

Sharing practice: case studies

SEAL in the new curriculum at Harehills Primary



Harehills is a three-form entry primary school serving a disadvantaged area of Leeds. The school has been using SEAL for seven years now, and the principles are thoroughly embedded into school policies and practice.

SEAL is led by a strong staff team: headteacher Jo Summerfield, assistant headteacher and SMSC lead Catherine McMullen (formerly a PSHE advisory teacher for the local authority), and reception teacher Hollie Melling, who is the school lead for Pupil Voice. As well as

45-60 minutes a week of 'taught' SEAL/PSHE (which usually follows or precedes an assembly) there are ad-hoc circle times used to resolve issues that come up in class or in the playground.

All this is supported by a whole-school approach to staff and pupil well-being. In a big staff group there is a need to create a sense of belonging and community, so staff circles are used in addition to formal staff meetings. Circles start with everyone sharing a magic moment, or with a round. Buddies are used for both adults and children. In Y6 every child has an adult buddy, carefully chosen from the entire school staff (including office staff, site manager, support staff and teachers) to inspire and motivate them. Teachers each have a teaching and learning buddy.

SEAL has been enhanced by restorative practice (<http://www.transformingconflict.org>), used whenever relationships break down – between staff, between children, between children and staff, with families. Illustrating their restorative philosophy, the school has a 'Relationships' policy rather than a behaviour policy.

Curriculum plans

Staff have developed half termly cross curricular themes for the revised National Curriculum. Each half term there is a focus on one of six whole-school attributes of learning: collaborate, enquire, be independent, persevere, be resilient, and reflect. These are linked to curricular learning objectives; for example, in a geography lesson children will say that 'as a geographer I will be using maps, books and atlases and globes to find out about the Polar



on

Region, and in order to do that I will need to enquire.' On top of this there is a weekly whole-school SEAL ethos statement, such as 'I can tell what is a safe or unsafe secret', which is posted on the

home page of the school's brilliant website. At the end of lessons when children self-assess, they will evaluate their progress against the ethos statement (where relevant) as well as the curricular learning objective and attribute of learning.

Another example of the school's cross-curricular approach to SEAL is PE. Harehills uses a PE scheme called realPE (<http://www.createdevelopment.co.uk/solutions/real-pe/>). Lesson plans have a dual focus, a PE physical skill objective and one focusing on social and emotional skills such as collaboration. Progress against both types of objective are again assessed at the end of the lesson.

SEAL and the additional aspects of PSHE (such as drug and alcohol education and safety) are integrated into one programme of study. The programme has New Beginnings as the theme in autumn 1, Getting on and Falling Out in autumn 2, Good to be Me in spring term 1, Going for Goals in spring term 2, Changes and Relationships plus drugs, alcohol and traffic education in summer term 1 and SRE in summer term 2.

One-off events such as Anti-bullying Week, Road Safety events, and Pupil Takeover Day are added in to the appropriate half term plans.

The programme of study includes controversial and challenging issues. Staff are not afraid to use the SEAL resource on bereavement and loss, following a spiral approach in which the youngest children look at the loss of toys or pets while older groups tackle bereavement.

A blog from the school's website

We had a fabulous opportunity to work with Danny from Class Dynamics as part of the 'Safe as Houses' project. As a group, we had to think of our own idea to write and perform a song. At first, we were scared and nervous but as a team we encouraged each other and then performed our song to the whole school. The song carried a very important message about being safe at home. It was brilliant!

Malika, Aman and Erik.

A collaboration with a local Safe as Houses project tackles domestic violence. Project workers come into school to work with the children on how to keep safe, who to tell and who not to tell.

The work involves developing class dynamics; in one lesson children worked together to create a song 'The Power of One' about courage, resilience and standing up for what is right.

Assemblies

Assemblies are an important part of the whole-school approach to SEAL/PSHE and SMSC. They are usually led by the children. Each week there is an assembly theme based on the SEAL/PSHE ethos statement of the week. In a recent assembly, for example, a group of Y1 children shared their ideas on how to deal with the fear, worry and upset that can happen at a time of change.



There is also a regular Celebration Assemblies for two year groups, to celebrate birthdays and achievements in relation to the SEAL ethos statement of the week, attendance, and attributes of learning.

There are Family Assemblies too, involving a range of year groups brought together to create a sense of belonging. This is reinforced by Family Service lunches, in

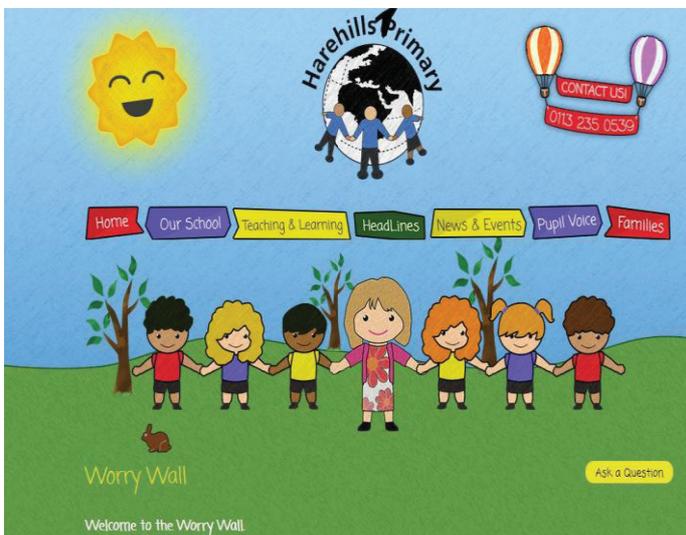
which children of different ages sit together, older children serving the younger ones and encouraging them to try new things.

Pupil Voice

Pupil voice is very important at Harehills, and the school recently received the coveted Investors in Pupils award (<http://www.investorsinpupils.org.uk/>). There are Class Councils and a School Council which meets weekly after school. Each School Council meeting starts with a SEAL mini check-in on how everyone is feeling. Council members then bring issues that children in their class are bothered about. The whole process has an emotional element as well as business elements.

All children are made aware of the role of the School Council: 'The School Council is made up of pupils from across the school who meet regularly to talk about any problems you might have in school.'

Hollie and Jo also run SEAL tea parties with a representative group of children from different year groups, at which children talk about things that went well/not so well in their class, and things they'd like to go better.



Children can post individual worries via the 'Worry Wall' on the school's website. (<http://harehills.leeds.sch.uk/worry-wall/>) They can choose to post anonymously, or optionally enter their name without it being shown on the website. They will always get a response. A Learning Mentor, for example, responded to one child by posting 'I'm sorry to hear you are sad at school. If there is anything I can do to help please come and see me'. Another child posted 'My worry is that when I leave Harehills I won't have any friends at high school.'



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He received a helpful response from the Deputy Head and also from a child at a partner school in the local CHES cluster of six schools, to which Harehills belongs.

Pupil Support systems

While the SEAL/PSHE curriculum and ethos provides a backdrop whole-school approach to well-being, children who need additional support with social and emotional learning are catered for by a large Harehills Hub Team of trained, experienced learning mentors and nurture managers. The CHES cluster also share staff with more specialist expertise, building on former pooling of extended schools funding.

Pupil Premium is largely focused on pastoral support. Children are collected in minibuses, for example, for Rise and Shine clubs, which start at eight and offer sports, reading, games and creative activities to around 75 children.

There are also a large number of after school clubs, to develop children's sense of belonging to wider groups, and their confidence. One example a Getaway Girls group; the school has found that many of its Muslim girls become more reserved as they go through KS2, and need to be reminded that they have a voice.

Impact

Jo is convinced that without developing children social and emotionally schools will not get the academic results they want. Having been at the school before SEAL was introduced, she saw the difference it made to children's interactions. Children became much more able to work collaboratively because of the strong and positive relationships they have with one another. This is why, while other schools 'are not willing to take the risk', Jo says, Harehills has remained committed to SEAL/PSHE. Their conviction is reflected in the school's results - this year the highest ever in all of the EYFSP, phonics check, and end of KS1 and 2 assessments.

For more information about the school's curricular maps visit <http://harehills.leeds.sch.uk/harehills-curriculum/#top>.

To find out more or arrange to visit the school, contact Jo Summerfield
J.Summerfield@harehills.leeds.sch.uk