

Making Praise Powerful!

	Why?	Instead of:	You could try:
Make praise SPECIFIC	Children often dismiss general praise such as "great job!" but praise that is linked to specific behaviour is more meaningful and is more likely to be believed.	<i>That is a fabulous picture!</i>	<i>I really like the way you have drawn the eyes..</i>
Make praise DESCRIPTIVE	Attaching a positive description to the praise gives them a positive label for themselves - it builds self-esteem!	<i>What a good boy!</i>	<i>That was very kind!</i>
Make Praise REALISTIC	Praise that is too excessive actually makes children more cautious and less likely to risk failure because they are anxious about falling below the high standard they have been set.	<i>You must be the BEST violin player in your whole school!</i>	<i>I can hear how much you have practised - it sounds much better!</i>
Praise EFFORT more than achievement	There are many steps on the way to mastering a skill. Praising perseverance and effort on the way to mastery encourages children to value the process of learning and to persevere next time.	<i>Spelling is easy for you - I knew you would get them all right!</i>	<i>I was so proud that you didn't give up even though it was tricky!</i>
Only praise what they can CHANGE	Praising children for things they have no control over such as appearance or intelligence can actually demotivate children. You can't try harder at things you can't change 😊	<i>You are SO clever!</i>	<i>That was really good thinking...</i>