



# **An Overview of The Essential Skills for Classroom Management**

Townsville SHS 2015



# It is important to understand the significance of:

- clearly stated expectations regarding learning and behaviour (i.e. the language of expectation)
- the crucial role of acknowledging appropriate behaviour, both verbally and non-verbally (i.e. the language of acknowledgment)
- the correction of inappropriate behaviour in a timely, least-to-most intrusive manner (i.e. the language of correction).



The Essential Skills Core Learning Component emphasises teacher's language, both verbal and non-verbal to focus students' attention, as well as the importance of positive teacher— student relationships developed through the learning process.

The 10 Essential Skills for Classroom Management are:

<u>Essential Skill</u>	<u>Description</u>
■ Establishing expectations	Making rules
■ Giving instructions	Telling students what to do
■ Waiting and scanning	Stopping to assess what is happening
■ Cueing with parallel acknowledgment	Praising a particular student to prompt others
■ Body language encouragers	Smiling, nodding, gesturing and moving near
■ Descriptive encouraging	Praise describing behaviour
■ Selective attending	Not obviously reacting to certain behaviours
■ Redirecting to the learning	Prompting on-task behaviour
■ Giving a choice	Describing the student's options and likely consequences of their behaviour
■ Following through	Doing what you said you would



# The Balance Model

The Balance Model as described by Christine Richmond is made up of three sets of information (Richmond 2002):

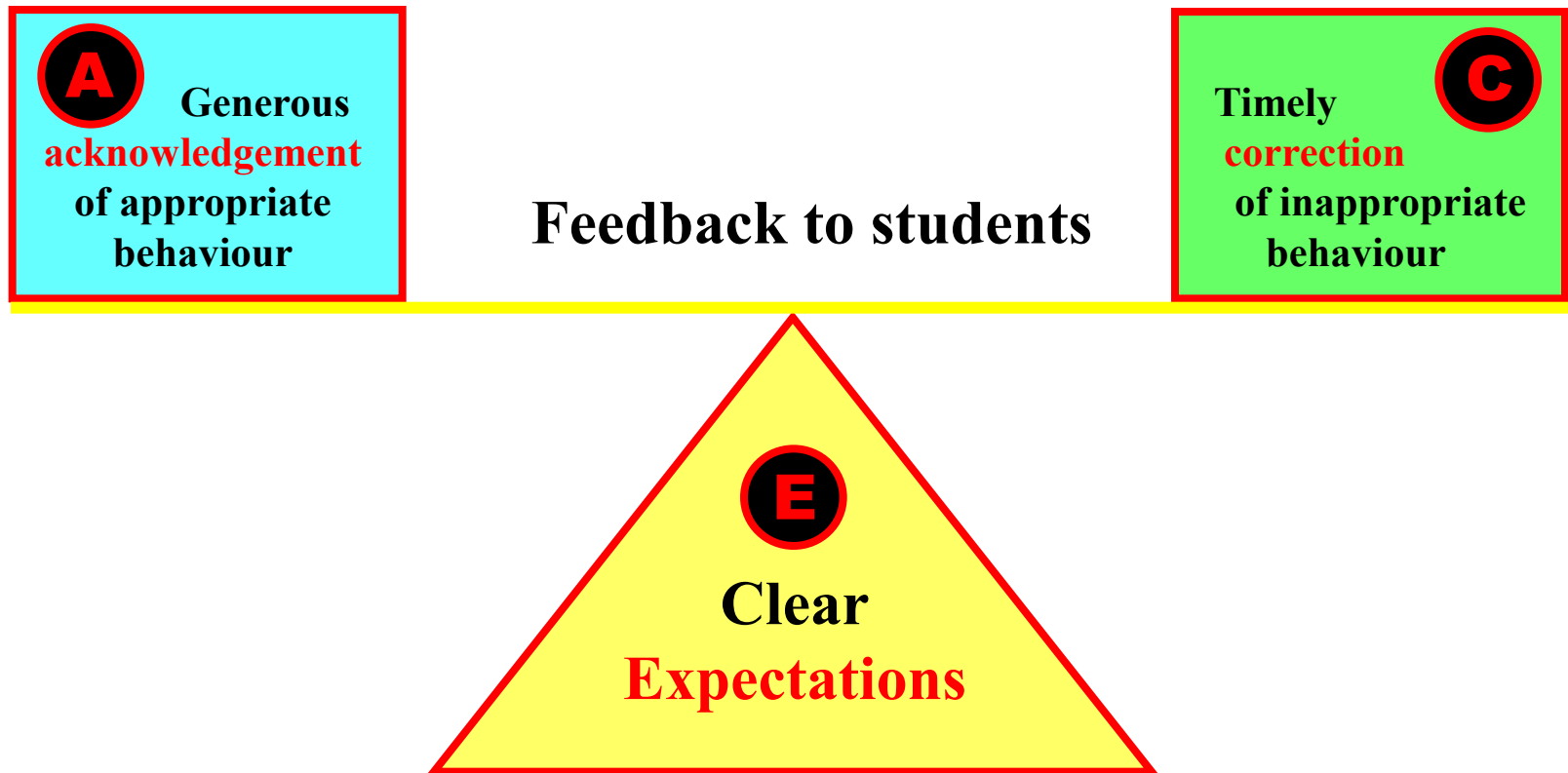
1. The strategies teachers use to teach their expectations to students.  
The Language of Expectation.

2. How teachers acknowledge students when they are behaving appropriately.

The Language of Acknowledgement

3. How teachers correct students when they behave inappropriately.  
The Language of Correction

# The Balance Model of Behaviour Management





# Skill 1    Establishing expectations

**To clearly articulate and demonstrate the boundaries of pro-social behaviour**

It is important to have clear boundaries for social behaviour so that everyone is clear about what is, and is not, regarded as responsible and safe in a particular context.

**3-5 short, simple, clearly defined rules/expectations**

**Make rules positive to draw attention to appropriate behaviours**

**Refer to rules frequently**

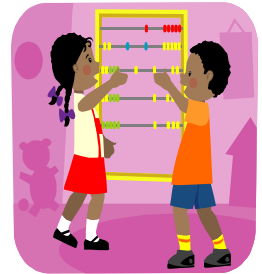
**Discuss relevant scenarios (positive and negative)**

**Discuss possible consequences (positive and negative)**

**Model, model, model**

**Refer to rules when they are being followed, not just when they are not being followed**

**Publish rules/expectations/consequences where students can read them**





## Skill 2 Instruction giving

### **To give a clear direction about what to do**

1. Clear, short instructions help students understand what you expect them to do.
2. Instructions help students organise what they are required to do.
3. Instructions cue to students that they need to be actively engaged with the curriculum.



**Give instruction from a designated point in the room**

**Gain attention with either verbal/non-verbal prompts**

**Wait and Scan (Skill 3)**



**Give 1-2 Descriptive Encouragers (Skill 6)**

**Start instruction with a verb**

**Use calm, firm, friendly, measured tone**



**Make instructions short and clear (5-7 min)**

**Use visual cues to assist**

**Ensure expectations are clear (Skill 1)**



**End the instruction with “*Thanks...*”**

**If necessary, move toward student/s not ready**

**If still necessary, when in close proximity, repeat instruction**

**If necessary follow through with choice and apply consequences**



## Skill 3    Waiting and scanning

**To wait and look at your students for 5–10 seconds after you give an instruction**

1. It gives students time to process the direction.
2. It indicates non-verbally to students that you mean what you say; increasing compliance.
3. You avoid filling all the available time with excess talk which can inadvertently train the class to stop listening to your voice.



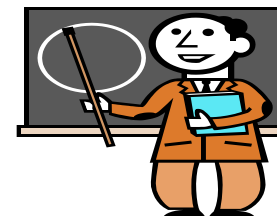
Wait for 5-10 seconds after you have given an instruction (this varies according to the needs of the children)

Stand still and face the group to encourage a period of quiet focus

Use this short time to think ahead and calm yourself

Scan the group and link with a 'Descriptive Encourager' or 'Redirection' as necessary

*(eg... Vera has her pen down... Janet is sitting up straight... Gavin has his book out and eyes are on me...)*





## Skill 4 Cueing with parallel

**To acknowledge students' on-task behaviour with the intention of prompting others to follow suit**

1. It cues other students to match the behaviour that is being acknowledged.
2. It is an alternative to a redirection, so can help you to avoid nagging or becoming too directive.
3. It contributes to a positive tone in the classroom.

Scan group regularly... student is off-task, acknowledge and praise someone in close proximity

Acknowledge that person with a descriptive encourager

Follow up with a low-key acknowledgement once on task

### Verbal Language...

Descriptive encourager: "Daniel, I can see you writing"

Praise: "Well done Melissa"



### Non-Verbal Language...

Smiling

Finger signing

Close proximity

Touching of students' materials

Touch book/work of those on-task. When students off-task go back on-task, calmly go back and touch their work





## Skill 5 Body language encouraging

**To intentionally use your proximity, body gestures and facial expressions to encourage students to remain on-task**

1. It takes no time to do.
2. It promotes a positive tone in the classroom.
3. Body language is an integral part of communication and strengthens relationships.
4. It promotes on-task behaviour when used intentionally.

Triple 'P' – *Praise, Prompt and Push Off*

Touch work of on-task students

Smile

Eye contact

Nod, Thumbs Up

Hand signals / Sign Language

Peripheral Vision: scan class regularly while working with students or group

Personally Understood Signals (PUS)

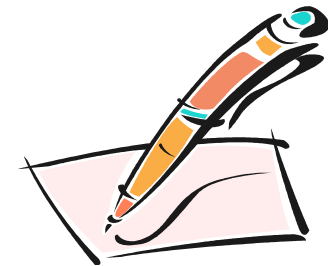
Hats off

Sit in chair properly

Come here

Turn around

Quiet etc...





## Skill 6 Descriptive encouraging

**To encourage students to become more aware of their competence by describing exactly what you see or hear from them that you want them to repeat more frequently**

1. It describes to students the behaviour that you know will help them to learn. This has a positive training effect.
2. It reinforces the rules.
3. It promotes a positive, supportive learning environment.
4. It focuses on strength and is esteem building.
5. It stimulates students to take risks in terms of behaviour. They become more able to display the courage to tackle difficult work, or practise self-control.
6. It gives students information about their competence.
7. It directs attention to strategies that are useful for problem solving.
8. It strengthens your relationship with students.



Describe the positive behaviours you see or hear  
e.g. *“Steven has started work”*; *“This group is on task”*



Use privately to individual students

Use a respectful tone

Have genuine intent

Use frequently

Use collectively to the group



Send home positive notes to parents regarding positive behaviours



## Skill 7 Selective attending

**To intentionally give minimal attention to safe off-task or inappropriate behaviour**

1. It avoids unintentionally reinforcing off-task or disruptive behaviour, decreasing the likelihood that this behaviour will be repeated.
2. It gives you time to think of how to handle the student's behaviour in a way that is productive.
3. It gives you time to attend to other students who are on-task.
4. It sends a message to all students about your expectations.
5. It is a powerful modelling device saying, "I can stay focused on my work despite the disruption."
6. It is a deliberate process used within a discrete timeframe, having a beginning and an end.

*Use when student is displaying off-task or inappropriate behaviour that is not seriously disrupting others.*

*Be ready to use a descriptive encourager, or if necessary give choice/warning*  
Keep student in peripheral vision

Attend to student when: on-task; begins to seriously disturb others; off-task behaviour is maintained over extended period of time

Praise-Prompt-Push Off

Prompt-Pause-Push Off

Use of 'Vaseline eye'





# Skill 8    Redirecting to the learning

(not the behaviour)

**To respectfully prompt the student who is off-task or disrupting others, initially with a redirection to the learning**

1. Initially, it provides a least intrusive, positive, learning-focused prompt to resume on-task activity; reducing the need for further correction.
2. It puts the responsibility for decision making onto the student.
3. It reinforces the importance of on-task behaviour.
4. When linked with giving a choice, it reinforces to the student or group, information about your expectations and the likely consequences of the choices given.

## **Non-Verbal:**

- Non-Verbal redirection (*eye contact, head/hand movement, smile etc*)
- Proximity
- Pause in talk
- Non-verbal directional action

## **Verbal**

- Verbal redirection (*curriculum refocus*)

## **Oral redirections include:**

- \* Individual close talk
- \* Questioning to redirect (*Where should you be? /What should you be doing?*)
- \* Humour
- \* Redirection given
- \* Oral directional phrase
- \* Call student's name
- \* Across room to individual



*Remember the impact of body language, tone of voice, proximity and facial expression. Be calm, clear, firm and positive in tone.*



## Skill 9 Giving a choice

**To respectfully confront the student, who is disrupting others, with the available choices and their logical consequences**

1. It provides the student or group with information about your expectations and the logical consequences of the choice.
2. It puts the responsibility for decision making onto the student.

Use after a redirection hasn't worked

In close proximity

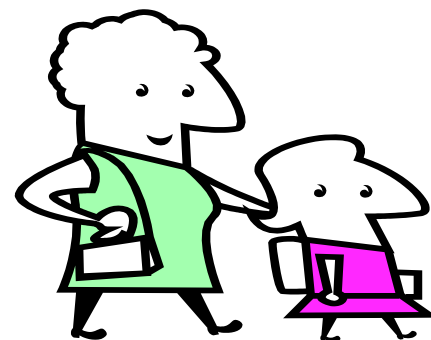
Using a calm, measured and firm voice  
*"Your choices are ..... or ....."*

Walk away and scan back intermittently

Allow time for choice to be made

FOLLOW THROUGH (Skill 10) with consequence if choice not made

Post lesson discussion might be effective





# Skill 10 Following through

**Resolute, planned action in the face of on-going disruptive behaviour that is seriously disturbing the learning environment or is extended off-task behaviour**

1. It clearly establishes that you mean what you say.
2. It models assertive behaviour in the face of threat.
3. It models morally courageous behaviour.



Demonstrate confidence using appropriate body language and a calm, firm voice

Consider removing the class from the problem if necessary

Do what you planned and said you would do

In a crisis event send for help immediately

Reassure the class

Take notes in objective language and date and sign it

Review behaviour management plan if necessary

Debrief with a colleague privately (not in public eg staffroom)

Follow up with a class discussion/post lesson discussion

Take a short break if you need to (be responsible for your emotions and behaviours)



# **DEBRIEFING / DEFUSING**

Debrief as soon as possible and when calm

Staff need to support those involved in the trauma  
(seek professional assistance if necessary)

A supportive school environment will  
provide for debriefing

Time spent on debriefing is an effective use of time  
Get those involved to write what happened or draw if it is younger students

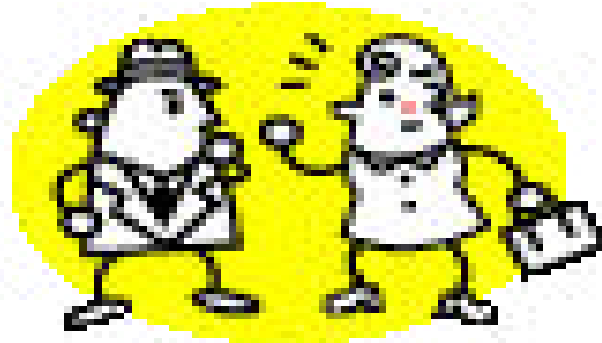


# THINGS TO AVOID

Confrontation

Sarcasm

Putdowns



Unfinished business – it's the *certainty* of the consequence being applied and NOT the *severity*

Invading personal space

Showing emotional arousal

Getting into a power struggle

Making choices sound like threats



# **GAINING ATTENTION**

## **For individuals:**

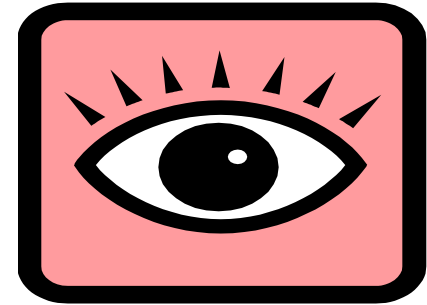
Cue with parallel acknowledgement

Call student's name

Gain eye contact

Move to student

Eye or head movement to close student who is listening to pass on message



## **For Whole class or Group:**

### **Verbal Cues**

Chant/sing “1,2,3...” they respond “eyes on me”

Directional phrase eg. Stop, look, listen

Counting down

### **Non-verbal cue**

Turn off lights

Play music

Bell

Clap pattern

Hand in the air

Pause and stand in “*direction giving spot*”





# **RE-ENTRY AFTER TIME OUT**

***Re-entry is a CRUCIAL process to changing behaviour***

*Before a student re-joins the class again they must be able to articulate what they did, what they should have done, what they agree to do if they re-enter and importantly what will happen if they choose the same behaviour.*

## **Re-entry Questions:**

*What did you do?*

*What rule did you break?*

*What can you/we do to fix it?*

*What could you do instead next time?*

*What should happen if this behaviour occurs again?*

*Only when the teacher is satisfied that the student is genuine and understands what they are to do, should they accept the student back into the class/group*

*At no time should a student re-enter a class without this process*



# *10 Essential Skills*

Language of Expectation:

- 1. Establishing Expectations**
- 2. Giving Instructions**
- 3. Waiting and scanning**
- 4. Cueing with parallel  
acknowledgement**



# Language of Acknowledgement:

**5. Body Language**  
**Encouraging**

**6. Descriptive Encouraging**



## Language of Correction:

**7. Selective Attending**

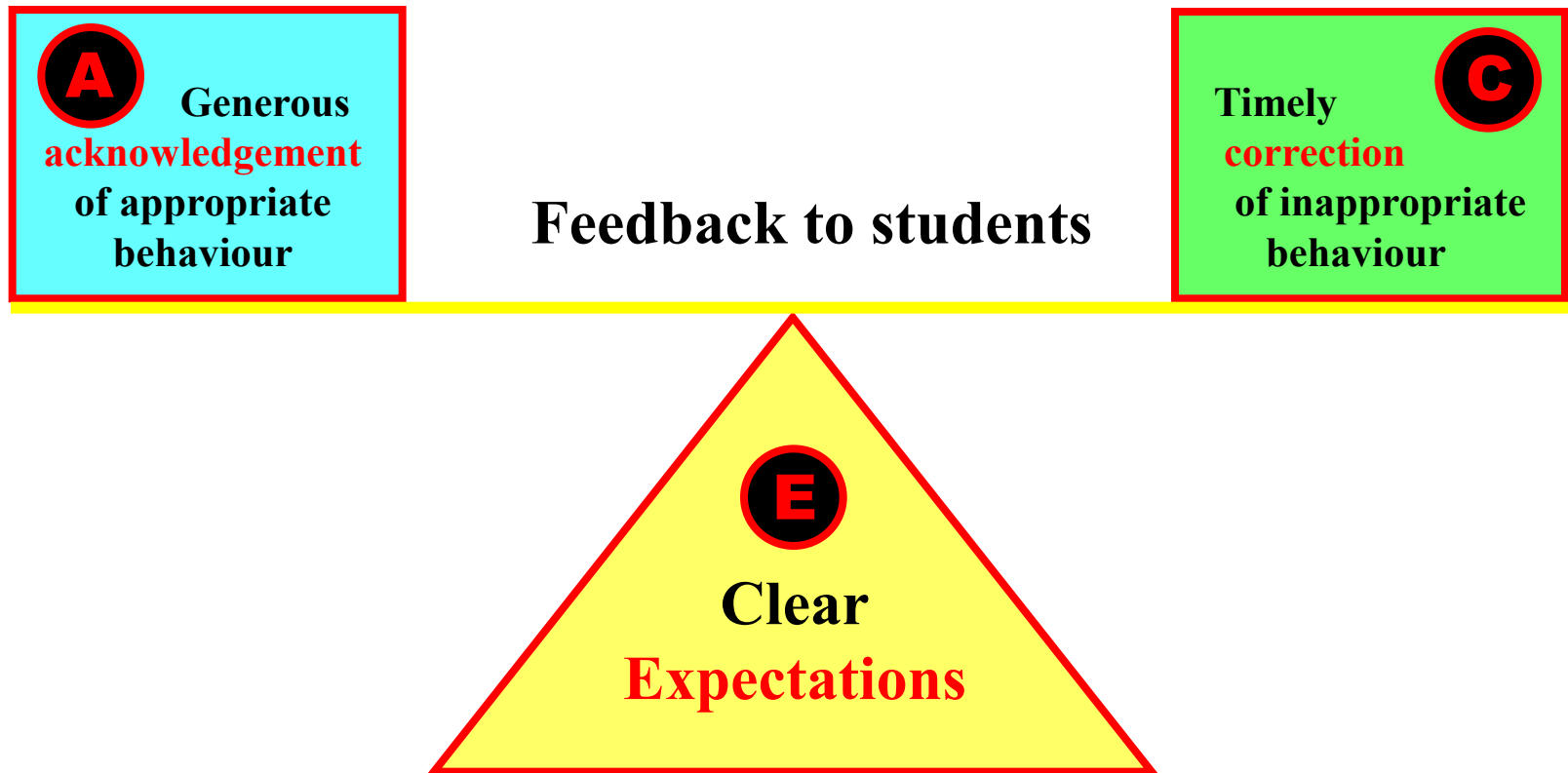
**8. Redirecting to the Learning**

**9. Giving a choice**

**10. Following Through**



# The Balance Model of Behaviour Management





**When a teacher is said to be ‘in balance’ in the classroom, there are:**

1. Clearly articulated expectations to students.
2. An observable evenness (balance) in the use of language, verbal and non-verbal to acknowledge appropriate behaviour and correct inappropriate behaviour.
3. The language of encouragement, acknowledgement and correction are used in a balanced consistent manner