

ITT Behaviour Management Network Update – March 2026

If you are keen to contribute to the network updates, please get in touch via email at steve.mcnichol@ntu.ac.uk. Similarly, if you have new colleagues who might want to join the network, please ask them to email me and I will add them to the distribution list!

Recent Developments

ITE Inspection Toolkit

The Ofsted ITE Inspection Toolkit makes specific reference to behaviour management within the 'Achievement' evaluation area. To meet the expected standard for this specific aspect of the area, trainees should *"learn, develop and apply the knowledge and skills they need to teach and manage behaviour effectively in their subject(s) and phase"*. To meet a strong standard for this specific aspect, trainees should *"gain a deep and thorough understanding of behaviour management...in their subject(s) and phase."*

Given the criteria, providers might find it useful to consider 'breaking down' the expected standard into:

How trainees **learn** about behaviour management approaches and strategies: This could focus on behaviour management content in the taught ITT curriculum and how this is delivered, reading and other resources that trainees are required to engage with and how trainees are supported to observe effective behaviour management in schools. If behaviour an aspect of management is a focus of Intensive Training and Practice (ITaP), this could fall within the 'Introduce' and 'analyse' phases of the ITaP cycle. Links to the ITTECF are likely to fall within the 'learn that' statements.

How trainees **develop** behaviour management approaches and strategies: This could focus on activities such as classroom rehearsal, scripting routines and responses, practicing non-verbal communication and focusing on specific targets. This could also include how mentors are trained and supported to develop the behaviour management skills of trainees through guidance, target-setting and providing developmental feedback. If an aspect of behaviour management is a focus of Intensive Training and Practice (ITaP), this could fall within the 'prepare' phase of the ITaP cycle. Links to the ITTECF are likely to fall within the 'learn how to' statements.

How trainees **apply** behaviour management approaches and strategies: This could focus on how successfully trainees manage behaviour when teaching whole-class lessons, using evidence from lesson observations and trainees' reflections. If an aspect of behaviour management is a focus of Intensive Training and Practice (ITaP), this could fall within the 'enact' phase of the ITaP cycle and how this has impacted on trainees' practice. Summative end-of-training assessments of practice may also provide information about how trainees have successfully applied the strategies that they have learnt and developed over training.

When considering self-evaluation and how to distinguish between the ‘expected’ and ‘strong’ standard, providers could consider what might constitute evidence of a “*deep and thorough understanding of behaviour management*” (whilst appreciating that this is a rather subjective judgement) and how trainees are given the opportunity to demonstrate this. Examples might include academic assessments based on behaviour management, active participation in online tasks and activities that deepen knowledge and understanding, engaging in joint development with qualified teachers or conducting practitioner enquiry related to behaviour management. However, this is not an exhaustive list and I’d be keen to hear ideas from others to share with the network!

Book Chapter Review – Part 3 of ‘What Do New Teachers Need to Know? A Roadmap to Expertise’ by Peter Foster

“Knowledge is the key to expertise,” asserts Peter Foster in Part Three of *What Do New Teachers Need to Know? A Roadmap to Expertise*. This section, which focuses on behaviour management, certainly delivers on that promise, offering a clear and well-structured blend of practical knowledge for the novice teacher.

As a trainee teacher, behaviour management has often been a source of anxiety. Confronting the reality that negative behaviour is both inevitable and requires deliberate management can feel disheartening, and during early placements it can be an uncomfortable truth to navigate. Although the field is well served by established authors such as Tom Bennett and Bill Rogers, their comprehensive frameworks can sometimes feel overwhelming for trainees, particularly when the breadth of strategies appears difficult to implement within the constraints of a host teacher’s classroom. As guests in established teacher’s space, the desire not to overstep or appear overly innovative can inhibit the confident application of these approaches.

Foster’s contribution, however, feels far more accessible. He offers concrete, evidence-informed strategies, accompanied by concise verbal routines that trainees can practise and adapt to their own style. The inclusion of examples from trainee and early-career teachers was – for me – particularly exciting; while these practices are grounded in wider theoretical traditions, seeing them used successfully in contemporary classrooms makes them feel much more relatable and achievable. Foster also addresses persistent misconceptions—most notably the widely circulated belief that “you need a certain type of personality to manage behaviour.” For me, this section of the book goes a long way towards dispelling that stereotype, replacing it with a more empowering and practice-based understanding of what effective behaviour management entails.

Tim, Primary PGCE trainee.

Research Summary

Title: Development of classroom management competencies throughout teacher education: a longitudinal study

Authors: Jasmin Bauersfeld, Bernadette Gold & Manfred Holodynski

Citation: Bauersfeld, J., Gold, B. & Holodynski, M. (2025) Development of classroom management competencies throughout teacher education: a longitudinal study. *Teacher Development*. 29:5, 891-911

This study explores how trainee teachers develop classroom-management skills over the course of their teacher-education programme. The researchers followed trainees across multiple stages of their training to understand how their knowledge, confidence, and practical abilities changed over time. They focused on three key areas: what trainees *know* about classroom management, how well they can *notice* important events in a classroom, and how effectively they can *apply* strategies in real teaching situations.

The study found that trainees usually begin with a basic understanding of classroom-management theory, but this knowledge alone does not make them confident or effective in practice. As trainees progress through their programme, they become better at recognising what is happening in a classroom — for example, spotting early signs of off-task behaviour or noticing when instructions are unclear. This skill, known as “professional vision,” develops gradually and is strongly linked to improved classroom-management performance.

Practical experience was shown to be essential. Trainees made the biggest improvements when they had opportunities to practise strategies, receive feedback, and reflect on their teaching. Observing experienced teachers, analysing classroom videos, and discussing real scenarios also helped them connect theory to practice.

Overall, the study shows that classroom-management competence develops in stages and requires a combination of knowledge, guided practice, and reflective learning. It highlights that trainees should not expect to master behaviour management immediately; instead, it grows steadily through experience, support and repeated opportunities to apply what they have learned.

Links and Resources

The first episode of the podcast *Inside Teacher Training* includes some relevant discussion about supporting trainees to develop behaviour management skills. If you would like to join the podcast for an episode that fully focuses on developing the behaviour management of trainees, please get in touch with me at steve.mcnichol@ntu.ac.uk. These are the Spotify and web-browser link to *Inside Teacher Training*, though it is available on all major podcast platforms.

Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/show/3qpJsV0ezUM8JHjYFDJgwe?si=e86910444f5f48cf>

Web-browser (Acast): <https://shows.acast.com/inside-teacher-training>