



# New Town Primary School



Parent Workshop: December 2023

Managing behaviour positively at home and school

# What types of behaviour are there?

- Positive behaviours which can include being: *kind, thoughtful, helpful, generous, respectful, trustworthy, co-operative etc.*
- Negative behaviours which can include being: *unkind, disrespectful, defiant, rude, violent, destructive, selfish, disruptive, angry, unco-operative, etc.*

## How can we positively influence our children's behaviour?

- Set clear and consistent boundaries and routines
- Give them quality time both with you and on their own
- Be good role models
- Positively reinforce good behaviour
- Think through situations which may lead to negative behaviour
- Give alternatives and choices
- Try not to overreact
- As a parent or carer take responsibility for what they are exposed to
- Ensure they understand the consequences of their behaviour both in terms of sanctions but more importantly the effect their actions could have on other people

# Setting clear and consistent boundaries

- Children need consistency
- It is sometimes useful to draw up a 'contract' with your child so that you can discuss and agree on a compromise on more contentious things such as screen time and going to bed
- Make sure that you treat all your children with equity and explain your decisions: they have a deep sense of what is fair



# Give them quality time

- It can help if children understand why you want them to do something.
- Try to put aside time each day to share something; this may be anything from talking about feelings, sharing a book, exchanging stories about their day, watching a programme together, going for a walk or a picnic, a visit to a museum, a journey on a bus or baking a cake
- Get them involved in household chores to nurture a sense of achievement and responsibility
- Try to establish a positive relationship with all your children; this is the responsibility of everyone who cares for them. A bike ride, a trip swimming, learning to cook etc with parents, carers or extended family can build really positive relationships- make sure all adults understand the agreed boundaries
- Put away your phone and ensure you are 'present' for a reasonable time each day

# Be good role models

- This can be tricky sometimes especially when we, as adults, feel angry, stressed or upset.
- Try to speak to your child as you would expect to be spoken to by them
- Don't raise your voice as a matter of course; keep the raised voice for when it matters
- Apologise if you get things wrong- we are not always right!
- Know when you need time out or a 'change of face'
- Guard against using bad language
- NEVER use physical violence

# Positively reinforce good behaviour

- Make sure you heap on the praise and lightly sprinkle the criticism!
- Praise can be: kind words, reward charts, stickers or an agreed activity of their choice in your shared time
- Do not encourage a tit-for-tat approach where you promise the world!
- If you have more than one child focus on praising the one who is displaying the good behaviour whilst ignoring (if possible) the negative behaviour
- Give time to reflect on how positive behaviour can make us all feel much happier
- Recognise the small steps



# Think-through situations which may lead to negative behaviour

- Give warning or a count down
- Don't completely avoid necessary situations just because they can be difficult - if they are consistent, agreed and are given warning then total loss of control can be avoided
- It is really important that you build a strong relationship built on mutual trust, understanding and respect so that tricky situations and periods can be more positively managed
- Don't ever ask your child to do something that is unreasonable
- Help your child build strategies to cope with overwhelming situations
- Show empathy
- Help them to repair the damage done with natural consequences

# Give alternatives

- Rather than saying 'You can't do that' or 'Stop that noise' try giving an alternative. For example:
- 'Sorry you can't meet your friends right now- help me get the tea and then you could go outside afterwards for an hour...'
- 'Please always be kind to your sister- why don't we go outside and play football.'
- '...ten more minutes on your game and then we could go to the park.'
- '...either, or...' Giving choices can make the child feel they are in control

# Try not to overreact

- This can be difficult. When your child does something annoying time after time, your anger and frustration can build up
- It's impossible not to show your irritation sometimes but try to stay calm
- Move on to other things you can both enjoy or feel good about as soon as possible
- Find other ways to cope with your frustration, like talking to other parents
- Avoid smacking- what does it actually teach your child?

# Take responsibility for what they are exposed to

- Gaming and social media usage should be very carefully monitored; children are increasingly being exposed to unsuitable on-line games, social media and internet browsing sites
- Life changes - any change in a child's life can be difficult for them: new siblings, moving house, a change of childminder, the breakup of a marriage or something much smaller
- If you're having a difficult time - children are quick to notice if you're feeling upset or there are problems in the family and will react to this

# Make sure they understand the consequences of their actions

- Children will naturally learn that actions have consequences; from an early age a baby will learn that if they cry an adult will usually feed them or pick them up for a cuddle. As they get older they will become aware that 'being good' involves pleasure and 'being naughty' may bring unwanted consequences!
- Longer term consequences are those that affect other people negatively. For example:
  - Using violence against someone else will cause them pain, upset and distress
  - Losing control and getting angry will make others upset and interfere with any activity that is going on
  - Defying an adult could result in putting others in danger either in the long or short term

# Where can I get more help?

Do not feel you have to cope alone. If you're struggling with your child's behaviour:

- talk to your health visitor - they will be happy to support you and suggest some new strategies to try
- visit the Family Lives website for [parenting advice and support](#), or phone their free parents' helpline on 0800 800 2222
- download the [NSPCC's guide to positive parenting](#)

Parents who discipline their child by discussing the consequences of their actions produce children who have better moral development, compared to children whose parents use authoritarian methods and punishment.

The sign of great parenting is not the child's behaviour.

The sign of great parenting is the parent's behaviour.

Children are great imitators so give them something great to imitate.