

# Teaching and Learning Monthly Newsletter

SHARPLES  
SCHOOL



April 2025



## Summer Sunshine

The summer sunshine has finally graced us with its presence and with students enjoying the sunshine, I hope you also feel a little lighter with the dark and gloom beyond us.

With the summer sun, however, comes the arrival of GCSEs and Y11 suddenly realise 'all the time in the world' that they had at one point has now disappeared and they need to ensure they are working hard consistently.

It has been lovely to see Y11 in the library after school, a lot of students stay behind till 6pm to complete revision for the upcoming exams.

Their desire for success and ambition is being seen across the school and hopefully the results will pay off for them in the summer.

In this newsletter, I have chosen to focus on the use of rewards in the classroom.

The rewards pathway we use at Sharples is excellent and students are often very complimentary about the rewards they receive in lessons.

I do feel at this time of year, routines are so consistently embedded that we may sometimes forget to reward our pupils that are consistently excellent and so, here is a small reminder of that.

In this newsletter you can expect:

**Article on Rewards in the Classroom**

**Sharples Shoutouts and Celebrations!**

**National College Recommendations**

**CPD Book Recommendations**

**X / Twitter Shoutouts**

**ECT Corner**



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## Rewards and Praise

The behaviour pathway at Sharples has been designed specifically to support pupils and staff with their learning and to create an environment where students can thrive and succeed in all classrooms.

Alongside this, is the rewards pathway that has been developed and used consistently across the school. Students often talk positively about the reward system and enjoy receiving reward points for their efforts and contributions in class.

Often during this point of the year, staff may begin to forget about the rewards system (I am no stranger to this!) as the routines are set in place and students generally behave in an exemplary way. We may forget to use the points system and at times, the pupils who are most conscientious, are sometimes not praised for their consistently excellent behaviour.



There are also differing opinions on the use of rewards within the classroom. Some argue that rewards systems reinforce desired behaviours more frequently and help to cultivate a positive school ethos; others believe that the use of rewards systems undermine students' intrinsic motivation and the desire to learn or behave well for internal satisfaction. They argue that these motivations are simply being replaced by external incentives - but is this always a negative?

Students are young, immature and easily swayed. They often want to work to see outcomes improve and I don't think there is anything wrong with that. They are learning a vital skill for the future in improving their attitudes towards learning.

At Sharples, students are rewarded in numerous ways: ACE points, Bac reward points, form time breakfasts, reading rewards and challenges, end of year presentations, attendance awards, rewards trips and more!

The list is endless and as a school we undoubtedly do a fantastic job of utilising rewards in the classroom. This article outlines the benefits of using rewards and praise in the classroom and the various avenues this may take.

### Reward Pathway



The rewards pathway (pictured above) is something that students value, the majority of students at Sharples behave brilliantly. Students are often praised for their behaviour in the community and on trips, the use of the rewards system has been key in cultivating this culture.

Beyond this, the Points Promotion weeks are always a welcome from the students and its great to see them so excited by it! I also believe it is beneficial for teachers to understand why the varying rewards are used. The table below outlines this.

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<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Underlying Principle</b>
Verbal Praise	Immediate positive verbal feedback on behaviour or effort.	General encouragement - well done, good job etc.	Immediate Reinforcement, Social Recognition from peers and staff
Written Praise	Positive feedback conveyed in writing.	Comments on work, praise postcards/notes home, positive report comments, planner entries.	Delayed Recognition, Parent Communication, Formal Acknowledgement
Tangible Rewards	Physical items given as incentives.	Form time breakfasts, Sharples goodybags, Kindles for reading rewards.	Extrinsic Motivation, Concrete Reinforcement Recognition from peers and staff
Privileges	Granting special permissions or desirable roles/activities.	Front of queue passes, chip barm vouchers, film afternoons.	Non-Material Incentive, Status Enhancement Delayed gratification
Social/Public Recognition	Acknowledging achievements or behaviour publicly.	Displaying work, certificates ('Star of the Week'), assemblies, Headteacher awards/lunches, positive calls home, displays of grades 7-9.	Social Reinforcement, Modelling, Status Enhancement, Community Values
Class-Wide Rewards	Incentives earned collectively by a group for shared positive behaviour.	Form time attendance rewards, film afternoons.	Collective Responsibility, Teamwork, Group Motivation
Activity-Based Rewards	Rewards involving participation in special events or trips.	School trips, Nandos visits Alton Towers / Blackpool trips.	Experiential Reward, High-Value Incentive

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Research has shown that using praise and rewards often enhances student motivation to conform, behave appropriately and act according to the rules. Even if students are working more diligently because of the idea of a reward, they are still working harder and are engaging further with the material than they would have done otherwise. Furthermore, the development of a positive habit needs to take place over time, and the use of rewards might bridge the gap between initial extrinsic motivation and the development of more ingrained positive routines. In addition to this, utilising rewards and praise creates an environment of success. When one student is praised or rewarded for a behaviour, it motivates others to also act in the same way.

Beyond academic and behavioural outcomes, praise and use of rewards are recognised as being beneficial for students' social and emotional wellbeing. When students are recognised for their effort or achievement it can foster a sense of pride and boost self esteem and confidence. It can also support emotional regulation skills and support the development of resilience. For more vulnerable pupils, it also creates a recognisable environment where there is consistency in all aspects, including rewards. The school culture is shaped and made apparently aware by all members of staff so all students know what is expected of them and how to be rewarded for it.

Another aspect of rewards and utilising praise focuses on the idea of a growth mindset. We need to ensure when we are praising we focus on the work and the process that the student has undertaken, rather than focusing on the individual student. The table below outlines this further.

Person Praise	Process Praise
<b>Great job! You must be smart at this.</b>	<b>Great job! You must have worked really hard.</b>
<b>See, you <i>are</i> good at English. You got an A on your last test.</b>	<b>You really studied for your English test and your improvement shows it.</b>
<b>You got it! I told you that you were smart.</b> <i>Mrs. Winter's Bliss</i>	<b>I like the way you tried all kinds of strategies on that math problem until you finally got it.</b>

In order to utilise praise effectively, we should focus on controllable factors like effort, the strategies used, progress made and specific positive aspects of the work, rather than focusing on innate ability or intelligence.

This is something I am going to focus on personally in this term and ensuring when I am cultivating the desired environment in my classroom, it based on the praise of work and in turn I hope this motivates students further.

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# SHARPLES CELEBRATES!



Each month we want to shout out teachers who want to share excellent practice! The first 3 teachers to email [n.ayub@sharplesschool.co.uk](mailto:n.ayub@sharplesschool.co.uk) with an example of brilliant practice will receive a box of celebrations delivered to their classroom!



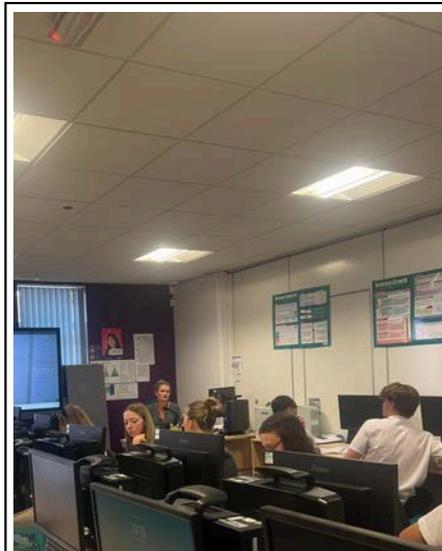
**Catherine Liddy**

Catherine is completely dedicated to the success of her students. She regularly hosts revision sessions for students beyond the school day and ensures a safe and secure learning environment for all. She also ensures students who speak a second language have the opportunity to complete additional GCSEs in their native language.



**Mia Cain**

Mia has shown excellent enthusiasm and passion for her subject during her time at Sharples. She uses rulers to ensure pupils are specifically being guided through the text and questions and clarifies consistently to ensure success for all. She was also a brilliant Mrs Birling in the An Inspector Calls production for Y11!



**Sophie Curzon**

Sophie has brilliant presence both in the classroom and on the court! Sophie ensures her lessons are engaging and focused by being relentless in her desire for success for her students. Her passion and enthusiasm for the subject has encouraged students to be involved with the subject beyond the classroom brilliantly.

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## National College Recommendations

### **Review**

This webinar provides tips and insights into the challenges we face in schooling, particularly in behavior management. It offers guidance on handling student behavior more effectively. The suggestions are very useful.

### **About the**

**Presenter** - A teacher of 20 years, Matt Bawler has extensive experience of teaching across all key stages, with a specialism in early years. Currently working as a head of early years and development lead for a school in South London, Matt teaches full time as well as overseeing wellbeing and mental health for staff and pupils across the school. Matt also runs external training for teachers, senior leaders and parents in London boroughs and beyond.



### **Behaviour Management: Is Challenging Behaviour Misunderstood?**

This webinar aims to unpick what is actually meant by 'behaviour' and encourage staff to think differently about how they perceive 'challenging behaviour'.

[CLICK HERE](#)



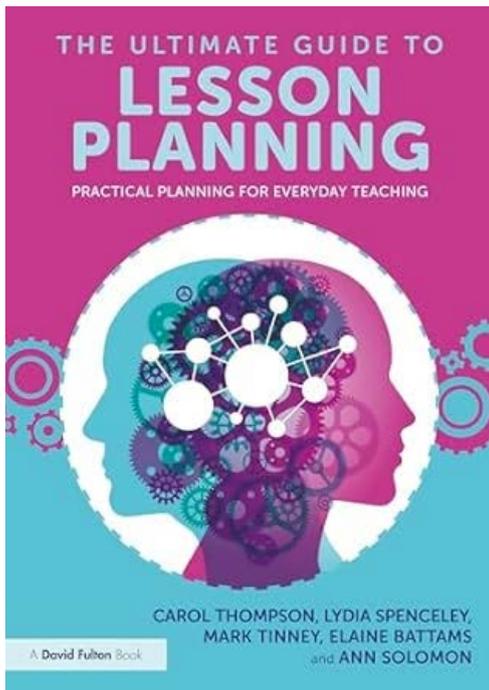
### **Develop a Growth Mindset to Facilitate Learning (Secondary)**

This webinar explores the benefit of a growth mindset, the impact that it can have on children's wellbeing and how to develop it in your secondary school.

[CLICK HERE](#)

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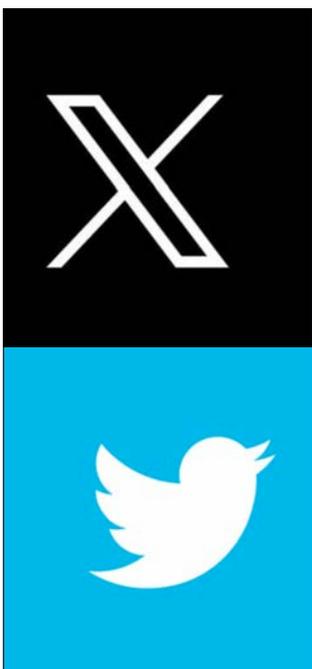
## Book and Twitter (X) Recommendations



### The Ultimate Guide to Lesson Planning

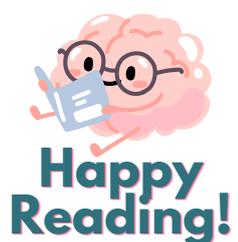
This practical guide will help you to plan evidence-informed, innovative lessons that can be adapted to meet your individual student's needs.

Modelled on a typical lesson plan, the book covers all aspects of planning such as learning aims, starting a lesson, resources and activities, embedding skills, and assessment. Each chapter features a wide range of activities and strategies that can be used every day and easily adapted for different learners. The chapters also explore what to do when lessons don't go to plan and how to use technology effectively to support learning. Throughout there are nuggets of useful theory to help you reflect not only on what works in the classroom but why.



<https://x.com/vinceboley/status/1916306765823566296?s=46&t=FKJE4qMjKGpckKbVUqG1Pg>

This link outlines Rosenshine's principles in 5 key ideas. It's a great quick read and a reminder of key components of a great lesson.



# 5 HIGH IMPACT & TIME EFFECTIVE MARKING STRATEGIES

Too much to mark, too little time. What is a teacher to do?

**Time is a finite resource, yet our marking workload can seem infinite. Therefore, we must look for effective marking strategies to help us deal with the seemingly insurmountable pile of books in front of us.**

## The Numbers

Undeniably, assessment and marking are vital parts of our role as educators. The evidence is clear that effective marking and feedback lead to significant improvements in pupil progress across the board. However, when you look at the numbers it is staggering how much our marking workload is dragging us down.

Firstly, if we assume a secondary teacher of a non-core subject teaches 10 classes of 30 students, with the requirement to mark a piece of work every half term (seems reasonable on the surface). Then that teacher is marking 1800 pieces of work a year. Spending just 5 minutes a piece will cost that teacher 150 hours over the course of a 38 week academic year. To put it bluntly, this exceeds the average PPA time by over 50 hours a year.

The way forward!

Here are some effective marking strategies to help take back time and take back control. Whilst maintaining your high-impact practice. You can also plan your marking using Teacher Toolkit's 5 minute marking plan.

### 1. Whole-Class Feedback

This can be a huge time saver. Firstly, collect a range of books from your class. Preferably a cross-section of SEND, Pupil Premium, Higher and lower attainers. Secondly, note down key strengths and common areas of improvement. Record your findings on a capture sheet. Finally, feedback to your class. Emphasise the positives (we do better with praise) and scaffold pupils through an improvement task.

### 2. Selective marking

We do not have time to mark everything, nor should we seek to. Select a particular task or section of work that you are going to provide more detailed feedback on. It does not have to be a big piece of work, just something meaningful. You could try the Yellow Box method to help.

### 3. Show me

Similar to selective marking, but putting the onus on the pupils. Ask the pupil to look through their work, with a highlighter and identify where they have demonstrated a particular skill, improvement, piece of knowledge or whatever it is that you are looking for. Next, get the pupils to hand in their work on that page (which saves a surprising amount of time) and mark that highlighted work.



## 5 HIGH IMPACT & TIME EFFECTIVE MARKING STRATEGIES

### 4. Check mark with conviction

A form of live marking. During the course of a lesson, insert clear points where pupils must get their work checked before moving on to a further point of the lesson or subsequent task. Certainly, a clear way to provide timely feedback. Though this does involve some preparation of an appropriate lesson.

### 5. Coded marking

All of the above methods could and should be used with coded marking points. Undoubtedly, you will end up providing a lot of similar feedback across a class of 30. Make efficient use of your time by training your class to respond to some generic coded marking points, as well as more specific points that can be adjusted on a class-by-class basis. Use letters, numbers, colours or shapes anything that works for you and reduce your time spent writing the same comments.

The key principle with time-effective, high-impact marking is that you implement what you are doing well. It is better that you do one strategy well, rather than multiple strategies poorly. Pupils will become adept at responding to your approach and the impact will be more significant.

