

## **Cusgarne's story**

Our story began some time before we were able to partake in the Healthy Schools Plus initiative. We had identified certain areas for development, one of which was to review our provision of SRE. So Healthy Schools Plus became the ideal opportunity for us to address this need and to receive support and guidance whilst doing so.

When we embarked upon Healthy Schools Plus we quickly realised that SRE for us could not stand alone and that linked to it, was the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils. We had identified a group of particularly vulnerable Year 5 and 6 girls and so they became our focus group.

We sought to involve parents, along with our pupils and governors, but had very few offers to join our working party. Likewise, we were disappointed when the Speakeasy taster session was so poorly attended.

At the outset, three of the four teaching staff expressed lack of confidence and knowledge in the teaching of the SRE curriculum. However, following the support from the Cornwall Healthy Schools team, all responded that they felt they had an increased knowledge and a far greater confidence. They felt that they would appreciate an opportunity to observe or to support in other classes so as to obtain an overall feel for the subject and this is something we are aiming to address in the future.

I must confess, we were elated when Kate praised our SRE policy which we were reviewing, but actually required little change. We appreciated the joint teaching sessions, lesson plans and resources provided for us and apart from the staff comments about their enjoyment of the sessions; many children reported that they were 'fun' and not what they had expected. Initially, some pupils commented that they thought they would feel embarrassed, but stated that knowing the correct vocabulary to use had made it easier to talk. There was an increase in the number of children who reported that they felt better informed and would like to know more.

An important aspect of our delivery of the subject was the stress placed upon the importance of relationships and respect for others. The pupils' self-esteem was also a major consideration for us, particularly our vulnerable group. Staff and governors undertook RTime training which, together with the SEAL resources is used by each class.

The results from the children's survey conducted after the Healthy Schools work revealed an increase in self-esteem and a reduction in the number of pupils complaining of bullying or harassment at school. Our suggestions box has remained empty of such comments also.

There has been an increase in the number of parents responding to their questionnaires from one third pre Healthy Schools Plus to just over one half post Healthy Schools Plus. What is promising is that their comments are far more positive across every question, with only one parent stating that their child had been concerned about bullying.

We have been impressed with the changes, but recognise that there is still more to do, whilst we are planning on delivering the SRE at different times through the year, we have not fully embedded it into our cross-curricular planning but we are adapting it and making it our own.

We do hope to run some Speakeasy session if still available to us. We continue to monitor the Year 5 pupils (now Year 6) from our focus group, the others having moved on to secondary school. Only time will tell how successful both we and their new schools have been.

For the future – well, whilst we will continue to monitor the SRE and emotional health and wellbeing we intend to put greater emphasis on our children's fitness and will be using our funding to this end.

So a big thank-you to Kate and the Healthy Schools team for all your support; not only was it enjoyable, but the whole school gained from the experience.

Yvonne Clark  
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