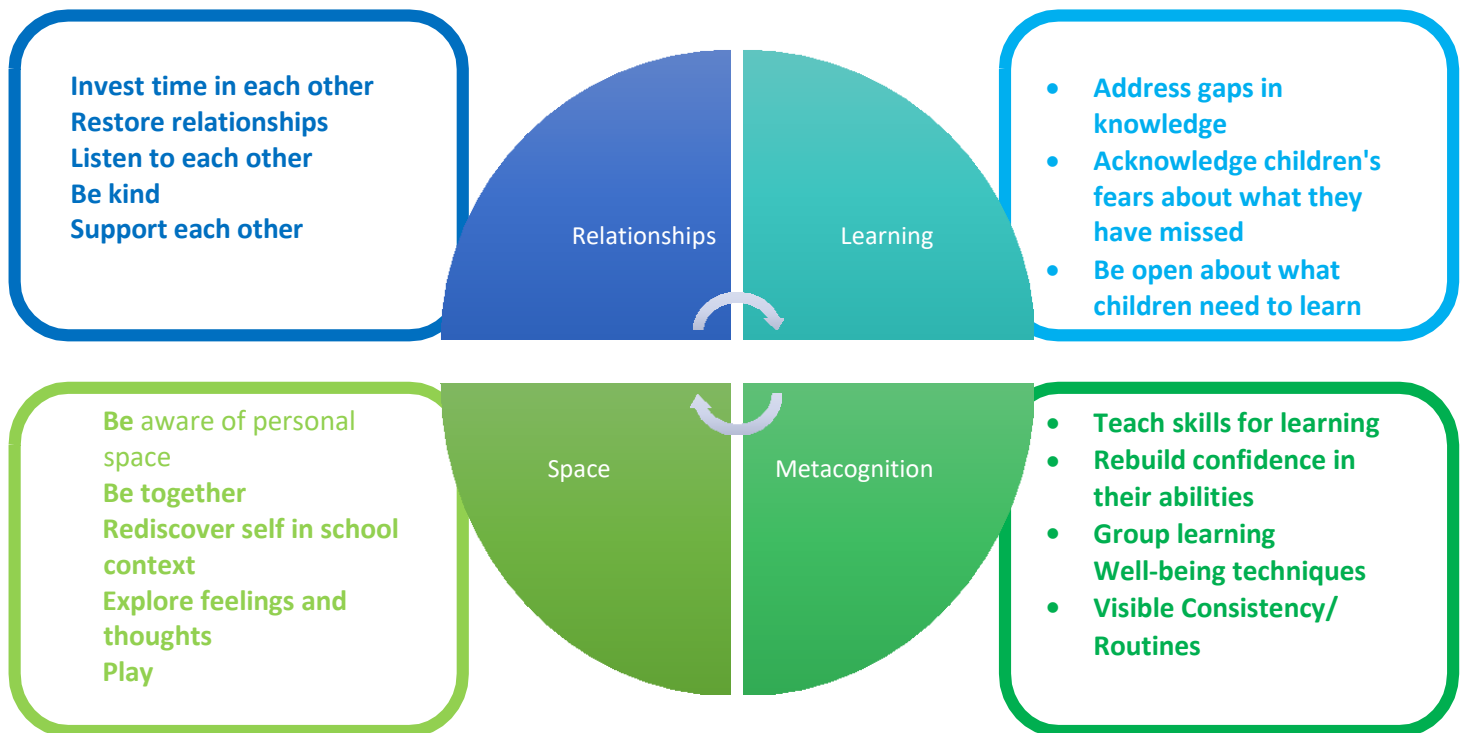


Recovery Curriculum



Rationale

We know that when more children are able to come to school following the COVID-19 pandemic that we will be facing an unprecedented situation. All members of our school family; children, parents, staff and governors, have had different experiences of the lockdown and some have been quite profound and life-changing. Some members of our community will now have to rebuild their lives in a new version of normality. We realise that some children will need time to address the trauma that they may have suffered and need support to restore their mental health.

Ellwood Community Primary School has always sought to build meaningful relationships rooted in our values, and now, more than ever, we recognise the importance of our school family, in rebuilding those relationships. We feel that this situation needs us to focus on the fundamental well-being and secure positive development of the child. This will lead to us being able to ensure academic achievement that will have true meaning and deep personal value for every child.

Our recovery curriculum has been written to address a holistic recovery for all children, but we recognise that for some there will need to be a more focussed, personalised and needs-led approach.

Context

Loss

The unique situation caused by the COVID-19 crisis has meant that children have experienced levels of loss and change that would not normally happen. The loss of daily routine, support and structure, of coping mechanisms and even of sleep, may have had a profound effect on children. They may appear quieter, troubled and easily alarmed. When schools closed children found the infrastructure of their week was abandoned, however logical the reason behind the decision. The suddenness of it may have led to anxiety, a loss of self-control and children will have struggled to understand and accept what was happening.

The loss of friendship and social interaction may have triggered a bereavement response in some of our children. They may have grieved for the simple daily interactions: giggling with a friend, playing football, making daisy chains, chatting about their work. While they have been at home children's freedom has been severely curtailed, as they have only seen their immediate family. When they have gone out for walks they have experienced other humans turning away or crossing the road, and this is an unnatural human response to others.

Recovery Curriculum

Anxiety

Children may have seen news broadcasts with daily death tolls and endless discussions of how to combat the virus. We know this has made many adults anxious, but children may have had less understanding of the situation or misunderstood what was being said. We may need to address some misconceptions, and also revisit some of the measures that have been taken to allow children to make sense of them.

In addition, children will have been in very small groups over an extended period of time. It may be strange, or even alarming, to be in a class group and we need to be aware of volume, sudden movements and over-stimulation. Anxiety, trauma and bereavement are powerful forces. For them all to appear at once in this untimely and unplanned fashion is significant for the developing child. Our children are vulnerable at this time, and their mental health may be fragile.

Phased Return

During the phased return to school we will have smaller class groups and will need to continue social distancing. This will mean that school will look and feel very different to what children, staff and families are used to. It will be important for teachers to retain routines and processes that are familiar to the children where possible.

Children will have been mixing in very small family groups and may find being part of a larger group overwhelming. It is important that the atmosphere in school is calm and supportive and that children are able to gradually acclimatise to the situation.

We will need to focus on the health of children and staff and this will include hygiene routines and social distancing to minimise the spread of COVID-19. It will be equally important to recognise the emotional needs of the children and to find ways to explicitly support their understanding.

Once the children are settled, the next stage in our curriculum will be to concentrate on making sure all children are secure in the key objectives for their year group in maths, reading and writing. This is to ensure that children do not fall behind and that they are building the skills and knowledge they need to move on to the next school year. Lessons will be carefully planned, so that as far as possible, the same content can be delivered in school in smaller classes and at home. This will ensure equity of provision for all children.

We recognise how challenging this interim phase will be for children and families and so we want to ensure that it is not overwhelming for them. We will include lots of fun and relaxing activities to support the transition back to school, to include lessons which will:

- use the arts to explore feelings and thoughts
- build resilience through shared challenges
- discussion and circle time
- teach wellbeing techniques
- encourage a sense of shared joy
- reminders about what makes a good learner
- independent learning strategies
- mindfulness
- appreciation of the outdoors and nature