



Hindlip First School
Tibberton First School



Anger Management

This guidance has been written by our partners at
Perryfields Primary PRU.



Perryfields Primary PRU

Anger Management

Anger is a normal emotion, and every pupil will have times when they don't manage to keep it under control. Sometimes, there's a simple cause: they might be hungry or tired, or have fallen out with a friend. Pupils have a strong sense of justice, and can often become angry if something seems unfair,

Pupils may have angry outbursts if they feel they're not being listened to, or if they can't express how they feel. It's a form of communication when pupils are trying to tell you something but haven't learned the right way to do it.

For some pupils, anger is a sign of emotional distress. If they feel very anxious, embarrassed, afraid or ashamed, they might subconsciously cover up that emotion with anger.

Remember that it's OK to be angry

We need to help pupils understand and expect that they will experience a variety of feelings as they go through life, including anger. It's normal to feel angry at times. It's what you do with those feelings that matter.

(Anger management can be a particular struggle for pupils who have autism, ADHD, sensory processing disorders and other special educational needs.)

Teach Your Pupils about Feelings

Pupils are more likely to hit out when they don't understand their feelings or they're not able to verbalise them. A pupil who can't say, "I'm angry," may try to show you they're angry by hitting out or a pupil who isn't able to explain that they're sad may misbehave to get your attention.

Help the pupil recognise basic feeling words such as angry, sad, happy, and scared. Label your pupil's feelings for them by saying, "It looks as though you feel really angry right now." They will begin to label their emotions and then learn to manage those feelings.

Spotting the signs of anger

Being able to spot the signs of anger early can help the pupil handle it and use strategies.

Talk about what the pupil feels when they start to get angry. For example, they may notice that:



- ✓ Their heart beats faster
- ✓ Their muscles tense
- ✓ They clench their teeth
- ✓ They make a fist
- ✓ Their stomach churns

Keep talking to a minimum

The anger causes a rush of adrenalin, (a hormone and chemical messenger in the brain), which in turn triggers these anxious reactions in a process called the "fight-or-flight- freeze' response. This prepares us to physically confront or flee any potential threats to safety. When a pupil is in fight, flight or freeze mode, they can't process information as well. This is not a teachable moment. It's best to keep talking to a minimum. When you do speak, make sure you use a neutral, calm, and quiet tone. Keep it simple, short and repeat the same phrase. Repeating it is helpful because they aren't processing information and words as they usually would. Repetition makes it more likely that they'll hear what you are saying.

Phrases that you can say at that moment:

"I'm here for you."

"I want to help you."

"Let me know when you're ready."

"You are angry; I understand."

"I understand."



Strategies

- Create a calm, “safe” place in the classroom for the child by setting up a workstation in a quiet area.
- Equip the workstation with everything they will need, stored in their own, labelled box.
- Talk to them about how this will work for them, at the same time telling them that they will be participating in class activities. Emphasise the importance of being a member of the class.
- The workstation can be used when the child is struggling to work with other children, or is continuing to show increased levels of anxiety, and also as a place of “time out” when their behaviour is unacceptable, as an alternative to taking them out of the room.
- Provide a calm box, containing activities which will help to calm and soothe, e.g colouring, jigsaw, cuddly toy, playdough, fidget object etc.
- Encourage the pupil to talk. Recognise that the pupil is upset, and ask him how you can help him. Sometimes he will need help to contain his feelings/anxiety, when he is unable to do this on his own.
- Evaluate the situation. If child becomes wound up/anxious, allow him/her to remove self to an agreed calm-down area. Is everyone safe? If not, clear the room before addressing him. If necessary send one of the other pupils to get another adult.
- Validate the pupil’s feelings. Never tell him/her that he has nothing to be angry about. It is not necessary to agree with pupil’s anger to validate it. Simply tell the pupil, “I bet that would make a lot of people angry.”
- Ask for deep breaths. Taking deep breaths is the fastest way to calm. The child has to comply with the request, though. Once you get your first compliant request out of the way, ask the pupil to take a deep breath. Encourage him by counting in for ten seconds and out for ten seconds. If your pupil complies with the first breath, repeat the process until he is calm.
- After an angry outburst, continue to maintain a calm, nurturing, secure, non-confrontational environment, a calm, quiet tone of voice,



particularly during or after an outburst, helping to maintain the connection between the adult and the pupil. After an outburst, when he is sufficiently recovered, talk through what happened, making it clear that that the behaviour was not OK, but that things can be made OK again. Provide closure by helping him to make amends, by repairing something, tidying up, making a card for someone etc.

- Discuss what happened with the pupil. Tell the pupil that his behaviour is concerning to you. Do not use this time to lecture. If you start lecturing the pupil, he will shut down almost instantly or it may lead to another angry outburst. Make consequences logical and restorative, not punitive. If the pupil has made a mess, allow him to clear it up and if the pupil said something hurtful, have him apologise when he had sufficient time to calm down.
- Plan for triggers. Once you know the triggers, you can plan accordingly to help him overcome his anger. For example, avoid the trigger or plan a preferred activity before and after it. Tell the pupil about activities ahead of time. This kind of planning can help the pupil work through difficult activity.
- Record Incidents. If you have pupils who display anger regularly, record the incidents. This will help pinpoint any trigger as they are not always obvious.
- ✓ ABCC form. (Antecedence, Behaviour, Consequence, and Communication) is a helpful and structured way of gaining information in order to try and identify triggers and purpose.
- ✓ FAB form. This can unpick any triggers and it is possible to build a behaviour plan. It is important to remember that strategies might work for a while then, without warning may stop working, so these might need changing or need tweaking. (Ask the Behaviour Consultant if required)

The Anger Iceberg

The Anger Iceberg represents the idea that, although anger is displayed outwardly, other emotions may be hidden beneath the surface. These other feelings—such as sadness, fear, or guilt—might cause a person to feel vulnerable, or they may not have the skills to manage them.

Please consider the Anger Iceberg diagram on the next page.



ANGER ICEBERG

In some families, anger is seen as more acceptable than other emotions. A person might express anger in order to mask emotions that cause them to feel vulnerable, such as hurt or shame.

Anger triggers are people, places, situations, and things that set off anger. Your triggers can provide clues about the emotions behind your anger.

Anger is an emotion that tends to be easy to see. However, anger is often just the tip of the iceberg. Other emotions may be hidden beneath the surface.

Anger may be fueled by different emotions at different times, or by a combination of emotions. Sometimes, however, anger is just anger.

