

Essential Skills for Classroom Management

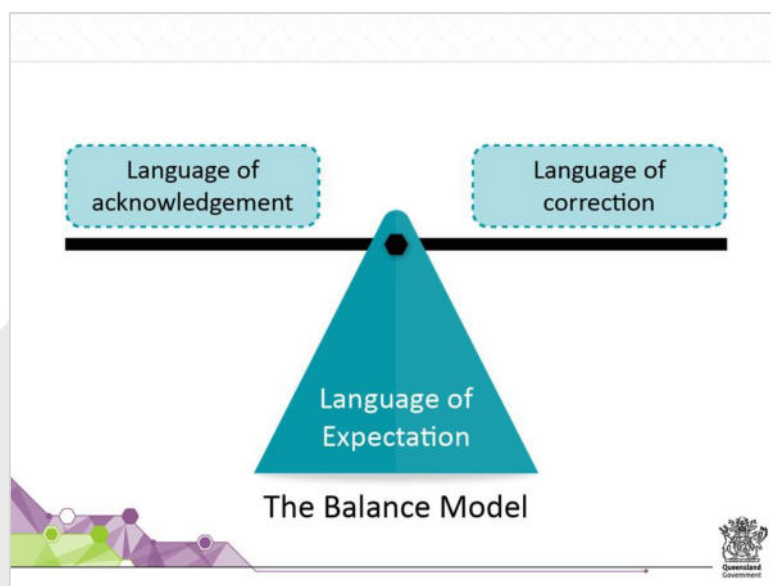
10 Essential Classroom Skills

Part four



Notes:

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Notes:

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Management-focused language

- **Expectation**
What teachers say and do to articulate the boundaries of acceptable behaviour in the classroom.
- **Acknowledgement**
What teachers say and do to support students to engage with the curriculum and cooperate productively with others.
- **Correction**
What teachers say and do to interrupt and redirect students who are off-task.



Notes:

The diagram illustrates 'The Balance Model' as a seesaw. A horizontal black line represents the fulcrum. On the left side of the fulcrum is a light blue rounded rectangle containing the text 'Language of acknowledgement'. On the right side is another light blue rounded rectangle containing the text 'Language of correction'. This right-side box is circled in red. Below the fulcrum is a large teal triangle pointing upwards, with the text 'Language of Expectation' inside it. The entire diagram is titled 'The Balance Model' at the bottom center. The background features a repeating pattern of small white triangles on a light blue field, and a decorative geometric pattern of purple and green triangles in the bottom left corner.

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Essential skills

- 10 Essential Classroom Skills are sorted into three categories:

1. Expectation

1. Establishing expectations ☒
2. Giving instructions ☒
3. Waiting and scanning ☒
4. Cueing with parallel acknowledgment ☒

2. Acknowledgement

5. Body language encouraging ☒
6. Descriptive encouraging ☒



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Essential skills

3. Correction

7. Selective attending
8. Redirecting to the learning
9. Giving a choice
10. Following through



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Essential Skills for Classroom Management

7. Selective attending

Purpose:

Consciously attend to on-task behaviour, and refrain from giving attention to unsafe, off-task or inappropriate behaviour.

**Notes:**

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How to use selective attending

1. Do it when the student is displaying off-task or inappropriate behaviour that is not seriously disrupting others.
2. Keep this student in your peripheral vision. Avoid turning your back at this point as you may miss an opportunity to use a descriptive encourager if the student chooses to come on-task.



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How to use selective attending

3. Attend to the student when:

- the student displays on-task or appropriate behaviour. Use a body language encourager or less obvious descriptive encourager to reinforce the appropriate behaviour.
- the student begins to seriously disturb others
- the student's off-task or inappropriate behaviour is maintained over an extended period of time (determined by the teacher).



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How to use selective attending

- In case b (serious disturbance) or c (extended period of behaviour), give a clear redirect to the learning or offer of assistance (see Skill 8), followed by take-up time. (Take-up time allows students to respond to a direction before a redirection is given).
- If the disruptive behaviour continues, give the student a clear choice (see Skill 9) including the likely consequences if their inappropriate behaviour continues.



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How to use selective attending

- If a clear choice has been given previously, follow through (see Skill 10). Remember, the goal of a clear choice is to modify the inappropriate behaviour, not to punish the student or damage the positive teacher–student relationship (learning relationship).
- When giving choices, use a least-to-most intrusive approach without emotional engagement. For example, start with an offer of teacher assistance rather than a more severe consequence e.g. a lunchtime detention.



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How to use selective attending

4. Use the 'Vaseline eye' to encourage the resumption of on-task behaviour. That is, if you have tried to cue an off-task student with 'a directive look and pause', slide your eyes away from the student once they have resumed on-task behaviour, or if you think they are about to resume on-task behaviour.



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How to use selective attending

- If you realise you are maintaining eye contact with an off-task student for too long and possibly inadvertently encouraging the continuation of off-task behaviour, use the 'Vaseline eye' to prompt them to resume on-task behaviour.
- You can also use the 'Vaseline eye' as a prompt to begin on-task behaviour once you have given an instruction or redirect. Combine the 'Vaseline eye' with a slow 'walk away'.



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Essential Skills for Classroom Management

8. Redirecting to the learning

Purpose:

To respectfully prompt the student who is off-task or disrupting others, initially with a redirection to the learning. This can be verbal or non-verbal.



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How to redirect to learning

1. Verbal redirection to learning

- When a student is off-task, the period of off-task behaviour is extending, or they may become disruptive, ask a question about the set task or ask a question related to an offer of teacher assistance.
- For example, if a student is off-task, talking to a neighbouring classmate, the teacher could say:
 - ‘Shane, what question are you up to?’
 - ‘Shane, are you working on the writing task now?’
 - ‘Shane do you need some help?’ (Offer of teacher assistance)



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How to redirect to learning

2. Non-verbal redirection to the learning

- When a student is off-task, the period of off-task behaviour is extending or their behaviour may become disruptive, redirect the student to learning and/or offer teacher assistance, using body language encouraging e.g. proximity, gesture, and facial expression.

3. If the student resumes on-task behaviour, use a form of low-level acknowledgment

- If the student accepts the offer of teacher assistance, assist them. When they resume on-task behaviour, use a form of low-level acknowledgment.



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How to redirect to learning

4. If the student maintains off-task behaviour:
- redirect to the learning again (allow for take-up time; this can vary with developmental levels)
 - redirect, giving a specific instruction about the appropriate behaviour you would like the student to demonstrate (allow for take-up time)
 - offer teacher assistance
 - give a choice if necessary.



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Essential Skills for Classroom Management

9. Providing Choice

Purpose:

To respectfully engage a student who is disruptive and explain their choices and logical consequences.



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Providing choice

- Choices may have positive options or be positive in their intent, for example:
 - Offering to stay after school to assist a student to comprehend or complete class work.
 - Offering the student the option of having a peer tutor during class.



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When to provide choice

1. When, despite redirection, the student has remained off-task and is disturbing other students, or the period of off-task behaviour has become extended.



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When to provide choice

2. When the student has begun to seriously disturb the class after a redirection from you.

E.g.:

- the student may be engaging in intense secondary behaviour (subsequent behaviours after the initial redirection that are more severe, such as sulking, accompanied by large-scale distracters such as paper tearing, spitting, chair rocking or loud interrupting).



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When to provide choice

- Secondary behaviour describes behaviour that has the objective to change the original focus of your concern. Often minor secondary behaviours are selectively attended to, allowing for focus on the primary behaviour. More severe secondary behaviours require an obvious teacher response.
- Secondary behaviour frequently elicits arguing or convincing talk from the teacher. This has no productive end and wastes precious time.



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When to provide choice

3. When the student is overly hostile to you and is challenging your management.
4. When you can't think of any less intrusive options.
5. When it is clear to you that the student's inappropriate behaviour is escalating.



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When to provide choice

- Say: 'Chris, your choices are ...'
 - You may also experiment by adding, 'Which would you prefer?' Then pause:
- 'Chris, your choices are ... Which would you prefer?'
 - Allow Chris to resume on-task behaviour without more teacher talk.



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When to provide choice

- Wait a short while. Allow for a short delay (thinking time) in the student's response to your direction. If they are on-task and you believe it is appropriate, in close proximity to the student, use a low-level verbal or non-verbal encourager.
- Acknowledge the student discreetly by not using loud or attention gaining verbal or non-verbal encouragers, at this point.



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Examples of how to present a choice

- 'Year 8, you can choose to start now or later. The first two questions have to be finished before lunch today or you will need to stay back to complete them. If anyone needs help, please let me know.'
- 'Steven, the choices are: move over here near the window and you will be able to join us, or stay there on your own. Make your choice now.'



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Examples of how to present a choice

- 'Kate, if you can't complete the two problems on your own in the next 10 minutes, I will ask you to choose someone in the class to give you some help.'
- 'Jason, continue with your work or you will have to see me at the end of the lesson.'
- If the student asks what will happen at the end of the lesson, the teacher says:
 - 'We will need to have a talk at the end of the lesson and then take it from there. It depends on what you do between now and the end of the lesson.'



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Examples of how to present a choice

- Redirect the student to the learning and do not engage in further discussion about the choice given. If necessary, use body language to cue that the discussion is over by slightly turning your back toward the student and walking away slowly.



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Examples of how to present a choice

- The last choice ('... or you will have to see me at the end of the lesson.') is particularly useful as it allows students to redeem themselves during the remainder of the lesson.
- It allows students to redeem themselves during the remainder of the lesson.
- Students will not perceive the certainty of a consequence other than a quick talk at the end of the lesson, and will often choose to behave more appropriately, rather than maintain inappropriate behaviour because they know they are going to be 'punished' anyway.
- This choice also allows the teacher time to calm down and think about what they may say to the student at the end of the lesson.



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Examples of how to present a choice

- This choice allows the teacher to respond to the inappropriate behaviour without escalating the situation immediately or needing to commit to a specific consequence beyond the end of the lesson.
- This choice is a least intrusive option.
- **Remember: Do not escalate the situation too quickly by confronting the student or threatening them with sanctions.**



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When to provide choice

6. Use a firm, calm and measured tone. Depending on the student you may need to use proximity purposefully; for some you will need to give the choice in close proximity; for others it will be more effective to be further away.
7. Pause briefly after giving the choice. Walk away after the pause and look back intermittently (scan back).
8. Link this strategy to the most logical alternate management skill.



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When to provide choice

For example:

- Descriptive encouragement if they return to the task.
- Selective attending if a student de-escalates the disruptive behaviour so that it is no longer disrupting others.
- Follow through (see Skill 10) if the behaviour escalates, or continues to seriously disrupt others, or if the student remains off-task for an extended period of time.



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When to provide choice

9. When the situation has de-escalated, deliberately act to restore the 'working relationship' between the student and teacher and minimise any harm done.



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Essential Skills for Classroom Management

10. Following through

Purpose:

Resolute, planned action in response to extended off-task behaviour, or on-going disruptive behaviour that is seriously disturbing the learning environment.



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How to follow through

1. Demonstrate confidence using appropriate body language and a calm, firm voice.

Be conscious of the difference between a calm, firm, assertive tone and an angry or 'annoyed' tone. A voice does not have to be loud to imply firmness.

2. Do what you planned and said you would do.

Make it happen now. Consult with colleagues and/or administrators to plan an appropriate course of action for following through, if necessary.



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How to follow through

3. Avoid letting your embarrassment about what others may think erode your confidence.
4. Consider removing the class from the problem situation if safety is a particular concern.
5. In a crisis event send for help immediately and put the Crisis Plan into action.
6. 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, for example:



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How to follow through

Friday 20 July, 2015 (2.30pm)

David is throwing paper around the classroom, intermittently screaming obscenities and refusing to join the class despite direction from the teacher. I gave the direction, "Sit down now, thanks", then a choice to join the group or sit to the side. I called administration for assistance at 2:15 pm with a 'red card'. Other students appeared agitated. Used calming and distracting procedures with the class by reading a story.



Notes:

How to follow through

7. Reassure the class and work on your self-control.
8. Following through may look and feel disturbing at times.
 - Do it anyway as it establishes and reinforces the boundaries.
 - All students will know you mean what you say.
 - They may feel safer and build their trust in you as their teacher as a result of your commitment to follow through.

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How to follow through

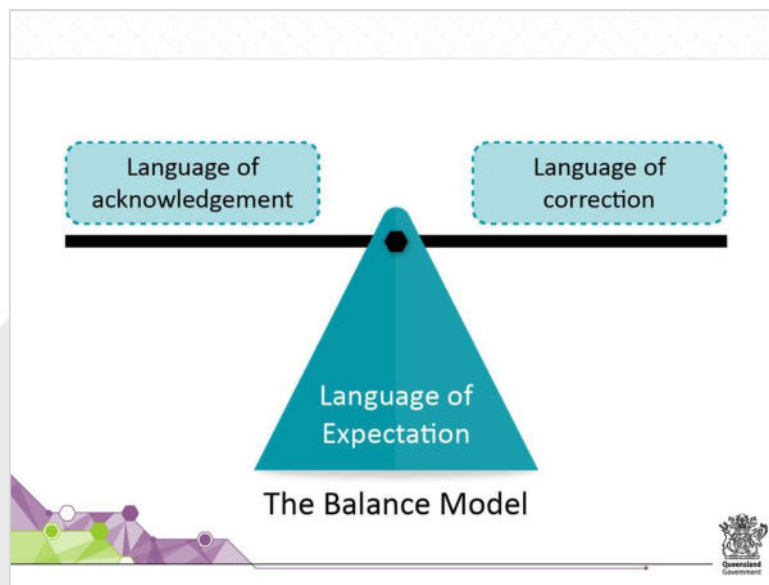
9. Reflect on the event later with a colleague if possible and:

- Debrief if necessary. Seek advice from your supervisor or guidance officer or school counsellor.
- Critique your action by asking:
 - What did I do that helped?
 - What did I do that did not help?
 - What could I have done differently?
 - Who can I go to for advice?
- Review your behaviour management plan if necessary – consider how effectively you used preventative strategies.



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Essential skills

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Notes:

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Essential skills

3. Correction

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 7. Selective attending | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Redirecting to the learning | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Giving a choice | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Following through | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |



Notes:

End

Notes: