TeamTeach

Behaviour Support

Creating calm environments for learning



Moving beyond behaviour management

Every school needs clear expectations, consistent boundaries and staff who feel confident responding to disruptive behaviour.

The Team Teach approach is practical and grounded in everyday school life, so the skills can be used straight away in classrooms, corridors and playgrounds. It also gives the whole staff team a shared language and a consistent way of supporting students.

Understanding what is driving behaviour helps staff respond earlier, make better-informed decisions and prevent situations from escalating.



Team Teach training equips staff with practical skills to:

- maintain clear boundaries and expectations
- reduce disruption to teaching and learning
- de-escalate difficult situations calmly and confidently
- support students to regain control of their emotions and behaviour

The strategies in this guide are designed to work alongside your school's existing behaviour policy, to strengthen consistency, staff confidence and safety across school.

What is de-escalation?

De-escalation means reducing tension and helping a student regain control, before a situation becomes more disruptive, confrontational or unsafe.

It does not mean ignoring inappropriate behaviour, lowering expectations or removing boundaries. It means responding in a way that helps calm the situation so that expectations can be reinforced and learning can resume.

De-escalation combines:

- clear, consistent expectations
- calm adult communication
- appropriate boundaries
- understanding and addressing what may be driving the behaviour
- practical support that helps the student regain control

De-escalation helps to:

- ✓ reduce disruption to teaching and learning
- ✓ create a calm, safe environment for both students and staff
- ✓ build trust between students and teachers
- ✓ teach students how to recognise and understand their emotions

Useful words

- **Behaviour management:** Systems and approaches used to set expectations, reduce disruption and respond consistently to behaviour.
- **Behaviour support:** Looking beyond the behaviour itself to understand what may be causing it and what support may help.
- **Co-regulation:** An adult using their calm presence, communication and actions to help a student regain control.
- **De-escalation:** Reducing tension or conflict so that a situation becomes calmer and safer.
- **Escalation:** The process through which emotions, behaviour or conflict become more intense.
- **Non-verbal cues:** Information communicated through body language, facial expressions, movement, gestures or tone of voice.

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Preventing escalation

Effective behaviour support begins before a difficult situation develops. Schools can reduce disruption by creating environments that are calm, predictable and easier for students to navigate.

Taking a proactive approach:

1. Maintain clear routines, expectations and boundaries so students understand what is expected and what will happen next.
2. Notice early changes in body language, facial expression, tone of voice, movement or engagement that may indicate rising anxiety or frustration.
3. Identify common pressures such as transitions, unexpected changes, difficult work, noise, crowding or conflict with peers.
4. Plan and share the strategies across staff teams that help individual students remain calm, engaged and ready to learn.
5. Use consistent language and responses across the whole staff team, to help reduce confusion and enable students to feel secure.

If a situation continues to escalate or there is an immediate risk of harm, staff may need to seek additional support or take other appropriate action in line with the school's policies and procedures.

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De-escalation strategies

The strategies below are practical starting points rather than a complete checklist. Always adapt your response to the individual student's needs, the situation and your school's policies and procedures.

Use co-regulation:
Remain calm and use your voice, body language and presence to help the student regain control. Speak slowly, keep your movements calm and give the student appropriate space. Co-regulation can sit alongside clear expectations and boundaries.

Reduce pressure:
Consider what may be increasing the student's distress, such as noise, heat, crowding, difficult work, changes to routine, conflict with peers, or an audience. Where possible, reduce unnecessary activity, create space, allow processing time or move to a quieter area.

Communicate clearly:
Use a calm, clear and respectful tone. Keep your language simple, and avoid giving lengthy instructions or asking several questions at once. Offer one manageable next step, such as: "We will work this out. First, let's move somewhere quieter."

Know what works for the student:
Different students need different support. One may need quiet and space, while another may benefit from movement, a familiar activity or time with a trusted adult. Record and share effective strategies so staff can respond consistently.



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Our own emotional state

As staff, we set the emotional tone during difficult situations. Before stepping in, take a moment to consider whether you are ready to respond with the calmness, clarity and authority the situation requires.

Ask yourself:

- Am I calm enough to respond rather than react?
- What emotions am I bringing to this situation?
- Is my tone of voice likely to reduce or increase tension?
- What is my body language communicating to the student?
- Do I need to pause for a moment to reset?
- Do I need support from a colleague before continuing?



Pause before responding and give yourself time and space to think.

Take a few slow, deep breaths to reduce tension and regain focus.

Relax your posture and facial expression, and lower your tone of voice.

Model calmness, patience and respect through your own response.

Step back briefly if you feel frustrated or emotionally charged.

Ask a colleague for support or swap roles if you are struggling to remain calm.

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We're here to help

Team Teach is at the forefront of behaviour support training. We focus on understanding individual needs, building strong relationships, and creating inclusive school cultures, to reduce disruption and give every child the best learning experience.

Get in touch to find out how we can support you:

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