Learning from your teacher

Classroom teachers have had an opportunity to develop relationships with their students from the beginning of the year. You will learn a lot about how to effectively manage your classroom by observing your mentor teacher. Think about these points. They can also be used to promote discussion about your mentor teacher's approaches.

1. How does your mentor teacher walk the students into the classroom?

2. What are the routines as the students enter the room?

3. What are the seating arrangements? Are the seats self selected by the students or does the teacher nominate where they sit?

4. Are the classroom rules visible to the students?

5. How does your mentor teacher develop positive relationships with the students?

6. How does your mentor teacher gain the attention of the students?

7. How are materials distributed in the classroom?

8. In the course of one day, what different teaching strategies and approaches does your mentor teacher employ to cater to the varying needs of the students? Observe the various strategies employed for different teaching areas.

9. What does your teacher do when a student misbehaves?

10. Are there consequences for on-going poor behaviour? Ensure you are familiar with these consequences.

11. Is there a classroom behaviour management plan? Is there a whole school behaviour management plan?

12. Does your mentor teacher use rewards? If so, what and how are they used?

13. Observe how your mentor teacher:

Gives clear expectations

Provides clear, concise age appropriate instructions

Scans the class and waits for everyone to be listening

Acknowledges those doing the right thing (parallel acknowledgement)

Uses body language to encourage behaviour management

Comments on positive behaviour

Ignores or gives little attention to those not doing the wrong thing

Redirects inappropriate behaviour

Speaks respectfully to students providing choices for those who exhibit inappropriate behaviour

Follows through when behaviour is inappropriate

14. How is your mentor teacher firm, fair and consistent in managing the class?

15. Make note of anything else you notice about your mentor teacher's approach to managing the classroom.