

Tips and ideas for parents

Sharing and turn-taking

Some children find it difficult to share an activity or toy with another child and you may observe this at home at the moment with siblings. Here are some pointers of what you can be doing to promote sharing and turn-taking.

- Point out good sharing in others.
- Give lots of praise and attention when they try and share and take turns.
- Practice taking turns in routines and games. E.g. at bedtime when you read a story. First you turn a page then let your child have a turn, keeping taking it in turns.
- At nursery we use a sand timer, you may have toothbrush or an egg timer you can use. You can turn the timer over when it is one child's turn and explain when the sand has gone through it is now the other child's turn. This is a great visual to use for children to understand when it is their turn and when it is someone else's turn.
- I also sometimes sing a song at nursery in the butterfly room to encourage turn taking. See below. 'Your turn, my turn, we can share, your turn, my turn, then it's fair.' Children respond well to songs and rhymes and it gains their focus and attention.

Routines

A routine for a child is important as it allows them to understand and know what is happening now and what is happening next. A routine allows children to establish what is expected of them and when. It also helps to create a calm atmosphere as children will get less upset to stop something they are enjoying if they are aware of a routine and what is expected of them.

See below for some ideas which we implement at nursery to help with children following and understanding routines.

- We use a 5-minute warning tambourine to let the children know they have 5 more minutes to play until we need to stop, ready for the next part of the routine e.g. going outside or lunch time.
- After the 5-minutes is up, we sound another shaker to let them know it is now tidy up time. This is when the children are encouraged to stop what they are doing and playing with and helping to tidy up the toys and put back where they belong.
- We use visual images to set out the daily routine and to highlight what is happening now and what is happening next. You can download some of these images or you can draw your own to represent different routines e.g. mealtimes, outdoor time, sleep time, bath, and sleep time.

Rules and Boundaries

It is important for children to maintain what is expected of them and to have rules and boundaries in place which they are familiar with. At nursery we have different rules and boundaries in place which allow children to understand what is expected of them and what is not. At nursery we have our 'Golden rules' which are different and made specifically for the different age groups. Some of these include; walking feet, listening ears, kind hands and kind words. Some of our elder age groups help to set their own golden rules, taking on their opinions and get them motivated to co-operate with these rules.

At home you could:

- Sit down with your children and let them discuss what you and they think you can set as some golden rules which they are to follow in and around the home. I would suggest maybe 4 rules is a great starting point.
- Encourage your children to help with and join in with home routines such as setting up for mealtimes, helping to tidy up, helping to wash up, help to prepare for meals. This is a great way for children to understand why their mummy's and daddy's have to do different chores as well as encouraging them to learn different skills such as sorting and categorising of clothes, using tools for a purpose and with control, using number language and co-operating in self-care routines.