

Survey Question

17. In this class, the students are well behaved.

Australian Professional Standard

Professional Knowledge Domain

Standard 4: Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments

Focus areas:

- 4.2 Manage classroom activities
- 4.3 Manage challenging behaviour

What does this sound like in the classroom?

"Students in this class don't muck around. Our teacher gave us a set of guidelines at the start of the year, so we know what we need to do and what will happen if we aren't paying attention. It just makes it easier to get on our work."

Why is this important?

The 'climate' in the classroom is one of the most important factors in promoting student learning. This atmosphere is set largely, by the teacher. Classroom management refers to the broad range of strategies, approaches and actions used by teachers to create a safe, positive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment for students (DEC, 2014). While student behaviour can impact on the climate, teachers should be able to identify and quickly handle disruptions in order to prevent interruptions to the 'flow' of learning.

Well-managed classrooms have an above average impact on achievement and engagement (Hattie, 2009). They enable teachers to spend more time on teaching and less time on managing disruptive behaviour (DEC, 2014). Disruptive students can have negative impacts on their own and all other students' learning (Hattie, 2009). Teachers in Australia spend 14% of their lesson time maintaining order in the classroom (OECD, 2013). This is nearly a day and a half per fortnight of time and energy that is not spent on teaching.

Data from international testing (OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment) shows that students who report that their teacher starts lessons on time, keeps the class orderly and gets students to listen have better test results (DEC, 2014).

Research evidence shows that five key strategies are effective in creating well managed classrooms (DEC, 2014):

- Engagement: Foster student engagement by including opportunities for active student participation in class [[link to student engagement resource pack](#)]
- Rules: Establish and teach clear classroom rules and expectations for behaviour

What strategies have been shown to work in the classroom?

- Routines: Create routines and structure to guide students in various situations
- Praise: Reinforce positive behaviour
- Consequences: Establish and consistently apply consequences for misbehaviour

These proactive strategies should be used in conjunction with each other. Reactive strategies, such as criticism, punishment or expulsion, can reduce on-task behaviour and elevate teacher stress levels (Clunies-Ross, Little & Kienhuis, 2008). It is important that classroom management strategies are part of a school-wide approach to behaviour management, create positive teacher-student relationships and are implemented with consistency and fidelity (Institute of Education Science, 2008).

The most effective classroom managers employ different strategies with different types of students (Marzano, 2003). Rules and procedures should be established and reinforced in the following areas (Marzano, 2003):

- General expectations for behaviour;
- Beginning and ending class;
- Transitions and interruptions;
- Materials and equipment;
- Group work, and
- Seatwork and teacher-led activities.

Reinforcement and consequences that might be used include (Marzano, 2003; VIT, 2008):

- Nonverbal disapproval;
- Token economies (tokens or rewards for positive behaviours);
- Group goals;
- Isolation time-out;
- Restorative justice strategies

Establishing positive teacher-student interactions can involve a myriad of techniques, but is ultimately about balancing dominance (a teacher's ability to provide clear purpose and strong guidance) and cooperation (concern for the needs and opinions of others) (Marzano, 2003). Strategies that help with providing clear purpose and guidance include the setting of clear learning goals, and setting clear classroom rules and expectations. Strategies that help with cooperation include talking informally with students about their interests, greeting students individually, encouraging all students to be part of classroom discussions, and including students in the process of planning classroom activities (Marzano, 2003).

Teachers should remain 'on top of' classroom management and behaviour by being aware of what is happening in all parts of the classroom, and quickly and accurately identifying problem behaviour and acting on it. Teachers should remain emotionally objective when dealing with disruptive behaviour, responding in a matter of fact manner (Marzano, 2003).

What three things can I try in my classroom tomorrow?

1. In order to help cultivate a deeper, more personal relationship with students spend some time asking them about their hopes and goals for the future.
2. Seating by numbers. Take the seating plan to a whole new level by using this strategy: <https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/assign-classroom-seats>
3. 'Swap' expectations; ask students to explain what they would expect from you and in turn, outline your own expectations for the class.

What opportunities are there for collaboration with my colleagues?

Ensure that your approach matches that of your fellow teachers so that there is consistency for students. Check what kind of guidelines your colleagues put in place in their classrooms. Seek out an expert teacher for strategies to handle particular students at your school. And remember to look 'outwards' on occasion: recognise and offer support to colleagues in the face of troublesome students, share strategies that have worked.

Where can I find out more?

Video

- Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2012. Workable Routines.
- Managing Non-Compliance: Effective Strategies for K-12 Teachers with Dr Geoff Colvin
- George Sugai – Schoolwide Positive Behaviour Supports
- Safe Schools Hub: Professor Helen McGrath
Teaching Channel: What's "Your 'teacher' look"?

Reference articles, books and other great reads:

- Clunies-Ross, P., Little, E. & Kienhuis, M. (2008) Self-reported and actual use of proactive and reactive classroom management strategies and their relationship with teacher stress and student behaviour. *Educational Psychology*, vol. 28, no. 6, pp. 693-710.
- Hattie, J. (2009) *Visible Learning: A Synthesis of Over 800 Meta-Analyses Relating to Achievement*. Routledge.
- Institute of Education Sciences (2008) *Reducing Behaviour Problems in the Elementary School Classroom*. NCEE 2008-012 U.S. Department of Education. Accessed 10 October 2015
- Marzano, R. (2003) *What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Action*. ASCD.
- NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC), (2014). *What Works Best: Evidence-based practices to help improve NSW student performance*. Accessed 25 June 2015
- NSW Education and Communities Professional Learning Clearinghouse on Classroom Management. (2015) *Resources Website*.
- OECD (2013) *Key Findings from the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) - Australia Country Note, 2013*
- *Positive Behavioural Interventions & Supports Resources* (2015)
- Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) (2008) *Research Digest: Managing Classroom Behaviour*. Accessed 12 June 2015