

# Story of Improvement

## Understanding of Mental Health



### Healthier behaviour outcome:

Increase in the number of children/young people who understand what positive mental health is and strategies they can use to promote it.

### Why was this intervention chosen?

Since lockdown/COVID we have been concerned about children's emotional wellbeing and mental health. As a whole school we have observed an increase in behaviour issues linked to anxiety and children finding it difficult to separate from parents.

### How did you select your target group?

We decided to select the whole school as a target group as we found that there was a wide variety of children in every year group who were anxious and struggling to regulate/talk about their emotions with teachers and peers.

### Intervention work carried out:

Staff completed a questionnaire with the children at the beginning of the 2 weeks asking:

- Do you know what positive mental health is?
- Do you know what zones of regulations are?
- Do you know where your Calm Corner is?
- How would you use the Calm Corner?
- Do you have any other strategies that you use?

All classes then started a two-week intervention with lessons about mental health and discussing children's attitudes towards it. During the 2 weeks, staff taught lessons linked to Zones of Regulation and mental wellbeing, and we held assemblies linked to feelings and emotions. Within classrooms, teachers revisited their Calm Corners with the children and worked on redeveloping them. They then re-established how they can be used linking to mental health and the Zones of Regulation.

At the end of the two weeks, we repeated the same questionnaire.

### How has this intervention impacted the children?

Staff noticed over the two weeks children were able to talk about their emotions more openly and were independently linking it to the Zones of Regulation.

Children also gave a wider variety of answers in the second questionnaire about what they would do in the calm corner.

Children talked about doing breathing techniques, reading books, talking to friends about how they are feeling, cuddling teddies, putting their worries in worry monsters.

Staff also noticed that some children were happier coming into school. For those who found separating from their parents difficult, staff noticed that they could verbalise how they were feeling more confidently and would use the Calm Corner sooner in the day than before.

### Next steps as a result of the intervention:

When looking through the questionnaire results, it was clear that Calm Corners were important to the children. As a staff we are aware that lunch times can be difficult for children who struggle to regulate their emotions, so we are going to create some Calm Corners outside so children can access them during break/lunch times.

We want to continue to promote the Zones of Regulation and we will always start every half term with an assembly and lessons linked to emotions/mental health for the first week.

We have also booked an Inset Day training session linked to children's mental health so that all staff (office, teachers, teaching assistants, lunch time supervisors etc.) will know how to talk to children about their mental health.