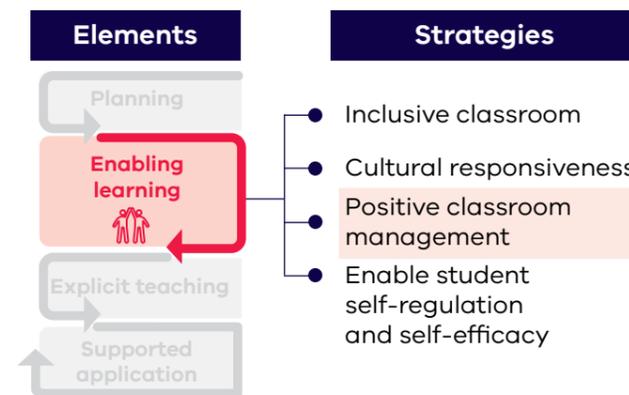# Positive Classroom Management Strategies

Positive Classroom Management Strategies (PCMS) focus on increasing learning time and engagement through eight evidence-based practices. These practices stem from the School-wide Positive Behaviour Support model, and are documented in the PCMS guides.

PCMS are effective when implemented consistently through a whole-school approach that establishes consistent expectations, clear rules and fair, logical and predictable consequences.

Elements

- Planning
- **Enabling learning**
- Explicit teaching
- Supported application

Strategies

- Inclusive classroom
- Cultural responsiveness
- Positive classroom management
- Enable student self-regulation and self-efficacy

Key links to other guides

- **Lead a whole-school curriculum approach**
- **Develop and deliver quality curriculum materials**
- **Explicit explanation and modelling**
- **Scaffold practice**

Links to departmental initiatives

- **Diverse Learners Hub**
- **School-wide Positive Behaviour Support**
- **Mental Health Menu**
- **Respectful Relationships**

References and further reading

- schools.vic.gov.au/pcms
- arc.educationapps.vic.gov.au/learning/resource/77780

Target audience: Teachers

Practices 1-4 — Increase instructional time

Classroom rules and expectations

When schools clearly define and teach consistent expectations and rules, students have a clear structure for behaviour.

Expectations set broad goals for behaviour, while rules describe the specific actions students should take to meet those goals.

HOW?

- Identify, explicitly teach and consistently apply classroom rules.
- Follow school protocols for positive reinforcement, corrective feedback and fair consequences.

For details, see PCMS guide 1

Classroom procedures and routines

Consistent routines reduce uncertainty, support transitions and create a predictable learning environment.

HOW?

- Identify regular whole school classroom procedures. E.g. entering the room, asking for help.
- List expected routine procedures.
- Teach directly and apply consistently.
- Provide practice and feedback.
- Provide visual reminders.

For details, see PCMS guide 2

Encouraging expected classroom behaviour

When teachers consistently use specific, positive feedback to acknowledge expected behaviour, students are more likely to repeat and strengthen those behaviours.

Effective feedback describes exactly what the student did well and links to whole-school expectations.

HOW?

- Teach expectations and routines explicitly.
- Use prompts and precorrection.
- Give frequent positive attention.
- Provide specific positive feedback.

For details, see PCMS guide 3

Discouraging inappropriate behaviour

When teachers respond to misbehaviour calmly and with whole-school procedures, students are more likely to re-engage and focus on learning.

Corrective feedback should be brief, directly linking behaviour to rules and expectations.

HOW?

Indirect responses:

- proximity
- signal/verbal cue
- ignore/attend/praise.

Direct responses:

- prompt, re-direct and re-teach.

Consequences:

- implement school processes
- predictable and logical.

For details, see PCMS guide 4

Practices 5-8 — Increase classroom engagement

Active supervision

Moving, scanning and interacting with students during learning boosts engagement, promotes positive behaviour and helps prevent minor issues from becoming bigger problems.

HOW?

- Position yourself to see all students during whole group, small group and individual instruction.
- Move frequently and unpredictably.
- Scan frequently.
- Interact frequently using verbal and non-verbal methods.

For details, see PCMS guide 5

Opportunities to respond

Planning and using a range of questions and activities that require students to respond support active participation and engagement.

Frequent responding promotes learning, increases time on task and reduces off-task behaviour.

HOW?

Plan frequent opportunities to respond during instruction:

- verbal, e.g. cold calling
- written, e.g. mini whiteboards
- non-verbal, e.g. hand signals
- involve individual students, groups and the whole class.

For details, see PCMS guide 6

Activity sequence and choice

When teachers sequence tasks strategically and offer some planned choices, students are more likely to stay engaged and persist with learning.

Thoughtful sequencing builds behavioural momentum and supports motivation.

HOW?

As part of planning, collaboratively develop a menu of acceptable choices such as:

- method of response
- tools and supplies
- working independently or with peers
- order of tasks
- location for working.

For details, see PCMS guide 7

Task difficulty

Adjusting task difficulty to match student learning needs maintains engagement and helps students access the learning. This may include modifying task length, work time, response mode or providing breaks, guided practice, additional support and extension.

HOW?

Develop a repertoire of task adjustments such as:

- task length or required work time
- offering periodic breaks
- mode of input or response
- opportunities for instruction or guided practice.

For details, see PCMS guide 8