

Developing staff skills to support pupils

Aims

- To help participants understand the influence of staff behaviour on staff–pupil relationships and attendance
- To identify and develop staff skills for building and maintaining effective relationships both inside and outside the classroom
- To identify and improve staff skills in managing interventions while maintaining lesson pace and pupil engagement

Resources

- Slides 1–5
- Handouts 1–8
- Sticky notes (two colours)
- Flipchart and pens

Outline of the session		
Introduction	Whole group	10 minutes
Developing staff–pupil relationships	Individual and small group activity	15 minutes
Identifying assertive teacher skills	Whole group and small group activity	20 minutes
The use of praise to encourage positive behaviour and attendance	Small group activity	20 minutes
Using corrective language and defusing confrontation	Individual and small group activities	20 minutes
Summary and points for action	Whole group	5 minutes

Introduction

10 minutes

Show **slide 1** to clarify the aims of the session.

Slide **1**

Aims of the session

- To help participants understand the influence of staff behaviour on staff–pupil relationships and attendance
- To identify and develop staff skills for building and maintaining effective relationships both inside and outside the classroom
- To identify and improve staff skills in managing interventions while maintaining lesson pace and pupil engagement

Take the participants through the outline of the session. Explain that members of staff will frequently intervene to reinforce, redirect or refocus pupil behaviour, both inside and outside the classroom. Emphasise that interventions can be verbal or non-verbal, but should look to achieve a positive outcome. For example:

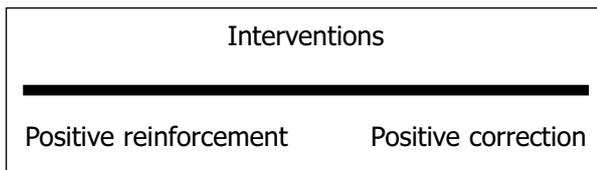
- staff can use gestures such as raised hand, open palm, thumbs up;
- staff can phrase their instructions positively, allowing take-up time for pupils to respond – *'Anthony, I need you to put your mobile phone away ... thanks.'*

Effective interventions support and encourage positive behaviour for learning. Ineffective interventions take up valuable teaching time and impact on the learning of the individual pupil and the rest of the class, and the member of staff's confidence.

Explain that most interventions should take the form of positive actions that fit somewhere on a continuum from positive reinforcement through to positive correction. The actions that are selected should be those that enable learning to continue and will usually include eye contact, use of name, description of the appropriate behaviour, pauses and affirmation.

Show **slide 2**.

Slide **2**



Remind participants that there is a strong correlation between the amount of time used in positive reinforcement and behaviour change in an individual. Emphasise that staff should aim for a proportion of intervention equivalent to five positive types of reinforcement used for every one corrective action.

Give the following examples to clarify this point.

Positive reinforcement

'Excellent, you have settled down really quickly and got your books out.'

'Good question. You can do the task in any order you wish.'

'Nice writing.'

'Yes, talk to your neighbour to get ideas. Well done.'

'Well considered. It's better to frame your question before you ask.'

Ask participants for five other examples they might use.

Positive correction

'I would like this piece of work finished by the time the bell goes.'

'Can you please make sure you write in complete sentences.'

'Walking in the corridor will be safer for everybody.'

'Please remember to listen carefully to everyone's contribution.'

Ask participants for one other example. Ask participants to consider:

- whether staff confidence in positive reinforcement or correction was identified in the audit analysis;
- whether the issues are the same inside and outside the classroom;
- how you could address this issue as a whole school;
- to what extent classroom observations focus on number and types of interventions.

Remind participants that the most important thing to consider when developing staff intervention skills is the need for pupils to continually make progress in learning. They should not be held back by the loss of momentum from reactive interventions that impact negatively on the teaching and learning environment.

Developing staff–pupil relationships

15 minutes

Explain to participants that a key to effective interventions is good staff–pupil relationships.

Task 1

Ask participants to work in groups to consider the key characteristics of positive staff–pupil relationships. Take brief feedback and note characteristics on a flipchart. You should expect to include characteristics such as:

- genuine interest;
- trust;
- listening;
- respect;
- open dialogue;
- understanding;
- empathy.

Ask participants to read through **handout 1a**, which lists some pupils' perceptions of a 'good' teacher. Allow a short time for participants to discuss their feelings and thoughts about these and consider how they relate to pupil perceptions in their own school. Ask participants to consider the characteristics of their current staff using the list generated earlier on the flipchart. They should record this list on the right-hand side of **handout 1a**.

Next, ask them to draw lines to match the pupils' views and the staff characteristics. Allow about 5 minutes. Refer to **handout 1b** for some of the possible responses and ask if there are any characteristics that need to be added. Suggest they might consider which characteristics are generally held by staff in their school and which need developing. Ask participants how this might be achieved.

The outcomes of this activity may reflect views already expressed in school behaviour and attendance audits. It is possible to analyse the key characteristics of positive staff/pupil relationships in terms of the pupils' expectations of staff. This task can be used as a basis

for subjective discussions between staff and trainers, line managers and mentors to identify the strengths and weaknesses in personal skills to inform continuing professional development. This might include specialist advice and training for mentors and trainers involving partners most frequently worked with in the school.

The following key messages can be used to summarise this activity.

- Good relationships have a critical impact on learning, behaviour and attendance.
- Good relationships are more likely to flourish in a school ethos based on shared values, principles and beliefs.
- Analysing and improving staff–pupil relationships should be an important element in action planning.

Promoting staff–pupil relationships

There are many opportunities throughout the school day at a number of different levels to promote staff–pupil relationships. The next task enables participants to explore the links between systems and actions within a school that impact positively on the behaviour and attendance of pupils. Sometimes the immediate outcome is that parents feel supported; however it is possible to see the impact this has on the pupils and therefore the relationships being developed across the school.

Task 2

Ask participants to consider relationships within their school community. Explain that the task will focus on three levels: whole school, groups and individuals.

Give out **handout 2**. Ask participants to look at the examples of systems (that provide opportunities to promote and develop positive relationships). Explain that it is through these opportunities that the characteristics underpinning good relationships can be developed.

Ask participants to add some more examples to this grid, focusing on the link between the identified system and the characteristics that will underpin the intended outcome.

Explain that positive relationships at all levels impact on behaviour, attendance, bullying and relationships with the wider community. It is through positive relationships that pupils:

- develop confidence;
- feel supported when faced with a challenge;
- gain trust;
- feel safe;

and as a consequence **want to attend**.

Every member of the school community has an entitlement and a responsibility to contribute to the development of positive relationships. For this to happen schools need to be proactive in identifying opportunities for involvement. Remind participants about solution-focused approaches and how these may be used to acknowledge what the school already does well and to identify what they would like to try next.

Identifying assertive teacher skills

20 minutes

Following the audit, one of the actions that may be identified by schools is to consider developing specific staff skills. Staff who develop successful relationships organise the space and time to respond to emerging situations while maintaining progress in the lesson. Effective communication skills are key in achieving this balance. Assertive staff are good communicators. Staff may have different views on what it means to be assertive and therefore it is important to explore the definition using **slide 3a**.

Slide **3a**

Assertive is:
'to state or express positively, to affirm'
(Webster's New College Dictionary)

Now show **slide 3b** and ask participants to discuss, in pairs, their initial feelings and thoughts. Take brief feedback.

Slide **3b**

An assertive teacher:
'states or expresses positively, affirms'

Task 3

Ask participants to work in small groups to identify the characteristics of assertive staff. Note each characteristic on a separate sticky note (use one colour). Allow about 3 minutes. Characteristics could include:

- leadership;
- confidence;
- open and direct;
- decisive;
- high expectations;
- dependable;
- reliable;
- sets clear boundaries;
- states expectations, both academic and behavioural;
- fair and consistent;
- listens to pupils;
- values pupils' opinions;
- good model of behaviour, e.g. polite;
- humour – but **with** pupils, not **at** them;
- raises both achievement and effort.

Next, take each sticky note and identify the necessary skills to achieve the listed characteristic (use a different colour sticky note). Allow 5 minutes.

Skills could include:

- well-prepared;
- pre-planned;
- a good communicator;
- a good listener;
- rational detachment;
- alertness;
- a challenger;
- a finisher.

Ask a representative from each table to feed back on a characteristic and the necessary skills. Ask participants to consider how these skills are reflected in school documentation or the continuing professional development programme. For example:

- specific characteristics are included on staff job descriptions;
- the newly qualified teachers support programme includes guidance on developing effective communication skills;
- classroom observation forms have indicators for preparation skills.

Display this information for the rest of the training.

Explain that the impact of an assertive member of staff on pupils' behaviour and attendance is significant if contrasted with that of a member of staff who is lacking in many of the characteristics and skills we have identified. An assertive member of staff actively contributes to raising standards both in the classroom when teaching and also through their daily interactions in and around the school.

The assertive teacher is successful because they:

- have clear expectations;
- model behaviour for learning;
- actively promote regular attendance;
- are consistent in approach;
- are able to effectively combine non-verbal and verbal communication skills;
- are respectful in their interactions with adults and pupils.

This is particularly important when we consider that people communicate:

- 55% through their body language;
- 38% through the tone of their voice;
- 7% by the words that they use.

(Ref: NLP. O'Connor & Seymour, 1998)

Show **slide 4** and distinguish between the different types of non-verbal behaviours used positively by assertive teachers. Explain that congruence between verbal and non-verbal behaviours will enhance the message. For example, a quiet voice and open hand gestures convey that the teacher believes that their intervention will be acted upon.

Slide **4**

Non-verbal behaviours used by assertive teachers:

- Eye contact
- Body language
- Proximity and height levels
- Take-up time
- Tactical pauses

Task 4

Divide participants into groups A and B. Group A are the assertive teachers and group B lack many of the skills. Set the scene.

It is the last lesson of the day. You are sent to teach a cover lesson to a mixed ability group of Year 9 pupils. The work set is a simple exercise from a textbook. You are not a specialist in this subject and when you arrive all but very few pupils in the class are sitting down.

In groups, use **handout 3** to record the non-verbal behaviours and instructional language used to settle the group and the possible verbal and non-verbal responses from pupils. For example, the teacher, on entering the classroom, uses the palm of their hand as a signal to stop current actions and then asks pupils to return to their seats. Pupils will generally move to their seats but often there will be low level muttering.

Some groups may feel confident enough to act out the scene. If this is not the case, take verbal feedback and make notes on the flipchart. Ask participants to consider the need for agreed signals or prompt phrases across the school in order to promote assertive behaviour in all teachers.

Gather the best examples of techniques and ask participants to demonstrate them.

Explain that from this task the following becomes clear:

- assertive teachers use a range of verbal and non-verbal responses to manage their classrooms effectively;
- frequent and planned use of these responses promotes lesson pace and pupil engagement;
- pupils recognise and respond well to these characteristics in teachers and as a consequence feel safe and valued.

This secures the emotional climate for learning.

A repertoire of skills and techniques exists that can help teachers promote positive behaviour for learning. It is important that all teachers have the opportunity to identify strengths and areas for development through self-evaluation and the school review process. Schools need to be responsive to staff needs and use both internal resources and support from other agencies to give staff the opportunity to develop their practice.

The use of praise to encourage positive behaviour and attendance

20 minutes

Remind participants that praise is one element on the intervention continuum. Explain that staff are often very good at finding something positive to say about pupils' work but where there is an expectation of positive behaviour there is less inclination to praise it. Very often there is only a reaction when negative behaviour is observed.

Ask participants to consider:

- types of praise;
- language of praise;
- appropriate praise;
- reason for the praise;
- whether it is fair and genuine.

Link this discussion to how praise is perceived by pupils.

- Are there any cultural issues that need to be addressed?
- Is the praise understood by all pupils?
- Is praise socially acceptable with peers?

Task 5

Distribute the six task cards from **handout 4**. Explain that this task focuses on the purpose and type of praise best used in certain situations. The aim is to support participants in exploring the possible range of responses from an assertive teacher and the impact this may have on teaching and learning, behaviour and attendance. Emphasise that participants should consider, in particular, the manner in which praise is given and the acceptability of praise to the audience.

Ask groups to discuss the scenario on the task card and agree a staff response. Once the response is recorded each task card is delivered to the next table. When all cards have visited all groups, each is returned to the original table.

Finally, each group must consider all responses and use them to consider the impact on pupils:

- immediately;
- next time the situation arises;
- in the long term.

Take feedback from each group and return to the bulleted considerations at the beginning of this section. Remind participants of the value of considering:

- why we praise;
- what type of praise we use;
- the type of communication used (verbal or non-verbal);
- when it is appropriate to praise;
- what outcomes we expect.

Consider the impact of praise in terms of its purpose and the audience. The place and time for individual and whole class/group praise needs to be considered. Some pupils find public praise particularly difficult but respond positively to private or written comments.

Praise will be well received if it is:

- personal;
- genuine;
- appropriate and measured;
- specific;
- consistent;
- used regularly.

Pupils need to know what they are being praised for so that they can replicate the behaviour. Staff need to find opportunities to praise all pupils in a given time frame. Discuss the difference between praise and feedback and give an example of when feedback may be used instead of praise. How can a whole school strategy for praise be introduced? How can this be made genuine in the eyes of pupils?

Using corrective language and defusing confrontation

20 minutes

All staff should use praise and positive interactions to ensure that the relationship with pupils encourages effective learning. However, there will be times when staff need to swiftly defuse confrontation and it is often at these times that the language used is negative, with a focus on what a pupil should stop doing rather than prompting them towards a desired behaviour.

Task 6

Ask participants to work individually and to think about pupil behaviours that disrupt a lesson. Record the responses on flipchart.

Ask participants to discuss how these behaviours are dealt with at an individual level or whole school level and ask them to think about consistency. If a pupil demonstrated the same behaviour in two different classes would the response from the teacher be the same?

Now, ask participants to comment on the use and choice of language. Ask them to give a brief example and to explain how effective it is in defusing confrontation. For example, *'I would like you to complete this piece of work. It is your choice. If you choose not to complete the piece of work during the lesson, it will have to be completed at another time.'*

Remind participants that, whatever the situation, they should always remember that it is the behaviour which is being corrected and not the pupil.

Take brief feedback.

Emphasise that:

- the responses may not be the same but all staff need to be consistent with policy;
- it is important for staff to be rational and willing to understand why pupils have chosen the behaviour;
- staff need to develop a repertoire of responses and a language of intervention;
- the purpose of the correction must be clear;
- pupils need help to build capacity to make better choices;
- the repertoire needs to include preventative strategies to anticipate difficulties and avoid escalation.

Task 7

Divide the participants into three groups representing the teacher, the pupil and the rest of the class. With the help of a colleague, model the scenario on **handout 5**. Explain to the participants that you want them to observe the scenario in their allocated role and note what they are thinking and how they are feeling.

Allow each group to discuss their thoughts and feelings and nominate one person to give feedback. Allow 5 minutes.

Take feedback on the flipchart for the three roles. Draw out the direct link between the impact of the pupil's behaviour on the teacher's response. Explain that in situations like this every response triggers a counter-response, creating a cycle fuelled by emotion. Emphasise the impact this type of dialogue has on the emotional climate of the classroom and as a direct consequence the negative effect it has on teaching and learning for all.

Next, ask each group to take the role of an assertive teacher who has a repertoire of intervention strategies and decide how they would have dealt with the situation. Allow 5 minutes. Take feedback from each group noting:

- the use of verbal and non-verbal interventions;
- timing;
- body language;
- the impact these strategies have on the emotional climate;
- the impact these strategies have on the climate for learning.

Refer participants to **handout 6** taken from session 4 (Effective classroom teaching) in Core day 1, which lists a series of teacher techniques that promote positive relationships and impact on the climate for learning. Suggest that participants reflect on how staff in their school might be encouraged to use these ideas more effectively.

Invite participants to rephrase the teacher response using the language of choice for the first three responses and giving an emphasis to correcting the behaviour and not the pupil.

Primary and secondary behaviours

Explain to participants that the next activity is to support an improved understanding of primary and secondary behaviours. Staff response to a pupil's initial/primary behaviour significantly influences the magnitude and focus of any secondary behaviour.

Task 8

Ask participants to read the first section of **handout 7** and, with the support of the techniques listed on **handout 6**, ask groups to discuss and agree:

- an effective alternative initial intervention;
- an intervention after Kerry's first response.

Ask groups to record their response. Allow 3 minutes for this task.

Next, ask participants to read the second section of **handout 7**, which describes the thoughts and feelings of the teacher and what happened next.

Ask groups to discuss, agree and record a possible intervention to prevent the situation escalating after Kerry mutters. Allow 3 minutes, after which explain that Kerry's initial response is something called a secondary behaviour. To escape from the feelings of being reprimanded in public she retaliated with a justification of her initial behaviour. Her second response was also a retaliation, reinforced by the need to maintain credibility with her peers.

Ask participants to consider their first, second and third intervention strategies now they are aware of Kerry's feelings and decide whether this information influences their decisions. Allow 4 minutes.

At the end of the task, take feedback and emphasise:

- how the teacher's choice of response can minimise further problems;
- when teachers make it clear that they are correcting the behaviour and not the pupil, it is more likely that situations are defused and the teaching and learning climate sustained;
- understanding the reasons for behaviours helps teachers respond appropriately.

Summary and points for action

5 minutes

Show **slide 5** to support the summary.

Slide **5**

- Staff behaviour affects relationships and, as a consequence, inclusion, motivation, attendance and learning
- The whole school community contributes to the development of positive relationships and a safe, secure learning environment
- Assertive teaching secures positive learning experiences for all pupils
- Positive intervention strategies underpinned by a consistently applied behaviour and attendance policy promote behaviour for learning

Emphasise that **teachers' behaviour is the most important determinant of pupil behaviour and attendance**. Teachers can change their own behaviour through a planned professional development programme which includes the observation of good practice and good support mechanisms within the school. Staff can influence pupil behaviour by engaging in a whole school approach to:

- build relationships;
- model the attributes of an assertive teacher;
- use intervention strategies which have a significant weighting towards praise and encouragement;
- respond to inappropriate behaviour by using techniques which avoid escalation.

As a consequence, teaching and learning opportunities are maximised and standards of behaviour are raised.

Points for action

Encourage participants to complete the points for action in **handout 8**. Ask them to identify how they will use this session to provide training in school, who they will involve and when.

It will be helpful to share these points with the senior leadership team and their consultant at the next meeting.

Handout 1a

Pupil perceptions

Comments by Year 8 pupils

A good teacher:

- is kind
- is generous
- listens to you
- encourages you
- has faith in you
- keeps confidences
- likes teaching children!
- likes teaching their subject
- takes time to explain things
- helps you when you're stuck
- tells you how you are doing
- allows you to have your say
- doesn't give up on you
- cares for your opinion
- makes you feel clever
- treats people equally
- stands up for you
- makes allowances
- tells the truth
- is forgiving

(DfEE 2000 *Research into Teacher Effectiveness*, Hay McBeal)

Handout 1b

Pupil perceptions	Characteristics
<p>Is kind</p> <p>Is generous Listens to you</p> <p>Encourages you</p> <p>Has faith in you Keeps confidences</p> <p>Likes teaching children!</p> <p>Likes teaching their subject Takes time to explain things Helps you when you're stuck Tells you how you are doing Allows you to have your say</p> <p>Doesn't give up on you Cares for your opinion Makes you feel clever Treats people equally Stands up for you Makes allowances</p> <p>Tells the truth Is forgiving</p>	<p>Genuine interest</p> <p>Listens</p> <p>Respects others</p> <p>Empathy</p> <p>Shared understanding</p> <p>Respect</p> <p>Open dialogue</p>

Handout 2

Building relationships

Level	Systems	How do you apply them?	Outcomes (links to characteristics)
Whole school community	Respond to phone calls within 12 hours	Provide clear guidelines and identify key staff	Parents feel supported Pupils feel safe
	Regular communication with parents	Frame parents' letters with a supportive tone, e.g. <i>'We appreciate how difficult it is for...'</i> instead of <i>'We don't expect parents to ...'</i>	Parents feel supported and respected Pupils feel safe Pupils feel encouraged to achieve
	Social events involving staff, parents and pupils	Involve staff and parents in planning and delivery with shared responsibility for success	Parents develop trust in school Parents gain a sense of equality Parents have some quality time to discuss school issues
Class/group	Class-wide reward system	Opportunities to celebrate success in whole school assemblies and newsletters	Pupils feel sense of achievement Pupils feel that staff like teaching them
Individual	Form tutor groups and pastoral support	Timetabled sessions for development of personal and emotional skills	Pupils are known by name and feel valued Pupils have a chance to voice their opinions

Handout 3

Non-verbal staff behaviour	Pupils' verbal response	Pupils' non-verbal response
<p>On entering the classroom, the teacher uses the palm of their hand as a signal to stop current actions</p>	<p>General muttering about having to start work</p>	<p>Heads down and move to locate desks</p>
Instructional staff language	Pupils' verbal response	Pupils' non-verbal response
<p>Ask pupils to return to their seats</p>		

Handout 4

Matthew

A shy Year 9 pupil who has just engaged in a group activity.

Zoe

A Year 8 pupil who seeks attention through confrontation.

Today you have witnessed Zoe standing calmly in the break-time snack queue.

Sophia and Baljinder

Two Year 8 pupils who hardly ever volunteer to give answers, are quiet, always complete tasks and never ask for help. Today was no different.

Fabian

A Year 9 pupil who has just returned from ten days' exclusion for bullying a Year 7 pupil.

Just before the start of the lesson you witnessed him talking politely to the teaching assistant who works with him.

Arthur

A Year 10 pupil who has strong opinions and thrives on argument. He approaches you between lessons wanting to know how pupils get elected onto the school council.

He is fed up of seeing younger pupils being bullied at lunchtime.

Small group

A table of three boys and two girls in Year 7, supported by teaching assistant.

They are engaged in every lesson. Today was no different.

Handout 5

Pupil enters the room late and is wearing a hat.

Teacher: (sarcastic voice) Thanks for turning up, (very direct voice) quickly get to your seat and take that hat off.

The pupil walks slowly to his seat and makes no attempt to remove the hat.

Teacher: Hurry up, we haven't got all day! And TAKE YOUR HAT OFF!

Pupil sits down and ignores the request.

Teacher: I am now asking you for the third time to remove your hat. Don't ignore me. I am sick of pupils disobeying the most basic of school rules. If you don't remove your hat then I am going to report you to the head of year.

Pupil: Report me then. I don't give a stuff!

Teacher: Don't you dare speak to me like that! Get out!

Pupil: Why should I? I have only just sat down.

Teacher: Get outside or I am going to send for the headteacher!

Pupil gets up, shoves the chair to one side and struts out of the door muttering to himself.

Handout 6

Teacher techniques	Details
Choice	<p>Gives pupils some control over a situation which is less likely to initiate point-blank refusal. Examples include:</p> <p><i>'I want you to get on with your work or (consequences), it's your choice.'</i></p> <p><i>'Are you choosing not to follow our rules on _____?'</i> or <i>'Sit over here or next to Peter (implicit choice).'</i></p>
Take-up time	<p>Allows pupils not to lose face. Watching and waiting is, in a way, issuing a challenge. We need to be clear and confident about expressing expectations. Follows an instruction with a pause to allow pupils time to comply. Examples include:</p> <p><i>'Could you open your book and start work now, Jane. I'm going to see Bill who needs some help but I'll come back in a minute if you need any.'</i></p>
Partial agreement	<p>Deflects confrontation with pupils by acknowledging concerns, feelings and actions. Examples include:</p> <p><i>'Yes, you may have been talking about your work but I would like you to...'</i></p> <p><i>'Yes, it may not seem fair but ...'</i></p>
When-then direction	<p>Avoids the negative by expressing the situation positively. Examples include: It is better to say, <i>'When you have finished your work, then you can go out'</i> than <i>'No, you cannot go out because you have not finished your work'</i>.</p>
Privately understood signals	<p>Draws the class together and builds in sharing times. Examples include: clapping your hands gently twice; or standing next to a 'learning zone' poster in the room. An individual pupil may recognise a gesture from the teacher as a reminder to concentrate on work.</p>
Tactical ignoring	<p>May be appropriate for attention-seeking behaviour. This could be an example of secondary behaviour, so try to focus on the primary behaviour by concentrating on the pupil and not the behaviour. Ignore the 'target' pupil but praise the nearby pupil. If target pupils change their behaviour, praise them. Examples include:</p> <p>The teacher may say to a nearby pupil: <i>'Well done. You have remembered to put your hand up to answer a question.'</i></p>
Redirect behaviour	<p>Reminds the pupils what they should be doing and avoids getting involved in discussion about what the pupils are doing wrong. It may be possible to focus their attention on the required task. Examples include:</p> <p><i>'Okay, Maria and Mark. We're looking at the extract from Tennyson on page 23 of your books.'</i></p>
Consequences and sanctions	<p>Needs to be in line with school policy and be implemented clearly and consistently. Examples include:</p> <p><i>'Remember the school rule, Phil. If you are late for lessons without a pink slip you make up the time at lunchtime. It's there on the poster to remind us all.'</i></p>
Deferred consequences	<p>Deals later with a pupil who is misbehaving and therefore removes the 'audience', that is the rest of the class who are watching the drama unfold, and also avoids a possible confrontation. Dealing with a pupil in a one-to-one situation is more likely to have a positive outcome. Examples include:</p> <p><i>'I'd like to sort this out, Amy, but we can't do it now. I will talk with you at 10:30.'</i></p>

Handout 7

The teacher stops explaining the instructions to the group, gives an audible sigh and with increased volume asks Kerry to stop talking, turn round and listen to the instructions. The reply from Kerry is *'I wasn't talking, I was just borrowing a pencil to draw a margin to stop you having a go at me later.'*

The teacher is now feeling enraged because he knows very well that Kerry was talking and also feels that her response showed no respect and has undermined his authority with the rest of the class. The teacher asks her to move to another seat. She does as asked but on her way to her new seat she mutters about how useless he is as a teacher. The teacher sends Kerry to the head of department.

Handout 8

Points for action



Aims of the session

- To help participants understand the influence of staff behaviour on staff–pupil relationships and attendance
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Interventions



Positive reinforcement

Positive correction





Slide 3a



Assertive is:

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(Webster's New College Dictionary)



Key Stage 3 National Strategy



Slide 3b

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An assertive teacher:

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Non-verbal behaviours used by assertive teachers:

- Eye contact
- Body language
- Proximity and height levels
- Take-up time
- Tactical pauses





Slide 5

-
- Staff behaviour affects relationships and, as a consequence, inclusion, motivation, attendance and learning
 - The whole school community contributes to the development of positive relationships and a safe, secure learning environment
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Task 1

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- genuine interest;
- trust;
- listening;
- respect;
- open dialogue;
- understanding;
- empathy.

Ask participants to read through **handout 1a**, which lists some pupils' perceptions of a 'good' teacher. Allow a short time for participants to discuss their feelings and thoughts about these and consider how they relate to pupil perceptions in their own school. Ask participants to consider the characteristics of their current staff using the list generated earlier on the flipchart. They should record this list on the right-hand side of **handout 1a**.

Next, ask them to draw lines to match the pupils' views and the staff characteristics. Allow about 5 minutes. Refer to **handout 1b** for some of the possible responses and ask if there are any characteristics that need to be added. Suggest they might consider which characteristics are generally held by staff in their school and which need developing. Ask participants how this might be achieved.

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- open and direct;
- decisive;
- high expectations;
- dependable;
- reliable;
- sets clear boundaries;
- states expectations, both academic and behavioural;
- fair and consistent;
- listens to pupils;
- values pupils' opinions;
- good model of behaviour, e.g. polite;
- humour – but **with** pupils, not **at** them;
- raises both achievement and effort.

Next, take each sticky note and identify the necessary skills to achieve the listed characteristic (use a different colour sticky note). Allow 5 minutes.

Skills could include:

- well-prepared;
- pre-planned;
- a good communicator;
- a good listener;
- rational detachment;
- alertness;
- a challenger;
- a finisher.

Ask a representative from each table to feed back on a characteristic and the necessary skills. Ask participants to consider how these skills are reflected in school documentation or the continuing professional development programme. For example:

- specific characteristics are included on staff job descriptions;
- the newly qualified teachers support programme includes guidance on developing effective communication skills;
- classroom observation forms have indicators for preparation skills.

Display this information for the rest of the training.

Task 4

Divide participants into groups A and B. Group A are the assertive teachers and group B lack many of the skills. Set the scene.

It is the last lesson of the day. You are sent to teach a cover lesson to a mixed ability group of Year 9 pupils. The work set is a simple exercise from a textbook. You are not a specialist in this subject and when you arrive all but very few pupils in the class are sitting down.

In groups, use **handout 3** to record the non-verbal behaviours and instructional language used to settle the group and the possible verbal and non-verbal responses from pupils. For example, the teacher, on entering the classroom, uses the palm of their hand as a signal to stop current actions and then asks pupils to return to their seats. Pupils will generally move to their seats but often there will be low level muttering.

Some groups may feel confident enough to act out the scene. If this is not the case, take verbal feedback and make notes on the flipchart. Ask participants to consider the need for agreed signals or prompt phrases across the school in order to promote assertive behaviour in all teachers.

Gather the best examples of techniques and ask participants to demonstrate them.

Task 5

Distribute the six task cards from **handout 4**. Explain that this task focuses on the purpose and type of praise best used in certain situations. The aim is to support participants in exploring the possible range of responses from an assertive teacher and the impact this may have on teaching and learning, behaviour and attendance. Emphasise that participants should consider, in particular, the manner in which praise is given and the acceptability of praise to the audience.

Ask groups to discuss the scenario on the task card and agree a staff response. Once the response is recorded each task card is delivered to the next table. When all cards have visited all groups, each is returned to the original table.

Finally, each group must consider all responses and use them to consider the impact on pupils:

- immediately;
- next time the situation arises;
- in the long term.

Take feedback from each group and return to the bulleted considerations at the beginning of this section. Remind participants of the value of considering:

- why we praise;
- what type of praise we use;
- the type of communication used (verbal or non-verbal);
- when it is appropriate to praise;
- what outcome we expect.

Task 6

Ask participants to work individually and to think about pupil behaviours that disrupt a lesson. Record the responses on flipchart.

Ask participants to discuss how these behaviours are dealt with at an individual level or whole school level and ask them to think about consistency. If a pupil demonstrated the same behaviour in two different classes would the response from the teacher be the same?

Now, ask participants to comment on the use and choice of language. Ask them to give a brief example and to explain how effective it is in defusing confrontation. For example, *'I would like you to complete this piece of work. It is your choice. If you choose not to complete the piece of work during the lesson, it will have to be completed at another time.'*

Remind participants that, whatever the situation, they should always remember that it is the behaviour which is being corrected and not the pupil.

Take brief feedback.

Task 7

Divide the participants into three groups representing the teacher, the pupil and the rest of the class. With the help of a colleague, model the scenario on **handout 5**. Explain to the participants that you want them to observe the scenario in their allocated role and note what they are thinking and how they are feeling.

Allow each group to discuss their thoughts and feelings and nominate one person to give feedback. Allow 5 minutes.

Take feedback on the flipchart for the three roles. Draw out the direct link between the impact of the pupil's behaviour on the teacher's response. Explain that in situations like this every response triggers a counter-response, creating a cycle fuelled by emotion. Emphasise the impact this type of dialogue has on the emotional climate of the classroom and as a direct consequence the negative effect it has on teaching and learning for all.

Next, ask each group to take the role of an assertive teacher who has a repertoire of intervention strategies and decide how they would have dealt with the situation. Allow 5 minutes. Take feedback from each group noting:

- the use of verbal and non-verbal interventions;
- timing;
- body language;
- the impact these strategies have on the emotional climate;
- the impact these strategies have on the climate for learning.

Task 8

Ask participants to read the first section of **handout 7** and, with the support of the techniques listed on **handout 6**, ask groups to discuss and agree:

- an effective alternative initial intervention;
- an intervention after Kerry's first response.

Ask groups to record their response. Allow 3 minutes for this task.

Next, ask participants to read the second section of **handout 7**, which describes the thoughts and feelings of the teacher and what happened next.

Ask groups to discuss, agree and record a possible intervention to prevent the situation escalating after Kerry mutters. Allow 3 minutes, after which explain that Kerry's initial response is something called a secondary behaviour. To escape from the feelings of being reprimanded in public she retaliated with a justification of her initial behaviour. Her second response was also a retaliation, reinforced by the need to maintain credibility with her peers.

Ask participants to consider their first, second and third intervention strategies now they are aware of Kerry's feelings and decide whether this information influences their decisions. Allow 4 minutes.

At the end of the task, take feedback and emphasise:

- how the teacher's choice of response can minimise further problems;
- when teachers make it clear that they are correcting the behaviour and not the pupil, it is more likely that situations are defused and the teaching and learning climate sustained;
- understanding the reasons for behaviours helps teachers respond appropriately.