

Behaviour Management

Be safe.
Be kind.
Be responsible.
Be courteous.

“I like to have my rules as simple as possible. My favourite is ‘I Care’. We brainstorm all the things in school that we should care about, each other, the learning, the classroom, belongings, etc.”

“I feel that good behaviour management should have the students doing the right thing because it is the right thing to do. I try not to bribe with rewards or punish at all if I can help it. We talk about keeping our class the happiest place in the school, and we try to smile and laugh a lot. This works most of the time with most classes! We discuss manners, watching out for our classroom friends or younger children, we do the ‘wrinkled heart’ and leave it up all year. We talk about the behaviours that please us and make us proud.

Occasionally, later in the year, things get too noisy or the students begin to have problems. I have given out rewards, by giving good points to the rows or tables - and there is nothing wrong with this once in a while. I do find it takes time out of my lessons so I have to balance the better behaviour with the time spent. I do worry about the ‘fairness’ of these games. It is all very subjective!

I do feel that I have gained pleasure in my work when the students are happy and calm, and when they are noisy or cranky my pleasure diminishes and I am sure the students feel it, too - so it is worth while to put some effort into producing the behaviours that improve the classroom tone.”

Note: If you are not familiar with the ‘wrinkled heart’, e-mail Primary Success and we will send the information to you.

“I always call my class the best in the school. The pride in this gives them something to live up to.”

“I use a variety of rewards. I give some class rewards - an occasional movie, extra gym time, etc. The favourite individual reward is having the room mascot on the desk for the day. The mascot is a very fuzzy owl that I bought in London - I couldn’t resist him - and the kids love him, too. To have Whooeey on the desk for a whole day is just the best thing to happen!”



“I let a student winner sit at my desk for part of the day. This is a favourite prize.”

“For team prizes, I get really neat things at the dollar store - fancy pencils and erasers, stickers, puzzle books, etc. I bought about \$20.00 worth and it lasts a long time!”

If you have a ‘whole school’ behaviour policy, it should have the following guidelines:

- The method should be simple and easily understood by the staff, students and parents.
- The management methods should be set out clearly so that everyone understands them, from small infractions to the large ones.
- The policy should have a positive leaning, but there must be consequences for breaking the rules.
- The rules must be consistently applied.
- The policy for infractions should be simple so every staff member can use it.
- The policy should be devised by everyone concerned and approved by all. The staff, students and parents should all feel that they ‘own’ it.
- Special lessons should be taught at every level in the beginning of the year, and repeated as needed so that everyone continues to use the guidelines.
- New students will need to be taught the rules, and new staff trained to use them.
- The policies should be reviewed often and tweaked if necessary.

Behaviour Management

<http://www.marvinmarshall.com>

Marvin Marshall's book *Discipline without Stress® Punishments or Rewards* is very useful to understand ways to collaborate rather than discipline your students. Go to the articles on the website for an overview of the program.

"When I went home unhappy or stressed, it was because the discipline got out of hand. It began to affect both the way I handled the kids, too, as it became a vicious cycle. The worse it got, the more I didn't handle it well because of my stress and the worse it got. This is very difficult to recover from! Finally I read some books on the subject, and I found that the book by Marvin Marshall gave me ways to handle situations without the stress - and as things improved, my stress lessened and things improved more. I would recommend it to anyone!"

"I don't like the management systems that take time from teaching! I begin each year simply expecting my kids to behave, and I model the behaviour I want and we practice it. This only works for the whole year if I don't have serious behavioural problems in my class. Sometimes I am lucky, and I have a class that is happy and cooperative all year - but this isn't as often as I would like. I try not to use the management systems with rewards and/or punishments unless things are not going well."

"I give each student one of the library card pockets. Each child gets 3 or 4 craft sticks, depending on how many stages of discipline you want to have. Each stick should have the child's name on it. The pocket either stays on the top of the desk or moves with the child around the classroom. Each time a student is off task, ask them to give you a stick. Make it very clear why s/he must give you a stick so there is no question and have the child repeat it. Students who lose sticks may gain them back by working hard to give acceptable behaviour. Children with all their sticks at the end of the day get a sticker or other tiny prize, and those who lose all the sticks must phone home and tell about their day."

"I have a behaviour notebook. This is a binder that is kept on a table at the side of my desk. Each child has his/her own section. If there is a problem, the student goes to his/her section, writes the date and what he did wrong. We discuss the offense and I have the child tell me verbally what he did, and then I have words and phrases by the book that they can write to be specific with the offense. This book is very useful to show parents on conference times, and as it is in the student's handwriting there can be no argument!"

"I am instituting a 'STOPLIGHT' classroom management this year and made three painted stoplight trays out of cookie sheets. I bought a happy/sad/puzzled face stamp to go with that."

"I use the 'flip card system' together with positive encouragement. Each student has a numbered card with four stickers on it: green, yellow, red, blue. There is a sticker on each end of the card and on each side. They are encouraged to stay on the green team. There are various consequences for flipping their card. If I turn their card to yellow it's just a warning, although then they do not get a ticket at the end of the day. (Friday I draw 5 tickets for prizes) If they get to red they must write their parents a note telling what they did. I started doing this last year and I love it! It forces the child to take responsibility for their behaviour. Then I stamp the note with a 'parent signature' stamp and make a copy of it. They must return it the next day signed or I will call home. This year if they get to blue the parents must come in for a conference."



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“When working with my guided reading groups, I keep the noise level under control by using coloured circles. If I want the class to stay on task and be very quiet, I put up a red circle. If they may talk softly in whispers, a yellow circle is put up. When more talking is allowed, there is a green circle. I find they will calm back down quickly when the circles are changed.”

“I have a small kitchen timer to get my students to pay attention to the task at hand and not waste time. I set a specific time limit on many tasks and I've noticed a great improvement in finished work. This is especially helpful for the students with learning disabilities.”

“Sometimes children bring toys or other things from home. I created a ‘Safekeeping Box’. I found a medium-sized box with a lid, decorated it, and put a label on the box that said 'Items in Safekeeping, To Be Returned Later.' When I see children playing with something that is distracting them, I ask them to put it in the Safekeeping Box and let them know that they can retrieve their item at the end of the day. This validates their important personal treasures and assures them they will be returned. Additionally, it cuts down on the distractions in the classroom, as the students learn quickly to avoid having things put into the box.”

“I teach my children to give and receive compliments. I choose a student of the week and make a colourful poster on which I write a few specific compliments about the student. My class takes time out at the end of the day for the children to give compliments to the student of the week. As I write the compliments on the poster, the students respond with ‘thank you’ and ‘you're welcome’. We continue to do this every day that week. I find they are now complimenting each other more often and using the polite words to respond. It is very nice to hear!”

“When I have two quarreling children who come to me, each telling me their side of the story, the first thing I ask them to do is to sit together somewhere away from the other children so they can have privacy. Next, I tell them to talk between themselves about what happened, and then come back to me when they both have the same story as to what really happened. Many times, through this discussion, they will conclude that it was just a misunderstanding, and they will come back to me and say they have resolved it by themselves. If this is not the case, then when they come to me, I know I will hear what is probably the 'truth' about what happened, and I am able to handle it from there. This teaches the students the importance of communication, and that many times they are able to resolve their own problems without my interference.”

“While the students are eating lunch I play soothing music, usually classical, and I also play it very softly when they are doing independent tasks. They really like it! We discuss the composer and they soon have favourites.”

Classroom Rules

Involve the students when fixing the rules.

Have class meetings to discuss outcomes. How do you want to treat others? How do you want to be treated?

Have a few simple rules that are easily understood.

Have the rules stated positively. Talk about expected behaviour rather than the breaking of rules.

Identify rewards and consequences. Doing what is expected should be its own reward, of course, but sometimes other simple rewards help to reinforce the rules. Rewards might be: doing a particular job in the classroom, being first in line, helping the teacher, being the leader in a game, etc. The consequences should be thoroughly understood.

Post the rules in the classroom. In Kindergarten and Grade One read the rules frequently and discuss them.

Model the expected behaviour and practice it.

Tell the parents about your rules and the expected behaviour.

Be consistent. If you allow poor behaviour one day, it will be much more difficult to prevent it on subsequent days.

Getting Their Attention

Children have perfected listening to a fine art! They shut out what they don't want to hear and can hear a whisper of something they want to hear. For example, they shut out a parent or teacher who nags, saying things over and over - and they can hear a whisper of 'ice cream' or a treat from across the room. This being true, we want our attention getters to be interesting, varied and fun - to make it worth while stopping and listening.

"I hung wind chimes from the ceiling over my desk. Then I have a 'magic' wand and when I want attention I use the wand to tap the chimes. There is a lovely sound, and the students all become quiet to listen."



Here is a list with a variety of attention getters:

- Say: 1, 2, 3 - Eyes on me!
- Ask the children to smile at you - or wink, or wiggle their eyebrows or put a finger on their noses, etc. The motion must be silent and not too silly.....
- Say: 'Repeat after me.....' and then a sentence that describes the behaviour or action that you want. This gives a repetition of the direction as the students say it back.
- Turn off and on the lights to signal clean-up time.
- Buy a doorbell with a remote button. Put the remote in your pocket and ring the doorbell when you want to get the students' attention.
- Tap a cow-bell with a small metal rod or ring it.
- "We made rainsticks from cut pieces of gift-wrap rolls, filling them with beans and rice and decorating them. I shake the one I made for an attention getter."
- Do clapping patterns - e.g. - clap, clap clap clap, clap (1-3-1), etc. The students repeat the pattern that you clap.
- Say softly, "Put your hand up if you hear me." As some of the nearer students do this and become silent, repeat it softly so the rest of the class hear. Vary the order - put your hands on your head, clap once, sit on the floor, put your hand on your mouth (or eyes), etc.
- Use seasonal toys that talk - a black cat that meows for Halloween, a laughing Santa for Christmas, etc.
- Get a tap-on battery-powered wall light at Home Depot or similar store. Attach it at the front of the classroom. When you want attention, tap it and turn on the light. This is a nice quiet way to get attention.
- Say, 'Give me five'! One is to be silent, two is to sit down, three is to fold the hands, four is to have feet on the floor, and five is to look at the teacher.
- 'Give me five' can mean the five words 'stop and look at me!'
- If you want instant quiet, say 'Freeze!' - with eyes on you.
- Softly begin to sing a song that the class knows, and they begin to sing with you.
- Use a variety of musical instruments to get attention.
- Begin to whisper so the students have to be very quiet in order to hear.
- Give verbal recognition to students who are listening well, sitting quietly or other desired behaviour.

"Thank you, John, for sitting so quietly!" "I see that Emily is ready for sharing time!"

Behaviour Management

1. Be firm, fair, friendly, respectful, with a sense of humor.
2. A cheerful, organized classroom encourages good student behaviour.
3. Learn to anticipate problems before they begin.
4. Make learning interesting, fun and relevant. Even the most scripted lesson can be fun if the teacher makes it so.
5. Discuss, but never argue!
6. Have only a few classroom rules and state them simply, clearly, and often. Have the students help to establish the rules.
7. Act, don't threaten. Follow through on what you say.
8. Let your students know that you care about them.
9. Have your rules and expectations the same as the school's rules and expectations.
10. Parents can be important allies and resources.

"I have rewards for my children, but I don't believe in giving them prizes or treats. That is bribery! The rewards on my list are ones that make the child feel special for his/her good deeds. For example, when they get ten smiley faces on a behaviour sheet they can select one of the rewards from my list. I often add to the list so they have lots of choices.

1. For a day, use a fancy pencil from my box or very special pencils.
2. Choose the book that I will read to the group that day.
3. Sit at my desk with me to eat lunch.
4. Be the teacher's helper for the day.
5. Read with the stuffie of your choice.
6. Get extra computer time.
7. Move your desk to where you would like it for the day.
8. Go on a special visit to the library.
9. Be the line leader.
10. Read to yourself for an hour.

My kids are just as happy with privileges that do not cost anything!"



"Our school has a 'caught being good' board. All the teachers and school personnel who do not have a class participate. If they see a class or an individual being extra good or doing a good deed, they fill out a simple slip in duplicate with the name, date and behaviour. One copy goes to the classroom and the other gets put up on the board for all to see. The kids are very delighted to get a 'caught being good' notice and love to look at the bulletin board."

"We are not allowed to take away recess time. Because of our shortage of gym time, we use this as P.E. time. The kids really need this time as a break and a time to get some much needed exercise."

"When my whole class is due for a privilege, we have a 'Cuddle Up and Read' afternoon. The children bring blankets or light sleeping bags, a favourite stuffed toy. We have done it with pajamas and slippers, but that isn't necessary. I collect a selection of great books from the school library. The desks are moved to one side and we cuddle up and read and read and read. It is great to promote the idea of reading as a wonderful treat and the kids love it."

"I like to make 'good' phone calls to the parents. The children are very pleased and so are the parents, especially when they hear my voice on the phone they are expecting news that is not so positive! I also send happy notes home with the students."

"Make sure you document EVERYTHING that a troublesome or difficult student does every day - good things and bad things. Put it into a sequential file or a book. Discuss the notes with the parents and the Principal. You may need these for a diagnoses or to get help for the student at a later time. You may also see patterns - time of day, food, school work, home problems, peer problems, etc."

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“I like to use the book *Chrysanthemum* (Kevin Henkes) at the beginning of the year to talk about inclusion and bullying. In the book, the children in her class make fun of Chrysanthemum's long name. I enlarge a picture of her from the book and give one copy to each child. Every time Chrysanthemum is made fun of in the story, we stop and crumple the picture a bit. By the end, our picture is crumpled into a ball. Later we talk about how we can say we are sorry if we hurt someone (and smooth out the paper) but the hurt will still be there. Illustrated by the wrinkles still left in the paper, even after we try our best to smooth it out.”

Aleesha

“Here is a very brief behaviour management teacher tip I've used for years and found it works really well in my K-2 class. I have a desk tucked behind my classroom door we call the 'Privacy Desk'. On the side of the desk, I have attached a sign, upon which is written; 'Privacy Desk: If I am sitting here, please don't talk to me because I need some quiet time to think. Thank you'. If kids come in off the yard upset and unwilling to talk, or have a meltdown in the class, I encourage them to go to the Privacy Desk to cool off and/or take a break to think. I always check on the students after 5 or 10 minutes to make sure they're O.K. and want to talk. Students often go on their own, and will sometimes choose to do their work there if they need a really quiet spot. At the desk we keep a 'feelings' poster, headphones, a chart of strategies they can use to solve small problems, and a small stuffed mascot from our conflict resolution program taught at the beginning of the year (called 'Kelso's Choices', an absolutely fabulous program for teaching kids how to make choices to help them solve small problems). If there is a conflict between two students, I send them to the privacy desk together to try and solve it on their own (I check on them after about 10 minutes, or if there's excessive giggling, after which I tell them I can help them with it later).

I've found the 'Privacy Desk' is respected by the students and empowers them to solve their 'small problems' independently. It also gives them a safe place to sit in peace where they won't be bothered, which is sometimes hard to find in a classroom and it gives me a positive place to send someone who needs a time-out.”

Jennifer

“One thing that works in my class is the ‘I feel _____ when you _____ because _____.’ The ‘I feel’ statement reminds them they are not being respectful and need to remember their place. For example, sometimes my kids try to talk when I am teaching.....they already know everything and interrupt all the time. When this happens I stop and quietly wait for the offenders to stop talking too. Then I say, ‘I feel frustrated when you talk when I talk because we cannot get our lesson done and it isn't fair to the others who are listening.’ Amazingly enough, when the offenders hear this they will look repentant and stop the calling out or playing around. Its taken us awhile to get to this point but it really seems to be hitting home.”

“Children who suffer from ADHD are living a life of negativity. The first thing that I would recommend is to try to focus on the positive instead of the negative. These children are used to receiving punishment and often become negative attention seekers. This then perpetuates the problems that they have. Here's what I do:

1. Realize that the children are suffering too. No one likes them, they seem to always be ‘in trouble’.
2. They often can't see past their impulse to do something in order to focus on the consequence of their actions. Having to focus on a whole day can be too overwhelming for them to even contemplate.
3. I find at least one positive thing about them and make that my focus.
4. I've found that behaviour contracts work extremely well with ADHD children. If I break our day into smaller, more manageable chunks of time, the child is able to focus on one chunk at a time.



Behaviour Management

Give the tools to problem solve

“We talk about problems being little, middle-sized or big. Little problems can be solved by the child: my pencil broke, I finished my book, someone bumped into me accidentally. Middle-sized problems are ones where minor hurt is involved, either hurt feelings or minor scrapes, arguments, etc. Large problems are bullying, serious injury, blood, sickness, a stranger on the playground, fire, etc. Brainstorm problems and write them on a chart in the right column after discussion.

Little problems should be able to be solved by the person. With middle-sized problems, the person should try first to solve it by speaking to the other person involved, but if it doesn't get settled the teacher can be told. Big problems must be told to an adult immediately.

Every day do 'what if' questions and ask the children what they should do. If problems arise in the classroom or playground with the students, talk about the solutions. Ask what they did about the problem and how it could have been solved in other ways.”

I feel sunny!

“I have a chart with pockets and the students names on these. Inside the pockets are cards.....sunny, cloudy, rainy, stormy - with the pictures. The students start the day being sunny, and the weather deteriorates if the behaviour does. If a child ends on stormy for the day, we go to the phone in the classroom and the child phones the parent to tell them about it. The children do not want to have to do this! They also have a chance to improve the weather, if the behaviour noticeably improves through the day.”

Tattling

“I have my students 'talk it out'. When the kids come in with problems, I have them go out into the hall and take turns telling each other their side of the story. They must be quiet while the other person is talking. This usually solves the problem.”

“I have Grade Twos and Threes. I tell them that if they come to tell me something, it must begin with the word 'I'.”

“We ask these main questions:

1. Are they trying to hurt me?
2. Could someone get hurt by their actions?
3. Are they in danger by doing what they are doing?

We discuss hurt feelings, and I always do the 'wrinkled heart' to show how hurtful things stay with us.” (If anyone doesn't know about the wrinkled heart, drop an e-mail to me.... Jean)

We Have Rules

We have rules. We have rules.
Rules to keep us safe at school.
We use inside voices and walking feet,
(point to mouth, then to feet).
We don't touch or bother the friends we meet.
(Hug self and shake head)
And when we're eating we stay in our seats,
(sit and pretend to eat)
'Cause we have rules
At our school.

