

Juniper Hill School – Life Skills Curriculum September 2026
Knowledge & Skills Overview Document

Topic: Empathy, kindness and understanding others (Juniper Hill School’s own unique topic)

In this unit, children will develop empathy by learning to understand and appreciate the thoughts, feelings and experiences of other people. They will explore the importance of listening carefully, showing genuine interest in others, and recognising how kindness and compassion can have a positive impact on wellbeing. Pupils will learn how to avoid making judgements, challenge assumptions and consider situations from different perspectives, including the experiences of people facing difficulties such as homelessness. Through discussion, reflection and acts of kindness, children will develop the skills to build positive relationships, show respect and care for others, and become thoughtful, compassionate members of their school and wider community.

“Empathy is now acknowledged as an essential ingredient of human wellbeing. It helps us create the human relationships that give our lives meaning, and expands our mental landscapes so we have new perspectives on the world and our own lives.”

Empathy: Why It Matters, and How to Get It, Roman Krznaric p35

Objective	Year 1	Year 3	Year 5
Lesson 1 Put yourself in someone else’s shoes Focus: Homelessness	I can imagine what it’s like to be someone else.	I can imagine what it’s like to be in someone else’s shoes. (Cognitive empathy) I can try to feel what someone else feels. (Emotional Empathy)	I can imagine what it’s like to be in someone else’s shoes. (Cognitive empathy) I can try to feel what someone else feels. (Emotional Empathy)
Lesson 2 Connect and <u>listen</u> to others.	I can look at someone and really listen to what they are saying.	I know that sometimes I just have to listen and not always talk! I understand the importance of looking at someone and giving them my undivided attention.	I understand the importance of listen without the intention of responding or judging what someone is sharing.

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Lesson 3 Connect and <u>talk to</u> people, ask them how they feel. Be interested in others.	I can show people I care about them by asking them how they feel.	I can connect with other people by asking questions about how they feel. I can show I'm interested in them.	I can connect with other people by asking questions about how they feel. I can show I'm interested in them.
Lesson 4 Think positive thoughts about others. (Don't judge and criticise)	I know that it's important not to judge people. You need to talk to people and get to know them.	I know that it's important not to judge or criticise others. I know that you are unable to show empathy when you are judging and criticising other people. I know how important it is to think positive thoughts about others.	I know that it's important not to judge or criticise others. I know that you are unable to show empathy when you are judging and criticising other people. I know how important it is to think positive thoughts about others.
Lesson 5 Show Kindness. Act in a caring way, to someone you know.	I know how important it is to show kindness to others. I can show others acts of kindness.	I know how important it is for our wellbeing and the wellbeing of others to show acts of kindness. I can identify acts of kindness I could carry out for other people.	I know how important it is for our wellbeing and the wellbeing of others to show acts of kindness. I can identify acts of kindness I could carry out for other people.
Lesson 6 Show Kindness. Act in a caring way, to someone you aren't as close to.	I know how important it is to show kindness to others. I can show others acts of kindness.	I know how important it is for our wellbeing and the wellbeing of others to show acts of kindness. I can carry out an act of kindness for someone I don't know.	I know how important it is for our wellbeing and the wellbeing of others to show acts of kindness. I can carry out an act of kindness for someone I don't know.