



ANGER MANAGEMENT

Reintegreat School Toolkit

Supporting Pupils with Anger Management

1. Introduction

Anger is a **normal human emotion**, and every pupil will experience it. What matters most is not whether pupils feel angry, but how they learn to **manage and express their anger safely**.

In schools, anger can be expressed in many ways, from quiet withdrawal to loud, physical outbursts. For some pupils, particularly those with **SEND (e.g., Autism, ADHD, Sensory Processing Disorders)**, managing anger can be especially challenging.

This toolkit provides:

- An understanding of anger and why it happens.
- Practical classroom strategies for prevention and intervention.
- Ways to support recovery and repair after incidents.
- Tools for staff to use consistently across Reintegreat settings.


2. Why Do Pupils Get Angry?

Anger is often a **secondary emotion** – what we see on the surface may be covering deeper feelings such as:

- Anxiety
- Embarrassment
- Shame
- Sadness
- Fear

Pupils may show anger because:

- They feel unheard or misunderstood.
- They struggle to communicate their emotions.
- They feel something is unfair.
- They are hungry, tired, or overstimulated.

 **Key reminder:** Anger is a form of communication. Instead of asking, “*What’s wrong with you?*”, ask, “*What happened to you?*”

3. Normalising Anger

It is important that pupils learn:

- *It is okay to feel angry.*
- *It is not okay to hurt yourself, others, or property because of anger.*
- Anger can be managed safely through strategies and support.

4. Teaching Pupils About Feelings

Children often act out when they don't have the words to describe what they feel.

Strategies:

- Teach emotional vocabulary (angry, sad, happy, scared, worried).
- Model language: *"It looks like you're feeling angry right now."*
- Use **visuals** (emotions charts, zones of regulation).
- Share books, characters, or puppets to explore emotions indirectly.

5. Spotting the Early Signs of Anger

Helping pupils recognise the early warning signs allows staff to intervene before escalation.

Physical signs may include:

- Fast heartbeat
- Muscle tension
- Clenched teeth
- Making fists
- Stomach discomfort ("butterflies" or "churning")

6. Responding in the Moment

When anger escalates, pupils may be in **fight, flight, or freeze** mode. At this stage, they cannot easily process complex language.

Guidance for staff:

- Keep talking to a minimum.
- Use short, calm, repetitive phrases.
- Maintain a neutral tone.
- Keep body language open and non-threatening.

Helpful Phrases:

- "I'm here for you."
- "I want to help you."
- "Let me know when you're ready."
- "You are angry; I understand."

7. Strategies for Support

Safe Spaces & Calm Boxes

- Create a **calm workstation** in a quiet area of the classroom.
- Equip with a labelled “calm box” (colouring, jigsaws, fidget objects, cuddly toys, playdough).
- Pupils should know this space is for regulation, not exclusion.

Encouraging Expression

- Invite pupils to talk about what they’re feeling once calm.
- Validate their emotions: *“I bet that would make a lot of people angry.”*
- Avoid dismissing or minimising their anger.

Breathing & Relaxation

- Guide deep breathing (count in for 5, out for 5).
- Repeat until the child begins to self-regulate.
- Pair breathing with grounding: *“Feet on the floor, hands on the table.”*

Classroom Management During an Outburst

- Ensure safety first. If necessary, remove other pupils from the room.
- Avoid crowding the child – give space.
- Request support from another adult if needed.

8. After an Outburst

Steps to repair and restore:

1. Maintain a calm, nurturing approach.
2. Once the pupil is settled, talk through what happened.
3. Make clear the behaviour was unsafe, but reinforce that the relationship is intact: *“Things can be made good again.”*
4. Support closure: tidying up, repairing damage, apologising, or making a card.
5. Avoid lecturing – use short, clear reflections.
6. Focus on logical, restorative consequences (e.g., cleaning up, repairing relationships) rather than punishment.

9. Preventing Future Outbursts

- **Identify Triggers:** Keep a behaviour log.
- **Plan Ahead:** If a trigger is unavoidable, give warnings and follow with a preferred activity.
- **Use Forms for Analysis:**
 - **ABCC Form** (Antecedent, Behaviour, Consequence, Communication).
 - **FAB Form** (Functional Analysis of Behaviour).
- **Adapt Strategies:** Remember, strategies may work for a while then lose

effectiveness—review and tweak as needed.

10. The Anger Iceberg

Anger is often just the visible tip of the iceberg. Beneath it may be emotions like sadness, fear, loneliness, guilt, or frustration.

📌 *Staff should always consider what lies beneath the anger and address those unmet needs.*

(Insert diagram of an iceberg with “Anger” above water and emotions like “Fear,” “Shame,” “Anxiety,” “Sadness” below the surface.)

11. Key Reminders for Staff

- ✓ Anger is normal – unsafe behaviour is not.
- ✓ Stay calm, quiet, and consistent.
- ✓ Focus on safety first, then repair and restore.
- ✓ Validate emotions – never dismiss them.
- ✓ Record incidents and review strategies regularly.

12. Further Guidance & Resources

- DfE Behaviour in Schools (2022)
- Mental Health & Behaviour in Schools (2018, updated 2022)
- Trauma-Informed Practice guidance
- Zones of Regulation framework

ANGER ICEBERG

