

This guidance has been designed to inform teachers, parents and volunteers about why children behave in the way they do. The guidance also offers strategies to enable children's behaviour to be effectively transformed so that they can reach their full potential in education and for the future.

### **Why do children misbehave?**

- All Children are social beings whose primary motivation is to belong.
- Every action is purposeful towards social integration.

*"The direction in which a person moves, the goals which they have set for themselves, presents the only access to an understanding of the total personality. Behaviour is movement towards a goal that the person pursues, and it implies action for a specific purpose. It is impossible to understand a person correctly unless one recognises the purpose of his behaviour."* (Dreikurs 1962)

From an early age children will seek to find ways that will gain recognition, a feeling of importance and a sense of belonging. To the child it is not necessary for the behaviours to be constructive or socially acceptable-the only criteria, which determines if a particular behaviour will persist is whether it satisfies the child's need to belong.

When teachers and parents say they don't understand why a child is behaving in a certain way, what they are saying is that they are not aware of the purpose or goal of the child's behaviour.

One of the ways in which teachers can determine these goals is by analysing their own feelings and reactions to the pupil's behaviour. Teachers' reactions can often sustain and strengthen undesired behaviour. They should try not to follow their initial impulse.

If children cannot find their place through constructive, co-operative behaviours they will often seek to achieve their aim by pursuing "mistaken goals" for example:

- Attention seeking.
- Demonstrating power.
- Seeking revenge.
- Escape by withdrawal.

### **Pupil Behaviour Profile**

Pupils with behaviour difficulties may not understand the teacher expectations and need to be taught specific appropriate behaviour.

#### **Identify the Exact Circumstances:**

- The activities during which the child is non-compliant.
- The specific behaviour that occurs during those activities.
- The appropriate behaviour that you want the child to engage in.

#### **Attention Seeking Behaviour:**

- Demands excessive attention from the teacher.
- Frequently disturbs others.
- Talks out of turn.
- Makes silly noises.
- Constantly gets out of the seat.
- Interrupts lessons.
- Works only when receiving attention.

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**Teaching Appropriate Behaviour:**

- Talk to the child individually with no other pupils around.
- Discuss the exact problem.
- Choose one area to work on at a time.
- Explain- “When you talk during individual work time you don’t finish your work and you stop other children from getting on with theirs”.
- State the exact behaviour you expect from a child during an activity.
- Check understanding-get the child to repeat instructions.
- Remind the child of the appropriate behaviour.

**Child’s Go: Attention Seeking****Two Types of Behaviour:**

- Attacking behaviour.
- Defending Behaviour.

**Attacking Behaviour: Pupil’s Strategy:**

- Is a nuisance.
- The show off.
- The clown.
- The “smart Alec”.
- The walking question mark.
- Mischief maker.
- Pushy.
- Obtrusive.
- Latecomer.
- Instability .
- Embarrassing behaviour..
- Pencil tapper.
- Chatterbox.

**Attacking Behaviour: How the teacher feels and reacts:**

- Annoyed and irritated.
- “For goodness sake stop!”.
- Feeling the relief when the annoying behaviour ceases.

**Defending Behaviour: Pupil’s Strategy:**

- Lazy.
- Wants help.
- Bashful, shy.
- Fearful.
- Too tired.
- Untidy .
- Self-indulgent.
- Vain.
- Cute.
- Model child

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- Anxious.
- Frivolous.

**Defending Behaviour: How teacher feels and reacts:**

- “I must do something”.
- Sense of responsibility.
- Urged or coaxed into action
- Feeling of encouragement when pupil responds.
- In case of “model child”, flattered by child’s conformity.

**Suggested Strategies for the attention seeking child**

- Use planned ignoring. Praise the child nearby who is behaving appropriately.
- Acknowledge and reinforce appropriate behaviour. “What gets attention will increase”.
- Do the opposite of what is expected. Give permission for the child to continue unwanted behaviour.
- Have clear expectations-rules, boundaries and rewards.
- Employ a whole class reward system.
- Teach friendship skills.
- Express surprise at the behaviour.
- Pair with good role model.
- Give special job or responsibility.
- Label the behaviour-use “I” statements..
- Teach other children to use “I” statements.
- Consequences are a choice.
- Show an interest in the child.
- Circle time.
- Give unconditional positive strokes.
- Extend the “feelings” vocabulary.
- Plan for success and celebrate it when it happens
- Focus on the child’s abilities and strengths rather than disabilities and weaknesses. Stay “positive focused”.

**Childs’ Goal: Power**

**Two Types of Behaviour:**

- Attacking Behaviour.
- Defending Behaviour.

**Attacking Behaviour: Pupil’s Strategy:**

- Rebellious.
- Argues.
- Defiant.
- Truant.
- Contradicts.
- Disobedient.
- Temper tantrums.
- Bully.
- Bossy.

**Attacking Behaviour: How teacher feels and reacts:**

- Feels threatened.
- Feels angry.
- Feels authority is being challenged.
- Wants to win.
- “If you think I’m going to stand for this you’re mistaken”.
- “I’ll teach you to defy me”.
- “You won’t get away with this”.
- Feels victorious when behaviour is quelled.

**Defending Behaviour: Pupil’s Strategy:**

- Stubborn.
- Unco-operative.
- Dawdles.
- Forgetful.
- Disobedient.
- Refuses to do what they are told.

**Defending Behaviour: How teacher feels and reacts:**

- Feels exasperated
- Feels irritated.
- Feels challenged.
- Feels frustrated.
- “You won’t get away with this”.
- “You’ll fall into line or else”.
- Feels victorious when pupil does fall into line.

**Child’s Goal: Revenge****Two Types of Behaviour:**

- Attacking behaviour
- Defending behaviour

**Attacking Behaviour: Pupil’s Strategy:**

- Vicious
- ‘Tough guy’
- Cruelty
- Brutal
- Stealing
- Destruction.
- Vandalism.

**Attacking Behaviour: How teacher feels and reacts:**

- Feels badly upset.
- Feels deeply hurt
- Feels measure of trepidation.
- “what will he do next”.
- “what have I done to deserve this”.

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- “how could he do this to me”.
- “what an ungrateful person”.
- Feeling of immense relief and hope at any sign of improvement.

**Defending Behaviour: Pupil’s Strategy:**

- Sullen.
- Moody.
- Morose.
- Refuses to participate.

**Defending Behaviour: How teacher feels and reacts:**

- Feeling of injustice.
- Feels that the child is ungrateful.
- “well two can play this game”.
- “this won’t get you anywhere”.
- “it’s not my job to placate or appraise you”.
- “you can make the first move”.
- Feeling of self justification if child displays acceptable behaviour.

**Strategies for the child who needs to be in control:**

- Keep calm! Avoid a power struggle.
- Redirect and walk away- expect compliance.
- Don’t praise too soon- delay your reaction.
- Keep praise low key.
- Give power by responsibilities.
- Arrange opportunities for the child to feel important.
- Use ‘you’ not ‘I’ to give power.
- Have firm limits and boundaries- negotiate rules to give ownership.
- Use logical consequences applied to the whole class.
- Try to be positive and friendly and don’t take anything personally .
- Be prepared to listen.
- Avoid audiences-discuss behaviour in private.
- Reframe their actions.

**Strategies for revenge**

- Set achievable goals
- Set short-term targets.
- Highlight the positive.
- Avoid labelling.
- Use group support.
- Help pupil identify the problem.
- Chart and monitor progress .
- Give success feedback to the home.
- Plan activities that play to the pupil’s strengths.

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### **Child's Goal: Escape by Withdrawal**

#### **One type of behaviour:**

- Defensive Behaviour

#### **Defending Behaviour: Pupil's Strategy**

- Stupidity.
- Idleness.
- Indolence.
- Incapable.
- Inferiority.
- Won't mix.
- Solitary activities.
- Fantasy activities.
- Babyish ways.
- Hopeless.

#### **Defending Behaviour: How teacher feels and reacts:**

- Feeling of inferiority.
- Feeling of helplessness.
- Feeling of despair.
- "I just don't know what I can do".
- "I'm at my wits end".
- "I give up".
- "What can I do with him/her".
- Instances of improved behaviour are seized upon hopefully – "Perhaps he's a late developer".
- Expect nothing of pupil.

#### **Strategies for learned helplessness**

- Build confidence.
- Focus on past success.
- Make learning tangible.
- Provide tutoring ..
- Encourage positive self-talk.
- Make mistakes OK.
- Recognise achievement.
- Modify teaching methods.
- Show the child they are capable.

#### **Behaviour Modification**

Behaviour modification refers to:

*"The range of techniques in which the psychology of learning is applied in a planned and systematic way in an attempt to change the behaviour of oneself and others."*

#### **Major Underlying Principles**

- Behaviour can be observed, measured and described in objective terms.
- All behaviour is learned.

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- Behaviour is largely controlled by its consequences.
- Context is important.
- You predict the outcome before intervening. The approach is therefore open and unambiguous.
- The behavioural approach is carefully planned and systematic. Each step is monitored, evaluated and can, if necessary, be adjusted.

### **Conducting a specific behavioural review**

- Schools are complicated places and communication can be difficult for a variety of reasons.
- People have attitudes to behaviour as well as different ways of dealing with misbehaviour.
- In addition their formal (and informal) roles and status may vary considerably.

### **REMEMBER:**

- All behaviour is dependent on **CONTEXT**.
- There are **NO** simple **CAUSES OR CURES** for misbehaviour.
- Any cure will partly lie in the context and the relationship of the people involved.

### **Conducting a Specific Review:**

- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- What did they do?
- What was the context?
- How serious was the incident?

### **Practical Issues:**

- Who is going to collect the information?
- How is the information going to be collected?
- Who is going to collate the information?

### **Major Underlying Principles of the Behavioural Approach:**

- Behaviour is observable.
- Emphasis is on specific behaviours that are described as objectively as possible.
- Environmental factors are important in moulding the individual's behaviour.
- Approaches are based on knowledge and theories derived from the scientific study of behaviour and assume that all behaviour is learned.
- Focus is a positive one and assumes that behaviour can change for the better.

### **Behavioural Approach**

(A) Antecedents – what led up to the behaviour?

(B) Behaviour – the behaviour that is occurring

(C) Consequences – what happened after the behaviour?

### **Used to:**

- Reduce frequency of undesirable behaviour
- Increase the frequency of desirable behaviour
- Initiate and maintain new forms of response

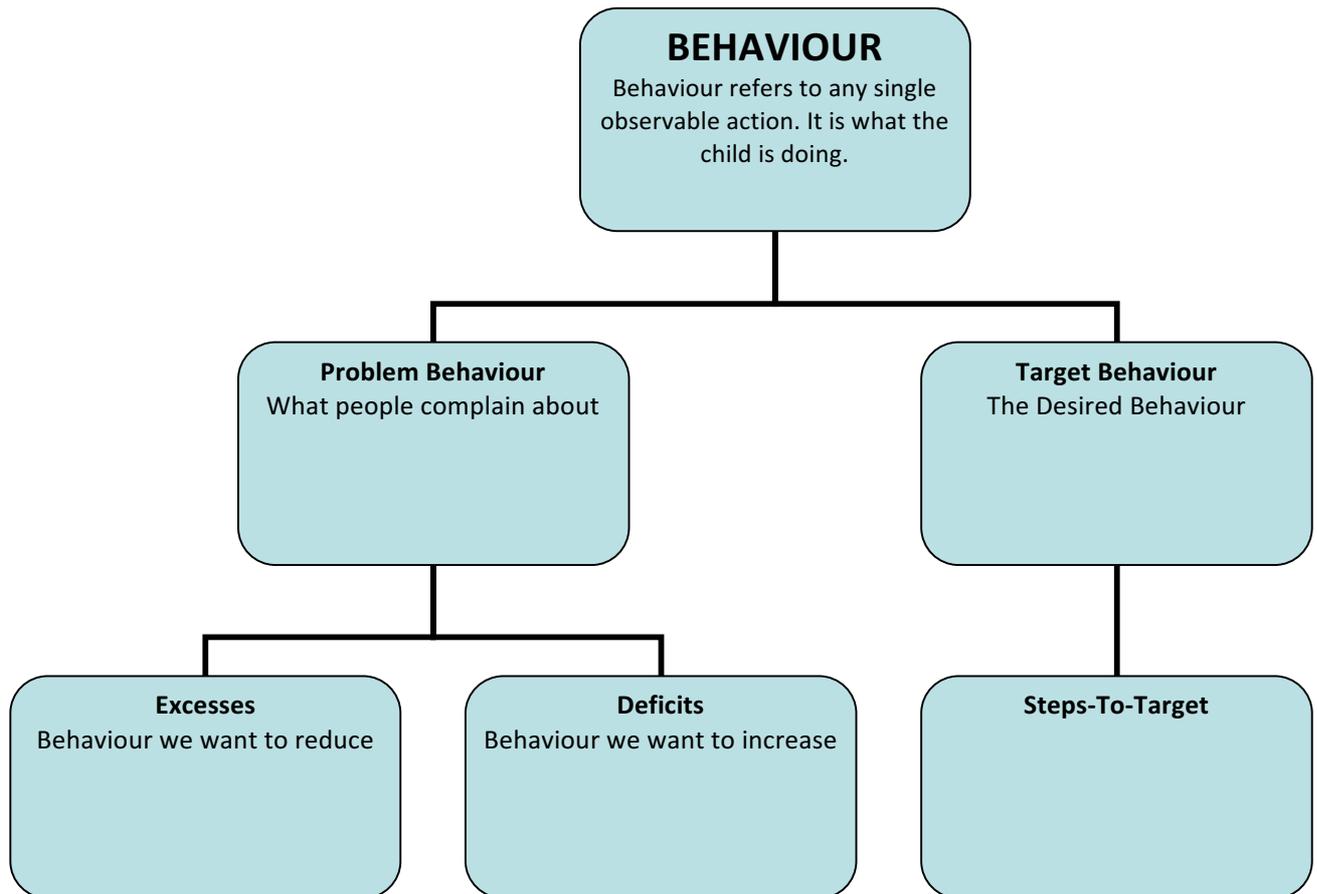
### **Criteria for implementing a behavioural programme**

- How annoying is the current situation to the class teacher?
- How dangerous is the current situation?
- To what extent is the current situation interfering with the pupil's progress and adjustment at school?
- Is it likely that you will achieve the desired outcome with intervention?

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- How central is the problem with the complex of problems stated?
- How accessible is the problem – can you get at it or will you have to deal with something else first?
- What is the likely cost of intervention in terms of time, money, energy and resources?
- What is the relative frequency, duration or magnitude of the problem? Are you satisfied that the proposed outcome is fair and reasonable?
- Is it likely that the new behaviours will be maintained in the situation that the pupil finds him/herself in following intervention?

**DEFINITIONS-**



**Reasons for careful observation**

- To identify more precisely the behaviours to be modified.
- To clarify one’s perception of the problem.
- Observation and measurement provide an accurate record.
- Observation helps us to select targets for intervention.
- Observation may reveal patterns of behaviour.
- It helps to evaluate the success of the intervention.

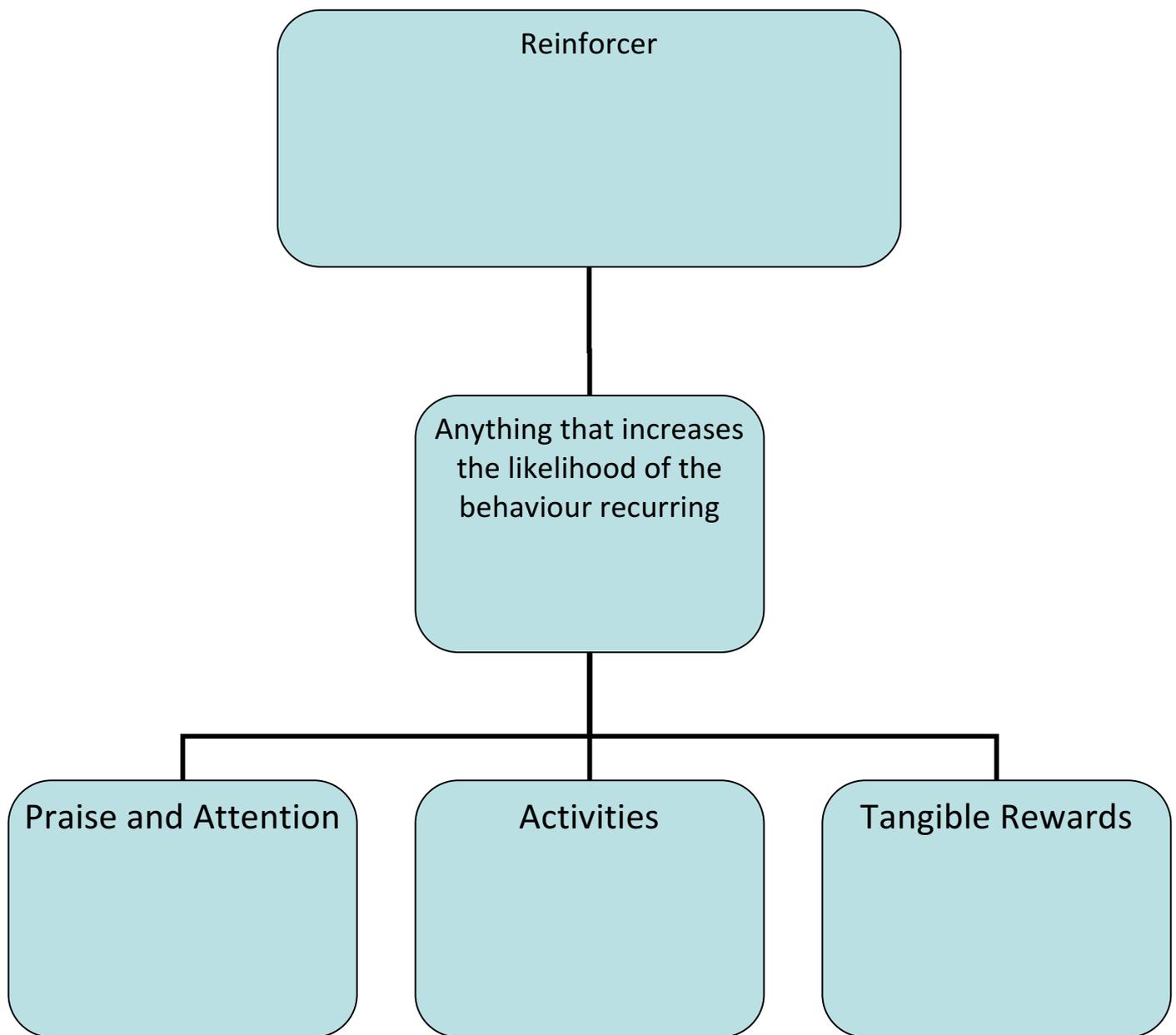
**Fuzzies and Performances**

<u>Fuzzy</u>	<u>Performances</u>
“He’s Disruptive”	He shouts out loudly when the reader talks to another child.
Jane can’t concentrate	Jane is unable to work for more than three minutes before leaving her patrol and talking to scouts in the other patrol.
Gillian is under-achieving	Gillian can master magnetic bearings, but is unable to convert them to grid bearings.
“Paul is uncoordinated”	Paul can run and jump but is unable to catch a cricket ball thrown five metres away.

**Behavioural productivity is increased by:**

- Grading the performance task into steps that are small enough to reduce the task demands to a point where successful performance is guaranteed.
- Ensuring that the graduated steps are obvious so that the pupil can monitor his/her own performance (and thus become aware of his/her success).
- Focusing attention on what has been accomplished already, instead of worrying about how much there is yet to do.
- Ensuring that reinforcement is contingent upon performance. Preferably, reinforcement should be ‘social’ and administered by someone important to the child; ideally, the class teacher him/herself. It is hoped that this will facilitate generalisation to other things that the teacher does.

**REWARDS-**



### **Rewards**

Reward your child as soon as s/he does what you want him/her to do.

To begin with, reward the child every time s/he does it.

Tell him/her why you are pleased with her/him.

### **I.e. be specific:**

- "I like the way you tidied your room".
- "Well done for getting 9 out of 10 for your maths homework".
- "Thank you for holding the door open for Mrs Thomson".

### **Form for exercise on meaning of disruptive behaviour.**

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- We need to transfer opinion and comment to hard data.
- Information about behaviour is most reliable when based upon hard data rather than opinion.
- This is particularly true about behaviour because it is such an emotional issue.
- It is therefore essential that any decisions in this area are grounded in reality.
- This is a critical part of the process of moving towards a Whole School Policy.

**Advantages of a Whole School Policy**

- Enables the school to focus on specific, agreed objectives.
- Provides an opportunity to share objectives with others.
- Helps to achieve consistency amongst all adults in the school.
- Provides a context for considering achievements.
- Creates an opportunity to with needs and skills of

**Common Attitudes for**

- It's someone else's
- It's the child's problem.
- It's the parents' fault.
- It's something that
- No-one can do anything
- If this school was something about it.
- All the family are like

**Behavioural Programmes**

- Define precisely the target behaviour.
- Observe and measure the child's usual behaviour.
- Select suitable reinforcers.
- Implement your reinforcement.
- Evaluate.

Identify the problems

match school requirements teachers and support staff.

**Misbehaviour** problem.

Re-state as performances

happened it early childhood. about it. organised better we could do that.

Decide the Priorities by:

- Listing Assets
- Listing excesses and deficits
- Agree the priority problem
- Decide the desired outcome

programme by applying

Establish the antecedents, background and consequences relating to the priority problem

**FIRST STEPS IN BEHAVIOURAL ASSESSMENTS:**

Establish Baseline

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## **DEFINITIONS**

- **BEHAVIOUR**- what the child does that we can observe.
- **POSITIVE REINFORCER**- Anything that increases the likelihood of the behaviour recurring.
- **NEGATIVE REINFORCER**- Something which when withdrawn, increases the likelihood of the behaviour recurring.

## **A properly written Behavioural Objective has several components.**

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**It tells:**

- Under what circumstances.
- Who.
- Does what.
- How often.

**Reinforcer- Anything that increases the likelihood of the behaviour recurring**

- Make consequences clear.
- Make sure that consequences follow the desired behaviour in a regular and predictable manner.
- Emphasise positive aspects.
- If possible, use a visual record.
- Don't take rewards away.
- If you can, let the child have an option of rewards.
- It may be possible to arrange a situation so that the child can win rewards, not only for him/herself, but for the group.

**Types of Reinforcer:****Praise and attention**

- 'Smiles'.
- 'Well Dones'.
- 'I like the way you tidied up.'
- 'Excellent work'.
- 'Good, you achieved full marks'.

**Activities**

- Choosing an activity in class.
- Taking part in sports classes.
- Producing things for special projects.
- Drawing.

**Tangible rewards**

- Extra time with sports activities.
- Written comments on work from teacher.
- Commendation from teacher.