

Top Tips for Positive Behaviour Management in the Primary Classroom

Body Language

- Look at the **class** (not your notes, a file, or a bag) when addressing them and show that you're interested.
- Stand tall, but **relaxed**, keeping hands ready to use in gestures.
- Make and maintain appropriate **eye contact** when speaking to individuals.
- When assisting a child with their work, get down to the child's level by squatting down beside them, or pulling up a chair.
- Avoid standing and leaning over children.

Carpet time strategies

- Affirmations for all positive behaviour.
- Special carpet places.
- Use personal mats/cushions.
- Sitting on chairs.
- Fidget objects.
- Use an interesting prop such as a puppet, wand, sand timer, stop watch or speaking object.
- Get children involved by turning a page, scribing on a board or holding a prop.
- Vary the range of activities experienced by using music, artefacts, photographs, games, role play, songs, time challenges, brain gym.
- Tactical ignoring.
- Distraction and re-direction techniques.
- THE look!

Praise, praise, praise

- Children want attention and thrive on praise, so be generous and try to catch **all** good behaviour.
- For every negative comment directed at a child, there should be **several** positives.
- Be **explicit** when praising a child so that they know exactly what it is that pleases you.
- It is only by praising a child for the behaviour you want and expect to see that **more** of that behaviour will be encouraged.
- Get to know the children in your class so that you can determine those children who prefer more **subtle** forms of praise.
- Own your praise by making it an 'I' statement, delivered with a smile.
- Use the child's **name** when praising so that it feels extra special.
- Never take good behaviour for granted and ensure that **all** children find it equally rewarding to behave appropriately.
- Good **role models** can have a powerful impact on other children's behaviour so make sure that they get their fair share of praise.
- Praise should to be delivered genuinely, with **warmth** and enthusiasm so that a child can 'see' how pleased you are.
- Remember** to make use of the many forms of praise including a wink, a smile, a thumbs up, a pat on the back, a class clap... the list is endless!

Using your voice

- Speak calmly and clearly and **model** appropriate ways of speaking to one another.
- Project** your voice to gain attention-never shout!
- Modulate** your voice to convey a point and to maintain the children's interest.
- Routinely use a range of **scripts** with the class to gain attention. For example, 'After 3, I want you to stop, look and listen... 1... 2... 3'
- Announce **positive** statements about a group to refocus the class on expectations. For example, 'Well done red group you're sharing beautifully.'
- Use words of **encouragement**. For example, 'I saw you line up really quietly at playtime, let me see you do it again.'
- Always mean what you say and **follow through** with any sanctions.

Useful tips to remember

- Avoid asking **WHY** questions. Ask **WHAT, HOW, WHEN** and **WHERE** questions instead.
- Avoid using **DON'T, NO, CAN'T, WON'T**. For example, 'Remember to,' rather than 'Don't forget.'
- Try to use **'thanks'** rather than 'please.' For example, 'Quiet, thanks,' rather than 'No talking please.'
- Use simple **reminders**, stating the obvious. For example, 'I'm looking for good sitting and listening skills.'

Useful scripts for low level re-directions

- 'What is the rule about...?'
- 'What should you be doing?'
- 'When do you need to do that?'
- 'How should you be doing that?'
- 'Where should you be now?'
- 'When you have done ... then you can do ...'

Useful scripts to remain focused

- 'I understand what you are saying, however...'
- 'I heard what you said, but I want you to...'
- 'I know it you're upset, but I've asked you to...'
- 'I can see you're angry, but I need you to...'
- 'I hear what you're saying, but it's time to...'

Differentiate instructions

- Children learn in different ways, so it is important to give instructions in a variety of ways.
- When giving a **verbal** instruction, ask children to repeat back what they have been asked to do.
- Write** instructions down, particularly when a group are required to work independently.
- Use **visual** cues such as pictures, photographs and cue cards.
- Younger children enjoy a visual task board which can **reinforce** verbal instructions and serve as a reminder.
- Know** your children so that you can determine those that can follow just one simple instruction at a time.