Australian Education Research Organisation

## Whole-school approach to classroom management reflection

# Building positive connections with all students and families

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A whole-school approach to classroom management creates safe and supportive learning environments for all students by fostering shared understanding and practice. This practice resource is part of a suite of reflection resources that complement the Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO)'s foundational classroom management and professional learning resources.

This reflection resource is designed to help school leaders facilitate staff discussions reflecting on your whole-school approach to building positive connections with all students and families. It will help you identify strengths and opportunities for refinement. It can also be adapted to use with students, parents and primary caregivers.

## Preparation for staff reflection

- [ ] Read AERO's A Whole-School Approach to Classroom Management facilitation guide to learn more about our professional learning and reflection resources for leading a whole-school approach to classroom management.
- [ ] Consider using AERO's Evidence-Based Approaches for Effective Classroom Management professional learning resource first to build shared understanding of effective classroom management.
- [ ] Schedule the reflection session with staff and ask them to bring either a digital or printed copy of the Foundational Classroom Management Resources Handbook. Suggest that they read Chapter 5 beforehand.
- [ ] To strengthen the rationale for refining your whole-school approach to building positive connections with all students and families, identify how it aligns with your school's mission, vision, values and strategic goals and is informed by whole-school data (both qualitative and quantitative), including feedback from the school community. Share this alignment and data with staff before or at the beginning of the session.
- [ ] Decide if participants will complete the reflection tool digitally or on paper. If using paper, print enough copies for pairs or groups of 3 to record their reflections. You might also consider using survey software to create a digital version.

## Facilitation of staff reflection

- [ ] Clearly communicate the purpose of the session: to reflect on your whole-school approach to building positive connections with all students and families, identifying both strengths and opportunities for refinement.
- [ ] Share how building positive connections with all students and families supports your school's mission, vision, values and strategic goals and share relevant whole-school data that staff may not already have access to.
- [ ] Explain that staff will work in groups of 2 or 3, following the instructions on the reflection tool to reflect on your whole-school approach to building positive connections with all students.
  - Emphasise the importance of identifying strengths to celebrate and reinforce what's already working well, as well as opportunities for refinement.
  - Optionally, invite groups to share a summary of their reflections with the whole group at the end of the session.
- [ ] Give participants 25 minutes to follow the instructions on the reflection tool.

## After staff reflection

- [ ] After the session, collate and review participants' responses to identify:
  - strengths to be celebrated, reinforced and continued
  - priorities for refinement
  - proposed actions to refine your whole-school approach to building positive connections with all students and families, considering the advice in AERO's classroom management resources. AERO has also developed guidance for implementing evidence-based practices in schools, outlining a deliberate and structured approach to implementation based on key research ideas.
- [ ] Share a summary of your findings and next steps with staff shortly after the reflection session.
- [ ] Provide opportunities for staff to discuss, clarify and refine the proposed next steps.

# Reflection tool

## How we build positive connections with all students and families

**To build positive connections with all students and families, we:**

- Interact positively.
- Engage with families.
- Get to know our students.

Connecting with students requires consideration of students' diverse needs and involves several skills, including acknowledgement and praise, circulation, clear communication, non-verbal correction, scanning and voice control.

## Instructions

1. Read Chapter 5: Building positive connections with all students of AERO's Foundational Classroom Management Resources Handbook.
2. Use the chapter's checklist items to help answer the reflection questions, ensuring alignment with the evidence-based approaches.
3. Record your responses in the spaces provided.

# Reflections

## Identifying our strengths

What are we doing well to build positive connections with all students and families, including those requiring additional support?

How do we know?

Whose perspectives are we considering when reflecting on how we build positive connections with all students and families?

## Identifying our opportunities for refinement

Who else should we consult to gather input from all members of our school community to identify our strengths and opportunities for refinement?

What could we refine to strengthen our positive connections with all students and families, including those requiring additional support?

How do we know?

How might we do this?

What support might be needed?

What else should we consider?

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