

Positive Parenting

an alternative to physical punishment

What is Physical Punishment?

There are lots of types of physical punishment. It can mean smacking, hitting, slapping and shaking. But there can be other types too. It isn't possible to give a set list because it can be anything where a child is punished using physical force.

Research suggests that any type of physical punishment could be harmful to children.

How do I discipline my child?

Every child needs discipline; it is an essential part of good parenting. However, discipline is very different to physical punishment.

Discipline is about providing a child with **boundaries, guidance and support** so they learn appropriate behaviour.

Physical punishment is not a necessary part of disciplining children.

It may look like it works because children often stop what they are doing when they are smacked, but physical punishment of children is not effective in improving children's behaviour and it doesn't help children learn about self-control or appropriate behaviour. Physical punishment can:

- Hurt a child
- Make a child feel fear, anger, sadness and confusion
- Give children the message that violence is ok and is an appropriate response to strong feelings
- Be associated with negative outcomes for children

How do I discipline my child without using physical punishment?

There are many ways to discipline a child without using physical punishment.

- Sometimes just distracting a young child in a challenging situation is enough to reduce a problem behaviour
- With children over 3 years old you can use a consequence instead of physical punishment, such as removing a toy or activity for a short time
- For older children and teenagers, knowing what would have the biggest impact is important, such as removing access to electronics, spending time with friends or loss of pocket money for a set period of time
- By learning to recognise and manage our own feelings and emotions, it may mean that we can calm situations before they escalate. For example, by staying calm, taking a few breaths or even walking away—you give your child a great example of how to behave.

Positive Parenting

- **Give genuine praise** for positive (good) behaviour.
- Have **clear family rules** suitable for your child's age and ability.
- **Plan ahead** for times where children tend to behave in challenging ways (e.g. take a snack or a toy on shopping trips).
- Try and think about what's going on under the surface of tricky behaviours — is your child **Hungry, Lonely or Tired (HALT)?**
- **Connect a feeling to the behaviour** e.g. 'I think you are throwing the toys because you are cross, but we don't hurt people'.
- **Develop a routine** that works for your family.
- **Model the behaviour** you want to see—a child won't understand that hitting or shouting is not allowed if that is what they see adults do.

Chapel Street Community Primary School

Every member of staff at Chapel Street Community Primary school has a duty of care, to ensure that all our children are happy, healthy and safe. Children talk to us about things that make them feel sad, worried or frightened. It is common for our children to tell us they have been hit at home, as a form of punishment.

We take this seriously.

If a child tells us about being hit at home, a member of the Safeguarding Team will contact you to have a conversation. We want to work with and support parents to use positive alternatives to disciplining their child. We understand that managing unwanted behaviour in a busy home can be difficult. When we are concerned that a child might be at risk of significant harm, where abuse might be taking place, we will seek further advice from Children's Services.

Chapel Street Safeguarding Team

You can speak to any member of the team for advice and support, just ask at the school office or phone 0161 224 1269



Ella Hughes
Headteacher



Karen Pilling
Deputy Headteacher



Suzanne Powell
Safeguarding & Welfare Manager



Tim Wheeler
Chair of Governors



Kate Ortoft
Assistant Headteacher

Other information & support

Early Help Parenting Team (EHPT) is a specialist, city-wide team of practitioners who deliver parenting interventions such as group sessions and help implementing parenting strategies, to families with children aged 2 to 16 years – see a member of the Chapel Street Safeguarding Team for further details.

Positive Parenting: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/leaflets/positive-parenting>

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk (children's behaviour)

Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk