

# Information sheet:

## Essential elements of a successful whole-school approach to promoting positive behaviour and learning

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**Ka pai ki mua, ka pai ki muri ka pai ngā mea katoa.**

If all is good in the back, and if all is good in the front, then everything will be taken care of.

## Things to remember about whole-school approaches to promoting positive behaviour and learning

No quick fix exists. A whole-school approach to promoting positive behaviour and learning is a long-term process, usually three-to-five-years.

It's a team effort. You need 80% of buy-in from all school staff (including teaching and support staff, administration, cleaning, and maintenance staff) to be successful and to achieve consistency across your school.

Students need to be involved and have a say about how things work – school is their space, after all.

Family matters, too – involve parents, family, and whānau and you increase your chances of success.

The following have proved to be key to success. A description and tips follows each element of a successful whole-school approach to promoting positive behaviour and learning.

## Ensure there is strong support, participation, and leadership from the principal

Having strong support, participation, and leadership from the principal is vital. Leaders in high-performing schools establish a clear vision and goals for their school.

They work to establish consensus about those goals among staff. They model desired behaviours, and they set clear, consistent social expectations and a safe, supportive environment for staff and students.

Effective leaders also work collaboratively. They participate in professional learning with staff and promote collective responsibility for student achievement and wellbeing.

### Tips

If you are a principal:

- develop a high trust and collaborative learning culture, maintain standards, make a public statement of support
- establish a leadership team
- support the team members
- guide the decision-making process
- take a leadership role in problem-solving
- support team meetings
- recognise the team for their work
- serve as the point person for school-related group activities
- monitor implementation activities
- provide feedback, review data, ensure innovation is sustained
- recognise the time commitment required to sustain a long-term approach.

## Set up a data-based decision-making process

All decisions about positive, proactive whole-school initiatives are driven by data, and initiatives are monitored and evaluated regularly.

### Tips

- Review current school data management system and investigate other systems.
- Develop/review current Office Discipline Referral form (identify number of incidents per day per month, location, behaviour, student, time).
- Analyse your suspension/exclusion, attendance and lateness data.
- Collect and analyse data monthly.
- Report quarterly to staff.

## Identify a common purpose and approach to discipline

Be sure to identify a common purpose and approach to discipline.

Staff align school mission, goals, and behaviour goals.

Establish a leadership team that will lead the planning for systems, practices, and data, and use an action planning process to establish and maintain ongoing communication.

### Tips

- Establish a school-wide team.
- Review operational/strategic plan.
- Develop a statement of purpose – ask staff for words to describe their beliefs around behaviour and formulate these into a statement that is communicated and visible throughout the school.

## Set up good systems of communication

Develop a communications plan and share it with staff.

This could include systems for disseminating information, presenting data, and receiving feedback from staff, students, families, and community.

Consider setting up a staff notice board.

## Generate a clear set of positive expectations

Collaboratively develop a list of expected behaviours for students and staff. Use commonly occurring problem behaviours across school settings to generate a clear set of positive expectations.

Consult with staff and students, and use your data to identify important values. Keep open lines of communication.

Aim for three to five behavioural expectations that are positively stated, easy to remember, and significant to the climate.

"Brand" them and promote them by thinking about what is special about your school, what is your school spirit? Branding possibilities include using your school logo, school badge, traditions, and treasures.

At the end of the year, a researcher should be able to walk into the school and ask 10 random students to name the behavioural expectations, and 80% or more of the students should be able to tell the researcher what they are and to give examples of what they look like in action.

### Tips

- Identify how the expectations will look in all classroom and non-classroom settings (for example, respect in the classroom, on the bus, in the school café, in the playground, in walkways).
- Create visual reminders around the school.

## Procedures for teaching expected behaviours

All staff should know the procedures for teaching expected behaviours. They should demonstrate, explain, and practise social skills within and across multiple school settings.

### Tips

- Establish a team to develop teaching plans.
- Identify key student and staff routines.
- Identify when behaviour teaching will occur – place and day.
- Teach staff at staff meetings how to use the teaching plans.
- Provide training at staff meetings in teaching classroom and non-classroom routines and in encouragement techniques and language.

- Establish a common area for teaching resources.

## Establish a recognition system

Have a recognition system and go through the system with staff. Identify recognitions that are free and frequent (for example, stickers), intermittent (for example, monthly rewards), and long term (for example, celebrations). Decide the type of tangible items that will be used and how these will be disseminated. Combine tangible rewards with positive language from staff.

### Tips

- Compliance needs to receive more attention than non-compliance.
- Balance your praise of academic and social behaviours.
- Make sure the staff and students value the rewards and see them as worthwhile.

## Procedures for discouraging inappropriate behaviour

Develop and implement an array of procedures for responding to social behavioural learning errors, with a re-teaching focus.

As a staff, brainstorm behaviours of concern.

Define "minor" and "major" behaviours, and decide how staff will respond to minor and major behaviours.

### Tips

- Review and have in place an Office Discipline Referral form.
- Consider a system for supporting teachers to work through minor misbehaviours one-on-one with a student, to maintain the teacher-student relationship.
- Have a crisis management plan and display it in all classrooms.

## Monitoring and evaluating effectiveness of whole-school approaches

Develop procedures for monitoring and evaluating effectiveness of whole-school approaches. Use the information to assess the effectiveness of procedures.

### Tips

- Review monthly and annually – both positive and negative elements.
- Monitor teaching lessons.
- Monitor teaching effectiveness.

This information is based on New Zealand Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) School-Wide framework.

If you're interested in implementing this framework in your centre or school, contact your local Ministry of Education office .

You can find more information about PB4L School-Wide on the Programme and initiatives page of this website.