

The Idea: Be Aware of Your Reaction

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What does 'be aware of your reaction' mean?

When responding to pupil behaviour, you have choices to make about the way in which you react. Being aware of these choices and having a tried and tested repertoire of response options, will enhance the way you manage behaviour in your classroom.

When should you be aware of your reaction?

Whenever a pupil displays undesirable behaviour, from low-level to more disruptive conduct, you should react in a consistent and rational manner. By being aware of how you are reacting, this can be achieved on all occasions.

How can you be aware of your reaction when managing behaviour?

Your reactions to negative behaviour in the classroom should be planned out and rehearsed. In order to do this, you will need a bank of effective reactions you can turn to. As you practise these strategies, you will find those that work for you and add them to your own behaviour management toolkit. Here are some that you may wish to try:

Instinctive reaction versus rational or creative reaction

Your instinctive reaction to low-level disruption may be to move a child onto a sanction straight away but this may not always be the most reasonable reaction and can give you little room for manoeuvre. Try taking a step back and applying a more rational response, for example, highlighting the good behaviour of pupils who are doing as expected, or moving to stand by the disruptive pupil. You may also try a more creative approach in diffusing the undesired behaviour through a non-verbal warning, such as prolonged eye contact, a distraction or offering an interesting motivator. It is worth noting that creative reactions that work well with one child may not work with another. Try different strategies and make a note of what works for you and your pupils.

Use CASPER

You could avoid an instinctive reaction by trying the **CASPER** approach, to help you remember how you might respond to unacceptable behaviour in your classroom.

C is for Calm: Strive to appear calm at all times, even if it's hard and your frustration is testing your patience. Take a breath, count to 10 and stop to think before you do anything.

A is for Assertive: Maintain your authority and remember that you are in charge. Try being an authoritative and assertive classroom leader and not a forceful dictator.

SP is for Status Preservation: Avoid responses which embarrass or humiliate pupils and thus damage their self-respect as this can have a negative effect on unacceptable behaviour. If pupils feel their status with their peers and the class is at risk, they may foster resentment and rebellion. In cases like this, a private reprimand may have more impact than public shaming - remember that it is the behaviour that is unacceptable and not the pupil themselves.

E is for Empathy: Stop and think about why a pupil may be acting the way they are, empathise with their situation and respond accordingly. The better you know your pupils and their individual backgrounds, the easier it is to empathise.

R is for Respect: Effective behaviour management relies on mutual respect. Model what you wish to see from your pupils through your own respectful and reasoned responses to unacceptable behaviour.

Why should you be aware of your reaction?

When dealing with any undesirable pupil behaviour, it is important to manage this in a reasonable and well-planned manner. Misbehaviour may lead to a fraught and highly charged situation. Make sure that you take time to respond to this calmly and consistently so the outcome can be managed in a constructive and respectful way.

This Will Help If...

- you want to keep a consistent approach to different types of behaviour
- you want to have a number of resources in your behaviour management arsenal

Start Your Research Here

This interesting article on [responding to student misbehaviour](#) looks in detail at different strategies and approaches that you can apply when reacting to behaviour in your classroom.

Take a look at page 4 in particular of this [guide to managing pupil behaviour](#), which will support you in evaluating how you currently react and respond to unacceptable behaviour.

This blog on [managing classroom behaviour](#) provides a general view on classroom management but includes some useful ideas on how you can respond to different behaviours, which you can add to your toolkit of reactions, as does this Twinkl Teaching Wiki page on [behaviour management strategies in primary school](#).

Action Points

Evaluate how you already respond to behaviour - be honest!

Take time to reflect on your own reactions and responses to unacceptable behaviour over the last few days. Objectively analyse what you did and what worked or didn't work.

When did you react emotionally or instinctively? What did this look like? What was the outcome?

When did you react rationally or creatively? What did this look like? What was the outcome?

Start your toolkit

Once you have completed your research and evaluated your practice, note down some ideas for reactions, both those that have worked for you previously and those that you are going to try as part of this programme. Refer to your notes each morning and reflect on the outcomes of any interactions.

What strategies will you develop and add to your repertoire of reactions?

Find what works

After four weeks, reflect on and evaluate the responses and reactions you have adopted and how well they have worked. Refine your toolkit to those that are most effective for you and your pupils. Reflect and evaluate again after eight weeks.

How has behaviour improved? Which reactions will become part of your permanent behaviour management strategy?

Source Material

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