

MENTOR HANDBOOK

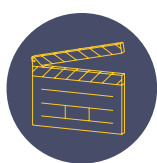
B1 | BEHAVIOUR: STRAND OVERVIEW AND CONTRACTING

STUDY

KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR THIS MODULE

Your teacher can promote positive pupil behaviour and an effective learning environment by understanding that:

- > Holding high expectations, creating an effective learning environment and managing behaviour effectively all positively impact pupil learning outcomes.
- > Creating an effective learning environment over time can also have benefits for classroom relationships, pupil attitudes to learning, pupil wellbeing and wider outcomes and wider school culture.
- > Teachers can create effective learning environments through proactive, reactive and escalation strategies.
- > Teachers can foster further effective learning behaviours through developing behaviours that help pupils to learn more successfully.
- > Teacher expectations play an important (yet complex) role in influencing pupil behaviour and learning.
- > Balancing the challenge and support that teachers provide in order that pupils experience success is key.



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SUMMARY BELOW:**

TEACHING CHALLENGE

Ms Foden is starting a new year at school. She wants to create an effective learning environment for all of her pupils but worries that she may find it difficult to get some pupils to listen, work independently, or show sufficient respect in the classroom. What does an effective learning environment look like, and where should she start in building one?

KEY IDEA

Creating a predictable and secure classroom environment, managing pupil behaviour and holding high expectations all contribute to more successful learning.

THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND PUPIL LEARNING

Effective teaching entails improving pupil achievement, in terms of both academic outcomes as well as other outcomes that matter to their future and success (Coe et al., 2014). Improving pupil achievement means generating a lasting change to pupils' capabilities or understanding. Pupil behaviour, the learning environment and how teachers manage these, all play a critical role in improving pupil learning.

The learning environment or classroom 'climate' is a result of multiple factors, such as (Coe et al., 2014):

- > Teacher expectations.
- > The relationships between teachers and pupils.
- > How the teacher manages the classroom.

There is strong evidence that certain teaching approaches lead to better pupil behaviour and create a more effective learning environment (IES, 2008).

The most effective learning environments are those that are predictable and secure, where pupils are responsive to the teacher (IES, 2008), and where pupils feel a sense of connection to their school, peers and teachers. Such classroom environments also contribute to a positive school culture (Chapman et al., 2013). Classroom environments like these are good for all pupils, but particularly those with special educational needs (Carroll et al., 2017).

In general, pupils are more alike than different in terms of how they think and learn (Willingham, 2009), so common approaches are likely to be effective in improving pupil behaviour. But this must be balanced with the need to match teaching and classroom management to individual pupil needs (IES, 2008). Providing additional support can be particularly beneficial to pupils with specific barriers to learning (Carroll et al., 2017).

In addition to improving pupil behaviour, over time effective learning environments can produce a range of important benefits, including:

- > **Pupil-teacher relationships:** Positive relationships and pupil perceptions of their teacher are based on repeated interactions over time (Wubbels et al., 2014). Being responsive to pupil needs, including considering and seeking to understand their feelings, can help build strong teacher-pupil relationships.
- > **Pupil attitudes to learning:** Pupil perceptions of school are shaped by teacher-pupil interactions and the goals, values and behaviours of classmates (Rathmann et al., 2018).
- > **Pupil wellbeing:** Pupils who perceive that their teachers are in control of the class and are able to

include them in activities are also more likely to feel satisfied in life and have better school outcomes (Rathmann et al., 2018).

- > **Wider outcomes:** In addition to generating high academic outcomes for pupils, effective environments can also improve wider outcomes such as university entrance and graduation rates, higher wages, and lower chances of becoming pregnant as a teenager (Chetty et al., 2014).

EFFECTIVE BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Part of creating an effective learning environment entails managing pupil behaviour. Effective behaviour management happens best when teachers anticipate challenging pupil behaviours and modify the classroom environment to prevent or mitigate them (IES, 2008). Behaviour management strategies typically fall into one of three categories:

- > **Proactive:** Approaches for pre-empting and preventing problem behaviours before they occur. For example, using seating plans.
- > **Reactive:** Strategies to deal effectively with classroom behaviours as they arise. For example, using rewards or sanctions.
- > **Escalation:** Where proactive and reactive strategies are failing to work after a time, or where behaviour is extremely disruptive or dangerous, teachers should follow the school behaviour policy and/or discuss with their mentor what further support can be put in place. For example, calling parents, setting detentions or sending pupils out of the class after a certain number of sanctions.

Part of effective behaviour management involves setting clear rules and consistently reinforcing them (Coe et al., 2014; IES, 2008). The goal of these rules should be to create an environment where pupils are routinely successful (Coe et al., 2014). In the first half of the Behaviour strand we explore a series of teacher approaches that establish an effective learning environment with good pupil behaviour. Evidence suggests that there are several specific ideas and practices that teachers can use to build an effective learning environment and manage pupil behaviour.

These include:

Time on task	While pupil behaviour is not a perfect indicator of whether pupils are learning (Coe, 2013), there is a significant relationship between the amount of time pupils spend on task and how much they learn (Muijs & Reynolds, 2010).
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Peer effects	Pupil behaviour is influenced by that of their peers (IES, 2008). The more that individual pupils adopt on-task behaviours, the more likely it is that other pupils will follow them.
Positive reinforcement	Positive reinforcement can create an effective learning environment. Positive reinforcement entails providing acknowledgement, praise and rewards for positive behaviours. However, teachers must be careful not to overuse praise, as this can inadvertently communicate low expectations (Coe et al, 2014). To avoid this, teachers can use 'acknowledgement' when expectations are merely met and reserve 'praise' for when they are exceeded. Sanctions for negative behaviours can also be used alongside positive reinforcement. Providing more praise than reprimand has been found to be most effective (IES, 2008).
Pupil success	Ensuring a high pupil success rate is a powerful way to foster pupil behaviour and learning (Rosenshine, 2012). How Ms Foden communicates her expectations of pupil success can influence what they do and achieve. For example, if she inadvertently communicates low expectations of success, pupils can start to think that they can't do it (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2010) and reduce the amount of effort they put in (Gutman & Schoon, 2013). Conversely, pupils' prior experiences of success at a specific, appropriately challenging, task makes it more likely they will be motivated to persist at similar tasks in the future; this also makes it more likely they will be successful at such tasks (Gutman & Schoon, 2013). Ms Foden should balance challenge with high success rate (Rosenshine, 2012)

Motivation	Pupil motivation can be intrinsic (driven by the task itself) or extrinsic (driven by rewards and sanctions). Pupils who are motivated intrinsically are more likely to stay on task longer and persist when learning gets challenging (Lazowski & Hulleman, 2016). Over time, Ms Foden should aim to reduce extrinsic motivators and increase pupil intrinsic motivation. For example, helping pupils to master challenging content, and make links between their long term-goals and the work they are doing in school, can help pupils to journey from needing extrinsic motivation to being motivated to work intrinsically. Building effective relationships with parents, carers and families can improve pupils' motivation, as well as pupil behaviour and academic success (EEF, 2018). Ms Foden should use opportunities like parents evening to communicate proactively and engage parents and carers in their children's schooling.
Self-regulation	Self-regulation – the ability to steer our own behaviour and learning – is a strong predictor of attainment and future success. A key aspect of this is emotional regulation (Gutman & Schoon, 2013). This is important because negative pupil emotions can lead to pupils avoiding a task (Kluger & DeNisi 1996) and also because the ability to regulate one's emotions affects pupils' ability to learn, success in school and future life (EEF, 2017). Effective self-regulation also requires pupils to develop metacognitive strategies – how they plan, monitor and evaluate their approaches to specific tasks. Teacher support for pupil metacognition is likely to increase pupil self-regulation, success and therefore motivation (EEF, 2017).

BEHAVIOUR THAT FOSTERS EFFECTIVE LEARNING

In the second half of the Behaviour strand, we will explore ways that teachers can foster effective learning. This part of the strand has lots of connections with the Instruction strand. Evidence suggests that there are several specific ideas and practices that teachers can use to generate behaviours that further foster effective learning in the classroom. These include:

Guided instruction	Pupils learn best when they build on what they already know, and when teachers guide them clearly and directly towards what they need to know – an approach sometimes referred to as ‘explicit instruction’ (Coe et al., 2014). This is in contrast to less guided instruction, where pupils are left to ‘join the dots’ or discover things themselves. Once a teacher has established their classroom expectations, maintaining good pupil behaviour while adding to their teaching repertoire requires effective instruction. There are links with the Instruction strand later in behaviour.
Practice	Getting pupils to think about and practise expected behaviours, by guiding them and reinforcing desirable behaviours, can foster positive changes in pupil behaviour change over time (IES, 2008). Guided practice can develop pupil metacognition linked to specific tasks, and practice can also develop pupils’ capacity to self-regulate their emotions, which can support pupils to be more successful and independent over time (EEF, 2017).

Holding high expectations is one particularly important yet hard-to-pin-down part of creating an effective learning environment. When we talk about teacher expectations we mean: the beliefs that teachers hold and the messages that they communicate regarding what their pupils are capable of, both in terms of behaviour and learning. In turn, this influences the levels of classroom challenge and support that teachers provide (Coe et al., 2014). Inadvertently communicating low expectations can lead to a ‘self-fulfilling prophecy’, where pupils behave and learn in line with what the teacher

expects rather than what they are capable of (Murdock-Perriera et al., 2018; Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2010).

NUANCES AND CAVEATS

Behaviour is only one piece of the effective teaching puzzle. Effective instruction and sound teacher subject knowledge are also critical (Coe et al., 2014). And perhaps most importantly, these different dimensions of effective teaching influence each other – it is only when they are aligned that effective teaching can flourish (IES, 2008).

So, while Ms Foden must work hard to develop her understanding and approach around behaviour, she must also recognise that this needs to go hand-in-hand with things like providing the right balance of challenge and support for helping her pupils to experience regular success in the classroom. It is little wonder that becoming a great teacher takes time and continued learning.

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COACHING CONTRACTING

WHAT IS CONTRACTING?

Contracting is a process that involves teasing out the norms, goals and ways of working that will lead to a productive professional relationship. It is a reciprocal process intended to develop shared expectations, establish mutual respect and pre-empt potential issues. This module serves as a starting point for you as a coach to reflect on the key messages you want to get across in this meeting and support to prepare effectively for it.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Contracting serves as an anchor upon which you base the foundations of the coaching relationship. Without these solid foundations, it makes the rest of the working relationship harder to build upon and less resilient when faced with situations or factors that will test this relationship throughout the year.

WHAT DOES CONTRACTING INVOLVE?

Contracting is used in many different contexts and across all different fields so there is a lot of variety in what contracting looks like and how it is carried out. Despite these superficial differences, contracting can be viewed on three levels:

- > **Professional:** Considers the aim of coaching in relation to the professional development of the ECT.
- > **Procedural:** Considers the practicalities of making effective coaching happen.
- > **Psychological:** Considers the perception and possible misconceptions of coaching, and how you might deal with these.

CONTRACTING MEETING

Meet with your teacher and use the following prompts as the basis for a coaching contracting discussion. Contracting is most effective when both parties (yourself and the ECT) answer questions for each other.

1. Professional prompts

- > What is important to you in your work?
- > What do you want to get out of this process?
- > What do you need from me to make this work well?

2. Procedural prompts

- > What is the best way for us to communicate and when?
- > When are the best times to meet for our mentor sessions?
- > What classes/subjects are best to observe?

3. Psychological prompts

- > What does an effective professional relationship look like for you? Can you give me an example?
- > What experience have you had of observation? How can we make observation an effective experience?
- > What experiences do you have of coaching? What might we need to do to embrace this coaching approach?

CONTEXT-SPECIFIC MEETING

In addition to contracting, as required, you may wish to meet with your teacher to work through any context-specific policies, systems and/or procedures that they will need to know about to be effective in their role. It is also important for teachers to be made aware of school-specific policies so you may wish to point your NQT to these and provide some time to discuss them.

Typical school policies include, but are not limited to:

- > Their responsibilities planning.
- > The school's behaviour policy.
- > The safeguarding procedures.
- > How your school assesses pupils.
- > Your marking requirements.