

## *The PATHS® Programme*

Allfarthing Primary School is one of 17 schools across London that is currently delivering The PATHS® Programme for Schools (UK Version). PATHS® stands for Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies. At present, the programme is delivered in Reception, Years 1, 2 and 3. It is delivered as part of the PSHE provision and complements the school's ethos of inclusion and achievement for all.

More information about The PATHS® Programme for Schools can be found <http://www.pathseducation.co.uk/what-is-paths>

### *What is The PATHS® Programme?*

The PATHS Programme was written to help primary school children develop better thinking skills, more mature and responsible ways of behaving, emotional literacy, improved self-esteem and improved academic performance.

### *What are the goals of the PATHS Programme?*

- Increasing children's ability to think and solve problems for themselves
- Improving children's understanding of themselves and others
- Helping children with emotional literacy and awareness of feelings
- Improving children's feelings about themselves (self-esteem)
- Increasing children's abilities to learn more effectively in the classroom environment

### *How will the PATHS Programme help my child?*

The world is changing rapidly. Problem-solving, emotional understanding and knowing how to interact well with others are increasingly important for success in today's world. To best prepare children for the future, social-emotional learning is an important part of the primary school curriculum.

The authors of the PATHS Programme also believe that the five goals listed above are critical for efficient learning. When children can think independently, feel good about themselves and act responsibly, then they are more motivated to work to their potential.

### *Why is it important for parents / guardians to know about the PATHS Programme?*

Parents / guardians are a child's most important models and teachers. As such, you are the most important influence on your child's development. The more that you understand about the PATHS Programme, the more you will be able to help reinforce and support your child's skills.

### *What conceptual units does the PATHS® Programme Cover?*

The PATHS® Programme for Schools (UK Version) Curriculum includes four conceptual units. The units are:

- **Emotional understanding**
- **Self-control**
- **Social problem solving**
- **Peer relations and self-esteem**

These units are integrated within the lessons and are covered at the appropriate developmental level during each year.

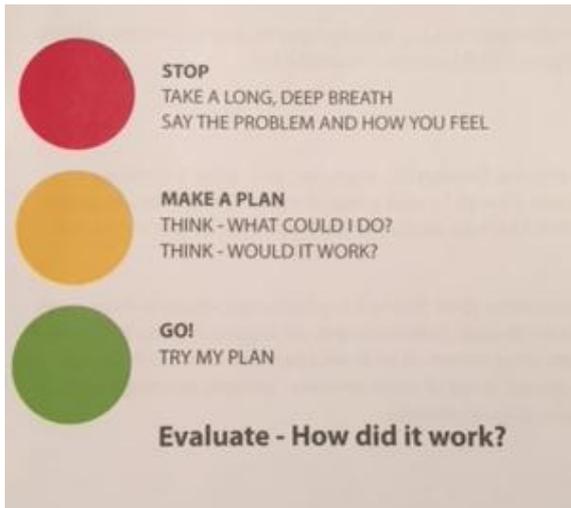
#### *Emotional Understanding*

The lessons on emotional understanding cover approximately 25 different affective states and are taught in a developmental hierarchy beginning with basic emotions (happy, sad, angry, etc.) and later introducing more complex emotional states. As the ability to label emotional states is a central focus, major emphasis is placed on encouraging such labelling as a precursor for effective self-control and optimal problem resolution. The children are also taught cues for the self-recognition of their own feelings and the recognition of emotions in others, affective self-monitoring techniques, training in attributions that link causes and emotions, perspective-taking skills in how and why to consider another's point of view, and information regarding how the behaviour of others can affect oneself. These lessons include group discussions, role-playing, art activities, biographies, stories and educational games.

#### *Self-Control*

The second unit focuses on self-control, a prerequisite for effective problem-solving. In this section, emotions such as anger and frustration are discussed, differentiations are made between feelings (all feelings are OK to have) and behaviours (some are OK and some are NOT OK), and modelling and role-play are utilised to teach children new ways to recognise and control anger. Some methods for helping children to calm down and learn better self-control, the Turtle Technique, Three Steps for Calming Down and the Control Signals Poster (CSP) are also introduced in this sub-unit. The CSP is modelled on the notion of a traffic signal and is a revised version of the Stop Light used in the Yale-New Haven Middle School Social Problem Solving Program (Weissberg, Caplan, & Bennetto, 1988). The red light of the CSP focuses on self-control.

The Control Signals Poster



### *Social Problem Solving*

The third focus of the curriculum teaches interpersonal problem-solving. The skills in emotional awareness and self-control are prerequisites for learning competent interpersonal problem-solving, so lessons on this topic do not begin until the groundwork has been covered by previous instruction.

### *Peer Relations and Self Esteem*

Issues regarding friendship and peer relations are introduced throughout the PATHS® Curriculum. This occurs both in the context of feelings (i.e., angry, shy, lonely, etc.) as well as through role-playing and thinking about how to solve problems that arise with friends. The issue of self-esteem is covered in a variety of ways including the regular activity of giving compliments (The PATHS® Pupil of the Day).

### **Parents and Guardians**

We encourage parents and carers of pupils in Reception, Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 to ask their children about what they have been exploring in their PATHS lessons.

### **Parent / Guardian Tips**

- Use language at home that is consistent with PATHS® language

*Everyone has the same types of feelings.*

*Feelings are on the inside but can show on the outside.*

*There are many different feelings.*

*Feelings are either comfortable or uncomfortable.*

*There are no bad feelings.*

*All feelings are OK to have. Behaviours can be OK or not OK.*

*Feelings are very important signals.*

*Feelings tell us what is going on around us and inside of us.*

*If we pay attention to our feelings, they can help us understand things.*

*Everyone has feelings all the time.*

- Talk to your child(ren) about how they are feeling
- Model your own feelings - tell your child how you are feeling
- If you see your child is about to lose control, guide them through the 3 steps to help them calm down (See the Controls Signal Poster above)
- Model calming down at home if you are feeling like you are about to lose control
- Compliment your child
- Let them see what you think is OK behaviour by pointing it out when you do it or your child does it
- Praise them for thinking of others, share your feelings
- Play games at home which encourage team work and cooperation
- Mediate problems at home using PATHS® approaches and language
- Model good manners and playing fair
- Praise your children when they use these strategies

Some possible questions you might like to consider are

- What words do you know for different emotions?
- How can you recognise if someone is feeling happy / sad / angry / frustrated etc?
- What situations at school or at home make you feel happy / sad / angry etc?
- What strategies can you use to calm down if you are feeling sad / angry etc?
- What behaviours are OK, or not OK when you are feeling sad / angry etc?
- How does your behaviour affect others?