

## Research evidence to support the 5C model of school-based induction

Wong (2005) describes the process of induction as a ‘highly organised and comprehensive form of staff development, involving many people and many components’.

The following excerpt from *Beginning teachers’ perceptions of their induction into teaching* (Hudson, Beutel and Hudson, 2008) identifies many of the issues facing beginning teachers and supports the need for induction that is highly organised, comprehensive and involving many components.

*The early experience for many beginning teachers is ‘one of isolation’, of being ‘thrown in at the deep end’, and rarely with satisfactory advice, mentoring or supervision to help them ‘cope’ with the demands of their first teaching appointment (Lovat & MacKenzie, 2003, p. 20).*

*Stress, self-doubt and disillusionment result from these experiences (Khamis, 2000) and, in more serious cases, teacher morale and effectiveness are reduced.*

*Initial teaching experiences have a major impact on teacher attrition rates, longer term commitment to the profession (Skilbeck & Connell, 2005) and on future teaching performance.*

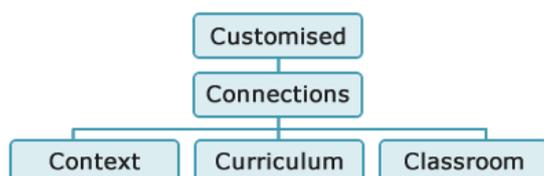
*It is therefore essential that well-monitored teacher induction programs effectively support beginning teachers as they make their transition from pre-service teacher to beginning classroom practitioner (Ramsey, 2000).*

Based on experiences in Switzerland, Japan, France, Shanghai (China), and New Zealand, Britton et al. (2003) (as cited in Wong, 2004) reported that effective induction programs are based on the following three characteristics.

- **Comprehensiveness:** Effective induction processes are highly structured, comprehensive, rigorous, and seriously monitored. There are well-defined roles for personnel: beginning teachers, principals, supervisors, coordinators, buddies, mentors, colleagues.
- **Professional learning:** Effective induction processes focus on professional learning and support professional learning communities. Induction processes are considered to be the first phase of lifelong professional learning.
- **Collaboration:** Effective school-based induction processes occur in a climate where collaboration is accepted as part of the culture. Teachers share experiences, practices and resources and there is a shared language to talk about teaching and learning. Beginning teachers are treated as equal contributors to these processes, building a sense of group identity.

### The 5C model of induction

The department has developed the following 5C model of quality induction which incorporates the essential components of induction recommended in the research.



By designing school-based induction processes that incorporate each of the 5 components in the department's model schools will ensure their induction processes are a 'highly organised and comprehensive form of staff development, involving many people and many components'.

In line with the research, school-based induction processes need to be:

- **Customised** to suit the needs of beginning teachers in each localised school context
- Supportive of **connections** both with more experienced teachers and other beginning teachers

School-based induction processes need to use customisation and connections to support beginning teachers' knowledge, understandings and practices in relation to:

- Context
- Curriculum
- Classroom

**Note: Curriculum** and **Classroom** are closely related and at times seem to be one and the same, however to examine them closely and to ensure both receive equal attention they have been included as two separate components.

The 5C model of induction provides a practical research-based model upon which schools can build their induction processes.

By using the 5C model of induction to plan, monitor and evaluate induction processes schools will achieve the following goals of induction as described by Huling-Austin, (1988); Ashby et al (2008):

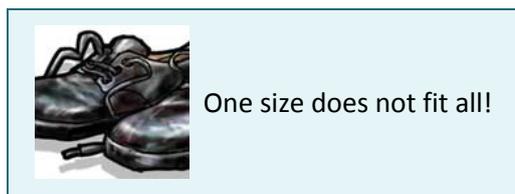
- achieve smooth transition from teacher education to being a fully qualified teacher (reduce the 'reality shock')
- improve teaching performance
- increase the retention of promising beginning teachers during the induction year(s)
- promote the personal and professional well-being and development of beginning teachers
- support collegiality and teamwork of teachers (becoming a member of the wider school system)
- transmit the culture of the system and school to beginning teachers.

The 5C model of quality induction can be used to:

- design comprehensive school-based induction processes
- refine and modify existing induction processes
- plan personalised support for individual beginning teachers
- regularly monitor induction processes
- evaluate induction processes.

Following is a brief overview of the key themes in the research underpinning the five components that are the cornerstones of the 5C model of quality school-based induction.

## Customised



While the goals of induction processes remain the same, individual schools will provide different pathways for individuals to achieve these goals.

### What is customised support?

Customised support for beginning teachers includes modifying, tailoring, adapting or personalising support to better fit the requirements of individual beginning teachers in each particular school context. In short, it involves providing custom-built support.

Such support at the school level involves considering the challenges for beginning teachers in their particular school context and using the available school resources flexibly to make the transitions from university graduate to beginning teacher to Proficient teacher as smooth and stress-free as possible.

Tailoring induction processes to meet the specific needs of beginning teachers can greatly minimise the ‘reality shock’ that is a major part of the experience for many beginning teachers as they transition from pre-service training to professional practice (Department of Education Science and Training, 2002).

Schools can customise support for beginning teachers at two levels:

- At the whole school level
- At the individual level

### What does the research say about customising support for beginning teachers at the school level?

The research suggests the following possible ways to customise support at the school level.

#### *Reduce workload*

*Rethinking a school’s organisation to lighten the teaching loads of new teachers could allow more structured time for lesson planning, in-school support and classroom observation.*

(Teaching in Focus – 2012/02 [September] OECD 2012)

Hudson (2012) notes that creating a work-life balance can be difficult for those new into teaching positions; hence their workloads need to be monitored.

Beginning teachers enter the teaching profession with specific needs. It is not appropriate for beginning teachers to be expected to assume the same responsibilities as their more experienced colleagues.

*A teacher graduating from university commences teaching with the same responsibilities as more experienced teachers in the school; yet it is widely recognised that beginning teachers need support in their first few years of teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Le Maistre & Paré, 2010), particularly with teachers leaving the profession in those early years with a seemingly ‘sink or swim’ approach from many schools (Howe, 2006, p.287).*

(Hudson, 2012)

Some ways schools could reduce workload include:

- initial week class free
- lighter teaching load
- reduced playground duty
- student selection (not the most difficult students)
- additional release

### Consider smaller class sizes

*Half of the countries surveyed in TALIS help facilitate new teachers' success by providing them with significantly smaller-sized classrooms.*

(Teaching in Focus – 2012/02 [September] OECD 2012)

*To make life less stressful for beginning teachers, schools can reduce the number of students in beginning teachers' classrooms, refrain from assigning them the most challenging students, and minimise their extracurricular and committee assignments.*

(Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000)

### Avoid multi-grade classes

*At the primary school level, in particular, schools can avoid assigning combination grades.*

(Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000)

### Monitor course schedules

*At the secondary school level, schools can make sure that new teachers' course schedules require as few separate preparation efforts as possible. They can also avoid assigning schedules that require new teachers to change classrooms during the day.*

(Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000)

### Consider modifying professional learning expectations

Schools can protect beginning teachers from being spread too thin by helping them prioritise their time and by excusing them from all but the most essential activities. They can also help beginning teachers choose and focus on a single, important theme that might run through multiple events such as literacy instruction.

In addition, beginning teachers need

*... time to think about their teaching in order to grow in their craft. Induction programs must make sure that beginners' time is not filled with formal activities that have little relationship to their teaching, that leave little room for their immediate concerns, or that deny them a reasonable personal life.*

(Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000)

### What can schools do to customise support for beginning teachers at the school level?

Schools can begin thinking about school-wide, customised induction processes by asking questions that include:

- What are the challenges of our particular school context?
- What 'lifelines' can the school offer to beginning teachers?
- How can current resources be used flexibly to provide support?

- Who can assist in providing this support?
- How will the school monitor the effectiveness of its support?
- How will it be possible for the school adapt support to cater for changing and emerging needs?

### What does it mean to customise support for beginning teachers at the individual level?

Customised support at the individual level involves adapting support to meet individual needs. This level of customised support can only come from discussions with beginning teachers and requires a commitment to adapting and modifying induction processes and support to accommodate the individual needs expressed.

It means that regular individual meetings need to be scheduled with beginning teachers to ‘touch base’ and keep on top of issues and concerns.

Some of the individual support will relate to curriculum and classroom areas, however schools need to be mindful that not every beginning teacher responds in the same way to their new school circumstances and hence will require different support. For example, one beginning teacher may require a lot of support to settle in a remote community while others will settle quickly into the new community.

Such individual customisation also requires the beginning teacher to reflect on and articulate their challenges and needs without fear of being seen as ‘needy’ or unable to cope. As well it requires the beginning teacher to be prepared to accept advice and support in a professional way.

### What can schools do to customise support at the individual level?

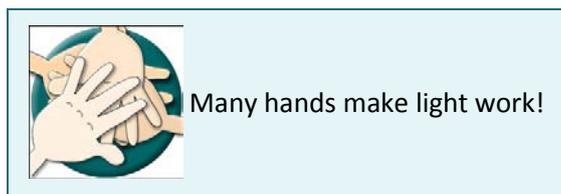
To customise support at an individual level schools could:

- offer the support of a buddy
- listen to individuals’ challenges
- observe and monitor individuals’ well-being
- develop individual professional learning plans
- schedule regular meeting times with individual beginning teachers
- provide opportunities for classroom observations
- organise co-teaching sessions
- provide constructive feedback.

Schools can begin thinking about individual induction processes by asking questions of beginning teachers that include:

- What challenges have emerged for you in this particular school context?
- What lifelines could be offered to support you to meet these challenges?
- Have you thought about how current resources could be used flexibly to provide these lifelines?
- Who do you think might be able to assist in providing these lifelines?
- How will the school know whether these lifelines have been effective?
- How will the school know about your emerging challenges as they occur?

## Connections



Too often the support for beginning teachers and responsibility for induction processes fall to one person.

### What is meant by connections?

Making connections for beginning teachers is about joining together or linking two or more people to form interconnected relationships that will help to support them through induction processes—this includes connections with: principals, supervisors, buddy teachers, coordinators, mentors, colleagues and networks.

Cohesive induction processes involve several members of staff working together as a team to provide timely and appropriate support for beginning teachers.

Hudson, Beutel and Hudson's (2008) study highlights ...

*the need for principals and school staff to re-assess their contribution to beginning teachers' development within specific school contexts, which includes the allocation of a mentor to discuss key issues and share practices, scheduled time for collaboration with colleagues, support for continued professional development, and clear guidelines for mentor support.*

### What dimensions of support can connections provide?

Eisenschmidt, 2006 (cited in European Commission Staff Working Document SEC 2010) identifies three dimensions that coherent induction processes for beginning teachers should focus on:

- the personal dimension
- the social dimension
- the professional dimension.

These dimensions provide useful organisers when considering the connections that schools need to make available to support beginning teachers. Balancing the support provided ensures that induction processes are comprehensive and encourage a collective responsibility for supporting beginning teachers. Beginning teachers need more than just one type of support.

### What does the research say about personal support?

Research reveals that beginning teachers face several problematic situations as they make their first steps in the profession. These situations can lead to a loss of self-confidence, extreme stress and anxiety and can cause the beginning teacher to question his/her own competence as a teacher and a person.

*Other challenges at the beginning of one's career include lack of time, inadequate feedback and recognition, unrealistic self-expectations and difficulties in finding the right life-work balance.*  
(Sorcinelli, 1992)

Quality connections can support teachers through the initial survival stage and throughout the induction process as new personal hurdles are encountered.

## What does the research say about social support?

Induction processes support the beginning teacher in becoming a member of the school and professional community.

*Many new teachers went through their first months of school believing that they should already know how their schools work, what their students need and how to teach well. When they had questions about their schools and their students, they eavesdropped on lunchroom conversations and peered through classroom doors seeking clues to expert practice. Having no access to clear answers or alternative models compromised the quality of their teaching, challenged the sense of their professional competence, and ultimately caused them to question their choice of teaching as a career.*

(Moore Johnson and Kardos, 2005)

It is well known that collaboration with others stimulates feedback and the exchange of new ideas.

Beginning teachers can feel much more readily accepted within a team that is open to new ideas and innovations and that works collaboratively to solve problems.

Social support encourages a collaborative learning environment within the school and between the school stakeholders.

## What does the research say about professional support?

Professional support during induction processes begins the lifelong process of learning as a teacher. Professional support can not only contribute to supporting beginning teachers but can also help to upgrade professionalism in the school as a whole.

*It is important to keep in mind, as you begin your career as a teacher, that proficiency comes with practice. We don't learn to teach. Rather, we learn from our teaching. It is through the professional relationships and conversations that you will have with colleagues, which will expand your knowledge, and through applying and adapting information and strategies within the context of your own classroom, that you will continue to refine your expertise as a teacher.*

(Ontario Ministry of Education. New Teacher Induction Program 2010)

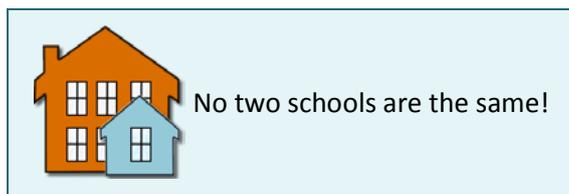
It is important that during induction processes the focus does not rest with only personal and social support. To be truly comprehensive, induction processes need to provide adequate and appropriate professional support.

## How can schools provide connections for beginning teachers?

To provide personal, social and professional support, ideally schools should share the responsibility for induction processes between:

- the beginning teacher(s)
- the principal
- the supervisor
- a buddy
- a mentor/coach
- colleagues.

## Context



### What is meant by context?

Context refers to the setting, background, situation, milieu, climate and environment of schools. Schools vary in terms of location, size, staff, student cohort, parents/carers.

*Every school context is different, particularly with the economic-socio status, geographical location, population input, and the school-community culture. Beginning teachers are placed in schools where they need to learn about these contexts along with staff social dynamics, individual student needs, and specific school policies and procedures. It would be unrealistic to expect pre-service teachers to graduate with these experiences that require contextually-specific knowledge and skills without further assistance and guidance from schools.*

(Hudson, 2012)

Even schools that have many similarities will have differing contexts.

### What are the two key aspects of school context?

Vicki Boyd-Dimock describes two aspects that make up school context in *Issues about change: Creating a context for change* ([www.sedl.org/change/issues/issues22.html](http://www.sedl.org/change/issues/issues22.html)).

The first includes aspects of the school that are not living, but nevertheless affect the people within it. The resources available, policies and rules, and size of the school are examples of this dimension of school context. Boyd-Dimock refers to this as the ecological context.

The second element is the school's culture which includes attitudes and beliefs, school norms, and relationships, both within the school and between school and community. This could be referred to as the cultural context.

The cultural context is made up of two parts: the visible aspects of the school, or climate and the invisible aspects of the school, or culture.

A superficial introduction to the ecological context and the climate of the school is often provided during orientation sessions however these often do not include invisible aspects of the context (culture) which are so vital to understanding how the school works and how things get done.

The cultural dimension of context takes longer for beginning teachers to understand and cannot be learned during orientation alone. Such deep understanding of context can only be understood through multi-faceted, long term school based induction processes.

### What does the research say about context?

Beginning teachers require considerable support to understand both the ecological and cultural contexts of their particular schools. Customised school-based induction processes that provide opportunities for connections with appropriate school-based personnel, the students and the community are the most appropriate way to provide this support.

Hudson (2012) found that it was evident that the beginning teachers in his study required more support in school culture and infrastructure.

Renshaw (2012), in discussing the importance of context for pre-service teachers, notes that different geographical and community contexts need to be foregrounded. Much of what he says about pre-service teachers applies to beginning teachers.

He goes on to say that in rural, remote and indigenous communities, support needs to focus not just on ‘being classroom and school ready for teaching’, but also being ‘community ready’ and being ready to work ‘across school-community relationship’ in more intense and engaged ways.

He says that similarly, in low SES communities, many students come to school with ‘virtual school bags’ and ‘funds of knowledge’ that are not highly valued at school. In these schooling contexts teachers need to move beyond their own assumptions, cultural experiences and expectations in order to connect more effectively with learners.

He suggests that support in understanding the local situation and the local resources available for building connections between the ‘official curriculum’ and what learners bring with them into the classroom is necessary.

### How can schools support beginning teachers to understand context?

To support beginning teachers to understand school context schools can provide:

- general school information including policies, procedures, worksite information, administration procedures and so forth
- information about school personnel and their roles
- information about the student cohort, such as background and assessment information
- information about the community, such as ethnicity and socioeconomic background.

To support beginning teachers to understand school contexts schools can encourage:

- collaboration—where people work together, share information and instructional strategies, and are encouraged to have constructive discussions and debates
- collegiality—creating a sense of belonging, emotional support, and inclusion as a valued member of the school
- efficacy—where people feel as if they have control of their destinies rather than feel helpless victims of the system. Research-supported evidence about good teaching is respected rather than people being rigidly attached to the status quo.

### Curriculum



The early Latin definition of *curriculum* means literally *to run a course*.

(<http://thesecondprinciple.com/instructional-design/types-of-curriculum>)

Beginning teachers require customised support from school personnel to successfully plan and implement the courses they will run.

## What is meant by curriculum?

To consider what is meant by curriculum it is useful to look at Oliva's (1997) multiple definitions of curriculum:

- that which is taught in schools
- a set of subjects
- content
- a program of studies
- a set of materials
- a sequence of courses
- a set of performance objectives
- a course of study
- everything that goes on within the school, including extra-class activities, guidance, and interpersonal relationships
- everything that is planned by school personnel
- a series of experiences undergone by learners in a school
- that which an individual learner experiences as a result of schooling.

## What are the aspects of curriculum?

Generally speaking, curriculum involves two aspects:

- Curriculum planning—planning what to teach
- Curriculum implementation—considering how to teach

## What does the research say?

International and national research into the support required by beginning teachers, as well as considerable anecdotal evidence, overwhelmingly indicates that beginning teachers struggle with curriculum planning and implementation and yet many beginning teachers report that they receive little support in this area.

*Learning to teach well is slow, difficult work. Managing a classroom, choosing or creating curriculum, developing sound instructional strategies, accurately assessing student understanding, and adjusting to student needs are complex tasks, and new teachers need time and support to develop the necessary knowledge and skills.*

(Johnson, Birkeland, Kardos, Kauffman, Liu, and Peske 2001)

Hudson's 2012 study found that the beginning teachers in his study required support in teaching practices such as pedagogical knowledge.

*Great Teaching, Inspired Learning: What does the evidence tell us about effective teaching?* (NSW Department of Education and Communities, February 2013) highlights the need for support for beginning teachers in the area of curriculum and cites several examples from the research studies to support this.

- *Ingvarson and Rowe (2008) found that teaching quality can only be attained by ensuring that teachers are equipped with subject matter knowledge and an evidence- and standards-based repertoire of pedagogical skills that are demonstrably effective in meeting the developmental and learning needs of all students for whom they have responsibility.*

- *The international research shows that teachers tend to be more effective if their pre-service and in-service training focuses more on the content they will be delivering and the curriculum they will be teaching. (Boyd et al 2009)*
- *The advantages of teachers using data from assessment for formative purposes are well documented. Helen Timperley's (2009) research into the effect on student outcomes of teachers using high-quality assessment data found that student achievement gains accelerated at twice the expected rate, with greater gains for the lowest-performing students.*
- *Timperley points out that many teachers have been trained to use data to label and categorise students, and that a shift is required in order for teachers to use data to guide and direct students, and to reflect upon the effectiveness of their teaching.*
- *Similarly, Alton-Lee's synthesis of 72 studies, which analysed the links between professional development and its impact on student outcomes, found that the greatest benefits to student learning were from professional development programs 'that deepen teachers' foundation of curricula-specific pedagogical content and assessment knowledge' because they 'provided teachers with new theoretical understandings that helped them make informed decisions about their practice' (Alton-Lee 2011)*
- *Baker and Smith identified the following characteristics of professional development as being the most effective in sustaining change in teachers:*
  - *a heavy emphasis on providing concrete, realistic and challenging goals;*
  - *activities that include both technical and conceptual aspects of instruction;*
  - *support from colleagues;*
  - *frequent opportunities for teachers to witness the effects that their efforts have on students' learning (Baker & Smith, 1999).*

In addition, Fry (2007) discusses the effects of 'curricular freedom' on beginning teachers. He claims that while such curricular freedom may be welcomed by experienced teachers, it can be a burden for new teachers, who have not yet developed a 'robust repertoire of lesson ideas or knowledge' of what will work in their classrooms. He claims that case studies have observed beginning teachers struggling 'just trying to come up with enough curriculum' and spending many hours a day juggling lesson planning, and the demands of paperwork, committees, and extracurricular activities.

### What does the research say about mentoring to support beginning teachers with curriculum?

The research clearly highlights the need for support in the areas of curriculum planning and implementation.

In recent years mentoring has been seen to be the answer to providing curriculum support for beginning teachers. Several studies have reported on the effectiveness of such mentoring programs and the consensus seems to be that mentoring is most effective when it focuses on improving the quality of teaching and learning rather than just emotional and social well-being.

Mentoring is usually an individual practice. In addition to mentoring, the establishment of collaborative team work, including co-planning with colleagues, and encouraging discussions and debates about teaching, would go a long way to further support beginning teachers in the areas of curriculum planning and implementation.

## What is involved in curriculum?

There are numerous curriculum models. Regardless of the curriculum model adopted by schools, curriculum involves the following in no particular order.

- Goals—the benchmarks or expectations for teaching and learning, often made explicit in the form of a scope and sequence of skills to be addressed
- Methods—the specific instructional methods the teacher will use
- Materials—the media and tools that are used for teaching and learning
- Assessment—the reasons for and ways of measuring student progress

## How can the NSW Quality Teaching model support curriculum planning and implementation?

The NSW Quality Teaching model of pedagogy and its related framework of dimensions and elements provides invaluable support in the areas of curriculum planning and implementation. Ensuring that all long term planning, short term planning and lesson planning cover the dimensions of Intellectual Quality, Quality learning environment and Significance is essential.

Built on the most reliable national and international pedagogical research, the NSW model of pedagogy can be applied across all years of schooling K–12, and all curriculum areas.

The NSW Quality Teaching model:

- describes in detail the characteristics of quality classroom and assessment practice
- provides a basis for teachers and schools to focus discussion and critical reflection on teaching and assessment practice.

Curriculum design and delivery can be effectively supported by the four Quality Teaching questions that form part of this model.

### *What do I want the students to learn? (Learning intentions)*

Articulating specific learning intentions for the learning sequence or lesson. A learning intention is simply a description of what you want your students to know, understand or be able to do by the end of a lesson or short series of lessons. It tells students what the focus for learning is going to be.

### *Why does that learning matter? (What's in it for the students?)*

Grounding the learning sequence or lesson in prior learning, thinking about where the learning fits within the overall learning sequence, thinking about whether the learning is setting students up for future learning, considering whether the learning will be transferable, etc.

### *What do I want the students to do or produce? (Learning experiences)*

The learning experiences (or activities) that will be used to assist students to achieve the learning intention(s). Learning experiences should always lead the students in the direction of the learning intention.

### *How well do I expect them to do it? (Success criteria)*

*...success criteria summarise the key steps or ingredients the student needs in order to fulfil the learning intention – the main things to do, include or focus on.*

(Shirley Clarke, 2005)

## How can schools support beginning teachers' in relation to curriculum?

To support beginning teachers' knowledge, understandings and practices in relation to curriculum schools could build understanding of:

- school curriculum practices
- the NSW Quality teaching model of pedagogy
- curriculum design models
- evidence-based assessing, planning and teaching practices.

To support beginning teachers' knowledge, understandings and practices in relation to curriculum schools could provide:

- any curriculum materials/school programs/text books
- preferred planning templates
- professional learning required for any school programs such as Positive Behaviour for Learning, Focus on Reading, etc.
- demonstration lessons - specific strategies and processes, particularly to show how to cater for a range of student abilities
- feedback.

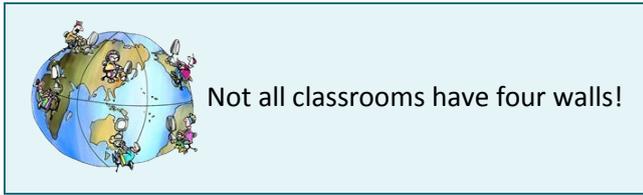
To support beginning teachers' knowledge, understandings and practices in relation to curriculum schools could outline and explain:

- expectations regarding planning and programming and how syllabuses support these processes
- expectations regarding teaching standards
- assessment processes
- content overviews and school scopes and sequence
- how to access to student data/student files
- how ongoing assessment links to planning.

To support beginning teachers' knowledge, understandings and practices in relation to curriculum schools could encourage:

- collegiality and collaboration
- co-teaching
- co-planning
- classroom observations in colleagues' classes
- reflective practice
- discussions about pedagogy.

## Classroom



Establishing and managing a quality learning environment is a priority for beginning teachers.

### What is meant by classroom?

The classroom can be any environment where learning takes place.

No matter where the learning takes place there are two related facets to classroom:

- a focus on learning, not just doing
- managing this environment so that learning is possible.

*Managing a classroom is where the theory of teaching and the practical implications of day-to-day teaching come together. ... The greatest impact on successful classroom management is effective teaching where students are engaged in learning.*

*(Great Teaching, Inspired Learning: What does the evidence tell us about effective teaching? NSW Department of Education and Communities, February 2013)*

Beginning teachers, with their limited experience, have not had the opportunity to develop a repertoire of classroom strategies that can overcome all the challenges of the classroom. They require substantial support to manage the multiple variables of the learning environment.

Some classroom variables include:

- student behaviour
- intellectual engagement
- student interaction
- materials
- physical space
- time.

A quality learning environment is about more than just student behaviour and discipline.

Establishing a learning environment begins well before the students enter the classroom and impacts on every aspect of teaching.

### What does the research say?

There is a significant body of research regarding the importance of creating and maintaining an environment that makes effective teaching and learning possible.

As far back as 1984 Veenman conducted an international review of perceived problems among beginning teachers. He cited the greatest challenges perceived by beginning teachers across differing education systems as being: classroom management, motivation of students, dealing with the individual differences among students, assessing student work, and relations with parents.

Ten years on Britton, Paine, & Raizen (1999) in a study funded by the National Science Foundation found that in countries as different as China, New Zealand, and Switzerland, beginning teachers expressed these very same problems as being the most pressing difficulties they faced.

It seems that while there has been evidence of the need to provide more support for beginning teachers for more than 30 years, creating and maintaining an environment where teaching and learning can occur continues to be at, or near the top of the list of areas where beginning teachers feel they need most support.

The 2010 Staff in Australia's Schools survey found that managing student behaviour was one of the top five areas in which school teachers indicated they needed more professional learning.

According to the countries surveyed in the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS, OECD 2012), new teachers spend less time on teaching and learning and more time on classroom management and report lower levels of self-efficacy than experienced teachers.

Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce, and Hunter (2010) found that pre-service training does not equip teachers to meet the demands of classroom teaching (Ramsey, 2000; House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, 2007; Roehrig & Luft, 2006). This is particularly so in the area of classroom management (Robertson, 2006).

Hudson (2012) concludes that one of the areas where beginning teachers require more support is behaviour management.

### What has been done?

The research indicates that in many cases little has been done to overcome this long-term need.

Despite the evidence above, Caldwell and Sutton (2010) found that beginning teachers continue to receive inadequate support in establishing positive classroom teaching and learning environments. This inadequate support refers to both pre-service training and training during induction processes.

Furthermore, the OECD (2012) in the report summarising TALIS results emphasises that, regardless of the school or classroom situation, schools can provide more support for beginning teachers, 'in a number of ways including offering professional development around classroom management'.

Such evidence begs the question about whether support for beginning teachers has focused on the real issues. Boyd (2008) suggests that it's useful to determine what the real issues are. For example, a request for help with setting routines and behaviour management may mask underlying issues of relationships with students, a lack of careful planning, involving students in constructing their learning or providing differentiated learning opportunities.

### What more can be done?

In an Australian study, Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce and Hunter (2010) found that where there was explicit acknowledgement of the 'complex, intense and unpredictable nature' of teacher's work, accompanied by 'realistic expectations' of beginning teachers and the amount of support needed, beginning teachers were most successful. In such cases beginning teachers were:

- mentored by colleagues working in similar year levels or curriculum areas
- involved in collaborative planning for teaching and learning (including assessment and reporting)
- supported by school-wide policies and support systems for the management of student behaviour.

## What is the elephant in the (class)room?

While student behaviour is only one part of establishing and maintaining an environment focused on teaching and learning, it is nevertheless what most teachers are meaning when they cite ‘classroom management’ as an area of need. What they really mean is student behaviour.

For example, in a survey of 500 teachers, teachers with three years or fewer years experience were more than twice as likely as teachers with more experience (19 percent versus 7 percent) to say that student behavior was a problem in their classrooms (Melnick & Meister, 2008).

In a nutshell, establishing and maintaining an environment focused on teaching and learning is more about preventing problems rather than solving problems after they occur and as such student behaviour needs to be examined in the context of classroom design, curriculum, and instructional strategies.

## What happens when beginning teachers don't receive support?

What happens when beginning teachers don't receive support in establishing and maintaining an environment focused on teaching and learning?

*Often, classroom management difficulties can prompt new teachers to jettison many of the research-based instructional practices they learned in college (such as cooperative learning and project-based learning) in favor of a steady diet of lectures and textbooks.*

(Hover & Yeager, 2004)

Such practices place very little focus on the environment for teaching and learning and are solely teacher-orientated, however they are often the practices inappropriately advocated and modelled by more experienced teachers.

Another consequence of inadequate or inappropriate support in establishing and maintaining an environment focused on teaching and learning is the ‘send to the office’ syndrome.

It is imperative to spend some time on this syndrome as it is often the only strategy that beginning teachers believe they have and is the result of a focus on student behaviour alone, rather than the set of interconnected variables that each contribute to the teaching and learning environment.

**Note:** While students whose behaviour is harmful or dangerous should be referred to the principal immediately and most schools have procedures for these circumstances the principal and school executive need to send clear messages to teachers and students alike that ‘sending to the office’ is a last resort and will be seen as a major issue requiring more serious consequences.

It is generally known by expert teachers that ‘sending to the office’ too often for things they should deal with themselves does not solve the problem of student behaviour in the classroom. Each ‘sending to the office’ for minor classroom problems sends a message to the students and the higher authority that the teacher is not able handle the situation.

Beginning teachers can feel unsupported when students are ‘sent to the office’ and nothing happens as a result. This can be avoided when beginning teachers are supported with strategies to avoid escalation of behaviours in the classroom which often result in the beginning teacher having no other options left and nowhere else to go other than ‘sending to the office’.

It is also important that when students are ‘sent to the office’, that it is not seen as a reward or a way of getting out of class. In all but extreme cases, the student should be returned to the class as soon as possible to continue with their learning.

To avoid this syndrome beginning teachers should seek help early on when the problems are easier to solve and the school also needs to be monitoring such classroom issues and stepping in early to provide adequate and appropriate support.

### How can the NSW Quality teaching model provide support?

How can the NSW Quality teaching model support creating and maintaining a classroom environment that is focused on teaching and learning?

The NSW model of pedagogy is comprised of three interrelated dimensions. These research-based dimensions represent classroom practices that have been proven to enhance student learning outcomes.

By understanding how all three quality teaching dimensions interconnect to create an environment where teaching and learning can take place will provide beginning teachers with a starting point to remove ‘the elephant in the (class)room’ and overcome the ‘send to the office’ syndrome.

The NSW Quality Teaching model can be used by teachers when planning learning sequences or lessons, when reflecting on learning sequences or lessons and by school personnel when providing constructive feedback following lesson observations.

### How can schools support beginning teachers in the classroom?

To support beginning teachers’ knowledge, understandings and practices in relation to the classroom schools can:

- ensure that all aspects of creating and maintaining a classroom focused on teaching and learning are covered during induction processes rather than just student behaviour
- ensure that all teachers understand and use the NSW quality teaching model of pedagogy
- ensure that teachers and students understand school expectations for classroom conduct
- consider student behaviour in the context of classroom design, curriculum, and instructional strategies
- encourage reflective practice that examines the classroom environment issues in relation the teacher and teaching rather than blaming students
- demonstrate and co-teach the establishment of classroom procedures and routines
- provide time to observe ‘expert’ classrooms in action
- observe lessons and provide feedback in relation to all aspects of the classroom environment.

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