

# Resilience at Thomas Gray



## What is resilience?

Resilience is the capacity to 'bounce back' from adversity. Protective factors increase resilience, whereas risk factors increase vulnerability. Resilient individuals, families and communities are more able to deal with difficulties and adversities than those with less resilience. Schools have a key opportunity to build resilience among children and young people. Resilience is a key factor in protecting and promoting good mental health. It is the quality of being able to deal with the ups and downs of life and is based on self-esteem.

## Why is resilience important?

Childhood isn't all adventures in the forest or computer games all evening. There are real challenges and difficulties that children can face. Children find a lot of situations stressful such as moving schools, new siblings arriving, exams, death in the family, moving to a new house. All these situations can be difficult to process for a child. There is a lot of evidence that stress can lead to mental health issues for children, such as anxiety or depression. In an NHS survey, it was found that 18 per cent of girls and 12 per cent of boys were showing signs of depression and anxiety. When a child is resilient, they will be able to work through their challenges rather than focus on the problems they encounter. Giving a child tools to be able to seek help or the confidence to say "I don't know" will help them not take the stress to heart. Teaching resilience in your classroom means that you're setting your pupils up to better cope with difficult finances, rocky relationships, and losing their loved ones when they reach adulthood.

## The 5 key factors of resilience

- Basic Needs - I have enough money, a nice place to live, a good diet, time to relax, and getting enough exercise.
- Belonging - I recognise strong and healthy relationships, that I belong, that I am needed, I can make and keep friends.
- Learning - Through engaging well with my school or college courses, being organised and achieving my goals.
- Coping - Learning from my mistakes, not being too critical of myself and helping myself through problems solving
- Core Self - I can understand the feelings of others, understanding what I am good at and being hopeful about the future.

## How do we teach resilience to our children?

Resilience fits into our Jigsaw PSHE scheme so we have mapped out using the resilience framework where the different factors fit into the units of work (see learning overviews). This ensures children are being taught about resilience and building on prior learning each week. Teachers can also do stand-alone resilience lessons if they feel their children need more work on an area of resilience.

## Who is Resilient Ralph?

As a school we have decided to adapt the 'ROAR Response to Mental Health in Primary Schools' approach. We use Ralph, an elephant puppet, to model and remind the children to be resilient and 'bounce back' from difficulties. Ralph is each class mascot and is used throughout the day to encourage resilience.

