



# Alfred Lord Tennyson School

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Issue 1

Head Teacher: Mrs. K O'Connor

## Wellbeing at ALTS

### Welcome to our Autumn term Wellbeing Newsletter

[alts.northants.sch.uk](http://alts.northants.sch.uk)



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Welcome to our first edition of 'Wellbeing at ALTS'. Each term, we aim to share with you services, support and practical advice that you can use to support your child's positive wellbeing. This term's edition is focused on sharing information about helping your children with their friendships. As adults we are aware of how friendships can have a positive impact on wellbeing but there can also be times when friendships can be hard. We hope that you find the information in this newsletter helpful.

In school, we continue to focus upon positive mental health within our curriculum and our newly appointed 'Wellbeing Pupil Ambassadors' for this academic year will be supporting with this.

We are also pleased with the continued support we have from MHST (Mental Health Support Team.) They continue to hold parent workshops at various points through the year on a range of topics you might find useful. Look out for information about these shared via our Parent app.



### Wellbeing Ambassadors



Khaynna, Megan, Viky, Caitlyn and Tyreece

I like helping the children in all year groups to find ways to stay happy.

**Meagan**

I love cheering people up.

**Viky**

# What is a good friend?

## Good friends makes you feel positive about yourself...

Good friends say and do things that make you feel good. They give compliments, congratulate you and are happy for you.

## Good friends support each other...

If you're feeling down, a good friend will support you. If you need help, a good friend will try to help you out.

## Good friends don't always have everything in common...

You don't have to be into the exact same things! A good friend encourages you to like your own things rather than making you feel bad for liking different things.

## Good friends listen...

A good friend allows you to talk and doesn't interrupt you. They're interested in what you have to say.

## Good friends are trustworthy...

If you tell a good friend something private, they won't share it. You can trust a good friend not to be judgmental.

## Good friends respect boundaries...

Sometimes you might fall out with your friend. A good friend will tell you what has hurt them. If you tell a good friend they've hurt you, they'll be sorry and won't do it again.

## Good friendships work both ways...

It's not a good friendship if one of you is doing all the talking and the other is doing all the listening, all the time.

Good friends make each other feel good about themselves and share the talking and listening.

## Having a group of friends...

Don't limit yourself by having just one "best friend". Your friendship is something special which you can share with everyone who needs a friend! Sometimes friends drift apart or fall out. That's a part of life. Having more than one friend means it's more likely there will be someone who can help you when you need it.

## Friends not followers...

In the digital world you can feel under pressure to have a lot of friends and followers. Remember that you only need a small circle of friends to be happy, and it's a good idea to keep your most precious (and private) thoughts and moments for those that really care about you.



# Friendships



*Some advice about supporting children with friendships from [www.Place2be](http://www.Place2be)*

## **Work together to grow their friendship skills**

Talk to your child about what makes a good friend, and practice friendship skills such as listening, sharing, compromising, and negotiating.

Sit together and explore examples in everyday life and from TV and books. This will help your child think about what makes a good friend and feel less worried about friendship issues. You can also encourage friendships beyond school, like joining clubs or arranging play dates.

## **Help them to gain confidence**

If your child is shy, this can make it feel more difficult to make and keep friends. Give your child lots of opportunities to connect and communicate with you in whatever ways you feel comfortable for them. Practising with you will give them more confidence to connect with others.

Have one-to-one play-dates to give your child a chance to practise social skills and deepen friendships without being in a crowd. If you base play-dates around activities your child enjoys, this can help your child overcome the initial struggle to engage.

## **Model positive and healthy relationships**

Happy relationships between parents and significant adults lead to better mental and physical health for all involved. Children thrive emotionally when they see and are involved in warm and caring relationships where they are respected and valued.

By modelling positive relationships of your own, you can help your child to see what positive, healthy and meaningful relationships should look like – and to recognise when friendships aren't positive.



## Reassure them that it's natural for friends to fall out sometimes

Children's friendships often change and can look different depending on your child's age and stage of development. While having friends at school is important, it is perfectly ordinary for your child to have difficulties with their friendships.

Let your child know that being friends doesn't always mean agreeing or getting along with others all the time.

### Talk the talk

Sometimes children can find it difficult to know how what they can say when talking with their peers. You can help your child by practicing what they can say to introduce themselves to someone new or to make a new friend. Sometimes this involves them learning to ask a question or invite another child to play with them. Help children to think of questions they can use to make connections with friends, such as:

- Would you like to play football or something else during break?
- Can I sit next to you in class?
- Do you want to play catch?

### Check out these videos from 'Place 2 be' about supporting children with different friendship issues:

1. Encouraging your child to solve problems.

<https://parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk/article/my-child-has-friendship-issues>

2. My child is struggling with peer pressure.

<https://parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk/article/my-child-is-struggling-with-peer-pressure>

3. Supporting my child with shyness.

<https://parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk/article/understanding-shyness-in-children>

4. Helping children to be resilient.

<https://parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk/article/raising-a-resilient-child>

## Recognising when friendship difficulties could be bullying

The Anti-Bullying alliance offers the following advice for parents

### WHAT IS BULLYING?

#### The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as:

"the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power."

Put simply this means any situation where your child is being deliberately and repeatedly hurt by other people and they find it hard to defend themselves. This could be face to face or online, in school or in the community. It may be physical, or it could be verbal or emotional. For example, your child might be pushed around by others, called names, or be excluded from friendship groups.

Children may also target aspects about people they feel are 'different' – this could include disability, race, faith, gender, sex, sexuality, poverty, talent, skin conditions, allergies, or situation at home. Children are influenced by the home, community, and society they grow up in, by the things they see, read, and hear, and the people around them. We all have a role to play in creating communities where children feel safe and valued, where we stand up to prejudice and are united against bullying. Most children will experience or witness bullying during the school years: they may be the target of bullying, may be involved in bullying others, may stand by while others are being bullied or may take positive action to stop bullying.

<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/anti-bullying-week-2023-make-noise-about-bullying/parents-and-carers>

As a parent you have a vital role to play in helping your child recognise bullying and what you can do together to stop it.

## WHAT ADVICE CAN I GIVE MY CHILD?

- 1. Be kind and respectful to others:** you have a vital role to play in modelling positive relationships. Your child is always watching you and learning from you. It's important to talk kindly about other people and support your child to be kind and respectful to others. 
- 2. Understand true friendship:** you can teach your child the qualities of a true friendship such as kindness, respect, boundaries, laughter, forgiveness, and trust. This will help your child recognise if others are being unkind or manipulative towards them. Encourage your child to be open to friendship rather than insisting on one best friend. Experience shows you can be vulnerable if they decide not to be your friend anymore! 
- 3. Grow in confidence:** we all have times when we feel shy and self-conscious. Some children are naturally more confident than others, others are quieter, and are happy with their own company or the company of a small group of friends. If your child is unhappy and wants help to grow in confidence then talk to the school to see what support they can give (e.g. a buddy or peer mentor system) and consider activities and groups outside of school that might help your child grow in confidence (e.g. sports, Scouts and Girl Guides, arts and drama, martial arts, volunteering). 
- 4. Role play together how to handle difficult situations:** it is likely that your child will experience name calling, will get into arguments and may even be involved in physical fights. Role play together the different options you have in these situations, what you could say or do, and who; else could help. 
- 5. Establish physical boundaries:** help your child to understand that their body belongs to them, and that everyone has their own physical boundaries. This means it is not okay to be rough with other people, or to touch, hug or grab them without their consent. It is never okay for someone to physically hurt someone else and children need our help and guidance to learn to give people personal space. 