

ECT Mentor session

Module 1: Enabling pupil learning

Week 6: Managing behaviour

Session Elements



analyse
artefacts



discuss with a
mentor



collaborative
planning

Learning Intentions for this session

Your ECT will learn how to:

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

- 7e** Using consistent language and non-verbal signals for common classroom directions.
- 7f** Using early and least-intrusive interventions as an initial response to low-level disruption.
- 7g** Responding quickly to any behaviour or bullying that threatens emotional safety.

Build trusting relationships by:

- 7i** Responding consistently to pupil behaviour.

Introduction

In their self-directed study session this week, your mentee revisited learning on how to manage behaviour – this was first introduced in week 3 (Establishing the learning environment). Your mentee wrote vignettes about (a) an event where they had managed behaviour effectively and (b) a situation in which they found it tricky to manage behaviour. By reflecting on these two events, your mentee was able to draft

a checklist to help them manage behaviour well in the future.

In this week's ECT mentor meeting, you will work with your mentee to review their vignettes and checklist. You will then agree on a focus for a developmental lesson observation next week when you will observe your mentee with a focus on one or more aspects of the Module 1 content. You will spend some time in your meeting today helping your mentee to prepare for this observation.

Research and Practice Summary

Overcoming a difficult few weeks

James started in his new school in September. He is delighted with how effectively he has established his high expectations and how well pupils have responded to these.

However, as the October half-term approaches, James is increasingly aware that some of his expectations are being challenged by pupils. His mentor reassures him that this is very common and that it matters how he responds – this is an important opportunity for James to reinforce and maintain the strong start that he has made.

What should James think about to reinforce and maintain the high expectations he has established?



You have already learnt about how to effectively establish your expectations. You saw how you can use the following four stages to establish and maintain routines and expectations for behaviour:

- **clarify** – begin by clarifying exactly what the routine involves and why you are using it. For instance, the aim of the routine about handing out equipment quickly may be mainly about maximising time for learning safely
- **model** – show pupils how to perform the routine and explain its purpose. It can help to show non-examples that represent common misinterpretations of the routine as part of this. For example, you can show how just one person in a pair should gather equipment in a science lesson, to minimise the number of people moving around the room

- **practice** – scaffold opportunities for practice when first using the routine. Including an element of competition may be appropriate here. For example, challenging pupils to hand out books as quickly and quietly as possible at the start of the lesson
- **reinforce** – regularly reinforce the routine by acknowledging when it is done well and providing reminders and further practice when it is not. This may be as simple as, ‘well done for settling down and beginning so quickly, Matthew – you’re already learning now’

Using this approach will help you to demonstrate your high expectations of pupils. However, you are likely now reaching the stage where careful reinforcement of your expectations is needed. It is natural for pupils to test the boundaries of your expectations, so it is important to manage your response to this well.

It can help to distinguish between situations where pupils are actively testing your boundaries and situations where pupils do not fully understand what you expect. Where pupils do not understand, re-modelling and practising are likely to be beneficial. In other situations, you will need to consider how you reinforce your expectations.



To continue to reinforce your high expectations, as explored in week 3 of this module, it can help to:

- **be predictable** – schools use sanctions and rewards in many different ways to reinforce desirable behaviours. The success of any system will be determined by its implementation, and predictability is a key part of this. For instance, sanctions that are only enforced sometimes will be less effective than those that always, predictably, follow a certain behaviour. Being predictable helps to reinforce your school’s high expectations of pupils
- **be aware** – awareness is important for preventing low-level disruption as well as for quickly managing bullying or other behaviours that threaten pupils’ emotional safety. To maintain awareness, you should position yourself physically so that you can visually monitor the whole class even when speaking to an individual or small group and frequently ‘be seen looking’ so that pupils know you are aware of what they are doing

- **be responsive** – responding early to low-level disruption usually helps to shut it down quickly. ‘Least-intrusive’ approaches – i.e. those which limit disruption to learning, including non-verbal signals – can be appropriate at this stage, such as pausing abruptly, moving physically closer to disruptive students or looking at pupils to show that you know what they are doing and that it is not acceptable (the ‘teacher glare’)
- **review your expectations** – you will have set your expectations with the best of intentions, but it may be appropriate to carefully review them if pupils are struggling to do as you wish. You should avoid lowering your expectations, but it may be helpful to alter routines to make these expectations more achievable

Building effective, trusting relationships with pupils will help you to manage behaviour and create an environment that supports learning. This process will take longer to establish with some pupils than others and this is quite normal, especially if you are a secondary school teacher who sees individual pupils less frequently. It is easier to build these relationships when pupils believe that their feelings will be considered and understood – even though you are ‘in charge’ of your classroom, you are also modelling how to develop and maintain positive relationships, and taking account of others’ feelings is, of course, an important part of this. This does not mean that you always have to do as pupils wish, but that you can positively impact your relationship with pupils by acknowledging their feelings and being clear about the reasons for the decisions you take.

Responding consistently to pupil behaviour is important for two reasons:

- **reinforcing expectations** – if you only sometimes reinforce your expectations in how you use sanctions and rewards, then pupils quickly learn that your expectations are optional. Over time, you will likely find that pupils adhere less and less to your high behavioural expectations
- **fairness** – pupils have a strong sense of fairness, so, if they notice (or perceive) they are being treated differently than their peers, this can undermine your relationship with them. Therefore, it is important to ‘be fair’ and to ‘be seen to be fair’. This can include, for example, using least-intrusive interventions (see week 3 of Module 1) so that pupils don’t feel that they are being singled out in front of their peers and linking your use of rewards and

sanctions to the school behaviour policy. By being explicit like this, you make it clear to pupils why they are being sanctioned and others know what they need to do to achieve the rewards that their peers receive.

Setting pupils up to succeed: consistency and persistence

James was coming to dread his Friday afternoon lessons. It seemed that pupils could sense the weekend coming and were especially tricky to teach at this time. He felt that two pupils in particular consistently caused low-level disruption that affected everyone's learning and were frequently off task. This upset James, as he had worked so hard to develop a positive, predictable and safe environment in which all pupils could thrive.

James asked his mentor to come and observe the class so that she could help James plan how best to tackle the problems he was concerned about.

The feedback from James' mentor was surprisingly helpful. Not only did she offer some strategies for addressing the pupils' low-level disruption, but she also highlighted the approaches that James had embedded that were supporting the majority of pupils to learn well – even on a Friday afternoon!

James had taken the time in September to carefully clarify, model, practise and reinforce the behaviours he expected from pupils, and his mentor could see that this was already paying off. She praised the way that he reinforced positive behaviours from pupils and how he linked this to the school's policy on sanctions and rewards. She highlighted to James that he was already doing lots of things well and could feel proud of this.

James's mentor also suggested some strategies to work on. She felt that the disruption worrying James was stemming from the two pupils not always understanding clearly what they needed to do. This helped James to see that the most effective behaviour management strategy in this situation was not to respond to the disruption once it had happened but to pre-empt it by making sure the pupils understood clearly what they should be doing.

Based on this feedback, James set himself the following targets:

1. target the two pupils with clarification questions when giving task instructions

to make sure that they fully understand expectations from the outset

2. focus on using consistent language and non-verbal signals for common directions in the classroom so that he can more easily remind the pupils of his expectations while they are working. This includes a non-verbal 'shhh' gesture for when they get chatty, which James can use without distracting other pupils

James' situation is not unique – all teachers experience these kinds of challenges from time to time, especially less experienced teachers. By consistently and persistently applying the principles you have learnt in this module, you will be able to address these challenges and support all pupils to learn well in your class. Remember that you are not alone in this endeavour and that you can expect assistance and support from colleagues, which can often make all the difference.

Mentor Meeting Activities

Throughout the session, try to refer explicitly to the Learning Intentions, and encourage your mentee to record key points in their Learning Log. Tailor your use of the Theory to Practice activities below in response to the Review and Plan sections of this session.

Review: 5 mins

- (1) Start this session by briefly following up the actions that the mentee set at the end of last week's session. Ask your mentee to summarise
 - a. what they did
 - b. the impact of this on pupil learning (including how they are evaluating this)
 - c. what they will do going forward to build on these actions
- (2) Clarify the Learning Intentions for this session with your mentee.

Plan: 5 mins

At the start of this module, you looked at all of the *learn how to* statements for

Standards 1 and 7 and conducted a module audit with your mentee: in some areas, they will already be confident and skilled; in others, they will want more practice and support from you and others. Look back at this audit now and use it to help decide how you and your mentee will make the most productive use of the suggested Theory to Practice activities below.

Theory to Practice: 35 mins



1. Analyse artefacts/discuss with mentor

Invite your mentee to talk you through the vignettes and checklist they drafted in their self-study session this week and to share what they learned from completing these activities. Use your knowledge and experience to highlight strengths in your mentee's reflective thinking and suggest ways to make the most of their learning from the activities as they put their checklist into practice.

To support this discussion, you could:

- connect your mentee's checklist to your school's behaviour policy to ensure that the two are aligned
- highlight strengths in your mentee's current approach to managing behaviour on which they can build
- note any areas for development which your mentee has not included in their checklist, but which you think should usefully be addressed



2. Discuss with mentor

Module 1 has introduced a range of approaches to behaviour management, many of which your mentee will now have put into practice. As part of next week's ECT mentor meeting, you will observe your mentee using some of these approaches. Based on your mentee's development needs and the challenges they are currently

experiencing with their pupils, agree with your mentee which class you will observe and the focus of this observation. The observation is allocated 20 minutes of your meeting time for the week.

Use the notes made by your mentee in their self-study session and the outcomes of the first activity in this session as a starting point for some collaborative planning. Work with your mentee to plan how they will incorporate into their teaching, in the coming week, strategies for developing pupils' resilience, self-regulation and motivation.

Agree with your mentee:

- which lesson you will observe
- which 20 minute part of the lesson you will observe
- the focus of your observation, drawn from one or more of the sessions for Module 1
- the success criteria for this observation, contextualised for your mentee's stage of development and the characteristics of their pupils

Note: this observation should not form part of your school's performance management process or NQT statutory induction. To clearly differentiate this developmental observation from these formal processes you may wish to record your observation notes on paperwork not associated with these processes.



3. Collaborative planning

Spend some time with your mentee planning their lesson for the agreed observation next week. Make use of research and practice summaries from previous weeks in this module, as appropriate, to stimulate ideas for the lesson. You might also use scripting and/or rehearsal if this suits your mentee's needs.

Next Steps: 5 mins

As your mentee is preparing for the developmental observation as part of next

week's ECT mentor meeting, there is no need to set further actions arising from this week's session.

Note the date of your next mentor meeting. There is no ECT self-study in week 7, as this is replaced by an ECT online learning community.