**The Compassionate and Connected Classroom – Further information for parents, carers and staff.**

This communication supplements the information already given in the booklet for parents and carers.

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| **What is this resource?** | The Compassionate and Connected Classroom is a health and wellbeing resource for upper primary which supports all children to cope with challenges and adversity and develop confidence, resilience, empathy and compassion. |
| **What does the resource aim to do?** | The aims of the resource are to:* Support children to understand that experiencing adversity and trauma can happen to anyone
* Help children to understand the possible impact of adversity and trauma on their wellbeing
* Recognise the importance of positive, nurturing relationships in protecting children from the impact of adversity and trauma
* Provide children with strategies and skills to help them cope with challenge and develop resilience
* Support children to understand that they have the right to be protected and supported by the adults in their lives.
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| **Why do children need to know about trauma and adversity?** | Trauma through neglect, bereavement, abuse, parental absence or illness affects many families in Scotland. It can affect children’s health, wellbeing, and ability to engage in learning and the impact can be life-long. Even where children have not had significant adverse experiences in their lives, dealing with day-to-day challenges can cause strong emotional responses and impact on their health and wellbeing. To support all children to be confident, effective and successful in life and in learning, this resource aims to help children understand the links between the challenges they might face and how these might make them feel and behave. The resource supports teachers to promote strong, nurturing relationships, based on mutual respect, in class and in the school community. It supports children to feel that they are listened to and can talk about things that might worry them with someone that they trust. It helps children to develop skills and strategies to cope with life’s ups and downs and promotes the development of empathy and compassion for others. |
| **What is the content of the resource and how will it be taught?** | As the booklet explains, there are 5 themes, each linked to 4 sessions of activities. Children will explore each theme in the classroom with their teacher and other children in the class. They will participate in discussions and activities which will help them to understand the key messages. These sessions will be delivered as part of the health and wellbeing curriculum and they tie in with the key experiences and outcomes within that, particularly those which focus on mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing.  |
| **Will my child be asked to share personal experiences?**  | There will be no expectation that children will share their own personal experiences although there may be times when they wish to do so. Children are asked to reflect on adversity and the impact that it has more generally and to consider how we can offer understanding and support. Scenarios, the life stories of famous people and examples of problems that children might face are all used to promote discussion and refection.Children will be given opportunities to share any concerns if they wish to, either in discussion in class; in private discussion with a teacher or trusted adult or by their established class structures such as a worry box or jar. In the rare event that children did share an experience that made staff concerned for their safety or the safety of others, normal safeguarding procedures would be followed. |
| **What are the personal journals?** | Each child will receive a booklet with pages which link to the themes in the resource. Children will be encouraged to reflect on what they have learned and make notes to help them remember things that are important to them. They will record strategies and activities which help them cope with challenges and feel more relaxed when they are anxious or stressed. Children can share these with their teacher or other trusted adult if they choose. They will be encouraged to share these with their parents or carers at the end of the programme. |

