



**Fairness**  
I treat people  
the way I like to be  
treated

At the beginning of Spring 1, the children were introduced to our third character trait 'fairness'. The children listened to the story *Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman. A story about one girl's determination to reach for her dreams, no matter what anyone else may say to stop her.

During the assembly, we discussed the meaning of fairness, treating people the way we like to be treated. We agreed that it was treating everyone in a way that is considered right or reasonable, giving everyone an equal chance, recognising that what is fair to one person might not be fair for another, treating everyone with dignity and respect and listening to others' point of view. Together, we recognised that being treated fairly is not always the same as being treated equally. Fairness is about treating someone in a way that helps give them what they need. Equality is about treating two or more people in exactly the same way, regardless of what they need as individuals. In class, the children discussed moral dilemmas to help them to consider fairness and equality and to ensure that they act responsibly, even when no one is watching.

### **Supporting at home**

**Model it** - Children pay close attention to how adults follow the rules and treat people. Children will notice inconsistencies and will point them out to you. Be sure to demonstrate the types of behaviour you'd like to see in your children.

**Listen to their side** - Listen to your children. Validate their feelings. Find out what happened and become the mediator when there is a conflict. Don't simply blame and give out a

consequence in a reactive way. If a child breaks a rule, the consequence has to be clear and logical and the children need to know what will happen in advance. That's fair! Listen to what your child has to say before deciding what to do.

**Empower them** - Talk to your children about what is fair and not fair. Teach them what is right and wrong, read books with morale in it. Discuss main points of interest. Talk about how they would feel if unfairness would happen. Ask them if it was fair, and ask them to give reasons why. As children get older and their brains develop, share more sophisticated examples of injustice from articles, newspapers, books and websites. Ask them about their opinions.

**Praise it** - If you see your child showing fairness, praise their efforts.

**Fair, but not equal** - "She got more than I did!" "You just bought him shoes, I want some too!" While it's easier to simply equalise things to keep the peace, this is not the best strategy. Treating siblings "fairly" really means that everyone gets what he or she needs, not what she or he wants because he throws a tantrum! A good way to think of it is, "fair, but not equal."

Below are some suggested books that you can share with your child at home.

