

Effective classroom behaviour management strategies

Establishing expectations of behaviour

School RESPECT Code of Conduct is clearly communicated and displayed, and referred to frequently especially at unstructured times e.g. wet break times, transition periods e.g. before or after lunch, entering school building/classrooms

Age appropriate visuals to reinforce appropriate behaviour

Understanding the behaviour

Addressing the causes of the inappropriate behaviour. By meeting the child's needs, inappropriate behaviour can be prevented from happening again in the future.

Building positive relationships

According to James Comer, "No significant learning happens without a significant relationship". Every opportunity should be used to get to know the children; greet them as they come in, find time out of the classroom at break time and lunch time to chat, show an interest in them and their lives.

Countdown and Mantras

A countdown is useful at the end of an activity, as it gives children time to finish what they're doing. For example, 5.... Finish the sentence you're on, 4.... Put your pens down, etc. This is especially important for children with additional needs or attachment issues as they find change and transition particularly difficult. Countdowns are also useful for getting the children's attention. For example, "Give me 5" (show high 5 with your hand): 5... Eyes on me, 4 ... Ears listening, etc

Mantras and **clapping a rhythm** are also useful for gaining attention e.g. 123, eyes on me, Are you listening? Yes we are

Praise and rewards

The 'Attention Rule' states that what we give attention to, we will get more of. Children strive for our attention and if they're not getting it for positive behaviour they will often resort to negative behaviour. This means that effective praise is a really powerful strategy. Make sure praise is genuine, immediate and labelled, e.g., "Well done for putting your book away, Zach."

Proximity praise

Proximity praise can be used to make sure attention is given to those doing what is asked; praise the ones lining up on either side of the child who isn't.

Tactical Ignoring

The Attention Rule also means that tactical ignoring works well to eliminate unwanted low-level behaviours

Choices

Using choices is a great way to get appropriate behaviour, whilst teaching children to take responsibility for their actions. For example, "You can either put the football cards away in your drawer, or put them on my desk. It's up to you, it's your choice." You could also add a consequence – make sure it's logical – which helps children learn that their choices have consequences and teaches them to make good choices, e.g. "You can either continue to play with your football cards

and I will take them away until the end of the day, or you can put them in your drawer now and then take them out at break. It's up to you, it's your choice."

'When – Then'

'When-Then' is a useful strategy for getting the right behaviour. However, the 'Then' must be something the child wants to do, e.g., "When you have finished that sentence, then you can go out to break". By using 'When' instead of 'If', there is an assumption that the child will do what they have been told to do and there is no room for argument.

Clear Instructions

Often, the way we give instructions to children is not as clear as it could be. Remember, children are usually very literal. If we say to them, "Would you like to put your books away now?" they could quite easily say, "No." Don't phrase instructions as a question, simply say, "Put your books away, thank you." Saying 'thank you' assumes compliance, whereas, 'please' sounds like you are asking and not necessarily expecting compliance. When giving a child an instruction, use their name to ensure you have their attention.

Positive Language

Always use positive language; say what you want, not what you don't want. If you say, "Don't run", children hear 'run', so instead say, "Walk, please". Children are more likely to do what they hear you say, as mentioned above for rules.

Supporting children to understand the behavioural needs of other pupils e.g. when to give them space

Well-designed classroom

Children respond well to an organized and collaborative environment, so paying attention to how you set up desks, bulletin boards, displays and other aspects of your classroom can impact attention and help lessen potential distractions. Thoughtful classroom design can help create a calm learning environment.

Zones of regulation

Use of zones of regulation to develop emotional language and give children the ability to express emotions

Routine and predictability

Visual timetable

