

SUPPORTING TRAINEE TEACHERS IN BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

The 2011 survey of newly qualified teachers showed that around three out of four (74 per cent) felt their behaviour training was “good” or “very good”. This is a significant improvement on previous years but there is no doubt that confidence in managing behaviour effectively continues to be one of the foremost concerns for most trainee teachers. These notes and linked resources are offered by the University of Greenwich to help subject tutors support trainees to improve their skills and confidence in this vital area.

From the outset it is worth noting that there is plenty of evidence to show that successful classroom management is far more complex than the teacher simply reducing the class into cowed silence in order that s/he can teach them. Even if you can maintain this strict and disciplined approach there is little chance that much learning is going to take place. It would appear to be based on the false assumption that students are empty vessels waiting to be filled with knowledge. In order to make progress students need to be active participants in the learning process and this can only be achieved if they are free to ask questions, contribute, and discuss without fear of getting things wrong. Good behaviour management is evident in an ordered and purposeful classroom environment, not necessarily in a silent one.

Behaviour in classrooms does not occur in isolation - it is the product of a variety of influences and not simply the product of a pupil's unwillingness to behave or learn as required by the teacher. This is the premise of concepts such as *Behaviour for Learning* or *Behaviour to Learn* which emphasise the crucial link between the way in which students learn and their social knowledge and behaviour. The focus is upon establishing positive relationships across three elements of self, others and curriculum

- **Relationship with Self:** a pupil who does not feel confident as a learner and who has 'internalised' a view that s/he is unable to succeed as a learner will be less likely to engage in the challenge of learning and (in consequence) may be more inclined to present 'unwanted behaviours'
- **Relationship with Others:** all 'behaviour' needs to be understood as 'behaviour in context'. Behaviour by pupils is triggered as much by their interactions with others (pupils, teachers or other adults in schools/settings) as it is by factors internal to the child.
- **Relationship with the Curriculum:** pupil behaviour and curriculum progress are inextricably linked. Teachers who promote a sense of meaningful curriculum progress in learning for each pupil will be more likely to create a positive behavioural environment.

[Source: Behaviour2Learn www.behaviour2learn.co.uk]

EXPECTATIONS OF TRAINEE TEACHERS

Teacher's Standard 7 sets out the expectation of teachers regarding behaviour management:

A teacher must

Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment

- *have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy*
- *have high expectations of behaviour, and establish a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly*
- *manage classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them*
- *maintain good relationships with pupils, exercise appropriate authority, and act decisively when necessary.*

More explicitly, the Teaching Agency set out the knowledge, skills and understanding that trainee teachers need in order to be able to manage their pupils' behaviour in

[*Improving teacher training for behaviour*](#) (October 2012).

The introduction contains the following statement:

"It is important to note that good teaching is the most effective way to get good behaviour. Teachers who plan and teach dynamic, stimulating lessons based on sound assessment and excellent subject knowledge are likely to experience fewer difficulties with behaviour".

It is always worth emphasising with trainee teachers that **carefully planned, well presented lessons which interest and motivate students are likely to lead to less problems with behaviour.**

The document then goes on to summarise the required knowledge, skills and understanding on behaviour under the following headings:

- Personal style
- Self-management
- Reflection
- School systems
- Relationships
- Classroom management
- More challenging behaviour
- Theoretical knowledge

You might find it helpful to use these headings for discussions in mentor meetings around behaviour. Refer to the [Improving teacher training for behaviour](#) for the scope of each one.

Having done this, now consider the following statements taken from school placement reports commenting on TS7 (*Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment*). See if you can decide whether each statement relates to a trainee teacher who is demonstrating the minimum to be awarded QTS (Grade 3), is achieving at good level (Grade 2), or is achieving at a high level (Grade 1).

Statement	Grade?
She can rapidly assess the mood of a class and is able to adapt the lesson to re-motivate pupils so that they display high levels and engagement and cooperation. She has used the school's behaviour policy to promote good and courteous behaviour and frequently follows up behaviour issues. Lesson evaluations contain reflection on behaviour in lessons and sometimes suggest alternative strategies.	
She is aware of and understands the school's policy for behaviour and the need to develop clear rules and routines. With support, she is beginning to apply these, using sanctions and rewards to maintain an ordered classroom.	
She recognises that behaviour is context dependent and is able to articulate which factors contribute to more challenging situations. Through planning it is evident that she has considered behaviour in the way in which she organises group work.	
She uses a good balance between praise, sanctions and rewards which are consistently applied. On the few occasions when behaviour falls short of expectation she can respond quickly and exercise her authority whilst still maintaining good relationships.	
Where behaviour of some pupils is significantly challenging she has sought the support of colleagues in addressing this. She is beginning to recognise that planning appropriate lessons that meet pupils' needs is a major factor in successful classroom management.	

In fact, below are the criteria for TS7 for Grade 3, 2, and 1 trainees. It is not hard now to check your response to the statements above. (Check your 'answers' below).

Note the subtleties in expectation between the grades. It will be the quality of the mentor's support and guidance that will move a trainee to a higher grade. You might like to assess your trainee's current level of attainment with him/her against these criteria and what evidence you have for such a judgment. The most important outcome of this process will be some clear targets for the coming weeks.

<p>Grade 3 - All trainees to be awarded QTS will have demonstrated as a minimum that:</p> <p>They work within the school's framework for behaviour and can apply rules and routines consistently and fairly. They have high expectations and are aware of the range of strategies that experienced teachers use to promote positive behaviour. They are able to apply these appropriately, in the context of the schools policy using sanctions and rewards, including praise, in order to create an environment supportive of learning. They understand when to seek additional support in addressing the needs of pupils where significantly challenging behaviour is demonstrated. They recognise that planning appropriate lessons that challenge learners, teaching using a variety of strategies that address pupils' needs and employing appropriate assessment strategies will all contribute to successful behaviour management. They show</p>
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understanding of how barriers to learning can impact on pupil behaviour and have begun to apply strategies to address these, working alongside experienced teachers and support staff as appropriate. They understand that behaviour management is context-dependent and are able to articulate which factors may contribute to more challenging behaviour being exhibited within their classes.

Grade 2 - Trainees achieving the standards at a good level may demonstrate these characteristics:

They work within the school's framework for behaviour and apply rules and routines consistently and fairly. They consistently have high expectations and understand a range of strategies that experienced teachers use to promote positive behaviour and apply these effectively, including use of school sanctions and rewards, and use of praise, in order to create an environment supportive of learning. They manage behaviour effectively so that learners demonstrate positive attitudes towards the teacher, their learning and each other allowing lessons to flow smoothly so that disruption is unusual. They actively seek additional support in addressing the needs of pupils where significantly challenging behaviour is demonstrated.

Grade 1 - Trainees achieving the standards at a high level may demonstrate these characteristics:

They rapidly adapt to the different circumstances in which they train, working confidently within the frameworks established in different settings and applying rules and routines consistently and fairly. They consistently have high expectations and understand a range of strategies that experienced teachers use to promote positive behaviour and apply these very effectively, including use of school sanctions and rewards, and use of praise, in order to create an environment highly supportive of learning. They manage pupil behaviour with ease so that learners display very high levels of engagement, courtesy, collaboration and co-operation. They actively seek additional support in addressing the needs of pupils where significantly challenging behaviour is demonstrated.

[Answers: 1 – 2 – 3 – 2 – 1 – 3]

KEY QUESTIONS IN BEHAVIOUR

This [resource](#) is a good starting point as it looks at the key questions that trainees and newly qualified teachers most frequently ask about behaviour management. Scroll down the page to see Key Advice to trainees to the following key questions. But before you do so you might like to consider how you would respond.

- What is the best way to begin creating a positive climate for learning in my class?
- What is your advice about setting up classroom rules?
- How do I instil in the children that I have certain expectations?
- How should I structure my system of rewards and sanctions?
- Is it important how I organise the layout of the classroom?

SOME COMMON ISSUES

Here are some common issues which might lead to behaviour problems. Which of them have you seen with the trainee teacher(s) in your department? Discuss how they might address them and make sure the identified strategies are included as targets for short term development.

Undemanding work: lack of challenge leads to chatter and lax approach	Unclear instructions: unsure of a task, pupils will not settle and tend to chat	Too much teacher talk: pupils lose interest and minds wander
Too much teacher-led activity, and not enough pupil activity	Pupils call shots: through interruptions, calling out, questions, etc.	Shouting: as the noise level rises the teacher shouts , either to be heard or out of frustration
Crumbling transitions: behaviour deteriorates as the lesson shifts focus without firm guidance	Loses sight of class: the teacher helps individuals without keeping eye on the whole class	Inaudible voice: e.g. through talking too quietly or too quickly

[Source: Newman University College, Birmingham]

WORKING ATMOSPHERE IN THE CLASSROOM

Terry Haydn has done extensive research into the classroom environment and shown how the atmosphere in the class is a crucial element in the teaching and learning process as it affects achievement, pupil motivation and teacher wellbeing. The result is the 10 level scale below which you can use with trainee teachers to assess the mood of their classroom and help them to work towards a relaxed and comfortable environment in which teaching is an enjoyable experience.

10. You feel completely relaxed, able to undertake any form of lesson activity without concern. You and the pupils work together, enjoying the experience.

9. You feel completely in control and can undertake any sort of activity, but you need to exercise authority at times, in a friendly way, to maintain a calm, purposeful working atmosphere.

8. You can maintain a relaxed and co-operative working atmosphere, but this requires thought and effort at times. Some forms of lesson activity may be under less control than others.

7. You can maintain a co-operative working atmosphere and undertake any form of classroom

activity, but this requires more considerable thought and effort.

6. It is often a major effort to establish and maintain a relaxed, calm atmosphere. Several pupils will not remain on task without persistent surveillance, exhortation or threats. It is sometimes difficult to get pupils to be quiet while you are talking, but there is no major disruption.

5. Your control is limited, and there are times when you would be embarrassed if the head walked in. The atmosphere is rather chaotic at times, with several pupils manifestly not listening to you. But pupils who want to work can get on with it, albeit in a rather noisy atmosphere.

4. Your control is limited: it takes time and effort to get the class to listen. You try to get onto the worksheet or written part of the lesson fairly quickly in order to get their heads down. Pupils talk while you are talking, and minor transgressions go unpunished because too many occur. You try to keep a lid on things and concentrate on those pupils who are trying to work.

3. There is major disruption and many pupils pay little attention to your presence. Swearwords may go unchecked and pupils walk round the room at will. When you write on the board, objects are thrown around the room.

2. The pupils largely determine what goes on. You take materials into the lesson, but once distributed they are ignored, drawn on or made into paper aeroplanes. When you write on the board, objects are thrown at you rather than around the room.

1. Your entry into the classroom is greeted by jeers and abuse. There are so many transgressions of the rules it is difficult to know where to start. You wish you had not gone into teaching.

For more details and to see Haydn's lecture to trainee teachers at the IoE where he explores this research in depth and offers practical advice and techniques, click [here](#)

LANGUAGE OF PRAISE

It can easily be overlooked by trainee teachers how effective it can be to motivate students by praising them when they are working well and doing what is expected rather than telling them off when they are not doing what is wanted.

[Unit 20 \(Classroom Management\) of the Pedagogy & Practice series \(2004\)](#) pages 7-11 has some good advice and tasks around the language teachers use and we would recommend exploring this with trainees.

There is a useful exploration of the power of positive reinforcement at <http://www.teachingexpertise.com/e-bulletins/accentuate-positive-12001>

Capel, Leask, and Turner (2009) *Learning to Teach in the Secondary School*, which is the core text for the PGCE Professional Studies course, has a useful observation task (Task 3.2.6) that trainee teachers could carry out which explores positive and negative comments teachers make about behaviour and work to individual students, groups, and the whole class.

BEHAVIOUR CHECKLISTS

In 2011 Charlie Taylor, the DfE's 'behaviour expert' at the time, published a straightforward [Behaviour Checklist](#) for schools and teachers as a result of a [conference of successful headteachers](#) exploring the key principles for improving behaviour.

We recommend you look at this with trainee teachers and, in particular the Behaviour Checklist [for Teachers](#) towards the end of the document. For example,

Has the trainee seen / had experience of these simple ideas?

Can s/he identify the benefits of when these strategies are in place?

Are there any suggestions that you disagree with? Why?

It might be helpful to use [a document devised by the University of Cumbria](#) to analyse the checklist.

BEHAVIOUR2LEARN WEBSITE

The [Behaviour2Learn](#) website is a tremendous resource for supporting trainee and newly qualified teachers to understand the many facets of behaviour management. Links on the homepage are labelled 'Must know', 'Should know', and 'Could know'. It is vital that trainees explore at least the first of these.

MISCELLANEOUS RESOURCES

1. The behaviour management pages of the [Teaching Expertise](#) website where there are some good practical tips on

- [Dealing with low level disruption](#)
- [Rewards](#) and [Sanctions](#)
- [Non-verbal Behaviour Management](#)
- [Behaviour policies](#)

2. There is an extensive bank of videos dealing with behaviour management on [Teachers Media Behaviour Hub](#)

3. 26 SCENARIOS - This resource is [a set of classroom 'scenarios'](#), each of which approximates to a classroom event which teachers will probably have encountered at some point during their career. For example, *Starting lessons in an orderly way*, *Gaining attention in a noisy class* etc.

The scenarios have been identified by trainee teachers, as being those which they feel are the key areas that they want information about. In each case there is a number of slides (usually between 8-10), which take trainees through aspects of each behaviour being considered. These scenarios can provide the basis for raising the awareness of trainees about the importance of creating an effective learning climate in their classroom, and the various components involved in doing this.