

United Against Bullying School Case Study: Using emotional wellbeing trackers

How Kingmoor Nursery and Infant School used emotional wellbeing trackers

Context of our anti-bullying work

Following feedback from parents who completed our initial survey stated that in section 3 on well being children lacked the ability to be able to express themselves in how they were feeling. As PSHE lead I was also aware that through our PSHE lessons the children's use of vocabulary was limited due to our school being an infant school and the children being so young. We also felt that due to timetabling and other commitments in school we did not have regular opportunities to check how the children were feeling and to spend time with individuals who needed it. We felt this was particularly important following the changes from COVID through the previous two years, which for some of our children was most of their school lives so far. Therefore, we wanted to further educate our children in the ability and opportunity to express their feelings.

What we hoped to achieve

To develop children's language and understanding of their feelings.

To offer children regular ways to express how they are feeling which can then be monitored and tracked and support can be offered when needed which should result in any issues or concerns being address earlier rather than escalating.

The action we took

Following our own ABA pupil survey, we found that although 100% of children stated in section 3 that they felt happy either 'a lot' or 'always'. 42% of children said they worry and 31% of children said they wake up at night. When we spoke to parents and children about this the children were unable to express why they were worried and we recognised this was due to their lack of language to express their needs.

From this we implemented the use of the Emotional ABC programme.

- Every class and nursery access the programme through short sessions two to three times per week.

- The sessions teach children about the use of language associated with emotions, facial expressions and body language.
- It supports them recognising emotions in others and in themselves. It gives them tools to deal with emotions.
- We paid a premium subscription to allow a number of children with SEMH needs access at home.
- We use this as support families through the early help process.
- We have developed displays and interactive resources are available throughout the school so that children can access Emotional ABCs when needed.
- We have ELSA trained staff who use Emotional ABCs to support children in their 1-1 and group sessions e.g. access to 'The Moody' characters and language around emotional literacy e.g. pause, reflect, rewind.
- Our interactive displays have 'post it boxes' for children to express their feelings at any point throughout the day.
- We have resources available to access throughout the day to support children if they wish.

On occasions staff were unaware that some of the children were feeling worried. Therefore, we felt it was important to implement a system to track children's feelings.

- Each week we complete an Emotional ABC well-being tracker, when the children come to school they complete a quick online survey to state how they are feeling that day by selecting a photo/word linked to Emotional ABC that describes how they feel e.g. calm, excited, sad etc
- Children can select more than one emotion and these are scaled 1-2 for either a little or a lot.
- This is then tracked by class teachers weekly and any children who express any negative emotions will be offered universal support e.g. 1-1 discussions.
- This is then monitored half termly by the inclusion team and class teachers and children are given targeted support through 1-1 or group ELSA sessions if they are consistently expressing negative emotions.
- We have 'worry wall/box' if children would like to express a worry at any point throughout if they do not want to share this verbally. Staff in school regularly check this and offer support when needed.
- We also encourage open communication with children so they know they can come and express their feelings at any time with an adult and their feelings are valid and valued.

Impact and outcomes of the work

From future questionnaires and our final version of the ABA questionnaire we found that 100% of children felt happy either a lot or always. The percentage of worried children was down to 19% with the significant difference being that we were aware that these children had been feeling this way and they were able to confidently express why.

Through observations of PSHE sessions I have been able to recognise that the children are more aware of the vast range of emotions, what that emotion looks and feels like and have a more advanced vocabulary to express this.

When completing pupil surveys 100% of children who took part were able to identify the Emotional ABC 'Moody Characters' around school and explain what it meant and why we have them in school.

Staff now have a clear and consistent approach to discussing children's emotions this supports children's transitions through year groups and also any adult in school is able to communicate with any child in school in a way in which they are all familiar with.

We share with our parents the language we use at school and some parents have stated that they have been using this approach effectively at home to help support their children's understanding of their emotions and feelings.

We were able to recognise which emotions children were still finding difficult to recognise and express and purchase additional resources to support this e.g. books etc.

Our weekly trackers have demonstrated that the majority of children only express a negative emotion intermittently therefore this reinforces that children do feel happy at school and the negative emotion can be to something that has happened that day – e.g. fallen over on the way to school. This also helps us to support our work we have been doing on recognising the definition of bullying that it is something that is happening consistently, therefore if a child has stated they feel sad through discussions we have found that this way usually due to a one off incident such as a small disagreement with a friend. We remind children of our phrase 'everyday is not ok' and 'all day is not ok'.

Children are more aware of their emotions and others emotions and we have noticed a reduction in the amount of issues surrounding friendships in school.

Next year we would expect the positive results of this to continue as children have had a year to familiarise themselves with it and will be able to build on their knowledge further. We have recognised and added to our action plan to have a key focus on Emotional ABCs within children starting in reception new to our school and within nursery to develop this language as early as possible.

What we have learned

We will continue to disseminate the use of well-being trackers and Emotional ABCs throughout school and aim to offer more intervention groups for support when needed.