

## What is the evidence?

Numerous impact evaluations of the ELSA programmes have been carried out. Broadly, evaluations found the following:

- Pupils value the work of ELSAs
- Class teachers report improvement in a range of measures after a pupil receives ELSA intervention
- The intervention has an impact on the emotional literacy of the school community as a whole

Please see [www.elsanetwork.org](http://www.elsanetwork.org) for evaluation studies



## How do I get involved?

**Schools**—If you are interested in enrolling a staff member on the ELSA training programme, please contact your link Educational Psychologist who will provide you with further information

**Parents**— If you feel your child would benefit from this intervention, please speak to their class teacher or the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). If the school does not currently have an ELSA, they will be able to provide you with alternative support.

## ELSAs can help with:

- Loss and bereavement
- Self-esteem and confidence
- Low mood
- Emotional literacy
- Social skills
- Anxiety and worry
- Anger difficulties
- Relationships
- Friendship issues
- Bullying/conflict
- Behaviour
- Relaxation techniques

# Emotional Literacy Support Assistants

**Who they are and what they do: A guide to the ELSA programme in Sefton**

## What is an ELSA?

The ELSA programme is an evidence based intervention aiming to train in-school staff to deliver effective emotional health and wellbeing interventions. ELSAs are typically teaching assistants who have a particular passion for support children experiencing additional difficulties.

To become an accredited ELSA, staff must undertake a specific training programme covering all aspects of the role.



ELSAs play a key role in providing high quality support from within the school environment. This means that children with difficulties can access effective interventions at an early stage, rather than relying on support from external services. Having an ELSA in school also increases the knowledge and skill level of the staff as a whole. ELSAs may even want to contribute to staff training days, or find ways to share their skills with other members of staff.

## What training does an ELSA have?

ELSAs receive specialist training and supervision from qualified Educational Psychologists.

In Sefton, ELSAs are required to attend 6 days of training delivered by the Educational Psychology team, as well as follow up supervision sessions and a North-West area conference.



Following successful completion of the initial training, ELSAs are added to the registration of accredited ELSAs in the borough. They must then continue to access supervision sessions to maintain accreditation.

In Sefton, one cohort of ELSAs are currently trained per year, with spaces for around 16 staff to participate



## How do ELSAs work in schools?

ELSAs are typically already employed by the schools as learning mentors, teaching assistants etc. The ELSA role tends to take up around 1 day per week.

ELSAs plan and deliver interventions for children who are struggling with a range of skills related to emotional literacy.

Interventions might be delivered at an individual level (1 to 1 sessions with the child), or in small groups.

ELSAs can work in primary, secondary or specialist schools. Sefton's first cohort of ELSAs all worked in primary schools, but there are plans to expand this over the coming years.