

Mental Health Project

We have had a group of pupils from both **** Juniors and **** (local schools) taking part in our Mental Health Project. This project, funded by the Lottery Community Grant allows children to attend sessions for a longer period of time in order to address their issues and allow for development.

Children taking part are identified by schools / CAMHS as having specific mental health issues and the aim of the Project is to address these issues and help prevent them escalating.

The Project has been carefully planned out by our SEN professional and Derbyshire Head teachers, in line with the proposed application. Over the lockdown period we collated information on mental health issues from a variety of sources, including MIND, Derbyshire Education and NHS and have produced a Project Plan. The sections include: Resources, Assessments, Areas of Mental Health concern, Identifying Risk Factors, Objectives and Outcomes, Delivery and Activities. We have identified a school assessment tool which gives a standardised score of emotional / mental health and this has been used with each participating child at the beginning and end of the Project. We have also devised our own questionnaire to be completed for each child at the beginning and end which gives us a wide profile on the issues and problems faced by each child and shows us any development. All findings will be analysed with the Head teachers and report on findings at the end of the project. Reports will need to be made for the Lottery at the end of the academic year.

Pupils in the Mental Health groups from both schools are enjoying the sessions with us. They have a range of mental health issues and problems including poor self-esteem and confidence. Most have difficulty listening and focussing and have short attention spans. The assessments outlined in the Mental Health Project plan have been done in school and a report on initial findings for both school groups will be written shortly once liaison and analysis with the Head teachers is complete. Both groups need a great deal of support and help to keep on task and to use “good listening” but are a delight to work with. They have already grown in confidence and despite being quite lively are developing their knowledge and skills. They have had a combination of lessons and hacks and enjoy both. They have also taken part in grooming, yard cleaning and hay net/water bucket filling. We will complete a “user voice” plan which will note what they think they have learned, want to know and learn and where they feel they need to develop and improve. This will be kept with the Project Plan and Assessments and will feed into the final analysis and assessment. Both these groups have more sessions booked, after which we will look at their progress and determine if more sessions are needed or if we start a new group of students.