

Andrews' Endowed CE Primary School



Supporting the Wellbeing of Our Children: Thinking about Anxiety

Love

Courage

Respect



While many children and young people worry about school or home circumstances from time to time, around 1 in 10 experience anxiety severe enough to make it hard for them to get on with the things they want to do in life. Children and young people may feel anxious in particular situations, such as speaking in class or socializing with peers, and may want to avoid these scenarios. They may find themselves worrying a lot and not being able to stop. They may also experience physical and visible symptoms, such as panic attacks.

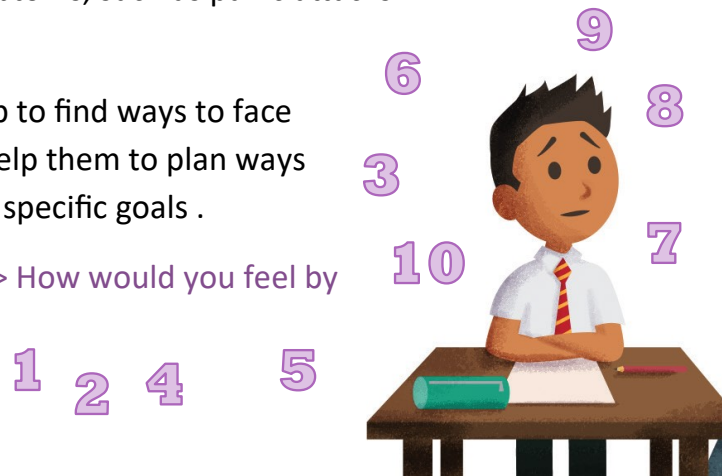
At Andrews' Endowed CE Primary School we help to find ways to face feared situations by talking with the child. We help them to plan ways for them to test out their fears gradually and set specific goals .

"I am anxious about sharing my ideas in class." -> How would you feel by speaking in class at least once a week?

The school staff stay calm and supportive to the child.

Supportive but practical.

Questioning the child:
What has happened in
this situation before?



The teaching staff help the child to think through what they have learned about their fears and about themselves.

Sometimes it is helpful to rate anxiety levels on a scale of 1-10. In this way, the child may begin to notice when they face their feared situation repeatedly that their anxiety level goes down.

We're all different—anxiety can come and go. We treat the children individually and we understand that one strategy might not work for everyone.



We are aware of how nature can calm an anxious brain. We use our outdoor environment to help distract the child from their anxieties. Instead they can begin to enjoy the awe and wonder of the world e.g. can they notice the chirping birds? Asking a child to carefully observe the environment can help them turn their focus away from their worries and toward something more tangible.

How many different shades of green are in the grass?

How many different kinds of trees do you see?

How many different bird songs do you hear?

We help the children to practice their breathing if we feel it is appropriate for the child.

When people slow down their breathing, they slow down their brain. It helps the child who is overwhelmed. This is a strategy that might be used with the whole class to help them to refocus on their learning.

At Andrews' Endowed CE Primary School well-being is taught during our PSHE curriculum. During these sessions, a range of different feelings are discussed and we encourage children to tolerate these different emotions and to engage in life.

I know you're scared and that's okay, and I'm here, and I'm going to help you get through this

You can face your fears!

Strategies that could be used at home:

Help your child to learn to tolerate their anxiety and function as well as they can, even when they are anxious;

Don't avoid things just because they make a child anxious;

Express positive—but realistic—expectations;

Listen and be empathetic, help them to understand what they are anxious about.

Encourage your child to talk about their feelings, but try not to use leading questions e.g. how are you feeling about the class assembly?

Think things through with your child—how would they handle it, if their fear did come true? Having a plan might reduce the uncertainty in a healthy, effective way.

You are going to be ok!

You will be able to manage it!