



## ***Therapeutic Thinking***

*Our approach to  
supporting children's  
emotional literacy  
and positive behaviour*

*So that we can **be the**  
**best that we can be!***

***A child's behaviour is telling us  
something.***

***Has your child talked to you  
about 'colour monsters' or  
'zones of regulation'?***



The Therapeutic Thinking approach compliments our school ethos to 'be the best that we can be'. Therapeutic Thinking starts with the creation of a positive classroom by providing a calm and safe learning environment in order that children feel more secure and are better able to regulate their emotions. This supports children to be ready for learning.

When a child shows an emotion such as being worried, happy, calm or upset there is **always** a factor behind this, as there are for us as adults!

Quite often people feel children are being 'naughty'. However, if we were to unpack the reasons behind the behaviour we would understand, and be able to support the child to find a better way to deal with their feelings e.g. rather than a child becoming aggressive or withdrawn they will be able to express their emotions in a more appropriate way.

*So that we can **be the best that we can be!***

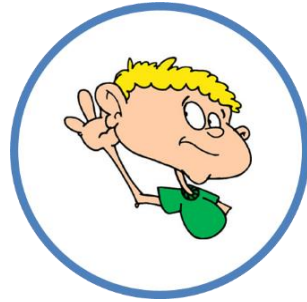
***What are 'pro-social,' 'unsocial',  
'externalising' and 'internalising'  
behaviours?***

**Pro-social:**

Relating to behaviour which is positive, helpful, and intended to promote social acceptance. Behaviour which benefits other people or society.

**Unsocial:**

Unwilling or unable to behave sociably in the company of others, but not to the detriment to self or others. This includes quiet communication of anti-social feelings.



**Externalising:**

Is where your natural response to antisocial feelings is to act on the world around you. This can lead to physical and verbal responses that affect the wellbeing of others, such as fighting, impulsive actions, damaging property etc.

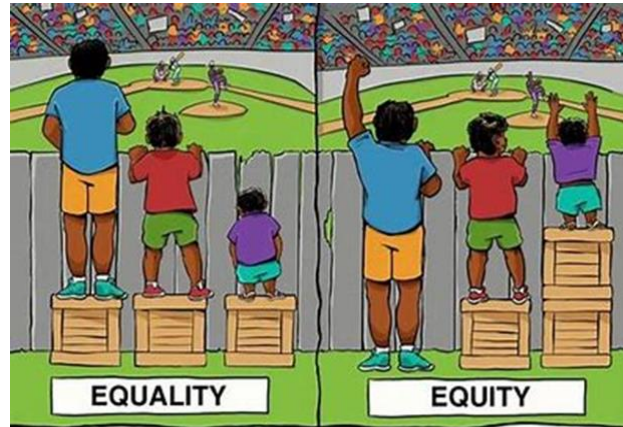
**Internalising:**

Is where your natural response to antisocial feelings is to withdraw from the world around you. This can impact the wellbeing and engagement of the individual concerned, such as refusal to communicate, self-isolation, school refusal, self-harm etc.

*So that we can be the best that we can be!*



## ***Equity versus Equality***



A 'Therapeutic Thinking' approach is not about treating everybody the same, it's about giving equity to achieve equality.

Equality is about treating everybody the same regardless. Equity is about giving everyone what they need to be successful.

We aim to provide equality by providing the same prosocial experiences for all children and equity by differentiating support and resourcing to remove any barriers.



*So that we can be the best that we can be!*





## ***What is emotional literacy?***

Emotional literacy involves having self-awareness and recognition of your own feelings and knowing how to manage them, such as the ability to stay calm when you feel angry or to reassure yourself when in doubt.

It includes empathy i.e. having sensitivity to the feelings of others.



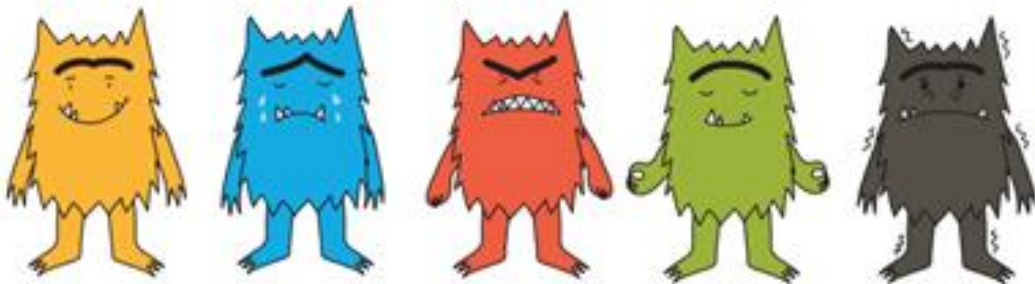
## ***How do children explore this in school?***

-  Circle times — To talk about feelings and relationships
-  Word of the week — Use of our 'classroom trees' to develop their understanding of emotion words in order to extend their vocabulary
-  PSHE/RSE curriculum—To develop children's understanding of their sense of self and their relationship with others
-  Social stories—To help children visualise how to manage a situation

*So that we can be the best that we can be!*

## *What are the 'Colour Monsters'?*

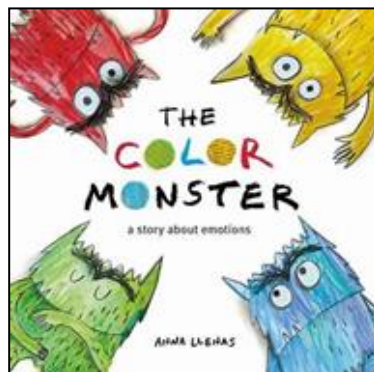
Today I am feeling...



In Reception the children are introduced to the Colour Monsters through the book 'The Colour Monster' by Anna Llenas.

Each Colour Monster represents an emotion and the children are encouraged to recognise what these emotions feel and look like and relate these to themselves.





The children continue to develop their understanding of these emotions as they progress through Year 1.



*So that we can be the best that we can be!*

## What are the 'Zones of Regulation'?

### The **ZONES** of Regulation®

			
<b>BLUE ZONE</b> Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly	<b>GREEN ZONE</b> Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	<b>YELLOW ZONE</b> Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	<b>RED ZONE</b> Mad/Angry Terrified Yelling/Hitting Elated Out of Control

In Year 2 the children progress from Colour Monsters to learning about the Zones of Regulation.

Children are supported in recognising where they are feeling within the zones and that all four are acceptable zones.

We then focus on developing strategies to help them move towards or remain in the 'Green zone'.

*So that we can be the best that we can be!*

***What are the impacts and benefits of this approach?***



Empowered children who can regulate their emotions successfully.



Improved relationships both within the classroom and at playtimes.



Support for children's mental health.



Developing pro-social citizens in our community.



Improved learning opportunities.



*So that we can be the best that we can be!*



## ***Why don't we give public awards and praise anymore?***

Historically society has a belief that the best way to get somebody to do something is to offer them reward or bribe and the best way to stop somebody doing something is the threat and application of punishment.



Fundamentally this does not change the behaviour of the individual or support the development of strategies, nor the ability to manage emotions in a positive way. The only thing that becomes relevant is the size of the reward or the severity of the punishment.



Whilst giving public praise and rewards **might** make an individual feel positive and motivated, other children can feel embarrassed or uncomfortable. In addition, other children who have acted in the same way and are not in receipt of the public praise, may feel worse about themselves.



If the reward is being used as a carrot this will not change children's behaviour in the long term and in order to maintain behaviours, often the size of the reward has to increase.



Private praise and rewards are personal to the individual and can be tailored in a way that supports individual development and does not negatively impact on others.

*So that we can **be the best that we can be!***

***Why do we have consequences instead  
of punishments?***



you can't  
teach children  
to behave better  
by leading them  
to FEEL worse.  
when children  
FEEL better  
they behave  
better.

***Pam Leo***

***'Connection Parenting'***

The use of consequences places an emphasis on repairing the harm done rather than using punishment to assign blame and shame. The 'Therapeutic Thinking' approach supports children to think about the impact of their actions and to develop strategies to deal with situations more positively in future.

So that we can **be the best that we can be!**

## ***In school this might look like:***



Discussion with staff and people affected to understand the impact of their actions.



Rebuilding the relationship through - writing a sorry letter or drawing a picture, giving a verbal apology, helping to repair a broken model.



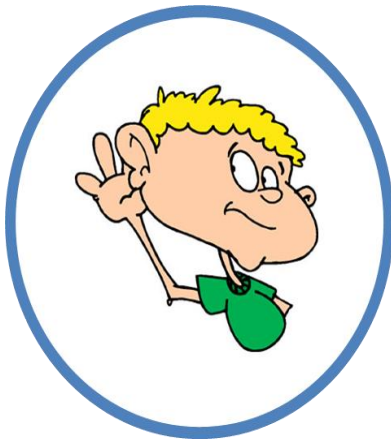
With staff find alternative, more positive ways for dealing with difficult situations, e.g. walking away, counting to 10, getting help from a grown up, using an emotion corner or using language of the 'Rights' (I have the right to be safe).



*So that we can be the best that we can be!*

## *How have we adapted our provision?*

Replacing public praise e.g. class rewards/behaviour charts/stickers/certificates with personal and private praise through 'Marvellous Me'.



Creation of accessible emotion areas within classrooms. A higher focus on developing emotional literacy through 'Colour Monsters', 'Zones of Regulation' and an emotion word of the week.

All staff have enhanced their use of pro-social language in supporting day to day learning and children's emotional development.



*So that we can be the best that we can be!*



Reorganisation of lunchtime seating and enhanced 'Positive Play' opportunities.

Trained 'ELSA' (emotional literacy support assistant) to support student's individual needs.



Enhancing our nurturing spaces to support development of pro-social skills. 'The Reef', 'The Nest', 'The Treehouse', 'The Proud Peacock Room', 'The Oasis' and 'The Rainbow Room'.

*Our Journey as a therapeutic thinking school will continue to evolve as we explore and personalise this approach for our children.*

*So that we can be the best that we can be!*

## ***Where can I find out more about this approach?***

### ***Therapeutic Thinking —***

West Sussex therapeutic thinking website links:

<https://schools.local-offer.org/inclusion/wellbeing-in-west-sussex/wellbeing-charter/therapeutic-thinking-approach/therapeutic-thinking-aims-in-west-sussex/>

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### ***Colour Monster —***

colour monster read along <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6wIEp-M4tg>

colour monster book [https://www.amazon.co.uk/Colour-Monster-Anna-Llenas/dp/1783704233/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Colour-Monster-Anna-Llenas/dp/1783704233/ref=sr_1_1?crid=10IU1PCK0E9M&keywords=the+colour+monster&qid=1643279934&sprefix=the+colour+monster%2Caps%2C124&sr=8-1)

[crid=10IU1PCK0E9M&keywords=the+colour+monster&qid=1643279934&sprefix=the+colour+monster%2Caps%2C124&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Colour-Monster-Anna-Llenas/dp/1783704233/ref=sr_1_1?crid=10IU1PCK0E9M&keywords=the+colour+monster&qid=1643279934&sprefix=the+colour+monster%2Caps%2C124&sr=8-1)

### ***Zones of Regulation —***

Link to [THE ZONES OF REGULATION: A SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING PATHWAY TO REGULATION - Welcome](#)

### ***Paddington 2—***

Watch the film to see how Paddington uses a therapeutic approach to changing lunchtimes and relationships in the prison.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RuvCFvi2-cl>