My students

The central role of the classroom teacher is to provide learning experiences that ensure that every day, in every classroom, students are achieving. The most critical decisions focus on the student.

What do my students already know?

What do they need to learn?

How do I teach it?

How will they demonstrate their learning?

How will I know how well my students have learned it?

Where to next?

Effective teachers draw on this information to set attainable and worthwhile learning goals for all students,and select appropriate teaching strategies to achieve these learning goals.

Student records

Class profile

Students in Queensland state schools will be from diverse social and cultural backgrounds and have a range of diverse learning needs. Because of the diversity of school communities, our students have rich opportunities to acquire the skills and values necessary for a productive life in an open, just and multicultural democracy.

It is your challenge to make authentic connections to the knowledge and skills students need for success in school and beyond. Further information on how to effectively cater for diversity in your classroom can be found within the Inclusive Education policy at www.education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/curriculum/crppr009/. A host of resource links are accessible within the policy.

Hint

To access effective strategies and resources, use keywords such as 'inclusive education', 'students with disabilities' or 'diversity' in the power search facility through the Resource Exchange at learningplace.eq.edu.au/cx/resources

Reporting student achievement

Research indicates that parents want to be:

- kept well-informed about their children's progress
- given information about achievement and progress in both academic and non-academic areas of learning
- informed of the strengths and weaknesses of their children
- provided with constructive advice about how they can support their children's learning.

In response to this, Education Queensland's policy on reporting states that all schools must:

- issue a formal report to parents using a 5-point scale and 'plain English' at least twice yearly in Years 1 to 12
- report orally to parents twice yearly in Prep
- offer parent–teacher interviews every semester.

In order to report to parents, quality records of student achievement must be kept by teachers.

Student files and data

Accountability is essential, so it is worthwhile expending a lot of energy on maintaining a quality system that both works for you and is in line with your school's policy on record-keeping.

A student record, which includes academic and behaviour records, extra-curricular participation, attendance information, record of contact with parents and personal and contact information, is located in OneSchool. Standardised and diagnostic test results can be recorded, and corporate assessment results such as NAPLAN can be accessed in OneSchool. Reference to other school records may be needed, depending on the implementation of OneSchool functionality in the school.

For further information, refer to your school's policies, the *Information Privacy Act 2009* and section 426 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*. These provide the regulatory framework for the responsible management of personal information, including its collection, storage, use and disclosure by the Queensland Department of Education and Training.

Office files

Official student files are stored in the office. Student enrolment forms are contained within these files. Enrolment forms are signed by both parents and students, confirming their agreement in terms of the school's Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students, and procedures for homework, assessment and uniform. This written agreement signifies the joint understanding and responsibility of parents and students in regard to these school-based procedures.

Office files may also contain official and legal documents such as court orders, copies of report cards and systemic test reports, guidance officer reports and letters generated by the leadership team. This file stays at the school.

Hint

If you feel that there are gaps in what you know about a child, check the student's office file. For example, if you are wondering why James is a year older than his peers, the enrolment form contained within the office files will provide years and locations of schools attended — you may see that the family moved from interstate, or overseas, or that he repeated a year. Ensure that you seek permission to view documentation and information, as it can be highly confidential.

Student files – primary

These files are moved from class to class as the student progresses through the school, and each teacher adds data to the folder before passing it on. Most schools have a list of what teachers are expected to add to the folder. Such items may include a running record, writing samples or mathematics tests. These files can be sent on from school to school if the child transfers. Some schools pass them on to the secondary school when the student moves to Year 8. These files should be considered confidential, and it is important to store them in a lockable filing cabinet.

Hints

- Review each student's records in OneSchool. This includes records of their behaviour, academic achievement, specific education requirements and contact with their parents.
- Notes to parents that you generate in relation to each child should be filed in the student's file to allow you to build up a record of the contact that you have had with parents. Recording contact with parents in OneSchool will enable you to manage and monitor discussions and decisions about your students' progress.
- All written notes from parents and carers also need to be filed.
- Talk to past teachers or the year level coordinator to gather data about a student's academic performance or behaviour.

Student files – secondary

A child may have more than one file, depending on their needs and the extra support they are receiving. If you have concerns about one of your students, discuss your concerns with your year level coordinator and the student's other teachers. The pieces of information contained in different teachers' student files can contribute to the whole picture.

Teacher files

Keep detailed records to assist with assessment and parent interviews. It is worthwhile to keep additional student work samples and anecdotal records as part of your teacher files.

Student assessment can be recorded in OneSchool. Markbooks for curriculum assessment, NAPLAN, diagnostic and standardised tests, and teacher personal markbooks, are available in the OneSchool application.

As well as the student files that you keep updated to pass on to the next teacher, there are other records that you will need to keep as part of the assessment and reporting process.

Hint – primary

Develop a folder of items such as completed homework, assessment pieces or writing tasks. When you attend parent–teacher interviews, you will have a collection of student work samples to demonstrate to parents how you arrived at your evaluation of student performance. Once report cards and interviews are completed, the work can be sent home, keeping the folder free to repeat the process in the next semester.

Hint – secondary

Develop a way to organise your files for all of your students across all subjects and classes. You may find it useful to have separate folders for each subject, class or unit of work you teach. Create a folder for your class rolls. Establish separate folders where student assessment is kept. You will need a place to store your student assessment folders, as you could teach up to 150 students. Keeping these folders up-to-date is your responsibility. Be mindful to take any relevant information with you to parent–teacher interviews.

Qualitative data – behaviour, records of meetings, parent meetings, anecdotal notes

It is important to note student welfare information such as:

- behaviour issues (for example, incidents at lunchtime or in class)
- background details from parents (for example, issues in the home or family that may affect their learning)
- outcomes of meetings with the principal or other professionals regarding behaviour (for example, the guidance officer or Support Teacher (Literacy and Numeracy).

All this information should be recorded in OneSchool so it is available for subsequent teachers of the student.

Hints

- Maintain student information systematically, for example, in a ring binder, separated alphabetically with plastic folder dividers labelled A–Z. This way, you can add to it if you receive new students, or add other items such as printed emails.
- If you are a secondary teacher, chances are that you will have a homeroom or form class. Form teachers need to have an awareness of how the students in their form class are performing in all subjects. Ensure information is recorded in OneSchool, as form teachers can often be the first port of call when a student is displaying poor results or behaviour in a particular subject.
- All notes regarding absences need to be kept.
- Please note that all written records can be requested under Right to Information legislation and may be used in a court of law. It is important to write factual information and avoid interpretations.
- Your school will have procedures in place for the secure storage of personal information about students and staff. Ensure you follow these procedures to protect the privacy of individuals.

Qualitative data – academic anecdotal notes

Markbooks are great see-at-a-glance tools, but do not provide a complete picture. Ensure you keep documentation on anecdotal evidence about a student's performance. A mark will only indicate student achievement, but anecdotal notes (which may be included as comments on the assessment's criteria sheet) will provide detail of the student's particular strengths and weaknesses. The sample student profile on page 52 provides a template for you to record anecdotal information about students in your primary classroom.

Anecdotal records can be entered into the teacher's personal markbook in OneSchool. All markbooks are accessible when entering data for student academic reports.

Hints

Using the student profile sheet (page 52):

- Enlarge the profile sheet to A3 and photocopy it back-to-back so you have one side for each semester.
- As you mark tasks, jot down notes about the student's work on their profile sheet.
- If you find that you are writing the same note about many students, you need to take appropriate action. For example, if you are marking mathematics tests and you note for many students 'difficulties with division with decimal remainders', then you probably need to focus on this concept with your class.
- At the end of the semester, you will find this sheet very helpful as you will have a complete record of how each student managed each task that you set. You will be able to write report cards and run parent–teacher interviews using just the profile sheet and your markbook.

Sample student profile sheet – primary

Name	Year level: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Semester 1/2
Writing and shaping		Number Whole numbers Fractions Money Addition and subtraction Multiplication and division
Speaking and listening		Patterns and algebra Patterns and functions Equivalence and equations
Reading and viewing		Measurement Time Length, mass, area and volume
Handwriting		Chance and data Chance Data
Word study		Space Shape and line Location, direction and movement
Science Science and society Earth and beyond Energy and change Life and living Natural and processed materials		Technology Technology practice Information Materials Systems
Studies of society and environment		The arts
Time, continuity and change Place and space Culture and identity Systems, resources and power		Visual arts Dance Drama Media Music
Health and physical education Promoting the health of individuals and communities Enhancing personal development Developing concepts and skills for physical activity		Additional information Appraised/education adjustment program/choir/ chamber group/district sport

Quantitative data – senior secondary assessment

In addition to qualitative information about the students in your class, you must be vigilant with recording student assessment. Stay up-to-date with the marking of your students' work, as it can pile up and catch you off guard, particularly around the end of term. Mark student work as soon as it comes in, while the assessment task is fresh in your mind. Immediately record student results for assessment in OneSchool and on the student's profile sheet.

The careful marking and recording of student work is essential for senior students in Years 11 and 12, who may be working towards their Queensland Certificate of Education. Queensland follows a system of externally moderated school-based assessment. This means that students are taught and assessed by their teachers in accordance with the requirements of the Years 11 and 12 syllabuses.

The Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) at www.qsa.qld.edu.au is the statutory body that ensures that the curriculum and assessment developed by schools are rigorous and meet the requirements of the syllabuses. Teachers' judgments about the standards achieved by their students are moderated by the QSA using trained expert panels of teachers from other schools. If you teach an Authority-registered subject, some of your students' work will inevitably be sent to one of these review panels for either monitoring (at the end of Year 11) or verification (at the end of Year 12).

Student assessment folders and the accompanying profile sheets for each subject and student are the responsibility of the teacher. In the case of senior students studying Authority-registered subjects, these profile sheets (usually found on the front of the individual student's folder of assessment items) must be set out in accordance with the relevant syllabus to show the:

- tasks completed
- assessment instrument used for each task
- criteria assessed in each task
- tasks as formative or summative
- results for each task
- level of achievement at moderation, verification and exit.

Schools may design their own student profiles as long as the key elements are shown.

If you teach a senior subject that is not Authority-registered, as part of your school's Vocational Training and Education (VTE) program, there will be an alternative, but equally crucial and specific, system for marking, recording and filing student work. These requirements will be subject-specific, and may be in relation to any associated TAFE modules being completed in the subject. Your Head of Department Senior School, VET coordinator or subject area coordinator will be able to guide you in this.

Hints

- Mark and file student assessment as soon as the assessment process is complete.
- Keep student profile sheets up-to-date.
- Refer to your HOD/HOC to discuss the use of OneSchool to plan units and record assessment results. Schools will be implementing the OneSchool curriculum and assessment functionality over time.
- It is absolutely vital that your students' profiles (folders containing their assessment items and profile sheets) and your submissions to panel are highly organised and well-presented.
- Check the QSA or school policy before allowing students to take marked work home.
- Check the QSA policy in regards to keeping senior student work — QSA mandates that all student work completed by students over the course of senior study (Years 11 and 12) must be kept until 30 March of the following year.

Sample student profile sheet – senior secondary

The student profile below shows the results of a hypothetical student, who has studied senior music over Year 11 and 12. This profile sheet would be found on the front of the student's assessment folder. The layout of student profiles and the information contained on them are entirely subject-specific, so liaise with your HOD to ensure you have the correct profile sheets for your subject area. Criteria sheets are developed in OneSchool as part of the curriculum planning functionality. Speak to your HOD to discuss the use of OneSchool.

Semester	Assessment task	Exit criterion		
		Analysing repertoire	Composing	Performing
Year 11 (Formative)				
1	1. Analysing repertoire Extended written task: comparison of two scores	A–		
2	2. Composing Song with accompaniment		C	
2	3. Performing Performance of music theatre repertoire			B
Interim level of achievement at monitoring		HA		
Year 12 (Summative)				
3	4. Analysing repertoire Multimedia task: argumentative evaluation of a composer's work referring to specific repertoire	A		
3	5. Performing Accompanying school choir			C–
4	6. Composing Rock composition: any style, instrumental or vocal or both		B+	
Verification of interim level of achievement		HA		
4	7. Performing Conducting school concert band			C
Exit level of achievement: October		HA		

OneSchool

The foundation component of the department's Smart Classrooms strategy, OneSchool involves the design and deployment of a comprehensive, flexible and sustainable information management system in Queensland state schools.

OneSchool is not just about securing a technology replacement for the current school-based system. Rather, it is a school-driven project focused on parents and guardians. By providing teachers an accurate, complete and timely student record, OneSchool helps them to form a holistic picture of each student, which in turn enhances the learning of all students.

The scope of the OneSchool project includes functionality for:

- student management
- curriculum and learning management
- resource management
- finance and asset management
- performance, reporting and analysis.

OneSchool is being deployed progressively, with each release adding functionality.

Teachers can record, report and review students' extracurricular participation, contact with parents and guardians, behaviour incidents, career aspirations and academic achievement, attendance details, contact information and personal details. All student academic reports are developed in OneSchool.

You can also create curriculum plans and criteria sheets, schedule assessment tasks and record assessment data. Schools are expected to take 18 months to three years to fully implement this additional functionality.

Schools and corporate offices have the ability to share individual student records and access NAPLAN data within strictly defined security protocols. On transfer or enrolment, a student's records are made available to the new school, enhancing its ability to ensure continuity of student learning and management. Schools now have a timetabling module which provides valuable information for schools around facilities and staffing.

Release Three will deliver the functionality to replace the existing School Management System (SMS), and will include financial asset and student management. The statewide deployment of this is release is planned for 2011.

Medical information

More and more students require daily medication. For some, quick access to this medication is a matter of life and death. Your professionalism and responsibility in this regard is crucial.

Possible needs for medication include:

- chronic conditions — these are ongoing medical conditions such as attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, cystic fibrosis, and allergies
- acute conditions — these are medical conditions that are sudden and urgent, such as anaphylaxis and infections, which may require immediate treatment.

You will need written permission from a student's parents or carers to dispense any medication. All medications must be clearly labelled.

The administration staff are usually responsible for dispensing medication during the school day. However, you must support them by sending students to the office to take their medication, and ensuring that replacement medication is sent in from home when supplies run out.

Hints

- If you are absent, leave reminders for supply teachers about which students take medication and at what times.
- Ask for a list of your students who require medication. Store this with your class roll.

Students with a disability

Students with additional educational support needs may be eligible for additional targeted resources through a number of programs, including the Education Adjustment Program (EAP). The EAP Handbook guides schools through the process for identifying students who meet criteria, and reporting on the education adjustments schools are making to meet the teaching and learning needs of these students, for the six EAP disability categories of:

- autism spectrum disorder
- hearing impairment
- intellectual impairment
- physical impairment
- speech–language impairment
- vision impairment.

The handbook is available on the department's website at www.education.qld.gov.au/students/disabilities/adjustment/verification/docs/eaphandbook.pdf

The policy definition of disability applies to a greater number of students than those identified through the EAP disability categories. Students who do not access additional resourcing through the EAP process, but who still have a disability as defined by the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, are supported through the full array of student support services allocated to regions and schools.

The department uses a tiered approach to record-keeping for students with diverse learning needs. This includes:

- system (official) records
  - Adjustment Information Management System (AIMS) — an online database of students with disabilities. This is maintained by a nominated staff member
- school records
  - Education Adjustment Program (EAP) Profile — developed to describe the range and frequency of a sample of adjustments schools make for students with disabilities in Prep to Year 12. For summary information on the EAP visit www.education.qld.gov.au/students/disabilities/adjustment
  - Individual Student Plan (ISP) — a document that is tailored to suit the learning needs of an individual student, stating their goals and outlining the teaching strategies that will be used to work towards achieving those goals. The ISP can be developed in the OneSchool application
- teacher records.

You will also need to keep evidence of how you meet the needs of students requiring an ISP. You can do this by:

- recording your discussions regarding the student with relevant staff or parents in OneSchool
- keeping written evidence of alternative programming or curriculum adjustments
- acknowledging the student's particular needs through your curriculum planning, and indicating how tasks will be adjusted
- keeping a copy of the student's individual timetable and the regular timetable
- keeping a copy of any adjustments to homework and the regular homework
- showing adjustments made to assessment tasks
- documenting exemption from, or modified participation in, standardised tests
- documentating the educational adjustments made to support students with diverse needs (for example, teacher aide or specialist staff support timetables, samples of modified work).

Students who struggle with the literacy or numeracy demands of the curriculum

It is important to closely monitor the achievement of students who have been identified as struggling with the literacy or numeracy demands of the curriculum. Dates of meetings with parents to outline concerns and plans of actions must be recorded in the student's file and in OneSchool. In your early days of teaching, the Support Teacher (Literacy and Numeracy) can assist you with this.

NAPLAN

Each year in May, all students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 across Australia participate in the common national tests for reading, writing, language conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy. The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) tests occur over three days. These tests form part of the National Assessment Program agreed to by all Australian education Ministers.

National testing aims to achieve greater consistency, comparability and transferability of performance data across states and territories in a way that was not possible under the previous state-based systems.

The results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a common scale across 10 achievement bands, with six of these 10 bands used for reporting performance at any one year level of the testing program. The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings.

This information will be available for all teachers in OneSchool. All teachers can access the 2009 and 2010 NAPLAN reports in the OneSchool application. For more information, visit http://iwww.qed.qld.gov.au/strategic/performance/naplan.html

Queensland Comparable Assessment Tasks

Queensland Comparable Assessment Tasks (QCATs) are authentic performance-based assessment tasks. They are administered each year to students in Years 4, 6 and 9. Their purpose is to provide information about student learning in targeted Essential Learnings in English, mathematics and science, and to help promote consistency of teacher judgments across the state.

Year 2 Diagnostic Net

The Year 2 Diagnostic Net is a process of assessment and intervention to support children's literacy and numeracy development during the early years of schooling in Queensland. It identifies and provides additional support for those children who are experiencing difficulties in literacy and numeracy.

The Year 2 Diagnostic Net involves a four-step process in which Years 1, 2 and 3 teachers:

- observe and map children's progress using developmental continua for literacy and numeracy
- involve identified Year 2 children in specifically designed assessment tasks and identify children who require intervention
- provide support to children requiring additional assistance
- report to parents about their child's development in literacy and numeracy.

Students in out-of-home care

Many students who are in out-of-home care require additional support to assist them in meeting their educational goals. The Department of Communities (Child Safety Services) and Department of Education and Training work in partnership to deliver the Education Support Funding Program for students in out-of-home care.

This program ensures that each student in out-of-home care has an Education Support Plan (ESP) developed either within one month of enrolment or within one month of the school being made aware the child is in out-of-home care. The plan identifies any additional support needs, and the strategies to be implemented to meet these needs. ESPs usually involve collaboration with the student, carer, school principal or delegate, child safety officer, guidance officer and any other significant person in the student's life who can contribute to the development of the plan. A student in out-of-home care may also have Education Adjustment Profiles and Behaviour Plans. ESPs are signed off by, and provided to, the contributing parties and reviewed on an annual basis, or earlier should the need arise.

Further information about the Education Support Funding Program can be found on the department's website at www.education.qld.gov.au/studentservices/protection/childsafety/edsupport

Social and emotional learning

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is a process for helping students develop the knowledge, understandings and skills that support learning, positive behaviour and constructive social relationships. Social and emotional learning is an approach that teaches students to recognise, regulate and express the social and emotional aspects of their lives so they can operate successfully in the world and manage life tasks.

Support materials for SEL include the *Guide to Social and Emotional Learning in Queensland state schools* and a program selection tool which analyses SEL resources against five core social and emotional competencies.

For more information on social and emotional learning, visit www.education.qld.gov.au/studentservices/protection/sel/index.html

Planning

The *Dimensions of teaching and learning* form the basis of every teacher's professional practice. When planning a program, it is important to consider the curriculum and also identify what students already know in order to plan effective learning experiences that meet the needs of every student.

All schools have different expectations regarding daily, weekly, term and unit planning, which can be created in OneSchool. Ensure that you know what documentation your leadership team expects, and speak to them about the use of the OneSchool application.

The framework used for planning can involve long-term, short-term and daily lesson planning. By investing time in planning, your students are more likely to be engaged by your lessons.

Long-term planning can be a yearly or semester plan aligned with the school curriculum or work plan. Include your objectives and assessment items.

Short-term planning involves the planning of each unit, outlining the processes you intend to use to deliver your content. The unit plan should include details of sequenced individual lessons to ensure that students' learning is scaffolded.

Daily lesson planning involves an overview of what you plan to teach, including the timing and materials to be used. This should be prepared no later than the day before.

Syllabus documents

The planning documents that you create must be clearly linked to the school-based curriculum plans and relevant syllabus documents. Access the Queensland Studies Authority online syllabus sourcebook modules and resources at www.qsa.qld.edu.au to assist you in your unit development. Syllabus documents, scope and sequence and Essential Learnings are all available in OneSchool in the curriculum planning functionality, and the appropriate organisers and sub-organisers can be selected during the creation of a unit plan process in the application.

Hints

- Access the vast collection of planning materials and resources provided by Education Queensland through the Learning Place and the Resource Exchange at www.learningplace.eq.edu.au
- Consider purchasing a teachers' diary to work efficiently. These are available in primary and secondary editions at newsagents and education suppliers. Some schools give these to their teachers at the beginning of the school year.
- Ask how the school manages collaborative planning processes.
- Plan how you will use your non-contact time and maximise this to your advantage.

School curriculum and work programs

Apart from curriculum plans and work programs that encompass the key learning areas, your school may also require the teaching of other programs, for example, robotics, philosophy or social skills programs such as You Can Do It. You will be informed of the resources that exist to support you in your teaching of such programs. Information will also be available in your school's Annual Operational Plan.

In secondary schools, access the work program for your subject area, past assessment samples and the semester or unit overview documents to support your individual planning.

Schools can set up all these things in OneSchool so they are automatically included in any unit plan that is developed. HODs/HOCs can also develop 'master' unit plans which teachers can modify to suit the needs of their class.

Planning templates

Your school's requirements for planning are configured in OneSchool. Follow the process in the application to ensure you've met your school's planning expectations.

Teaching curriculum areas for the first time

During your appointment, you may be required to teach in a variety of new curriculum areas. Should this occur, ensure you work closely with the relevant Head of Department. Seek out another teacher (a buddy teacher) to support you, and take the time to learn the content you need to teach.

Digital pedagogy

Digital pedagogy is a new way of working and learning with information and communication technology to facilitate quality learning experiences for your students. Digital pedagogy moves the focus from information and communication technology tools and skills to a way of working in a digital world. It is the convergence of technical skills, pedagogical practices and a knowledge and understanding of curriculum to create meaningful, rich and engaging learning experiences for students.

Effective digital pedagogy is based on the needs of individual students, and incorporates contemporary teaching and learning strategies. It features student-centred learning approaches, innovative curriculum design, personalised approaches, intellectual engagement, rigorous learning, connectedness to global contexts, supportive and collaborative classroom environments and connected curriculum, assessment and reporting to improve outcomes for students.

Hint

Looking for ways to continue learning about new technologies and how they can improve student learning outcomes? Visit the ICT Learning Innovation Centre website at www.learningplace.com.au/ea/licsunshinecoast for ideas and professional development opportunities.

First day and getting to know your students

The first contact you have with your students must be well-planned, as it is essential to your success. The first contact you have with your students, whether it is a first day or a first lesson, is an opportunity for you to build relationships and set the tone for the rest of the year. Plan meaningful tasks for students to enjoy on their first day back at school. Over-plan for your first day and first week – it is better to have too many activities planned while you determine the ability levels of students. Be organised and prepared to welcome your students and parents. First impressions count!

Take the time to get to know your students and establish classroom expectations. This can ultimately save you teaching time. Endeavour to establish knowledge of students' prior learning and interests so that you can maximise engagement in curriculum and connectedness to other learning and real-world contexts. Students will need some time to get to know you as well; you may wish to write them an informal letter introducing yourself.

Throughout your first day or lesson:

- discuss class expectations with students
- get to know the names of your students
- play getting-to-know-you and trust-building games to build cohesiveness between all class members
- survey your students to discover their interests
- organise student stationery and textbooks
- discuss classroom organisation
- create student work to display by the end of the first day ready for parents to view
- cooperatively negotiate classroom rules.

Hints – primary

Complete the following tasks to ensure that your primary school classroom is prepared:

- make a check-out chart and birthday chart
- hang posters
- create storage for student books and shared items
- collect supplies of blackboard equipment, including markers and dusters
- collect supplies of spare stationery, such as pencils and pads
- set up desks and chairs, including two spares for any new students
- set up computers, ensuring that they are all working and can print, and that you know how you and the students log in
- gather art gear, including paper, easel and markers
- borrow library books for your unit and books for reading
- choose a book/s to read to the class
- collect the mathematics equipment that you will always need such as MAB, multilinks and unifix cubes.

Hints – secondary

- You will need to be mindful of the age of your students when it comes to establishing your classroom expectations — be flexible.
- Students in Years 8 and 9 require much more structure than students in Years 10, 11 and 12. For example, while you may ask students in Years 8 and 9 to line up prior to class, this may not be necessary for students in the senior years.
- Students in Years 11 and 12 will be very familiar with the school rules, while for students in Year 8, these will be completely new. Make the effort to continualy reinforce these new rules to your younger secondary students.

First week

Your aim in the first week is to determine the skills, abilities and interests of your students. Review existing student files or data profiles to guide your own data collection during the first week.

It is important to over-plan during this early phase of the year — it is always better to have too many activities planned than not enough. In the first week of school, endeavour to include the following activities:

- problem solving
- maths investigations
- opportunities for reading and comprehension
- opportunities to collect samples of students' writing
- activities that enable you to analyse students' strategic spelling capabilities
- team or cooperative games
- introducing a topic or unit of work
- making expectations explicit in relation to homework programs, such as spelling and reading.

You will also need to familiarise students with the content that you will be covering throughout the year, their first unit of work, and your expectations in terms of their use of a student diary, homework and assessment.

Hints

- Obtain a copy of the book list and decide how you will use each book.
- Decide where you will store books — some can be kept in desks; you may like to store others on shelves.
- Write a newsletter to send home to parents during this week. Introduce yourself and your philosophy on education, and what you envisage over the year for their children, in terms of their education.

Student stationery and textbooks

Students are provided with stationery and textbook lists during Term 4 to purchase requirements ready for the start of the school year. Obtain a copy of these lists and allocate these resources accordingly.

Secondary schools often have textbook hire schemes. Additionally, you can access class sets of textbooks, which are ultimately your responsibility. Monitoring these resources throughout the year will make your job easier during stocktake and when it is time for books to be returned.

You may need an extensive collection of stationery, so build up your collection steadily. Schools may supply some items.

Hint

- Prepare a 'back-up pack' of student supplies for those who may come without the necessary materials.
- Keep all of your receipts for taxation purposes.

Photocopying procedures

Schools manage photocopying in a variety of ways, but it is common for a limit to be set for your class/es. Manage this resource wisely and devise methods, such as laminating, to facilitate the re-using of photocopied materials. You are expected to abide by the copyright laws. Access to these may be gained through the school's teacher-librarian.

Safe, supportive and disciplined school environments

Education Queensland's core business is to achieve the best educational outcomes for every student in a safe, supportive and disciplined educational environment. Effective behaviour support requires:

- the creation of a positive whole-school culture
- quality learning and teaching practices
- relevant and engaging curriculum
- a range of provisions that are characterised by non-violent, non-coercive and non-discriminatory practices. They range from positive preventive action for all students, through to intensive intervention for specific individuals or groups.

Developing and maintaining safe, healthy and supportive working and learning environments is essential to delivering quality educational outcomes for students, and is a priority for the department.

Behaviour in Queensland state schools

A behavioural approach to classroom management is relatively easy to understand; however, you need to put some work into setting yourself up for success. As you progress in your career, you will begin to appreciate that effective teachers are those able to manage both social behaviour and academic behaviour equally competently in their classrooms. These teachers may be known as 'strict' teachers by the students, but they will all want to be in those teachers' classrooms. This is because those classrooms will be the most consistent, predictable, safe and positive learning environments, and the ones in which teachers and students feel respected, valued and even admired.

This section outlines the basic requirements for successful classroom behaviour support. There are many more 'micro-skills' you might be motivated to learn about and to try, and we have provided some references to help you to do that.

Remember that classroom behaviour problems are not solved 'one student at a time'. Effectively managing the whole class is the greatest hurdle to establishing order in the classroom. After that, assisting students with the highest support needs will be a lot easier, as you will have established a solid management plan for all students, and will have time to address the individual needs of students.

School behaviour documents

The Code of School Behaviour outlines the standards of behaviour expected of students and the responsibilities of parents, schools, principals and senior Education Queensland staff in promoting positive learning environments. As a classroom teacher, you are perhaps the most pivotal factor in this process.

A copy of the Code of School Behaviour is available from the school or online at www.education.qld.gov.au/publication/production/reports

All state schools are required to have an approved Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students that outlines a range of strategies including whole-school behaviour support, targeted behaviour support (for students at risk of developing long-term problem behaviour) and intensive behaviour support for students with chronic problem behaviour, as a means of facilitating positive learning environments and responsible behaviour in students.

To support positive student behaviour, the Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students requires you to:

- explicitly teach expected student behaviour in accordance with the school's Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students
- provide safe and supportive learning environments
- provide inclusive and engaging curriculum and teaching
- initiate and maintain positive, constructive communication and relationships with students and parents and carers
- promote and model the skills of responsible self-management.

Be familiar with the school's Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students

You should read this plan and discuss it with your colleagues. If any parts of the plan still seem unclear to you, then make an appointment to discuss them with a school administrator, such as your Head of Department, Head of Special Education Services, Deputy Principal or Principal. The plan should describe in adequate detail the behaviour policies of the school.

Consistency

Classroom structure is the single most important factor in creating a positive environment for you and your students. If you have this structure in place and deliver it with consistency, then there will be fewer behaviour problems.

By establishing classroom behavioural expectations and teaching and rewarding students for following them, you are being powerfully clear about what is (and what is not) regarded as positive and disciplined behaviour in a particular context. These contexts include, but are not restricted to:

- entering and exiting the classroom
- moving about in the classroom, such as during transition between activities, or getting materials from a cupboard
- being able to follow a timetable or classroom schedule
- following teacher instruction
- asking the teacher for help
- working effectively, either independently or in a group
- handing in assignments or homework
- preparing for and sitting a test or exam.

Examples of some of these procedures can be found in the sections below.

Establishing classroom expectations

Your first task is to decide on your classroom expectations and to teach these to all your students. The first few weeks of the year should be dedicated to teaching these expectations, even if you just do one a week.

All behaviour we expect from our students can fit into three to five broad classroom expectations. If your school already has three to five expectations then your job is easier: simply adopt these in you're your classroom. If your school does not have three to five expectations then you will have to create your own. You will find some examples of three to five expectations on the Schoolwide Positive Behaviour Support Learning Place website: http://www.learningplace.com.au/sc/studentservices/swpbs

Here is an example of classroom expectations that will 'fit' both younger and older students:

1. Respect yourself
2. Respect others
3. Respect learning
4. Respect the environment.

Behavioural matrix

Students need exemplars of what each of these expectations look like in school. The best way to do this is to create a behavioural matrix for your classroom. Here is a brief example using the sample expectations above.

Respect yourself	Respect others	Respect learning	Respect the environment
Get plenty of sleep the night before	Talk in turn	Come to class with learning materials	Push chairs in before leaving the classroom
Look for solutions	Look at the teacher when s/he is talking to you	Attempt every task	Put paper and plastic in the recycling box
Be active in your weekends and on holidays	Raise your hand to speak	Be in class on time	Put materials away when you have finished with them

You will find lesson plans and instructions for teaching classroom behaviour expectations on the Schoolwide Positive Behaviour Support Learning Place website: http://www.learningplace.com.au/sc/studentservices/swpbs. Download these plans and discuss them with a colleague. You may want to support each other to adapt the lessons and deliver them in your classrooms.

Remember: you are the most important adult in the classroom, and therefore it is important that you teach your students the behavioural expectations of your classroom yourself. It is not a job that can be delegated to another staff person. Always teach the expectations in the environment you want to see them demonstrated.

General classroom management tips

1. Being prepared to teach

Make sure you are prepared for all lessons of the day, by:

- ensuring that you have any resources you need for each lesson
- completing all necessary marking needs
- ensuring that photocopying is done ahead of time
- checking to see that the daily timetable or classroom schedule is current, corrected and clearly posted in a position for all students to see it
- ensuring that your seating plan is up to date and that you have taught students to sit and work where you want them.

2. Active supervision

- Effective teachers do not sit at their desks when the students are in the room. Move your desk to a non-traffic area of the classroom and ensure that any confidential materials are locked in the desk drawers or cupboards.
- Active supervision means scanning, moving and interacting. Ensure that you can see every student in the room from wherever you are, and be ready to notice and acknowledge on-task and positive behaviour at all times.
- Always use the language of your classroom expectations when acknowledging positive behaviour.

3. Responding to minor problem behaviour

- When responding to a student's minor disruptive behaviour, always move towards it, acknowledging students who are on task first. This sends a message to the student: those who are doing the right thing will get my attention first.
- If peers are giving the student attention, get them back on task first, thank them, then correct the disruptive student. Be respectful and assertive in a non-threatening way. If you are not sure how to do this, then brainstorm it with your colleagues and practise it.

4. Giving clear instructions

Giving a clear instruction is important. It should:

- help students understand what they are expected to do
- help students organise what they are required to do
- give cues to students that they need to be actively engaged with the task.

Clear instructions enable students to know exactly what is required. Always:

- gain the attention of students before giving instructions
- keep instructions short
- phrase the instruction as a direction, not a question
- use the word 'thanks' at the end, not the word please. This makes your expectation clear — for example, 'That can be picked up now. Thanks.' This is better than, 'Can you pick that up for me please?'
- give the instruction in a firm, calm and measured voice
- allow students enough time to process an instruction and carry it out
- give specific encouragement when a student or group does as expected — for example, 'You did that quickly. Thanks.'

Avoid:

- standing too close to a student. This can be intimidating and cue hostility. It is better to prompt or correct, pause, then walk away and scan back. Give the student 10 seconds to comply before prompting again. Always acknowledge the compliance: 'Thanks'
- moving too fast towards a student. This can induce a fight or flight response
- holding eye contact, since it can become a 'stare out' challenge
- showing irritation or annoyance through tapping your foot, pursing lips, crossing arms or frowning.

5. Acknowledging on-task behaviour

An effective technique in minimising off-task behaviour is acknowledging on-task behaviour. This is effective as students become more aware of their competence by hearing exactly what you want and hope to see and hear more frequently.

You should aim for a ratio of one behaviour correction to four positive acknowledgments in your classroom.

Where possible:

- respond to desirable behaviours with specific descriptive behaviour feedback
- use body language intentionally — smiles, eye contact, proximity
- avoid attending to off-task behaviour when a student is exhibiting behaviour that is not seriously disturbing to others — always give attention to those on task first
- keep the student who is of concern in peripheral eye range, if you are consciously avoiding off-task or disruptive behaviour
- avoid turning your back as you may miss when they begin to work
- make sure you acknowledge their on-task behaviour as soon as they begin to work
- avoid giving conditional praise, for example, 'Good work; why didn't you do it like this all along?' The student may resent this and the learning relationship may suffer.

6. Following through

This is resolute action in the face of ongoing disruptive behaviour that is seriously disturbing the learning environment. To follow through effectively, you need to:

- think about realistic consequences that you have taught to the class and have been agreed on. This process will stop you from pulling ideas out of the air, for example, saying you're going to keep them in the classroom when the lunch bell goes if you have playground duty that day
- do exactly what you said you would do
- keep the consequence close to the behaviour, for example, not completing work means the student will have to complete it before they go home
- avoid making any consequences sound like a threat
- when giving a choice to a student, they may engage in secondary behaviour. Secondary behaviour describes behaviour that has the objective to change the original focus of your concern. For example, you may have asked a student to move to another location in the classroom. On their way, they may stamp their feet and grumble — this behaviour is the secondary. Do not attend to minor secondary behaviours, as they are designed to elicit arguing or convincing talk from the teacher. Secondary behaviour is not productive and wastes precious time. It is important when the student re-engages in learning to acknowledge this immediately.

Hint

If you feel powerless to do anything, make an anecdotal note of what is happening in objective, descriptive language. Remember to sign and date it. Discuss the incident with your supervisor or mentor to develop strategies to deal with the behaviour if it happens again.

Setting appropriate consequences

Always ensure consequences are linked in to the classroom expectations.

All students in the classroom should be able to recite what the positive and negative consequences are within their classroom environment.

Consequences should be logical and natural. They shouldn't be overly harsh, and should be implemented in a timely manner. Always think about the intent of consequences — the intent should be to change the behaviour, not to punish the student.

It is the certainty of the consequence being delivered that is important, not the severity.

Classroom positive reinforcement

To 'reinforce' behaviour means to strengthen it. 'Positive reinforcement' by definition means that the behaviour has been increased as a result of the positive consequence.

A 'reward' (whether this is praise or some kind of token like a star) is only a potential reinforcer. If you keep rewarding, but the behaviour doesn't change, then you are not using positive reinforcement. You will need to think more about the nature of your reward, and the nature of your expectations.

- Do you need to make the task easier or more comfortable for the student?
- Do you need to use more reward and more frequently?

When starting out, ensure that positive acknowledgment is delivered as near to the positive behaviour as you can get, especially for students with histories of low rates of positive reinforcement. You can gradually thin the reinforcement by making it more intermittent and by waiting longer before giving it — but don't start this way if you want to be assured of success.

Dealing with bullying and violence

Throughout your teaching, it is likely you will come across instances of bullying and violence. Bullying and violence should not be tolerated. Your Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students will give you guidance on the school's strategies and expectations with regards to dealing with bullying and violence. As well as this, there is *Working Together: A toolkit for effective school based action against bullying*. This toolkit will provide you with practical strategies to address the complex issue of student-on-student bullying. It highlights and unpacks 10 effective actions for schools and staff. These are:

1. Create a caring, respectful, inclusive and supportive school culture
2. Establish a clear whole-school definition of bullying
3. Establish a clear anti-bullying policy
4. Develop procedural steps to appropriately respond to bullying incidents
5. Establish teaching and learning programs
6. Provide professional development
7. Consult students regularly
8. Create physical environments that limit incidences of bullying
9. Support and engage families
10. Establish a process for regularly reviewing and celebrating effectiveness of policy.

This toolkit and other toolkits in the Working Together series can be found at www.education.qld.gov.au/studentservices/behaviour/qsaav/school-resource.html

Behaviour resources and information

Education Queensland provides a range of resources and support materials, including:

- Management of the Bullying. No Way! project website www.bullyingnoway.com.au.
- Essential Classroom Management Skills is a professional development package produced by Education Queensland, which covers the minimum standards in behaviour support. It is delivered by trained facilitators and consists of initial training in the core 10 Essential Skills, and a follow-up coaching component.
- The Better Behaviour, Better Learning Professional Development Suite is a practical skills package designed for all schools to access on a needs basis. Every state school has a copy on CD.
- The Better Behaviour, Better Learning online course, which covers introductory concepts associated with behaviour support and management in a school context. It also offers learners the opportunity to engage in structured online learning experiences that focus on both process and content in the topical field of behaviour in school.

In addition to these resources, Education Queensland supports classroom teachers by providing access to highly qualified specialist personnel, including:

- behaviour support staff
- guidance officers and senior guidance officers
- youth support coordinators
- school-based youth health nurses (service to all state secondary students)
- school-based police officers
- school-based community education counsellors
- district-based community education counsellors.

See your principal if you wish to access any of these support personnel.