

BRIDGE ROAD SCHOOL

FOCUS OF THE WEEK

FRIENDSHIP

The benefits of childhood friendships

There are a great many benefits to be gained from forming and maintaining childhood friendships. Here are some of them:

- Navigating friendships helps to support children's emotional and social development
- Friendships help to increase a child's capacity for empathy and altruism
- Having friends boosts happiness, well-being and self-confidence, and promotes a positive outlook on life
- Having friends lessens stress
- Forming friendships entails practising communication skills
- Positive friendships can help encourage good behaviour



Supporting childhood friendships

- Model good friendship behaviour

Interacting positively with your colleagues in front of children, being kind, and cooperating with each other

- Nurture politeness

Being polite to everyone should be one of the core values, encourage children to talk to each other and adults in a polite way

- Practice sharing

Learning to share and take turns is fundamental to being able to form friendships



Always be kind

A few points to consider

It's important to keep in mind that children are just starting out on their way to learning how to build friendships. It's all about recognising the skills that they might be struggling with and supporting them to begin developing those skills. Some children will find it easier than others to make friends, for all kinds of reasons. Here are some points to remember when considering how you can support preschool friendships

Be inclusive

Dealing with disputes

Children learn best when they work things out for themselves; with older children, in particular, it's worth hanging back before intervening in disputes or negotiations, to see if they can resolve them on their own. Obviously, if someone is being hurt or conflict recurs then you will need to step in

Show respect

Group dynamics

There are many reasons why children might not join in with a group. They might be unsure of how to do it, they might not want to play with those particular children, or the other children might not be letting them join in. Watch and try to work out what the reason is, then approach the situation accordingly. Also recognise that many children need time away from others, playing by themselves, so don't be tempted to always make them join in

Be helpful

Learning how to resolve conflict can help children to:

- Improve their communication and listening skills
- Understand how to evaluate a situation
- Foster creative problem-solving skills
- Develop greater empathy for others
- Build self-confidence

Be caring

Listen to each other