

## **Advice on Managing Students (Bruce Gurney, 2004)**

People tend not to behave rudely or maliciously towards anyone they respect.

Students are more likely to respect teachers who treat them respectfully.

Students are much less likely to misbehave if they are interested, engaged and busy (i.e. not bored) and feel successful (i.e. not frustrated). Therefore the best insurance against misbehaviour is a well planned lesson and good instruction.

Start your lesson promptly and purposefully.

Keep the pacing of the lesson brisk but not hurried. Avoid idle time like the plague!

You will not win a power struggle. Take your sails out of their wind.

If it is necessary to confront a student regarding their behaviour, do so in private rather than in front of his/her peers.

Escalate your responses or consequences in a hierarchy of actions:

- "The look"; pause in your lesson: use student's name
- Ask politely to stop...
- Ask again with a warning of consequences (eg: "if you continue to talk I will have to ask you to sit up here with me...") or a presentation of choices (eg: "you can either stop talking and continue to work with Jason or you can sit up here with me...")
- Execute the consequence as an outcome of the student's choice (eg "I can assume from your actions that you have chosen to...")
- Restate warning/choice with a higher level consequence such as sitting out in the hall etc.

Keep your cool.

Be polite.

Address the behavior while maintaining a positive relationship with the student.

Keep a written record of classroom incidents.

Communicate with parents and administration.

Take charge. Whenever possible, manage behaviour incidents yourself rather than routinely referring the offending student to the administration.

The key for to good classroom management is to have a set of clear expectations of student behaviour as well as to have established procedures and routines for various activities in the classroom day. BE PROACTIVE. (It is much easier and considerably more effective than always being reactive!)

Be fair, firm and consistent in your enforcement of these expectations.

Justify the reasons for the rules and expectations. Make certain they are good ones.

"Catch them being good". Make a resolve to make many more praising and encouraging statements than reprimands.

Don't take it personally.

Practice non-verbal cues e.g.: proximity, eye contact.

Keep your antennas up. Pay attention to what is going on by monitoring constantly.

Management problems can often be minimized by thoughtfully managing the classroom environment (e.g. Seating plan, classroom arrangement, aesthetic surroundings)

Exercise strong leadership. Act.

Consider the possible reason for the misbehaviour:

- Attention getting (ignore misbehaviours, give attention to positive behaviour)
- Frustration (adapt the task to allow success)
- Avoidance (encourage but persevere)
- Power struggle (time out)

NEVER use verbal abuse or sarcasm.