

Supporting mental health and wellbeing at Emmanuel School

## EMOTIONS COACHING



Emotion Coaching is an empathetic approach and framework for adults to help guide a child to recognise and then regulate their emotions, to problem solve and create boundaries to avert inappropriate behaviours and reactions from being repeated. There are 4 steps:

### Step 1 Recognising and empathising with the child's feelings

- Empathise with the child from their point of view (this doesn't mean agreeing with them, but viewing things from their perspective).
- All emotions are natural and normal, and not always a matter of choice.
- Their behaviours are communicating these emotions.

### Step 2 Validating the feelings and labelling them

- Use words to reflect back the child's emotion and help the child to label the emotion - say what you see/observe rather than asking questions.
- Saying that you understand their emotional situation and that you don't blame them helps soothe their emotional brain.
- "I can see you're angry because you are frowning and you're kicking the wall. I would be feeling like that too if I didn't want to do something".

### Step 3 Setting limits or a boundary on behaviour (if needed)

- Be clear to your child what is the boundary limits of acceptable behaviour - that certain behaviours cannot be accepted ("It's ok to feel angry but it's not ok to hit or kick).
- Let the child know they are safe and secure – "I can see you and I'm going to stay near you to make sure you stay safe".
- Encourage and provide the child with things to regulate their emotions – a calming space/time out zone (see below for ideas).

### Step 4 Problem-solve with the child

- When the child is calm and in a relaxed, rational state (at least 90 minutes after), explore the feelings that gave rise to the behaviour.
- Help think of ideas and actions that could lead to more appropriate outcomes ("Let's think of what we could have done instead") and empower the child to believe they can overcome difficulties and manage feelings/behaviour.
- Over time, this supports a child to be able to do this themselves



*All emotions are natural and normal, it's how we manage them, and our resulting behaviours, that's key.*

