

## Classroom management observation tool

# Building positive connections with all students

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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 [observation tools](#) that complement the Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO)'s [foundational classroom management resources](#). These observation tools are designed for experienced teachers and school leaders to use with AERO's practice guide, [Supporting a Colleague with Refining their Classroom Management Practice](#).

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With your colleague, you can use this tool to identify specific aspects of the practice they demonstrate, take notes on what you observe and use these to help identify strengths and areas for refinement.

## Before the observation

It's important you take the time to prepare well before an observation. This is essential to clarify objectives and gather relevant, accurate and useful information to support your colleague in identifying strengths and refining their practice. Preparation will also help you become familiar with this tool's format and content so it's easier to use during the observation.

### Before using this tool:

Read AERO's practice guide, [Supporting a Colleague with Refining their Classroom Management Practice](#).

Follow step 1 – Build and maintain a collaborative relationship.

Follow step 2 – Decide on a specific practice or skill to observe and prepare for the observation.

### Before observing:

Read AERO's [Building Positive Connections with all Students](#) practice guide to familiarise yourself with the steps.

Read the information in this observation tool.

Discuss with your colleague what will be observed, how long the observation will be and how evidence will be collected.

## During the observation

Observe your colleague and tick the boxes for any actions observed. To support the feedback discussion, objectively record what your colleague says and does at key moments, as well as how students respond.

### The teacher interacts positively with all students

The teacher:	Observation notes
<p>interacts with students with a calm tone, respect and politeness – for example, greeting students on first encounter, completing instructions with ‘Thank you’ and saying goodbye to students when they <u>exit the classroom</u></p>	
<p>frequently <u>acknowledges students</u> meeting behaviour expectations and <u>praises students</u> exceeding behaviour expectations specific to them</p>	
<p>uses positive non-verbal communication, such as turning to face students when they’re speaking, smiling and maintaining an encouraging facial expression and positive body language</p>	
<p>positively frames communication, stating, when possible, what students need to do rather than what they shouldn’t (that is, avoiding using words like ‘no’ and ‘don’t’)</p>	
<p>uses students’ preferred names</p>	
<p>acknowledges and responds to <u>students gaining teacher attention</u> in a manner that meets expectations to seek assistance, ask a question or share information</p>	
<p>when <u>responding to disengaged and disruptive behaviours</u>, provides students with the opportunity to change their behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses <u>clear communication</u></li> <li>uses a calm, non-threatening tone</li> <li>starts with less intrusive responses – for example, <u>non-verbal corrections</u>, such as a finger to the lips, combined with a look</li> <li><u>acknowledges</u> students when they correct their behaviour.</li> </ul>	

## The teacher gets to know their students

The occurrence of these actions will vary depending on the time of day and what is being observed, so you may not see them during the observation. If you do, it will be helpful to tick the box and record what your colleague says and does, as well as how students respond, so the information can be included in the feedback conversation.

The teacher:	Observation notes
<p>provides opportunities for students to identify challenges they may face and inform the teacher of how they can be successful</p>	
<p>creates opportunities for students to 'check-in' at the beginning of a lesson or day to provide additional encouragement or support</p>	
<p>regularly speaks to students individually and reinforces that they're interested in them, value them being a part of the class and appreciate their efforts and contributions</p>	
<p>shows interest in students' extracurricular activities</p>	
<p>shares a little about themselves when appropriate.</p>	

## After the observation

Follow step 3 – Conduct a feedback session in our practice guide, [Supporting a Colleague with Refining their Classroom Management Practice](#).

**Before the feedback session**, you may want to document:

What did they complete well? What aspects can you praise? What have they refined since your previous feedback session (if relevant)?

**Before or during the feedback session**, you may want to document:

What is their next priority to focus on? Is it an element of this practice or a practice step or skill within it? Within the element of this practice, practice step or skill, what specifically needs refinement? What evidence is there to support this?

**During the feedback session:**

Model for your colleague then support them to plan and rehearse the element of the practice, practice step or skill they will focus on refining. You may want to document:

When will they next use the refined skill or practice?

What key elements of the refined skill or practice will they make sure they include?

How will they know if they've been successful in refining their practice?

When is a suitable time to re-observe the refined skill or practice?