



FIVE ACRE WOOD SCHOOL

Growing and Learning Together

THERAPY NEWSLETTER

Term 3 – 2021

“We will provide therapy in collaboration with teaching staff, parents and other relevant professionals through a holistic and integrated approach that places the pupil at the centre of everything we do.”

Music Therapy



Hello, I am Lib, the music therapist and this is an update on what I have been doing since New Year at Five Acre Wood School.

As it has not been possible for me to offer individual and small group music therapy sessions in person I have been doing on-line sessions via Teams. I have been making music directly with the students, listening and responding to their individual sounds and movements. During these times when many children are feeling isolated and alone it is particularly important for them to be able to see, hear and play with their friends, while making music, even if they are in different places. The skilled, sensitive and professional ways that the staff and parents/carers have adapted to this way of working has meant that I have been able, during some sessions, to be working with a couple of children in the class room and with others, who are at home, all at the same time.

For the students who have not been able to access these music therapy sessions I have been making videos each week of songs that the staff or parents/carers suggest. I send these videos to the school who then put them on their class Teams. Last summer, during the first lockdown, I also set up a YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG3YOtub-DdU4HK1vfuKQfQ/videos>

This is for any of the students at the school and their families to access. This continues to be readily available and I continue to add to this channel.

Comments from staff of some students that I work with:

“Both students have really responded well and been focused and engaged throughout all the on-line sessions. It has also been really nice seeing them recognise the familiar songs and react so well. Very beneficial sessions in very unusual times! “

“We have used live music therapy sessions as an amazing way of connecting the learners that are in school with the home learners participating in the same activity! Both pupils parents and staff have all been enjoying these activities and engagement is seen by their wonderful smiles! It’s an amazing chance to feel connected for all “





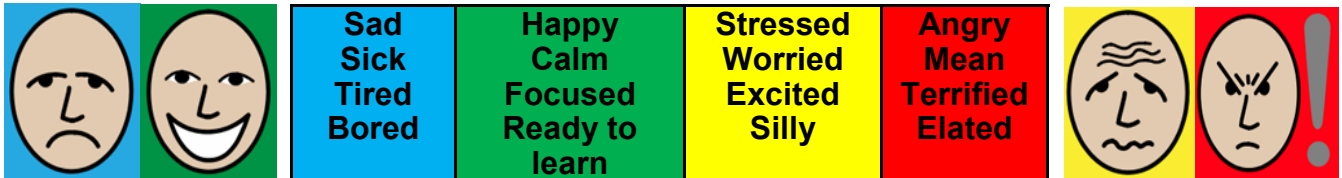
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Speech and Language Therapy



This term we marked Children's Mental Health Week and the therapy team encouraged classes to talk about their emotions using the zones of regulation.

What is it?

- An approach to teach emotional self-regulation
- Emotions are sorted into four categories each related to a colour – blue, green, yellow, red
- It helps pupils to identify how they are feeling and how they can stay in the green zone

How can it help my child?

- Some students find it difficult to understand their feelings
- Zones of regulation sorts emotions into 4 categories making them easier to understand
- Once students can identify their zone we can teach strategies to return to the green zone

How can I introduce zones of regulation at home?

- Create a 'check in' area.
This is a place with colours and often pictures representing the four zones of regulation.
Encourage the whole family to check in with their emotions throughout the day.
- Talk about what zone book/film characters are in. Inside Out is a very good example!
- Try different strategies for getting to the green zone. These could include deep breaths, listening to music or playing with a sensory object.



Contact your child's class teacher or the therapy team if you'd like more support.

For more information follow this link to a free webinar from the author of Zones of Regulation:

<https://www.socialthinking.com/online-training/on-demand/webinar-zones-of-regulation>

Look at these pictures of Ladybird class learning about the different zones and using their class check in area. Well done!



Mental Health and Wellbeing



I support FAW pupils with bereavement, loss and a range of mental health needs. I use a range of visual and creative tools to help adapt Cognitive Behaviour Therapy techniques to make sense of thoughts and feelings. Together we might use puppets, story, timelines, stones and all sorts of materials to help identify thoughts and feelings. We can then work out how to express and ultimately better manage them. It is a privilege to develop a trusted relationship with each child and young person I work with and support them with their wellbeing.

An ACE way to Wellbeing:

The news is full of worry about the wellbeing of families and children during these winter months of lockdown. There are hundreds of ideas to support wellbeing available at the moment and many of them are great ideas. But some of them don't really work for us as individuals as they are not 'tuned in' to what is important and has value for us. So maybe what we do is only valuable when it means something to us.

Telling me that sorting out my sock drawer will transform my life for me is nonsense- though I know it works for others. Telling me to go for a run would cause me utter fear rather than the joy my many friends seem to get from their blisters.

Using an **ACE** way to wellbeing can help us find the things that work for us. And then we can help our children find what works for them.

A = achievement – what gives you a sense of **achievement**?

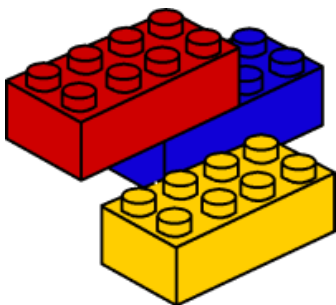
C = closeness – what helps you feel **close** to those you care about?

E = enjoyment – what brings a bit of **joy** to your day?

Have a think about how you could build an **ACE** element into your day or maybe each **ACE** element into your day. It might be something that takes just a moment, or it might be something that takes a bit more time or effort.

Making an **ACE** list can help children start to plan in things that are **ACE** for their wellbeing. Or you could check in together to find out what has been **ACE** about their day.

And don't forget to let us know what ACEs work for your family.



ACE



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Therapy Dogs

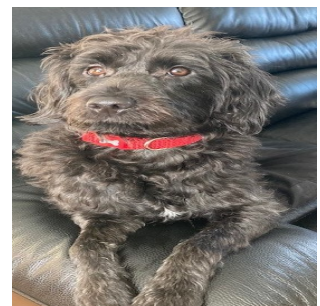
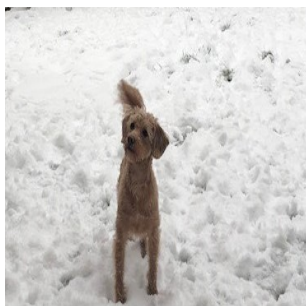
The use of animals especially dogs as therapy is not a new idea. Dogs have been used in other sectors for over 40 years.

The benefits of Animal Assisted Therapies (AAT) has been extensively studied and the results range from improvement in general health and wellbeing to increased confidence levels, improved and controlled movement, to improved communication skills.

Therapy dogs work has shown they have improved communication in our children by evoking memories and stimulating conversation.

Our dogs have shown they help with special needs and autistic children by giving focus and providing a calming environment.

Snowy, Sandy, Poppy and Millie have grown since their puppy pictures and are missing everyone and can't wait to get back.



SANDY

POPPY



MILLY

SNOWY

Dogs can really help with well being. Our children can often relate to animals when they are anxious and sad, in a way they may find hard with humans. We have already seen some fantastic Interactions between them and our pupils and they can't wait to get back to seeing everyone.

New Team Members



Hello, my name is Carol Parry, and I joined the Therapy team in January. I am a Speech and Language Therapist, with many years experience of working in other special schools in Kent and elsewhere. It has been great to join the team at FAW, and to begin to get to know some of the staff and students, even though like everyone else I have had to get used to doing everything virtually. I hope one day soon to be able to work together with many of you in person!

Important dates

- **Dyslexia week: 7-12 October 2021**—Search the hashtag #DyslexiaCreates on Twitter to follow the conversation
- **World Autism Awareness Day 2nd April 2021**—<https://www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism/world-autism-awareness-day>
- **Young Carers Action Day -https://carers.org/news-and-media/news/post/67-young-carers-awareness-day-is-changing**
- **Think of how you help your child develop their independence during Occupational Therapy Week 2021 TBA**
- **World Book Day 4th March 2021**



BRITISH DYSLEXIA SOCIETY

<https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/>