

This 'One~Pager' looks at the importance of teachers establishing positive relationships with students. Positive relationships underpin and support Behaviours for Learning. They create conditions where students and teachers can focus on learning, free from distractions. The ideas here are taken from Teaching Walthrus. For fuller guidance and Trusted Techniques, visit the online version of our Toolkit.

Establish norms around clear roles and boundaries



- Make it explicit to students through your messages and interactions, that you as their teacher have responsibility for them and that this gives you role-authority alongside a duty of care.
- Adopt a mindset where your relationships with students focus on the shared purpose of achieving learning

Communicate kindness



- If you think about all of your students and classes through a lens of kindness, it influences all of your interactions, the things you say and the way you say them, the expectations you have of students and the way they interact with each other.
- Keep kindness at the forefront especially if you have challenging situations to deal with.

Learn names and use them



- It is much easier to communicate warmth and kindness to students if you know their names.
- It pays to take time to learn names early on with a new class
- Design, use and insist on a seating plan

Combine assertiveness with warmth



- The ideal demeanour for a teacher is one of being assertive, rather than autocratic or indecisive.
- It is possible to be very strict if needed, strongly enforcing a boundary, at the same time as being warm, kind and caring.
- Use a tone of voice and body language that is firm but warm

Always be the adult



- This applies when you are challenged by students behaving inappropriately.
- However badly they behave, however inappropriate the language they might use, it is vital to remain as calm and rational as possible, taking a pause to compose yourself if necessary.
- Listen for the substance of what students are saying and respond using adult language and Positive Framing, maintaining a professional demeanour, without seeking to have the last word or resorting to sarcasm, idle threats or personal remarks.

Decide and deliberately practice positive classroom management language

- **Affirm positive responses first**

"Well done to this table; you're listening and ready to learn without me prompting you"

- **Frame correction as positive reinforcement**

"Sophie I'd like you to put your hand up if you have a question, thanks"

- **Narrate the consequences**

"Rachel, you've continued to talk after a number of warnings, which disrupts our learning, you know this is a demerit"

- **Give the benefit of the doubt.** Bill Rogers calls this 'partial agreement' "maybe it's true but...."

Teacher: Bella, I need you focused on the task now. Thank you.

Bella: But I wasn't talking or disturbing anyone.

Teacher: OK, maybe you weren't, but I need you focused and working hard now. Thank you.

