

Character Education - Self Control



During the first Character Education assembly of the new academic year, the children were introduced to our seventh character trait, 'Self Control'. The children listened to the story '*I Really Want to Shout*' by Simon Philip. The story follows a little girl who uses witty and insightful rhymes to tell us about the things that make her angry. No matter how hard she tries to keep the shout inside, sometimes it just explodes out of her. Luckily, she has a good friend and patient parents who let her know that anger is a perfectly normal emotion and encourage her to talk things through rather than bottling up her feelings. The story teaches children about the importance of self control and how this can be developed over time through different life scenarios.

During the assembly, we discussed the meaning of self control: **watching what we say and do and understanding that self control is something that is developed over time.** We agreed that self control is when we try to make better decisions, are able to resist temptations and get on better in school and with others. We also discussed that self control is being mindful that our behaviour affects those around us.

Together we recognised that showing self control can be challenging, but by setting goals and sticking to them, we can develop our self-control in tricky situations.

In the following assembly, the children discussed moral dilemmas, offering advice to others on how to show self control. The children offered advice to different children on how they can manage upsetting situations and what advice could be offered.

How to support at home

1. Talk about it - At the dinner table, describe what self-control is and share examples of when you've shown self-control. Talk about how it helped you be a better mum or dad, or worker, or boss. Then ask your kids to talk about how they showed self-control that day. Do this several times each week. As you make discussions about self-control part of your daily routine, your children will see how you show it, and they'll learn how you value it. They'll see it in action. And they'll begin to show it in their own lives. This is the single best way to teach self-control: identifying successes and failures with it in daily life and improving in meaningful ways.

2. Give gentle reminders - If your child is about to lose control, gently remind him or her to think of a way to stay calm and make wise choices. Researchers have found that regular gentle reminders keep us on track and making wiser decisions than we might otherwise have.

3. Avoid rewards

If we reward self-control, children will start to think it's only worth being controlled if they can get a reward. We want them to recognise *why* it matters and make their own decisions.

4. Wait - When you or your child really want something, talk about whether it might be a good idea to wait. Whether it's sneaking a treat, checking social media or hitting a sibling, encourage your child to wait ten minutes and see if it's still something he/she feels they must do.

5. Play self-control games - Games like "freeze", "sleeping lions", drumming/rhythm games or "red light, green light" require a child to follow instructions or patterns, listen, be controlled, and make changes.

6. Be an example - If you're lacking in self-control your child will learn from you and act accordingly. When they see you eat too much, spend too much time in front of screens, or do whatever else it may be, they'll think it's fine for them to do it too.

This is especially important when we respond to our children's big emotions. If we respond with disapproval or dismissal to our children, we show less control than when we turn towards them with compassion and kindness.

See below books which explore, 'self control.'

