

Friday July 11, 2008

Dear Parent / Guardian,

My name is Scott Towaij and I am a grade 2 teacher here at *In Your Dream Elementary School*. I would like to formally welcome you and your son/daughter (insert name) to our school and express how delighted I am to have this opportunity to connect with you prior to the commencement of the school year! I have included my email address should you wish to contact now or in the future and am a strong proponent of clear and open communication. I wanted to take this opportunity to share with you some of my teaching philosophy and specific classroom management approaches as I believe that it is the teacher's responsibility to set the tone of mutual respect on the first of school.

I believe that it is important for students to have ownership in their learning process and that if they are included in classroom management they will be more likely to respond in a positive way. As we a community of learners, you as parents are key to the success of your son/daughter (insert name). I will have a classroom meeting with the students on the first day and will start by asking them how they wish to be treated by me, how they expect to be treated by others etc. and we will brainstorm this together. Once they are done I will give them my expectations and then a simple chart will be posted for all to see and refer to as needed.

My expectations are very simple, mutual respect, participation, raising your hand when you have a question, not interrupting other when they are speaking and being kind and helpful. Noise levels will reflect the activity or lesson at any given movement. I have included a table that lists and explains classroom management strategies that I have used successfully in the past. These will be taught to students and I anticipate a positive response.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely your partner in education,



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classroom management strategies

STRATEGY TOOL	PURPOSE	PROCEDURE & DESCRIPTION
1. HANDS ON TOP	Classroom Management – Quieting a classroom or group of students when they are talking or being disruptive	Teacher: says “hands on top” and then places his/her hands on their head. Students: <i>immediately stop what they are doing and respond by placing their hands on their heads and saying “that means stop”</i> Teacher: now that class is calm, gives students instructions of feedback
2. ATTENTION SALUTE	Classroom Management – Quieting a classroom or group of students when they are talking or being disruptive	Teacher: says “attention” while saluting Students: <i>immediately stop what they are doing and respond by saluting and whispering “attention”</i> Teacher: now that class is calm, gives students instructions of feedback
3. HAND IN THE AIR	School Assembly Management – Quieting students during an assembly when they are talking or being disruptive, usually before assembly formally starts	Teacher: says nothing and puts a hand high in the air waiting until students stop talking Students: <i>immediately stop what they are doing and respond by raising their hand and remaining quiet</i> Teacher: now that students are quiet gives students instructions of feedback. Usually teacher will explain the procedure again and challenge students to see how fast they can raise their hands.
4. COUNTDOWN 5,4,3,2,1 THUMBS UP	Classroom Management – Quieting a classroom or group of students when they are talking or being disruptive	Teacher: raises one hand and starts counting down from 5 to 1 using words and their hand ending with a “thumbs up.” Students: <i>immediately stop what they are doing and respond by counting down and giving a “thumbs up” while remaining quiet</i> Teacher: now that class is calm, gives students instructions of feedback

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5. IF YOU CAN HEAR ME...	Classroom Management – Quieting a classroom or group of students when they are talking or being disruptive	<p><u>Teacher:</u> says in a whisper “if you can hear me touch your nose” and then touches their nose</p> <p><u>Students:</u> <i>immediately stop what they are doing and respond by touching their nose</i></p> <p><u>Teacher:</u> now that class is calm, gives students instructions of feedback</p>
6. CLASSROOM MEETING	Classroom Management – Long term response and preventative measures	<p>As is done in a business setting, teacher will hold a monthly meeting to discuss issues with students.</p> <p><u>Why have class meetings?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To get kids involved in constructive decision-making in their classrooms and schools. ➤ To build a climate of trust and respect between teacher and students, as well as among students. ➤ To help build self-esteem by getting kids involved in decisions that impact their world in important ways. <p><u>Rationale</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students often develop a better sense of responsibility when given a chance to make meaningful contributions to the world around them. ➤ When children believe they are contributing to the school environment in a significant way, they feel a more positive attachment to school and are more motivated to learn. ➤ Students who are allowed to problem solve and make some of their own decisions are likely to buy in to the solutions. <p><u>Benefits</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Just as families can use family meetings as times to connect and reflect on their goals and/or problems as a family, class meetings can achieve similar results. ➤ Class meetings provide children with opportunities for assuming responsibilities. ➤ Class meetings may help children to take ownership for their actions by involving them in the process of understanding and questioning rules, guidelines, limits, and consequences. ➤ Children are able to reason/reflect on their actions, think about the consequences of their behavior, and comprehend the impact they have on others. ➤ Class meetings can help students learn to associate their successes with their own efforts and abilities, thus boosting self-esteem. ➤ When children feel they are making an important contribution

to the world, their motivation and sense of control in their lives can greatly increase.

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7. SECRET AGENTS	Classroom Management – Quietening a classroom or group of students before leaving the classroom to walk to another part of the school	<p>Teacher: explains to children that they are about to walk through the school halls as be as quiet as secret agents</p> <p>Students: <i>walk through hallway quietly pretending to be secret agents</i></p> <p>Teacher: Gives students praise once their reach final destination i.e. gymnasium</p>
8. RHYTHM CLAP RESPONSE	Classroom Management – Quietening a classroom or group of students when they are talking or being disruptive	<p>Teacher: claps a specific rhythm</p> <p>Students: <i>immediately stop what they are doing and respond by clapping the identical rhythm.</i></p> <p>Teacher: now that class is calm, gives students instructions of feedback</p>
9. CATCH THEM BEING GOOD	Classroom Management – Long term response and preventative measures	Instead of focusing on what kids do wrong, catch them being good. Negative attention is still attention and kids know that. Ignore negative behaviours, the technique is called extinguishing and instead praise positive behaviour and look for it especially when it comes to your challenging students.
10. CERTIFICATES	Character Building – Long term response and strategies to encourage positive behaviour	Issue Student of the week certificates and No Homework Coupon . The student of the week certificate works like the employee of the week and is given for excellent behaviour for a week for use the following week. This student gets special privileges for one week including one No homework coupon to redeem once.
11. DRESSING FOR SUCCESS	Classroom Management – Setting a positive tone and modelling appropriate presentation and	As a teacher it is important to dress extremely professionally to set a professional tone in the classroom. Children of all ages respond to teachers who are dressed well and communicate that they are professionals who value their jobs. A teacher who dresses in a sloppy manner sets themselves up for being

	self respect	challenged.
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12. TRUE BLUE FRIEND	Character Building – Long term response and strategies to encourage positive behaviour and respect to other students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have one green index card for each child in each pocket. There's a gold seal on one end and a blue happy face sticker on the other. Everyone starts off with the gold end showing to "treat others the way they'd like to be treated i.e. the Golden rule" When another student or the teacher catches someone doing something nice for the class or another student, they go and flip that student's card to the blue happy face end for "being a true blue friend." ➤ One student each week gets to read out the names of those true blue students at the end of each day and return all cards to gold. ➤ If the teacher has to speak to a student more than twice, they are asked to flip their card to the total green side. Then he/she must write a letter home to his/her parents and have it signed that night.
13. KINDNESS BOX	Character Building – Long term response and strategies to encourage positive behaviour and respect to other students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Children write down a student's name and a short description of the good deed that the student performed on a slip of paper and sign it. ➤ Each Friday the teacher will pull five of these slips from the box and those five wear a medal all day. ➤ You can purchase a pack of five Olympic type medals in the party section of WALMART for this. ➤ All medals get returned the end of Friday until the next week when the process starts again.
14. LINING UP	Classroom Management – students line up outside before entering the class	Teacher has a whistle and stands by designated entrance to the school for his/her class. The teacher will blow the whistle with 3 short and quick blasts and students know this is their cue to line up quickly.