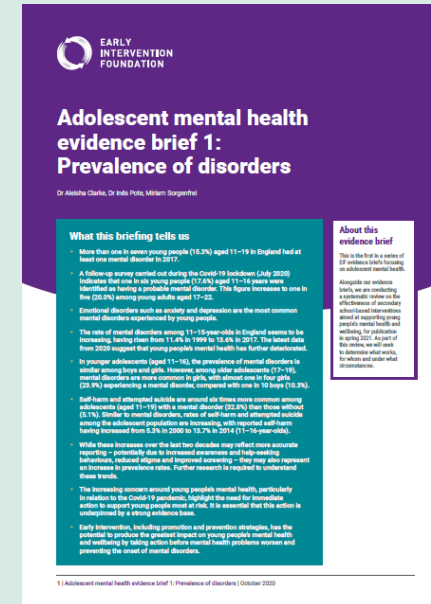
A broad range of cognitive, social and emotional skills are needed for positive youth development

Growing consensus on need to develop the 'whole child' to face challenges of 21st century

Current context

Young people experience increasing levels of mental health problems

One in 8 young people identified as having probable mental disorder in 2017, increased to one in six in 2020/2021

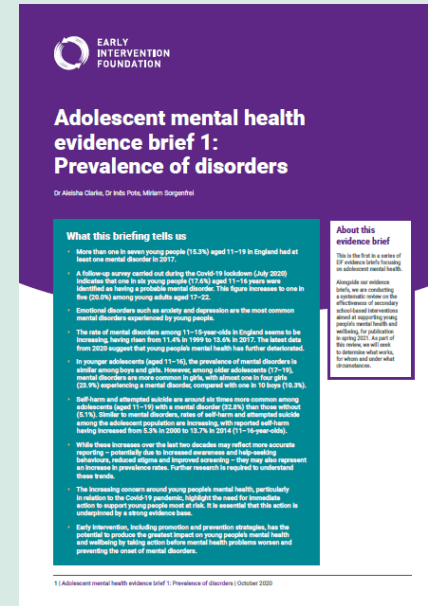


Current context

Young people experience increasing levels of mental health problems

One in 8 young people identified as having probable mental disorder in 2017, increased to one in six in 2020/2021

Mental health difficulties experienced during adolescence are associated with increased risk of poorer adult outcome – depression, anxiety, education and employment outcomes, physical health



Supporting young people's mental health and wellbeing

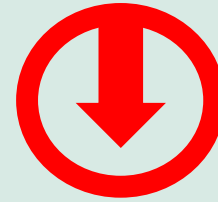
Concerned with:

- Enhancing and protecting positive mental health – positive functioning, engagement and social wellbeing
- Enhancing young people's **capacity to successfully cope with and enjoy life**
- **Strengthening social and emotional skills**
 - ability identify, articulate, regulate emotions
 - develop relationship skills
 - enhance decision making skills
- Creating **supportive environments** where young people feel a sense of belonging and connection

Research links mental health promotion to pupil gains



- Improved social-emotional skills
- Improved attitudes about self, others and school
- Positive classroom behaviour



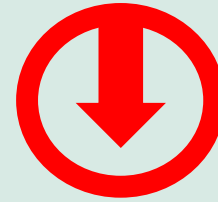
- Fewer conduct problems
- Less emotional stress
- Lower drug use

Durlak, J.A., Weissberg, R.P., Dymnicki, A.B., Taylor, R.D., & Schellinger, K. (2011) The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development*: 82 (1), 405-432.

Research links mental health promotion to pupil gains



- Improved social-emotional skills
- Improved attitudes about self, others and school
- Positive classroom behaviour
- 11 percentile point gain in academic achievement tests



- Fewer conduct problems
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Teachers benefit too



Teachers with good social and emotional skills:

- Develop and manage nurturing relationships with students
- Manage behaviour in classroom
- Regulate own emotions
- More likely to stay in teaching for longer

Approaches to promoting mental health in the school setting

Universal classroom-based approaches – teaching of skills to all students in classroom through developmentally appropriate curriculum

Social and emotional learning programmes, mindfulness programmes, positive psychology programmes

Examples: *MindOut Programme; Dutch Skills for Life Programme*

Targeted approaches – programmes for students at higher risk of developing mental health difficulties

Reducing the risk of negative mental health outcomes

Examples: *Blues Programme; DISCOVER; SPARX-R*

Whole school approach – coordinated action between multiple components

Leadership, Supportive environment, Working together, Curriculum teaching, Working with external stakeholders

Examples: *Learning Together*



Whole school approach – supportive environment

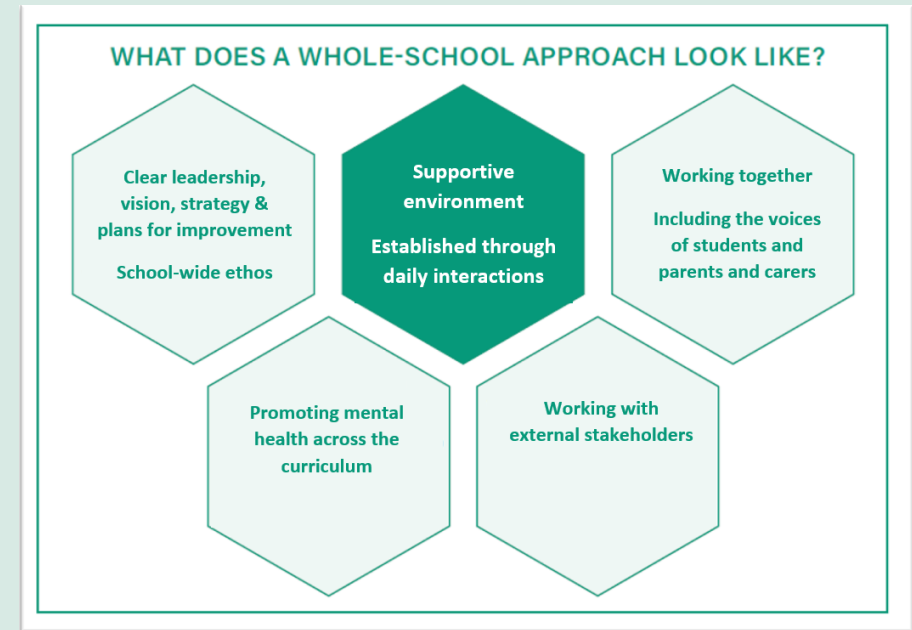
Key ingredient of successful whole school programmes:
whole school teacher training

Strategies ***all teachers*** can use to support young people's mental health through everyday interactions

Supporting student's mental health through non curricular ways

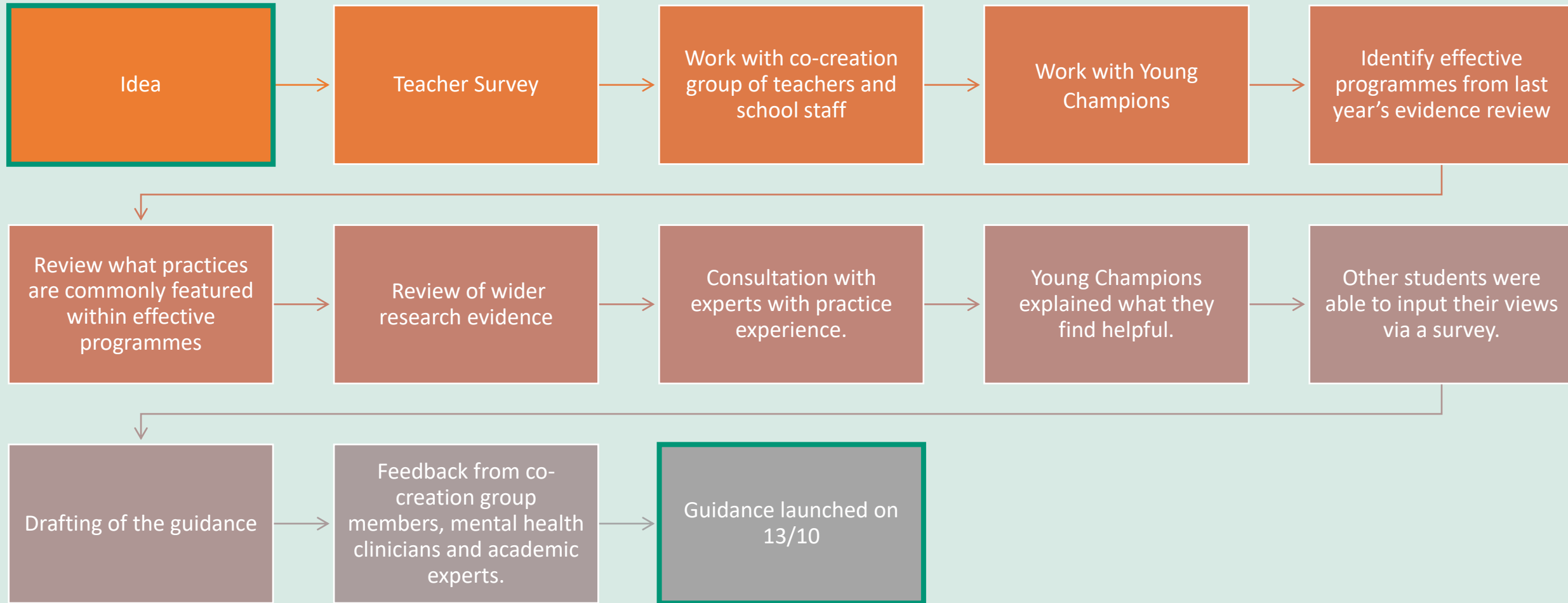
- interact with pupils
- build relationship
- model key social and emotional skills
- respond to pupils' needs

Classroom Wellbeing Toolkit



“Mental health is everyone’s business”

Methodology



Combining different forms of evidence

- **Research evidence**
 - Strong starting position due to recent high-quality evidence review
 - Review of common practices to translate programme-level evidence into practical recommendations
 - Lack of specificity in programme descriptions
 - Additional searches, including additional impact evaluations and publications other than impact evaluations, e.g. association of skills and mental health outcomes
- **Practice experience**
 - Work with teachers & young people to consider and optimise fit
- **Expert knowledge**
 - Experts' review to consider gaps & coherence

Collaboration with young champions and teachers

- Enabled us to meaningfully engage with our audience
- The teacher panel helped us
 - ask the right questions
 - get the structure, tone and way of presentation right
- Working with the Young Champions helped us
 - include the right questions
 - reflect on the acceptability of recommended practices

Surveys

- The surveys enabled us to hear from a wider group of teachers and young people
 - Open responses highlighted an urgent need for practical guidance that provides tangible strategies
 - Young people highlighted what practices they do and don't like

Tangible strategies that can be applied through daily interactions that support pupils' mental health and wellbeing (n=42)

"practical tools and resources, ... that are tangible and easily accessible ... clear suggestions on implementing and embedding within tutor groups and general classroom settings not just RSHE"

"Everyday activities/methods to encourage positive mental health."

"Building friendships, fitting in, combatting feeling lonely - especially with impact of Covid restrictions"

"Supporting mental health in the classroom as part of every lesson. Strategies to support students on a daily basis"

"How to maximize support given in a limited time period"

"Specific tools and strategies to use within a classroom setting"

"How to support development of resilience without sounding like we are encourage the young people to suck it up! Want them to be reflective and stronger"

"Day to day management, to keep children in the classroom rather than working in pastoral hubs for example. How to teach resilience."

"Resources that can be used discreetly IN lessons of which the subject is not mental health ..."

"Appropriate ways to 'assess' when in school."

"Some training on key aspects that actually help. How to support numerous children at one point..."

Tangible strategies to support young people to manage stress and anxiety, including exam anxiety (n=14)

"What practical steps can be taken to support pupils when they are feeling anxious and how to intervene as soon as possible to help reduce incidents of crisis"

"Strategies for coping with exam related anxiety."

"Anxiety, strategies to support students who are anxious and it is impacting on their ability to learn"

"Integration to lessons for a young person"

A better understanding of the link between mental health and academic achievement, as well as between mental health and behaviour (n=11).

"Increasing staff awareness and confidence that mental health (theirs and pupils') underpins all achievement"

"How to get through to some teaching staff just how important a pupils wellbeing and mental health is and how they should communicate with them"

More confidence in spotting the signs that young people may require additional support (n=23)

"Spotting signs early enough."

"Identifying students needs and offering strategies to help them be in school."

"How society is changing ... Training on how to deal with new issues which arise in school these days"

Strategies that can be applied to support young people with identified mental health difficulties (n=11)

"There are waiting lists for everything, so it feels as though there's nothing we can offer. If we had lists of good quality resources that we could use while waiting for referrals to go through, that might be helpful."

A better understanding of what support teachers can provide to young people dealing with self harm or suicidality (n=9) or eating disorders (n=5)

"Suicidal thoughts. How to get students to engage in support."

More confidence in having a conversation with young people about mental health (n=6)

"How to start a conversation and what to do depending on what they say. How and when to inform parents."

Strategies to support young people with ADHD, autism or SEND (n=4) or to support young people who were bereaved (n=2)

"I would benefit from more training on Bereavement, and wellbeing, due to Covid 19 we have witnessed lots of students losing very close family members including parents."

A better understanding of gender and of sexual violence (n=4)

"... better understanding of gender transitioning as this is becoming more common"

Guidance on dealing with behaviour difficulties (n=2)

"Language to use in order to diffuse challenging situations ie behaviour"

"Behaviour relating to mental health issues."

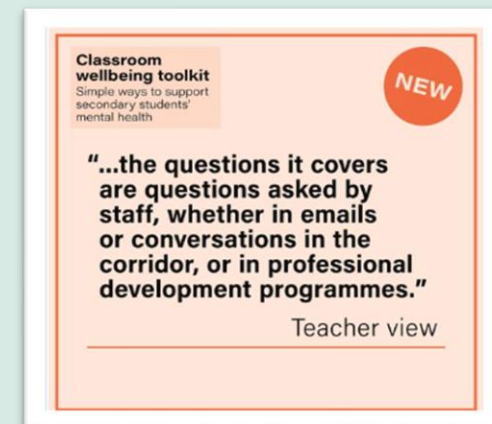
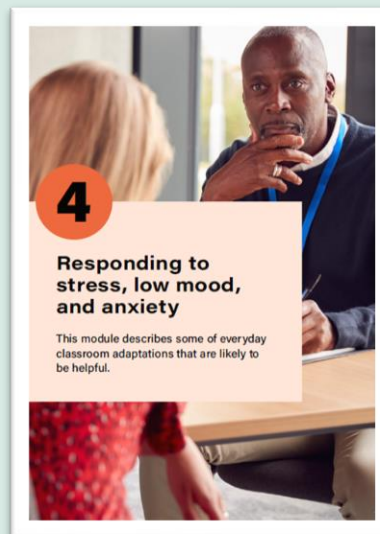
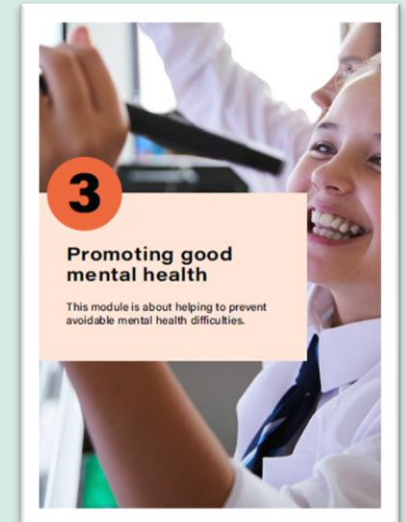
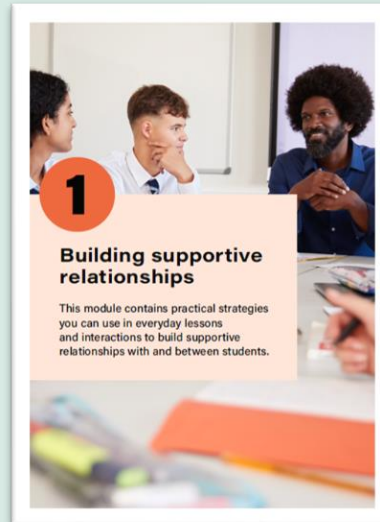
Additional training (n=11)

"... training for all staff in school"

"...training on how ... can be delivered in class ..."

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What's in the toolkit?

How can I support my students to understand and manage their emotions?

WHY THIS?

Two key skills – the ability to understand emotions and the ability to manage emotions – were frequently targeted in the effective school-based mental health promotion programmes that we reviewed as part of the common elements work to inform this toolkit. The EIF [evidence review](#) ⁷ also found that social and emotional learning programmes, which typically target self-awareness and self-management, had a consistently positive impact on students' mental health. Research shows that these skills are fundamental to both attainment and wellbeing, in adolescence and throughout life.²³

The ability to understand and regulate emotions is associated with reduced depressive and anxiety symptoms in young people.²⁴ Emotional regulation strategies such as cognitive reappraisal²⁵ and problem-solving have been shown to be associated with elevated levels of positive affect and wellbeing.²⁶

Individuals with anxiety or depression have greater difficulty managing their emotions because they tend to rely on ineffective self-regulation skills (such as rumination or avoidance) more often than effective skills (such as problem-solving or acceptance).²⁷

Research has demonstrated that self-regulation skills continue to grow throughout adolescence and that they can be strengthened with instruction.²⁸ Schools can thus play a key role in helping students learn how to be aware of how they are feeling, describe how they are feeling to others, and deal with their feelings effectively.

3 PROMOTING GOOD MENTAL HEALTH

INTRO 1 2 3 4 5 MORE



Strategies to develop students' ability to understand and regulate their emotions

Strategies identified via a review of the common elements of evidence-based programmes, practice experience, and echoed by the wider research evidence include:

1. Help students be aware of and talk about their feelings

► **Provide a model** by being prepared, on occasion, to talk about your own feelings: *'Just to let you know, I'm on a bit of a short fuse today for various personal reasons. Sorry about that. I'd appreciate your help in keeping the noise down.'* Describing scenarios where you felt hurt, ashamed or angry, for example, helps young people see that everyone experiences difficult emotions and that these emotions are not only unavoidable but important, in that they provide signals which tell us something about the situation we are in.²⁹

► **Make clear it is okay for students to talk about their own emotions:** Ask *'How are you feeling?'* instead of *'How are you doing?'*, or encourage students to talk briefly about how they are feeling when they are frustrated by a piece of work or when someone annoys them (the principle of 'Name it to tame it').

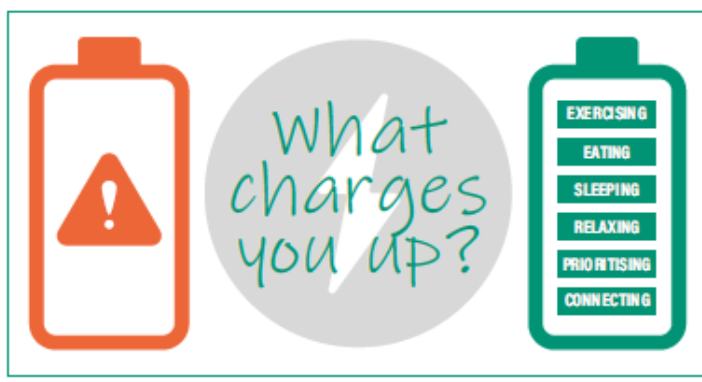


"I try wherever possible to catch them being good. So I can praise them ... just not over the top so it's embarrassing."

Teacher

"It was helpful when teachers rewarded us or said 'well done' for the little things we did right."

Student



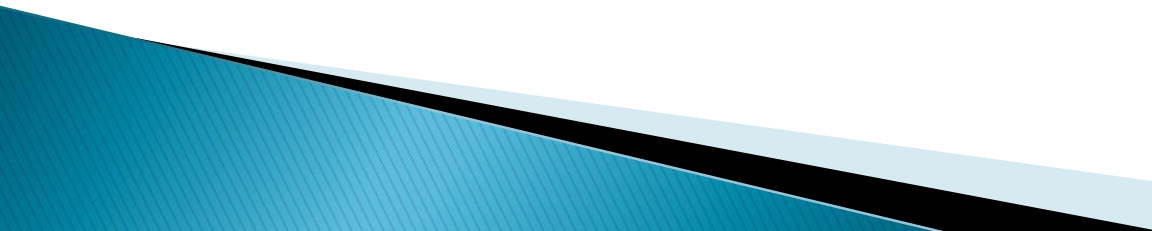
Connecting to the classroom

@JeanGrossCBE

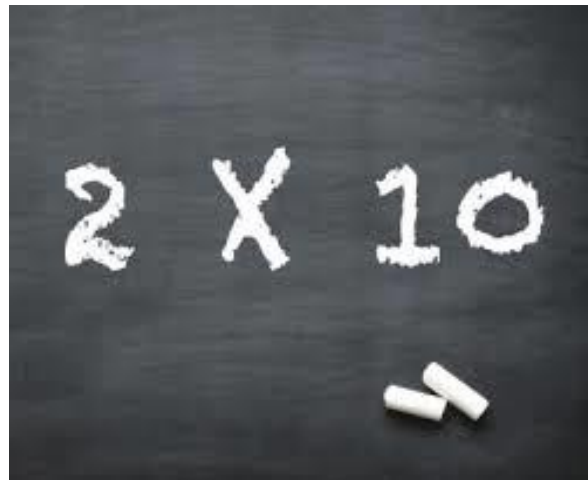
<https://www.jean-gross.com/>



Everyday classroom practice


- ▶ The relationships we create
 - ▶ What we model
 - ▶ The feedback we give to students
 - ▶ How we help all students manage everyday stress, low mood and anxiety
 - ▶ How we respond to students experiencing mental health difficulties
- 

Teacher pupil relationships



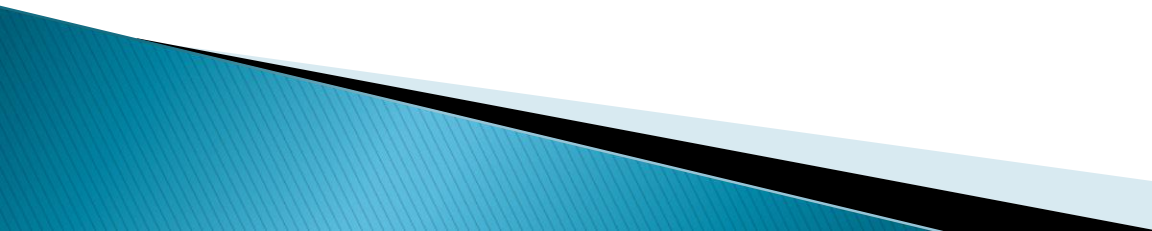
TRY THIS: PERSONAL PROFILES

Make sure students feel 'seen' as individuals. For example, ask your new Year 7 class to complete personal profiles at the start of the year.

<p>This is me: Jordan Jones Year 7</p> 	<p>What I'm interested in: Singing, TikTok, country music, animals</p>
<p>What I'm good at: Looking after my dog, Lola</p>	<p>What I find hard: Maths</p>
<p>What I like about ... subject (e.g. maths, history): I like reading stories about people in history.</p> <p>What I don't like or am worried about in ... subject (e.g. maths, history): I don't like doing loads of writing.</p>	<p>What teachers need to know so they can help me learn: Please use lots of pictures and videos in lessons to help explain things.</p>

 [Download this template](#)


Peer relationships

- ▶ Create opportunities for students to work with others outside their normal friendship groups, throughout the year, using random pairs.
 - ▶ Encourage peer support: e.g. 'Can anyone think of a way to help Mo here?'
 - ▶ Give specific praise when students are helpful to each other
 - ▶ Encourage students to step into others' shoes: 'If that had been you, how would you have felt?'
 - ▶ Actively teach students how to work cooperatively in groups
- 


The worst group in the world



Our break out room ground-rules

1. Focus on the subject
 2. Listen to each other
 3. Give everyone a turn
 4. Everyone should try to join in
 5. What's in the Zoom stays in the Zoom
 6. Disagree with the point not the person
- 

Everyday classroom practice

- ▶ The relationships we create
 - ▶ **What we model**
 - ▶ The feedback we give to students
 - ▶ How we help all students manage everyday stress, low mood and anxiety
 - ▶ How we respond to students experiencing mental health difficulties
- 

THINGS WE MODEL, WHETHER WE REALISE IT OR NOT



How we handle mistakes



How we deal with frustration



How we solve problems



How we take care of ourselves



How we apologise and repair



How we ask for help



How we speak up for self and others



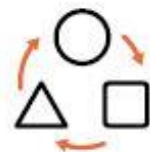
How we navigate conflict



How we approach differences



How we look after each other



How we adapt to change



How we listen

Everyday classroom practice

- The relationships we create
- What we model
- **The feedback we give to students**
- How we help all students manage everyday stress, low mood and anxiety
- How we respond to students experiencing mental health difficulties

Great job
applying the
strategy we
learned to the
homework'

'It
was good to
see you
helping your
friend
with...'

'It looked like
everyone was really
listening to your
presentation.
What do you think
you did to ...

'I hear that you did
really well at X,
Jason'

Praise postcards– and their electronic equivalent




Conveying that mistakes are useful and how we learn

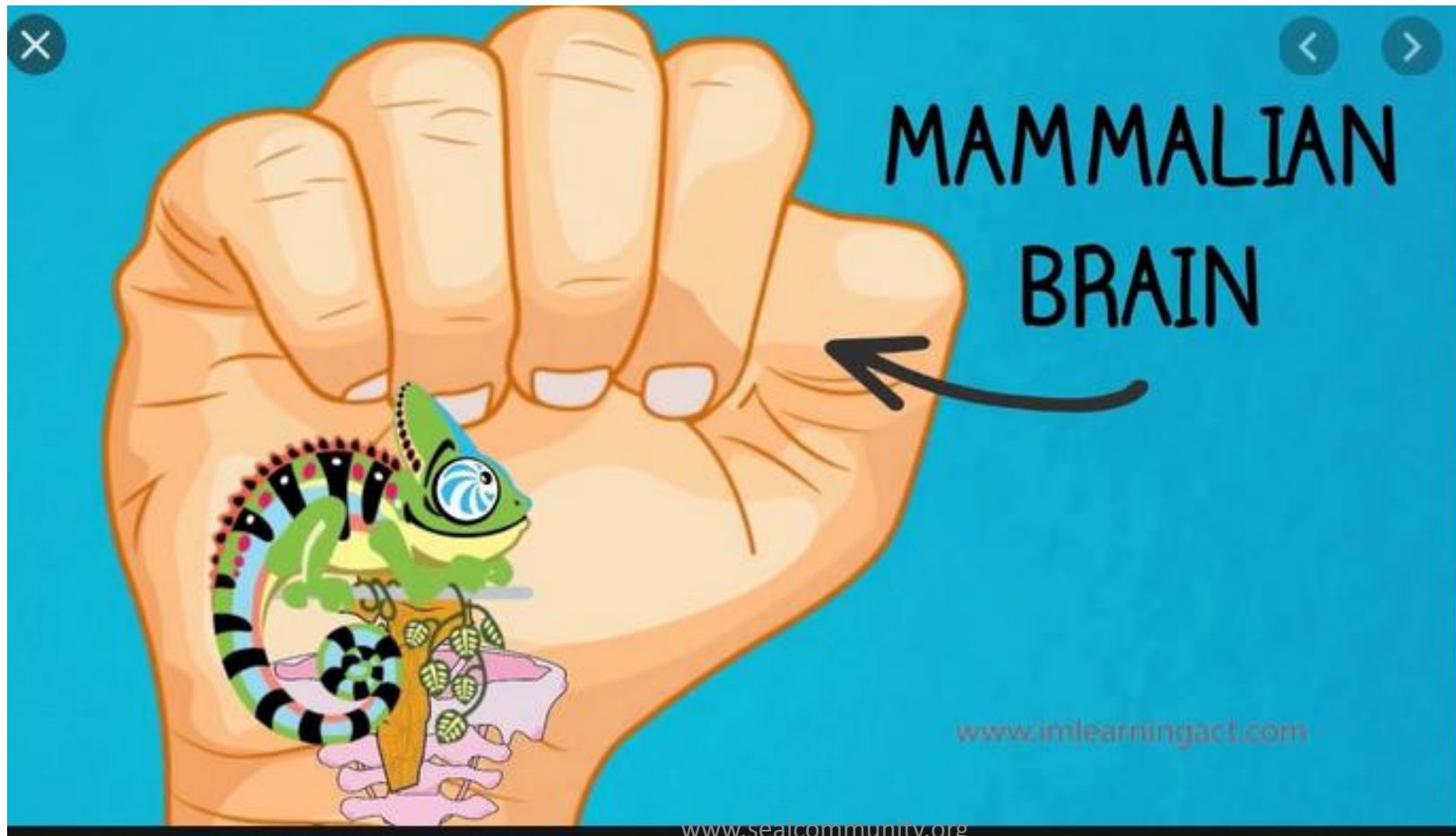
F **FIRST**
A **ATTEMPT**
I **IN**
L **LEARNING**

Adult: No mistakes? I can see I've wasted your time

Everyday classroom practice

- ▶ The relationships we create
 - ▶ What we model
 - ▶ The feedback we give to students
 - ▶ How we help all students manage everyday stress, low mood and anxiety
 - ▶ How we respond to students experiencing mental health difficulties
- 

Flipping your lid



Self management/regulation

ZONES OF REGULATION

BLUE ZONE

RUNNING SLOW

- Sad
- Tired
- Bored
- Moving slowly

GREEN ZONE

GOOD TO GO

- Happy
- Calm
- Feeling okay
- Focused
- Ready to learn

AMBER ZONE

CAUTION

- Frustrated
- Irritated
- Anxious
- Worried
- Restless
- Unfocused
- Loss of some control

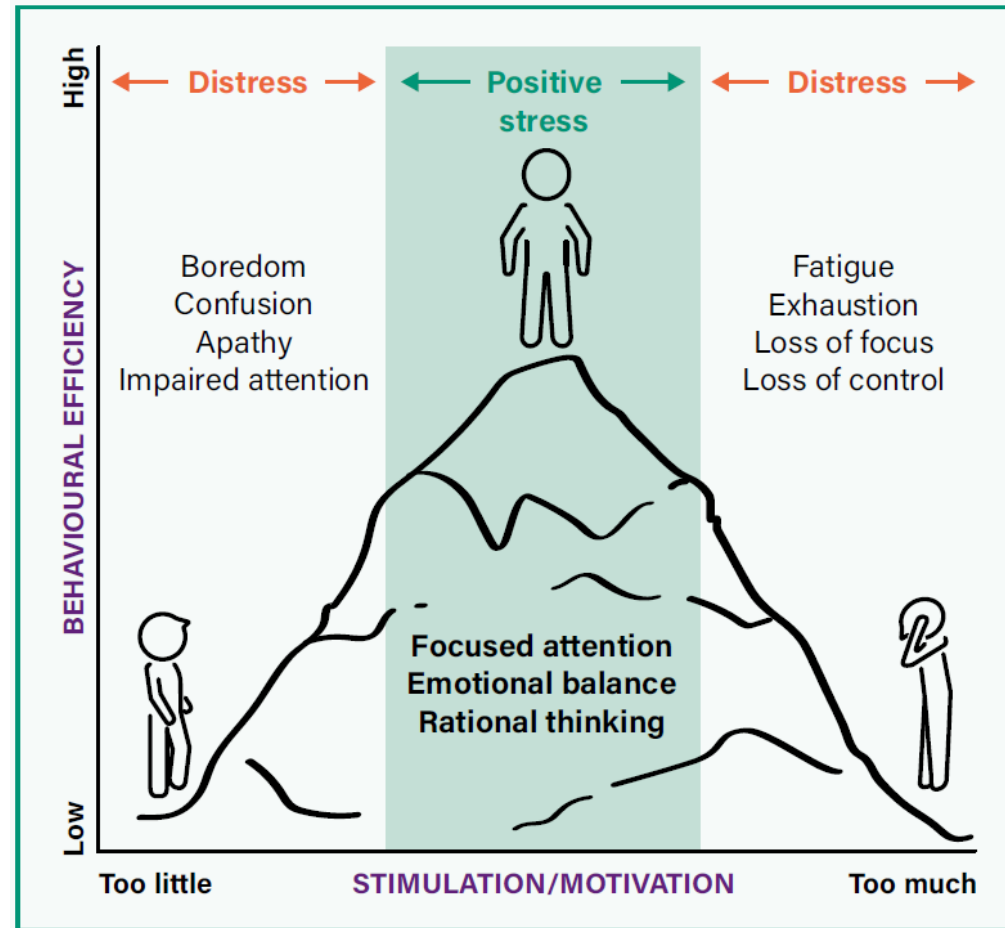
RED ZONE

STOP

- Angry
- Furious
- Out of control
- Panicky
- Overwhelmed

Exam anxiety

The stress curve



Exam anxiety



- Help students reframe the feelings they have as potentially making them more productive (re-appraisal)
- Teach a simple strategy like 'five finger breathing' to use if the anxiety gets too much (self-regulation)
- Ask students to press fast forward and imagine how they will feel in a few years if they fail an exam now.. (temporal distancing)

Everyday classroom practice

- The relationships we create
- What we model
- The feedback we give to students
- How we help all students manage everyday stress, low mood and anxiety
- How we respond to students experiencing mental health difficulties



What
charges
you up?



Reasonable adjustments



“When I struggled, my maths teacher throughout was such an amazing teacher. And he knew that if I turned around and looked at him, I would just walk out and I could go to like my safe space. So we had agreements that didn’t necessarily mean having a long conversation.”

Student

Everyday classroom practice

- The relationships we create
- What we model
- The feedback we give to students
- How we help all students manage everyday stress, low mood and anxiety
- How we respond to students experiencing mental health difficulties

“

*Be the person you needed
when you were younger*

”

Rahi Popat

rpopat@keyham.discoverytrust.org

Supporting Students Mental Health and Wellbeing
Keyham Lodge School

Keyham Lodge School

Whole School Intervention

Resilience building

Senior Mental Health Lead

Assembly programme

Staff development and training

Staff Wellbeing

My Skills

Website

Trauma Informed Practice

Pre-referral consultation regarding any concerns

Drop in facility

Pastoral support

Student voice

Safeguarding

Mental Health DSL

SENCO

Mental Health First Aiders

Tier 1

IRT
(Response/Therapy)
Drop-in therapeutic sessions

Psychological assessments
(identification, snapshot, evaluation)

Behaviour and pastoral support
Mentoring

Offsite provisions
(Equine Therapy)

Tier 2

School nurse referral/support

Referral to Autism specialist support

Referral to additional support agencies (if necessary)

Tier 3

Early Help

CAMHS / CYPMH

Early Intervention Team

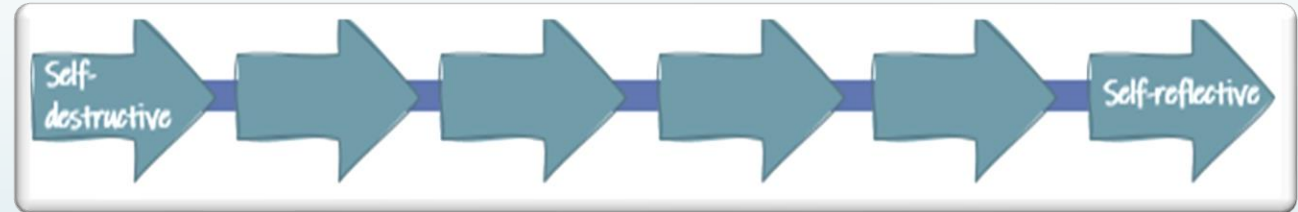
Crisis Support Team

Local Support Services

Statement of Intent

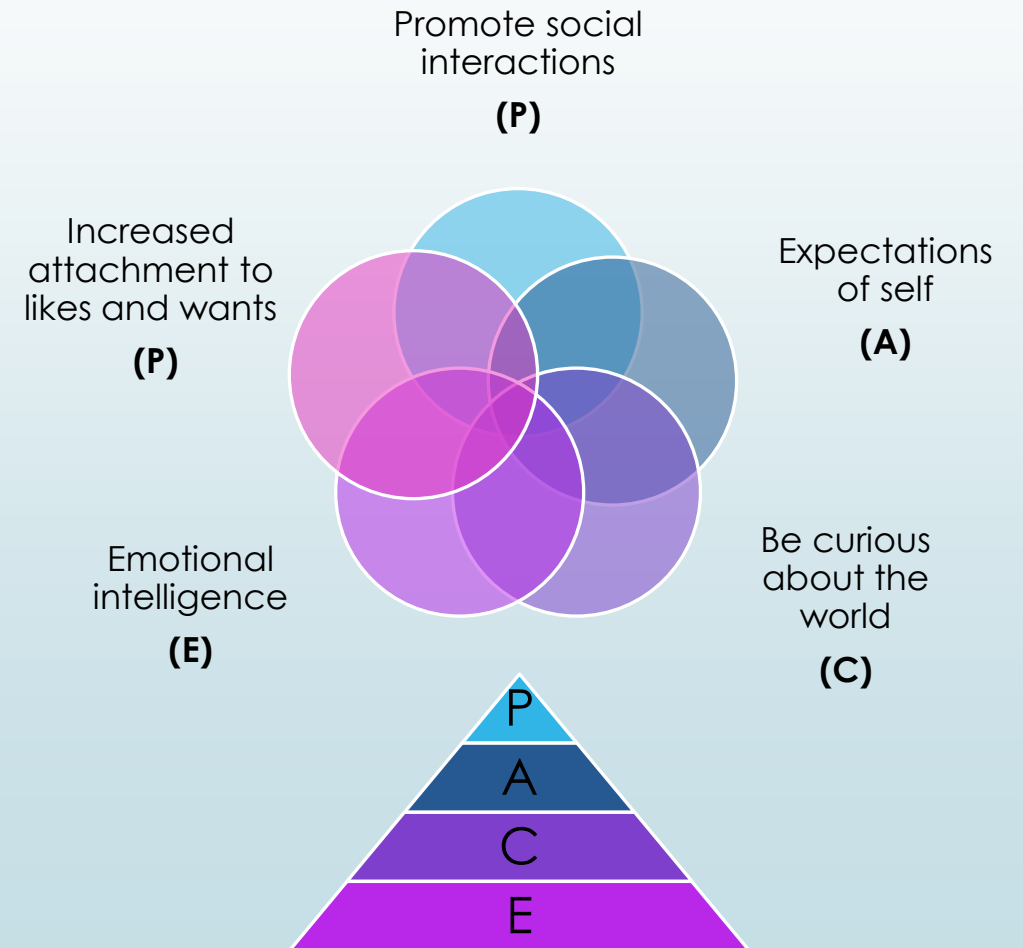
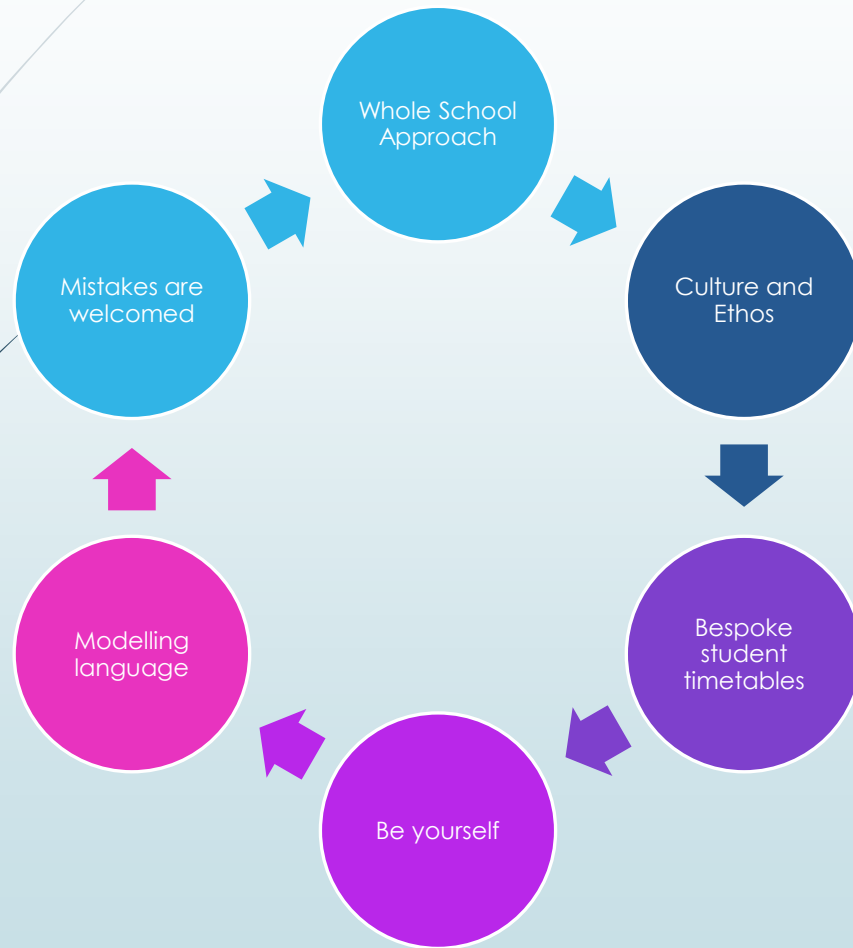
Key Principles

- Respect
- Honesty
- Trust
- Integrity
- Kindness



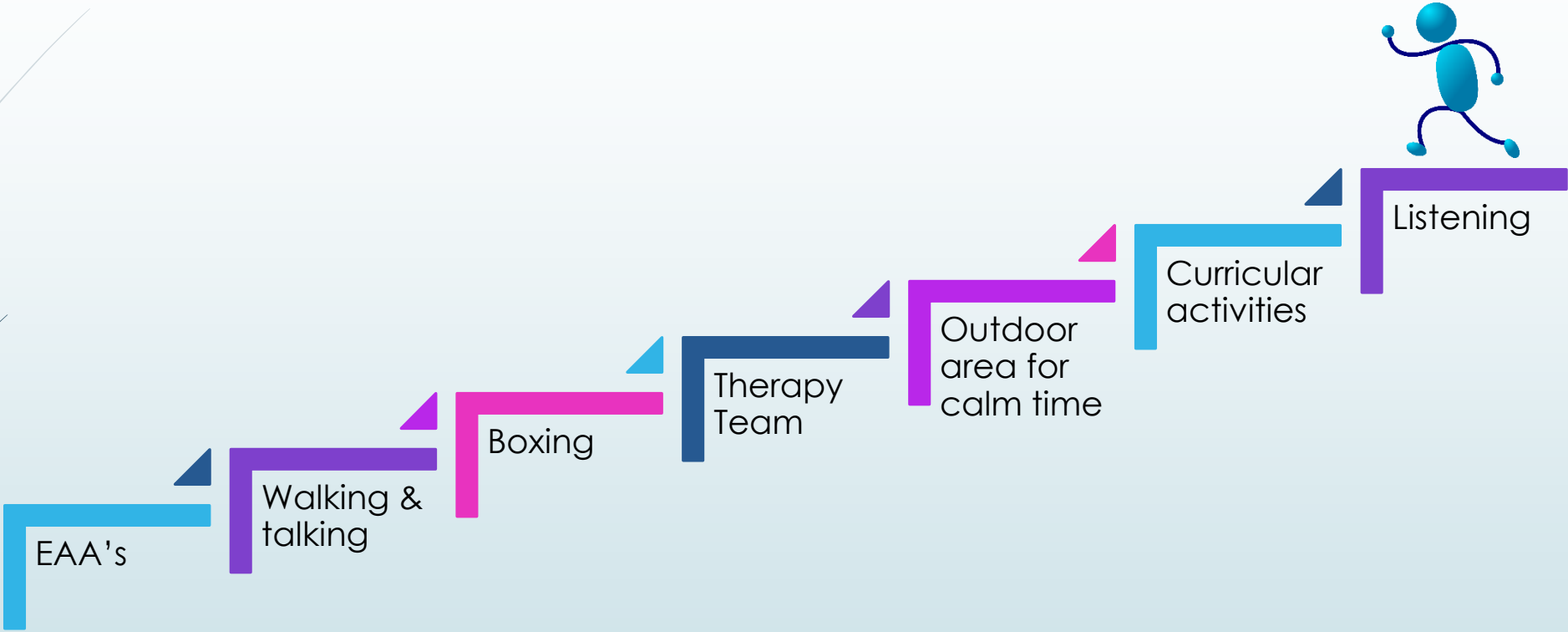
- These principles are key to forming of positive relationships with each other, staff, parents/carers and for life beyond school. They all are adhered to form long lasting positive relationships. These principles are aligned with the schools vision - to *learn better, behave better and live better lives*.
- The implementation of the behaviour modification policy also plays a key role in the behaviour strategy. In addition it supports the students to become better informed decision makers based on self-reflection.

Implementing Strategies





In Action...





Child

Acknowledging feelings

Use interests to make sense of what he feels

Drawing on interactive board to convey feelings and understand

Facilitating conversation between him and Mum with EAA present

Children

Access to rich curriculum to allow for exploration of feelings

Bespoke timetables so they can access EAA to reflect on feelings

Use of extra-curricular activities to explore themselves further

Student Council to ensure their voice is heard

Staff

Therapy Team who provide access to daily safe space for staff and students

Extended tutor time once a week to allow time to reflect on self (WINE)

My Skills, Life Skills and CORE Curriculum linked to emotions and feelings

Behaviour and relationship policies

All Together Now...

- ▶ Ensure staff are **part** of the process of what the school vision may look like
- ▶ Look to be **proactive** with possible mental health difficulties
- ▶ Having an **empathic view and understanding** that we are all different and that is okay. We all have different ways to manage and express ourselves
- ▶ Space offered in and out of school where they feel **safe, accepted and heard**



I wish my teacher knew...

"I want to come to school than stay at home"

"I may need to sell drugs because Mum has low money at home"

"I feel rejected"

"I don't know how to tell others I care about them"

"I don't like school food and I go hungry"

The vision...

