

Managing Behavior: The Basics for New Teachers

Managing student behavior can be one of the most challenging aspects of the teacher's role. The first thing to remember, however, is that most young people you meet want to learn and succeed at school. This is not to say you won't encounter challenging students - even the most experienced teachers find particular pupils or classes more challenging than others - but your approach to behavior management can have a big influence on how well you cope.

To like or not to like

Students are people. You will find, as with all people, that there are some you like and some you don't. This is wholly natural. Treating all pupils fairly is part of your role as a teacher - with time, it becomes easier to differentiate between your feelings as a teacher and as a human! Intimate relationships with pupils must be avoided. Even discussions of an intimate nature are off-limits.

Tips for Positive Behavior Management

- Try to be positive in your dealings with students and offer praise and encouragement.
- Establish clearly the rights, rules, and responsibilities within your classroom.
- Make students aware they have choices about behavior and that there are consequences if they choose to misbehave.
- Greet students at the classroom door and issue a personal greeting where possible.
- Use a respectful tone of voice, speaking clearly and firmly.
- Avoid proximity - don't get too close or be overbearing in your body language.
- Avoid unnecessary interruptions. If a student is late, acknowledge the lateness, direct them to their seat and follow up later.
- If a student is not cooperating, avoid arguing. Refer to the class rules, give the student a clear choice and follow up.
- Always follow up and follow through punishments. Students respect clear boundaries.
- Utilize wider support (peers, administration, parents).
- Maintain a sense of humor!
- Don't be afraid to call the parents of a student who is misbehaving, when this is in line with school procedures.

- Use the layout of your classroom to your advantage; sit the pupils where you want them to sit.
- Arrange the room so that you have eye contact with everyone.