

*'Shine as Lights in the World' Philippians 2:15*

## Sutton VA Lower School

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**Sutton VA Lower School**  
**A Values School**



St. Albans Diocese

**SIAMS**  
Outstanding

### 'Making Me' at Sutton VA Lower School

We began implementing the Making Me programme (The Mind Map at the time) across all age groups at Sutton VA Lower School in 2019. I was very attracted to the Making Me programme and hoped it would extend and complement our Values programme. As an accredited Values Education School, for many years we have introduced and provided opportunities for pupils to learn about and focus on one Value a month. Our 20 School Values include, love, respect, cooperation, friendship and responsibility. During the month-long focus we use role models, story, video, music, Collective Worship and drama to provide examples and learning experiences for our pupils to recognise and strive to 'live the Values' in all they do.

In the same way, we have been using the Casey/Kipsy Caterpillar stories, choosing a theme across the school to provide our pupils with; adult input, space and reflection time to learn about wide ranging emotions, while encouraging them to explore the physical feelings that these emotions can trigger. By understanding and recognising the connection between emotions and physical responses, we can help our children to manage their responses and become more aware of why others might be acting in a certain way.

The impact of the programme has been amazing. The pupils have developed emotional literacy knowledge by being taught the sometimes subtle, differences between emotions and associated feelings eg the difference between angry and frustrated. By recognising the difference in such emotions, they are more able to reflect on their actions and thoughts. This in turn, enables them to articulate more easily what they are feeling and try to unpick why they are feeling this way. Staff may help by asking 'I wonder what has happened to make you feel like this?' They are also better equipped in understanding others who may be feeling different emotions to them. It is not unusual to hear a child comment; "He is living the value of friendship because he knew I felt sad this morning so he stayed with me all playtime" or "She is not living the value of honesty, because she said my pencil was hers. This has made me frustrated."

Each Class displays a 'Feelings Flower' where the children are invited and encouraged to place their name on the emotion that best describes their feelings at that time. This visual helps staff respond and also provides the child with time to really consider their emotions. Children move their name during the day which helps reinforce that feelings come and go and that they are sometimes able to manage/change the way they feel over time.

The 'Talk Time' is deeply embedded in our practice, with children confident to request a Talk Time as well as staff offering it, when a child indicates or shows that there may be something bothering them. So embedded in our whole school practice is this pastoral 1:1 provision, that parents now encourage their child to book a Talk Time or ask staff to initiate it when their child is experiencing something challenging outside of school.

We have recently received refresher INSET from Making Me staff. This has provided new staff with a clear rationale for our aims and practice and has re-energised colleagues by the awareness of the updated resources and the relevance of the programme, most especially as the world has changed so much since our initial introduction two years ago.

This programme has the ability to transform a school's approach to managing pupil behaviour and developing their wellbeing and resilience.

Thank you 'Making Me'! We are so grateful, the programme has impacted significantly on our pupil welfare and wellbeing provision and access to your expertise and resources are made freely to us.

Mrs Lucy Chapman  
Head Teacher