

Incentives

Acknowledging positive behaviour

Keep it simple

Classroom management begins with having clear, consistent and well-communicated rules and expectations about how the class and school will function. These rules should be:

- decided with students
- explicitly taught
- frequently referenced
- regularly reviewed.

Using a positive, supportive approach is more effective than using punishment and negative comments. Aim to 'catch them being good'.

Why incentives?

Recognising and acknowledging achievement and positive behaviour is an important part of effective management and may include offering incentives.

Incentives and rewards should be negotiated with students and should match their age and developmental level. They should be fair and consistent and avoid any cultural or gender bias.

It is a good idea to check how individual students respond to public praise before using this type of acknowledgement for achievement. Keep track of which students are being praised and reinforced to ensure that all students are receiving appropriate acknowledgement.

Positive reinforcers

Examples of positive reinforcers include:

- timely positive feedback and acknowledging effort
- recognising contributions to the community (citizenship)
- recognising participation in special events such as sports days
- merit certificates that link to the whole-school reward system, such as assembly awards
- raffle tickets for end of session, day, week, month, term prizes
- class star chart with clear criteria for earning rewards that are linked to specific rules
- class jobs and responsibilities
- free choice activity for a set time, such as computer, craft, sport activities
- whole-class celebrations, excursions or outings
- positive contact with family in person or via certificate, email, letter or phone call
- articles in the school newsletter and positive referral to executive staff.

Involve students in collecting, counting, recording and monitoring progress.

Any system using concrete reward should be carefully monitored and 'phased out' over time as the student develops intrinsic motivation and self-monitoring.