

Appendix

Behaviour for Learning

Lateness:

Dealing with lateness is a common problem. Although punctuality is an important discipline for children to develop, I've learnt that reasons for lateness are many and varied. I've been advised to remember that lateness is not always the fault of the pupil. Parents who are disorganized, unsupportive, or just having a 'bad day' can cause a pupil to be late to school. Emotional problems such as bereavement, abuse, severe conflict at home or bullying can also contribute. And there may be times when one's teacher-colleagues may cause a pupil to be late for a lesson!.

The trainee should handle the situation assertively and with sensitivity, having established a process that works for him/her (within the context of school policy), the problem is less likely to disrupt lessons.

If lateness is a common problem throughout the school, then the trainee may need to discuss the issue with his or her mentor to receive further advice.

Behaviour problems can be reduced if the school has systems in place that work and if the roles of staff in managing lateness are clear.

Sequence

Planning, anticipation, sequencing and creating a positive atmosphere in the classroom and improving the organization of lesson transition also change behaviour patterns and, to a large extent, avoid the necessity of dealing with the disturbance.

I feel It is important to identify the reason why some pupils misbehave and disrupt transition and for me as a teacher to respond accordingly so that the cause, and not the symptom, is being addressed. If problems continue, I've been advised that differentiated action within the class is usually needed.

Overall improved lesson organisation and planning as well as developing a more positive and engaging classroom climate for learning will improve behaviour.

Enforcing Class Rules:

Dealing with one pupil who is late or breaking a rule is one thing, If a third of the class is involved, then the situation is potentially a lot more difficult. Dealing with this quickly, without conflict and in a positive way, is the key to a successful outcome (for both the pupil and the teacher!).

A calm, assertive, low-intervention approach is needed so that the lesson can continue as quickly as possible.

The reality in some schools is that pupils receive inconsistent messages about behaviour. This can be caused by the lack of consistency amongst teachers, TAs and others in the implementation of an agreed code of conduct.

Pupils notice these differences and are quick to make judgements on this basis. Thus, one of the key tasks for a new teacher must be to establish routines which clearly reinforce the whole-school policy.

Obviously, confrontation of this nature should be avoided as far as possible but, even with excellent planning for behaviour, it does sometimes happen. The whole issue of avoiding conflict by the use of a range of techniques including the use of the language of (limited) choice will be explored.

Trainee (and experienced) teachers may need help in keeping control of their own tempers and being assertive rather than passive or aggressive. The ability to defuse conflict is a very valuable skill.

The key is to be fair and consistent!

My Experience:

There are a few pupils in my form who are regularly late and it is mainly due to their parents dropping them off late. As for lessons, there are some incidents where pupils are late but the teacher always asks for a reason and the pupils in most cases just say that it was the teacher from the previous lesson that held them back.

Regular lateness to school does cause pupils to be in detention and it is a deterrent for most but not for all. From what I have seen lateness is not as common in my school, as in maybe others, as the area is an affluent area with good social status.

As for behaviour within class, I have noticed that most often that not the pupils are not engaged in task because the task is tedious, not understood or because the pupils are not motivated enough.

This unfortunately does bring rise to many difficulties and I have seen some of these issues in the classes I teach.

For instance, I taught a year 9 and they were doing OCR nationals. Unfortunately the first task was to set up a folder structure but they had to print screen before and after creating each folder. I automatically knew this was boring and tedious and so did the pupils. This caused much frustration and what should have been a ten minute task took the class a whole hour to do.

Most pupils were creating the folders but not screen shooting each aspect hence had to start again. AS one can imagine the atmosphere was dull and no pupil really strived to complete the task in the time allocated.

I was advised that such action should be done simultaneously by teacher and pupil. I.e. teacher advises pupils all to open word. Open My documents, create screen shot and paste into word etc. Although this would work are the pupils really learning anything?

As for firmness in rules, there is no better advice than be firm be fair.

I once asked a pupil to stand up and because he felt he was not doing anything wrong he reacted very unpleasantly to my request and openly objected to it. I realised that I probably was not being fair and the class may begin to see me as an unfair teacher. So I quickly learnt not to repeat that same mistake again.