

Classroom Management Plan

(Applicable to All Classes)

Overview

In my experience so far, and based on the recommendations I've received from my professors and sponsor-teachers, the best classroom management strategy is to try to build relationship with the students; if the students trust and respect the teacher, they are usually much more willing to cooperate and try their best. However, sometimes exceptional situations happen, regardless of the relationship with the students, and having a plan will usually lead to more favourable circumstances than having to react to a situation by improvising. Generally, I try not to publically identify a student's disruptive behaviour in front of the class, because not only does that approach shame the student, it also may reinforce a desire for attention that the student might have. Instead, I prefer to speak to the student privately so as to understand that student's reason for their behaviour.

This Practicum

Within the scope of this practicum, I have several advantages with regard to classroom management:

- The students have homework time allocated in almost every class, so there is usually time and opportunity to talk to students privately if needed.
- All classes have positive, inclusive atmospheres with students who are generally quite motivated.

Getting Attention

Sometimes if a class is particularly enthusiastic, it will be difficult to keep the class focussed and attentive, so there are many strategies I can draw upon (some of which may require prior explanation to the class). Generally, I will simply use proximity to quiet a student, i.e. standing next to the student until the student gets uncomfortable and stops talking. However, sometimes I have to interject into their conversation and ask that the chatty students postpone their conversation for a later time so that the class can learn. If after both those strategies do not work and the behaviour continues, I might take the students aside and inform them privately of the ways in which their behaviour is disrupting the class.

In senior grades, those three strategies usually work, and I don't have to teach them classroom management techniques that would normally be more appropriate for students in younger grades. However, if it becomes commonplace that none of those strategies work, I may teach them some

rituals that can be used to indicate a time of quiet (clapping in a pattern, repeating a phrase I say, turning out the lights, etc.).

Continued Issues

Occasionally, there are students for whom classroom management is a continual challenge. I have spoken with my sponsor-teachers already in order to identify the regular classroom management issues of which they are already aware. Sometimes management issues are just demonstrations of a lack of understanding; to that end, I regularly remind my students of all the extra help available to them—of which there is much—so that they are able to be as successful as possible. I have noticed in both of my practica so far that a change in instruction style, coupled with scaffolding of concepts and regular checks for understanding, has led to far fewer incidents in the classroom.

In my first practicum there were two students who were particularly disruptive to the rest of their respective classes. On the second week of the two-week practicum, one of these students informed me and my sponsor-teacher that he was in the process of switching to a Learn@Home programme that taught a less advanced stream of math. The other student is still in attendance, but I've found that he is less likely to challenge the teacher if he understands the material; I helped him with his homework several times, and he informed me that he understood more in five minutes than he had in the rest of the term so far! The more I took time to help him understand, the fewer the number of incidents there were.

Classroom Rules

My second sponsor-teacher only had two rules in the class:

1. Treat everyone with kindness and respect.
2. If something you are doing disrupts your communication with the teacher, or disrupts your own learning or the learning of the others, then that action must stop immediately.

I really like that approach because it is simple to understand and easy to remember, and it provides firm guidelines without seeming condescending or controlling to the students. It also takes into account certain contingencies, such as if a student is able to concentrate better by listening to music (via headphones) during practice time, or if students are using their mobile devices to research the answer to a homework question. It does require that the students be able to qualify what respectful behaviour and disruptive behaviour mean, however, so this simple of a policy may not be quite as effective for younger grades.

Student Attendance

Typically, the teacher will be able to record student lates and absences via the MyEdBC website. However, TTOCs and student-teachers do not have credentials to access this website, so the teacher will send an attendance slip to the office each block, within fifteen minutes of the start of class.

If a student should need to leave the class for any reason, there are hall passes, though only my Math 9 sponsor uses them. Even she will allow students to step outside to the water fountain without the pass, but she will give them 30-second time limits (because the water fountain is right outside the class). In the Pre-Calculus 12 classes, the teacher has built a trust relationship with the students and does not require them to take the hall pass.

Classroom Setup

My Math 9 class is not equipped with a digital projector, so the teacher will generally use the two whiteboards on the walls. As such, little setup is required, except when a lesson should need extra equipment, or when a particular class should require extra equipment.

My Pre-Calculus 12 teacher uses SMART Board technology to guide the students through the text. Although the hardware is already set up with the textbook software when I arrive, I will have to familiarise myself with its usage, because the software needs to be activated and reset each block.

Students in all classes place their chairs on their desks if their class is the last class of the day. Otherwise, the rest of the class remains set up each day.