

Behaviour for Learning - Establishing Clear Routines & Expectations



Presenter Script

"Welcome to our first Behaviour for Learning CPD Spark.

When we think about improving behaviour, it's easy to jump straight to consequences, sanctions or dealing with disruption.

However, the evidence tells us something quite different.

The most effective classrooms don't spend lots of time reacting to poor behaviour—they spend their time preventing it.

Today's session is all about one of the biggest preventative strategies we have as teachers: **clear routines and expectations.**

The aim isn't to create stricter classrooms.

It's to create calmer classrooms where pupils know exactly what is expected of them, feel secure and are therefore able to learn."

Slide 2 – Session Outcomes

"By the end of today's session you'll understand why routines are so important, identify the key routines in your own classroom, learn a simple five-step process for teaching routines effectively and leave with one practical action you can implement this week.

Notice that we're only asking you to improve one routine.

Behaviour improvement doesn't usually come from introducing lots of new systems.

It comes from doing the simple things consistently."

Slide 3 – Safeguarding Spark

"As always, we begin with our safeguarding reminder.

What are your responsibilities under Keeping Children Safe in Education if a pupil makes a disclosure?

Take thirty seconds to think before we reveal the answer."

Slide 4 – Safeguarding Answer

"The key principles remain the same every time.

Stay calm.

Listen carefully.

Never promise confidentiality.

Explain that you'll need to share the information with the Designated Safeguarding Lead because your priority is keeping them safe.

Record what you've seen or heard as soon as possible using the school's agreed systems and report immediately.

It's never our role to investigate or decide whether something is serious enough.

If you're concerned, report it.

Good safeguarding relies on everyone understanding their responsibilities."

Slide 5 – Introduction

"So why are we talking about routines today?

Nationally, schools continue to report increasing concerns around low-level disruption.

Not extreme behaviour.

The small interruptions that slowly chip away at learning.

The conversations as pupils enter.

The repeated requests for equipment.

Slow transitions.

Calling out.

Packing away early.

Individually they seem insignificant.

Together they can cost hours of learning over the course of a school year.

Today's session is about reclaiming that learning time.

The exciting part is that the solutions are often remarkably simple."

Slide 6 – What Does the Evidence Say?

"The Education Endowment Foundation's guidance is incredibly clear.

Strong behaviour starts with prevention rather than punishment.

The best classrooms don't rely on sanctions because expectations have already been taught so clearly.

Tom Bennett reached the same conclusion in his national review for the Department for Education.

Schools with the strongest behaviour cultures weren't necessarily the strictest.

They were simply the most consistent.

Pupils knew exactly what was expected wherever they went.

This consistency reduces anxiety.

Children don't have to constantly work out different expectations for different adults.

Instead, routines become automatic.

And when routines become automatic, teachers spend less time managing behaviour and more time teaching."

Slide 7 – What Do We Mean by Routines?

"When we talk about routines, we're really talking about predictable ways of working.

Not rules on a display.

Not statements in a behaviour policy.

Actual behaviours that everyone understands.

Think about the first two minutes of one of your lessons.

Do pupils know exactly what happens without needing to ask?

Do they know where to sit?

What equipment to get out?

What to do while you're taking the register?

How they gain your attention?

How they move between activities?

How they leave the room?

If those routines are crystal clear, they require very little thinking.

That frees pupils to focus on learning instead."

Slide 8 – High Expectations + Consistency = Security

"One of my favourite messages from today's session is this equation:

High expectations plus consistency equals security.

Sometimes high expectations are misunderstood.

They aren't about shouting louder.

Or being stricter.

They're about being clearer.

Children need to know exactly what success looks like.

'Be ready to learn' sounds reasonable.

But what does that actually mean?

Does it mean books open?

Equipment ready?

Eyes on the teacher?

Silent?

Feet under the table?

Expert teachers make these expectations visible.

They teach them explicitly.

This clarity is especially important for pupils with SEND, attention difficulties or executive functioning challenges.

Predictability reduces anxiety.

Children perform better when they know what's coming next."

Slide 9 – Teaching Routines Explicitly

"This is probably the biggest takeaway from today's session.

We don't simply have routines.

We teach them.

Think about how we'd teach long division.

We wouldn't mention it once and expect pupils to master it forever.

Yet sometimes that's exactly what we do with behaviour.

We tell pupils once at the start of September and expect perfect routines all year.

Instead, effective teachers follow a simple process.

Explain the routine.

Model exactly what it looks like.

Allow pupils to practise it.

Reinforce success immediately.

And reteach whenever standards begin to slip.

Notice that the final step is retraining.

Not blaming.

Not complaining.

Simply reteaching.

Because routines need maintenance just like academic learning."

Slide 10 – Example Entry Routine

"This example demonstrates how explicit routines can become.

Notice how specific the teacher script is.

There's no ambiguity.

Pupils know exactly what to do.

Enter quietly.

Go directly to your seat.

Books and equipment out.

Complete the Do Now in silence.

Even the correction script is calm and instructional.

Rather than saying,

'Stop talking!'

The teacher simply says,

'Let's try that again. Remember our entry routine.'

It's not emotional.

It's not personal.

It's simply returning pupils to the agreed expectation.

This helps corrections feel predictable rather than confrontational."

Slide 11 – Reflection Activity

"Now it's time to reflect on our own classrooms.

Every teacher has routines that work brilliantly.

And every teacher has routines that occasionally drift.

That's completely normal.

I'd like you to identify one routine you're particularly proud of.

What makes it successful?

Then identify one routine that feels less secure.

Perhaps transitions.

Perhaps equipment.

Perhaps ending lessons.

The aim isn't self-criticism.

It's identifying one area where a small adjustment could have a big impact."

(Allow discussion.)

Slide 12 – Next Steps

"So where do we go from here?

This week, choose just one routine.

Not five.

One.

Use the five-step process.

Explain.

Model.

Practise.

Reinforce.

Retrain.

Observe what changes.

Often improving one routine creates improvements elsewhere because pupils begin to understand the consistency you're aiming for.

Remember...

Behaviour improvement rarely comes from dramatic changes.

It comes from doing the basics exceptionally well."

Slide 13 – Optional Extension Activity

"If you have additional time during your staff meeting, the extension activity allows teams to translate today's ideas into whole-school practice.

Begin by identifying the three to five routines that matter most within your phase, department or key stage.

Think carefully about where the greatest amount of learning time is currently being lost.

Entry routines?

Transitions?

Questioning?

Independent work?

Choose one priority routine to improve together.

Keeping the focus narrow makes successful implementation far more likely."

Slide 14 – Designing the Routine

"Once you've identified your routine, work together to design it in detail.

Think about the pupil script.

What exactly should pupils do?

Then think about the teacher script.

Where does the adult stand?

What language will everyone use?

How will success be recognised?

How will corrections remain calm and consistent?

The more precise these routines become, the easier they are for both staff and pupils to follow consistently."

Slide 15 – Rehearsing the Routine

"The final activity is perhaps the most powerful.

Rehearse it.

Role-play the routine.

One person becomes the teacher.

Others become pupils.

Include common scenarios.

Someone arrives late.

Someone forgets equipment.

Someone continues talking.

Practise the exact language you'll use.

This might feel slightly awkward.

But rehearsal builds confidence.

If we expect pupils to practise routines, it's only fair that we practise them too."

Slide 16 – Further Reading

"Today's session draws heavily on guidance from the Education Endowment Foundation, the Department for Education and Tom Bennett's independent review.

Although each publication is different, they all reach remarkably similar conclusions.

Effective behaviour is built proactively.

Clear expectations.

Simple routines.

Consistency between adults.

And deliberate teaching of behaviour, just as we deliberately teach reading, writing or mathematics.

The evidence isn't asking us to do more.

It's asking us to do the important things consistently."

Closing Reflection

"I'll finish with one final thought.

The best behaviour systems are often invisible.

Visitors don't notice them because everything simply flows.

Children arrive knowing exactly what to do.

Transitions happen smoothly.

Learning starts quickly.



That doesn't happen by chance.

It happens because routines have been deliberately taught, consistently reinforced and patiently maintained.

As you leave today, I'd like you to ask yourself one question:

'If I watched my lesson back on video, which routine would I be most proud of—and which one deserves my attention next?'

Improving that one routine could reclaim minutes every lesson.

Over a year, those minutes become hours.

And those hours become better learning for every child."