It is a consistency rooted in kindness, not in the machismo of zero tolerance.

Behaviour management is a team sport. It needs a team discipline, ethos and look. To get the behaviour you want there can be no gaps between the adults on what matters. It is this consistency that is most important.

It seems that the behaviour of a few leaders is pivotal to the success of such initiatives. Many would argue that their behaviour is pivotal to the success of the school. Without visible consistency from the top, collaborative agreements are just discarded sticky notes at the end of an INSET day.

Token economies, where a credit or merit system is used to reward individuals, can never be consistent. It always rewards the highest achievers or the worst behaved... They do not add anything to behaviour practice that can’t be done with a sincere ‘well done’ or a round of applause from the class.

THE COST OF ADULT EMOTION - When adult behaviour is wobbly there are lots of hidden costs. The knock-on effect on the workload of others is considerable.

You can land a sanction with a hard edge or you can land a sanction with an immediate reminder of the child’s previous good behaviour. Done well, with good timing and perfect tone, there is a little magic here:

“It was the rule about ... (lining up/staying on task/bringing military hardware into school) that you broke. You have chosen to ... (move to the back/catch up with your work at lunchtime/speak to the man from Scotland Yard). Do you remember last week when you ... (arrived on time every day/got that positive note/received the Nobel Prize)? That is who I need to see today ... Thank you for listening. (Then give the child some ‘take up’ time.)” ... Save your finest performance for when it has most impact: when children do the right thing. Then reward them with your enthusiasm, encouragement, humour, time and attention.

There is a reason why the UK has the highest imprisonment rates in the European Union, and it is the same reason why sticking children in silent detentions or imprisoning them in isolation booths doesn’t solve anything...

Damaged children need people, not punishment.

Expecting restorative meetings to be a quick fix. It takes time for pupils to be able to answer questions fully and reflect properly. It takes time to change behaviour. Persist and gradually trust is built, conscience is developed and everyone is more aware of their behaviour.

Punishment doesn’t teach better behaviour, restorative conversations do.