

# ENFIELD EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

## When Pupils' Creative Work Gives us Cause for Concern

Everyone has had very different experiences during lockdown. Sometimes we know about a pupil's difficult experiences, and sometimes we may not yet know.

If you feel concerned about a pupil because of their appearance, demeanour, behaviour or things they say or write, offer them some space to talk:

- Find a relaxed place
- Ensure you can't be overheard
- Make sure you have enough time
- Sit down, so that you and the pupil are at the same height

### Invite them to speak to you about anything that is on their mind:

*You don't seem your usual self today. Would you like to talk about anything?*

*You look sad/worried today. Do you want to have a chat about it/is there anything I can do to help?*

*You said something interesting in your poem about how you felt when you weren't coming to school. Can you tell me more?*

### You can help the pupil to feel comfortable by:

- Giving them your full attention
- Sitting down, so that you and the pupil are at the same height
- Showing that you are listening by nodding and acknowledging what they've said
- Asking open questions
- Offering the chance to draw or play while talking, if they are finding it hard
- Adapting your communication to take account of a pupil's special educational needs
- Acknowledging the child's feelings and offering empathy and understanding: *"It sounds like [...] happened, and that made you feel [...]. I can understand feeling like that, it sounds really hard."*

### If a pupil discloses something of concern:

- Explain to the pupil that you need to share the information with the designated safeguarding lead, and tell the pupil what will happen next
- Think with the pupil what would help them to feel safe and calm right now
- Follow your school's normal safeguarding procedures
- Talk to the Senior Lead for Mental Health in your school who can advise on provision available in your school and local area. They will be able to support you to have further conversations with the pupil and/or signpost to internal school provision (e.g. school counsellor for example) or to other available support (e.g. Young Minds, Kooth).



Adapted from Heads Together: Mentally Health Schools

