

## **ESTABLISHING A POSITIVE CLASSROOM CLIMATE**

An integral part of engendering and maintaining a cooperative and caring atmosphere at Eaton Community College is creating a positive classroom environment. Establishing such an environment requires a dedicated plan – particularly in the early stages of working with students. The following is a guide to assist teachers.

### **Classroom Rules**

- Ensure that every student knows the classroom rules.
- Encourage student identification with the rules by involving students in the rule creation process and rationale behind each rule.
- Periodically remind students of the rules in an informal way.
- Teach students to behave in accordance with the rules.
- Manage transitions.

### **Adequate Preparation and Professional development**

- Be prepared. Make a prompt start to lessons.
- Consider variety, interests and motivation. Provide lessons suited to student needs and abilities.
- Avail yourself of opportunities around you to enhance your own professional development and that of others.

### **Build Positive Relationships**

- Give students the ‘time of day’ (smile, say hello) both inside and outside the classroom.
- Always be courteous and expect courtesy in return.
- Be genuine and caring.
- Recognise positive/acceptable behaviour where possible.
- Don’t spend an undue amount of time on misbehaving students – work with the well behaved students.
- Be firm, but fair.
- Be consistent.

### **Knowing Students**

- Learn the names of your students as soon as possible.
- Develop a rapport outside as well as inside the classroom.
- Be aware of what a specific student is capable of – this includes verbal and written ability as well as skills, eg: reading to the class.
- Be aware of student weaknesses and dislikes, eg: direct questions to a student who becomes anxious when receiving the focus of the whole class.
- Identify students who are at risk of behaving inappropriately – build a relationship with them.

### **Create a Cohesive Class Group**

- Encourage a cooperative ‘team’ effort.
- Endeavour to keep the environment ‘warm’. All students require a sense of belonging to the group as a whole.
- Involve your students, allow them to take on responsibility.

### **Communication/Effective Listening**

- Be a good listener.
- Be friendly and consistent.
- Listen carefully – twice as much as you talk.
- Give students your individual attention. Show interest in what they have to say.
- Tune into students' experiences.
- Share a little of yourself and your experience where appropriate.
- Be empathetic.

### **Acknowledgement and Encouragement**

- Point out to students that they are working for their own success, not the teachers.
- Continually explain why they will benefit from what they are learning.
- Make it deliberate practice to encourage students and acknowledge work behaviour both as individuals and as a group.
- Identify mistakes non-critically. Avoid embarrassing the student. Encourage students to learn from their mistakes by ensuring that your criticism is constructive.
- Try to make the first contact each lesson with the class a positive one.
- Acknowledge students' efforts across all learning areas.

### **Mutual respect**

- Treat students with respect and expect respect in return. This can be conveyed through one's tone of voice and speaking in context.