

An exploratory study into the research priorities of the ELSA Network Steering Group; focusing on the promotion and development of the ELSA intervention
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Summary table of gaps in the current literature and research priorities highlighted from the ELSA Network focus group discussion.	
Gaps/issues identified in literature	Priorities highlighted from ELSA focus group
Variability and efficacy of the ELSA intervention programme	
Contracting and variability of the nature and length intervention with CYP (Peters, 2020; Nicholson-Roberts, 2019); students' overreliance on ELSAs in school (Krause, Blackwell & Claridge, 2020; Wong et al, 2020).	Variability of the intervention, positive and negative implications of being flexible and adaptable to individual CYP's needs. The initial 'setting up' of the intervention, including ensuring that CYP understood what they were consenting to when starting the programme.
Lack of sensitivity of the measures used to track progress of CYP (Pickering, Lambeth & Woodcock, 2019).	Variability of ELSA intervention sessions themselves arising from the ELSA's autonomy in programme delivery. Differences in measures used to track development over time, as well as concerns over who's views were prioritised when efficacy of the programme was measured.
The prerequisite skills of an ELSA, including what attracts individuals to the role, their entry level skills and possible exploration of the 'unideal' ELSA (Peters, 2020).	Variability between ELSAs of skill sets and sessions delivered. Active listening and empathy were thought to be key skills, but there appeared to be a gap in the current knowledge around the skills ELSAs use with their pupils in ELSA sessions.
Development of measures that investigate the self-efficacy and trait emotional intelligence of TAs, identifying qualities that ELSAs need to embody (Rees, 2016).	
Communication and understanding	
The involvement of and communication with parents within the ELSA support (Wilding & Claridge, 2016; Nicholson-Roberts, 2019), identifying key points for parental involvement (Peters, 2020).	Communication between ELSAs, parents/ carers and school staff serve as both facilitator and barrier to the ELSA intervention.
Does parental engagement facilitate the generalisation of new skills outside of the ELSA intervention sessions (Wilding & Claridge, 2016).	Key role of school staff and parents' understanding of the programme in supporting opportunities for CYP to generalise skills learnt in ELSA sessions.
Representation of views from ELSAs and pupils within secondary settings (Atkin, 2019; Peters, 2020).	Need to develop the evidence base for the ELSA intervention to aid the uptake in secondary school settings.

	A clear communication pathway is needed within schools so that ELSAs can be informed about what the expectation of the sessions are from staff and how staff feel the ELSA support might benefit individuals.
Voice of the CYP	
Lack of pupil voice in both the primary and secondary sector (Wilding & Claridge, 2016; Wong et al., 2020).	The lack of research around CYP voice (particularly that of secondary school aged pupils) to adapt the support to suit the needs of CYP individually, at a school and a national level, to add to the evidence base for the ELSA programme.
ELSA within different educational settings	
Comparison between the outcomes of primary and secondary schools, exploring the differences in the wellbeing outcomes of the programme at different ages (Krause, Blackwell & Claridge, 2020).	
Exploration of the wider impact of relationships in school, particularly YP-teacher. (Roffey, 2008).	The impact of school ethos and organisation
ELSA implementation	
Factors and practices at the different levels within school which may aid the development and promotion of EL and wellbeing at a whole-school and individual level (Humphrey, 2013).	Identifying barriers in establishing the programme at a LA level and how best to support implementation. The efficacy of training: <i>“are we communicating what we think we’re communicating?”</i> Are the skills outlined in the training being delivered in the ELSA sessions?
ELSA and gender	
	ELSA and gender: supporting an increase in the number of males wishing to become ELSAs. Numbers of male pupils referred compared to female pupils.

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