

Managing Angry Outbursts

Dear Parents/Carers

This week, I thought I would cover the issue of anger and angry outbursts. All children experience feelings of anger at some point and it can be hard to know how to best deal with fraught situations.

Here are a few ideas and suggestions, as well as some useful websites and resources.

Please remember, if you would like to get in touch with me about anything, have any questions or suggestions, you can call the school office on: (0116) 271 2261 or email

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Kind regards

Mrs Claire Groenewald (Parent Officer)

How to deal with an angry child

- 1. The trigger** – try to establish what thing/things are triggering angry outbursts. Are there any common patterns? Times of day? People or places?
- 2. When your child is angry - use techniques to calm them down.**
 - You could try a variety of strategies to see what works best for them. It could be as simple as changing activity to distract them, counting to ten, breathing activities, 'time out', 'time in' or physical activity like running or kicking a ball.
 - It is important that you remain calm and use a quiet, slow and clear voice. Try to avoid becoming angry yourself.
 - Keep your language simple and instructions short so as not to confuse your child.
- 3. Recovery stage** – give your child time to calm down in a quiet environment e.g. their room or somewhere they like to be. Consider giving them an activity to do take their mind of things e.g. drawing or colouring.
- 4. Follow up** – at a later stage, when your child has calmed down, talk to them, listen to them and help them to reflect on what happened. Try to make a shared plan to avoid the triggers and potential future outbursts.

Time in is when a child, who is having a difficult moment, is invited to sit with their parent/carer to express their feelings and eventually cool down.

During 'time in', you as the adult have the opportunity to empathise with your child's feelings. It doesn't mean that you let your child continue with unacceptable behaviour. The 'time in' gives you the opportunity to talk and then address whatever change needs to be made.

The added bonus is that your child is likely to feel less angry if they feel they are being listened to.

Time out is when your child is removed from where the outburst happened. Time out can be used to help your child calm down and reflect on what has occurred and why.

Breathing techniques can help some children to calm down. Here are some useful strategies for guidance and resources:

- ELSA Support has a free downloadable breathing star that you can print out on card and cut out. It can help some children to have a physical object to focus on their breathing: <https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/5-star-calm-breathing-exercise/>
- Use bubbles! Blowing gently to create bubbles is a good way to be playful and breathe deeply.
- Use a feather! Let your child choose their favourite colour, or a colour they feel is calming. Focus on the feather - breathe in and hold it for a count of 3, then breathe out.



Books



There are many children's storybooks out there which specifically target the issue of anger. Here are a few examples that you could try reading with your children. They might help your child to talk about and understand their own feelings as well as teaching them coping strategies.

'Angry Octopus' by Lori Lite

Angry Octopus teaches children how to control anger, calm down and lower stress by introducing research-based techniques woven into this popular story. Children ages 5-11 learn how to use muscle relaxation and diaphragmatic breathing (belly-breathing) to control anger before it erupts.

'Fergal is Fuming' by Robert Starling

A story about a dragon with a short temper who learns clever tricks from other animals about how to calm down and win his friends back.

'When I Feel Angry' by Cornelia Maude Spelman

This is part of "The Way I Feel" series. It explains how different things can make you angry, and that feeling angry is an expected part of life, but it's what you do when you're angry that matters.

'Rory Red – for children with angry feelings' by Luke Baker

Rory Red was a colour who always felt angry until a friendly face showed him how to cope with his feelings.

There are lots of useful websites available to support parents with guidance and advice. You might want to check:

[NHS - Dealing with Child Anger](#)

[Youngminds - Responding to Anger](#)

