

MENTOR HANDBOOK

B6 | BEHAVIOUR: CONSISTENCY

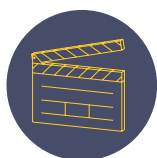
STUDY

KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR THIS MODULE

Your teacher can improve pupil behaviour and learning by understanding that:

- > Consistency entails predictably modelling and enforcing classroom systems. It is most effective when positive reinforcement moves pupils towards intrinsic motivation.
- > Consistency can improve teacher-pupil relationships and school culture by promoting shared values.
- > Over time, consistently enabling pupils to be successful can improve pupil wellbeing, motivation, behaviour and academic outcomes.

Get yourself into a strong position to mentor your teacher by working through the following:



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**READ THE EVIDENCE
SUMMARY BELOW:**

TEACHING CHALLENGE

Ms Mahrez is able to tackle disruptive classroom behaviour when it arises, but some of her pupils need constant monitoring to keep them on task and others do little more than the minimum required to complete the task. What can she do to create an even more productive learning environment?

KEY IDEA

Being consistent in sharing and reinforcing expectations supports pupil motivation. Over time it can generate an increasingly positive, stable and effective learning environment.

CONSISTENCY AND SYSTEMS

When teachers are predictable in how they act, pupils come to know what to expect, feel more secure in the classroom and can focus more on their learning (Rathmann et al., 2018). Being predictable entails being consistent in how we respond to similar behaviours by different pupils (both good and bad), and by consistently modelling expected attitudes, values and behaviours (IES, 2008).

One way to increase the predictability of our action is by sticking closely with a classroom behaviour system aligned with wider school expectations. Such systems often include (IES, 2008):

- > Proactive teaching of sanctions and rewards.
- > Reactive procedures for responding to common situations.
- > Basic policies for escalating persistent or extreme behaviour.

It is important that the system is simple to follow and easy to remember, for example with consistent language and non-verbal reminders for common classroom tasks. When this is the case, Ms Mahrez will be able to respond quickly without having to think too hard about every situation, and so is more likely to respond consistently over time.

The most effective systems are those that use reinforcement of positive behaviours more than reprimands (IES, 2008). However, teachers must also be careful not to over-use praise (Coe et al., 2014), using acknowledgement when expectations are met (“Thank you for putting your pen down, Jen”) and only praising when they are exceeded (“Well done for constructing a sentence that uses powerful persuasive language, Jamil”).

INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

Effective classroom behaviour systems also make the most of pupils’ intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is when pupils do something because they want to, perhaps because it is related to their identity or values. In contrast, extrinsic motivation is where pupils do something because of a sanction or reward. This distinction is important because pupils who are motivated intrinsically are more likely to behave better and persist longer with tasks when they get challenging (Lazowski & Hulleman, 2016).

Over time, teachers should aim to gradually reduce pupil reliance on external rewards or sanctions (IES, 2008). Ms Mahrez could do this by using intentional and consistent language that promotes challenge and aspiration, and helping pupils make links between their actions, successes and long-term goals. For example, when setting up a task which requires retrieval of prior knowledge, Ms Mahrez might say “successfully remembering this will help you to learn about figurative language, which are crucial for much of the English we’ll learn in the future and will also help you with everyday reading and writing”.

CONSISTENCY AND PUPIL-TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS

Effective whole school environments often include:

- > High expectations from teachers of pupil learning.
- > Consistent enforcement of collectively agreed upon disciplinary policies.
- > Effective classroom management (Chapman et al., 2013).

Therefore, individual teachers have a role in communicating shared values and improving classroom and school culture. They can do this by reinforcing expectations and following school behaviour policies in their classrooms and around the school. For example, challenging pupils on their manners in the corridor or upholding school rules in the playground.

Teacher consistency can also improve pupil-teacher relationships. Pupil perceptions are based on repeated interactions over time, so when teachers consistently manage the class in a controlled and positive way, pupils are more likely to believe that their teacher has their ‘best interests at heart’ and feel more ‘connected’ to school (Chapman et al., 2013). When this happens, pupils are more likely to interpret corrective interactions from their teacher – for example, being reminded to turn around and listen – as a supportive act rather than just a meaningless punishment.

CONSISTENCY BREEDS SUCCESS

In addition to improving pupil wellbeing and whole school climate, consistency over time can have a positive impact on pupil outcomes. When teachers regularly communicate a belief that everyone is able to achieve academically, their pupils are more likely to live up to those expectations (Murdock-Perriera et al., 2018). Furthermore, when teachers are able to consistently enable success, pupils will increasingly believe in their own ability, feel more positive about school and improve their outcomes over time.

In short, consistency is a powerful tool for promoting high expectations, enabling a positive whole-school climate and building trusting pupil-teacher relationships.

NUANCES AND CAVEATS

Teaching pupils strategies to develop their ability to self-regulate their emotions can also lead to more consistent pupil responses in the long term - for example, developing pupil emotional language to express the problems they are experiencing and self-calming strategies to support them to learn more effectively when the content is challenging (EEF, 2018). Supporting pupil success can also help (IES, 2008). Enabling pupils to be successful can minimise emotional barriers while developing emotional self-regulation.

SELECT

Before you observe, first select a **DEVELOPMENT AREA** to focus on. Next, familiarise yourself with the **FOCUSED DEVELOPMENT AREAS**, as you will zoom in on one of these during your observation. Finally, craft a **PRECISE TARGET** when you observe your teacher (examples are provided below).

DEVELOPMENT AREA	FOCUSED DEVELOPMENT AREA	EXAMPLE PRECISE TARGETS
Consistency of language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Teacher addresses pupils consistently and adopts language that reinforces the school's culture and values. > Teacher uses language that communicates the high expectations they have of pupils and supports them to have high expectations of themselves. > Teacher uses language that states positively what they need pupils to do. 	
Issuing sanctions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Teacher, with the support of a colleague, identifies which behaviours warrant which sanctions in line with the school's behavioural policy, and plans to address behaviours consistently and as positively as possible. > Teacher always delivers sanctions calmly, using language and non-verbals that are likely to de-escalate the situation and enable teaching and learning to continue. > Teacher consistently seeks to re-engage pupils after issuing a sanction. 	<p>If your teacher is...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Not doing it at all: With the support of a colleague, ensure you are clear on which categories of behaviour warrant which levels of sanction in line with the school's behavioural policy, including behaviours that arise as a result of issuing a sanction (secondary behaviours). > Doing it but needs some improvement: With the support of a colleague, plan how you will respond consistently to behaviours that require different levels of response in line with the school's behavioural policy. > Doing it well, but needs some stretch: With the support of a colleague, plan to use a consistent format for supporting pupils to change their behaviour, e.g. state the behaviour, state the consequence, tell them what to do to get back on track.
Consistent expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Teacher uses a format for delivering simple expectations and makes this into an efficient routine. > Teacher ensures pupils understand their expectations in relation to the conditions in which they are working (noise level, time limit, individually etc). > Teacher checks and supports pupils to meet expectations. 	

RECORD YOUR THINKING HERE

DEVELOPMENT AREA	FOCUSED DEVELOPMENT AREA	EXAMPLE PRECISE TARGETS
(select before observing)	(select whilst observing)	(select/write whilst observing)

OBSERVE

Consider the following questions based on a short (approximately 15 minute) observation of your teacher.

What was your teacher’s **previous** target? Are they meeting it? How do you know?

For the **DEVELOPMENT AREA** you are focussing on for this observation, what is your teacher already doing well?

Next, go to the previous page and select a **FOCUSED DEVELOPMENT AREA** to further zoom in on. Then select (from the examples) or write one **PRECISE TARGET** (bite-sized action) to coach your teacher on. You can choose to stick with the previous target if your teacher have not made enough progress yet.

How will you model the target to your teacher to show them what good looks like? What questions will you ask to check your teacher understands the model? For example, 'How it is different from your current practice?', 'What impact might it have on your practice and pupils?', 'What links can you see between the model and the module principles (below)?'

Reminder: Your model should help your teacher develop their ability in some of the following:

- > Use intentional and consistent language and non-verbal signals that positively promote challenge.
- > Apply rules, sanctions and rewards in line with school policy, escalating behaviour incidents as appropriate.
- > Respond consistently to pupil behaviour.
- > Apply high expectations to all groups, while ensuring all pupils have access to a rich curriculum.
- > Use consistent language and non-verbal signals for common classroom directions.
- > Contribute positively to the wider school culture and developing a feeling of shared responsibility for improving the lives of all pupils within the school.

Next, meet with your teacher to work through the 'Feedback' stage of instructional coaching. See the guidance on the feedback stage in the appendices of the Mentor Handbook for support.

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