

# WHAT WORKED FOR ME

## EXPERIENCES FROM A SECOND YEAR TEACHER

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Now that you have gotten into the swing of things, it's important to have an understanding about your role in the education system and pretty much, why we do what we do!

In the [Victorian Teaching and Learning Model](#), Practice Principle Number 1 'High expectations for every student to promote intellectual engagement and self-awareness', is a great focus for you at the beginning of the year. In order to create a positive climate in your learning space, I can't emphasise enough how important it is to set up and create high expectations for yourself and your students both behaviourally and academically.

While completing a degree at university, we were able to observe numerous different learning spaces, which all contribute to our personal teaching philosophy. This was something I made sure to keep in the forefront of my mind at all times and used when setting up the expectations with my students and myself in my own classroom.

I often thought about things such as:

- what kind of student do I want to cultivate?
- what do I want to achieve as a teacher?
- how will my expectations align with the school culture and values?

I have a few tips to get you started.

1. Develop a healthy, professional and reciprocal relationship built on respect with the students. Be friendly, be funny, be relatable but make your role very clear! Trust me, when students start to think you're their friend this makes it very hard to establish expectations. You are the teacher and you are there to support and enhance the students' learning journey.
2. Create class expectations. Do the students need to put their hand up to talk? How and where do they sit during teaching? What voice will they use during tasks? It may seem like these are obvious, however, students need to be fully aware and are able to regulate themselves within the context you are in.
3. Don't focus on the negatives! Promote an environment where students want to achieve. Know the recognition systems that your school endorses?
4. What will be the expectations for social and emotional wellbeing? How can you address the emotional needs of the students? In Grade 1 we do 'Circle Time' after lunch, where students discuss the Zones of Regulation and students identify what Zone they are in. This allows me to monitor and follow up any significant issues, as well as creating a safe space for students to share their emotions.

Lastly, think about yourself, for once - I know!. Create some mini-goals for yourself for the beginning of the year and write them down. Believe it or not, research has shown that people are more likely to achieve their goals if they write them down. In my setting this can be as simple as high fiving each student before going outside or creating visual reminders of the expectations in the learning space. Whatever you do, make sure you maintain consistency and keep your expectations high.