

## ECT Mentor session

**Module 6:** Enabling pupil learning

**Week 3:** What is evidence telling us about the effects upon their pupils of how the ECT sets high expectations and manage behaviour effectively

### Session Elements



discussion  
with mentor



collaborative  
planning



analyse  
artefacts

### Learning Intentions for this session

Depending on their own focus, your ECT will likely learn how to:

#### **Communicate a belief in the academic potential of all pupils, by:**

- 1a. using intentional and consistent language that promotes challenge and aspiration
- 1b. setting tasks that stretch pupils, but which are achievable, within a challenging curriculum
- 1c. creating a positive environment where making mistakes and learning from them and the need for effort and perseverance are part of the daily routine
- 1d. seeking opportunities to engage parents and carers in the education of their children (e.g., proactively highlighting successes)

#### **Develop a positive, predictable and safe environment for pupils, by:**

- 7a. establishing a supportive and inclusive environment with a predictable system of reward and sanction in the classroom
- 7e. using consistent language and non-verbal signals for common classroom directions
- 7g. responding quickly to any behaviour or bullying that threatens emotional safety
- 7h. creating and explicitly teaching routines in line with the school ethos that maximises time for learning (e.g., setting and reinforcing expectations about key transition points)
- 7j. reinforcing routines (e.g., by articulating the link between time on task and

success)

## Introduction

In your first mentor meeting of the year, you carried out a Module 6 audit with your mentee (based upon the same audit they completed in Module 1), and you identified development priorities in relation to Standards 1 and/or 7. In the annual conference you, with your mentee, refined one of these priorities into an exploratory inquiry question and learned about how to collect relevant in-school evidence. This week, within their self-directed study time, your mentee has been collecting some evidence about their exploratory question. They should have summarised this within a simple evidence statement about the impact upon their pupils of their normal practice.

In this session, you will consider whether the evidence suggests that your mentee's normal practice is helping their pupils to make progress, or there should be an alteration. Together, you will use the evidence base of the ECF to speculate about what that change could be. Finally, you will decide what evidence your mentee would need to collect to tell them that the alteration had led to improvement.

A note on evidence and workload:

Schools are already data-rich environments. Practitioner inquiries, first of all, make use of what we call here 'naturally occurring' evidence. They are in the pupils' work and the ECT's assessment of it. They are in the words and reactions of the pupils and what the ECT has heard or seen of this. When we refer to evidence collection, in the main, we mean: look at what the pupils have done, and listen to what they are saying. A practitioner inquiry invites you to be more systematic about how you do this looking and listening; so, you might deliberately ask a few questions of a few pupils for five minutes at the start of break time, or you might share lunch with a colleague and quiz them about how they approach a problem in their own class.

## Case Studies

These case studies explore how two teachers developed their own teaching and conducted practitioner inquiries into setting high expectations and managing behaviour effectively. Both are interesting, but you should focus on the one most closely related to the exploratory question you are working on. The case studies set out the issue the teacher was interested in, how they gathered evidence about the

impact upon pupils of their own normal practice and how they decided to introduce an alteration to the way they taught.

**When studying these cases, your mentee will need to take account of their own pupils' characteristics, the context of their classroom and the nature of the material that they are teaching.**

### **Setting high expectations**

Sam, a Year 5 teacher, believes that he is good at forming positive relationships with his class. He has a proactive approach to behaviour management and encourages his pupils to work hard through the use of praise and reward points. As a result, Sam doesn't have many problems with behaviour, and his pupils say they enjoy his lessons. However, progress data indicate that a number of pupils in Sam's class (including lower and higher prior attaining pupils) are not achieving age-related expectations in maths. To investigate this further, Sam decided to develop his teaching in this area and to undertake a practitioner inquiry.

Following a discussion with his Head of Year (who advised him on which pupils to concentrate on), he decided to undertake some pupil voice work, to see what his pupils thought about his normal practice and how far they agreed that the expectations he had of them were challenging.

Sam wrote an initial, exploratory question:

What do Year 5 pupils say, think and feel about the work they are set in maths?

To answer this question, Sam decided to give his class a short survey, which consisted of hands-up/ hands-down responses to 5 questions; this took just 2 minutes at the end of a lesson. He then interviewed a small, representative sample of pupils in 3 focus groups of 3. He did this during 5 minutes of morning break, on three mornings of one week. The data Sam collected suggested the following:

- pupils like receiving praise and encouragement when they feel they deserve it
- sometimes, pupils feel the work is too easy, or that they have 'done it before'
- sometimes, pupils don't understand the expectations he has of them
- sometimes, pupils don't understand how they are supposed to respond to the feedback Sam gives them about how to push their learning on to the next

level

What alteration to his teaching might Sam make to improve the levels of challenge, support and feedback he provides for pupils?



### **A multifaceted approach to setting high expectations**

Reflecting on the data he had collected, Sam looked again at the research on high expectations in the Early Career Framework – particularly 1a to 1d – to help him plan an intervention based around setting high expectations. He realised that setting high expectations is a complex process, with many moving parts. Sam, therefore, decided to create a multifaceted ‘high expectations plan’, comprising the following elements:

- set pupils a short weekly quiz to determine their current level of knowledge and understanding – he made sure that this was fun so that the pupils were supported by a positive environment and recognised that they could learn from their mistakes (1c)
- write explicit, descriptive success criteria for each maths lesson, and refer to these success criteria intentionally and consistently in lessons – this was so the pupils would understand the challenge he was setting them and how to achieve it (1b)
- he wanted to model for them how pupils like them might respond to a classroom environment where the expectations were high – he invented a fictional pupil, ‘risk-taking Sam’, but told them that Sam was based on himself. He did this to a) model what it looks like to take risks and push yourself out of your comfort zone; b) model common mistakes and misconceptions made by pupils in the class; c) help pupils anticipate common misconceptions, and identify solutions before they arise; and d) to create an environment where risk-taking and mistake-making are embraced as a part of the learning process. He hoped in this way to influence the attitudes of his pupils. (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1a)
- contact the parents and carers of three pupils each week, to celebrate success where pupils have reached or exceeded expectations in maths (1d)

## Managing behaviour effectively

Meera knows that behaviour in her Year 8 classes needs to improve. Each week, she spends several hours setting, running and chasing up detentions. Often, these detentions involve the same pupils each week. Because she has to spend time in lessons dealing with low-level disruption, this has a detrimental impact on Meera's ability to teach effectively and on the progress of pupils in her classes. To improve her practice with regard to managing behaviour effectively, Meera decided to undertake a practitioner inquiry. Knowing that many of her colleagues have excellent behaviour management skills, Meera wrote the following, exploratory question:

How do high-performing teachers normally establish a positive climate for learning at School X?

Meera's school encourages teachers to observe each other informally, and her inquiry coincided with an 'observe-to-learn fortnight', which made it easy for her to arrange to observe three colleagues, teaching similar classes to her own – one from within her own department and two from other departments. She followed their advice to come in just for the first 10 minutes of their lessons when they were reinforcing routines. Meera was pleasantly surprised and encouraged to see the pupils she found challenging working diligently in other lessons. She noticed that the teachers had little poor behaviour to deal with: they had already done the hard work when they had set up their routines. The observations helped her to understand that teachers, by being good role models themselves, can affect the motivation and behaviour of their pupils. (1.1, 1.2)

When Meera spoke to the teachers together one lunchtime, they gave her their top tips. She also read again her Learning Log notes for Module 1, where she had recorded her insights into demonstrating high expectations of behaviour. From these interviews, and from her reading, Meera collated the following insights:

- that it's best, where possible to establish routines at the beginning of the year, but it is more important to keep practising them – reinforcing positives; for example, by highlighting the behaviours she wants to see more of (7i)
- pupils with SEND especially – but all pupils really – respond best when they know clearly what the teacher's expectations are. Meera decided she would always praise effort, always praise when a pupil reacted well to making a mistake and always correct a pupil if they spoke out of turn (7.2, 1h)

- it is useful to use rewards and sanctions consistently and predictably (1g); however, this should not be the sole method of behaviour management as it is 'after the fact'
- it is important to have high expectations with regard to behaviour, and to stick to them rigorously (1f)
- it is important to give pupils manageable, specific and sequential instructions – short routines – to make expectations really clear and to minimise misbehaviour caused by confusion (7c)
- it is a good idea to use consistent language and non-verbal signals for common classroom directions (7e)
- when dealing with low-level disruption, it is important to use minimally invasive interventions in the first instance, to avoid escalating conflict and to give pupils the opportunity to respond (7f)

Meera also analysed the behaviour data relating to her classes and noticed a pattern that most of the pupils she regularly sets detentions for are boys who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL) in Year 8.

What alterations to her practice might Meera begin to try to improve the behaviour of pupils in her lessons?



### **A multifaceted approach to managing behaviour effectively**

Following her baseline data collection, Meera identified a number of strategies she wanted to try in order to improve behaviour in her Year 8 lessons, centred around memorable behaviour routines:

- Create a set of short, positively worded, three-step routines to make clear her expectations with regard to pupils' behaviour in each part of a lesson (7h) – e.g. entering the room – enter in silence, planner on desk, start the 'do now' task
  - when the teacher is talking – hands empty, perfect silence, eyes on me
  - during class discussions – take turns, give reasons, track the speaker

- during independent work – collect resources, check understanding, work in silence
  - at the end of the lesson – chair under desk, stand behind chair, wait to be dismissed
- create visual reminders of the above and non-verbal signals to help pupils understand behaviour expectations for each part of a lesson (7e)
  - deliberately practise the routines until the pupils can do them without thinking (7i), and mention the routines regularly using clear, consistent language non-verbal signals – for example, her hand up means she is waiting for quiet (7j)
  - make sure all pupils understand her expectations with regard to behaviour (as well as tasks) in each part of a lesson, especially those pupils who receive detentions most frequently – she would nominate a pupil to repeat back an instruction if she suspected the class were confused (7c)
  - reinforce these routines expectations through the consistent and predictable use of rewards and sanctions (e.g., not allowing pupils to speak while the teacher is speaking) (7a)
  - because she often found herself at a loss for what to say in the heat of the moment, she would use scripted responses when responding to incidents of low-level disruption, to avoid escalation and to give pupils time to respond – for example, she made a habit of always referring off-task pupils back to the learning intentions of the lesson (7f)

## Mentor Meeting Activities

### Review and Plan 5 mins

Allow a few minutes for you and your mentee to read the case studies.

Clarify the Learning Intentions for this session with your mentee.

### Theory to Practice 40 mins



#### 1. Analyse artefacts and data

Ask your mentee to share with you the simple evidence statement they wrote following their rapid collection of data on their exploratory inquiry question. They may also share with you the evidence itself (e.g., comments from pupils or analysis using the school's data management system).

To guide them, they had two model statements arising from the case studies.

Sam, in Case Study A, said:

'The feedback from my pupil survey seems to indicate that my pupils like me, and they feel safe in my classroom. However, some of my pupils also feel that I let them get away with producing work of a lower standard than I should. One lower-attaining pupil said that I seemed to be satisfied if he just "made an attempt". Other evidence – from the last pupil progress meeting – also showed that my higher-attaining pupils' work is not yet at the same level as similar pupils in the other class. The pupil survey suggested that my higher attaining pupils would like me to model for them with greater clarity what a high-quality outcome might look like for them. Overall, I need to have higher expectations of my pupils and make those explicit for them.'

Meera, in Case Study B, said:

'I am exhausted after every lesson with this class because I am struggling to manage their behaviour effectively. I had the impression that every pupil was misbehaving but, of course, that wasn't true. Our data management system tracks the behaviour points and merits for all pupils. I realised that my difficulties were mainly in Year 8. I noticed that, for this class, 90% of the behaviour points I was logging was for boys, often boys with EAL. Also, other teachers were not logging so many behaviour points for the same boys. This seems to suggest that there are things I could do to more effectively manage their behaviour, which would help the whole class.'

Your mentee's statement will not be definitive; it is likely that they have used tentative language, such as 'seems to indicate' and 'may suggest'. This is appropriate, but you should now gently probe them to support their statement with evidence. Remember, they were exploring the impact upon pupils of their normal practice.

To probe them, you could ask:

**About their normal practice**

Give me an example of how you normally communicate to your pupils that



you believe in their academic potential. What words do you use regularly? Do you set stretching, but achievable, tasks? How do you encourage pupils to learn from mistakes and persevere? Have you encouraged parents and carers to engage with their child's learning?

Give me examples of how you develop a positive, predictable and safe environment for pupils. For example, how do you deploy rewards and sanctions? How do you use the school's behaviour management system? How do you give instructions and ensure pupils understand them? How do you monitor misbehaviour and judge when and how to intervene?

### **About the evidence they collected**

How did you ensure it was reliable? Does the data reflect a true picture of the pupils you were interested in?

Did they collect enough, but not too much?

### **About their (tentative) conclusions**

Were you surprised?

Did you find out something you did not already know?

### **About their next steps**

Does your evidence suggest to you what your next steps might be?



## 2. Discussion with mentor

It is likely that you will agree with your mentee that there is some useful alteration to their normal practice that they can now make. This should be drawn from the ECF evidence base for Standards 1 and 7. Inspect these carefully and agree on one change, or set of changes, to their practice. You may need to spend a little time showing them how they could implement this alteration.

For example, returning to our two case studies

To communicate a belief in the academic potential of all pupils (e.g., 1.1,1.2, 1.3, 1a, 1a, 1c, 1d)	<b>A multifaceted approach to setting high expectations</b> Look back in the case study for what Sam did
To establish effective routines and expectations. E.g. 7h, 7e, 7i, 7j, 7c, 7a, 7f	<b>A multifaceted approach to managing behaviour effectively</b> Look back in the case study for what Meera did



## 3. Collaborative planning

Finally, you will decide what evidence your mentee would need to collect to tell them that the alteration they had agreed to make to their normal practice had led to improvement. As before, they should collect their evidence in an efficient way. All the examples in the right of the table are forms of evidence which are near to hand.

Here is a useful way to visualise this:

<b>What I hope to see (e.g.)</b>	<b>How I would know it (e.g.)</b>
Because I set high expectations, all my pupils believe in their own academic potential	Improved progress data (you might see this over time)  Pupil work – completion, quality, meeting of ambitious success criteria, sense of pride (you might see this in the short term)

What I hope to see (e.g.)	How I would know it (e.g.)
	<p>Pupil response – they accept challenge, they persevere</p> <p>Pupil voice – ‘Can I get my mum to help me with this at home?’ ‘I like it when you point out how I can improve my work.’ ‘It doesn’t bother me when I make a mistake, because it helps me know what to do next.’</p>
<p>Because I have developed a positive, predictable and safe environment for my pupils, I now manage behaviour effectively</p>	<p>Fewer behaviour points/more merits on the data management system (you might see this over time)</p> <p>Pupil response – they understand instructions, there is less low-level disruption and minimal threatening behaviour</p> <p>Pupil voice – ‘I feel safe.’ ‘Miss deals with low-level behaviour quickly and with little fuss.’ ‘I always understand what Miss wants me to do in lesson.’</p>

Your mentee will try to implement this change, collect the evidence and report back to you in your final mentor meeting of this module in week 5.

### Next Steps 5 mins

Agree with your mentee how they will now put their learning from this week’s session(s) into practice in their teaching. Help your mentee to clarify:

1. the action(s) they will take and how these action(s) are expected to contribute to improving pupil learning
2. what success will ‘look like’ in relation to these action(s)
3. how they will evaluate their success in taking these action(s)

Note the date of your next mentor meeting, which will be the last of this module, when your mentee will present their inquiry findings.

Finally, remind your mentee that their next session is an ECT Training session next

week.