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MAKE CONNECTIONS

Getting to know your students is one of the most effective ways of acquiring their cooperation and gaining their respect. Developing an insight into their interests and aspirations both in terms of their education and lives outside of school demonstrates to young people that you are interested in them and not just there to pick up your wages at the end of the month. This obviously takes time and effort, and these conversations typically happen when in corridors, during extra-curricular activities and in the playground when you are on duty. It might feel like meaningless chitchat, but a quick exchange about band practice, Minecraft, or Britain's Got Talent can go a long way to securing the desired response from a student at a later date.

3

CHOOSE YOUR WORDS

Using the wrong phrases with students can result in situations escalating and becoming difficult to manage. It takes significant skill and practice to use language as an effective way to engender the desired response from young people, and we should not underestimate the significant effect the words that educators say have on pupils (I still remember specific things that my teachers said to me, and I'm sure you do too). A few stock expressions can definitely come in handy. For example, describing exactly what students are doing is often more effective than a reactive reprimand. Let's say a class member is sending a text during a lesson. Barking out, 'Why is your phone out? Who are you texting? Hand it over!' is almost certain to provoke a hostile response. A more effective way of dealing with such behaviour would be to use the school rules as an external, overarching set of expectations that the teacher is merely adhering to: 'I see you have your phone out, now, school rules state that students are not allowed them out in class, so put it in your bag or on my desk, thank you.' Here the student has been given a positive choice to make, the school rules have been used to produce the desired response (the phone going away), and a conflict has been avoided. Another trick is, when giving instructions, simply to replace 'please' with 'thank you' at the end of the sentence, thus implying that your instruction is an expectation and not a request. For example, 'Ben, I would like you to sit in this chair today, thank you,' is more effective than the polite but rather weak request of 'Ben, would you sit in this chair please?'

4

DON'T GET DISTRACTED

This is a hard technique to master. One incident of misbehaviour will often be added to with further challenges – but it is important for the teacher to remain focused on the primary behaviour initially, to elicit the desired response. Tactically ignoring subsequent behaviours ensures that the student does not perceive the teacher to be 'picking on them for everything', and it allows the primary incident to be dealt with effectively.

5

STAY DETACHED

If a student misbehaves in your lesson or is confrontational, do not take it personally. This can lead to a perpetual negative perception of the young person concerned, and could influence your future judgement and manner towards him or her. Similarly, when speaking to

your class members, ensure that you separate the behaviour from the person. This is crucial in maintaining positive relationships with students whilst challenging their unacceptable conduct.

6

DO IT YOURSELF

The number one complaint from students will often be that something – or someone – is *unfair*, so ensure that you are as consistent as possible. It's important, too, that students perceive teachers as the leaders of their classrooms, and this image can be damaged if they

become too dependent on heads of department and senior leaders to sort out behavioural issues for them. On occasion it may be necessary, but if it's a response that's used too frequently, students will quickly sense a lack of control from their own teacher, and this is likely to lead to increased misbehaviour as they struggle to find boundaries. As much as possible, teachers need to persist with strategies to deal with disruptive students themselves, and seek advice from other members of staff regarding implementing these. Non-judgemental observations and the use of a trusted 'professional friend' for constructive feedback can be effective in developing new approaches.

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TEACH BETTER

Finally – and rather obviously – there is no better behaviour management technique than engaging your students in a genuinely exciting lesson, where they are so immersed in learning that they do not even think about misbehaving. Taking a proactive approach, rather than a reactive one, will always be advantageous for the class teacher and ultimately lead to learning and progress. Take time to prepare carefully and remember that although Ofsted might not always want to see a lesson plan, they do want to see evidence of a well planned lesson!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

TINY.CC/BXF0RW
ATL PUBLICATION ON
MANAGING PUPIL
BEHAVIOUR

TINY.CC/E1BORW OSIRIS
YOUTUBE CHANNEL (DR
BILL ROGERS BEHAVIOUR
MANAGEMENT CLIPS)

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