Australian Education Research Organisation

Classroom management skill

Scanning your class

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Effective classroom management creates safe and supportive learning environments for all students. This practice resource is part of a suite of foundational resources for beginning teachers, teachers working in new environments, or experienced teachers who want to refine or refresh specific elements of their classroom management practice. They can be used to individually reflect on and refine one's own practice, or as shared resources to support mentoring and other collaborative and whole-school approaches to improving classroom management.
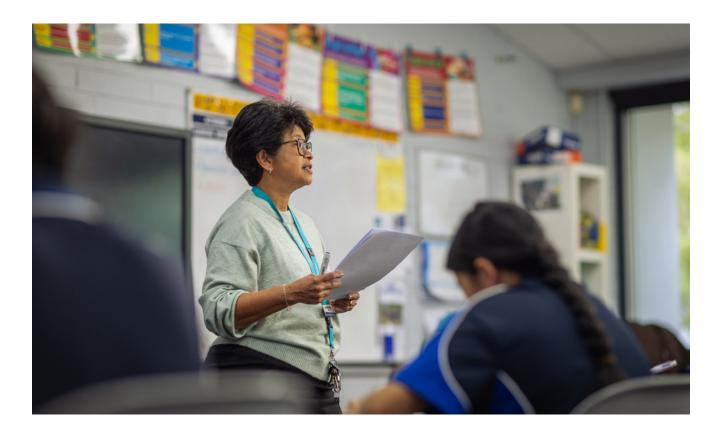
The Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO)'s guidance is based on a synthesis of the most rigorous and relevant research evidence and guidance on classroom management from a wide range of research experts and expert practitioners across Australia and internationally.

Scanning is a skill that supports and maintains positive student behaviour. Related practice resources to refine other skills focus on acknowledgement and praise, circulation, clear communication, deliberately pausing, non-verbal correction and voice control.

Scanning is the practice of consistently and intentionally monitoring all students. It allows you to gather information efficiently and regularly about students' behaviour and participation in learning.

The importance of scanning

Scanning is a proactive skill that can promote safety, increase student demonstration of expected behaviours, and prevent disengaged and disruptive behaviours. Effective scanning allows you to identify and acknowledge students meeting behaviour expectations, praise students exceeding behaviour expectations specific to them and respond to disengaged and disruptive behaviours. It can help you decide when it is time to revisit and reteach various aspects of your classroom culture.

Rehearsing scanning

It's important to rehearse scanning your classroom without students present. The elements for success in this section provide a clear picture of effectively implementing this skill. They also provide a focus for feedback and reflection to improve your use of this skill.

Further guidance on effective rehearsal can be accessed in the Classroom Management Resources: User Guide.

Elements for success

Position yourself in the classroom to see all students.

Use intentional and obvious head movements so students are aware that you are scanning the room.

Ensure all students and areas of the learning environment are monitored.

Rehearsing on your own

Visualise your class and where students would usually sit. Identify the positions in your classroom that will allow you to see every student.

Systematically and intentionally scan the learning environment, such as by scanning from left to right and from front to back.

Record your rehearsal and self-assess using the elements for success. Repeat the rehearsal until all elements for success have been demonstrated smoothly and with confidence.

Rehearsing with a colleague

Use the points from the Rehearsing on your own section to rehearse with a colleague, asking them to play the role of a student. Alternatively, review your recording with a colleague. Ask your colleague to provide feedback using the elements for success and identify:

- What went well?
- Which elements require refinement?

Rehearse again, incorporating feedback until all elements for success have been demonstrated smoothly and with confidence.

Practising scanning during a lesson

To practise when students are present:

- Scan the room regularly during activities and transitions.
- When talking to an individual student or group, position your body so you are still able to scan the whole classroom while avoiding having your back to the class (see Circulation).
- After giving an instruction, pause and scan to check that all students are meeting expectations. Acknowledge students meeting behaviour expectations and praise students exceeding behaviour expectations specific to them. Respond to behaviours that are not meeting expectations using a correction. For example, a look and gesture (for example, finger to lips to communicate 'silence').

Ask a colleague to observe 10 to 15 minutes of a lesson, using the elements for success to identify the effectiveness of your use of scanning and any areas for refinement.

Questions for reflection

- How often do you pause and scan the room to ensure all students are on-task?

- Is the act of scanning the room becoming habitual for you?

- What is scanning revealing to you about your students' participation and behaviour?

- Do you focus more on select students when scanning your classroom? Why?

- When you scan, are you looking for students demonstrating expected behaviours or only those demonstrating disengaged or disruptive behaviours?

- How is acknowledging students who are meeting expectations while scanning improving the classroom culture?

For more practical guidance

AERO has developed a suite of resources to support teachers and school leaders to refine or refresh their foundational practices in creating safe and supportive learning environments through effective classroom management. You can read the Classroom Management Resources: User Guide for an overview of these resources and suggestions for their use.

For more information visit **edresearch.edu.au**

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