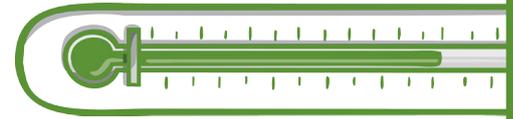


Top Tips



for Dealing with Aggressive Behaviour

Generally, at the root of aggression lies anger and frustration. Aggression can manifest itself in a number of different ways:

- Trouble concentrating
- Anxiety
- Agitation
- Mood swings
- Depression
- Disorientation
- Poor communication skills

There are several ways we, as teachers and support staff, can teach children how to manage their emotions and express themselves in ways that do not involve aggression. Here are some great tips to help you achieve that:

- **Set firm and clear boundaries:** The classroom should be a safe place for everyone and children need to learn that early on.
- **Routines are essential:** Make sure that you have routines in place and that any changes to the routines are shared in advance with the children.
- **Develop trust early on:** Develop a mutually trusting relationship with the child. Get to know them as individuals, for example, what they like doing, their favourite food, TV programme, etc. Build a relationship with the child so they understand you value them as an individual.
- **Develop a person-centred approach:** Get to know the child along with any triggers that lead to anxiety, frustration or anger.
- **Fair is fair:** Children appreciate fairness, and any perceived lack of justice can lead to aggression. Try not to treat children differently and apply rewards and sanctions consistently.
- **Express yourself:** Being unable to express themselves effectively can lead some children to become aggressive. Try giving them cue cards or a traffic light system to let you know how they are feeling or develop a system with the child to make it personal. Building trust and a relationship with the child will hopefully lead to them feeling comfortable expressing themselves verbally to you.
- **Calm-down space:** If a child has an outburst, try giving them a 'time-out card' and a quiet, safe space to go to where they can calm down.
- **Build social skills:** Organise some small group work with the child with a focus on social skill development. Use social situation prompts to help them understand how to react in different scenarios.
- **Communication is key:** Talk to the child about anger and how they can manage their emotions. Let them know anger is a normal emotion that everyone experiences at some point.
- **Empathise with the child:** Do some whole-class work around empathy. This will help all the children develop a sense of belonging and understanding of other people's points of view.