

Mrs Dowdell's Parenting Pointers

The Hardest Job in the World



I want to take the opportunity this week to tell you about parent support at Foundry Lane and what we have on offer. We have a high value of parenting, I believe it's the hardest job in the world and most of us have absolutely no training to equip us for the role. So, what does parent support look like and how can you access it?

Most important of all is to stress that all support is offered in a non-judgemental manner. We all have different situations and life experiences and we all parent as best we can, depending on our abilities and experience. My job is to help families figure out where

they're at, what's going well, what could be better and how can we work together to improve things? Sometimes this may be straight-forward; a few tweaks can get things back on track. Other times it's far more complicated and will require more intensive effort on my part and the part of parents. Sometimes it will be appropriate to seek help from outside agencies. Whatever the situation, it's a journey we take together.

The first step if you think you need some advice is to get in touch. Call the office and leave a message or email me at the address below. Sometimes you can catch me on the gate before or after school for a quick chat. Friday Coffee Morning (every week from school drop off until 10am in the Blue Room) is another good time to touch base and begin the process.

As well as offering one to one support to parents, one of the main ways that I support families is through running parenting programmes. I feel passionately that parents understand that attending a course is absolutely no indication that they are not already doing a great job. As I've already stated, parenting is really hard and we can all use some tips to try and improve what we're doing. Just as in our paid jobs we sometimes undergo training, why not get some training in our unpaid roles too?

All the courses that I run are tried, tested and free of charge. We have fun along the way, learn from each other and consume large quantities of tea, coffee and chocolate biscuits! One of the huge bonuses is that parents get to know each other better. It's easy to think that you are the only one who is struggling and it's reassuring to hear that others may be having similar problems. From my point of view, running groups for a number of parents is a really smart way of using my time because I can teach principles to multiple families simultaneously.



The Incredible Years Parenting Programme begins on 20th September.

The course runs for ten weeks and is an excellent building block, teaching all the basics of parenting, from building relationships, learning how to use praise and rewards, through setting rules and limits and using consequences appropriately and effectively. I've already had a number of parents apply but there are still some places left. Do get in touch to join in or to find out more. I can't wait to deliver this fun and transformative material to Foundry Lane parents once again.

You can email me at parenting@foundrylaneprimary.co.uk