

The National Professional Standards for Teachers: Standard 4 Reflective Commentary and Action

Plan

The National Standards for Teachers states that teachers should be able to manage challenging behaviours and maintain safety. It is some teachers philosophy that if you don't have good behavioural management than you can't teach the students anything. The main objective of these teachers is to have outright control of their classroom. I believe classroom management is important and poor behaviour can be very disruptive in the classroom but I also believe that students do need some freedom in the classroom. At SHS there was a teacher who controlled her class so that no student was allowed to leave their seat during class, no student was allowed to speak unless given permission by raising their hand and any student who did not follow the rules were immediately dealt with a consequence (no low key techniques). Although I respect this teacher and it is her decision to construct a learning environment like that I don't like such strategies. I like to allow students to work with the students next to them, allow students to walk to the bin or borrow a pen from a friend. It requires more monitoring from me but I feel it shows respect to the students as human beings and they appreciate it. As long as they are on task I don't mind a bit of talking as I believe school should be a social place and also believe that interaction provides better learning to students as they can feed off each other's ideas. I do believe behaviour management is very important but I feel the classroom environment as a whole is more important for student learning and students will learn more in a positive happy environment.

I do have set rules which can be found on the website that I do like students to follow. I only have four rules I want students to strictly follow because then the students can easily familiarise themselves with the rules and they are not over complicated. I enforce these rules but also know that students are going to misbehave and so I am not over bearing on the students if they misbehave a little and I try to use many low key techniques before I take more assertive action. I like to use preventative strategies like seating plans, lining up the students before they enter and desk arrangements as it is always better to prevent behaviour than to have to deal with it. I recognise that there will always be behavioural issues no matter how preventative you make the classroom and I feel you can become over preventative like the strict teacher mentioned above.

During my practicum there were a couple of situations where I had to deal with challenging behaviour. This is one aspect of teaching that it is very important to get right as not only is it important for a good learning environment it is important for the safety and well being of the students and myself as a teacher. One situation included a year 8 girl in a science laboratory who came in late as she was caught truanting and then was obviously put out and did not want to join in. When I asked her to join in she became irate and I had to think quickly as it was a science lab and there were many potential hazards. My mentor teacher and I were able to calm her down while I sent a student to get the head of year 8. The head of year 8 was able to safely remove the student and the class was able to carry on safely. This incident shows the importance of behavioural management in a science laboratory as there are usually chemicals, sharp objects, fire or other potential hazards that an irate student could inflict damage with intentionally or unintentionally.

After completing a CMS (Classroom Management Strategies) course it was obvious that I had to script out a behavioural management system to be used in the class in a form of a 'bump table'. The bump table is accessible on the website. I used the 'bump table' while at SHS. Of course it is

important to remember that schools have their own course of action in dealing with students and the 'bump table' will have to be changed depending on the school. This 'bump table' was based on school behavioural policies at SHS.

It is important to be prepared for situations as it is better to think rationally about what to do when you are calm and have time to think rather than when you are flustered with a student and having to think on the spot there and then. Therefore it is important to be familiar with the bump table as to make correct and professional decisions.

Using manners when dealing with misbehaving students is not only ethical but it shows that you are calm and collected in dealing with the situation and also your appreciation to the student stopping what they are doing and following your instruction. Students also respond well to manners. If manners are used it gives the perception of respect and a choice for the student. When manners are not used it gives the perception of an autonomous classroom and shows too much power or control from the teacher to the students. Therefore after every instruction or talking to students about their behaviour I always use manners such as "thankyou" or "please". It also provides something for you as a teacher to fall back on, for example "I have asked you nicely to do that" or "Please, don't speak to me like that as I have been polite to you". Not only is it important for the respect but it is important because of our roles as teachers to be role models.

To increase my classroom management I have completed a course on CMS as mentioned before conducted during and after my school practicum at SHS. I want to complete more courses on behavioural management especially based on high school. I will endeavour in 2013 and 2014 to attend professional development courses to enhance my ability and strategy repertoire on classroom management in the high school context to increase my ability but ultimately to create a better learning environment for my students.