

# CIRCLE TIME SOLUTIONS

Circle Time is just one way of promoting Emotional Literacy in schools. It is mostly used in classrooms but the framework can be applied with groups at all ages, including staff. It is particularly helpful in preventing bullying and developing a more supportive ethos. Your child will be involved in weekly circle time sessions.

## WHAT IS CIRCLE TIME?

Circle Time is a democratic and creative approach used to consider a wide range of issues affecting the whole school community. The strength of circles is that they address values, attitudes and skills within a structured, safe and supportive framework.

Evaluation of circle time indicates that it can have a significant impact on:

- Promoting positive behaviour
- Preventing and addressing bullying
- Clarifying rules and expectations
- Defining values
- Developing emotional and social understanding and skills
- Developing a supportive class /school ethos
- Sharing and taking responsibility
- Fostering belonging
- Supporting inclusion
- Conflict resolution / management
- Developing good communication
- Creating and developing trust
- Celebrations!

## THE PROCESSES OF CIRCLE TIME ARE INTENDED TO:

- Promote the value of both individuals and the group
- Not allow individuals to put each other down
- Focus on problem solving issues not blaming individuals
- Focus on the positive rather than the negative
- Emphasise solutions
- Give everyone a turn to contribute
- Emphasise equal value of all contributions
- Promote inclusion
- Not insist on participation but give second chances
- Allow for mistakes
- Give time for reflection

## RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT IS CENTRAL: ACTIVITIES PROMOTE

- Sharing of experiences
- Practising communication skills, especially listening
- Promoting understanding of each other
- Empathy building
- Giving a language and a space for feelings
- Collaboration and co-operation
- Breaking down prejudice
- Developing understanding of abstract ideas such as kindness, tolerance, support
- Having fun together

In classrooms it is essential that the teacher is a facilitator and participant in Circle Time, not a controller. This encourages students to develop their own solutions. Be sure to ask your child how 'Circle Time' was this week.

