

ELSA

Portsmouth Inclusion Service



Who are ELSAs?

Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs) are school staff who have been trained by Educational Psychologists to deliver interventions for children focused on:

- Building relationships
- Social and friendship skills
- Self-esteem & Wellbeing
- Emotional regulation
- Anxiety
- Neurodiversity
- Loss and bereavement
- Social Stories

Our ELSA Training, which takes place over 6 days, teaches ELSAs to plan and deliver these interventions safely and effectively. They also learn and develop skills such as active listening, self-awareness, working creatively and making adaptations for different needs. ELSAs learn how to write SMART targets to ensure interventions are measured and supporting CYP to make the progress required to thrive in school and beyond.



How many ELSAs do we have in Portsmouth?

There are approximately 80 ELSAs in the city who work in more than 41 settings (made up of infant, primary, junior, secondary



How much time is involved?

ELSA interventions are typically delivered in 8 to 12 sessions. They focus on helping the pupil to learn some specific new skills and strategies related to their emotional and social wellbeing. Clear SMART targets are written by ELSAs early in the intervention, so that the sessions are designed to help pupils achieve their targets.

ELSAs require a minimum of 1 day per week (including planning and delivery time) for their role. Each setting signs a training contract which outlines commitments made within the project.



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How are ELSAs supported?

Following initial training ELSAs attend half termly supervision in small groups of 6-8 ELSAs, facilitated by an Educational Psychologist. ELSAs continue to access these sessions for as long as they are undertaking the role. Regular psychological supervision is necessary to maintain the title of ELSA. This is to ensure ELSAs have ongoing support that develops their knowledge and understanding.

The aims of Supervision are to:

- Provide casework support through the application of psychological perspectives
- Enable CPD/ additional training in areas not covered in the initial 6 days
- Support emotional wellbeing of ELSAs
- Peer Support / Networking with ELSAs from other Portsmouth Schools
- Ensure ELSA is appropriately utilized, and to identify signposting or external support needs
- Facilitate problem-solving and resource sharing



Training Information

There is a £625 charge for the entire 6 days of training, which includes our ELSA resource pack. Following initial training, the cost is £285 per ELSA for each year of supervision (six 2-hour sessions).

You can book onto the course by emailing : Philippa.Wilson@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or through the [Traded Services website](#) course code PLG2-0226-T003.

Training dates for 2026:

- Tuesday 24 February 2026
- Tuesday 3 March 2026
- Tuesday 24 March 2026
- Tuesday 21 April 2026
- Tuesday 12 May 2026
- Tuesday 9 June 2026 (including Line Managers' Session, 1.30—3 pm)

9.00 am—3.00 pm on all 6 days (lunch and refreshments provided)



If you wish to discuss the ELSA project further please email:

Philippa.Wilson@portsmouthcc.gov.uk & Louisa.Thomas@portsmouthcc.gov.uk