

Progression in Mindfulness skill acquisition across the teaching teams

These skills will be explored using varied resources and through dedicated times when mindfulness is taught and experienced with the children. Along with discrete Mindfulness assemblies where whole classes come together, staff have the flexibility to take mindful moments with their children at different times in the day or week. These are often in reaction to busier times of the day where stopping to pause and gather our emotions is essential to highly effective learning. Learning environments reflect the strategies taught and are built up together in the classrooms over time. Children are fully involved in what is displayed and personalising display reminders for all.

Strategies that the adults and children learn together and children are encouraged to use as they make their way through the school include:

- Breathing techniques (These are often designed with the children and in line with their interests)
- Five Finger Breathing
- Weather and sensory links to how the children are feeling at different times in the school day
- Colour monsters (from Colour Monsters by Anna Llenas)
- Use of a mindful jar (to demonstrate busy minds and to support calming and control)
- Imagery (Children designing and visiting imaginary places as part of reflection and calming)
- Music to create atmosphere and music chimes
- The children's interests and likes are often interwoven into well-known mindful techniques and strategies

	Early Years	Year 1	Year 2
Progression in skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become aware of own feelings • Start to label and describe own feelings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidently describe own feelings • Begin to learn strategies of how they can control and manage their own feelings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn and confidently use strategies to manage and control their own feelings. • Begin to empathise with others' feelings. • Begin to show kindness and compassion for other children's feelings. • Begin to support their peers' with their emotions, encouraging or recommending strategies to others.

Children are actively taught about trusted adults and which familiar trusted adults they could go to for help if they or their friends have big feelings.

Resources below are a starting point and reminders for staff:

Mindful Jar

Just glitter (and sequins if you want!) in water as a very practical way of showing children what it can be like when our minds are very busy, and how it can be hard to see what's going on/see through when it's like this.

And how being still and calm, or focussing on a sound (or whatever mindfulness exercise you are doing) can help our minds to calm and settle down, just like the glitter.

Even just watching the water go from busy and swirling to calm and still can help children.

A useful visual aid to a lot of mindfulness.



Breathing

- A few slow, deep breaths can help the children (and us!) to feel much calmer
- Controlled breathing sends a signal that all is ok
- This begins to calm the nervous system and slow the body's stress response



BE STILL LIKE A FROG

I AM A LITTLE FROG
SITTING STILL AS CAN BE
I SEE ALL THINGS THAT HAPPEN AROUND ME

I TAKE A BREATH IN
I LET IT GO OUT
OVER AND OVER AGAIN WITHOUT A DOUBT

I AM A LITTLE FROG
SITTING STILL AS CAN BE
PEACEFUL AND QUIET IS HOW YOU FIND ME



Starting with mindful movements linked to breathing

Script:

Dolphin breath.

Every time you breathe in, curve your arms up like a dolphin jumping out of the water and then bring your arms down as you breathe out. Let's do that a few times.

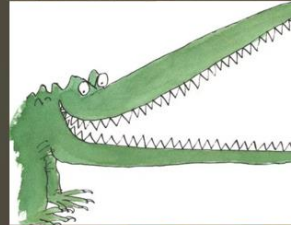
Now let's do the crocodile breath.

Every time you breathe in, open your arms like the jaws of a crocodile. And every time you breathe out let them drop. Let's do that a few times as well.

Now we can do a few butterfly breaths, where you let your wings open on the inhale and close on the exhale.

Now let's lift our shoulders up really tight when we breathe in and then as you breathe out let them fall and totally relax. Let's do that a few times.

This time let's be **totally still** without moving a muscle. When you breathe in and out see if anything moves. Even though you're trying to be totally still, see if there is any movement. Did you notice anything?



- **Bear breaths** (long, deep breaths when hibernating in our safe, warm cave)
- **Bee breaths** (buzzing on the way out, script below)
- **Hot chocolate** (deep breath in then blowing on our cup of hot chocolate to cool it down)
- **Flower breath** (taking a deep breath to smell a flower then letting the breath out again)
- **Vacuum breaths** (more advanced for later on to help children with difficult emotions or feelings)

- Children coming up with ideas after experiencing one or two of these. Imagery and ideas that work for them.





The Treehouse

- A safe place
- Children design & decorate their own



Power Poses

- It can help for children to do this first by themselves somewhere so they don't feel too self-conscious at first in front of others
- Tune into how this makes them feel



Resources

GoNoodle

100 IDEAS for Primary Teachers
Mindfulness in the Classroom
Tammie Prince

Sitting Still Like a Frog
Mindfulness Exercises for Kids
with Traci Thorne
Eline Snel
Foreword: Jon Kabat-Zinn

BE STILL LIKE A FROG
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GoNoodle

FLOW

show a

Key points

- It's about **awareness** and **attention**
- Make it **doable!** (bite-size)
- **Adapted** to (and by!) your children
- **Consistency**
- Be **open-minded** & give things a try