

Classroom Management Plan Laura Farnsworth

The following document is a tentative management plan for my own classroom. There is no best way to teach and I believe my management style will always be changing and improving. Therefore, these are my ideal management strategies for the time being. These strategies will include my philosophical statement, teaching style, how classroom rules are implemented and communicated, classroom routines, and how I will respond to positive and negative behaviours exhibited by students. Lastly, I have included a floor plan and rationale of my ideal classroom layout.

It is important to also consider theories of various psychologists such as Piaget or Kohlberg when discussing managing a classroom. Piaget's theories explain how children interact with their environment and Kohlberg's consider how children make sense of the world around them. According to their theories, primary children are egocentric, selfish and impulsive. Junior aged children consider more variables and can follow step by step instructions. They are also more eager to please. This means different teaching strategies could be more useful for one age group than the other and we must remain flexible.

Philosophical Statement and Teaching Style

I want to teach because I have always felt that a great teacher can make a dramatic and long lasting difference in someone's life. I can remember most of my teachers so clearly that I would like to have the same impact on somebody else. I have known for years that I have the innate ability to teach whatever I have to teach, but my passions are biology and visual arts. How I would like to teach includes being patient and not intimidating. I understand that students learn in different ways and I can adapt to that. When I have taught or explained concepts in the past I have found that my students are extremely thankful to be learning from someone that does not make them feel inadequate. I must make sure that I act as a role model for my students as well as other developing teachers.

I remember feeling very shy during a great deal of my elementary school education. I always felt like I was going to be embarrassed or look stupid. It is easy for me to separate my prior teachers into intimidating or not intimidating. It was easy for me to learn, but not always easy for me to perform in front of others. I want to be like those teachers where it didn't matter if you weren't good at something.

This teaching philosophy will contribute to my teaching practices and help students learn because they will not feel dumb or afraid to ask questions or not understand something. I will make each student feel like they belong in the community of our classroom. I will teach in a multi-faceted fashion so each type of learner has equal opportunities.

I like to think I have a collaborative teaching style opposed to being more student centred or teacher centred. I believe students perceive me as helping them by sharing my knowledge and expertise. This teaching style urges me to have authority and accept responsibility. One of the reasons I believe my teaching style and my management style will change and improve over time is because a certain person or *power base* may not work with a certain approach. It will take time to figure out exactly works best for me but I do think I will remain a collaborative teacher. I feel as though I should strive to be a bit more teacher centred because I probably lean a bit more towards student centred right now. I know I must be more consistent with rewards and punishments. I may feel this way because student centred teachers work better with mature students and my placement was with grade 1s. Maybe it means I should be more teacher centred or maybe it means I should try teaching mature students!

Classroom Rules and Communication

Because classroom rules are crucial to effective classroom management it is important to be consistent and firm about the rules from the first day of school. I believe the easiest rules to follow are rules you believe in yourself. Based on that I would compile a list of class rules with the students on the first day of class. Students will offer a suggestion, we will discuss the reasoning for and importance of the rule and decide if it should be a class rule. I will have a list of rules that must be included like walk instead of run, raise your hand to ask a question, use the washroom during work time instead of lesson time, try to solve a problem yourself before asking me for help, keep your hands to yourself, etc. It will also be important to determine what the school norms are regarding discipline and rules and align them with my own. The completed list of class rules will be left on display in the classroom. We will recite the class rules each morning for the first week of school. I have also learned it is important to state rules positively (for example, *raise your hand* opposed to *don't call out*).

It is important to deal with a broken rule immediately and consistently. The student should be able to tell you what rule was broken and why that is not good. This can help them monitor their own behaviour responsibly. On the other hand, I have to work on praising students who are setting good examples.

Something else to consider is how I will communicate the class rules to parents, caregivers and administrators. Some parents may not speak much English and may want a copy of the rules in their native language. I could use an internet translator to provide them with this. Depending on the grade, I could have the students write out the rules themselves to take home and have signed by their parents. Writing the rules will help student learn and memorize them.

Classroom Procedures/Routines & Assessment/Grading Plans

According to Maslow, “A student wants some kind of undisrupted routine or rhythm. He seems to want a predictable, orderly world.” Therefore, I feel it is important to implement routines and procedures for students of every age. We are creatures of habit and students will learn better if they know what is coming their way. Humans like routines because when we do things automatically it lets our brain think about other more important things. Many of my students on placement had no problem telling me I was doing the *wrong* thing at the *wrong* time. Christmas time in the classroom taught me how to be flexible and patient. Some routines I would implement in my classroom involve a morning routine, an end of the day routine, recess routines and a bathroom procedure.

My Associate Teacher had a great bathroom procedure that I would like to adopt. The grade 1 student who needed to go to the washroom would go get a bottle of hand sanitizer that had a home beside the classroom door and put it on their desk. When they returned from the washroom they could sanitize their hands and put the sanitizer back in it's home. This way, more than one student could not go at one time and they (and I) could ensure they sanitize their hands when they return. There was also a rule that they could not leave while a new lesson was being taught. Students on my first placement tried to take advantage of me by asking to go to the bathroom when someone was already using the sanitizer hall pass. They also tried to sneak out during lessons I was teaching before I knew there was a rule against it! This is why I will be sure to learn and memorize the classroom rules on the first day of a new placement!

My first Associate Teacher modelled a great morning routine for me also. I really hope to have a SMART Board in my own classroom because I think it makes routines and lessons easier, more interactive and *way* more fun. I would make a Notebook presentation that I could open

each morning so the students would be cued as to what is coming next. This visual will help them memorize and routine. My routine would consist of singing O Canada, recording the weather on our calendar and bar graph, reading the poem of the week, a matching game of sight words, skip counting, the days of the week song and the months of the year song. This is an example of a morning routine for a young primary class so things would be modified for older students. Almost all of the activities would be interactive with the SMART Board. While these activities are going on the students are opening their agendas so I can check for notes from parents, collect money, etc.

The end of the day routine is important because I would need to make sure everything that needs to go home goes home. I would also like to have the classroom tidy in preparation for the next day. I would have my students retrieve their communication bags from their crate and place anything that needs to go home inside them. Before they leave the classroom I would stand beside the garbage can and ask them to “pick up five in five”. Each student must pick up five pieces of garbage or materials and throw it out or put it in it's place. I will be sure to stand by the door as they enter in the morning or leave in the afternoon. This is a great opportunity to compliment them on something positive they did throughout the day.

When entering and leaving the classroom they must keep their coat area or cubby clean. When lining up inside the classroom I might decide to line them up in the same order every time based on seating arrangement or, for example, what row is sitting quietly first. If they are too noisy or disruptive coming in or out of the classroom they will have to go back and do it again the proper way. If they come in from recess and are unsure what to do they should know to take out a book and read silently until further instructed. It is also important that I find out any emergency exit policy the school has and practice it when permitted.

One of the most crucial aspects of a management plan would be a grading/assessment plan because assessment and evaluation could be considered the evidence of the learning. Assessment is my collected data and my evaluation is assigning a mark or a grade to the data for reporting purposes. A summative assessment is assigning a value, letter grade or percentage. Formative assessment is about feedback and checking for understanding. I love the idea of unit planning because I believe lessons should overlap and be highly connected to one another. That is, I will always review the prior lesson, answer any lingering questions and build on prior knowledge. A good lesson should leave a student wanting more. In regards to the assessment, I am a firm believer in multi-sensory, multi-faceted and multiple intelligence theories. I am such an extremely visual learner I understand that some people just need to see or hear things a certain way in order to best retain it. I plan to give my students options for their assessment. Maybe they want to tell me a story or maybe they want to write me a story or maybe they want to create a piece of art. In my class students will have choices.

Responding to and Managing Positive and Negative Behaviour

It is as important to reward good behaviour as it is to apply negative consequences to bad behaviours. By praising or rewarding positive behaviours I will be encouraging other students to exhibit the same positive behaviours. Students of all ages crave acceptance and praise. I will do my best to always verbally praise those students who are setting a good example. They will be rewarded with a task they find exciting, personal activity time or a reward system such as a Gotcha box. My Associate Teacher gave Gotchas to students who were being good role models. If a student was rewarded a Gotcha they would write their name on a small piece of paper and put it in the box. Each week a name was chosen from the box and the student could pick out a prize from a treasure chest. I like this system because the students were very excited to get a

Gotcha, but you don't have to give out a prize every time someone behaves well. For example, instead of giving away a pencil or eraser when a student is behaving well, they get a *chance* to win a better prize at the end of the week. The more times they show exemplary behaviour throughout the whole week, the better their chances for winning a prize.

Negative behaviours may be much more difficult to manage. There are so many techniques one could use to police negative behaviour that it may take some experimenting before I find out what works best for me. The best thing I learned during my 3 weeks of placement was that often *less is more*. I found myself getting frustrated and worked up when the class was getting out of control. I found myself raising my voice and trying to yell over top of them. My Associate Teacher told me (and modelled) to just *wait*. It was much easier to stop, stare and wait for the attention which did not take long. I found my biggest challenge to be disciplining individual students acting out.

Some causes of a student misbehaving include attention seeking, power, revenge tactics, boredom, a disorder or possible abuse/trauma at home. It is important for us to not take it personally, not get into a power struggle with the student and to be understanding. I will try my best to always talk to the behaviour instead of the person and see the person before the exceptionality. Some other responses I will try to avoid would be holding a grudge, making other students (or the whole class suffer), humiliating students, giving threats or giving more homework.

I will be using nonverbal strategies whenever possible as the first step for handling students who are misbehaving. Some of these strategies will include The Look, proximity or signals. A signal could be as easy as placing a finger over your mouth to say "please be quiet now." Some advantages of nonverbal strategies are that it is less disruptive and hostile, the students have a chance to correct their own behaviour, and you can preserve other types of interventions.

If nonverbal strategies don't work I will move onto verbal strategies such as posing a direct question to them if they talk out or whisper during a lesson. I have also learned that if you ask to speak to a student after class or the lesson it is a good way to get some positive behaviour out of them (or at least stop the negative ones). Nonverbal strategies are not always possible but if you use them too much it may decrease its effects. These interventions should be brief and kept quiet as to not humiliate the student. I will be sure to always avoid a sarcastic or condescending tone. I would like to implement the SWAT approach when dealing verbally with students which stands for State the rule, Warn, Act and Time out.

If a student continues to misbehave they may require to me implement an action plan or student contract. This will help the child admit what they did, why it was wrong and what they could do next time that would be more appropriate. This teaches the student to be more responsible and accountable for their own actions. I will have a generic template ready for such action plans or contracts. I will also be sure to communicate plans or contracts with parents/guardians. Sending students to the office be taken seriously and used rarely.

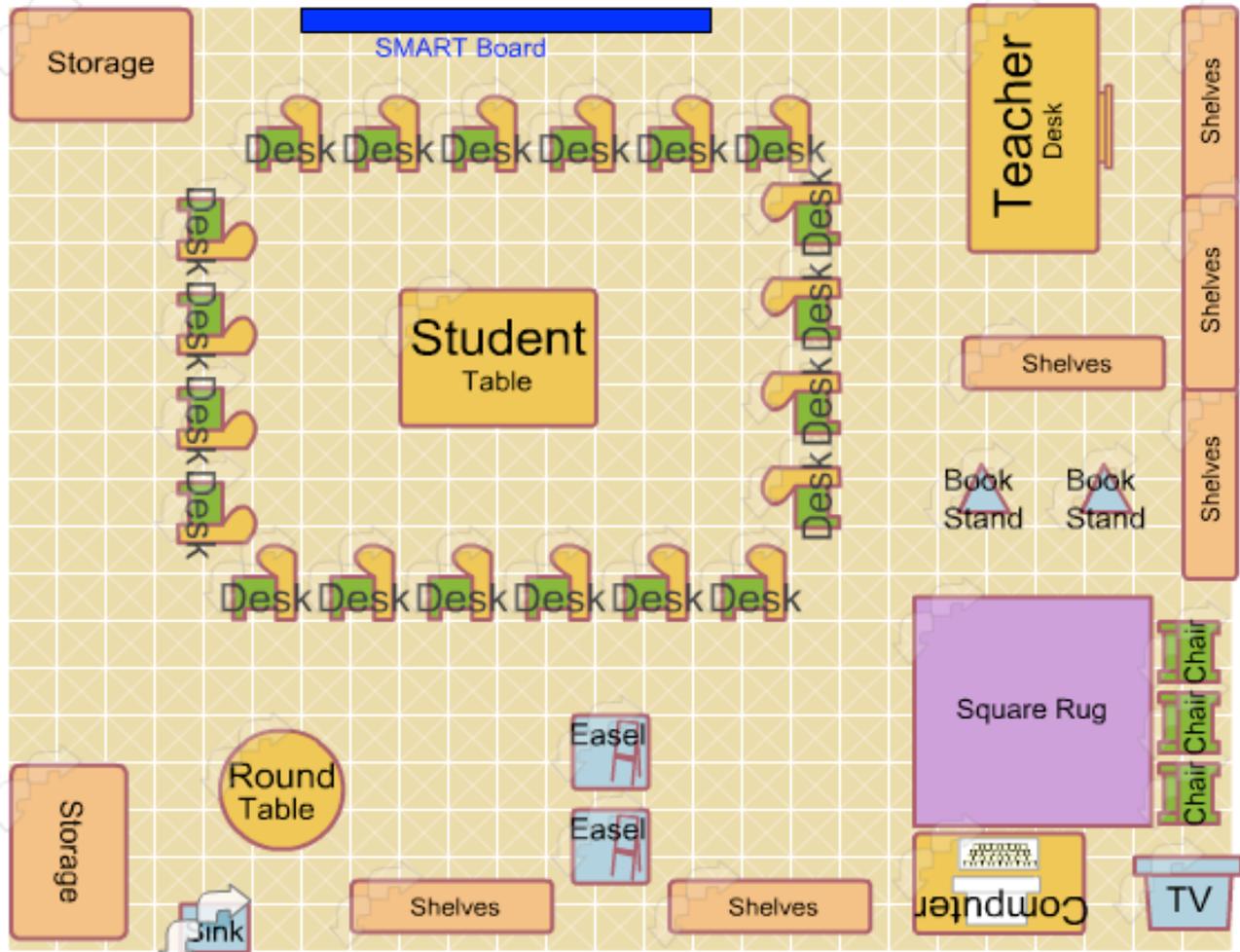
I also believe teachers must always use logical consequences. That is, the consequence must match the behaviour. Suppose a student refuses to take off their winter boots in the classroom. I would explain to them that the classroom policy is to take off winter boots when or before we enter the classroom. If they still refuse I would let them know they had two choices: take off the winter boots or they would have to leave the classroom and go to the office. Making the student leave the classroom is a more appropriate consequence for keeping his coat on than another consequence such as sitting in time-out in the classroom, with his coat on. This is a quick example of logical consequences. My Non-Violent Crisis Intervention training has prepared for

me situations like this as well as more intense crisis situations.

I believe an effective and successful teacher sets a tone in the classroom from day one that will lead to a positive atmosphere and minimize discipline problems. I as a teacher must understand that my students' behaviour will be a reflection of my own. Some of my behaviours that will help lead to a positive atmosphere will include genuinely smiling at my students, moving around the class, an open body posture, active listening, sharing personal thoughts and stories, giving the students choices and displaying a variety of student work. To be proactive I will plan ahead, understand my power base and be prepared for anything. My consistency, structure and honesty will also contribute to decreased management issues.

* Ideas and practices inspired by lecture slides and the class text.

My Classroom Plan



The first thing I put in my classroom were the student desks. I remember having the desks placed sort of like this when I was in grade 7 and my Associate Teacher had them placed like this. I like it because you can put materials or exemplars at the centre table. The other thing I like about it is the ability to stand inside the desks to quickly run around and help the students. I would also place the students who struggle the most in the front row. I have added in a SMART Board at the front of the room because I don't want to imagine a classroom without one!

I put the teacher's desk near the students so I could keep an eye on them while they are doing any seat work. I placed the most shelving units around my desk so that I have ease of access to my resources. I could also store toys or materials that I don't want the students to have access to at all times.

I put the carpet in the corner and naturally surrounded it with bookshelves and comfortable chairs. I did not put any shelves in reach of the carpet because many students are distracted by the materials on the shelves during carpet time. Instead, I have placed the technology centre beside the carpet which includes the TV and a computer table (with more than one computer I hope).

The rest of my classroom is dedicated to art and creative activities. There are some easels, a round table, a sink, storage and shelves for supplies. I enjoy creating and teaching art so I would like to support the arts as much as I can and inspire my students. Students can paint or make crafts in their free time or use this area for projects/group work. I would like to have supplies stocked for a different craft about every two weeks that the students can make if they choose to. This area will also display student work and achievements.