Behaviour Toolkit

A resource to support Behaviour for Learning

Teacher name:

Top Tips

- ☺ Always wait for silence when talking to the whole class (no matter how long it takes) - develop strategies for getting silence.
- ☺ Quiet does not mean silence! What do you want?
- ☺ Always be relentlessly polite—it's hard to be angry with someone who is smiling and calm.
- ☺ Always separate the behaviour from the person.
- ☺ Learn to focus on primary and not secondary behaviours like muttering, tutting and over exaggerated movements.
- ☺ Avoid any kind of confrontation if possible—de-escalate situations.
- ☺ React from the head and not the heart—emotions cloud rational thoughts and decision making.
- ☺ Shouting at students is always a dead end.
- ☺ Use Non-Verbal signals as much as possible—see list A
- ☺ Control your voice (tone and volume) - practise?
- ☺ Use the 'scratched CD' approach when asking students to comply with any instructions.
- ☺ Be consistent but not rigid—apply rules fairly!
- ☺ Personalise your teaching—take time to find out what makes your students tick and who they are.
- ☺ Know when to be flexible and when to walk away.
- ☺ Set clear boundaries and warn students before they reach them…
- ☺ Set them SMART targets for their work and behaviour-see list B
- ☺ Always give them 'the choice' to behave correctly.
- ☺ Intervene early—be vigilant! Visual and physical surfing.
- ☺ Know the policies inside out—the students do!
- ☺ Know what support is available and use it—escape plan.
- ☺ Smile as much as is humanly possible—it helps?
- ☺ Be the 'firm but fun' type of teacher—assertive!

Follow up tips

☺ This section provides a framework that is useful when talking to students, about their behaviour, at the end of lesson. It gives a five part structure to a discussion;

☺ Always remain calm and relaxed;

☺ Do not corner a student. Give them an opportunity to leave if they need to;

☺ Focus on the behaviour and not the person.

☺ If you want you could use the 'student behaviour record' overleaf to get them to record their behaviour.

☺ The steps below are also printed on the behaviour bookmark—have a go!

What did you do?

Ask the child to describe their inappropriate behaviour. If they say that they don't know, then describe it, factually, to them.

Why did you do it?

This gives the student an opportunity to explain their actions (make excuses). If no answer, move on!

What 'rule' did you break?

This gives the student an opportunity to see why you have decided that their behaviour was unacceptable

What would be a better choice next time?

You can have a discussion about more appropriate behaviours.

What can I do to help you?

This shows that you are concerned and it can give them a way of leaving the discussion with self-esteem intact.

The Walk Away

How to do it:

- Give a clear, short and explicit instruction with eye-contact
- Drop eye-contact and Immediately walk away and continue with the lesson (or, more powerfully, praise another student for compliance)
- The expectation is for the student to comply
- When they comply, turn back and thank them sincerely.

The Sciency Bit:

Some students thrive on confrontation. As the adult, it is up to us to avoid this at all costs. Try to avoid a stand-off as often as is possible. Give students a choice and a way out. This technique gives them 'compliance time' or 'take up time'.
By using this technique you are giving out subtle messages such as 'I trust you to make the right choice' and 'I'm so sure that you will make the right choice that I don't have to stay and make sure!'

A real life situation:

Kyle has entered a classroom but is wearing his baseball cap. The school policy is for students to remove hats and coats when they enter a classroom.

Ms Smith greets Kyle as he is about to sit down and says to him, "Kyle, I need you to take off your hat, thanks?" She immediately walks away and begins to give out the exercise books. Kyle looks about, sees that no-one is paying attention to the situation and removes his hat. He throws it onto the back table. Ms Smith ignores this secondary behaviour. She walks back over to Kyle and smiles at him. She turns to him and says, "Thanks for taking off your hat".

Sometimes Ms Smith gives a non-verbal signal such as a beaming smile or a thumbs up!

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Verbal Expectation

How to do it:

- Use 'thank you', 'thanks' or 'cheers' instead of 'please' at the end of any direction;
- Believe that the student is going to comply with the direction;
- Show your confidence by making eye contact when giving the direction.
- Develop your own verbal expectation?

The Sciency Bit:

Finishing any direction with a 'please' is polite but students often see this as a plea! They often choose not to follow the direction. If you use 'thank you' it gives a clear message, to the student, that you expect them to comply because you are thanking them before they do it. Using 'thank you' actually gives a greater sense of closure to any interaction. Thank you implies a greater sense of obligation. You will be surprised how many people follow the instruction.

A real life situation:

Mr. Gohil has a particularly challenging class. They are not deliberately difficult but find it hard to put up their hands when Mr. Gohil asks a question. In one lesson, Sarah has shouted out at least three times. Mr. Gohil stops talking and looks directly at Sarah. He makes eye-contact and then says slowly and calmly, "Sarah, (two second pause) if you have an answer to a question then put up your hand, thanks!

Sarah lets out a 'huff' but Mr. Gohil ignores this secondary behaviour. He then continues with the lesson. He then thinks of a question that Sarah will know the answer to. Lots of students throw up their hands, including Sarah. Mr. Gohil smiles at Sarah, walks over to her and thanks her for putting up her hand. She answers the question. Mr. Gohil praises her answer sincerely and then praises everyone for putting up their hands.

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Yes...and...

How to do it:

- Use 'yes...and...' instead of 'maybe...but...' with a matter-of-fact tone of voice;
- Use 'take up' time immediately afterwards;
- Whatever follows the 'and' is what you want them to do;
- This is a very powerful technique for dealing with secondary verbal behaviours;
- You will need to practise hard with this because it is very difficult to not say 'but'.

The Sciency Bit:

Many students will engage in secondary behaviours after they have been corrected. These are 'ego-protecting' strategies. When you react to secondary behaviours you are being deflected away from the original issue. When you use 'yes', you are seeming to agree with the student and recognise their perception of the situation. The use of 'and' instead of 'but' makes the redirection seem reasonable to comply with and it redirects them to what you want them to do.

A real life situation:

Amy and Bonnie are very good friends. They always sit together in lessons. Mr. Robinson has found it difficult to stop them talking and going off task. In one lesson, Amy and Bonnie are supposed to be completing a worksheet on their own. However, they have carried on talking. Mr. Robinson walks over to Amy and says 'Amy, I need you to complete the worksheet on your own, thanks!'. He turns to walk away, expecting compliance, but Amy shouts out 'But...I was only asking Bonnie if I could borrow a rubber.'

Mr. Robinson turns back towards Amy and says, 'Yes, you were just asking for a rubber and I need you to work on your own because I want your own ideas.' Amy looks at Bonnie for support but she is busy filling in the sheet.

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DIB and DIP

How to do it:

- Deliberate Ignoring (Brutal) is choosing not to attend to an unwanted behaviour and simultaneously acknowledge students doing the right thing. This is not the same as simply ignoring things you feel that you can't deal with!
- Deliberate Ignoring (Prefaced) is when you give an instruction or redirection before ignoring an unwanted behaviour. You only attend to the student when they have complied.

The Sciency Bit:

Ignoring another person can be a powerful tool if it used appropriately and sparingly. It sends a clear message about how we communicate and the rules that govern interpersonal relationships. You have to use all of your skills to decide: What things can be ignored? For how long? What to do if it doesn't work? This works better with an audience (e.g. whole class). Always give positive feedback if a student responds to this strategy.

A real life situation:

Mrs. Martin has a number of students who find it difficult to put their hands up when they want to ask a question. Britney is a particular problem. She always shouts out. In one lesson, Mrs. Martin is doing a starter activity where the students are doing a card sort. Mrs. Martin is supporting one group of students when she hears Britney shouting, "Miss, Miss, quick, us two is stuck. Come over here quick." Mrs. Martin ignores Britney and looks around the room. Students in another group have their hands up. She looks at Britney, makes short eye-contact and then says to one of the students, in the hands-up group, "I'll come and help you lot now because you've sat quietly with your hands up. Britney does not get the message. She carries on shouting, "Miss, Miss, Miss…". Mrs. Martin turns to Britney and says, "Britney, when you are sitting quietly in your seat, with your hand up, then I will come and give you some help." Britney stops shouting and sticks her hand up. Mrs. Martin notices this and makes a comment to the whole class that she is now going to help Britney because she has her hand up.

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Sound Advice

How to do it:

- Give non-confrontational advice to help students correct their inappropriate behaviour.
- Make sure that the advice follows a 'cause and effect' model.
- Share with them information about how the world works!

The Sciency Bit:

Giving advice is often a very much overlooked behaviour management strategy. It is important that the advice is about the behaviour and not the person!

Try to make sure that the advice links the behaviour with an undesirable outcome. If it all possible try to make the advice positive! Look at the target setting sheet for ideas.

A real life situation:

Mr Steale is a science teacher. There is an expectation that all students wear goggles when doing practical work that involves using hazardous chemicals. He notices that a group of five boys are not wearing their goggles. He walks over to the table and says to one of the boys, "Sam, it's important to wear goggles when using acid in case it gets splashed in our eyes, thanks!" Mr. Steale then moves towards another group of students. All of the boys quickly put on their goggles. Mr Sheldon has a different strategy. He uses humour and a rhyme to get the desired outcome. He says 'It's better to look a bit stupid than to never be able to look again?'.

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KISS (keep it short and simple)

How to do it:

- Give short, simple directions (simply describe the problem);
- Focus on the key issue (primary behaviour);
- Identify the problem (the behaviour not the person)
- Resolve the problem (give a choice)

The Sciency Bit:

When we get frustrated with low-level persistent disruptive behaviour we tend to vent our frustration by going on and on about the behaviours. These extended 'monologues' often give students what they want—that is to see an emotional reaction. More often than not these 'monologues' focus on the negative, are directed at the person rather than the behaviour and have little impact on the original issues. It is better to be cathartic in the staff room or in the pub!

A real life situation:

Emma is often late for lessons because she has (allegedly) been gossiping, re-applying her make-up and doing her hair. Everyone in the class knows this and the class teacher has had enough. Compare the following interventions:

"That's the final straw, Emma! I'm sick and tired of you sauntering into the room whenever you feel like it. If you spent less time preening yourself and more time in lessons you might do better in school. Your KUDOS career report was totally right…you're never going to be anything more than a shop assistant. Your sister was the same etc…"

"Emma, you can choose to arrive for the next lesson on time or you can choose to do a lunchtime detention, thanks!" - short, sharp and straight to the point.

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Focus on the positive

How to do it:

- Use 'do' rather than 'don't' in any student interactions;
- Practise rephrasing your directions so that they are positive 'do's'
- Have a go at completing the table below with common behavioural issues.

The Sciency Bit:

Research on the brain has shown that it processes positive information in preference to negative information. Telling people what you would like them to do will always be far more effective than telling them what they are doing wrong. In fact, positive statements are usually much shorter and more direct than their longer winded negative statements. When we have to think about making a positive comment it often helps us to focus on the primary behaviours. Know the school/college rules. We also develop mental pictures. If we say the behaviour we want then that is the mental image that will appear. Try not to think of a large slice of gateaux with loads of fresh cream and strawberries! See...
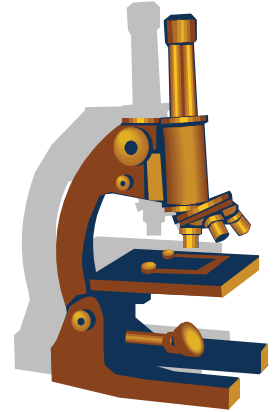
A real life situation:

Mr. Jones is a maths teacher. He has a particular problem with Alex. Alex often gets up out of his seat and wanders around the room. Mr. Jones decides that he needs to work on this issue. In one lesson, Alex gets up and goes to talk to another student. Mr Jones' first thought is to say, "Alex, don't get up out of your seat without asking. Go and sit back down before I give you a five minute detention.' He then decides to rephrase his statement in a more positive way. He says, "Alex, I'd like you to choose to sit back in your seat. Thank you." Alex looks up, mumbles something and then returns to his seat. Mr. Jones chooses to ignore Alex's secondary behaviour. He waits a few minutes then goes up to Alex and thanks him for making the right choice. Mr. Jones knows that if Alex gets up again he can expand the statement by adding in a consequence as a choice. For example—'Alex, you had the choice to stay in your seat **and** you chose not to...

List of common directions rephrased in a positive way (eg. Don't into do!)

Hand's up if you want to say something, thanks.	
I'd like you to choose to sit down now. Thankyou.	
Kylie, need you to get on with your work, thanks.	
Now, let's see if we can be a lot quieter, thanks.	
We take our outdoor coats off when we come into the classroom.	
Mobile phones should be kept out of sight	
We get to lessons on time...that is the expectation.	
We follow instructions first time	

Either...or...choices

How to do it:

- Give students a clear choice between complying with a request or choosing the inevitable consequence
- Choices often remove the element of confrontation
- Always finish the choice statement with a 'thank you'
- If possible, give them a choice of ways to comply.

The Sciency Bit:

We want students to take responsibility for their own actions, whether this is in the way they approach their studies or in the way that they behave. Students essentially have two choices in the classroom: either they do as the teacher requests or they choose to take the consequences. If we make the choices as simple and as clear as possible, then it is often enough to prevent the behaviour recurring or escalating. Sometimes a choice allows a student to save face and this reduces the risk of a confrontational situation developing. We cannot make anybody do anything but we can help them to make better choices.

A real life situation:

Mr. Savage is teaching a class with a particularly disruptive student called Andy. During the lesson Andy snatches a pen off another student. They then start to have an argument. Andy throws the pen across the room. Mr. Savage quickly reacts by saying, "Andy, that is not unacceptable behaviour. I want you to come outside with me right now. Thank you' Andy replies, "It's not me...it's him! I'm not going out the room". Mr. Savage moves towards Andy and says calmly, "Andy, you have two choices. Either you choose to come outside with me now to discuss your behaviour or you choose for me to get a senior teacher to remove you from the room. What's your choice?" Andy sighs loudly, pushes his chair out noisily and then storms out of the room. Mr. Savage chooses to ignore Andy's secondary behaviour and explains to the class that he is going outside to talk to Andy for a couple of minutes and that they should continue to work as well as they have been. He goes outside and talks to Andy. Mr. Savage knows that removing Andy, and talking with him in private, will prevent Andy from playing up to an audience.

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You can't make me!

How to do it:

- When a student challenges you by saying, "you can't make me!" then agree with them and then expect them to do it anyway
- Always use with the 'walk away' to give compliance time.

The Sciency Bit:

Some students react in inappropriate ways when challenged by teachers. They often refuse to do what you ask and add, "you can't make me!" This is a natural reaction when an organism feels threatened. The blood supply to the higher parts of the brain is reduced and the 'fight or flight' response kicks in. The reality is that you can't make anyone do anything. Often teachers then feel instantly disabled and give in to the little voice in their heads saying, "Oh I cant? Want to bet on it? We'll soon see about that you little…"

As the rational adult, it is much easier to agree with the student and expect them to do what you asked anyway.

A real life situation:

Kelly and her friends have already been given a choice to get on with their work or get a formal warning. Unfortunately Kelly has continued to turn around and disrupt others. Mrs. Edwards goes over to her (using physical proximity) and says, "Kelly, If you choose not to get on with your work then you will be choosing to move seats." The rest of the group have been trying to get on with the task.

Kelly becomes angry and says, "You can't make me move seats!"

Mrs. Edwards calmly responds by saying, "You're right Kelly, I can't make you move and I'd like you to choose to have your work finished in 5 minutes, thanks!"

Mrs. Edwards then turns away and gives Kelly 30 seconds of compliance time.

If she continues to refuse then you can just add—'it was your choice and you made the wrong one. You have chosen to have a senior member of staff called.

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Mum's the word!

How to do it:
- The conditional statement, "When...then..." can be used in a wide range of classroom situations
- It works very well when linked with other strategies such as 'the

The Sciency Bit:

This is one of the most common strategies used by parents. For example, "When you've eaten all of your dinner, then you can have some ice cream." In some books it is called "Grandma's rule". Students need to identify cause and effect. Teachers can help students by using this rule when correcting behaviours.

This strategy is more effective when used with others such as 'the choices', the 'walk away' and the verbal expectation.

It is such a simple technique and it tells the students the desired behaviour.

A real life situation:

"Trevor, *when* you've put up your hand *then* I will answer your question."

"Christina, *when* I've finished listening to what Britney has to say, *then* I will listen to your side of the story!"

"*When* everyone is sat down, in silence, *then* I will let you go off to Lunch."

When everyone finishes *then* we can play that game you like!

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Double 'what' questions

How to do it:
- Use refocusing questions as directions for students;
- Instead of using 'why?' use 'what?';
- If you use 'what?' twice you are likely to get more useful information;
- Use it sparingly with the 'choice'. Don't sound sarcastic!

The Sciency Bit:

Refocusing questions are a very powerful tool in behaviour management. They stop teachers sounding like they are being confrontational. They challenge the student to actively accept responsibility for their behaviour without any element of blame. The 'double what' allows you to gain a students attention, make eye contact, give them an opportunity to engage in a conversation and give them a choice of how to move forward. It often works well with the 'maybe…and…"

A real life situation:

The Design and Technology class are finishing off their evaluations of a project. The teacher has asked the class to work on their own because it is exam work. Billy is wandering around the class. The teacher moves towards Billy and says:

"Billy, I notice you're not at your desk. What are you doing?" (first what)
Billy replies, "nothing!"
"What should you be doing? (second what)
"I dunno!"
"You should be finishing off your evaluation. Choose to (or 'I need you to') sit back down and carry on with your work now. Thanks"
"I was looking for a rubber"
"Yes you were looking for a rubber and I need you to finish this work before the end of the lesson. I will come over with a rubber and have a look at the work you have already done"
Billy sighs loudly and scrapes his way back to his seat.
The teacher ignores this secondary behaviour, gets a rubber out of his stationery pot and walks over to Billy. Billy is scribbling away. He had obviously found a way around not having a rubber. Thank him for complying and say 'because you're getting on with your work then we can….

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Using I instead of U!

How to do it:
- Use a four part I statement.
- Part one is a reference to the behaviour—separate the behaviour from the person.
- Part two is a cause and effect statement (ie how the behaviour affects others)
- Part three is how the behaviour makes you feel (This is the I statement)
- Part four is a choice redirection for the desired behaviour.

The Sciency Bit:

This type of technique helps to remove blame or conflict from a behaviour management intervention. The use of the personal pronoun 'I' helps to separate the behaviour from the person. This stops a students self-esteem being attacked. It is important not to use 'you are a…'. Only label the behaviour. This technique is powerful because it helps students to work on their emotional intelligence. They are reminded about how their behaviour affects others. The use of a choice gives the student a clear message and a way out of the situation.

A real life situation:

Sammy-Jo is trying to get the attention of her art teacher. The teacher is working, closely, with another student and Sammy-Jo is preventing the teacher from concentrating on the support needed. The teacher stops her conversation with the student and apologises.

She turns to Sammy-Jo and says to her calmly:

"Sammy-Jo, when you are shouting at me (the behaviour not the person) it stops me from trying to help Simon (cause and effect) and I feel frustrated and annoyed (your feelings). I'd like you to choose to sit quietly and wait (desired behaviour) until I have helped Simon. I'll come and help you next."

Sammy-Jo slams her pen on the desk (secondary behaviour) and sits quietly. The teacher helps Sammy-Jo next but ignores the pen slamming until the end of the lesson when she asks to speak to Sammy-Jo as she is leaving.

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Name...direction...thanks!

How to do it:
- Identify the behaviour that you want (think about the positive and not the negative)
- Say the name of the student...get eye contact
- Say the behaviour that you want
- Say 'thanks' or 'cheers' or 'thankyou'
- Surf around the room—keep a check on the response—escalate if ignored!

The Sciency Bit:

People's names are important to them. It is the one thing that is special to us. Getting eye contact means that we are entering into a conversation.

If we say the behaviour that we want then that sets up a positive mental image and they are more likely to comply.

You are not entering into an argument because you are expecting them to carry it out. The 'thanks' reinforces this.

GIVE WAY

A real life situation:

Kyle has arrived at the lesson and is late. He sits down quickly. He is wearing a baseball cap. This is against the school rules.

Ms. Ridley says 'Kyle...baseball cap off...thanks' and then carries on explaining what they will be doing this lesson.

Kyle looks around for an audience. There isn't one. He takes off his cap. Ms. Ridley goes up to him later and says 'thanks for taking off your cap so quickly and reminds him that he needs to get here on time'.

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R U OK?

How to do it:
- Visually and physically surf the room
- Look for people who are going off task
- Say to them NAME+ "are you okay?" - you can even just give a thumbs up?
- You can say "Are you alright?' or "Is everything OK?" or "Do you need any help?"
- Respond in an appropriate way—don't enter into a debate.

The Sciency Bit:

This technique is effective because it is about 'clocking' a student who is about to do something! Students know when they have been clocked and this is a non-confrontational way of getting them back on task. All of the other students also know that they have been 'clocked'.

It is very difficult to say 'NO' to this statement and students will mostly say "Yes" and get on with it. If they do say 'No' then you can say "What can I do to help you?"/

A real life situation:

Fiona is getting restless because she is getting bored with the work that has been set. She starts turning around in her seat to talk to Carole who sits behind her.

Mrs Botterill spots this and says to Fiona, "Fiona…are you okay?". Fiona turns around and says " Erm…Yeh…I was just asking for a rubber". Mrs Botterill knows that this is an excuse and says "Fantastic…now you have a rubber you can get the rest of the work finished…we've only got 5 minutes left before we move on to that plenary game that you really like playing".

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What should you be doing?

How to do it:
- Visually and physically surf the room
- If someone is off task then move into social space (2m)
- Say NAME + "What should you be doing?"
- If they say "I don't know!". Then say "You should be X, Y or Z thanks"
- Walk away and use descriptive praise on a student (or group) who are on task.

The Sciency Bit:

Students need to be 'clocked' when they are off task. They know when you have spotted their off task behaviour. They are testing whether you are noticing. Nipping it in the bud means that further disruptive behaviours don't develop.

Saying "What should you be doing?" is a really open-ended question and invites a multitude of answers. If they say that they don't know then tell them what they should. Being positive helps to reinforce your message.

A real life situation:

Barry is poking Trevor who sits next to him. Trevor is getting annoyed. They are supposed to be doing a card sort. Mr Goodall says to Barry, "Barry...what should you be doing now". Trevor starts to say something and Mr. Goodall shows him the palm of his hand (a non-verbal signal to remain quiet). Mr Goodall repeats "Barry...what should you be doing!".

Barry says "Erm...finishing off the card sort but I can't when Trevor keeps messing it up". Mr. Goodall says "Well...the pair of you need to get it finished in the next two minutes because you are going to be starting off the answer session".

Mr. Goodall then turns away and goes to another table!

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