

# Managing Challenging Behaviour

## **Understand the student**

- Get to know the student and identify potentially difficult times or situations that may be stressful or difficult for them.
- Identify the student's personal signs of stress or unhappiness and intervene early.
- Monitor wider classroom/playground behaviour carefully for potential areas of conflict.

## **Respect the student**

- Demonstrate a supportive approach: "I'm here to help."
- Be flexible in your responses: adapt what you're doing to the demands of the situation.
- Be reasonable: a reasonable action, request or expectation deserves a reasonable response.
- Promote and accept compromise or negotiated solutions, while maintaining your authority.
- Take the student seriously and address issues quickly.

## **Preserve the student's dignity**

- Address private or sensitive issues in private.
- Avoid the use of inappropriate humour such as sarcasm or mocking.

## **De-escalation techniques**

### Safety first – create space and time

- Remove the audience – ask other students to take their work and move away.
- Give the student physical space.
- Name the emotion in a calm even voice: "You look really angry", "I can see that you are very frustrated"...
- Wait.

### **Communicate calmly**

- Talk quietly, even when the person is loud.
- Try to remain calm and respectful.
- Monitor your own body language and allow the student the opportunity to move out of the situation with dignity.
- Focus on communicating respect and your desire to help.
- Keep verbal interactions respectful.
- When appropriate, give the student clear choices and/or directions to help them feel more secure and regain control.

### **Think ahead in case the situation escalates**

- If escalation occurs, move further away.
- Make sure you have an exit plan.
- Constantly reassess the situation.
- Send for help if necessary.

### **What may escalate the behaviour**

- Threatening the student.
- Arguing or interrupting.
- Contradicting what the student says – even if they are wrong.
- Challenging the student.
- Trying to shame the student or showing your disrespect for the student.