

Early Career Framework

Core Induction Programme

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- > Week 2: Understanding teachers as role models

Week

2: Understanding teachers as role models

Session Elements

- analyse artefacts
- scripting
- discuss with a colleague
- observe a colleague

Learning Intentions for this session

You will learn that:

1.1 Teachers have the ability to affect and improve the wellbeing, motivation and behaviour of their pupils.

1.2 Teachers are key role models, who can influence the attitudes, values and behaviours of their pupils.

You will learn that:

1.3 Teacher expectations can affect pupil outcomes; setting goals that challenge and stretch pupils is essential.

1.5 A culture of mutual trust and respect supports effective relationships.

7.1 Establishing and reinforcing routines, including through positive reinforcement, can help create an effective learning environment.

7.2 A predictable and secure environment benefits all pupils, but is particularly valuable for pupils with special educational needs.

You will learn how to:**Demonstrate consistently high behavioural expectations, by:**

1e. Creating a culture of respect and trust in the classroom that supports all pupils to succeed (e.g. by modelling the types of courteous behaviour expected of pupils).

Establish effective routines and expectations, by:

7h. Creating and explicitly teaching routines in line with the school ethos that maximise time for learning (e.g. setting and reinforcing expectations about key transition points).

7i. Practising routines at the beginning of the school year.

7j. Reinforcing routines (e.g. by articulating the link between time on task and success).

Introduction

This module focuses on Teachers' Standards 1 and 7. These can be considered as foundational to your teaching because they address how you set up your classroom as a learning environment. As you work through the weeks of this module you will reflect on the different ways that you can influence your environment, and learn practical strategies that keep pupils safe, motivated and focused on learning.

Research and Practice Summary

This reading will help you understand some of the theory behind this week's topic. We will start by introducing some of the key concepts (these are in bold). You will also see some suggestions of how to put these concepts into practice. **When using these concepts in your own practice you will need to take account of your pupils' characteristics, the context of your classroom and the nature of the material that you are teaching.**

A new year and a fresh start

Sam is excited – and nervous – about starting a new job in September. At her current school she is happy: pupils respect and trust her, see her as a role model, and know that she believes in them.

However, it took Sam a couple of years to reach this point and she knows she made some mistakes along the way. To make the most of her fresh start, Sam's current mentor suggests that she considers how to communicate her expectations to her new pupils and create a positive learning environment from day one.

What do you think Sam should consider in order to embed expectations early on with her new classes, in order to recreate the respect and trust she had fostered at her old school?

Teachers can be extraordinarily influential – you can improve the motivation, wellbeing and behaviour of your pupils. In turn, this will help you to improve their life chances, especially for the most disadvantaged pupils. Ultimately, the quality of your teaching is what matters most, but creating secure foundations by acting as a role model, clarifying your expectations, and creating a culture of trust and respect will help your teaching to have the greatest possible impact. You can do this by:

- **acting as a role model** – your actions can influence the attitudes, values and behaviours of your pupils. For instance, modelling a joy of reading may influence your pupils' attitudes to reading. Therefore, you should be purposeful and consider the attributes you wish to foster through your example. Pupils may be especially impressionable if they identify with you, or if they lack existing positive role models
- **clarifying your expectations** – your expectations of pupils can affect their outcomes. This is sometimes known as the Pygmalion effect, through which pupils can internalise expectations of them held by others. Setting challenging, yet achievable goals will help you to communicate your high expectations and support pupils to achieve more. You should set similar expectations about behaviour by, for instance, not tolerating low-level disruption

- **creating a culture of respect and trust** – this can be achieved by doing lots of simple things well, such as actively modelling and reinforcing the courteous behaviour you expect pupils to show you and their peers. For instance, by respectfully listening to others' ideas and actively modelling how to do this and why it matters

A culture of trust and respect

Just like in Sam's previous school, the first time she set a collaborative activity for her new class, she spent time discussing and agreeing with them a set of class rules aimed at fostering a culture of respect and trust. Rules included 'listening carefully to others' views' and 'respecting each other's views'. Taken together, the rules that Sam's class agreed helped to reinforce their shared value about the importance of fairness.

The rules were similar to those from previous years, but this time Sam paid more attention to the details of how these rules were embedded with the class, having learnt how important this is. For instance, she systematically modelled the rules with her own behaviour, sometimes exaggerating this for effect. Furthermore, Sam reinforced the rules by highlighting successes and reminding pupils consistently of expectations if they violated the rules. As part of reinforcement, Sam also emphasised the positive link between time on task and learning.

Over time, Sam's pupils began to remind each other about the rules, and the culture of respect and trust helped all pupils to succeed. Notably, it became much easier for Sam to teach and for pupils to learn in these conditions – the initial investment of lesson time was worth it for its overall benefit across the year.

Routines are a sequence of actions regularly followed. School life is full of routines and teachers can influence these routines so that they are both effective and efficient – this helps to maximise the time available for learning. Routines can also help create a predictable and secure environment for all pupils, which may be particularly helpful for pupils with special educational needs.

Routines can be helpful in many different situations. These will depend to an extent on your own context. Common situations where routines are useful include:

- **transition points** – moving from one activity to another, especially when physical movement is needed, such as younger pupils moving from working at tables to sitting on the carpet

- **using equipment** – excess time taken in distributing and gathering equipment is time that could be better spent learning, so establishing efficient routines is important here
- **entering and exiting lessons** – simple routines to support entry and exit include the use of seating plans and ‘board activities’ for pupils to begin as soon as they enter the classroom
- **collaborative and paired work** – pupils benefit from clear routines to support them to work effectively and efficiently together. Working with others is most impactful when pupils are clear about how to do this well – for example, having defined roles for each member of a group; clarifying strategies for contributing and listening to ideas within the group; and establishing processes for feeding back outcomes to the class at the end of the task
- **safety** – different subjects pose different risks, but establishing routines, such as how pupils wear goggles in science, can help maintain safety for everybody

Establishing and maintaining routines, like any behaviour, takes effort – especially in the early stages of working with a new class. It can be helpful to think of this as a four-stage process; the speed and emphasis placed on each stage will depend on your pupils’ characteristics, your classroom context and the focus of the routine. It may be necessary to re-model or provide further practice if adherence to a given routine decreases over time.

- **clarify** – begin by clarifying exactly what the routine involves and why you are using it. For instance, the aim of the routine may be mainly about maximising time for learning safely
- **model** – show pupils how to perform the routine and explain its purpose, highlighting the core principles or elements of the routine. It can help to show non-examples that represent common misinterpretations of the routine as part of this
- **practice** – scaffold opportunities for practice when first using the routine. Including an element of competition may be appropriate here – for example, timing groups of pupils to see who can clear away equipment and be ready to exit the classroom in the least time
- **reinforce** – regularly reinforce the routine by acknowledging when it is done well and providing reminders and further practice where it is not

Establishing and maintaining a routine for gluing in sheets

Following her mentor’s advice, Sam spent some time thinking about the routines that she wanted to establish with her new class. One area where she needed a stronger routine was gluing sheets into pupils’ books. Initially, Sam thought it might be too trivial an action to focus on, but on reflection she found that it really did matter to her.

Too often in the past, this had been a slow process which some pupils did so ineffectively that their books were messy or resources got lost. Sam

had even found herself sometimes gluing in sheets when she was marking books, which was a poor use of her time. This time Sam was clear with her new pupils about the routine she wanted to embed:

- **clarify** – Sam clarified to pupils how she wanted sheets stuck into books: open, not folded; edges inside the book, not hanging out; a single line of glue around each edge, not across the whole sheet. Sam then thought about the routine pupils needed to embed to achieve this. She already kept glue sticks on the table, but she added in a stage of peer checking, too
- **model** – Sam explained to pupils why the routine mattered, which included showing the class two old exercise books: one where the routine had been followed, and one where it had not. Sam also modelled the process using her visualiser and a volunteer peer checker, and pointed out common mistakes as well as how to avoid these
- **practice** – Sam purposefully built in time for practice during the first weeks of term. As she built in peer checking of books it naturally became a little competitive and pupils enjoyed trying to glue in their sheets both efficiently and effectively
- **reinforce** – the peer checking became a powerful way of reinforcing the routine and this also contributed to the wider class culture of high expectations. Sam also regularly reinforced the rationale for the routine and its link to pupils' learning. If sheets had not been glued in correctly, Sam provided targeted reinforcement of her expectations

To make the most of your routines, consider the following questions:

- What is the purpose of each routine?
- What – exactly – do you expect to happen during each routine?
- How will you provide sufficient high-quality practice for each routine?
- How will you reinforce each routine?

You could then consider each routine from your pupils' perspective:

- Do pupils understand the purpose of each routine?
- Do pupils understand, exactly, what to do with each routine?

Self-Study Activities

Review: 10 mins

Read the research and practice summary on this week's topic. As you read, reflect on:

- the practices that you are already doing well
- the practices you are doing some of the time, but could do more of/more consistently
- the practices you do not use in your teaching yet

As you work through the activities in this week's self-directed study session and mentor meeting, aim to both refine and extend what you already do well, and to build your skill and confidence in using practices which are not yet a regular part of your teaching repertoire.

Plan: 15 mins

Analyse artefacts / discuss with a colleague

Spend some time exploring the culture and values of your school, then capture what you think are the main features of this culture / these values in a way that suits you. This could be in a short narrative, a bulleted list or a diagram, for example.

To help you, you might:

- read paperwork that outlines your school's culture and values – for example, staff induction documentation or promotional materials (you could also look on your school's website for this information)
- walk around the building and notice what this tells you about the culture and what is valued. What is on display, and on noticeboards? What is celebrated? How do staff and pupils interact with each other?
- speak to a colleague who has been at the school for a while and ask them what they feel characterises the culture and values of the school

Theory to practice: 15 mins

1. Observe a colleague

As you have read above, how you set the expectations in your classroom will significantly shape the learning that happens within it. Arrange to observe the beginning (first 5 minutes) of an experienced colleague's lesson. Make brief notes on all the ways that this colleague communicates their expectations about attitudes, values and behaviour in their classroom. Ask your mentor to suggest a suitable colleague, if necessary.

To shape this observation, you could look out for:

- How the colleague manages entry to the room: how do pupils enter? Do they line up first? Is entry controlled in any way? What happens if pupils are not following expectations?
- What pupils do on entry to the room: do they have a routine for dealing with their bags and outdoor coats? Do they sit down immediately? How quickly do they settle? Is there work or an activity ready for them to get on with?
- How the teacher communicates their expectations verbally and non-verbally: what words do they use? What tone, volume and pitch? How are facial expressions and gestures used to communicate with pupils?
- How the colleague uses aspects of the model described above: clarify; model; practice; reinforce

2. Scripting

Use the ideas in the research and practice summary above, and your notes from this session so far, to script your own routine for how pupils will enter your classroom. If relevant to your setting, you may want to consider the role of parents and carers as part of this, too.

Your script should address the 'clarify' and 'model' stages of the process described in this week's research and practice summary. Include in this script:

- your expectations about how pupils will enter the room: will they line up? Where? Who decides when pupils enter? What will happen if pupils aren't following expectations?
- instructions you will give pupils about what to do on entry: how will they deal with bags and coats? Will they sit down immediately? What are your expectations about how quickly they settle? What should pupils 'do' once they are settled?
- how you will model your expectations to your pupils
- notes for yourself on how you will create opportunities for pupils to practise your new routine
- notes for yourself on how you will communicate your expectations verbally and non-verbally: what language could you use to greet different pupils? How will you use tone, volume and pitch? How will you use facial expressions and gestures to help reinforce your expectations?

Be as specific as you can in the detail you give. The purpose of this activity is to help you think in detail about how you can set clear expectations about behaviour on entry to your classroom, and create a predictable and secure environment that supports effective learning.

Next steps: 5 mins

Bring your script and any notes you have made from the other activities in this session to your mentor meeting this week. Be ready to discuss your script with your mentor and work together to refine it further. You will have a chance to rehearse this script with your mentor before putting it into practice in your teaching.

[Next Week — 3: Establishing the learning environment](#) 

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