



### Home-School Links

Dear Parents/Guardians

In class we hope to help the children to better understand themselves and to help them develop high self-esteem. Those with high self esteem are less likely to be over influenced by ads or TV programmes or friends to buy sweets, games, sports gear, clothes with labels, jeans, drinks, etc. Children with low self-esteem (who don't think well of themselves) may be more likely to fall for these ads etc.

You could talk with your child about his/her:

- ▲ likes...
- ▲ dislikes...
- ▲ enjoyments...
- ▲ what s/he is good at...
- ▲ what s/he would like to be better at...
- ▲ what makes him/her happy...
- ▲ what makes him/her sad...
- ▲ what makes him/her feel special...

Any situation  
that helps your  
child feel valuable  
and cherished helps  
build high  
self-esteem

This could lead on to discussing:

- ▲ The influence of ads on what your child likes to wear
- ▲ Brand names of clothes that your child or his/her friends wear
- ▲ If ads or friends influence the clothes that your child wears
- ▲ What influences his/her choice in footwear, food, soft drinks, etc?

Children need  
to know that  
they matter just  
because they exist



### Home-School Links

Dear Parents/Guardians,

In class, we will help children to understand that there are different kinds of friends. We also want them to examine how friendship is shown on TV, radio and nowadays on the Internet and in newspapers and magazines.

Our aim is to help children to recognise the importance of friends and of cooperation with other people. We hope, with you, to help them prepare for the kinds of pressure they experience from the media and from their peers (peer pressure).

Here are a few ideas for home that link well with the work children are doing in class as part of the curriculum.

#### You could talk about:

- ▲ When the photograph was taken
- ▲ Who is in the photo
- ▲ The special friends in the photo
- ▲ Where you were in the photo
- ▲ Where your child was in the photo
- ▲ What you were doing
- ▲ What s/he was doing.

Talk about a  
family photo

#### This could lead on to discussing:

- ▲ What you and your children feel is important in a friend
- ▲ What you each like to do with your friends
- ▲ Friends with different personalities or from different countries or backgrounds
- ▲ Forgiving a friend or making an enemy, if friends have a fight or make a mistake.

A TV programme is a  
natural way to help you  
start a conversation  
about different kinds  
of friendships.



### Home-School Links

Dear Parents / Guardians,

In class we will help children to look at how family members show their feelings to each other and how they communicate. We will also be looking at how families are shown on TV, in books etc and compare this with real life.

You could talk about:

- ▲ Who in the family do you usually play a game with? Why?
- ▲ Who would you ask to help you with your homework? Why?
- ▲ Who would you ask for money for a school tour? Why?
- ▲ Who would you offer help to in the kitchen? Why?
- ▲ Who would you tell a joke to? Why?
- ▲ Who would you like to go on holidays with? Why?

Families on  
TV are/are not  
true to life?

You might also chat about:

- ▲ A TV programme you are watching together, or a radio programme you are listening to or a book you are reading together
- ▲ How the people behave towards each other/treat each other
- ▲ How they show they care for one another
- ▲ How the families on TV are the same/different from our family
- ▲ How we behave towards each other in our family
- ▲ How young people relate to older people on TV/within the family
- ▲ How it is the same or different to the way things are in real life.

In our family  
people show  
they care for one  
another by...



### Home-School Links

Dear Parents/Guardians,

In class we hope to help children realise that as they grow their responsibility for their personal safety grows too. With your help we will be able to remind children about keeping safe around people, places and things. You could talk about a day in your child's life and all of the situations where s/he needs to take care.

Some ideas of things they might do are:

- ▲ Setting the alarm
- ▲ Getting breakfast
- ▲ Making a school lunch
- ▲ Cleaning up after themselves
- ▲ Going to the shops, crossing the road
- ▲ Minding and playing with younger children, bottle feeding, nappy changing, feeding, etc
- ▲ Cooking
- ▲ Washing up and putting away
- ▲ Taking a bath / shower, washing hair, cleaning up afterwards
- ▲ You could also chat about safety / dangers around the things your child does.

**Keeping safe  
means taking  
care at home**

We need an adult with us when we are...

**Cleaning up  
spills helps to  
prevent a  
nasty fall**





Home-School Links

Dear Parents/Guardians,

In class we hope to explore feelings and emotions and how best to manage them. Being able to express how we feel in a positive way means that we are aware of the feeling and the choice in how we manage it.

We will also be exploring how feelings are expressed in the media. As part of the follow-up, you could talk about:

- ▲ How feelings were shown in a story your child liked that was in a book/magazine, on TV or Radio
- ▲ What the story was about
- ▲ Who the main people were in it
- ▲ How you knew when the people in it were happy, sad, angry etc.
- ▲ How you might have expressed feelings in a different way
- ▲ In real life would people show their feelings differently - for example would your friends show their feelings differently?

Feelings are  
neither good or bad.  
It is how we react to  
the feeling that is  
important.

This could lead to a chat about:

How you or your child show your feelings to each other and to other people  
- feelings you had might be happiness, anger, embarrassment, humour etc.

Appearances  
are sometimes  
deceptive.

Home-School Links

Dear Parents/Guardians,

In class we will help the children to understand better how their bodies grow and change, especially the natural changes that happen during puberty that prepare them for being adults. We want each child to be happy that s/he will grow and change in his/her own good time and that this is different for each child. We want to help your child realise that these changes cannot be hurried.

Growing and  
changing is a  
natural part  
of life

You could talk about:

- ▲ How your child has changed since s/he was born
- ▲ Some of the changes that happen to boys and girls when they reach puberty

(You may have talked to your child about this before but as this topic is now being covered in school it is a good time to have another chat about it. Take your lead from your child about how much s/he wants to talk about.)

This could lead on to a discussion about:

- ▲ Mood changes that might take place during puberty
- ▲ Changes that may happen in friendships between some boys and some girls
- ▲ Some ways you might like to celebrate the changes from childhood to adulthood.

Growing and  
changing can  
be an exciting  
time



### Home-School Links

Dear Parents/Guardians,

In class we will help your child remember what s/he has learned about body changes, especially during puberty. We will also help your child learn about how new life begins. Even if you have talked to your child about this already s/he may like the chance to talk about it again.

**You could talk about:**

- ▲ How boys grow into men?
- ▲ How girls grow into women?
- ▲ Does s/he know what parts of the body change most?

**You might like to read this story with your child and talk about what you remember of the nine months before s/he was born.**

#### Michael's Birth Day

Hi, my name is Michael. They say that today is my birth day and I am only a few hours old, but believe me I have been around a lot longer than that.

You would think that resting in my Mam's womb for the last nine months would have prepared me for my journey into the real world, but being born is an exhausting and frightening experience.

Let me tell you my story so far, it began 9 months ago when sperm from my Dad met with an egg from my Mam and suddenly there was me! You were created just like me.

During my first six weeks, my Mam or Dad were not aware that I was there. It wasn't until Mam missed her first period and had a pregnancy test that she realised she was carrying me. They were so delighted to see me today I can only imagine how excited they felt when the pregnancy was confirmed. Then, who wouldn't be excited about me! Even though I was no bigger than the tiniest small finger nail, by the end of these six weeks, I had the beginnings of arms, legs, nose and eyes. My heart was beating and my backbone was partly formed.

By the end of my third month my fingers and toes, knees and elbows had grown and my good looks were in place. My vocal cords had formed but I didn't speak yet. The umbilical cord that attached me to my Mam did a great job giving me food, though I didn't like spicy food as it gave me hiccups!

By the sixth month my eyes had opened. I couldn't see very much as it was very dark in there. I really enjoyed moving about, twisting and turning, though my Mam wished that all this activity hadn't happened when she was trying to get some sleep! I now had a light covering of hair on my head. I could hear loud music and sometimes people singing along. I think it must have been my Dad because that was one of the voices I heard earlier today. Don't tell him I said so, but he could use some singing lessons!

By the end of the ninth month I was much bigger and had put on a lot of weight which made it difficult for me to move around as much. All of my vital organs had formed.

As I said earlier, today was my birth day. I was very surprised and a little bit frightened when I felt my Mam's tummy start to tighten and I felt myself being pushed downwards. I tried to hold back but I was being propelled along. I passed through a very narrow tunnel and it seemed to take a long time. Suddenly, I saw bright lights and heard lots of noise, it felt very cold and strange and I started to cry. Then I heard familiar voices saying, "Oh look! it's our beautiful baby boy Michael, welcome to the world". It was my Mam and Dad.





### Home-School Links

Dear Parents/Guardians,

In class we will help children to think about the care a baby needs before and after birth. Children need to think about the way a new baby changes people's lives. We will already have talked about new life and the care a baby needs while growing in the womb. We will be reading the following story in class. You might like to read it with your child.

#### Michael's First Year

Hi, my name is Michael. I am one year old. I'd like to tell you about the first and only year of my life so far. I was born on the 15th of April at 2:28am. I weighed 4 kilos. It was a big shock to my system to leave the lovely comfort of my mother's womb but I didn't have a choice in the matter! When I was born my eyes were blue, they still are. My hair was brown, but it has got fairer now. I came home from hospital on the 20th of April with my Mam and Dad. It took me a while to get used to my new surroundings but I didn't mind too much as long as I was fed and changed.

In the beginning I put on loads of weight, as much as two pounds a week. I grew out of all the first size clothes and I began to sleep and eat more. I first smiled on the 6th of June, I was looking at my Mam who was smiling at me. I first laughed on the 19th of July, because my Dad was blowing noises on my tummy! I answered to my name 'Michael' on the 3rd of September. I know immediately that my Mam and Dad are talking to me when 'Michael' comes first. I first learned to sit up on the 12th of October, I can see so much more when I'm sitting up. I can see what's on top of the table, the pictures of a cat and a dog on my bedroom wall.

I first waved goodbye on the 9th of November, everyone said it was cute. I do try! I got my first tooth on the 2nd of December, that was sore. I wanted to chew everything in sight including my Dad's shoulder! I first crawled on the 15th of February and my Mam said: 'Here comes trouble!' Crawling is great freedom. If I want something I can go get it. Before now I had to try to get my Mam's attention and even then she didn't always know what I wanted.

My first word was Dada, a good move I was told. My Mam breast fed me until recently. This was a special time for both of us. She would look into my eyes and talk or sing to me. It was lovely and cozy cuddling up beside her. My first meal besides milk was potato which I loved. My favourite foods are toast, liga and milk. I hate baby rice, yeuk! I spit it out no matter how my Mam tries to disguise it. I love my baths, I splash and splash until my Mam is soaked. I share my bath with a duck, three fish and a boat. I spot my bath sponge and think I'll get to it to suck it but my Mam always gets to it first. She 'Tut, tuts' and asks me: 'Why must you put everything in your mouth?' Has no one told her that is how I learn about shape and size?

My first toy was a soft rabbit which is still on the side of my cot. My favourite game is 'Peekaboo', you just never know where my Dad will pop out next! My favourite song is 'Clap handies', because I can join in too. I had my first birthday where I blew out one candle. I'm learning to walk now but I'm taking it slowly, which is a good thing my Mam says!

**You might like to talk about:**

- ▲ The care a pregnant mother needs - food, exercise and rest
- ▲ How this helps the baby before and after birth
- ▲ The care your child received before and after birth
- ▲ The people who helped
- ▲ How your child's eating habits and needs have changed.

**This could lead on to a chat about:**

**The importance for your child of a balanced diet, regular exercise and rest as his/her body grows and changes.**





## Home School Link

Dear Parents/Guardians,

In class we hope to encourage your child to want to keep healthy, clean and to eat well over the next important years of his/her life.

**You could talk about:**

- ▲ Your child taking more care of health and hygiene now that s/he is getting older – remembering to wash daily.
- ▲ Below are some of the facts they have been given in school that you might like to talk about.

We need to take care of our bodies inside and out

### Keeping Clean and Feeling Healthy

Keeping clean and healthy is always important, but it is particularly important during the time all the changes are happening to the body. Feeling fresh and clean and in good health helps to give a young person a sense of well being. In puberty, the skin starts producing oil and perspiration. If the skin is not washed, bacteria grow causing spots in the case of oil and unpleasant smells where perspiration remains.

**Spots:** Children need reassurance that many skin complaints like spots are part of growing up. Daily cleansing of the skin and a well balanced diet will help to minimise the development of spots. Encourage your child to get plenty of rest, exercise and fresh air.

**Hair:** Just like the skin, hair needs regular washing to get rid of dirt, dead cells, oil, grease and perspiration. Washing regularly with a mild shampoo is essential.

**Teeth:** In puberty, the full set of permanent teeth has usually developed. These can last a lifetime if cared for properly. To avoid tooth decay, gum disease and bad breath, it is recommended that teeth be brushed regularly and foods with a high sugar content be avoided. A regular visit to the dentist is also important.

**Food:** It is important to eat a wide variety of fresh foods and have three balanced meals daily. Children need lots of protein foods such as meat, fish, eggs, milk and cheese. They also need energy giving foods like bread, cereals, potatoes, rice and pasta. Fat is also necessary in the diet as is a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables. Breakfast is a very important meal in the day and when a person skips breakfast, s/he is low in energy. Children who skip breakfast may find it harder to concentrate on their school work.

**Exercise:** Exercise is important for healthy growth and for the full and healthy development of the bones, muscles, heart and lungs. Any exercise is good for health.

**Sleep:** In general, adults need seven or eight hours sleep. A child in fifth or sixth class needs eight to ten hours sleep approximately per night.

You may wish to talk to your child about the positive decisions you made for him/her when s/he was younger e.g. making sure his/her food intake was balanced and healthy.

Together you can identify the positive health habits in your family. All of these habits began when you made conscious decisions about a particular behaviour. Good health habits show that you are taking responsibility for your health and well being.

You might also like to look at habits which you would like to change. Together you could look at how you formed the habits and draw up a plan of action to change them.

Finally, you could encourage your child to design a Ten Point Plan for good health.

**This could lead to a chat about:**

- ▲ Good habits already in the family
- ▲ How good health habits show you are taking responsibility for yourself
- ▲ What you would like to change and can change.

In our family we stay healthy by...