



Ratton School

Tips for Helping Boys to Succeed

Give Positive Messages



- Boys get a bad press, so avoid stereotypical comments like “boys will be boys”. How about “Boys will be brilliant” instead?
- Encourage positive thinking – self belief is a key to success.
- You get more response if you end a request with thank you rather than please!
- Praise and encouragement – give lots (more than girls). 3 positive comments to 1 area for improvement is a good ratio.
- Be specific with your praise – not just “That’s brilliant”, but what has been done brilliantly and why. That way they can reproduce the behaviour in the future.

Health and Wellbeing

- Screen time – our discussions with students showed an average of 2-3 hours per night on video games. Limit it!
- Using a screen before bedtime disturbs sleep – 1 hour’s downtime needed to calm the brain before sleeping. Even if you are able to fall asleep without this hour, your sleep quality is still reduced.
- Not eating breakfast gives you the brain reaction time of a 70 year old by 10.30am. At least half the students we talked to did not eat breakfast. Insist that students eat – if not at home, then there is toast at school in the morning.

Responsibilities

- Encourage independence – they do not need their school bag packing by the time they are a teenager!
- Give them home responsibilities e.g. cook a meal each week for the family. This is a job that they can be appreciated for.
- Dare them – give them time limits and challenges to liven things up.

Rewards

- Have a reward system in place at home.
- Give immediate rewards – boys would rather have a Mars bar at tea time than a bike at Christmas. Christmas is too far away!

Systems and processes

Boys like:

- A purpose for doing something
 - The difference between getting and not getting 5 GCSEs at A-C grade is £150,000.
 - Relate what they do at school to real-life.
- Short term goals and rewards
- Systems for doing things (see next slide)

Example 1 – How to research a topic

1. Give student a list of websites
2. Get them to identify the 3 best
3. Copy and paste the key information from each site
4. Highlight the most important bits
5. Paraphrase the information, using the highlighted sections as quotes

Example 2 – Tidying bedroom

1. List key steps e.g. clothes in the wash basket, books on the shelf, bed made.
2. Write each on a post-it note.
3. Stick them on the back of the bedroom door.
4. Child can destroy each post-it as the task is achieved.

Miscellaneous tips

- Teaching others is the best way to retain information – revising with others is a good idea.
- Many boys like to learn in an active way – they might not sit at the desk you have bought them, but spread out everywhere!
- Some boys find it physically hard to write – fine motor activities can help. Warming up the muscles involved (with hand exercises) can help.
- Find out of school activities that they can succeed in to build self-belief.