

Synopsis : The following are extracts from the publication: **Behaviour in the classroom: a course for newly qualified teachers**

[Ref : part of the Primary National Strategy DfES 0030- 2004](#)

Session One:

Creating a positive classroom context

Defining effective classrooms as places where:

- there is a shared understanding of what constitutes 'good' behaviour because it is talked about on a regular basis and is acknowledged and genuinely celebrated;
- there is regular teaching and reinforcement of appropriate social and learning behaviours;
- there is a behaviour framework in place which sets out clear expectations and consequences for the behavioural choices the children make;
- there is an emphasis on belonging and social responsibility rather than exclusion and externally applied discipline;
- there is an emphasis on building good relationships between adults and children, and between children themselves.

A framework for promoting positive classroom behaviour (the 4Rs). Emphasis is placed on the overarching fifth R, namely that of relationships, which is crucial to the successful implementation of any activity within the classroom.

The 4 Rs Framework

Rights and responsibilities – are inextricably linked. They refer to both staff and children and are the basis on which classroom relationships, teaching and learning are built.

•**Teachers' rights** – to be able to teach without hindrance, to feel safe, to be supported by colleagues, to be listened to.

•**Teachers' responsibilities** – to enable all children to learn, to seek out and celebrate improvements in learning, to treat children with respect, to create a positive classroom environment in which children feel safe and able to learn.

•**Children's rights** – to be treated with respect, to be safe, to learn, to be listened to.

•**Children's responsibilities** – to be willing to learn, to allow others to learn, to cooperate with staff and peers, to do their best.

•**Rules**– are the mechanisms by which rights and responsibilities are translated into adult and child behaviours

•**Routines**– are the structures which underpin the rules and reinforce the smooth running of the classroom. The more habitual the routines become the more likely they are to be used.

•**Choices**– children can be encouraged to make choices about their behaviour and so to take responsibility for their own actions. Choice will be guided by their responsibilities and will lead to positive or negative consequences according to the nature of the choice.

•**Consequences**– the consequences of sensible or inadvisable choices will be known by the children. Responsible choices lead to positive consequences, while if children choose to behave inappropriately there will be a known negative consequence.

Session Two: Setting expectations

Session Two explores the importance of expectations in the classroom. It looks at:

- how expectations about behaviour are set;
 - using expectations in the classroom;
 - a solution-focused strategy for developing expectations;
 - how to change and develop expectations;
 - creating a positive learning environment – physical and emotional;
- and continues to build on:
- a proactive checklist for positive behaviour management.

The principle underlying this session is the key importance of expectations in creating a well-managed classroom with a positive ethos. 'Expectations' is taken to mean clear, unambiguous descriptions of exactly which behaviours are required for each learning and social aspect of the school day. The rationale for emphasising the need for explicit expectations is given as follows:

- Children and adults need to know what is expected of them to be successful.
- Clarifying expectations helps to create a positive atmosphere by emphasising what is wanted and valued in the classroom.
- Stating specific expectations offers a framework for the teaching of behaviours so that all children can succeed.

We go on to look at times when stated expectations might need to be changed or reintroduced – perhaps because the needs of the group have changed or because the expected behaviour has not been achieved.

The following guidelines may be used for setting or resetting expectations.

- **Explicit description of the behaviour** you require (avoid using words like 'polite', 'kind', 'cooperative', 'sensible' and assuming a shared understanding). The more you can describe the behaviour in detail ('What would I see if you were coming in to the classroom sensibly? I'd see you walk in, go straight to the carpet, sit down with your legs crossed facing the front and looking at me') and the more you make it real for the children by using modelling, role-play, photographs that children have taken of the class behaving positively and so on, the more likely the children are to understand what you want.
- **Clarity.** Use language that the children will understand. Develop a shared vocabulary using words such as 'rules', 'routines', 'choices', and 'consequences' so that shared understanding develops.
- **Involvement of children.** Consider the most effective ways to help children take an active part in the process of discussing and agreeing expectations. Use, for example, circle time, role-play, feelings cards, photographs to support these discussions.
- **Involving support from colleagues** as necessary. Consider whether you need support in leading these activities; if so, from whom? How will you ensure that you get this support? Also, how will you involve class-based colleagues such as teaching assistants in the process?

Also consider how to plan for regular review of their expectations:

- Consider how you will monitor the success of your expectations.
- How frequently will you review what is happening in the classroom?
- How will you involve the children and others?
- How will you celebrate success?
- How will you deal with any revisions?

Consider how expectations can be demonstrated in classroom organisation. Looking at this from two perspectives: the physical and the emotional.

- **Physical support** – how NQTs' current classroom environments physically reinforce their expectations of the children's behaviour.
- **Emotional support** – ideas about ways in which emotional needs such as the need to feel safe, welcome, valued, supported and motivated are addressed by the classroom environment.

A proactive checklist to promote positive behaviour in my classroom:

My expectations of the children's behaviour

- What do I expect them to be doing at each stage of the session/lesson?
- How will I teach these expectations?
- How can I build this teaching into my curriculum planning?
- How can I involve my children in setting expectations for themselves?
- How can I reinforce the expectations over time?

Planning the classroom environment

- How will I physically organise the learning environment to promote positive behaviour?
- How will I ensure that children feel emotionally safe and nurtured in my classroom?

Classroom environment checklist

This checklist is designed to help you examine the context in which behaviour occurs. Only those statements which apply to your setting need to be considered.

	Definitely	Mostly	Partly	Not at all
The classroom is attractive and inviting				
Adequate lighting				
Appropriate temperature and ventilation				
Acoustics adequate				
Furniture arranged to best effect				
There is a seating plan which is known by the children				
Clearly defined pathways with sufficient space for children to move freely between activities				
Routines foster a calm and positive atmosphere				
Routines encourage children to make choices				
Chalk board, whiteboard, etc. easily seen				
Quiet area available				
Differing learning areas are clearly delineated				
Room organisation meets differing curriculum needs				
Materials easily accessible and visibly labelled to support children's independent learning				
Materials/resources match the learning styles of a wide range of individuals				
Provision and organisation of materials/activities support the development of social, emotional and behavioural skills				

Session Three: Teaching positive behaviour and responding to inappropriate behaviour

Session Three explores:

- why we need to teach positive behaviour;
- how to teach behaviour;
- a solution-focused strategy for promoting positive behaviour;
- how to select appropriate responses when inappropriate behaviour occurs;

and builds on:

- a proactive checklist for positive behaviour management.

The session starts by looking at how to teach the behaviour you want to see. It emphasises that positive behaviour development is one area where we cannot afford to take anything for granted.

The following points are stressed:

- Teach the behaviours which will enable children to meet the stated expectations.
- Make expectations explicit rather than implicit.
- Making time for this explicit teaching should be a priority.
- Describing the required behaviour as a learning behaviour gives a positive emphasis.
- Behaviours once established need regular reinforcement.

There is a need to teach the required behaviours. An example is given, based on the following sequence.

1. Ask the class to remind each other of the rights and responsibilities children and adults have in the classroom.
2. Focus on one behaviour that you will need to see in order that everyone's rights and responsibilities are fulfilled.
3. Describe the behaviour you need to see.
4. Teach the required behaviour – discussion, modelling, practice.
5. Develop and use a script which is consistent each time so that the children become familiar with your prompt words.
6. Explain the positive consequences if the children get it right. Reward systems – whole-school, class-wide, individual.
7. Explain the negative consequences if they don't get it right. Sanction systems – whole-school, class-wide, individual.

A proactive checklist for promoting positive behaviour

1. Establishing rights and responsibilities

- How can I involve my children in discussing our mutual rights and responsibilities?
- How can I ensure that my children understand these two concepts?
- How can I keep the idea of rights and responsibilities fresh and meaningful for my class?
- How can I involve other adults in discussing and reinforcing our rights and responsibilities?

2. My expectations of the children's behaviour

- What do I expect them to be doing at each stage of the session/lesson?
- How will I teach these expectations?
- How can I build this teaching into my curriculum planning?
- How can I involve my children in setting expectations for themselves?
- How can I reinforce the expectations over time?

3. Planning the classroom environment

- How will I physically organise the learning environment to promote positive behaviour?
- How will I ensure that children feel emotionally safe and nurtured in my classroom?

4. Managing classroom routines

- How do I want children to come into and leave my classroom?
- How will I ensure prompt,settled lesson starts?
- How do I want resources distributed and collected?
- How do I want children to move around the room?
- How will I manage activity changes within the lesson?
- How will I get children's attention when I need to speak to the class?
- How do I want children to answer questions or ask for support?
- How will I organise paired or group work?
- Which desired behaviours may I need to teach or model and how will I do this?
- When and how can children practise these routines or desired behaviours?

5. Curriculum design and differentiation

- Is what is being taught appropriate in terms of level and access?
- Is the work appropriately differentiated?
- Are the tasks interesting?
- Are the children given the 'big picture' regarding their own learning?
- Is the planned learning real and relevant,drawing on first-hand experience?
- Is there a balance of activities appealing to children's different learning styles and preferences?

6. How do I address children's motivation?

- How are my lessons structured to increase motivation?
- How do I give feedback to children (individually or as a whole group) about theirbehaviour?
- Do I use targets to increase motivation?
- Are children given the opportunity to reflect on their own behaviour and progress?
- Have I planned a specific time for review and celebration of success?

7. How do I promote children's well-being?

- Do I make sure they feel their ideas will be valued?
- Are they able to take risks in their learning, knowing that learning only begins when we make mistakes?
- How do I promote respect for one another, tolerance and cooperation?
- What do I do to make sure that children will not be belittled or hurt by others in the classroom?
- What do I do to encourage children to help and support one another?

8. Relationships in my classroom

- How will I promote positive working relationships?
- How will I use praise?