

Expectations and Consequences

Expectations, Structures and Boundaries:

- support emotional, psychological, and physical safety.
- are an expression of what is important to us (our values) and what we expect of ourselves and each other
- provide points of reference for respectful interaction
- can be explicitly linked to [positive consequences](#) as opposed to rules which are more often directly linked to negative consequences

Language and Culture

- Changing our language, supports cultural change and a shift in mindset
- Instead of talking about "rules," consider referring to "expectations"
- Instead of using "sanctions," consider referring to "positive consequences"
- This supports the cultural shift away from consequences only being perceived as negative, towards focusing on the benefits experienced when everyone meets the agreed expectation
- With a cultural shift we can move away from being reactive to being proactive in teaching about pro-social ways to behave that helps everyone

Values Drive Behaviour

- Values drive behaviour and should therefore always be the starting point when trying to decide what behaviours will be most beneficial to any learning community.
- Values have to be agreed by and shared with everyone in the learning community. In this way everyone is responsible for respecting these values and living by the agreed expectations. Everyone is also accountable to each other.
- Rights (children's and human) should be at the heart of agreeing boundaries, routines and shared expectations about how people treat one another.
- In line with UNCRC Article 12 children and young people should be full partners in agreeing what the shared expectations and boundaries are.

Consequences

- They are simply the resultant experience of the actions we take (our behaviour)
- We need a shift in mindset away from consequences only being perceived as negative and focusing on the benefits experienced when everyone meets the shared and agreed expectations.
- We all need to experience consequences if we are to properly understand 'cause and effect'.
- They can be positive or negative, natural or imposed (usually by an adult)
- Children and young people need to understand consequences if they are to become both successful learners and responsible citizens. For example, if I work hard I get good grades, OR if I damage something I'll have to try to fix it. is
- They are about learning and are not about punishment.

Information Note

Positive Consequences:

- when promoted can make certain behaviours more likely in the future (i.e. reinforce behaviour - I liked the result of that so I'm going to do more of it.)
- when promoted, can feed into social modelling: when others see the positive effect of a particular action, they will be more inclined to try the same thing to get the same benefit.
- can be externally provided and include positive attention, praise and rewards [care should be taken to ensure rewards don't become tokenistic or have a negative effect on those who don't often receive them]
- can however also encourage internal motivation [for example, feeling good after positive feedback on a piece of work can encourage a learner to try to keep producing good work]
- when used proactively, often means you need to use negative consequences less.

Natural Consequences:

- are things that happen automatically, for example, a natural consequence of forgetting a coat could mean we get wet when it rains
- teach us about **cause and effect** and often provide us with opportunities to learn how to make better choices in the future
- in the context of educational settings, can be enough to help a child learn a better way of doing things without any intervention from an adult
- support the development of responsibility, independence, and motivation

Negative (Logical) Consequences:

When behaviour causes disruption or distress to others it should never be ignored or dismissed. It is not caring or fair to a child or young person to allow them to think being unkind is OK.

- are different to punishments: they don't cause shame, inflict harm, or force compliance. These consequences when delivered respectfully create learning opportunities. If used appropriately, consequences applied by adults can encourage the development of self-regulation skills and help learners become responsible citizens.
- can make a behaviour less likely in the future if it involves learning better ways of behaving
- should be related to the behaviour you want to discourage – **logical** for the learner
- should help learners think about the issues, help them learn to be responsible and accountable for their actions, and to look inward to learn how they could do things differently in the future
- should involve the question "what does this person need to learn?"

Principles for Logical Consequences

- If adults need to intervene and apply consequences the purpose should always be for the child or young person to learn the impact of their behaviour and an alternative way of behaving that doesn't cause damage or harm to them or to others. These are often referred to logical consequences.
- *Logical consequences* are related to what's happened, they are respectful, and they are reasonable. What does this mean in practical terms?
- **Related** - If a consequence isn't related to the behaviour then it's likely to be, or be perceived to be, a punishment, and is likely to cause resentment rather than be an opportunity for learning.
- **Respectful** - If a consequence is delivered in a manner that is humiliating or instill's fear, then the learner will focus on feeling bad and not on the learning opportunity.

Information Note

- **Reasonable** - If a consequence isn't reasonable, even if its related, it may be difficult to follow through cause resentment and make future consequences ineffective

Points to Remember

- There is no one definitive consequences list works for all learners
- If used appropriately consequences can build a learner's emotional health and strengthen relationships with the adults working with them
- Expectations convey the belief to learners - you think they have the ability to behave positively - this portrayed belief helps build learners self-esteem
- Consequences don't happen in a vacuum - they have to fit with an ethos and culture which helps learners understand, and help develop, expectations

Additional helpful resources and information

- Positive consequences: <https://janebluestein.com/2012/positive-consequences/>
- Children's Parliament have created a very helpful Hub for Rights Based Practice: [Dignity in School](https://dignityinschool.childrensparliament.org.uk/) [<https://dignityinschool.childrensparliament.org.uk/>]
- [CIRCLE Framework](#) is a useful tool for examining boundaries and routines at establishment and class level [<https://education.gov.scot/resources/circle-resource-to-support-inclusive-learning-and-collaborative-working/>]
- [Wee HGIOS](#) and [Learner Participation](#) are useful resources for examining ways to involve learners and families in school decision making [<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/self-evaluation/frwk20-how-good-is-our-school/> & <https://education.gov.scot/resources/learner-participation-in-educational-settings-3-18/>]
- Dix, P (2021) *After the Adults Change – Achievable Behaviour Nirvana*. Independent Thinking Press
- Baker, S (2023) *That Behaviour Book – The Simple Truth About Teaching Children*. Crown House Publishing
- Baker, S & M, Simpson (2020) *A School Without Sanctions*. Bloomsbury
- Maynard, N. & B Weinstein (2021) *Hacking School Discipline*. Times 10 Publications