



Hindlip First School
Tibberton First School



Rewards & Sanctions

This guidance has been written by our partners at
Perryfields Primary PRU.



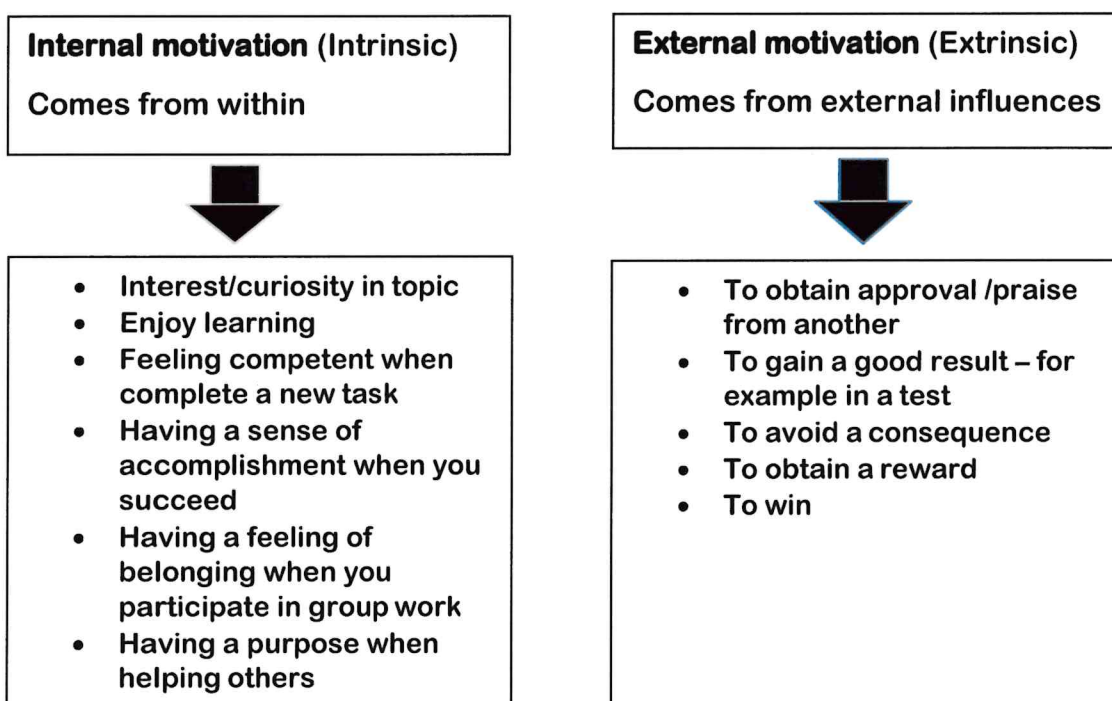
Perryfields Primary PRU

Rewards and Sanctions

Rewards and sanctions are frequently used in schools as a tool to motivate, encourage compliance and retain boundaries. Whilst both can be used effectively consideration needs to be made in regard to the positive and negative impact of these on our children.

There are two types of motivation which drive us to achieve:

- **Intrinsic motivation** – this is when behaviour comes from our inner drive as a result of an individual's interest / enjoyment of a task. The individual is motivated due to the activity being fun, challenging or the satisfaction they will get when they have achieved it.
- **Extrinsic motivation** - this is when behaviour is driven by external influences such as a reward or sanction. This behaviour is driven with the purpose of receiving the reward or avoiding the sanction.



For example-

If a child is really motivated to learn out of interest or curiosity for the topic or because they enjoy learning this would be based on **INTRINSIC MOTIVATION**.

If a child learns because they want an adult's approval, are trying to avoid a consequence or will receive a reward, this would be based on **EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION**.

Research has indicated that intrinsic motivation is much more effective for children during their early developmental stages. The benefits of them using this are:

- Higher levels of success – they are able to receive better results.
- Greater commitment to a task.
- Persistence – they will show more resilience and are less likely to quit.
- Greater creativity – they are more likely to have ideas and provide solutions.

At times rewards and sanctions can be effective but it is important to consider the following when using either:

A reward system often teaches a child to expect a reward in exchange for a certain behaviour. The danger is that when the reward stops the expected behaviour stops as well. The external motivation has gone which was the driving force behind their choice.

There becomes an expectation from the child that there will be continuous rewards. They have become reliant on external motivation and so have a mind set of “what will be in it for me” or “what will I get *for doing it*” Sadly this can stop them using their intrinsic motivation and doing things for enjoyment or interest.



- Once rewards are expected their effect becomes greatly reduced.
- Children can try to control the rewards and use these as a bargaining tools. “If I do my maths will you give me 3 reward points?”
- Some children dislike the idea that they are being controlled and may deem a reward scheme as a way of this happening. This results in them fighting against it with responses such as “I don’t care about your stupid reward” or “I don’t need rewards”
- For some children the rewards given at school are meaningless in comparison to those given at home so are dismissed. A pencil from the school prize box pales into insignificance for a child who gets a weekly Xbox game for making their bed every day.
- Children, especially those with SEND can feel confused when a reward is being offered to them for improving something that they really struggle with. They are left wondering why are not being rewarded for doing something they are good at instead.
- If the task set to achieve the reward is too difficult in the child’s eyes they will feel like they have been set up to fail so may not attempt it.
- Work tasks may be rushed in order to receive a reward for finishing and this could be detrimental to their learning.

Rewards are often offered for making good choices or achieving a particular task in the hope that the incentive will encourage the right behaviour and a good work ethic. The behaviour or level of learning might not be as a result of a lack of motivation but of other factors that are preventing the child from achieving the required behaviour / task. These can include:

Being/having:

Tired or hungry

- Afraid of failure
- Worried that if they do the task well there will be an increased expectation of them
- Feeling overwhelmed by the task
- Distracted and lacking focus
- Too disorganised to manage it
- Incapable of the task

- Other priorities such as staying safe
 - Low self-esteem and a lack of confidence
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- For children who have low self-esteem reward, schemes can prove challenging. They may feel that they can't achieve the rewards, which only endorses their lack of self-worth. Secondly, if rewards are given, they can feel that they are not worthy of these.
 - If a child with low – self- esteem receives a sanction for non-achievement, it only reinforces what they already feel about themselves-a lack of worth.
 - Often the focus on sanctions outweighs that of rewards. This creates a negative culture where children are trying to prevent something from happening rather than trying to achieve something positive.
 - Reward schemes can be deemed as manipulative offering bribes and threats and as a result of this we could be teaching children manipulation unintentionally.
 - A child might feel under more pressure when they have received awards for performance as the more we praise a child the harder it is for them when they don't get it.

Intrinsic motivation is much harder to facilitate in children at school than extrinsic motivation and needs a different approach to the much used reward and sanction schemes. It is worth remembering however that if this can be achieved it has a really positive impact on the child. The main difference is that you are encouraging the child to motivate themselves using their personal interests and own challenges rather than them relying on external motivation.

When trying to develop intrinsic motivation remember that studies have found one of the most significant motivators is the child having a feeling of competence. By mastering a new skill or completing a difficult task they will

have a sense of accomplishment which makes them feel happy. When they feel this way they are then intrinsically motivated to attempt more.

There are lots of ways that you can encourage intrinsic motivation:

- ✓ **Independent thinking** – allow the pupil to work on certain skills independently. Let them report back to you about how they tried to improve. This encourages resilience but also gives them a feeling of self-satisfaction when they have resolved an issue themselves.
- ✓ **Choice** – children are far more likely to be intrinsically motivated if they can have a say in how they are going to accomplish their goal.
- ✓ **Encourage positive thinking** – Having a “*Can do*” attitude will help develop the child’s confidence which will in turn lead to intrinsic motivation.
- ✓ **Working with others** – children can feel more motivated when working with others especially if they are helping a peer to learn a new skill
- ✓ **Ask questions** – Give pupils the opportunities to think for themselves rather than providing the answers for them.
- ✓ **Competition** – when used in the right way or this could be deemed as extrinsic. In appropriate situations such as sports day for example, competitive opportunities will intrinsically motivate the child if they have an interest in the activity.
- ✓ **Focus on individual improvement** – don’t compare a child’s abilities to others but instead focus on their own achievements. Let them track these
- **Plan with them** - ask them how they would like to reach their goal? Explain what options are available to do this and let them choose.
- ✓ **Encourage organisation** – give them the opportunity to be independent and organise themselves.
- ✓ **Develop problem solving** – this is two- fold. If a task is solved then they will feel they have accomplished a task and be happy with this. If it



isn't, it may encourage them to look at other ways they could improve this skill for their next challenge.

- ✓ **Consider the challenge** – ensure the challenge is pitched correctly; not too easy as it won't hold interest, but also not so hard that it seems unattainable.

When trying to encourage intrinsic motivation think about the type of language you are using, consider these examples:

“I am wondering what might happen to Red Riding Hood if she goes a bit further into the woods.”

“That’s a great way to work out that sum - could there also be another way of doing it maybe?”

“How could we make some other colours out of the ones we already have?”

“I am a bit nervous about what might happen if I put this oil into the water. What do you think?”

“I can’t think of a way to make my handwriting better – any ideas?”

“Choose the level you want to achieve today and let me know how you are going to do it.”

“Who is going to help Mary today with her science challenge?”

“What is going to happen to our character today?”

“I need some tips please on how we can keep the classroom tidy – does anybody have any?”

“Tell me about your achievements – how are we going to showcase these?”



“What could happen to our caterpillar next?”

“Have you seen this strange object that has arrived in class.....”

“Oh no we have run out of time and haven’t got to the end of our story, maybe someone can tell me what they think happens tomorrow?”

“Can anyone show us an easier way of doing this please?”

“I have forgotten how to write a ‘y’ Can anyone show me how it is done?”

“How many words could we find to describe this giant?”

“Which table will be ready for lunch first I wonder?”

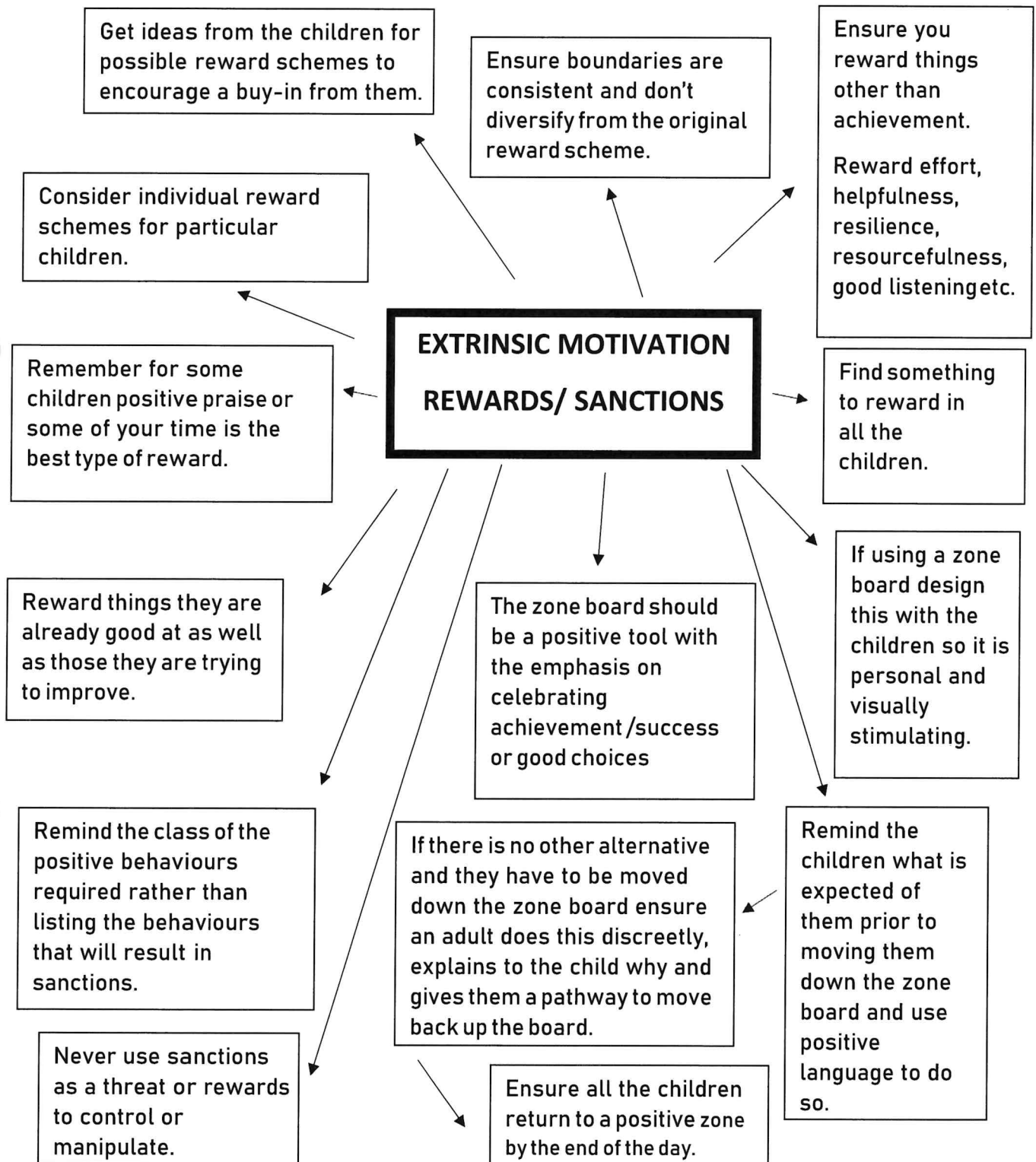
“Who can tell us all about a hobby they really enjoy?”

“What does that word mean that is on the board?”

“Has anybody noticed the birds nest in the oak tree by the playground?”

“Why do you think it’s so cold today when we are now in spring?”

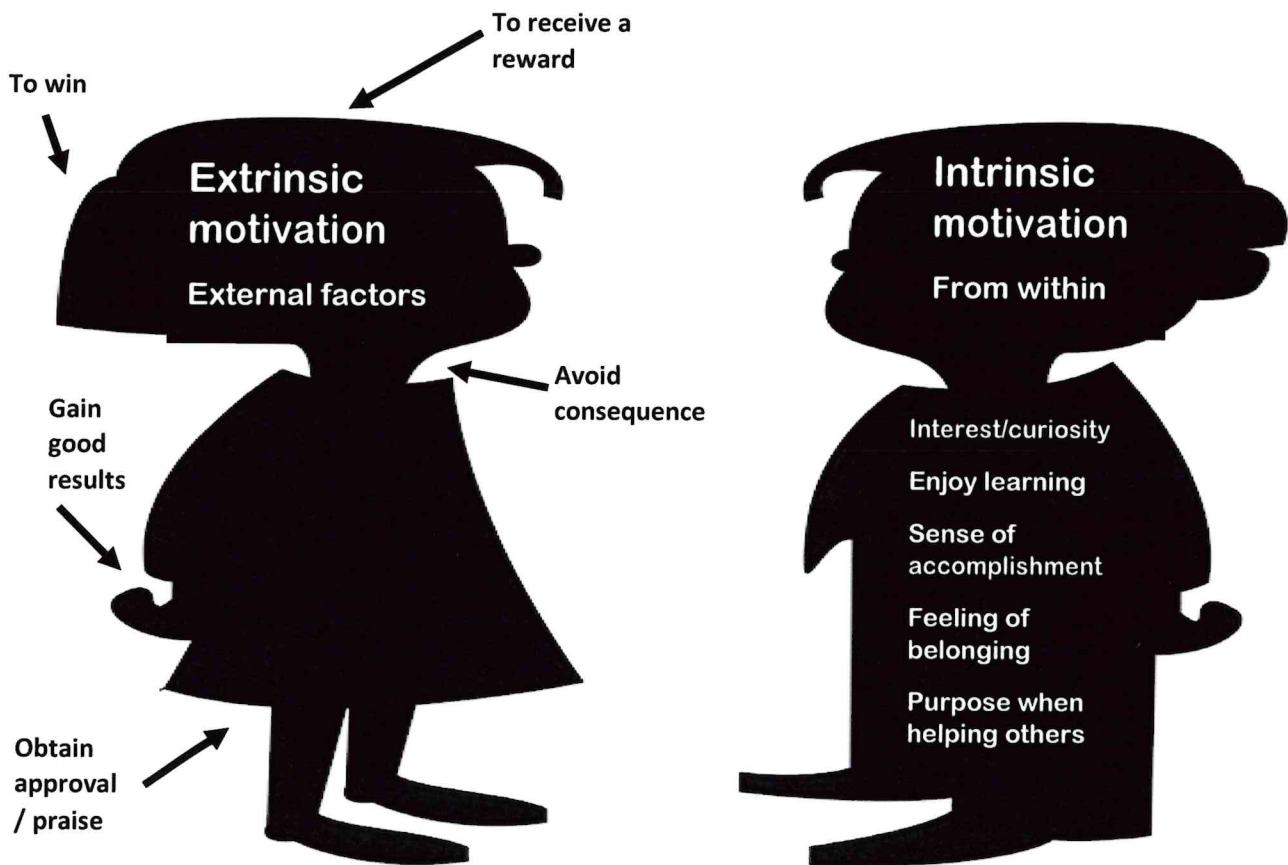
There are times when extrinsic motivation will be and the diagram below offers some key tips for when using this type of motivation.



A positive relationship between the child and their supporting adults are key in order that their intrinsic or extrinsic motivation can be effective.

Whilst their intrinsic motivation is driven from within by themselves evidence shows that if they have positive interaction with their supporting adults at this time they are far more likely to succeed.

In order for them to use their extrinsic motivation effectively they need their supporting adults to give clear direction of expectations and good communication outlining and then revisiting what their rewards or sanctions will be.



POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS