

ELSA

What is an ELSA?

An ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) is a specially trained member of staff who supports children with their emotional development. An ELSA is a warm, caring adult who helps children feel happy, confident and secure—both in school and at home—so that nothing becomes a barrier to learning or wellbeing.

At Blowers Green, our ELSAs are:

Miss Parks and Miss Bell

They work closely with teachers and our SENCO to support pupils who may find certain emotional or social situations more challenging.

ELSA support focuses on developing emotional literacy—recognising, understanding, and managing emotions. ELSAs are trained and regularly supervised by Educational Psychologists.

What can an ELSA help with?

ELSA sessions may support children with:

- Loss and bereavement
- Self-esteem
- Social skills
- Understanding and managing emotions
- Friendship issues
- Relationship difficulties
- Anger management
- Anxiety
- Bullying
- Conflict resolution
- Transition (including transition to secondary school)
- Relaxation and calming strategies

What happens in an ELSA session?

Every ELSA session is personalised to meet the individual needs of the child. Sessions usually last 20–30 minutes, once a week.

A typical session includes:

1. Emotional Check-In

An opportunity for the child to talk about their week, feelings, worries or successes.

2. Main Activity

Activities are chosen to support the child's ELSA target. These may include games, discussions, role-play, creative tasks or problem-solving activities.

3. Relaxation / Reflection

Sessions end with a calming activity or relaxation exercise so that pupils return to class settled and ready to learn. Reflection helps pupils think about how to apply new skills in everyday situations.

How do children access ELSA support?

A referral can be made by:

Class teachers

Pastoral staff

SENCO

Once a referral is submitted, Miss Parks and Miss Bell, together with the SENCO, will identify the most appropriate targets for the child.

How are targets set?

- Targets are based on the child's needs and the information shared on the referral.
- The SENCO and ELSAs review progress every 3 and 6 weeks.
- ELSAs also liaise regularly with class teachers to monitor how skills are transferring into classroom life.

Example target:

"I can recognise and talk about my strengths."

To support this, the ELSA may explore strengths through creative activities, discussions, games and reflection.

How long will a child receive ELSA support?

Every child is different. The duration depends on individual needs.

Some children may need only a few sessions, while others benefit from support over a longer period.

We never rush children—ELSA support is designed to progress at their pace.

What happens when ELSA support ends?

When a child completes their ELSA work, support does not end suddenly.

There is a gentle 'check-in' period, allowing pupils to reconnect with Miss Parks or Miss Bell whenever needed.

"ELSA work is built on trust and positive relationships. Through fun, supportive sessions, children learn to understand their emotions, build resilience, and develop strategies to navigate challenges confidently."

Want to know more?

For further information, please speak to:

- Miss Parkes - ELSA
- Miss Bell - ELSA
- Mrs S. Martin - SENCO and Deputy Headteacher