
Evaluation of Emotional Me Pilot

Wiltshire Council

December 2025

Executive summary

Introduction

Wiltshire Council has a longstanding commitment to implementing evidence-based approaches aimed at promoting healthy development and wellbeing throughout the life course. An important element of that has been rolling out across the wider children's workforce *Five to Thrive*, an attachment aware and trauma informed training programme developed by [KCA](#)¹ which promotes attuned connections through five steps which can be embedded in everyday interactions. KCA has now developed Emotional Me, a new school-based emotional wellbeing and resilience programme based on the same underpinning principles and neuroscience.

Emotional Me is structured around three core sessions that are delivered to children by their teachers in school, as part of the curriculum. Teachers are first trained by KCA to provide these sessions.

- Session 1 focuses on emotions and the brain.
- Session 2 explores wellbeing, resilience, and vulnerability.
- Session 3 centres around human connection and attachment.

The programme closely aligns with Wiltshire Council's strategic priorities for supporting children's emotional wellbeing and responds to increasing concern in schools that, particularly since the coronavirus pandemic, more children were finding it difficult to regulate their emotions.

Wiltshire Council decided to pilot Emotional Me and commissioned the Institute of Public Care, Oxford Brookes University, to conduct an independent evaluation. The evaluation has explored:

- The feasibility of implementing Emotional Me in both primary and secondary school settings.
- The acceptability of the programme among school staff and children, including how children engage with the lessons and resources, and whether they find them useful.
- Any early signs of impact on children's emotional regulation.

¹ KCA is a training company specialising in trauma prevention and recovery and stands for Knowledge Change Action

About the pilot

The pilot was implemented in Year 5 and Year 7, given the importance of transitions to secondary school.²

Implementation of key phases (school onboarding, teacher training, and classroom delivery) took place between February and July 2025. A total of 18 schools (15 primary and three secondary schools, all state-funded) signed up for the pilot. The schools were diverse (in size, locations etc.) and broadly representative of schools in Wiltshire.

Teachers from the participating schools received two full days of face-to-face training by KCA covering:

- The underpinning science, research, and knowledge behind Emotional Me.
- Introduction to the resources provided – lesson plans and suggested activities – and practical tips for effective delivery.

The training was complemented by a 90-minute reflective practice session, to enable teachers to share what they had done so far and reflect on their own and others' experience.

Schools could claim funding for cover to enable them to release staff for the training and reflective practice sessions.

A set of resources for parents was also provided to schools: these were three short presentations for each year group that link directly with the children's sessions. Schools could decide how they shared these with parents/carers.

Evaluation methods and data

The evaluation employed a mixed methods approach, comprising the following elements:

- Teachers' feedback on the training collected through online surveys. All teachers who attended the training completed the survey (24 after the first session and 23 after the second session).
- Observation of three reflective practice sessions.
- Children's feedback gathered via a short, age-appropriate paper questionnaire administered by teachers in schools after the delivery of Emotional Me lessons. Half of all schools in the pilot returned the children's questionnaires. A total of 388 questionnaires were returned, representing a response rate of approximately 45%.
- Semi-structured interviews conducted with five stakeholders from KCA and Wiltshire Council to explore their views and insights on programme implementation and outcomes.

² Year 6 was not chosen as schools and children are very busy preparing and doing SATs.

- Semi-structured interviews conducted with seven teachers to understand their views and experiences regarding the programme's acceptability and early signs of impact.

Findings

Our mixed-methods evaluation provided triangulated evidence concerning the feasibility and acceptability of the Emotional Me programme across diverse primary and secondary school settings in Wiltshire.

The pilot was successfully implemented as planned in at least two thirds (12 out of 18) of schools having delivered Emotional Me during the summer term in 2025. This suggests that the programme fits well into the school environment. Schools that did not participate cited resource constraints as the main reason for not getting involved during this period.

Emotional Me appears well-aligned with schools' and stakeholders' existing priorities and ambitions for fostering children's emotional health and wellbeing. This promotes sustainability and buy-in from leadership both within the Council and schools. All but one of the teachers interviewed for the evaluation were planning to run the sessions again, and some had already done so in the current academic year (2025/26). They were also talking about plans to take the learning forward more broadly across the whole school, including within their development plans.

All teachers were very positive about the quality of the training they received and valued the reflective practice sessions. Teachers we interviewed also reported high levels of understanding regarding the programme's content and its intended delivery methodology. The teaching and learning resources were particularly valued for their quality and ease of use, significantly reducing preparation time for teachers, and therefore barriers to implementation.

The range and flexibility of the Emotional Me teaching resources (e.g. lesson plans, suggested activities) were also appreciated. Teachers highlighted how this allowed them to effectively adapt lessons to meet the specific needs of their classes or year groups. Several of the teachers interviewed for this evaluation would like to see Emotional Me offered to all year groups. Similarly, a large proportion of children who took part in the pilot agreed that the programme should be made available to other schools.

Emotional Me is seen to complement the existing array of emotional wellbeing and trauma-informed resources already in use by schools (e.g., Five to Thrive, ELSA). Furthermore, the programme is viewed as complementing / enhancing the PSHE curriculum as well.

Both teachers and children reported positive views of the programme, describing it as fun and engaging. A large proportion of children in both primary and secondary schools said that they enjoyed the Emotional Me lessons (76% in primary and 81% in secondary school), learned useful things, and were able to name specific takeaways, new knowledge or practical tips to help with emotional regulation.

Initial evidence regarding the impact of Emotional Me on children's emotional regulation is only emerging. However, there were several examples of teachers observing children using some of the language and techniques they had been taught to talk about their emotions, the vagus nerve, or ways to calm down.

Parental engagement with the programme was low, therefore we were unable to engage parents in the evaluation. Although the resources for parents were deemed appropriate by teachers we interviewed, they reported that parental engagement appeared very low. This was mostly attributed to lack of time and capacity to engage with non-essential requests from schools.

Limitations of the pilot and the evaluation

Participation in Emotional Me was voluntary, and it is likely that the schools taking up the offer were those most likely to see the value of the programme. Similarly, the most enthusiastic participants may have been more likely to implement the programme. This is a common limitation in similar pilots.

Children's views on the programme were only sought via self-completion questionnaires administered close in time to the lessons they were being asked about. This method is less suitable for some types of special educational need, or for some children for whom English is additional language. The questionnaires were administered in the classroom under teacher supervision which may have influenced the results, and children's answers may have been influenced by their peers.

Finally, the evaluation took place at a formative stage, making it very early to look for measurable outcomes.

Conclusions and recommendations

Based on the findings from the feasibility and acceptability evaluation, a wider roll-out of the programme across Wiltshire could be considered.

For any future roll-out, the following programme refinements could be considered:

- Parent resources: while these resources were deemed appropriate, parental engagement was low. We recommend exploring with parents different ways to disseminate resources. We would also recommend exploring the benefits of a more targeted approach to engagement with parents for whom the programme might be especially salient, including foster carers and adoptive parents.
- Cohorts: the resources piloted were developed with Year 5 and Year 7 children in mind. Although the evaluation found a strong indication that the resources are also appropriate for other year groups, particularly slightly older children, there was some evidence that they were less suitable for younger children. It is understood that resources for other year groups have already been developed. We recommend offering clear guidance on year group readiness or offering additional adaptations or resources for teachers.
- Children with additional needs: findings from the evaluation suggest that children with additional needs engage well with Emotional Me; but they might require

adaptations. The resource pack could be expanded to include more ideas and practical examples to support teachers to make adaptations for children with different needs.

Finally, we recommend that any future roll-out includes structured monitoring to capture data on programme take-up, engagement levels, and resource feedback, ensuring a cycle of continuous refinement.

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1. Introduction

The Institute of Public Care at Oxford Brookes University (IPC) has been commissioned by the Wiltshire Council's Public Health service to evaluate a pilot of a new school-based children's emotional wellbeing and resilience programme called Emotional Me.

The evaluation set out to explore:

- The feasibility of the implementation of Emotional Me in schools: can Emotional Me be implemented as planned/expected in schools?
- The acceptability of the approach and implementation among school staff, children, and parents: how teachers deliver Emotional Me in schools, how children and parents engage with the lessons and resources, and whether they find the resources useful?
- Early / potential outcomes for teachers, children, and parents/carers: are there any early signs of impact on children's emotional wellbeing?

This report presents the findings of this independent evaluation.

2. Background

Wiltshire Council has a longstanding commitment to implementing evidence-based approaches in children's services to promote healthy development and wellbeing throughout the life course. An important element of that has been rolling out across the wider children's workforce *Five to Thrive*, an attachment aware and trauma informed training programme developed by [KCA](#)³ which promotes attuned connections through five steps which can be embedded in everyday interactions.

Wiltshire Council was therefore keen to pilot *Emotional Me (EMe)*, a new programme developed by KCA, and based on the same underpinning principles and neuroscience as [Five to Thrive](#), but delivered directly to children by their teachers, with the aim of helping children to better understand and regulate their emotions. This aligned with increasing concern in schools that, since the coronavirus pandemic, more children were finding it difficult to regulate their emotions.

³ KCA is a training company specialising in trauma prevention and recovery and stands for Knowledge Change Action

3. The Emotional Me Programme

Emotional Me is a school-based emotional wellbeing and resilience programme in which teachers are trained to deliver lessons to children and provided with resources and activities which can be adapted to the needs of their pupils and school (see Box 1).

Box 1: The Emotional Me programme

Emotional Me is an evidence-based mental wellbeing and emotional resilience programme designed for children aged 9/10 (Year 5) and 11/12 (Year 7). It is delivered to children by teachers as part of the curriculum in schools.

The programme is structured around three core lessons for both year groups. The lessons must be completed in the set order to build knowledge sequentially:

- **Lesson 1** focuses on emotions and the brain, helping children recognise how emotions feel in the body, understand the neuroscience behind them, and develop emotional language and literacy.
- **Lesson 2** explores wellbeing, resilience, and vulnerability. It looks at how to support one's own and others' emotional wellbeing with a focus on what can be learned from nature about growth, resilience, and adaptation.
- **Lesson 3** centres around human connection: why people need people, how to map and value connected relationships, including identifying who is in one's net of connected relationships, the role of community, social communication, and social narration. The Year 7 lesson goes deeper by introducing the concept of attachment and how to navigate complex social dynamics.

KCA and Wiltshire Council developed their logic models for the programme prior to the pilot (see Annex 1). A logic model sets out the relationship between the issue a programme is designed to address, its resources (inputs), activities, and its intended results, including outputs and impact (outcomes). Logic models are commonly used in the design, implementation, and evaluation of programmes / interventions.

The initial idea was to offer Emotional Me to all year groups up to Year 7, but it was decided that a more focused pilot would be better, both on pragmatic grounds – to make it manageable for schools – and to ensure that decisions on potential future roll-out were informed by evidence.

Given the importance of transitions to secondary school, it was decided to pilot Emotional Me with Year 5 and Year 7. Year 6 was not chosen as schools and children are very busy preparing and doing SATs.

Figure 1 provides an overview of the pilot timeline. Implementation of key phases (school onboarding, teacher training, and classroom delivery) took place between February and July 2025.

All primary and secondary schools in Wiltshire received an invitation to take part in the programme in February. A total of 18 schools (15 primary and three secondary schools) signed up (see Section 6 for information about the schools).

Training was provided to 24 teachers in May and June 2025. They were given two full days of face-to-face training by KCA. The training was complemented by a 90-minute reflective practice session, three or four weeks afterwards, facilitated by KCA, to enable teachers to share what they had done so far and reflect on their own and others' experience (see Box 2).

Box 2: Emotional Me: Resource the Trainer

As part of the Emotional Me programme, teachers receive training to equip them with the knowledge and resources needed to deliver the lessons to their classes. The training involves:

- A full-day in-person session on the underpinning science, research, and knowledge behind Emotional Me, including an introduction to Five to Thrive.
- A full-day in-person session on how to deliver it effectively and review / contextualise the resources provided as part of the programme to their classes.
- A 90-minute online reflective practice session after teachers have delivered their first lesson, aiming to build long-term confidence.

Schools could claim funding for cover to enable them to release staff for the training and reflective practice sessions.

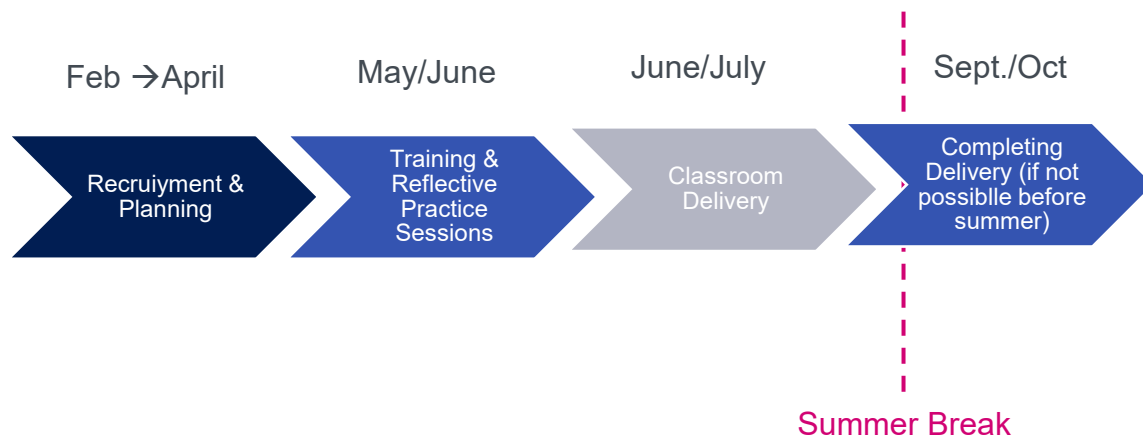
The resources provided to teachers were bespoke for each year group and included:

- Lesson plans and suggested activities,
- PowerPoint slides to use in the lessons,
- Video clips to use in the lessons,
- Poems to use in the lessons,
- Suggested homework, and
- Emotional Me journals for use by each child

A set of resources for parents was also provided to schools: these were three short presentations for each year group, which link directly with the children's lessons. Schools could share these with parents/carers, either on their websites or directly as part of an in-person event. The parent videos guide parents through Emotional Me and give practical ideas and activities to use with their children at home.

It was hoped that teachers would deliver Emotional Me before the summer break, but it was recognised that for some schools this might not be practical and that delivery might not be completed until the first term of the next academic year.

Figure 1: Project timeline



4. Evaluation questions

The evaluation used a mixed methods design to seek to answer three main questions:

- **Feasibility.** Can Emotional Me be implemented as planned/expected in schools?
- **Acceptability.** To what extent those involved in delivering (i.e. teachers) or receiving Emotional Me (i.e. children and parents) find it appropriate?
- **Early / potential outcomes.** Are there any early signs of promise including impact on children's emotional wellbeing?

Feasibility includes whether the training and resources were sufficient to enable teachers to deliver the lessons successfully to children, and whether the lessons could be accommodated within the timetable alongside other priorities.

Acceptability refers to various dimensions (see also Figure 2)⁴:

- How stakeholders felt about the programme (affective attitude).
- The perceived or actual amount of effort required to participate or deliver the programme (burden).
- The extent to which the programme was aligned with key stakeholders' value system (ethicality).
- The extent to which participants understood the programme and how it works (coherence).
- The extent to which other resources (such as time) had to be given up to deliver the programme (opportunity cost).
- The extent to which the programme was perceived as likely to achieve its purpose (perceived effectiveness).
- The extent to which key stakeholders were confident that they could deliver the programme as intended (self-efficacy).

It was recognised at the outset that it may be too early to identify signs of impact on children's wellbeing, whether positive or negative, but that it was nonetheless important to look for them.

Figure 2: Dimensions of acceptability



Source: Sekhon et al., 2017

⁴ Sekhon, M., Cartwright, M. & Francis, J.J. Acceptability of healthcare interventions: an overview of reviews and development of a theoretical framework. *BMC Health Services Research* 17, 88 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-017-2031-8>

5. Evaluation methods

The evaluation employed a mixed methods approach, comprising the following elements:

- Teachers' feedback on the training was collected through online surveys. These surveys were designed to assess the effectiveness of the training, including the extent to which participants felt the content was appropriate, whether it provided relevant knowledge and skills, and whether it increased their confidence to deliver Emotional Me in their schools.⁵ Teachers were asked to complete a short online survey at the end of the training day (both Day 1 and Day 2), while still in the classroom. The survey link was shared via a QR code embedded in the final slide of the presentation.
- The evaluation team observed the reflective practice sessions. Discussions were summarised anonymously.
- Children's feedback was gathered via a short, age-appropriate paper questionnaire⁶ administered by teachers in schools after the delivery of Emotional Me lessons (Figure 3). The questionnaires were completed anonymously by the children, no individually identifying information was collected. To reduce the burden on schools, we sent printed packs of questionnaires by post together with a return envelope addressed to IPC. Returned questionnaires were manually entered into an Excel dataset for quantitative (descriptive) and qualitative (thematic) analysis.⁷
- Semi-structured interviews were conducted with KCA and Wiltshire Council stakeholders to explore their views and insights on programme implementation and expected outcomes. Interviews were conducted online, audio-recorded, and transcribed for thematic analysis using Microsoft Team's automatic transcription feature.
- Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with teachers to understand their views and experiences regarding the programme's acceptability and early signs of impact. All teachers (n=23) who took part in the training were invited to sign up for an interview. Interviews were conducted online, audio-recorded, and transcribed for thematic analysis using Microsoft Team's automatic transcription feature. A brief online questionnaire was distributed to schools where teachers did not volunteer for an interview, to capture their perspectives and confirm whether they had delivered Emotional Me.

⁵ Kirkpatrick, J. D. & Kirkpatrick, W. K. (2016). Kirkpatrick's four levels of training evaluation. Association for Talent Development

⁶ Bell, A., 2007. Designing and testing questionnaires for children. *Journal of research in nursing*, 12(5), pp.461-469.

⁷ A small number of questionnaires had data issues. Specifically, in approximately 15 cases where children selected multiple responses for a single question, the response option consistent with the overall feedback was entered (e.g., if a child selected both "agree a bit" and "agree a lot" for a question but their other responses were "agree a bit" or "disagree," "agree a bit" was entered). Additionally, in approximately five questionnaires, the child's handwriting could not be read, and no open text responses were entered.

- Parents received a link to an online feedback form together with the video presentation shared by the school, to gather their views on Emotional Me.

All data collection tools are available via this [link](#).

Figure 3: Pupil questionnaire



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We would like to hear about how you have found the Emotional Me lessons.

Please answer a few questions. There are no right or wrong answers. We want to know what you think.

Don't write your name on the paper!

Please have a think about the Emotional Me lessons you have had at school and say how much you agree or disagree with the statements:

1. I enjoyed the Emotional Me lessons (tick one box)

Disagree a lot 	Disagree a bit 	Agree a bit 	Agree a lot 

2. I learnt useful things in the Emotional Me lessons (tick one box)

Disagree a lot 	Disagree a bit 	Agree a bit 	Agree a lot 

3. All schools in Wiltshire should do Emotional Me lessons (tick one box)

Disagree a lot 	Disagree a bit 	Agree a bit 	Agree a lot 

4. What was your favourite part of the Emotional Me lessons?

5. Tell us one thing you learnt in Emotional Me that you will use:

6. Characteristics of schools involved in the pilot

A total of 18 schools – 15 primary and three secondary schools – were involved in the pilot. All schools were state funded; however, nine out of the 15 primary schools were voluntary/church aided or maintained.

The schools taking part in the pilot were broadly representative of Wiltshire schools. However, their share of children receiving free school meals was considerably lower than the county average (Table 1).

Table 1: Characteristics of primary schools in the Emotional Me pilot (mean, min – max)

	Number of pupils*	% of children receiving SEN support*	% eligible for free school meals*	Overall absence**
Pilot schools	206 (58 – 409)	15.5 (9.2 – 29.3)	12.6 (3.4 – 29.3)	4.7 (3.5 – 6.9)
Wiltshire schools	185 (32 – 666)	16.1 (3.1 – 41.9)	17.0 (1.4 – 56.1)	5.1

Source: <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/find-a-school-in-england>

* Data for 2024/25; ** Data for 2023/2024

Ten of the 15 primary schools were rated “good” by Ofsted, three were rated “good / outstanding” (for personal development), and two were rated “requires improvement / good” (for personal development). All three secondary schools were rated “good.”

7. Findings

This section presents key findings from the data collected throughout the evaluation. It is structured around the various sources and includes:

- Teachers’ views on the training (online survey) and early implementation (reflective practice sessions).
- Children’s views and engagement with Emotional Me (pupil survey).
- The project team’s and teachers’ insights into implementation, acceptability, and early signs of impact (qualitative interviews).

We received no feedback from parents (see also *7.5.5 Parent Engagement*).

7.1. Teachers’ views on the Emotional Me training

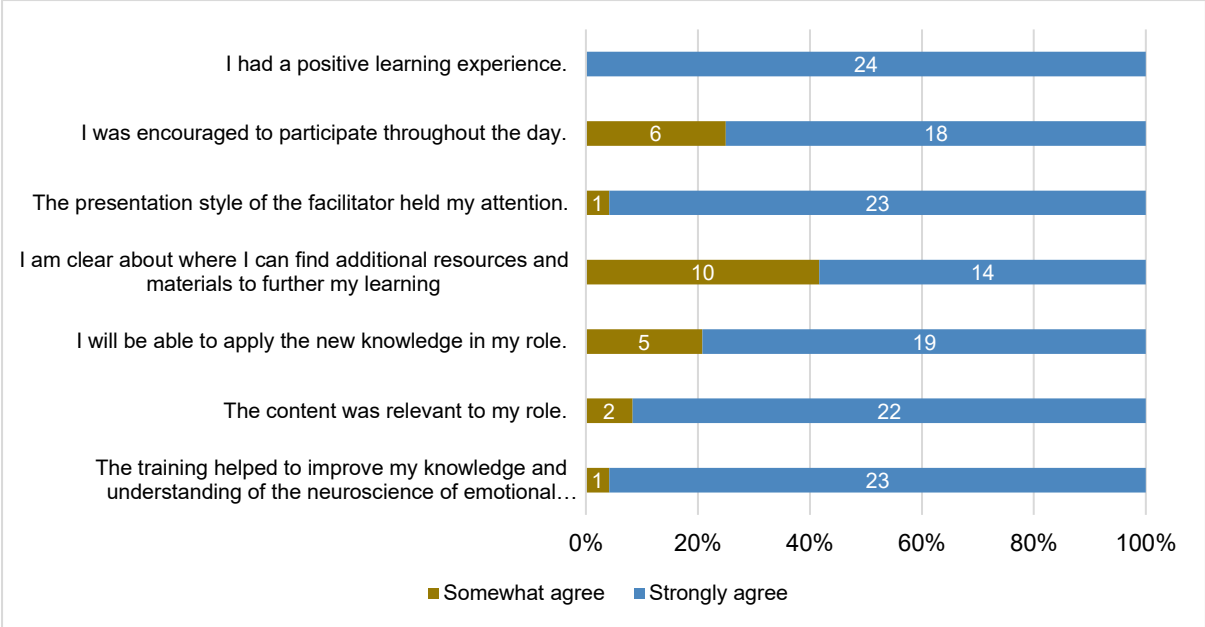
All 24 teachers who took part in the Emotional Me training completed the online survey. We received:

- 24 responses after Day 1 – 18 primary and 6 secondary school teachers / staff.
- 23 responses after Day 2– 17 primary and 6 secondary school teachers / staff.

After both Day 1 and Day 2, all respondents agreed that they would recommend the Emotional Me training to other teachers.

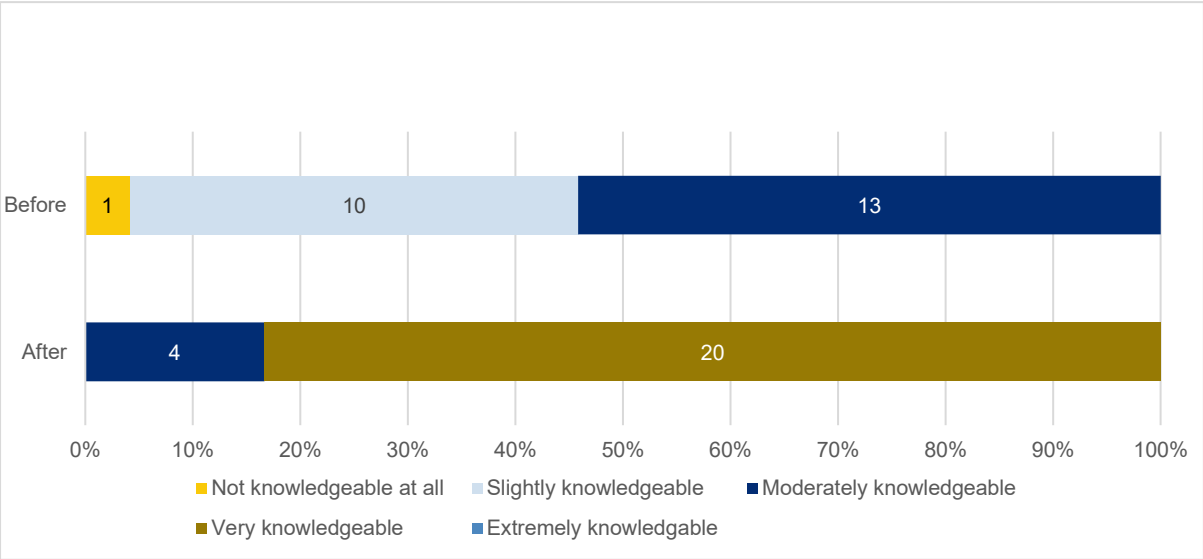
Day 1 of the training focused on the underpinning concepts and neuroscience behind Emotional Me, while Day 2 covered the content and how to deliver the lessons to children. All participants were very positive about both the content and the delivery – style and method – of the training after Day 1 (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Feedback about content and delivery after Day 1 (N = 24)



All participants reported an increase in their understanding of the neuroscience of emotional regulation as a result of the Day 1 training (Figure 5).

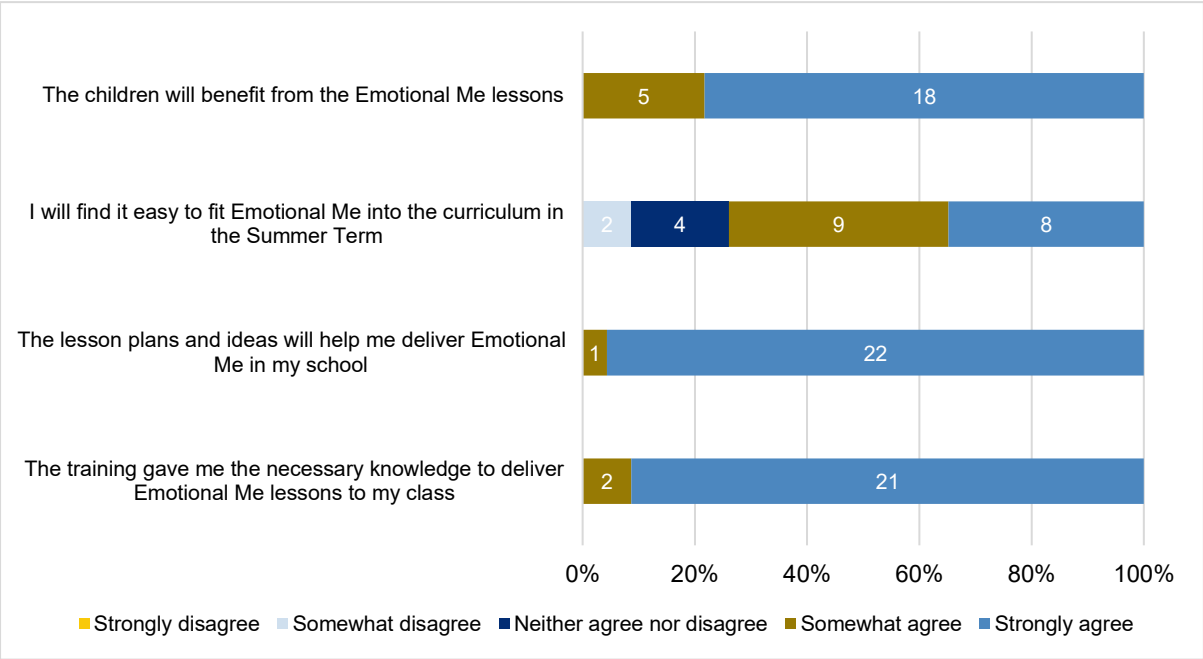
Figure 5: Self-reported knowledge of neuroscience of emotional regulation before and after the Day 1 training (N = 24)



When asked about the value they placed on the content of Day 1, participants found most useful topics related to extending their knowledge base, including learning about neuroscience and developing child / young person brain function (n=10) or emotional development and emotional regulation (n=9). A sizeable minority (n=5) mentioned practical application and peer learning.

After Day 2, participants reported high levels of satisfaction with the teaching resources and confidence that they would be able to deliver Emotional Me in their schools. A minority of teachers (n = 6, 26%) indicated concerns about the timeframe and the ability to deliver the lessons before the summer holiday (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Feedback about resources and perceived self-efficacy after Day 2 (N = 23)



When asked about what they found most useful in Day 2 (open question), all participants highlighted the teaching resources, including lesson plans. These were particularly valued and were also seen to reduce the perceived burden of delivering the programme by greatly reducing the need for detailed lesson planning and preparation.

Receiving all the lesson plans. It was very clear to see how it linked to what we learned in the previous session and how to explain it in a way children will understand.

The teaching resources and explanation of the lesson. I would not be able to deliver the same quality if I needed to plan this independently.

Teachers were also asked whether they would have liked to learn (more) about specific topics. Four main areas were mentioned as useful for further learning:

1. Practical tips for delivering Emotional Me focused specifically on primary and secondary school settings.
2. Additional trauma-informed strategies to support young people.
3. Additional examples and practical tips for delivering Emotional Me in schools.
4. Strategies for approaching / delivering Emotional Me with children who have severe special educational or additional needs.

7.2. Observation of reflective practice sessions

Early experiences, including key observations and reflections on delivering Emotional Me in schools, have been summarised by topic / lesson, based on what was shared by participants during the reflective practice sessions. Generally, teachers expressed positive views about the quality and usability of resources and shared positive experiences of delivering the lessons in their schools.

Lesson 1: Emotions and neuroscience

In primary schools:

- Children were described as having been highly engaged with the scientific content (e.g. vagus nerve, Dan Siegel's hand model of the brain, vagal tone exercises).
- Breaking lessons into smaller chunks worked well and was needed. Recapping previous learning helped to reinforce pupils' understanding of the content.
- Lessons also worked well in mixed year groups (Y5–Y6).
- Visual learners benefited from activity-based approaches.
- Some teachers included additional materials for a more tailored approach, e.g. scenario writing (anonymously) in class about challenging situations helped make content more relevant to children.

In secondary schools:

- The scientific content was described as crucial to engage pupils, especially for neurodiverse pupils.
- Some teachers indicated that more depth and detail about the scientific content would have been useful for this year group.
- Some pupils were reported to have struggled to identify emotions, and the lesson as challenging for others. Teachers thought these lessons could be offered to these children as a 1:1 session.
- Flexibility to mix Y5/Y7 resources was described as useful as it allowed a more tailored approach.

Lesson 2: Nature, wellbeing & resilience

In primary schools:

- Nature walks were generally reported to have been successful but required clear planning and managing expectations (i.e. not playtime).
- Some schools made adaptations to the lesson plan due to logistical challenges (e.g. limited outdoor space).
- In several schools, particularly the more rural ones, nature was already part of daily life, so there was less novelty, but children had still found it valuable.

In secondary schools:

- The nature walk was very popular, and one teacher reported that it had led to ideas like taking “brain breaks.”
- Some Year 7 pupils had not made a previous connection between nature and mental health due to their familiarity with it (e.g. farm life), but the lesson had helped to introduce a new perspective.
- Flexibility in delivery was key because some schools have limited access to outside space.

Lesson 3: Human connections and relationships

In primary schools:

- Children were reported to have seemed to enjoy the “people need people” video and poems.
- Teachers found the ‘connected relationships’ exercise to have been effective in that it had inspired insightful discussions on how friendship / social networks may change over time.
- Teachers had made adaptations for children with additional needs, such as one-to-one delivery.

In secondary schools

- The ‘connected relationships’ exercise was also well received by pupils in Year 7.
- The experience of delivering this lesson highlighted the importance of ongoing support to pupils’ emotional literacy development.

7.3. Children’s views and experiences of Emotional Me

Nine schools returned children’s questionnaires, and this included two out of the three secondary schools and seven out of the 15 primary schools. One of the secondary schools returned two sets of questionnaires: one after the summer term and one in the autumn, when Emotional Me was delivered again, in a new Year 7 group.

The response rate was 45%, which is considered adequate for similar surveys.

A total of 388 questionnaires were returned, and the breakdown by type of school is presented in Table 2. The responding schools were more likely to be medium-sized or smaller: their average size (for primary schools) was 156 pupils, compared to 206 for all primary schools in the pilot.

Table 2: Number of questionnaires returned, by type of school

	Primary	Secondary	Total
Questionnaires returned: Summer	176	140	316
Questionnaires returned: Autumn	-	72	72
Total:	176	212	388

This section presents an analysis of all 388 responses by type of school.

Over three quarters of the children (76% in primary and 81% in secondary school) agreed that they enjoyed the Emotional Me lessons, with approximately half agreeing ‘a bit’ and around a quarter agreeing ‘a lot’. The distribution of answers was largely similar in both primary and secondary schools; however, secondary students showed slightly higher agreement overall (agreed a lot: 25% vs. 22%; agreed a bit: 56% vs. 54%) (Figure 7 and Figure 8).

Figure 7: Primary school children’s agreement or disagreement with the statement “I enjoyed the Emotional Me lessons” (N = 176)

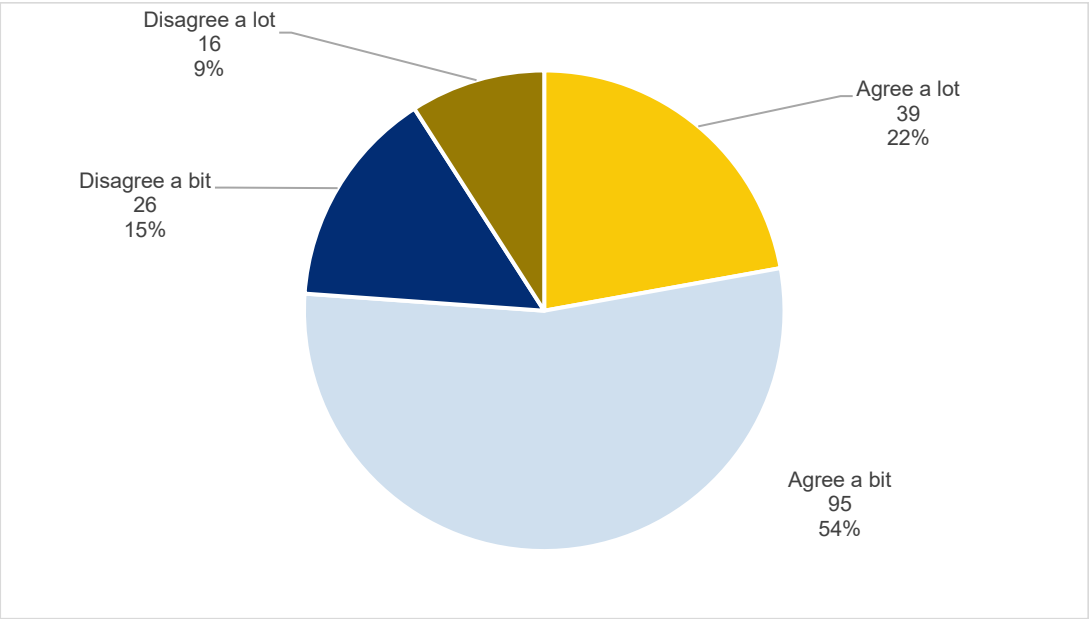
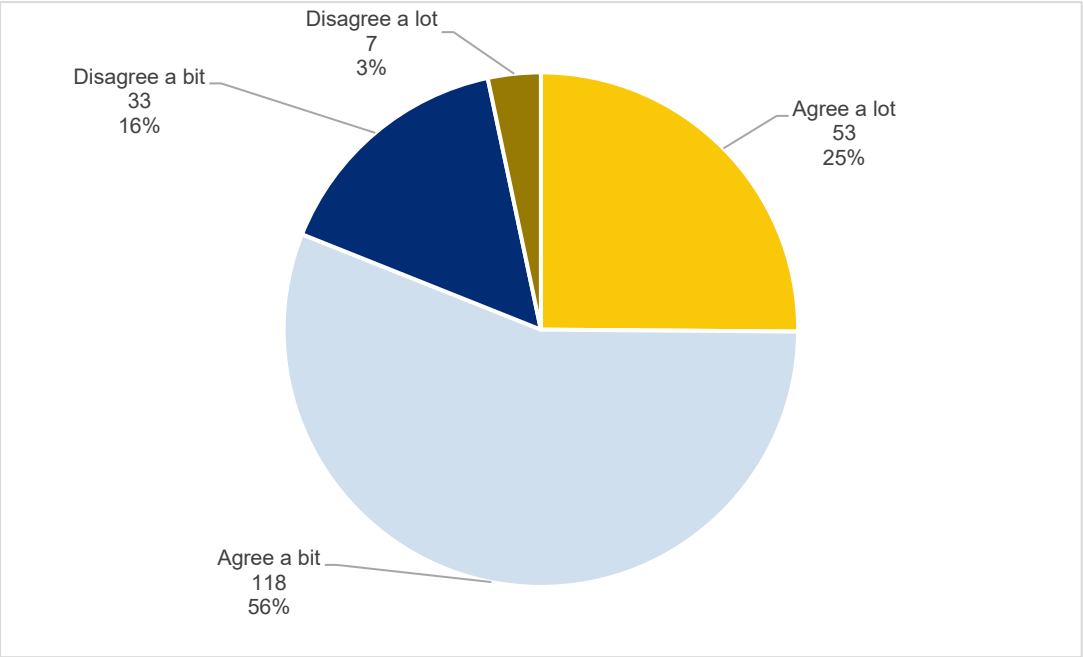


Figure 8: Secondary school children’s agreement or disagreement with the statement “I enjoyed the Emotional Me lessons” (N = 211)



Children were asked about their favourite part of the lessons as an open-ended question. Responses were coded into seven thematic categories (Table 3).

Table 3: Favourite part of the Emotional Me lessons

	Primary		Secondary	
	N	%	N	%
Nature and outdoor wellbeing activities	45	31	41	26
Learning about the brain and emotions	42	29	58	36
Exploring relationships	26	18	25	16
General positive feedback	18	13	15	9
General negative feedback	6	4	10	6
Videos	5	3	8	5
Other	1	1	9	6

Note: some responses were coded into multiple categories, therefore columns do not add up to the total number of responses or 100%

Among primary school children, learning about nature and outdoor wellbeing, and the brain and emotions were similarly popular: 31% and 29% indicated these as their favourite part. In secondary schools, learning about the brain and emotions was the most popular topic (36%), followed by nature and outdoor wellbeing (26%). However,

this difference needs to be interpreted with caution as delivery of the nature lesson likely varied between the two settings. Children also enjoyed exploring relationships, with 18% (primary) and 16% (secondary) pupils indicating this as their favourite part. Table 4 presents some illustrative quotes for each thematic category.

Table 4: Illustrative quotes for thematic categories – “favourite part”

	Primary	Secondary
Nature and outdoor wellbeing activities	<i>My favourite part was when we got to go outside and connected with nature.</i>	<i>Going outside and spending time in the nature and with wildlife.</i>
Learning about the brain and emotions	<i>Knowing about the vagus nerve and how to calm yourself if you flip your lid.</i>	<i>The science/psychology behind it/survival instincts.</i>
Exploring relationships	<i>My favourite was My Net because I liked the creativity you can put in, and it helped me learn how many people I can talk to with these emotions.</i>	<i>Listing names of people I can talk to.</i>
General positive feedback	<i>There are helpful things, and we learned them in a fun good way :).</i>	<i>The useful tips and fun activities.</i>
General negative feedback	<i>Nothing.</i>	<i>Nothing.</i>
Videos	<i>Watching the videos because it helped me learn a lot.</i>	<i>Watching the videos.</i>
Other	<i>Missing a real lesson.</i>	<i>Not writing a lot.</i>

A high proportion of children said that they learned useful things in the Emotional Me lessons, and the patterns were similar across types of school (76% agreed a lot or a bit in primary schools and 82% in secondary schools). However, while secondary students showed slightly higher agreement overall, the share of those agreeing “a lot” was higher in primary schools (32% vs. 27%) (see Figure 9 and 10).

Figure 9: Primary school children’s agreement or disagreement with the statement “I learned useful things” (N = 176)

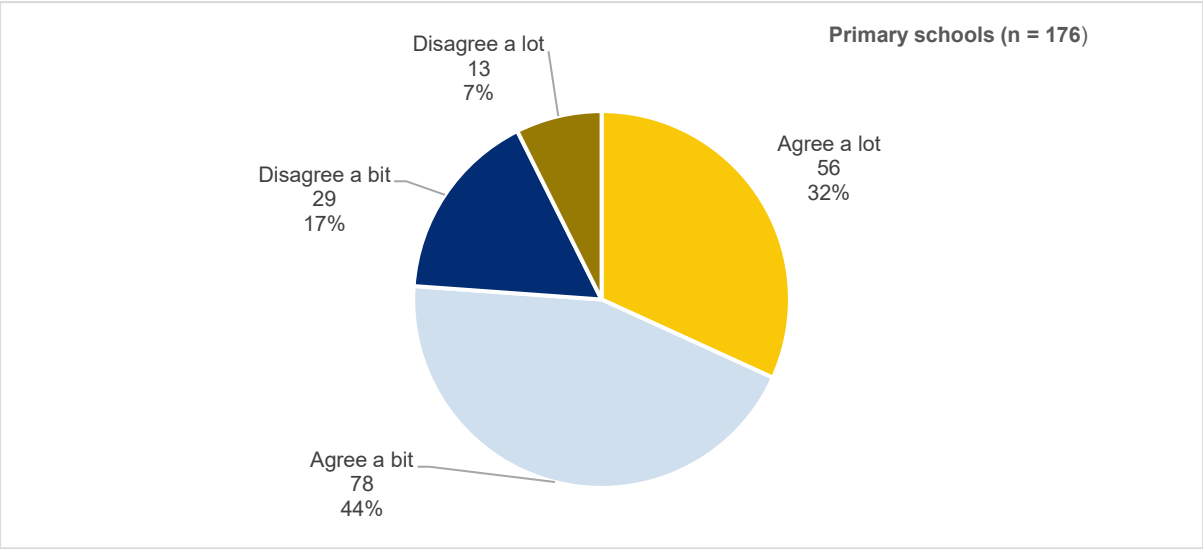
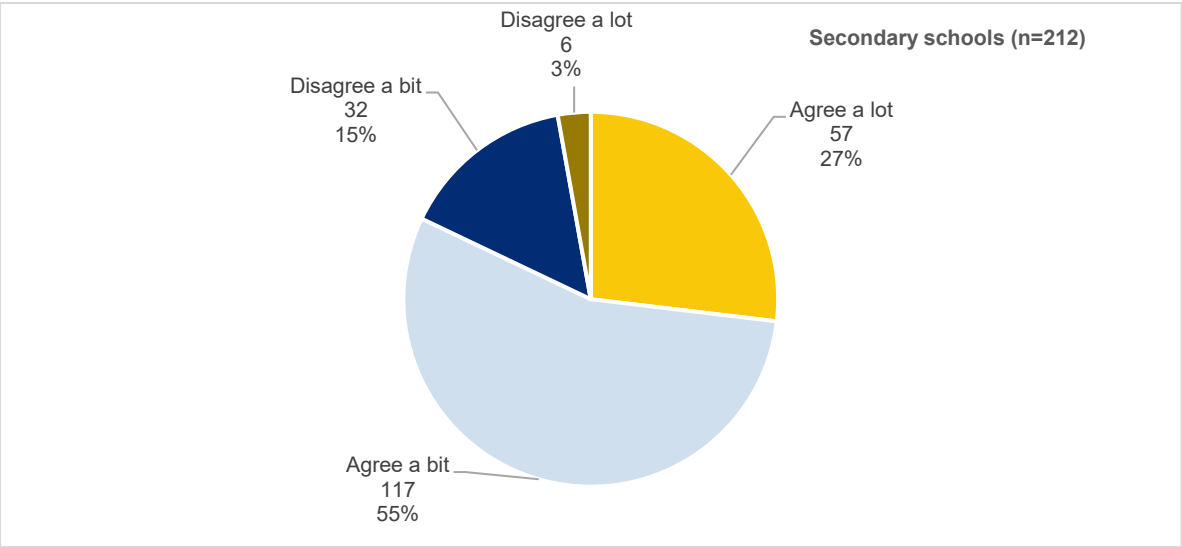


Figure 10: Secondary school children’s agreement or disagreement with the statement “I learned useful things” (N = 212)



Children were asked to share one thing they learned as an open-ended question. Responses were coded into seven thematic categories (Table 5).

Table 5: Key learning from Emotional Me reported by children

	Primary		Secondary	
	N	%	N	%
How to understand and manage emotions	69	44	72	34
Spending time in nature for wellbeing	33	21	7	3
Hand model of the brain / flipped lid	25	16	23	11
Breathing exercises	22	14	22	10
The vagus nerve	20	13	12	6
Nothing or doesn't know	15	10	11	5
Other	6	4	25	12

Note: some responses were coded into multiple categories, therefore columns do not add up to the total number of responses or 100%

The most frequent response of primary (44%) and secondary school children (34%) to a question about 'one thing I have learned' was how to better understand and manage their emotions. Pupils also frequently mentioned specific techniques they learned as part of Emotional Me in their responses (e.g. box breathing), especially in primary schools. The main difference between primary and secondary settings was regarding the connection between nature and wellbeing, with considerably fewer secondary pupils mentioning this area as 'the one thing I have learned'. However, this difference must be interpreted with caution, as the delivery of the nature lesson likely varied between primary and secondary settings. Table 6 presents some illustrative quotes for each thematic category.

Table 6: Illustrative quotes for thematic categories – “something I learned”

	Primary	Secondary
How to understand and manage emotions	<i>I have learned different words for different emotions.</i>	<i>I learned loads of new emotions.</i>
Spending time in nature for wellbeing	<i>Going outside helps you calm down.</i>	<i>Go out and do something active when you're stressed.</i>
Hand model of the brain / flipped lid	<i>Hand model of the brain and how our brain works.</i>	<i>How I can release myself when flipping my lid.</i>

	Primary	Secondary
Breathing exercises	<i>I will use the different ways to calm my vagus nerve e.g. box breathing.</i>	<i>I learned how to control my breathing to calm me down.</i>
The vagus nerve	<i>That sport can help calm the vagus nerve.</i>	<i>About the vagus nerve and what it does.</i>
Nothing or doesn't know	<i>Nothing but it was fun.</i>	<i>If I'm honest I won't.</i>
Other	<i>People need people.</i>	<i>Being kind to each other.</i>

Children were also asked whether they supported the delivery of Emotional Me lessons in other schools in Wiltshire. The majority agreed, either “a lot” (primary: 45%; secondary: 36%) or “a bit” (primary: 31%; secondary: 44%). Approximately one quarter of primary pupils (24%) and one fifth of secondary pupils (20%) disagreed (Figure 11 and 12).

These patterns align with the overall positive sentiment expressed toward the programme (e.g., enjoyment, useful learning). However, the results must be interpreted with caution, as we were not able to explore through this evaluation what were the underlying reasons for pupils’ responses.

Figure 11: Primary school children’s agreement or disagreement with the statement “other schools should do Emotional Me” (N = 176)

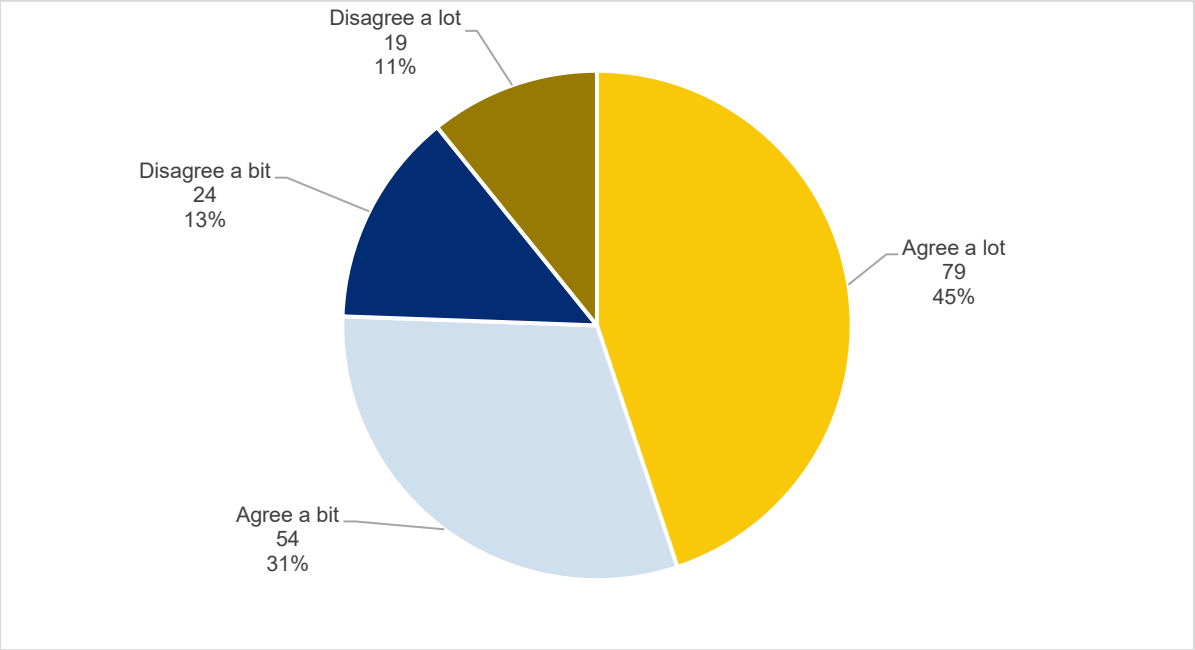
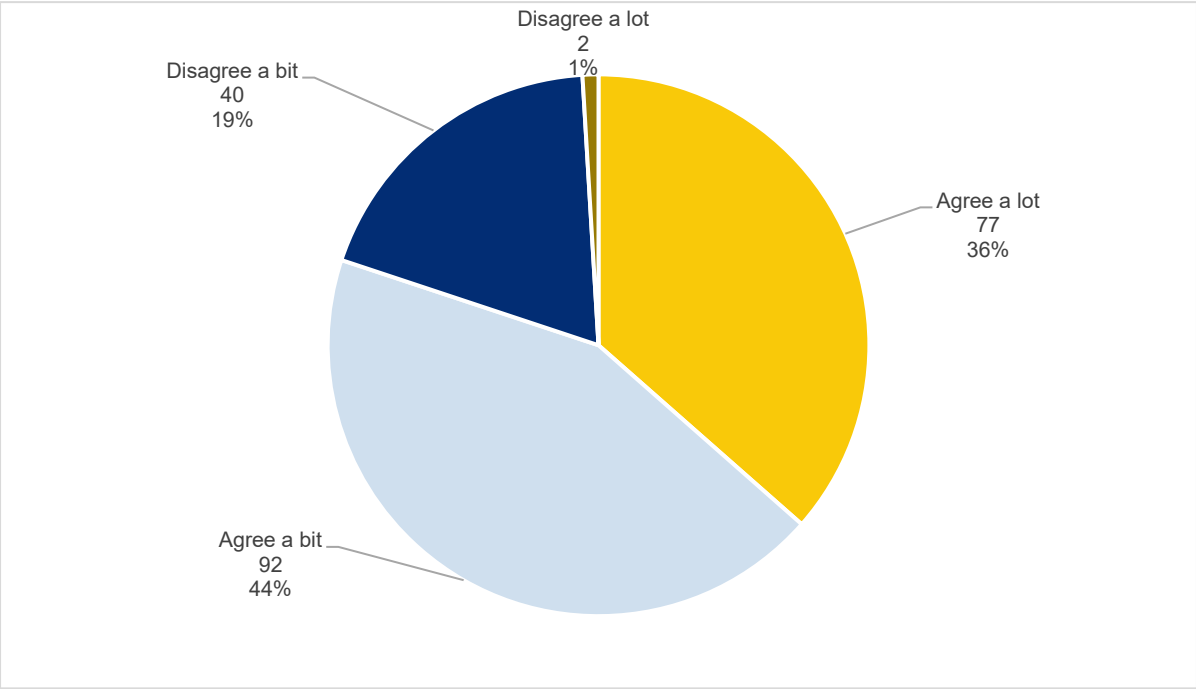


Figure 12: Secondary school children’s agreement or disagreement with the statement “other schools should do Emotional Me” (N = 212)



7.4. Stakeholder interviews

All five members of the project steering group were invited to semi-structured interviews. Stakeholders comprised both Wiltshire council staff from Public Health and Education who had commissioned the programme and KCA staff who had designed and delivered it, so all had been closely involved with the programme. One stakeholder gave their views via email rather than interview. Interviews took place in August 2025.

7.4.1. What was the thinking behind the Emotional Me Pilot?

All stakeholders viewed the programme as an important initiative aiming to help address issues of pupil emotional wellbeing which were an increasing challenge for both children and schools:

We all know the statistics, especially since COVID and there's a lot of, you know, disconnection, there's a lot of children who were finding it really hard to attend school and so we're sort of working from the school end and then it was kind of how can we also support children in having more tools to be able to cope with transitions and changes

Another said:

Supporting schools to further consider how they can best share key messages in relation to how children understand their emotions, in supporting emotional resilience and in the importance of the impact of relationships with schools and parents is really important, particularly in relation to the impact of mental health and emotional barriers to school attendance.

Pupil well-being surveys which had previously been administered in Wiltshire schools were mentioned as part of the evidence base for this programme, and it was identified by stakeholders that something more in-depth was needed to complement the PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic education) curriculum and existing programmes:

Initially the thinking behind it was there's there are already kind of emotional literacy courses out there for teachers that allow them to understand better to sort of talk and coach children when they're ... becoming dysregulated. And I think the idea of emotional me was much more about giving them structured lessons that they could use pre-emptively with children to help them to understand their emotions in a more in a more structured way [...] the content that we teach to adults is quite complicated, is quite complex and it goes into some quite detailed neuroscience. The idea was to put something in place that you could use in a classroom.

The Five to Thrive programme was another important influence on the development of Emotional Me. For Wiltshire Council, the opportunity to extend and further embed attachment aware and trauma informed practice was attractive:

...there is a benefit to everyone understanding [...] because if we have more moment-to-moment attuned connections, then we will all be in a better place and young people will be in a better place

Whilst for KCA, their experience providing Five to Thrive meant they had considered what else might be of value to complement their existing offer:

Five to thrive is like the flowerpot. And then the flowers that grow out of it, the courses that we deliver.

An earlier multi-agency self-harm summit in Wiltshire highlighting research evidence that, for some children, self-harm was a way of regulating their emotions had also informed the thinking of commissioners, prompting discussion about how to equip children with more positive coping strategies.

To most stakeholders the choice of a schools-based programme was obvious, and other options to address the underlying concern, such as a programme focused on parents, had not been considered. Teachers were seen as ideally placed to deliver the programme, because of their teaching skills and their relationships with children:

...teachers have got so much skill and knowledge and understanding already to be able to have those sensitive conversations and to be able to really link with what does that mean in real life.

The classroom was considered to provide a 'captive audience' and to facilitate more consistent delivery. Children learning alongside their peer group was also considered to be potentially beneficial.

Whilst the benefit of a schools-based programme was largely taken for granted amongst stakeholders, there had been challenge and critical thinking in designing the programme. For example, the idea of a 'train the trainer' approach had been considered at an early stage but rejected because not all teachers would have capacity or be confident to train their colleagues, and it felt premature when Emotional Me had not yet been tried and tested to jump straight to a cascade approach.

I was curious because I felt like we hadn't really tested the concept yet to be moving to a train the trainer model, we didn't really know whether actually the content...we didn't have feedback on that yet

Once it was decided to conduct a more focused pilot, pragmatic decisions were described as having been taken about which age groups to target and the number of lessons.

Originally, I can't remember how many [lessons] we said, but it was far more probably two or three times as many [lessons] as what we've actually ended up with. And again, that's all down to pragmatism. Speaking to the schools, listening to the feedback and them saying we can't fit this into an already busy term, a busy curriculum. Things need to be scaled back to make them manageable, workable for classroom teachers. So, there's been compromises all the way through...primarily through the feedback from schools.

7.4.2. What were the anticipated benefits of the programme?

Stakeholders mentioned a variety of outcomes they were hoping to see from Emotional Me. For some, the emphasis was on shorter-term impact such as teachers having confidence in delivering the material, or children enjoying the lessons, whilst others took it a step further and talked about children and teachers internalising the learning and making use of it:

I'd hoped to see children who had better communication skills when it comes to their thoughts, feelings and emotions, and for them to have the confidence to be able to talk about those things with the people around them... So if they're feeling a little bit overwhelmed to recognise that as overwhelm and to have tools including reaching out to those, they've got good relationships with to be able to work through that.

I'd be hoping they say ...the training was really insightful and the resources were really helpful in implementing the programme in the class, and... I'd also hope they'd be saying things like... I've really reflected in it in my broader role in teaching and I'm actually starting to... think about [applying it] in other parts of my life.

Another stakeholder hoped to see more measurable longer-term outcomes:

attendance and children feeling able and capable and wanting to attend school [and]

teachers noticing that they're... spending, less time having to help children to self-regulate, because actually they've learned the skills to be able to do that for themselves and notice what's happening inside them.

While these intended outcomes varied in type and timescale, they were all consistent with one another and perhaps reflected whether interviewees were thinking specifically of what the pilot could achieve, or more broadly about the potential of the programme.

7.4.3. What has gone well?

Stakeholders were pleased with how the training sessions had gone and the initial feedback from the teacher survey responses:

Well, the training seems to have been well received, and I think we have developed good working group relationships

The size of the cohorts for the training (around 12 per day) was considered by a KCA stakeholder to have been 'perfect'.

There was some relief that the compressed timescale for delivery had not proved problematic and, in fact, may have been beneficial:

I've been really surprised at the number that I haven't just delivered one lesson, but they've delivered all the lessons over the space of two or three weeks. It's,

it's probably surpassed my expectations actually in terms of what could be achieved before the summer holidays.

Stakeholders agreed that ideally the programme would be delivered earlier in the school year, but learning from the pilot, they would retain a short gap between training and classroom delivery.

Another aspect which stakeholders observed had gone well had been good teamwork underpinned by excellent project management and communication. The role of education colleagues from Wiltshire Council in engaging with schools was seen as particularly important:

The collaboration between different departments, that's one of the one of the highlights for me. I think the communication has been good...And I think that everybody's been quite respectful of others' priorities and made sure that they can all, you know, everyone's working very well together.

7.4.4. What could have gone better?

Schools were given discretion about how best to disseminate the resources for parents, Stakeholders recognised that this had been given less emphasis than other aspects and anticipated that parental engagement with the programme might be limited:

I think the parents' side of things probably... is an area that we could look to develop further. That was probably the one area that because there was a lot of focus on quite understandably on schools, on training, on classroom teachers, on lesson plans.

7.4.5. Key learning so far

Subject to the evaluation and based on their own experience, stakeholders would be keen to see Emotional Me developed and extended to more schools and year groups.

In interview, stakeholders highlighted a range of ways in which programme delivery might be further explored e.g. for roll out in other settings or other year groups. These included:

- The benefits of a team approach to delivery of the pilot, bringing together not just people from different departments (e.g. Education, Public Health), but also complementary skill sets, including both creative thinkers and people with strong implementation skills.
- Engagement with schools, considered so vital that education colleagues should continue to be involved in further roll-out e.g. to leverage their relationships with schools and obtain buy-in.

- The protected time that Day 2 of the training gives for teachers to plan their lessons was considered very important and valued by teachers.
- The importance of mapping the school year and giving schools plenty of time to plan.

I think it worked well – being a pilot – that it was all quite quick, fast pace. We're doing this. It's in this window of opportunity and it happened in that kind of blanket of time. But if we were to expand that or deliver it to more schools, I think it would need to be more 'this is coming.'

There was also a specific suggestion to consider broadening the invitation for Day 1 to include a wide group of staff such as head teachers and teaching assistants but to keep Day 2 focused on the teachers who would be delivering the lessons.

7.5. Teacher Interviews

All the teachers who had been trained to deliver Emotional Me in this initial cohort were invited to take part in an online semi-structured interview. Teachers were offered a range of dates and interviews were rescheduled when necessary to accommodate other pressures, such as covering for absent colleagues or dealing with urgent issues.

Seven teachers from six schools volunteered to be interviewed, which was a reasonable response given workloads. The interviewee group comprised one secondary teacher and six primary teachers.

Interviews were conducted in October and November 2025, approximately five months after completing the training and, in most instances, several months after delivery of the lessons.

7.5.1. Overall views

Overall, the teachers were very positive about the Emotional Me programme. All had delivered the lessons, and some were already repeating them, or planning to do so later in this academic year. Many felt Emotional Me fitted well with their school's priorities and ethos, but contributed something distinctive to the standard PSHE curriculum or other programmes their school delivered:

I thought it was a really good initiative. I thought it was a really interesting concept. And I think that, if children...are able to access...those ideas about learning about themselves and why they do something, it is always of a benefit to them because they don't feel different.... For lots of our children, they feel like I'm the only one with anxiety. I'm the only person feeling like this. Why am I feeling like this? And giving them the answers to those questions is always

something that is good to do so that that was why I thought it was a good project to do

7.5.2. Experience of training and reflective practice sessions

All teacher interviewees were very positive about the quality of the training they received and valued the reflective practice sessions:

Thought it was excellent, thought it was really, really good. I thought the training was really useful, came back learning things, which is always great as teachers and educationalists. It's nice to come back and actually have something new. I thought the science was really good about it. I thought the training time afterwards was really good as well.

The fact that the KCA trainer had a teaching background was valued:

I think it was very well delivered. X was great because [they'd] had experience as a teacher, but also as a SENCO. I think [they] really...explained things well and actually was brilliant at allowing us to ask questions as well.

One primary teacher particularly enjoyed the opportunity to network with colleagues from the secondary phase, and would have liked more secondary school teachers to be there so that everyone had the opportunity to interact across Key Stages:

I liked it that it was people from primary and secondary because I think it was year five and year seven, wasn't it? Yeah. So I found it useful. Being able to talk with colleagues from secondary as well and kind of sharing experiences of like, you know what it's like for them. I also liked the focus on Year 5 because, at my school in particular, it feels like the Year 6 is doing an awful lot in terms of preparation for secondary and things like that but the Year 5 probably don't do much about moving up to Year 6.

7.5.3. Teachers' experiences of the Emotional Me lessons they led in schools

All but one of the interviewees said that the Emotional Me lessons had gone well, and many referred to the content, giving examples of activities children had particularly seemed to have enjoyed:

I think the activities for the children were definitely the right level for Year 5. But I particularly remember the class liking the kind of creative things, so one where they kind of created a kind of mind map of people that were important in their lives... Often I think with Year 5 you're looking at a very ...wide range of abilities. So you're thinking about tailoring it to suit all the needs. But that kind

of activity was very open-ended. So you got all sorts of different outcomes, and some children did it in a very arty way. Some children just wrote. So I really liked that about it.

The secondary teacher participating in an interview thought the Year 7 resources were also age-appropriate and could also work with older children. She had already tested out the materials with a Year 10 group:

With the Year 10s, I explained the premise of it to them and explained what it was for and I said if you were in Year 7, how helpful would you have found this? How helpful did you find it now, and you know some of the girls particularly were really positive, they really like the brain like hands demonstration thing. And that was really cool.

The only exception was a primary teacher who delivered Emotional Me in a Year 4 class and observed that the pupils in that year group were not quite ready for some of the materials. However, they also noted that these pupils ultimately took some useful learning from the lessons.

I really enjoyed teaching it, I think because it was a Year 4 class of children at times they found it, they were didn't always understand why we were doing it. They were like, why are we learning about this? Because it felt so different to them from everything else that we do in school... I think it almost, it felt too grown up for them in a way.

Some teachers had followed the original lesson plans closely, whereas others had adapted them to fit the needs of their class. Examples of adaptations included:

- Spreading the content of the three planned lessons over four or five lessons.

We used the majority of the materials that were given to us. We just broke the lessons down because we felt that they were too big. The first lesson we broke into two

- Adding in extra material.

I added in a bit about non-verbal skills and how our body and our gestures can also communicate to other people what we're thinking and feeling. And then we watched a little Pingu clip because it doesn't have any actual words. But you can work out quite clearly what's happening and what people are feeling because of what the characters are doing.

- Adding extra exercises.

I added in a little activity about practising active listening and that I thought was really useful as well because they had one person was the speaker, one person was the listener and then the other person was the assessor of, like, how well they were listening to the person speaking. So the person speaking would tell them about a special event or a holiday, something very memorable. And then they kind of give gave feedback on the different elements of active listening. And I don't think that was in the original PowerPoint.

There had also been some adaptation in terms of year groups because some schools had mixed Year 5 and 6 classes. One teacher with a mixed class thought she would run the lessons with the whole group again next year, as she thought the Year 6 children would benefit from repeating the lessons, although she would change the activities for them. Another teacher with a mixed year group would prefer to find a way to get all the Year 5s together for the lessons next time.

All those who mentioned adaptations felt that these had worked and there were no examples given of adaptations that had not worked well.

7.5.4. Quality of Resources

All teachers we interviewed were very positive about the resources they were provided by KCA:

The resources that were provided were fantastic. I think a lot of teachers go on training courses where the resources are quite tricky and take up a lot of time, whereas this was, it was all there. You know, I've had to do a few tweaks, but not many.

Some teachers who were very impressed with the resources suggested small ways in which they could be even easier to use, for example:

- To have separate slide decks for each Year group (the Year 5 and 7 slides were combined in a single file, but colour coded).
- To separate out the training slides from the teaching slides, so that the latter were ready to use with all the videos embedded.

7.5.5. Parent Engagement

Teachers thought the resources – video presentations – for parents looked good. However, they reported that actual engagement from parents was low. One teacher commented that she could see from her system that no-one had visited the links. Others were not sure whether parents had accessed them:

What we did was we sent out a letter to all the parents and basically let them know that we'd uploaded it all to the school website. So everything was on the school website, that they would be able to access, but we didn't specifically send anything out to them. We sent them the initial letter saying we're doing this. Unfortunately, I don't know how many did go on to it, but I mean it's still there now for them to use if they would like to

Several teachers emphasised that it was very difficult for parents to engage because they were so busy and often overloaded with information:

No, I felt that that was, it was lovely...and wonderful, but I think I mean, our parents are quite engaged with school, but I think asking them to do something after the children have perhaps gone home and I know what it's like as a parent myself, it's sort of finding the time to do those things. I didn't have anybody ask any questions. You know, some of them would say, "oh, yeah, that emotional me thing. Yeah. I haven't had a chance to look at it yet. I will do." But ... my personal opinion, I didn't feel like it was necessary for them.

Teachers were sceptical that face to face sessions would have had better take up because parents have other priorities or commitments. One teacher suggested that a better way would be to have targeted conversations at parents' evenings with individual parents who might benefit.

An important exception to the overall view that parents were not motivated to engage was noted by one teacher who observed that adoptive parents did engage and did find the materials useful:

those parents particularly found it really, really useful. They found it really useful ...because obviously they're dealing with emotional dysregulation. They're dealing with those things, and they were all over it, you know, and...they took the programme home, and they talked about it with their child, and it was something that they are still coming back to

7.5.6. Early Signs of Impact

The teachers who were interviewed agreed that it was too early to expect to see changes in children's wellbeing or behaviour. It was also hard for teachers to comment on this because most of the children had transferred to secondary schools and all had changed year.

However, one teacher had observed children using some of the language and techniques they had been taught:

...in my tutor group I've noticed that some of my [students] have said, oh, that kid flipped his lid or, you know, when you flip your lid you can do XY and Z to try and calm yourself down. So that's been quite nice.

Whilst another thought it had helped some children to talk about their emotions differently:

During the time I was doing it and then up to the end of the year, I definitely thought it helped the children to be more aware of their feelings and being a bit more able to talk about...what a problem was or maybe where it had come from.

One teacher mentioned that children were talking about the vagus nerve and how to calm down but she had not noticed any difference yet:

In terms of them understanding themselves and their own emotions, there's nothing that's come out just yet, and I think it might be more kind of on a case by case when they, you know, have a situation that presents where they may be a bit more in 'flipped lid'.

Some teachers noted the broader impact of the training on their professional skills:

There were so many moments within the training where they would be talking about why children ... might be behaving this way and it just made so much sense. [...] It helped me to understand them better and learn about what's going on for them internally to be causing the behaviour that we were seeing. So just from a professional view, I feel like it really developed my understanding of the more complex behaviours I was seeing.

7.5.7. Future Plans

All but one of the teachers were planning to run the lessons again this academic year, and some had already done so:

This term, I've actually put it as part of our scheme of work. So I've taught three lessons to three separate year seven classes using the resources that that they gave us from KCA

Some had thought about how the learning could be taken forward more broadly across the whole school, including within their development plans:

Well, actually...since we've done the five to thrive training and the emotional me training, we've actually put that into our school development plan for this year that we really want to sort of build that emotional understanding literacy, you know, resilience in pupils, so we've put it as one of our targets for our school development plan.

Several of the teachers interviewed for this evaluation would like to see Emotional Me offered to all Year groups:

So, we will, yeah...the idea will be to continue to do it. I mean, we would be very interested if Wiltshire were to kind of carry on and think about other year groups adopting that as well. You know, I think it would be something that I believe would be useful as an ongoing programme rather than something that is just a one off

A minority view was that the programme could be delivered across more lessons over a longer period of time:

I feel like it's something we should do all year. ...three lessons is wonderful [...] I think actually having it where you could maybe space that over the year would be wonderful. I'm definitely going to deliver the lessons again. Unless we get more and I'd be so grateful, but it's definitely something that we will be doing as part of our whole school

7.6. Feedback from schools not represented in the interviews

It is important to bear in mind that those teachers who volunteered to be interviewed may well have been those who found the programme most useful and who were keenest to 'champion' it. To make sure that all schools had the opportunity to share their views about the programme, we distributed a very brief online 'follow on' questionnaire to all teachers who had taken part in the training but did not volunteer for an interview.

Of the four schools that responded to the survey (all primary phase), two confirmed that Emotional Me had been delivered in their school, whilst two had not delivered it. One of the schools that had not delivered the programme gave the reason as:

Time, lack of staff to deliver the service.

Of the two schools that had delivered the programme one added no further comments, but the other gave very positive feedback, consistent with the tenor of the teacher interviews:

A really good programme that we are going to incorporate into our existing PSHE scheme for Year 5. The lessons on the science behind emotions and the session on face-to-face contacts was really useful.

A really positive and useful pilot to be involved in. Thank you.

Although these four responses are limited, they confirm that a proportion of schools participating in the pilot training did not subsequently deliver the Emotional Me lessons, although their exact number is not known, they represent a minority of settings involved in the pilot.

This lack of delivery appears to be due to capacity limitations, as there was no indication of concern or dissatisfaction with the content of KCA training. Furthermore, the data suggests that a school's decision not to volunteer for an interview should not be interpreted as a lack of endorsement for Emotional Me.

8. Limitations of this pilot evaluation

Participation in Emotional Me was voluntary, and it is likely that the schools taking up the offer were those most likely to see the value of the programme. Similarly, the most enthusiastic participants may have been more likely to implement the programme in the summer term. This is a common limitation in similar pilots.

Children's views on the programme were only sought via self-completion questionnaires administered close in time to the lessons they were being asked about. This method is less suitable for some types of special educational need, or for some children for whom English is additional language. The questionnaires were administered in the classroom under teacher supervision which may have influenced the results, and children's answers may have been influenced by their peers.

The evaluation took place at a formative stage, making it very early to look for measurable outcomes. Nevertheless, a formal impact evaluation would be highly resource-intensive due to the programme's characteristics, namely:

- Emotional Me embedded in schools and likely form part of a wider curriculum for emotional wellbeing and resilience.
- It is delivered during a period of natural emotional maturation in children.

These factors combine to make it challenging isolating the direct impact of Emotional Me on children's emotional wellbeing and resilience.

9. Conclusions and recommendations

Our mixed-methods evaluation provided triangulated evidence concerning the feasibility and acceptability of the Emotional Me programme across diverse primary and secondary school settings in Wiltshire.

The pilot was successfully implemented as planned in participating schools, with most settings – at least 12 of the 18 schools who took part in the pilot – delivering Emotional Me to pupils in the summer term. This suggests that the programme fits well into the school environment.

Emotional Me appears well-aligned with schools' and stakeholders' existing priorities and ambitions for fostering children's emotional health and wellbeing. This promotes sustainability and buy-in from leadership both within the Council and schools.

Teachers reported high levels of understanding regarding the programme's content and its intended delivery methodology. The teaching and learning resources were particularly valued for their quality and ease of use, significantly reducing preparation time for teachers, and therefore barriers to implementation.

Teachers also appreciated the flexibility of the resources, allowing them to effectively adapt lessons to meet the specific needs of their classes or year groups.

Emotional Me is seen to complement the existing array of emotional wellbeing and trauma-informed resources already in use by schools (e.g., Five to Thrive, ELSA). Furthermore, the programme is viewed as complementing / enhancing the PSHE curriculum as well.

Both teachers and children reported highly positive views of the programme, describing it as fun, engaging, and age appropriate.

Initial evidence regarding the effectiveness of Emotional Me is emerging.

Based on the findings from the feasibility and acceptability evaluation, a wider roll-out of the programme across Wiltshire could be considered.

For any future roll-out, the following programme refinements could be considered:

- Parent resources: while these resources were deemed appropriate, parental engagement was low. We recommend exploring with parents different ways to disseminate resources. We would also recommend exploring the benefits of a more targeted approach to engagement with parents for whom the programme might be especially salient, including foster carers and adoptive parents.
- Cohorts: the resources piloted were developed with Year 5 and Year 7 children in mind. Although the evaluation found a strong indication that the resources are also appropriate for other year groups, particularly slightly older children, there was some evidence that they were less suitable for younger children. It is understood that resources for other year groups have already been developed. We recommend offering clear guidance on year group readiness or offering additional adaptations or resources for teachers.

- Children with additional needs: findings from the evaluation suggest that children with additional needs engage well with Emotional Me; but they might require adaptations. The resource pack could be expanded to include more ideas and practical examples to support teachers to make adaptations for children with different needs.

Finally, we recommend that any future roll-out includes structured monitoring to capture data on programme take-up, engagement levels, and resource feedback, ensuring a cycle of continuous refinement.

Annexe 1: Emotional Me logic model

What is the problem/what needs to change? (rationale)	What do we need to do to effect change?	What would be the short-term outcomes?	What would be the medium and longer-term outcomes?
In Wiltshire, CYP emotional wellbeing is a priority area, and there is an aim to reduce self-harm rates There is evidence that supporting young people to build emotional resilience will positively impact their mental wellbeing throughout life Children's brains and nervous systems are shaped by the quality of their relationships. Safe, consistent relationships with trusted adults support healing from trauma and promote learning. Adults can change their practice with the right knowledge, support, and leadership. A whole-school approach is necessary for sustainable change.	We need to support building young people's emotional resilience, recognising the importance of an attuned adults' role in this We need to support further embedding relational approaches among adults supporting CYP Emotional Me is a programme which aims to promote emotional resilience in CYP through improving knowledge around underpinning neuroscience and providing practical opportunities for young people and adults to engage meaningfully. Emotional Me will be piloted in up to 22 schools in Wiltshire with pupils in years 5 and 7 (aged 9-10 and 11-12). It will involve: 2.5 full day training days for teachers of the year groups identified 3 x sessions for CYP delivered by the trained teachers 3 Parent/Carer sessions (interactive video resources) - Supported by an Emotional Me journal for CYP and adults	CYP are supported to develop their emotional literacy Practitioners, parents/carers and CYP are supported to further understand how to support healthy brain development and maintenance Teachers and parents/carers feel empowered to support young people in their emotional literacy Children begin to experience school as a safe, predictable environment. Adults in school settings gain understanding of attachment and trauma-informed principles. Staff begin to use relational approaches consistently across the school day.	CYP have good attachment with responsive adults A relational approach is further embedded in practice. Children feel psychologically and physically safe at school. Students show increased resilience, self-esteem, and ability to manage stress. Adults respond to behaviour with understanding, consistency, and compassion. Stronger, more consistent adult-child relationships are established and maintained. Children and young people develop secure, trusting relationships with adults in school settings. Improved mental well-being and emotional regulation in students. Improved academic engagement and attainment.

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