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EIN058 Professional Practice and Ethics In Teaching

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UNIT 1

THE FOUNDATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE
❖ **Nature, Characteristics and Functions of a Profession**

Part of developing competency in working with young children is learning about and conforming to accepted professional standards of conduct. Your personal behaviour in relationship to the teaching profession must be ethical. Many daily decisions required of those who work with young children to be of a high moral and ethical behaviour.

Every professional needs to be **efficient** and **effective**. Classroom professionals also need **special training** to help them guide the learners that are placed in their care efficiently. classroom professional training aims at equipping learners with the professional skills and competencies that will enable them to identify, strategize and assist children confronted with developmental challenges.

This unit presents the Nature, Characteristics and functions of a Profession, Professionalism in Teaching and the Nature and importance of ethics as well as Ethical Conflicts in Teaching.

Nature of a Profession
A profession is any type of work that needs special training or a particular skill, often one that is respected because it involves a high level of education. A profession is generally defined as *one's life-long occupation* in which one has been specially trained and could called an expert because of the specialized skills acquired. Jobs that need special training and skill, such as being a teacher, doctor, or lawyer, *but not* work in business or industry.

> A profession is something a little more than a job, it is a career for someone that wants to be part of society, who becomes competent in their chosen sector through training; maintains their skills through continuing professional development (CPD); and commits to behaving ethically, to protect the interests of the public.

A profession is an occupation characterized by *skilled intellectual technique, voluntary association, and a code of ethics*. Antwi (1992) suggests that *a profession is an occupation that requires an advanced education and special training in its relevant discipline*. For example, teaching, law, architecture, medicine, pharmacy, and so on.

Furthermore, by its nature, a profession is highly recognised by the society in which it is practiced, and as such backed by a legal system. There are

laws protecting and guiding professions, as well as requiring those in the profession to follow certain ethics (principles).

Characteristics of a Profession

The following some of the general characteristics of a *profession*:

- **Long Period of Preparation**
  The core characteristics of professions are the prolonged specialized training in a body of knowledge. A profession requires a fairly long period of preparation and specialized training. During this period the learner acquires specialized body of knowledge and skills needed for that profession. As a profession, it goes without saying that the members must have a culture of never-ending zeal to be upgraded to meet the challenges and progress of the ever-changing world.

- **Registration of Entry/Official Application for Members**
  Membership of a professional body is not automatic; it is usually restricted to only persons who have expertise in the area. Aspirants must fulfill certain specified conditions of training, discipline, and service and/or experiences before they can be included in the group. In addition, there is official application, processing of the admission, registry, before formal acceptance and/or induction. For example, College of Education examinations are conducted and those who pass are accepted into the profession, if not, that person is regarded as a learner teacher. Professional practice is often legally recognised by some form of licensure.

- **Availability of Code of Ethics**
  A profession has a code of ethics that serve as a point of reference for discipline among members of their clients. The essence of a code of ethics is to guarantee responsibility on the part of the profession to its clients. The code of ethics prescribes proper professional conduct for members of the profession.

- **Members have Specialized Body of Knowledge**
  All professionals acquire education to the highest level to attain the requisite skills and ideas in their work to help them deliver very well. For instance, professionals take long years to complete their education. Lawyers after four years of first degree attend two years in addition to qualify as lawyers. Doctors spend seven years as well as pharmacists.

- **Measure of Autonomy and Freedom for Members**
  Every profession enjoys some measure of autonomy and freedom. Members are free to practice the profession by operating within the specified code of ethics. The practitioner is free of uninitiated assessment and control. For example, the freedom to teach, choose the methodology which suits learners as well as appropriate Teaching Learning Materials (TLMs) and other strategies.

- **Legal Backing Status to Safeguard Members**
  Every profession has a strong, active, and comprehensive self-governing organization which links all the members together and safeguards their interest. For instance, any professional association registered at the labour department has the right to demonstrate against unjust treatment from the government for ten days. This organization also regulates the activities of members in relation to their clients. (i.e., it has a legal backing and status). However, most regulations concerned with the profession is shaped by that profession.

- **Clear Statement of Conditions of Service**
  A profession which is an organized body seeks to improve the conditions of service of its members. The Ghana Education Service Council as well as other professional bodies has a booklet in circulation that provides the basic needs of the profession. For example, the booklet contains guideline on promotions, salaries, allowances, study leave and many others (*i.e., it seeks to improve the professional status of the members*).

- **Welfare of Clients or Customers**
  In every profession, there is a great regard for the interest and welfare of clients or customers.

- **Professional Association**
  A profession may also have an association to which members join. These associations are organized bodies which link their interest, regulate their activities with members and non-members, e.g., in the teaching profession, we have CETAG, UTAG, GNAT and NAGRAT.

- **Offer of Skilled Service for Fees**
  Professionals usually charge fees for the services they render to the public and it is protected by legal systems. For example, lawyers are paid for defending citizens, yet they charge those who come to employ them to defend them at the court, likewise teachers, doctors, pharmacists, architects, and others.

The Nature of Teaching

In its broadest sense, ***teaching is a process that facilitates learning.*** Teaching is the specialised application of knowledge, skills and attributes designed to provide exceptional service to meet the educational needs of the individual and of society.

- The choice of learning activities whereby the goals of education are realised in the school is the responsibility of the teaching profession.
- In addition to providing learners with learning opportunities to meet curriculum outcomes, teaching emphasises the development of values and guides learners in their social relationships.
- Teachers employ practices that develop positive *self-regulation* in learners. Although the work of teachers typically takes place in a classroom setting, the direct interaction between teacher and learner is the single most important element in teaching.

Teaching as a Profession

The continued professionalisation of teaching is a long-standing goal of the Ministry of Education and the teacher Unions and other non-governmental organizations. The National Teaching Council (NTC) continues to work with other stakeholders in education to advance teaching as a profession.

Teacher professionalism is a complex and indefinable concept; it is *dynamic* and *fluid*.

Six generally accepted criteria are used to define teaching as a profession. The teaching profession in Ghana fulfills those criteria in the following ways:

1. Its members have *an organised body of knowledge* that separates the group from all others. Teachers are equipped with such a body of knowledge, having an extensive background in the world and its culture and a set of teaching methods experientially derived through continuous research in all parts of the world.

2. It serves *a great social purpose*. Teachers carry responsibilities weighted with social purpose. Through a rigid and self-imposed adherence to the Code of Professional Conduct, which sets out their duties and responsibilities, teachers pass on their accumulated culture and assist each learner under their care in achieving self-realization.

3. There is cooperation achieved through *a professional organization*. Cooperation plays an important role in the development of the teaching profession because it bands its members together to achieve commonly desired purposes. The teaching profession has won its well-deserved place in the social order through continuous cooperation in research, professional preparation, and strict adherence to the Code of Professional Conduct, which requires every teacher to treat each learner within a *sacred trust*. Teachers have control or influence over their own governance, socialization into teaching and research connected with their profession.

4. There is *a formal period of preparation* and a requirement for continuous growth and development. Teachers are required to complete a defined teacher preparation program followed by a period of induction or internship prior to being granted permanent certification. This period includes support for the formative growth of teachers and judgments about their competence. Teachers are devoted to continuous development of their ability to deliver their service.

5. There is *a degree of autonomy* accorded the professional. Teachers have opportunities to make decisions about important aspects of their work. Teachers apply reasoned judgment and professional decision making daily in diagnosing educational needs, prescribing, and implementing instructional programs, and evaluating the

progress of learners. Teacher judgment unleashes learning and creates the basis for experience.

6. The profession *has control or influence over education standards, admissions, licensing, professional development, ethical and performance standards, and professional discipline*. As professionals, teachers are governed in their professional relationships with other members, school boards, learners, and the public by rules of conduct set out in the Association's Code of Professional Conduct. The code stipulates minimum standards of professional conduct for teachers, but it is not an exhaustive list of such standards.

    Unless exempted by legislation, any member of the Association who is alleged to have violated the standards of the profession, including the provisions of the code, may be subject to a charge of unprofessional conduct under the Discipline Bylaws of the Association. The competence of teachers is governed by the Practice Review Bylaws of the Association. The expectations for the professional practice of teachers related to interim and permanent certification are found in the National Teachers' Standards, which defines the knowledge, skills, and attributes all teachers are expected to demonstrate as they complete their professional preparation, enter the profession and progress through their careers.

Teachers as Professionals

What makes teachers professionals?

The certificated teacher is the essential element in the delivery of instruction to learners, regardless of the mode of instruction. A teacher has professional knowledge and skills gained through formal preparation and experience.

Teachers provide personal, caring service to learners by diagnosing their needs and by planning, selecting, and using methods and evaluation procedures designed to promote learning.

The processes of teaching include:
- understanding and adhering to legal and legislated frameworks and policies
- identifying and responding to learner learning needs
- providing effective and responsive instruction; assessing and communicating learner learning; developing and maintaining a safe, respectful environment conducive to learner learning
- establishing and maintaining professional relationships, and
- engaging in reflective professional practice.

These processes must be *free of discriminatory* practices and should contribute to the holistic development of learners who are actively engaged, responsible and contributing members of a democratic society.

The educational interests of learners are best served by teachers who practice under conditions that enable them to exercise professional judgment. Note that teachers have a right to participate in all decisions that affect them or their work and have a corresponding responsibility to provide informed leadership in matters related to their professional practice.

❖ **National Teachers' Standards in Brief**

The National Teachers' Standards represents the first ever collectively agreed standards to guide teacher preparation and practice in the country. The Standards have been developed as a professional tool to guide teacher educators, teachers, learner teachers and other stakeholders in education to identify in clear and precise terms what teachers are expected to know and be able to do, qualities they are expected to possess and some behaviour they are supposed to exhibit. The Standards set a clear baseline of expectations for the professional knowledge, practice, conduct, attitude, rights, and obligations expected of teachers working in schools at the pre-tertiary level. All teachers completing their initial teacher training will be assessed against the National Teachers' Standards.

The Standards

Teachers play such a critical role in inspiring and challenging learners to achieve their potential that their preparation and subsequent development require the highest possible standards in knowledge, conduct and practice in their workplace. *These Standards are concise written statements of what teachers are expected to know and be able to do*.

- The National Teachers' Standards set out the minimum levels of practice that all trained teachers must reach by the end of their pre-service teacher education course to play such a critical role.

- These Standards also inform teachers' development while in their first year as Beginning Teachers on their induction course in schools prior to licensing as professional teachers by the National Teaching Council (NTC) and provide the framework for future professional and career development for all teachers.

- The Standards should be seen as one common core set of standards that apply to all teachers at all levels. The exemplar that accompanies the Standards at the end of the guidelines give specific exemplars of the Standards in action at the kindergarten, primary, junior high school, and senior high school levels to give further support for those using them. The indicators provide evidence of attainment of the Standards.

The Legal Status of the Teachers' Standards

The 2008 Education Act (Act 778) established the National Teaching Council, and it is responsible for establishing frameworks around teachers'

employment, continuous professional development (CPD) and periodic review of professional practice and ethical standards. The NTC has overall responsibility to license teachers by law. These Standards define the minimum levels of practice expected of learner teachers and teachers to be licensed. It must be noted that during the training and the period of induction, the Standards continue to define the level of practice at which all qualified teachers are expected to perform.

The Philosophy that underpins the Standards

The main aim of Teacher education in is to prepare teachers who are well-equipped with professional skills, attitudes, and values as well as the spirit of inquiry, innovation and creativity that will enable them to adapt to changing conditions, use inclusive strategies and engage in lifelong learning. The teachers are required to have a passion for teaching and leadership, engage with members not only in the school community but also in the wider community and act as agents of change.

Over the years Ghana has reformed and restructured its teacher education system in response to demands of new vision and mission for education to meet the demands of a knowledge society in which the teacher is an agent of change. What has been missing in this entire process is a set of professional standards for teachers that provide a strong definition of and a key reference point for the work of teachers towards achieving the learning and social outcomes articulated in Act 1023.

The Standards are, therefore, designed to **codify** what a *'good teacher' looks like* for Ghana, recognizing the urgent need to improve the quality of the school experience and learning outcomes for all learners and to raise the status of teachers in their communities and country. The Standards are aspirational in their vision, positively embracing the promises and challenges of the 21st century for Ghana. More importantly, they support Ghana in meeting Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all'. In contributing towards this goal, the Standards are also realistic and relatively few to be achievable and user-friendly.

The development of the Standards was also informed by a review of international teaching standards whereby what is deemed most important is that *teachers apply their content knowledge in the classroom, thereby demonstrating sound pedagogical content knowledge*. Correspondingly, the practicum within teacher education programmes can take up to 25 to 30 percent of the course credit weighting.

Taking both the existing Ghanaian standards, aims for teacher education, context, and the international standards into account, these new *Standards*

for Ghana *emphasize the applied practical work of a teacher as a valued professional in a community of practice and envisage a warm and friendly teacher who:*

1. has secure curricular, subject, and pedagogical content knowledge.
2. plans for and uses different interactive instructional strategies and resources and so engages their learners.
3. achieves higher learning outcomes for all, particularly learners who are more vulnerable, those with disabilities, girls and those who need cognitive challenge,
4. uses assessment productively in achieving those outcomes, and
5. can play leading roles in the development of his/her community.

Uses of the Standards

The Standards apply to:

- Learner Teachers on pre-service teacher training courses working towards meeting the Standards by the end of their course.
- All beginning teachers in their Induction Year in schools.
- All in-service teachers in schools, who are covered by the 2016 new NTC frameworks for career progression and promotion. The Standards serve as a point of reference for all standards and competencies.
- The National Teaching Council (NTC) will use the Teachers' Standards in assessing cases of any misconduct by any member of the teaching profession.
- The National Teaching Council (NTC) for the licensing of teachers after induction.
- District education directors, circuit supervisors, teacher unions, head teachers and mentors in schools will also need to use the Teachers' Standards as a guide to inform their work – serve as a common point of reference.
- The NTC will use the Standards as a benchmark for the renewal of teachers' license.
- All those institutions involved in the training and development of teachers, including universities and colleges both public and private, vocational/technical, and academic.
- Teacher educators will use it as a guide in the preparation of curricula and courses for teacher training.

Domains of the National Teachers' Standards (NTS)

The Standards are divided into three main domains, each with its own sub-divisions:

A. Professional Values and Attitudes
- o   Professional Development
- o   Community of Practice

B. Professional Knowledge
- o   Knowledge of Educational Frameworks and Curriculum
- o   Knowledge of Learners

C. Professional Practice
- o   Managing the Learning Environment
- o   Teaching and Learning
- o   Assessment

❖ **Teacher's Codes of Conduct and Professional Ethics**

Teachers help learners learn the academic basics, but they also teach valuable life lessons by setting a positive example. As role models, teachers must follow a professional code of ethics. This ensures that learners receive a fair, honest, and uncompromising education. A professional code of ethics outlines teachers' main responsibilities to their learners and defines their role in learners' lives. Above all, teachers must demonstrate integrity, impartiality, and ethical behaviour in the classroom and in their conduct with parents and coworkers.

The Nature and Importance of Codes of Conduct and/or Ethics

Definition of Code of Conduct

A Code of Conduct is a written collection of the guidelines, values, standards, and employee expectations, behaviour, and relationships that an organization considers important and believes are essential to their successful operation.

Conduct is this context is behaviour, attitudes and character exhibited for example by anyone within and outside the working environment. The standards of conduct generally required of any members of the Ghana Education Service (GES) would be *leadership*, *comportment*, *integrity*, *impartiality*, *fairness*, and *honesty* in matters affecting work and status of the profession.

Teachers in the Ghanaian educational institutions are expected to adhere to the following rules of professional conduct.

1. ***Teaching Notes:*** The notes should be relevant and adequate and prepared in advanced.

2. ***Working Hours:*** Teacher should be punctual and in case of absence, permission must be obtained from the prescribed authority.
3. ***Presence of Babies in School:*** Teachers are not supposed to bring babies or children under school going age to school.
4. ***Drinking, Drunkenness and Smoking:*** No teacher should alcohol or be found drunk or smoke during school hours.
5. ***Sexual Offences***: No teacher shall indulge in any immoral relations with a learner or learner in any educational institution including place of work.
6. ***Publications***: No teacher shall without the express permission of the prescribe permission act as the editor of any newspaper, magazines and shall not engage in any unauthorized press interviews.
7. ***Anonymous letters***: No teacher shall write or circulate anonymous letters with malicious intent.
   Generally, teachers are to

Definition of Ethics

The term ethics comes from the Greek word **ethos**, meaning **character**. Ethics are moral rules or principles of behaviour for deciding what is right and wrong. Ethics (or etiquette or moral) **is a system of accepted beliefs which control behaviour especially based on moral.**

There are moral rules relating to a particular profession. For example, the teaching profession has its own ethics. Ethics seeks to resolve concepts such as good and evil; right and wrong; value and vice; justice and crime (National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC], 1998). Ethical behaviour should guide decision always making of classroom professionals.

Educators have legal responsibilities and code to guide them in some of their decision making, but they are not entirely on their own in handling non legal matters. Because teaching is a profession, a code of ethics guides its members in decision making. The NAEYC publishes a document that outlines a set of shared values and commitments based on the collective wisdom of the profession called the Code of Ethics.

The Nature and Characteristics of Ethics
  o **It Deals with Rules**: this means ethics deals with accepted principles that states what you are allowed to do, that is, ***Dos*** and what you are not allowed to do, that is ***Don'ts*** such don'ts may include do not steal.
  o **Reward and Punishment**: Reward is something given in exchange for good behaviour or good work. For example, if someone can obey the dos of the society that person is given a tangible reward like money, cloth, etc. and intangible reward like praise, handshake, etc.

nevertheless, some one can also be punished for the wrong thing done, and such punishment can be rebuke, suspension, etc.

o **Relativity:** It is the state of being judged in comparison with other things (and not by itself). For example, what may be good or right in a society like Ghana, maybe wrong in a society like Britain and vice versa. Likewise, what is right in a society like the Muslim society may be wrong in the Christian society. For example, it is right to have more than one wife in Muslim society but is wrong to have more than one wife in the Christian society.

o **Rights and Responsibilities:** *Rights* are compulsory legal things that need to be done for you and if they are not done one can claim it through the court. So, some people defined right as claims recognized by law. **Responsibilities** on the other hand, are the duties you are to legally perform. For example, in the school, it is the Authorities' duty to make sure the compound is clean. So, it is ethical for you to claim your right. However, do not forget it is equally ethical for you to perform your duties, if not, you can also be punished.

o **Rules are made to be Broken**: Ethics deals with **dos** and **don'ts**. These **dos** and **don'ts** are also known as rules. Such rules are made to be broken means that it is natural or necessary to disobey rules to save a life or to maintain peace.

o **Source of Ethics**: This means ethics are taken from somewhere or they are derived from somewhere. For instance, ethics or dos and don'ts are derived from religion, culture, peers, schools, families, etc. and it is your duty to go by the dos and don'ts of where you find yourself. For example, if you are in Rome, you do what Romans do.

Importance of Ethics

o **To be aware of the Code of Ethics that Exists in the Profession.**
It helps teachers to be aware of rules and regulations, code of conduct and sanctions that exist and should adhere to their progression i.e., to be aware of rules of the profession which stipulates what they should do and what they should not do, and the sanctions that follow or go against those who go contrary to them. E.g., a teacher found selling in the classroom during class hours may be warned for the first time, and the second time be suspended.

o **To Re-define or Readjust oneself or one's Behaviour in line with the Code of Conduct.**
This helps the teacher to readjust his/her behaviour according to the rules of the profession to bring harmony between the teachers and the Ministry of Education. For example, if a teacher dressed indecently to town, he/she will now have to adjust to decent dressing to be able to fit into the teaching profession.

o **To Foster Co-operation among Teachers**.

That is, due to obedience to the rules, it brings about harmony and cooperation among teachers and their employers. That is, MOE as well as the communities they find themselves.

- o **To Guard against Discrimination among Children.**

  Some teachers may not be fair with the children they teach, and the code of ethics makes it clear that teachers should not be subjective or unfair to children. Any teacher who does that may be sanctioned. For instance, a teacher decides to give extra marks to a learner due to religious or other backgrounds

- o **For Accountability**

  It makes teachers to be accountable by going by the rules of the profession. For example, a teacher may be promoted by many factors such as the extent the teacher has conducted him/herself in accordance with the code of conduct of the teaching profession.

- o **Guarantee Responsibility**

  This means, when rules which have to do with dos and don'ts are established, it forces teachers to comply, since they know they will be judged by such rules. This will therefore inspire public confidence in teachers to whom has been entrusted the physical, mental, moral, religious, and spiritual upbringing of the nation's children.

- o **It Protects Teachers**

  To help teachers lodge their agitations and grievance through appropriate channel of arbitration and settlement of cases. The rules of the teaching profession protect the teacher because if a head teacher tries to maltreat a teacher, the head teacher may not be successful because the teacher is aware of the rules. And if the teacher knows that if he/she has not gone against any of the rules, the teacher may report to the right channel for his/her concerns to be heard. For example, if a head teacher insults a teacher for eating in the classroom, the teacher can report the headmaster for the necessary action to be taken.

Terms Related to Ethics

In the 2005 revision of the NAEYC's (National Association for the Education of Young Children) Code, a working group of educators proposed new definitions of terms relating to ethics for greater consistency of terminologies used in teaching. The definitions now appear at the end of the NAEYC Code, as **a Glossary of terms**:

- o **Code of Ethics**. Defines the core values of the field and provides guidance for what professionals should do when they encounter conflicting obligations or responsibilities in their work.
- o **Values.** Qualities or principles that individuals believe to be desirable or worthwhile and that they prize for themselves, for others, and for the world in which they live.
- o **Core Values**. Commitments held by a profession that are consciously and knowingly embraced by its practitioners because they contribute

to society. There is a difference between personal values and the core values of a profession.

- o **Morality.** Peoples' views of what is good, right, and proper; their beliefs about their obligations; and their ideas about how they should behave.
- o **Ethics**. The study of right and wrong, or duty and obligation, that involves critical reflection on morality and the ability to make choices between values and the examination of the moral dimensions of relationships.
- o **Professional Ethics**. The moral commitments of a profession that involve moral reflection that extends and enhances the personal morality practitioners bring to their work, that concern actions of right and wrong in the workplace, and that help individuals resolve moral dilemmas they encounter in their work
- o **Ethical Responsibilities.** Behaviours that one must or must not engage in. Ethical responsibilities are clear-cut and are spelled out in the Code of Ethical Conduct (for example, teachers should never share confidential information about a child or family with a person who has no legitimate need for knowing).
- o **Ethical Dilemma**. A moral conflict that involves determining appropriate conduct when an individual faces conflicting professional values and responsibilities.

Summary
Code of professional ethics is a set of moral and professional guidelines that serve as a point of reference for discipline among the members of the profession and regulates the interaction between the members of the profession and their clients

Professional Ethics Related to Child Rights

Rights of Children
The Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 defines more precisely the term "child":

"…a child is any human being below the age of eighteen years, unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier"

The idea, through this definition and all the texts concerning child welfare, is that the child is a human being with rights and dignity. What characterizes the child, it is his youth and vulnerability. Indeed, the child is growing, a future adult, who has no means to protect himself. So, the child must be the object of a particular interest and a specific protection. In this perspective, texts proclaiming the protection of the child and his rights were adopted.

United Nations Charter on Child Right

A modern legal and humanistic view recognizes children as individuals with right of their own. Children are treated as individuals who need

protection. The rights are beginning to be defined, promoted, and defended. Since children are not organized into political groups, other must act as their advocates. Courts and social service agencies are becoming defenders. In 1989, the UN convention on the rights of the child was adopted by 159 member states of the UN General Assembly.

The convention went into effect in September 1990, after ratification by more than 20 nations. It has a *status* of legally binding document for all nations that signed it. The convention contains fifty-four (54) articles. A careful study of the convention reveals a combination of *human*, *political*, *civil*, *economic,* and *cultural rights*. In this sense, the convention acknowledges that health and economic well-being are also essential to political freedoms and rights. In addition, by extending rights to individual children, the convention challenges the view of children as property. Here are some major highlights of the **United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child:**

1. Every child has the inherent right to life and states shall ensure to the maximum child survival and development.
2. Every child has the right to a nationality at birth.
3. When courts, welfare institutions or administrative authorities deal with children, the child's best interest shall be a primary consideration. The child's opinions shall be given careful consideration.
4. States shall ensure that each child enjoy full rights without discrimination or distinctions of any kind.
5. Children should not be separated from their parents, unless by competent authorities for their well-being.
6. States should facilitate the unification of families by permitting them to travel into or out of their territories.
7. Parents have a primary responsibility for a child's upbringing, but states shall provide them with appropriate assistance and develop childcare institutions.
8. States shall protect children from physical or mental harm and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation.
9. States shall provide parentless children with suitable alternative care. The adoption process shall be carefully regulated, and international agreements should be sought to provide safeguards and assure legal validity when adaptive parents intend to move the child from his country of birth.
10. Disabled children shall have the right to special treatment, education, and care.
11. The child is entitled to the highest attainable standard of health. States shall ensure that health care is provided to all children placing emphasis on preventive measures, health, education, and prevention of infant mortality.

12. Primary education for children shall be compulsory and free; discipline in schools should respect the child's dignity. Education should prepare the child for life in the spirit of understanding peace and tolerance.
13. Children shall have time to rest and play and equal opportunities for culture and artistic activities.
14. States shall protect children from illegal use of drugs and involvement in drug production or trafficking.
15. States shall protect children from economic exploitation and work that may interfere with education or be harmful to health and well-being.
16. All efforts shall be made to eliminate the abduction and trafficking of children.
17. Capital punishment or life imprisonment shall not be imposed for offences committed before the age of 18.
18. No child under 15 should take part in any hostilities; children exposed to armed conflicts shall receive special protection.
19. Children of minority and indigenous populations shall freely enjoy their own culture, religion, and language.
20. Children, who have suffered maltreatment, neglect, or detention, should receive appropriate treatment for recovery and rehabilitation.

In Ghana, the 1992 Constitution (Fourth Republican) provides the following Rights for children:

Privileges are Special Care and Maintenance. This implies that the child has the right to enjoy all things necessary for its development from the parents or foster parents such things include food, clothing, and shelter.

Right to Security: This implies that appropriate measures should be put in place to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental torture. For example, every child has the right to be protected from engaging in work that constitutes a threat to his or her health education or development.

Right to Culture: This means children shall have time to rest and play, have equal opportunities to recreational centres like Kakum National Park, Aburi Botanical Gardens, the Castle, and Zoo.
Right to Education: Children have the freedom to primary education which shall be compulsory and free. Such education should prepare the child for life.

Right to Civil Issues/Natural Right: These rights allow the individual to enjoy certain personal opportunities such as freedom of movement, freedom of worship, the right to life and the right to nationality at birth.

Right to Health: The child has the right to be protected from illness, has the right to attend to any hospital of his or her choice and the state shall protect children from misuse of drugs like cocaine, wee, alcohol etc. the

state shall also ensure that health care is provided to all children placing emphasis on preventive measures to infant mortality.

Legal Right: These rights give a child free access to the courts to sue and be sued. This legal right also projects the individual from arbitrary arrests. For instance, a child can ask for a warrant before he/she allows a policeman to arrest him or her. A child should not be subjected to torture, cruel inhuman or degrading punishment.

Economic Right: States shall protect children from economic exploitation and work that may interfere with education or be harmful to the children's wellbeing. Such works that interferes which children work include illegal mining prostitution and selling during school hours.

Political Right: All efforts should be made to protect the child from abduction trafficking of children and though parents have a primary responsibility for a child's upbringing, states shall provide them with appropriate child, care institutions so that the state can provide parentless children with suitable alternative care either by adoption or the childcare institutions can take care of such children.
The need for this Article 28 of the constitution of Ghana 1992 ensures that, every child enjoys a standard of living adequate for his/her well-being. This also conforms to the 1989 convention, under which governments are enjoined to provide food and healthcare to ensure the proper development of the child.

Why Education should be a Right of Children

1. United Nations Charter on Human Rights states that everyone has the right to education at least in the elementary and foundation stage.
2. UNESCO has since its establishment with principles based on democracy and respect for Human Rights. African Union (AU), UNICEF and International Women's Organization have enacted codes and conventions to support it.
3. The Education Act of 1961 made it compulsory for every child who has attained school going age to attend school. This is normal six years for the child to enter basic one, failure to do so will face the full rigors of the law.
4. The 4th Republican Constitution of Ghana has entrenched rights in the constitution, stating that all persons shall have the right to equal educational opportunities and facilities.
5. The FCUBE policy also states that, the programme is to provide an opportunity to every child of school going age in Ghana to receive good quality basic education.
6. The overall objective spelt out by vision 2020 Document is to ensure that all citizens and for that matter children regardless of gender, ethics or social status are functionally literate and productive at a minimum Education provides the means for the population to acquire the

necessary competition global economy skills, knowledge, values, and attitudes and if these qualities are to be achieved, their children must be exposed to education early.

7. All children have the right to grow up and develop in equity and respect without any form of discrimination.
8. Educating children is not a privilege; that is, a form of favour done to them, but it is their right, moral responsibility, and obligation on the part of parents, the community, and the government to see to it that children in the country are properly educated since the future of the country depends on them.
9. Children, either normal or physically challenged need to be taken through educative process formally and informally.
10. Much of what the child learn becomes closely associated with the kind of treatment given to him or her.
11. Education either formal or informal combines to shape and re-shape the child who may be an assets or liability to the family, community, and nation.
12. The child has the right to be equipped with the knowledge, skills, capabilities, and attitudes which would increase

Rights of the Child to Education

Right to Basic Education: That is the child has the right to primary and junior High Scholl (JHS) education, either in the public or private school.

Right to Secondary Education: This allowed the child to further his or her education beyond the basic school if he or she can pass the JHS external examination. This secondary school can be generator vocational education.

The Right to Tertiary Education: This refers to making colleges, polytechnics, and universities accessible to children based on their capacity.

The Right of Access to Textbooks: To all basic school learners to enhance their learning, his/her capability to contribute to the family, community, or state in future for meaningful production of goods and services.

*The Right to Fair Treatment***:** This allows the child to be treated without discrimination at school. For instance, Article 28 of the Fourth Republican Constitution states that no child shall be deprived of education or suffer maltreatment of any kind.

Regular Attendance to School: The Education Service District Education Office and other stakeholders of education such as parents, SMCs, NGOs, the community and other should find ways of making sure that children's attend school regularly and on time.

Right of the Child to Provision of Health

The Right of Good Nutrition: This implies that the law allows the child to have access to good or balanced diet balanced diet must contain protein, carbohydrate, minerals, and vitamins.

The Right to Medical Assistance: This means, the child shall have the necessary medical assistance irrespective of his/her religious, ethnic, or political background. The child should not be denied of any medical.

The Right to be Protected against Diseases: This allows the government to reduce infant and child mortality through immunization.

The Importance of Providing Good Health to Children
- ✔ To reduce infant and child mortality.
- ✔ To ensure the necessary medical assistance and health care to all children.
- ✔ To combat diseases and malnutrition.
- ✔ To provide appropriate pre- and post-natal health care for mothers.
- ✔ To develop preventive health care for parents.
- ✔ To protect the child from childhood killer diseases.

Reasons why Teachers Need to be Aware of the Constitutional Rights of Children

1. **To Educate the Child.** Knowledge of the child's right will help teachers to inform the children of things that are their right so that they can claim and protect themselves from children abuse. For instance, teachers can inform children on rights such as Right to Education, Security and Health etc.
2. **To Respect the Child's Right.** Knowledge of the child's right will help teachers to show courtesy to the child in relation to issue which has to do with the child's right. For instance, the teacher can influence a child to go to school regularly through guidance and counseling and not using the cane.
3. **To help teacher Establish a School Climate.** That is, it will assist teachers to create a congenial atmosphere in which the rights of the child would be respected. For example, the child must be given the opportunity to express him or herself what pertains within learning atmosphere.
4. **To Protect the Child.** Knowledge of the rights of children would make teachers much more conscious of the need to protect the child against physical and moral hazards like child labour, rape sexual harassment, etc.
5. **To Promote the Proper Development of the Child.** It will help the teacher to be aware that it is his/her role to advice and direct the child on the food he or she should eat, where to report cases to, why to learn as well as the dos and don'ts of the nation. Such dos may be respect and such don't may be laziness.

Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession

Teaching is becoming increasingly complex in the 21stCentury, and members recognise that a commitment to ongoing professional learning is integral to effective practice and to learner learning. Professional practice and self-directed learning are informed by experience, research, collaboration, and knowledge.

This has created a need for more complex frameworks to support teachers' professional learning. Professional learning frameworks for the teaching profession support the ongoing growth and development of the profession through the identification of a wide range of learning and education opportunities.

The purposes of the Professional Learning Frameworks for the Teaching Profession

- ✔ Identifies a wide range of professional education and learning opportunities available for educators to promote their individual and collective growth
- ✔ Acknowledges the commitment members of the teaching profession have for intensive ongoing professional learning to further develop their professional knowledge, skills, practices, and values.
- ✔ Highlights a range of professional learning opportunities that members may consider to critically enhance their practice in the pursuit of enhancing learner learning and well-being.
- ✔ Assists members of the College to identify, reflect upon and celebrate their learning experiences and ongoing growth.
- ✔ Promotes public trust and confidence in the collective teaching profession.
- ✔ Affirms the central importance of ongoing learning through the applied contexts of professional practice (teaching, leadership and interprofessional collaboration).

A commitment to ongoing learning is a central principle of teacher professionalism. Educators' professional knowledge and efficacy are promoted through engagement in professional learning, and this is intimately linked to learner learning. Members of the Ghana's teaching profession should, therefore, engage in multiple opportunities that increase their learning and further refine professional practice. The adoption of an ethical inquiry stance to professional learning and education helps to support democratic teaching and learning.

Forms of Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession

Professional learning takes a variety of forms. Examples of such frameworks are:

1. Learning through practice or Action learning
2. Collaborative professional learning (CPL)
3. Professional inquiry
4. Self-directed professional learning

- o **Learning through Practice or Action learning**

Learning through practice or Action learning is one such framework and has been used for workplace learning in business settings for many years.

Members of the teaching profession have identified that the most significant and powerful professional learning that informs their practice is teaching alongside learners. Educators understand that their *teaching and*

leadership experiences are key sources of learning within the context of their practice.

Professional learning and efficacy are strengthened by critically reflecting on professional practice. Learning from professional practice can involve *experiential*, *transformative*, *relational,* and *reflective* learning. Professional autonomy is essential for supporting and advancing educators' practices in response to the evolving nature of teaching and learning.

- o **Collaborative Professional Learning (CPL)**

When teachers get the opportunity to collaborate, they share learning practices and experiences, support one another in trying new strategies and teaching steps, partner in responding to learner and classroom information, and work together to develop curriculum and implement new national and school initiatives.

Essential Characteristics of a PLC (adapted from Learning by Doing)

- **Shared mission, vision, values, goals:** Educators in a PLC benefit from clarity regarding their shared purpose, a common understanding of the school they are trying to create, collective communities to help move the school in the desired direction, and specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and time- bound (SMART) goals to mark their progress.
- **Collaborative teams focused on learning:** In a PLC, educators work together interdependently in collaborative teams to achieve common goals for which they are mutually accountable. The structure of the school is aligned to ensure teams are provided the time and support essential to adult learning. *Collaboration is a systematic process in which we work together, interdependently, to analyse and impact professional practice to improve our individual and collective results*.
- **Collective inquiry:** Teams in a PLC relentlessly question the status quo, seek new methods of teaching and learning, test the methods, and then reflect on the results. Building shared knowledge of both current reality and best practice is an essential part of each team's decision-making process.
- **Action orientation and experimentation:** Members of a PLC constantly turn their learning and insights into action. They recognize the importance of engagement and experience in learning and in testing new ideas. They learn by doing.
- **Commitment to Continuous improvement:** Not content with the status quo, members of a PLC constantly seek better ways to achieve mutual goals and accomplish their fundamental purpose of learning for all.
- **Results orientation:** Educators in a PLC assess their efforts based on tangible results. They are hungry for evidence of learner learning and use that evidence to inform and improve their practice.

o **Professional Inquiry**

As you consider your own professional learning journey, you may want to reflect on the following self-directed inquiries:

• How can you critically reflect on the vast and multifaceted nature of professional learning for the teaching profession?
• How does this conceptual framework connect to your diverse experiences engaged in ongoing professional learning?
• Discuss how this conceptual framework can be used to inform your own ongoing professional learning.
• How can this conceptual framework be enhanced to reflect the evolving nature of ongoing professional learning?
• How does this conceptual framework support your journey of professional learning through designing your own concept map?
• Collaboratively design a concept map to illustrate a school or board's engagement in ongoing professional learning to support school and/or board improvement plans.

o **Self-directed professional learning**

Autonomy in professional learning lies at the heart of teacher professionalism. Members of the teaching profession are intrinsically motivated to stay current in many ways through various pathways informed by professional needs, interests, passions, and inspirations

Contexts that support ongoing professional learning

Professional learning takes place in a variety of diverse and wide-ranging contexts. These varying contexts, settings and forms help to foster the ongoing professional knowledge, skills, practices, and values of educators. The self-directed learning that occurs in these various contexts is supportive and responsive to the continually evolving nature of teaching and learning in democratic communities.

CONCEPTS OF PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND ATTITUDES

Values Defined

Values are the guiding principles that underlie what people believe to be important when making decisions in all areas of life. They determine what people will prioritise in making a judgement, and what they will pursue in seeking improvement (Haste, 2018)

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Building Relationships

Techniques for Communicating, Collaborating, and Interacting Effectively

As a teacher, you will meet hundreds of people each year. You will be building new relationships with teachers, learners, parents, head teachers, and the public. Some of these people will be acquaintances, some will be colleagues, and some will become very dear friends. The way you choose to handle yourself in these many relationships will make a difference in the success you have in the teaching profession. Dyeing good, "strong relationships is part of being a professional.

> **Self-assessment:** - *What are some of the conducts expected of a professional teacher?*

A. Teacher to Teacher
When you secure your first teaching appointment, do not take lightly the task of building relationships with the teachers in your building

o **Managing School Politics Effectively**
Any time you deal with people, there will be personality conflicts. Situations won't always be fair, and people will always talk. These are the kinds of things that can dampen your spirits if you are not careful. A certain amount of involvement in "office politics" is unavoidable, but how immersed you become is up to you. As the saying goes, "Choose your battles carefully." For example, if there is a problem with the new staff welfare plan, then get involved and try to offer solutions to work it out. But if you are unhappy because of low teacher salaries, do not come to school complaining about it every day. When it comes to dealing with school politics, the most professional approach you can take is to closely adhere to the rules of social etiquette.

o **Being a Team Player**

Professionals work together. They understand the concept that "It takes a whole village to raise a child." Work with other teachers, parents, and administrators to meet the needs of your learners. If you have a learner who has an Individual Education Plan (IEP), work closely with members of that child's educational team. Ask questions. Find out ways you can help.

When you serve on committees or are asked to work with other teachers to develop a new program or choose new textbooks, strive to work together to meet your goals. Be a willing participant and do your part.

It is disruptive to a staff, and in the end to the children being served, if a teacher consistently refuses to work as a team member. Though there is something admirable about those who "follow their own drummer," there is a time when that attitude is appropriate and a time when it is not. For the good of the learners and the school, sometimes you must compromise your own ideas or plans and cooperate with others.

o Supporting Your Colleagues

Being supportive of your colleagues is an important part of being a professional. Be quick to encourage the teachers with whom you work. When you see someone in need of a kind word or a helping hand, be the first to offer your assistance. Even though you work with many teachers, there will be times when you may feel alone and isolated in your own classroom. Remember that others are feeling the same way. It takes effort, but effort that will be rewarded in kind, to go out of your way to support and encourage your colleagues.

B. Teacher to Learner

A baby food company used to have an advertising slogan that said, "Babies are our business, our only business." Likewise, teachers can say of their work: "Learners are our business, our only business." It is true that on a teacher workday when no learners are present, things may go very smoothly, and much planning and work will get accomplished. However, too many days without learners defeats the purpose of the preparation; as a teacher, you cannot do your job without learners because your learners are your business.

It is of utmost importance to develop a good working relationship with your learners. They need to be able to understand you; they need to trust you; they need to be able to talk with you. You should not have as a priority to be friends with your learners; they *seed* the security of knowing that you are more than a friend, that have their best interest at heart and that you are determined to carry out the purpose for which you are there.

i. Learners Are Your Focus

Once you are in the classroom, a variety of things will compete for your attention. You will have meetings, paperwork, committee responsibilities, and conferences; any number of obligations may fill your calendar. Being a professional means knowing your mission; it means remembering your focus. The reason you are in the classroom is to benefit the learner. As an educator, you are a facilitator to learning; your learners should always be

uppermost in your mind as you plan your lessons and strive to accomplish your goals. There will be times when you will have to make choices, and often these decisions will not be easy to make.

However, if you find yourself involved in too many things, even good things, you will soon realize that you are "robbing Peter to pay Paul." In other words, something is being shortchanged, and it certainly should not be your learners. If you are not able to focus on their needs because of other distractions of your job, reevaluate your commitments. You must continually remind yourself of your purpose in teaching.

ii.   Teachers as Role Models

Whether you like it or not, the nature of your job as a teacher makes you a role model to your learners. There are teachers who excel in this role, encouraging by their own actions' responsibility, love for learning, and the advantages of being a productive contributor to society. Unfortunately, the opposite is also true. The media has provided the public with ample examples of teachers who have been poor role models those who have become involved with their learners sexually, or teachers who participate in illegal drug activity or have a criminal history. A poor role model, however, is not limited to a person who has done something illegal. A teacher who is not honest, who is not consistent, and who is not fair, or who displays selfishness models in a negative way.

What kinds of things can you do to provide a good example for your learners? Show your concern for them and for society as a whole; be on guard as to how you respond to your circumstances; share with them your love for learning—they will catch it; talk with them about what you read, making sure that you often read things on their level; be consistent, practicing what you preach. Teachers who practice self-discipline and make a conscious choice to contribute something positive to those with whom they come in contact will impact those lives far beyond their own knowledge. You may not always feel like listening, following through with a promise made, or trying to explain something just one more time. But through self- discipline, you can say, "I will do it even though I may not feel like it," and that is what will make the difference.

iii.   Learner Conferences

One of the most rewarding parts of teaching is working one-on-one with individual learners. Conferencing with them provides an effective means of doing so. Nearly any age group can benefit from learner conferences, and the teacher can adapt the conference to any age.

A learner conference consists of a period when the teacher and learner meet to discuss a particular topic. Learner conferences may be used for disciplinary issues, academics, goal setting, and so on. Ideally, conferences are short, to the point, and regularly held.

One example of an effective learner conference is used in the reading workshop. The teacher meets with each learner for a brief period. During this time, the learner may set goals for reading progress, report to the

teacher what book is presently being read, discuss the book being read, and ask or answer questions about the book. Both teacher and learner share, and they both listen. Remember that this is a brief conference. The goal is to be able to meet with each learner; if too much time is given to some, others will be neglected.

Learner conferencing not only helps the learner academically, but it gives an opportunity for communication between learner and teacher. The more positive contacts a teacher cam makes with the learner, the better off both are. Conferences give teachers an opportunity to recognize problems the learner may be having and increase the probability of positive feedback. It is important to briefly interact with each learner individually at least one time during the day. This may not sound like too difficult a task, but it is surprising how often the same learners are involved in teacher/learner interaction and others are left out.

iv.   Earning Respect

Certain positions demand respect simply because of the nature of the position. A teacher, however, cannot expect to be respected simply because he or she is "the teacher." That day is past. A teacher earns the respect of his or her learners and their parents by acting in a professional manner and treating others appropriately.

Too often, a teacher who is demanding, harsh, or critical with learners in the classroom will become upset when their responses are not a positive one. Likewise, if a teacher teases a learner, perhaps in a cruel way, the learner may react in the same way; then the teacher may discipline the child for disrespectful conduct. This is, at best, very confusing to the learners, and, at worst, a recipe for disaster in the classroom.

Teachers must regard each learner as a person of worth. Children should be treated with kindness and concern. This in no way means that teachers should not have high expectations for their learners. It is important to be consistent and fair, and very often it is necessary to be firm. A child can easily recognize the difference between a teacher who cares and who values his or her learners and one who does not. The teacher who respects his learners will be one who will receive that same honor in return. Being respected does not mean being best friends. It may not even mean being liked. Teachers should not seek to win a popularity contest, but rather earn the respect of their learners.

v.   Being Fair

As mentioned earlier, a fair teacher is an effective teacher. Learners are quick to recognize justice and are demanding of it. They will readily take their due punishment or face the consequences of a misdeed if they understand that the result is fair. Likewise, they expect their peers to be treated in an equal manner. If one learner is treated in a noticeably different way than the others without a just cause, learners will recognize the injustice and problems may arise. Children are merciful in many ways, especially in unusual circumstances. For example, learners will often be understanding of a teacher who gives some slack to a learner who is

acting out if they are aware that the learner is experiencing severe home problems.

It is interesting to note that children are often tougher on their own peers than are their adult instructors. They want an environment that is structured, one that they can count on being consistent, and one that is fair. They want boundaries set, and they want someone to enforce them. If consequences were determined by peers, justice would most often be swift and severe.

Teacher who acts in a professional manner make certain that their classrooms operate fairly. They consider what they say and do before acting and make the effort to look at things through their learners' perspectives.

C. Teacher to Parent

The old proverb "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" applies to the relationship between teacher and parent. Establishing a good working alliance between the two is vital for a child's positive learning experience.

As a teacher, you will need to take the initiative in establishing a relationship with your learners' parents. Often this will be a very easy thing to do, as most parents are eager to be involved in their children's education and will be in touch regularly with you. In other cases, it will be more difficult. You will need to be the one to try to communicate consistently, be open about things that are going on m your classroom and give parents the reassurance that you are readily available if they have questions or concerns.

When parents and teachers understand that they are on the same side and that both want the best **for**-.the child, problems can be solved more easily or even prevented **from** occurring.

i. Communication Is Key

Preventing problems with parent's call be as easy as learning a few communication skills. It is extremely important to have a positive first contact with parents, this can be done in a variety of ways. Some teachers of young learners make summer visits to the homes of the children who will be enrolling in their classes in the fall. They may take with them a book or some other item of interest to present to the child when they introduce themselves to the future learner and his or her family, other teachers write letters to each learner and parent before the year starts, to introduce themselves and to express excitement about the coming year.

ii. Developing Partnerships

Working as a professional involves productive working relationships. Parent and teacher must have an understanding that the best interest of the child is the main issue in any situation. If the teacher recognizes that his or her learner is also someone's child, it will be much easier for that teacher to understand parental responses.

iii.   Parent Conferences

One of the most frightening things to a beginning teacher is a face-to- face meeting with a learner's parents. New teachers are often told horror stories of enraged parents with flared nostrils and lawsuits in hand, so it is no wonder that a parent conference is a dreaded event.

There are several keys to preparing for the conference between parent and teacher that will set the stage for smooth sailing.

- **Be prepared**: Before the conference, collect samples of the learner's work, have your grade book handy, and gather any disciplinary records that you may need to refer to. It *is* a good idea to make notes ahead of time of any special comments you want to make.

- ***Sandwich negative comments between positive ones:*** As mentioned earlier, this learner is someone's child. His or her parents may be as frustrated (or more so) as you are with problems, and they need, to hear a kind word about their child.

- ***Be pleasant.*** People in general respond better to consideration and sensitivity than to harshness, and severe criticism. You can be honest without being cruel.

- ***Be prompt and stay on a time schedule,*** especially if you have other parents waiting to conference with you at a particular time.

- ***The teacher is in control of the meeting.*** Take control of the situation early. Don't sit while parents stand looking down at you. Provide a comfortable place for them to sit, and then sit across from them where you can have good eye contact. Take the initiative to express your compliments and concerns about the learner.

iv.   Responding to Angry Parents

Unfortunately, there will be times when angry parents will approach you. You may feel attacked. You will probably feel hurt and perhaps even be angry yourself. What should your response be?

- ***Ask your administrator, school counselor, or team teachers to meet with you if you are aware that you will be speaking with an angry parent.*** Extra support is beneficial, and it often cools the parents' ire if they see that you are not the only teacher with whom they will be speaking or when they recognize that others in the school setting recognize similar problems with their child.

- ***One of the most important things you can do is to listen.*** Sometimes all a parent needs are a chance to vent. During the discussion, you may even discover that other things are going on in the person's life that are causing the frustration. Take time to listen before you get defensive and jump in with both feet.

- ***Your reaction is very important.*** It is not always how you act that speaks to others, but how you react. Stay calm as you respond. It is a very difficult thing to respond positively if you feel attacked, but it is

important that you do just that. You may need to repeat back to the individual things that he or she is saying to you.

- *Admit when you make a mistake and take appropriate* **measures to correct it**. Most people will respect those who are willing to recognize their own errors. However, it is also important to be fair. Don't be bullied into something by one parent that will not apply to all your other learners. There is a line here that is important to draw.
  - *End the conference if nothing beneficial is occurring and you are being verbally abused.* You do not have to listen to foul language or threats. There is nothing wrong with telling parents that you appreciate their viewpoint, steering them in the direction of the school office, buzzing in on the office intercom, or hanging up the phone if the anger is not controlled.

D. Teacher to Administrator/Head Teacher

Authority plays an important role in our society. Everyone comes under someone else's authority; no one gets too old to be above the law. Even the person who owns his own business and is his own boss is not exempt from following certain codes, guidelines, and laws.

i.   Recognize the Role of the Administrator

Each school system has a chain of command to which teachers are responsible to adhere. Above the teacher's role in the chain are the head, school superintendent, and school board. In larger school districts there may also be any number of department heads or curriculum directors.

ii.   Keep Your Administrator Informed

A head needs to be made aware of certain situations or circumstances. In some cases, it is better to over-inform than to under-inform. An administrator is put in a very precarious position when a parent, community member, or school board member approaches him or her about an issue of which he or she is totally ignorant. It is to everyone's advantage to prevent this type of situation from occurring. The classroom teacher has the opportunity and responsibility to be part of the solution to this problem.

iii.   Follow Administrative Directives

When a directive is given, it is given for a reason. It is the teacher's responsibility to follow the administration's requests. Unless there is a question of morality or legality involved, a professional will cooperate with and support those in authority.

PRACTICING PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Much more than teaching is included in being a professional. Teachers are expected to be involved in activities outside their classrooms, such as serving on committees and sponsoring clubs. Professionals are also expected to stay current with new research and up-to-date practices in their field. You wouldn't want to go to a doctor who doesn't know about the latest techniques in medical procedures, and you don't want to be a

teacher who isn't aware of current research findings in your field of study. One way to stay current is to continue to take college courses and to attend workshops and conferences provided by your school and other professional organizations.

School Responsibilities
One of the most, difficult parts of teaching is dealing with the responsibilities tied to the job that do not actually involve teaching. Sometimes teachers begin to feel that their teaching is suffering because of all the other things they are required to do. Some of these activities are necessary and beneficial, while others may be of questionable value to the educational process. Regardless, every teacher is expected to be involved in several activities other than the actual teaching process, and it is wise to be prepared for them.

Committee Work

"A committee of one gets things done" is a popular saying. However, most committees are made up of more than one person, and many schools have so many committees that they have a committee for committees. The role of the committee is very important and is useful in keeping the school functioning well.

After-School Functions and Extracurricular Activities
Each school system has a variety of after-school activities that teachers are required to attend or sponsor. Most heads require their staff members to be present at teachers' meetings throughout the school year. Some administrators plan their meetings on a regular basis, such as every week on a particular day, or monthly, such as on the first Wednesday of the month.

When to Say Yes and When to Say No
Learning to say no can be a difficult thing, especially when a teacher is in a new job and is eager to please. It is important, however, to recognize that no one person can do all that is available to be done. The more one is willing to do, the more that person is asked to do. So, it becomes necessary to think things through and prioritize the demands of your job. You must continually ask yourself what your purpose is. As has been discussed, you will have to do some things that do not appear to have anything to do with teaching your subject matter as required by. These may be things that your administrator or school board requires, thus becoming part of the job. But you also will have some choices, and you must recognize the difference between the times when it is appropriate to say no and when it is not.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

One of the reasons teachers become teachers is because they love to learn. Learning keeps teachers up to date in the classroom. That is why most schools and districts allow teachers one or two professional days each

year to attend conferences or workshops. Staying current in your field is a major part of being a professional.

In-service Workshops
While you are in school working on your teaching degree, you are referred to as a pre-service teacher; but before you know it, you will officially be an in-service teacher. The purpose of in-service workshops is to help teachers learn new teaching methods, strategies, and information. Many schools provide several of these workshops a year. On those days, school usually will be let out early or for the entire day so that teachers can attend these sessions.

Professional Organizations and Conferences
Being an active member in professional organizations is an excellent way to stay up to date in your field. Most fields of study have their own organizations. Many reading teachers belong to the International Reading Association (IRA). English teachers join the National Association of Teachers of English (NATE). There are similar organizations for all subjects, including math (Mathematical Association of Ghana [MAG]), music, science (Ghana Association of Science Teachers [GAST]), and technology.

Graduate Courses
While it is a good idea to begin working on your master's degree, it might also be smart not to take graduate classes until your second semester of teaching. You will be busy learning the ropes as a first- year teacher. As soon as you feel you can handle it, start slowly by taking an occasional course.

Teacher Study and Support Groups
Teacher study groups and teacher support groups can offer you a place to continue learning and growing. A teacher *study group* is defined as "a collaborative group organised and sustained by teachers to help them strengthen their professional development in areas of common interest" (Cramer, Hurst & Wilson, 1996, p. 7).
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UNIT 3
MANAGING TEACHING AND LEARNING AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Essential Skills for Classroom Management

Classroom management has been cited as one of the most serious obstacles in promoting effective teaching. One of the most common reasons for teacher burnout and attrition of first year teachers. Classroom management is directly linked to learner academic achievement, teacher efficacy, and learner behaviour.

Classroom Management refers to teacher practice as well as learner behaviour. That is, positive classroom climate, positive interpersonal relationships, clarity and consistency of expectations and consequences (both positive and negative) all work together to create an efficient learning environment.

Essential Skills

Essential Skills in classroom management are not a substitute for well-planned, innovative, and engaging curriculum.

The **ten (10)** ESCMs coupled with Classroom Profiling help identify the *positive aspects* of a classroom and identify areas of practice that may benefit from reflective discussion and improved practice. These are as follows:

Essential Skill	Description
1. **Establishing expectations**	Making rules.
2. **Giving instructions**	Telling learners what to do.
3. **Waiting and scanning**	Stopping to assess what is happening
4. **Cueing with parallel acknowledgement**	Praising a particular learner to prompt others.
5. **Body language encouraging**	Smiling, nodding, gesturing, and moving near
6. **Descriptive encouraging**	Praise describing behaviour
7. **Selective attending**	Not obviously reacting to certain behaviours
8. **Redirecting to the learning**	Prompting on-task behaviour.
9. **Giving a choice**	Describing the learner's options and likely consequences of their behaviour.
10. **Following through**	Doing what you said you would

ESCM 1: Setting Expectations-Classroom Rules and Procedures

Why is establishing expectations an effective management skill?

So that everyone is clear about what is, and what is not, regarded as responsible and safe in a particular context. The key is the clear articulation and regular reinforcement of teacher expectations.

How to establish expectations

1. Initially, present a small number of rules to learners. Developing class rules in a class meeting can also be effective. Teachers who engage with learners on an infrequent or irregular basis need to present their own rules as they may not have the time or rapport to negotiate rules.

2. Publish the rules where learners can read them.

3. Keep the rules short, simple, and clear, for example:
   - Arrive on time and prepared
   - Follow teacher instructions
   - Keep hands and feet to yourself
   - Use manners
   - Stay on task.

4. Make the rules positive to draw attention to appropriate behaviours rather than highlighting inappropriate behaviours.

5. Discuss the rules with the class.
   - Refer to the rules frequently
   - Discuss relevant scenarios, positive and negative
   - Discuss possible consequences in advance, both positive and negative
   - Refer to the rules when they are being followed, not just when they are not being followed.

6. Model, model, model.
 Demonstrate good social skills e.g., appropriate manners, tone of voice, body language, punctuality, and dress.

ESCM 2- Giving Instruction

Why is giving an instruction an effective management skill?

   - Clear, short instructions help learners understand what they are expected to do.
   - Instructions help learners organise what they are required to do.
   - Instructions cue to learners that they need to be actively engaged with the curriculum.

Learn how to tell if learner attention is focused before you give an instruction.

How to give effective verbal and non-verbal instructions

1. Use a verbal and/or non-verbal attention gaining prompt to focus learner attention on the teacher, for example:
   i. Verbal prompts: "Stop and look to the front, thanks", "Look here, thanks.", "Put pencils down, attention here thanks", "Face me, thanks children".
   ii. On-verbal prompt: clap (this could be in sequence), using bell or whistle (especially relevant to physical education), standing on an 'attention calling' spot in the classroom, which is known and understood by learners.
2. Wait and scan
3. When learner attention is focused, start the instruction with a verb. Keep instructions short: be concise.
4. Follow the instruction with a short pause and scan the class.
5. Separate instructions from curriculum/content talk. Avoid interrupting content talk with instructions.
6. Phrase the instruction as a direction rather than a question. For example, instead of saying:
   "Would you like to copy the sentence, Abigail?" or "Can we stop working   now?"
   Say: "Copy the sentence, Abigail." and "Stop working, thanks."
7. Use "thanks" rather than "please" at the end of an instruction for a crisper, less questioning tone. "Thanks" implies compliance; however, saying "please" at times is appropriate.
8. Give the instruction in a firm, calm, and measured voice, for example: ***Come here, Ewuraa, Open your books at page 17***.
9. Use "now" if the group or learner is unlikely to comply, for example:

Initial instruction: "David, look to the front, thanks." If he does not respond or his behaviour deteriorates: Look in his direction and say, "Now" (Using a firmer tone of voice, possibly with a slight increase in volume or inflected pitch, but with no anger).

Or it may be necessary to say: "David, look to the front, now." (Do not shout, but use a calm, firm tone of voice). When he responds appropriately, pause slightly to reaffirm, then look away and continue.

ESCM 3 Waiting and Scanning:

To wait and look at your learners for 5–10 seconds after you give an instruction.
Why is waiting and scanning an effective management skill?
- It gives learners time to process the direction.
- It indicates non-verbally to learners that you mean what you say.
- You avoid filling all the available time with excess talk which can inadvertently train the class to stop listening to you.

ACTION: When learners are not following many of your instructions, evaluate your use of 'waiting and scanning'—you may not be using this skill effectively.

How to wait and scan
    1. After you have given an instruction, pause, remain quiet and look at your learners; scan the room for 5–10 seconds to maintain their attention.
    2. When you have their attention, continue with your dialogue or prompt them to begin following your instruction i.e., start working.
    3. Use the waiting and scanning time to encourage a period of quiet focus. Use assertive body language - stand still facing the group, while scanning the class. Then, prompt learners to maintain the quiet focus while they start working.
    4. Use this short time to think ahead and calm yourself, if necessary.
    5. Scan the group, link with a descriptive encourager (see Skill 6) or a redirection as necessary.

ESCM 4 Cueing with parallel acknowledgment

To acknowledge learners' on-task behaviour with the intention of encouraging others to copy
Why is parallel acknowledgment an effective management skill?
- It cues other learners to match the behaviour that is being acknowledged.
- It is an alternative to a redirection, so can help you to avoid nagging or becoming too prescriptive.
- It contributes to a positive tone in the classroom.

ACTION: This is more effective with younger learners but can be used judiciously with upper primary and secondary learners in some cases. Experiment with its use by paying attention to your tone of voice, acknowledging individuals or groups of learners who are on-task

How to use parallel acknowledgment
1. Scan the class regularly. When learners are off-task, choose to acknowledge an individual or group in proximity who is on-task.
2. Acknowledge that person or group with a descriptive encourager (see Skill 6) in a loud enough voice for others to hear.

For example, if Jenny is off-task during a writing activity while sitting next to Mark who is on-task, you say to Mark, "I can see Mark working quietly on his writing." This is a prompt for Jenny or other learners who may be off task. If a group of learners sitting at one table is off-task, then acknowledge a group of learners sitting near them who are on-task. Say: "Group one is almost done with their project." (Loud enough for group two to hear). This is minimal and positive, and prompts group two to begin to construct their project.

ACTION: As you move around the room, touch the books or desks of those learners on-task. *Do not touch the books or desks of those learners off-task. When off-task learners become on task, calmly go back to their position, and touch their book or desk.*

ESCM 5 Body language encouraging

To intentionally use your proximity, body gestures and facial expressions to encourage learners to remain on-task
> ***Why is body language encouraging an effective learner management skill?***
> ✔ It takes no time.
> ✔ It promotes a positive tone in the classroom.
> ✔ Body language is an integral part of communication and strengthens relationships.
> ✔ It promotes on-task behaviour when used intentionally.

ACTION: *By moving around the room and interacting non-verbally with learners, the teacher's level of classroom monitoring increases and should therefore help to reduce episodes of inappropriate behaviour.*

How to use body language encouraging

1. Set learners to task. Immediately move around the room to non-verbally signal to learners that they should be working on the task. Walk near all members of the class.
2. Touch the work of learners who are on-task. This ensures you circulate throughout the classroom.
3. Pause after you have made one tour of the room, maintain minimal teacher talk then walk slowly toward learners who may be off task. This is a quiet prompt for them to resume on task behaviour.
4. Smile and make eye contact to acknowledge appropriate behaviour. These are powerful, positive signals that help learners feel valued and noticed. This intentional use of encouraging body language does not describe or preclude all spontaneous body language messages that teachers send.
5. Make discrete nodding movements and finger signals where appropriate as acknowledgment for on-task behaviour.

Avoid the following:

- Standing too close to a learner. This can be intimidating and cue hostility. It is better to prompt/correct, pause, then walk away and scan back.
- Moving too fast towards a learner. This can induce a fight or flight response.
- Holding eye contact since it can become a 'stare-out' challenge.
- Showing irritation or annoyance through tapping your foot, pursing lips, crossing arms, or frowning.

If something is irritating you, respond immediately by:
- providing a rule reminder
- redirecting the behaviour
- describing the irritating behaviour with minimal words and a neutral tone and giving a redirection.

Alternatively, you may choose to use selective attending (see Skill 7).

ESCM 6 Descriptive encouraging

To encourage learners to become more aware of their competence by describing exactly what you see or hear from them that you hope to see more frequently.

Why is descriptive encouraging a useful management skill? It...

- describes to learners the behaviour that will enable them to learn.
- reinforces the rules.
- promotes a positive, supportive learning environment.
- focuses on strength and builds self-esteem.
- stimulates learners to take risks in terms of behaviour. They become more able to display the courage to tackle difficult work, or practice self-control.
- tells learners about their competence.
- directs attention to strategies that are useful for problem solving.
- strengthens your relationship with learners.

ACTION: *This skill appears far easier to master than it is. Pay particular attention to the timing of its use and the tone of voice you use. Descriptive encouraging will require sustained intentional practice.*

How to use descriptive encouraging

1. Describe exactly what you see or hear from learners that you want to see or hear more frequently. In other words, state the obvious that is positive. For example: "Kwame has started work."
2. Use a respectful, measured tone rather than an exaggerated tone.
3. Be genuine and use descriptive encouraging sooner rather than later. If you wait too long this technique can become ineffective.
4. You may use it privately towards individual learners. If used publicly towards individuals, be brief and to the point.
5. Use it collectively to the group.
6. Use frequently.

ESCM 7 Selective attending:

To deliberately give minimal attention to safe, off-task or inappropriate behaviour

Why is selective attending an effective management skill?

- It avoids unintentionally reinforcing off-task or disruptive behaviour, decreasing the likelihood that this behaviour will be repeated.
- It gives you time to think about how to handle the learner's behaviour in a productive way.
- It gives you time to attend to other learners who are on-task. n It sends a message to all learners about your expectations.
- It is a powerful modelling device implying: "I can stay focused on my work despite the disruption."
- It is a deliberate process used within a discrete timeframe, having a beginning and an end.

ACTION: There is a difference between 'ignoring' and 'selective attending'. Ignoring inappropriate behaviour may imply that the teacher is deliberately demonstrating no outward awareness of it and is not monitoring the behaviour. This may indicate that the behaviour is, in some way, being tacitly condoned. 'Selective attending' requires the teacher to consider the inappropriate behaviour being demonstrated and act immediately if safety is compromised. Selective attending may involve subtle signaling to the learners who are displaying appropriate behaviour that the inappropriate behaviour of others has been noticed and that the teacher is deliberately choosing to pay minimal attention to it. This has a powerful modelling effect.

How to use selective attending

6. Do it when the learner is displaying off-task or inappropriate behaviour that is not seriously disrupting others.
7. Keep this learner in your peripheral vision. Avoid turning your back at this point as you may miss an opportunity to use a descriptive encourager if the learner chooses to come on-task.
8. Attend to the learner when: a. the learner displays on-task or appropriate behaviour. Use a body language encourager or less obvious descriptive encourager to reinforce the appropriate behaviour. b. the learner begins to seriously disturb others c. the learner's off-task or inappropriate behaviour is maintained over an extended period (determined by the teacher).

ACTION: In case **b** or **c**, give a clear redirect to the learning or offer of assistance (see Skill 8), followed by take-up time. (Take-up time allows learners to respond to a direction before a redirection is given). If the disruptive behaviour continues, give the learner a clear choice (see Skill 9) including the likely consequences if their inappropriate behaviour continues. If a clear choice has been given previously, follow through (see Skill 10). Remember, the goal of a clear choice is to modify the inappropriate behaviour, not to punish the learner or damage the positive teacher-learner relationship (learning relationship.)

ESCM 8 Redirecting to the learning

To respectfully prompt the learner who is off-task or disrupting others, initially with a redirection to the learning. This can be verbal or non-verbal

Why is redirecting to the learning an effective learner management skill?

- Initially, it provides a least-intrusive, positive, learning-focused prompt to resume on-task activity, reducing the need for further correction.
- It puts the responsibility onto the learner.
- It reinforces the importance of on-task behaviour.
- When linked with giving a choice, it reinforces to the learner or group, your expectations and the likely consequences of the choices given.

ACTION: • Remember the impact of body language, tone of voice, proximity and facial expression when giving a redirection to the learning or choice.

Avoid making a redirection to the learning sound like a threat or punishment.

    • It is important to be calm, clear, firm, and positive in tone.

    • Keep language to a minimum.

ESCM 9-Giving a choice

Respectfully challenge the learner, who is disrupting others, with the available choices and their logical consequences.

Why is giving a choice an effective management skill?

- It provides the learner, or group, with information about your expectations and the logical consequences of the choice.
- It puts the responsibility onto the learner.

ACTION: Pause to allow yourself thinking time.

- The most important factor in this skill is thinking carefully about the choice to be given.
- Do not give a choice you cannot or will not follow through.
- Avoid making this (giving a choice) sound like a threat or punishment—an easy mistake to make.

When to give a choice

1. Give a choice when, despite redirection, the learner has remained off-task and is disturbing other learners, or the period of off-task behaviour has become extended.
2. Give a choice when the learner has begun to seriously disturb the class after redirection from you. For example, the learner may be engaging in intense secondary behaviour (Subsequent behaviours after the initial redirection that are more severe, such as sulking, accompanied by large-scale distracters such as paper tearing, spitting, chair rocking or loud interrupting).

How to give a choice—another verbal example: "Kate, if you can't complete the two problems on your own in the next 10 minutes, I will ask you to choose someone in the class to give you some help.

ESCM 10- Following through

Resolute, planned action in the face of extended off-task behaviour, or on-going disruptive behaviour that is seriously disturbing the learning environment.

Why is following through an effective management skill?

1. It clearly establishes that you mean what you say.
2. It models assertive behaviour in the face of threat. It models morally courageous behaviour.

ACTION: Following through is necessary when all other skills have not been effective. Behave as if you are confident even though you may be feeling nervous or uncertain. It is the certainty of the consequence rather than the severity of the consequence that is important (Rogers 1995, p 38).

How to follow through

1. Demonstrate confidence using appropriate body language and a calm, firm voice.
     1. Be conscious of the difference between a calm, firm, assertive tone and an angry or 'annoyed' tone. A voice does not have to be loud to imply firmness.
     2. Do what you planned and said you would do. Make it happen now.
     3. Consult with colleagues and/or administrators to plan an appropriate course of action for following through, if necessary.
     4. Avoid letting your embarrassment about what others may think erode your confidence.
     5. Reassure the class and work on your self-control.
     6. Reflect on the event later with a colleague if possible and:
          a. Debrief if necessary. Seek advice from your supervisor or guidance officer.
          b. Critique your action by asking: What did I do that helped? What did I do that did not help? What could I have done differently? Who can I go to for advice?
          c. Review your behaviour management plan if necessary – consider how effectively you used preventative strategies.

Nine useful generic skills for teachers

While teaching can certainly be a challenge, it is also one of the most rewarding careers out there. Check out some of the useful skills for

teachers to see if there are any areas you need to work on before you become one:

1. Patience

This is likely the single **most important skill** a teacher needs when dealing with learners. Kids these days are stubborn, and many lack the inherent respect for authority that we were taught at a young age. Spending a single day in a room full of noisy teenagers is enough to send any human being to the *Loony bin*, which is *why every good teacher needs patience* to find a way to work with his learners and earn their respect.

2. Adaptability

Different kids learn in different ways, and some lessons need unique teaching tools. Good teachers know how to *adapt their lesson plan* to their learners, so that all the kids learn optimally. This trait can take some experience and practice in a classroom setting, so give it time.

3. Imagination

Whether you teach high school chemistry or kindergarten, nothing is a more effective tool than using your imagination to *create new and interesting ways for your learners to learn.* You may be inspired by the work of another teacher, mentor, or a TV commercial - it doesn't matter. All that matters is that you **take the initiative** to find new ways for your kids to learn the material.

4. Teamwork

Teachers could have a hard time without a wide variety of support staff around them. If you feel alone, your school head, administrative staff, parent-teacher committee, and more are often available to provide you help. By working as a team, you may have an easier time increasing your learners' ability to learn and have fun.

5. Risk Taking

Sometimes to get the big reward, you may need to take a risk. Being a teacher is about finding a way to get kids to learn, and sometimes these *new learning methods* can be risky. Stick to it and you will soon find that others are following your teaching example.

6. Constant Learning

You can never know too much when you are a teacher, especially when it comes to the best way to teach your learners. Great teachers are constantly looking for ways to expand their horizons with courses, workshops, and seminars. Make sure you *do not become stagnant.*
Take courses to keep the content fresh in your mind.

7. Communication

No teacher will succeed if they do not have good communication skills. Clear, concise, and to the point - *the better your communication skills are, the easier your lessons will be*. There are many different types of classes available to help some teachers who may need help improving their skills.

8. Mentoring

Teachers need to always remember that, aside from parents, they are *one of the most consistent mentors in a child's life.* That means *setting a good example*, always. Teachers may also have learners that they spend extra time with being a mentor, which means that *being a good role model* is even more important.

9. Leadership

One of the other most important skills each teacher must have (besides patience) is **leadership**. Your learners need someone to guide them, to be in charge, and set the tone of the class. Leadership is a difficult skill, meaning you may want to get outside help if you feel that you could use more work on this skill, or any other for that matter.

Reflecting on Effective Instructional Strategies for Diverse Learners

Every teacher wants to provide the best instruction and education for their learners. *Effective teachers* integrate the following:

i. ethical concern for children and society,
ii. extensive subject matter competence,
iii. thoughtfully selected pedagogical practices,
iv. a depth of knowledge about their learners, including knowledge of learners with special needs and those without; an understanding of their individual strengths, interests, and needs, and
v. knowledge about their families and communities.

Strategies that have been successful for working with learners with diverse needs

1. *Get to know your learners' abilities*
One of the most common accommodations for learners with special needs is preferential seating. This doesn't always mean in the front row of the classroom right next to the teacher's desk. There are many instances where seating a learner in the front row can be catastrophic! Most of the rooms I see are grouped in clusters; I like to make sure that a learner I am working with is next to peers they feel comfortable with and can help explain a concept during the collaborative time. Seats away from distractions such as windows or doors is quite helpful for learners with attention issues.

ACTION: Check and make sure you have current documents for learners in your class.   Make a chart with what services each learner receives and how frequently that   service would be provided.

2. *Implement Universal Design for Learning (UDL)*
Universal Design is an approach to curriculum planning and mapping that makes learning engaging and accessible to a wider range of learners with different strengths and needs.

UDL builds on *Howard Gardner's theories of **multiple intelligences***, in that it calls for teaching to utilise multiple modalities, and for learners to respond to learning with a variety of assessment tools.

Educators that recognise the importance of UDL realise that we all learn and express ourselves in different ways and that to assess skills we need to

be allowed to use our strengths while practising our areas of need at the same time.

3. *Engage in Collaborative Planning and Teaching*

No classroom is an island, especially an inclusive classroom. Opening your room to service providers, paraprofessionals, special education teachers, and parents gives you valuable opportunities to participate in collaborative teaching. Collaborative teaching looks differently depending on what school, level, and setting you are working. I am fortunate enough to work in a school where collaborative teaching is encouraged and celebrated. Teachers have common planning times, and professional development time is often set aside for teachers to plan together. This often spans grade levels and subject areas.

ACTION: Try to find a common time to sit and meet with a Special Education Teacher.   How can you work together to improve learner learning? Draft a plan to hand to   your head teacher!

4. *Develop a strong Behaviour Management Plan*
Having a successful inclusive classroom depends upon having control of your classroom. It is essential to have clearly communicated expectations and goals that are accessible to all learners. Your classroom environment should be tailored to better suit diverse learners' needs. With learners' and specialists' input, create a checklist or action plan for learners.

Some specific behaviour management strategies that support effective instruction are:

- Posting daily schedules
- Displaying classroom rules and expectations
- Encouraging peer to peer instruction and leadership
- Using signals to quiet down, start working, and putting away materials
- Giving learners folders, labels, and containers to organize supplies
- Checking in with learners while they work
- Utilizing proactive rather than reactive interventions as needed
- Speaking to learners privately about any concerns
- Employing specific, targeted positive reinforcement when a learner meets a behavioural or academic goal.

ACTION: *Look through learner special needs to see if any learner has a formal   Behaviour Intervention Plan (BIP). Consult with a Special Education teacher for   resources on how to establish and strengthen behaviour management in your   classroom. If possible, have the SpEd teacher observe and give feedback.*

Classroom Management Strategies

Research indicates that teachers overwhelmingly report a lack of professional development support in improving classroom management. Despite this unideal situation, there are straightforward approaches you can implement by yourself. These approaches can enhance prosocial learner behaviour and academic engagement, establishing an orderly environment. Below are 20 research-backed classroom management strategies and techniques.

Use the ones that best appeal to your situation and teaching style

1. Model ideal behaviour
Make a habit of demonstrating behaviour you want to see, as many studies show that modelling *effectively teaches learners how to act* in different situations. A straightforward way to model certain behaviours is holding a mock conversation with an admin, other teacher, or learner helper in front of the class. Talking about a test or other relatable topic, be sure to:

- Use polite language
- Maintain eye contact
- Keep your phones in your pockets
- Let one another speak uninterrupted
- Raise concerns about one another's statements in a respectful manner

Activity: After, start a class discussion to list and expand upon the ideal behaviours you exemplified

2. Let learners help establish guidelines
Encourage all learners to help you build classroom rules, as *you'll generate more buy-in than just telling them what they're not allowed to do*.

Near the start of the session, start a discussion by asking learners what they believe should and shouldn't fly. At what points are phones okay and not okay? What are acceptable noise levels during lessons? This may seem like you are setting yourself up for failure, but - depending on the makeup of your class — you may be shocked at the strictness of some proposed rules. Regardless, having a discussion should lead to mutually understood and respected expectations.

3. Document rules
Do not let your mutually respected guidelines go forgotten.

Like handing out a syllabus, print and distribute the list of rules that the class discussion generated. Then, go through the list with your learners. Doing this emphasises the fact that you respect their ideas and intend to adhere to them. And when a learner breaks a rule, it will be easy for you to point to this document.

If you are feeling creative, you can include the rule list in a learner handbook with important dates, events, and curriculum information.

4. Avoid punishing the class

Address isolated behaviour issues instead of punishing an entire class, as *the latter can hurt your relationships with learners who are on-task* and thereby jeopardize other classroom management efforts. Instead, call out specific learners in a friendly manner.

For example:

- "Do you have a question?", **NOT** "Stop talking and disrupting other learners"
- "Do you need help focusing?", **NOT** "Pay attention and stop fooling around while I'm talking"

ACTION: This basic approach will allow you to keep a friendly disposition, while   immediately acknowledging poor behaviour.

5. Encourage initiative

Promote growth mindset, and inject variety into your lessons, by *allowing learners to work ahead and deliver short presentations* to share take-away points.

Almost inevitably, you'll have some eager learners in your classroom. You can simply ask them if they'd like to get ahead from time-to-time. For example, if you're reading a specific chapter in a textbook, propose that they read the following one too. When they deliver their subsequent presentations to preview the next chapter on your behalf, you may find that other learners want a bit more work as well.

6. Offer praise

Praise learners for jobs well done, as doing so *improves academic and behavioural performance*, according to a recent research review and study.

When it is sincere and references specific examples of effort or accomplishment, praise can:

- Inspire the class
- Improve a learner's self-esteem
- Reinforce rules and values you want to see

Perhaps more importantly, it encourages learners to repeat positive behaviour. Let's say a learner exemplifies advanced problem-solving skills when tackling a math word problem. Praising his or her use of specific tactics should go a long way in ensuring he or she continues to use these tactics. Not to mention, you'll motivate other learners to do the same.

7. Use non-verbal communication

Complement words with actions and visual aids to *improve content delivery,* helping learners focus and process lessons.

Many differentiated instruction strategies and techniques are rooted in these communication methods. For example, running learning stations — divided sections of your classroom through which learners rotate — allows you to deliver a range of non-spoken content types. These include videos, infographics, and physical objects such as counting coins.

8. Hold parties
Throw an occasional classroom party to acknowledge learners' hard work, *motivating them to keep it up.*

Even if it's just for 20 or 30 minutes, they should be happy with snacks and a selection of group games to play. Clarify that you're holding the party to reward them, and they can earn future parties by demonstrating ideal behaviour, collectively scoring high on assessments and more.

9. Give tangible rewards
Reward specific learners at the end of each lesson, in front of the class, as another *motivational and behaviour-reinforcement technique.*

Let's say a few learners are actively listening throughout the entire lesson, answering questions, and asking their own. Before the class ends, walk over to their desks to give them raffle tickets. So, others can learn, state aloud what each learner did to earn the tickets. On Friday, they can submit their tickets for a shot at a prize that changes each week — from candy to being able to choose a game for the next class party.

10. Build excitement for content
Start lessons by previewing particularly exciting parts, *hooking learner interest from the get-go.*

As the bell rings and learners settle, go through an agenda of the day's highlights. These could include group tasks, engaging bits of content and anything else to pique curiosity. For example, "Throughout the day, you'll learn about:"

- How to talk like you're a teacher (sentence structure)
- Why you don't know anyone who's won the lottery (probability)
- What all the presidents of Ghana have had in common (social analysis)

The goal of this classroom management technique is to immediately interest learners in your agenda and thereby dissuade misbehaviour.

11. Offer different types of free study time
Provide a range of activities during free study time to *appeal to learners who struggle to process content in silence, individually*.

You can do this by dividing your class into clearly sectioned solo and team activities. In separate sections, consider:

- Providing audiobooks, which can play material relevant to your lessons
- Maintaining a designated quiet space for learners to take notes and complete work
- Creating a station for challenging group games that teach or reinforce curriculum-aligned skills
- Allowing learners to work in groups while taking notes and completing work, away from quiet zones. Running these activities, free study time will begin to benefit diverse learners. This should contribute to overall classroom engagement.

12. Interview learners

Interview learners who aren't academically engaged or displaying prosocial behaviour to **learn how to better manage them.**

While running learning stations or a large-group activity, pull each learner aside for a few minutes. Ask about:

- What helps them focus
- Who they work well with
- Their favourite types of lessons
- Their favourite in-class activities
- Which kinds of exercises help them remember key lesson points

Note their answers to come up with activities and approaches that engage them, thereby limiting classroom disruptions.

13. Address bad behaviour quickly

Avoid hesitation when you must address bad behaviour, especially when a learner breaks a documented rule.

Acting sooner than later will help ensure that negative feelings — whether between learners or you and a learner — won't fester. Failure to act can result in more poor behaviour, leading to needlessly difficult conversations. But keep in mind: It's usually **best to talk to the learner in private.** Emerging research shows that punishing learners in front of peers has "limited value."

14. Consider peer teaching

Use peer teaching as a classroom management strategy if you feel your top performers can help engage and educate disruptive and struggling learners. Peer teaching activities, such as pairing learners together as reading buddies, can be **especially beneficial for learners who suffer from low confidence and poor interpersonal skills.**

Authoritative research states tutors improve self-esteem and interpersonal skills by giving feedback. Tutees realize these benefits by asking questions and receiving immediate clarification. A later study of at-risk learners echoes these advantages. Although you should spend time

teaching peer tutors how to properly communicate with tutees, you'll likely find the benefits are worth the work.

15. 'Gamify' personal learning plans

Motivate learners on personal learning plans by gamifying those plans, as studies - such as recent research from South Korea - indicate this will **continuously engage and incentivise them.**

Consider gamification strategies such as:

- **Adjusting your scoring system:** Give experience points (XP) along with traditional scores on tests and assignments, setting a goal for the learner to reach a certain amount of experience points (XP) per unit. For example, if a learner scores 60% on a test, give him or her 600 XP. You can also award XP for completing extra assignments, participating in class or anything else that shows effort to learn.

- **Using stages:** Refer to topics and units as stages. The former terms have clear connotations for you, but learners may not see how they fit together. If they're gamers, they'll understand that reaching the next stage requires overcoming precursory challenges. Emphasise this by framing certain tasks as prerequisites to reach the next learning stage. If these strategies work especially well for individual learners, you should see similar success by using them as class-wide learner management techniques.

APPLICATION OF CMS- (Scenarios/Case Studies)

A. Scenario- Management Problem:

Disrespect

Teacher's Role: *What can one do with a child who shows disrespect toward the teacher and the other learners in the class?*

Workable Strategies:

1. An immediate approach is to inform the child that this type of behaviour is unacceptable and clearly explain the consequences if it occurs again.
2. Have an individual conference with the child. Include the services of a school counsellor if it is available and have the child share his/her feelings concerning the problem and its possible solutions.
3. Create a team of classmates including him/her to do many activities together as possible. Then after a period, observe and evaluate any positive or negative change in the learner.

B. Case Study- Management Problem:

Hyperactivity-Shift in attention

Teacher's Role: What can be done for the learners who frequently shift their attention and/or interest in class?

Workable Strategies:
1. Assign the learner some type of classroom responsibility that he/she looks forward to doing (e.g., collection of completed work, sharing books for exercise)

2. Prepare a variety of short lessons to maximize learner attention and participation (e.g., manipulation exercises of 15-20 minutes in duration).
3. Provide learners with firm but fair classroom rules. Make sure you consistently adhere to the consequences.

C. Scenario-Management Problem:

Alcohol Use

Teacher's Role: A learner comes to class drunk. *What should the teacher do?*

Workable Strategies:

1. Remind the learners periodically about school rules concerning drinking.

2. Immediately send the learner to the head teacher's office and have him/her detained until you can talk to him/her.
3. Provide private follow-up interaction with the learner to discuss his/her reasons for drinking.

D. Scenario-Management Problem:

Individual attention to Special needs learners

Teacher's Role: A learner needs individual attention to master a task and/or skill. *How can a teacher personalize his /her instruction?*

Workable Strategies:

1. Use peer tutors to help learners' complete assignments

2. Provide frequent individual exercises for the learners to monitor his/her academic progress.

3. Set realistic goals for the learners by modifying class exercises when appropriate. Thoroughly review assigned work to ensure proper understanding

E. Scenario- Management Problem:

Absenteeism

Teacher's Role: What can teachers do to deal effectively with learners who are habitual absentees for any number of reasons (i.e., illness, family responsibilities and school phobias)?

Workable strategies:

1. Place the learner in a group with two other learners whom he/she is friends with but come to school regularly. Tell him/her that his/her regular attendance will earn the group marks. At the end of the week, those scores can be exchanged for a special group activity of the group's choosing.
2. Reinforce learners whenever they attend school with special activity and/or event of their own choosing (e.g., ten minutes of talking with classmates)
3. Have the learner role-play the feared situation in the presence of the teacher. After rehearsing alternative ways of responding to the fear of the learner, try several actual everyday situations.

F. Case Study: -Management Problem:

Annoying Classroom Distractors

Teacher's Role: How can a teacher prevent irritating classroom behaviours?

Workable Strategies:

1. Periodically review the rules and procedures of the classroom until learners can successfully adhere to them.
2. Intervene as soon as possible to prevent the misbehaviour from reoccurring (e.g., 'John/Joan, may I help you with your exercise?') as the learner begins to show signs of misbehaviour.
3. Use simple verbal reprimands when the misbehaviour occurs. Make sure that they are to the point, moderate in tone, and private. (e.g., 'Stop talking and work on your problems, please').

UNIT 4
EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

Educational Policies

The 2008 Education Act, which was the legal outcome of the 2007 National Education Reform programme, underpins much of the Education Strategic Plan (ESP).

Objectives for Education Policy
a. Improve equitable access to and participation in quality education at all levels
b. Improve quality of teaching and learning
c. Bridge gender gap in access to education
d. Improve access to quality education for people with disability
e. Promote science and technical education at all levels
f. Strengthen links between tertiary education and industry
g. Mainstream issues of population, family life, gender, health, HIV/AIDS/STI, conflicts, fire & road safety, civic responsibility, human rights, and environment in the curricula at all levels
h. Improve management of education service delivery

The Act allows for the following provisions:

1. Poverty allowance
District Assemblies to support children of parents who cannot afford the cost of basic education.

2. Decentralisation
Responsibility for the management of basic and second cycle education devolved to District Assemblies.

3. Inclusive Education (IE) and Special Educational Needs (SpED)
School facilities should be designed to meet the needs of children with special educational needs.
The delivery of education to young people with disabilities and special educational needs is informed by *three guiding principles*:
- The right to education
- The right to equality of educational opportunities
- The right and obligation to be included in and participate fully in the affairs of society.

4. National Teaching Council (NTC)
NTC with wide-ranging powers regarding the professional development, quality, registration, and licensing of teachers.

5. National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA)
NaCCA has been established with overall responsibility for the national curriculum and learner assessment at the first and Second cycles.

6. National Inspectorate Board (NIB)
A NIB will be established, independent of the Ministry of Education, to set, enforce and monitor a wide range of academic, infrastructure and education standards for public and private schools, with routine inspection of schools

7. Sub-sector Policies
Since 2003a number of sub-sector specific policies have been developed. These collectively define many aspects of education delivery. There follows a brief synopsis:

Science, Technology and Mathematics Education (STME).

The purpose of the STME policies is to strengthen the teaching and learning of science, technology, math at all levels of the system to produce a critical mass of human resource that will stimulate Ghana's technological capacity. In brief the objectives are:

- o Encourage the development of a STME culture supported by industry
- o Develop infrastructures industry and other sectors of the economy to provide the basic technological needs of society
- o Make the most of existing STME capabilities
- o Introduce and support STME projects, exhibitions and fairs at district, regional and national levels objectives

Strategies to achieve STME objectives:
a) Strengthen science education in all aspects of the educational system at the Basic and Senior Secondary levels
b) Provide Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) to enhance middle level management and TVET delivery at all levels
c) Introduce science and TVET innovations within the system
d) Ensure that by 2020, 60% of all learners in the Universities and 80% in the Polytechnics and Vocational institutions are registered in science and technology–related disciplines
e) Provide special incentives for learners and graduates of Science and Technology
f) Ensure that adult literacy classes include studies into cause and effect, relations between entities, and how things work

8. ICT in Education
The ICT in Education Policy (MoE, 2006 draft) builds on the Ghana ICT for Accelerated Development (ICT4AD, 2003), that aims to transform Ghana "into an information rich knowledge based and technology driven high income economy and society". To achieve this policy goal, ICT will be utilized in relation to equitable access, quality, science and technology, educational management, labour market needs especially skills for the 21st century. The purpose of the ICT policy framework is to ensure that there are adequate opportunities for those in the formal and non-formal sectors to develop skills that will enable them to benefit fully from ICTs. There will be an interlinked tri-partite approach: ICT as a management tool within

institutions at all levels, ICT skills development for all, ICT as a pedagogical tool, particularly in Senior High Schools.

9. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Policy
The TVET policy framework was developed in six partner Ministries. The thrust of the TVET policy is to integrate the various types of formal and non-formal TVET, from the elementary to the tertiary levels, into a single comprehensive demand-driven system, under a single umbrella management council for TVET, COTVET.

Selected strategies to achieve ICT policy purpose:

i. Modernise the educational system through ICTs to improve the quality of education and training at all levels thereby expanding access to education, training (teacher professional development) and research resources and facilities.
ii. Use ICTs to orient all levels of the country's educational system to the teaching and learning of all subjects, including science and technology
iii. Improve national competence in 21st century ICT skills
iv. Use ICTs to assist in ensuring that graduates from basic education are functionally literate and productive
v. Improve efficiency and management of the system
vi. Improve the trainability of the work force
vii. Improve training quality and relevance
viii. Promote productivity in agriculture through TVET
ix. Build a human resource base for increased manufacturing and industrialization
x. Develop a world-class workforce
xi. Promote productivity in the informal sector through TVET
xii. Build capacity for ICT for global competitiveness
xiii. Promote environmental sustainability concepts and practices in TVET (including sustainable funding)
xiv. Recognise prior learning as a basis for TVET
xv. Develop and implement a National TVET Qualifications framework.

10. Ghana's Free SHS Policy

The 1992 Ghanaian Constitution states that *"secondary education in its different forms which include technical and vocational education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular, by the progressive introduction of free education"*.

This constitutional mandate made the Government of Ghana to come out with this policy in addition to international conventions like the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). *Goal 4, Target 1 of the SDGs also states that "by 2030, all boys and girls complete free equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes"*.

The Free Senior High School Policy was thus launched in August 2017. By free SHS, Government of Ghana plans to absorb tuition, admission, library, science centre, ICT, examination and utility fees, boarding and meals cost and provide core textbooks. The broad objectives of the policy were to remove cost barriers through the absorption of fees approved by the Ghana Education Service Council, expand physical school infrastructure and facilities to accommodate the expected increases in enrolment, improve quality through the provision of core textbooks and supplementary readers, teachers rationalization and deployment; improve equity through implementation of 30% of places in elite schools for learners from public junior secondary schools, and prioritise and programme support and reform of Technical , Vocational, Educational Training (TVET) institutions at the senior high school level and facilitate skills acquisition.