

Mindfulness Curriculum Summary

Mindfulness involves turning our attention in a practised and focused way to what is happening in the present moment. It trains us to tune in to what is happening in our bodies and minds and this helps us to respond rather than react to things that happen, whether they be good or bad.

Recent research into Mindfulness shows that regular practice can alter the structure of the brain helping adults and children to learn more effectively. Furthermore, Mindfulness promotes an attitude of kindness and open curiosity and teaches children and adults alike to feel empathy for others and compassion for oneself. Mindfulness also provides a space for children to just 'be'; a moment out of their busy lives to process and reflect.

Pre-Prep

In Pre prep, Mindfulness practices are part of the E4L curriculum and take place on several occasions during the week. A Mindful practice is a meditative activity led by the form teacher which invites the children to pay attention to what is happening in their experience at that present moment. One popular practice is rocking a teddy to sleep on your tummy which helps little ones to begin to pay attention to their breathing. Kindergarten children start each Forest School session with a mindful sit.

Mindful activities also take place throughout the week and are built into the curriculum. For example a child might be asked to complete a piece of handwriting mindfully or colour a picture whilst paying close attention to the movement of the tip of the crayon. Mindful moments can happen at any point during the day and are a chance for the teachers and children to stop, listen to a sound, look at something with fresh eyes or simply take a moment to check in with what is happening in their minds and bodies.

In Transition 1, children take part in a series of lessons from the Mindfulness in Schools Programme called 'Dots'. These lessons introduce Mindfulness in a fun and age appropriate way.

Forms 1 and 2

In Form 1 and 2, children take part in a short Mindfulness practice at the beginning of each new transition point. This supports the children in moving from their playing selves to their working selves. In Form 2, children take part in a set of lessons called '.paws'. This is a course written by the Mindfulness in Schools Programme and covers 6 aspects of Mindfulness including 'The story-telling mind' 'Dealing with difficulty' and 'Growing happiness'.

Forms 3-6

In Senior House, children take part in a Mindfulness practice at the beginning of some lessons and assemblies. This might be a body scan in which they pay attention to different parts of the body or just a short pause to 'be' and tune in to their minds and bodies. Children in Form 4 take part in a unit of Mindfulness called '.breathe' that builds on the '.paws' programme. Children in Form 5 or 6 take part in a set of lessons developed by the Mindfulness in Schools Programme called '.b' which build on the '.breathe' lessons. These lessons cover topics such as 'Recognising worry', 'Moving Mindfully' and 'Befriending the Difficult'.