

Supply teaching can be unpredictable, challenging yet incredibly rewarding. In this new series, between now and January SecEd will be offering wide-ranging advice and best practice support for supply teachers, ranging from your rights and legal duties to CPD, classroom practice, and placement tips



Classroom advice: The element of surprise

By John Dabell

Supply teaching isn't about seeking beauty, chasing serendipity and uncovering the poetic. Mostly it's about "survival" and making sure that students are fully engaged in their learning and they enjoy the time they share with you.

Supply teachers have a demanding job, no-one can refute that. Sometimes it can be a walk in the park but it is far from easy to walk into a school you don't know and teach 30 students you know nothing about which include a heady mix of EAL, Pupil Premium, SEN and refugee arrivals.

It is like we are on the ropes as soon as the bell

Rapid response

Being a "supply" teaches us lots of things including having low expectations of a school but high expectations of the children. It comes as no surprise that lesson plans may not have been left or if they have then they tend to be sketchy, inadequate or just a sticky note on page 56 of a Teacher Guide with the instruction, "follow this page".

Picking up someone else's lesson "plans" can be a nightmare as what you are given are very often just one-off activities, mopping up or finishing or something to "keep them busy". If you are lucky, really lucky, then you'll find a "sub tub" in class. This is something every class should have – a container of supply work just in case a regular teacher can't make it into school (this is rarer than hen's teeth).

What every supply teacher will always have is a bank of tried and tested and generic 'rapid response' lesson plans that can be used with any year group. What they will also have are surprises up their sleeves to feed into a lesson

rings. But we also have the upper hand because we have a special ingredient: the element of surprise.

Children don't know who we are and what we are "like", so we have golden opportunities to wow them, take them by surprise, widen their eyes, do something different and capture their interest like a Venus fly trap. Every teacher should be aiming to do something surprising everyday but covering a class enables us to supply memorable moments and we are well-placed to make an impact and seize the day with the unexpected and oxygenate learning.

Surprises help us to arrest children's attention so they stop in their tracks. Something novel and something fresh can breathe new life into a class and it is what all great teachers do anyway. Presenting a different way of doing something or sharing a new strategy can often get a class listening instantly and "on your side". A surprise can hook, make an association, make a connection and make someone's day. It can help to reinforce a concept, it could help to derail thinking or take it on a completely different track to make new connections or it could help turn something upside down and even inside out.

The secret therefore is the six Ps: Prior Planning and Preparation Prevents Poor Performance. There is room for another P here too! What every supply teacher will always have is a bank of tried and tested and generic "rapid response" lesson plans that can be used with any year group. What they will also have are surprises up their sleeves to feed into a lesson, to add extra value, to add a twist.

Four surprises

They come in all shapes and sizes, but surprises are one of four things: music, props, images and ourselves. They can all be used for maximum effect to engage children emotionally and make learning "stuff" meaningful and memorable.

Don't confuse surprises with a popularity contest or a circus act. Creating magic moments in a lesson aren't just so you can look good and be liked, they are principally to profit the learning experience but the spin-off is that they can make our life easier.

Surprise 1: Music

Playing music can help enhance a lesson because it possesses neural firepower and it has a powerful

effect on learning. Music can radically change the mood and atmosphere of a class in a second and can prime the mind for learning. You could play music when pupils come into a lesson or at key points in a lesson to change direction. By carefully selecting music you can make an ordinary lesson extraordinary. Music can be used as a backdrop, to rejuvenate, to demonstrate, to neutralise, to pacify and to add warmth.

Music is a potent ally because it engages emotions, it can help with abstract reasoning and brain-work, cut out distractions and structure thoughts for learning. So whether you go for gospel, classical, jazz or hip-hop, think about music as a brain trigger, involve children inside the sounds and lyrics so they can feel uplifted and inspired to work smarter, not harder.

Surprise 2: Props

All teachers need a bag of tricks, a suitcase of curios and a pile of props to supplement their lessons. Unusual artefacts and objects can flabbergast, entertain and educate and we should utilise them to power home a point, illustrate an idea or make a concept stick. Reliable servants of surprise can be magic tricks but these have to link to learning. For example, using cards and coins in maths can illustrate various concepts.

Depending on how brave you feel, you could wear a crazy wig, don a fun tie, put on a pair of crazy glasses and dress up like Spiderman. If this isn't for you then you could choose an interesting and mysterious object or be super-creative with plain ordinary bog-standard objects like a bunch of keys.

One of my absolute fail-safe props that always "does the trick" is to use a living puppet, the sort that have moving mouths and look a bit like Muppets. These are exceptionally effective "side-kicks" and perfect for getting attention across all ages – I have used them from key stages 1 to 4.

Puppets can be used in any subject for introducing a topic, offering commentaries, thoughts and opinions, disagreeing, challenging children's ideas and being unpredictable. I frequently use two puppets at a time called Ant and Dec and they act as teachers in their own right by bringing a lesson to life and saying some surprising things!

Surprise 3: Images

Still or moving images can "press shift" in the minds of learners and act as vivid surprises to power interest, boost motivation and increase self-confidence.

As photos, pictures, illustrations, cartoons and video are "in your face" resources, they have a tattoo effect because they can grab attention, astonish, jolt and inspire wonder and leave permanent memory imprints.

The internet makes searching for images easy and they can slot into anything you teach. You can select unusual pictures in the news to discuss, you can select quirky pictures where children have to guess what something is or what might be happening, you can use real-life photos to kick-start learning conversations, exploit them as writing prompts or use cartoons and infographics to simplify tricky concepts.

Videos that "push the envelope" or challenge stereotypes are definitely worthwhile and you can find many great examples on sites like The Literacy Shed.

Surprise 4: Ourselves

The number one resource that we can use to really make a difference is a human resource – ourselves! We can choose to be present or have presence. The most effective teachers use their own teaching assets to make a difference using their voices, faces and bodies to dramatic effect.

Teaching has to include overstatement and amplification so our verbal and non-verbal behaviours need to be exaggerated so that children are stirred up and energised by who we are.

To make a lasting impression, read a story, give instructions and have discussions by talking "posh", "cockney", "robotic" or like a pirate. You can talk slow or fast, whisper, shout or even sing like an opera singer.

I'm not surprised

If you are a teacher that likes to do things differently and pull rabbits out of hat then surprises are your bread and butter. At the end of the day, learning has got to stand out and it has to be sticky. If surprises can give your teaching the Velcro quality then it is worth every ounce of effort.

When parents ask "what happened at school today?", they normally don't get much of a response. But if you can be the teacher of surprises then the chances are children will mention the music you played, the unusual object you showed them or the silly voice you used and link it and associate it with the concept you were teaching.

As supply teachers we have the opportunity to shake snowglobes and take pupils by surprise right from the outset. By being different and adopting a maverick streak we can set the tone for the day and "win" the minds of learners in any placement and "supply" things they won't forget.

John Dabell is a teacher, teacher trainer and writer. He has been teaching for 20 years and is the author of 10 books. He also trained as an Ofsted inspector. Visit www.johndabell.co.uk and read his previous best practice articles for SecEd via <http://bit.ly/2gBiaXv>

Further information

Literacy Shed: www.literacyshed.com

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Supply Teaching Still to come in this series

- Safeguarding and child protection & your rights as a supply teacher (November 9)
- Managing behaviour & CPD (November 16)
- SEND (November 23)
- Your legal obligations as a supply teacher & safeguarding and child protection (December 7)
- Dealing with other staff & handling difficult placements (January 4)
- CPD & moving from supply to full-time (January 11)

All articles in this series will also appear online at www.sec-ed.co.uk/best-practice/

How to prepare for a placement

By Helen Frostick

The trend in recruitment is currently that there is an increasing shortage of teachers at both primary and secondary school levels.

As a result schools in both sectors are turning increasingly to supply agencies to address this shortage and to bridge the employment gap. In many instances, in spite of heavy agency fees, many short-term placements can result in substantive job offers if both parties are in agreement. This makes it doubly important that both schools and supply teachers work together to ensure a positive placement.

School budgets are tight and expectations are high, so supply teachers have to be able to perform in any given situation, even if teaching a year group unfamiliar to them. Feedback is scarce so for the vast majority of supply teachers the beginning of a placement is like starting a new job every day.

In order to get the most out of a placement there are many lines of enquiry to take before the placement commences, but there are differences between primary and secondary school placements.

Schools are very different. Some schools will be highly organised with everything supply teachers need when they arrive. However, some will give a supply teacher, for example, just a slip of paper with a few plans written on the back which are tricky to understand.

This article sets out lines of enquiry for supply teachers to take when preparing for a placement and also offers general advice on the legislation and policy that supply teachers should be familiar with.

Preparing for a placement

The first line of enquiry is as to whether there is a "Supply Teacher" file. Many schools will have such a file with key information set out. If there is no such file one of the first questions to ask, beyond the year group to be taught, is for the timetable of the day including start, finish and break times.

In primary schools, you will also need to know the lining up procedures and procedures for dismissal at the close of the day. Most schools will have different times for key stage 1 and 2.

Behaviour management is arguably the biggest

sanctioning, such as community service/litter patrol?

Also, what are the detention procedures and processes? To have the names of the heads of departments for the subjects you will be required to teach will be useful too, as ports of call.

As part of your general health and safety checks, ask about the fire regulations and meeting points should there be a fire evacuation.

Legislation and policy

In order to prepare for any placement in schools, there is important legislation to familiarise yourself with beforehand.

Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 is an essential read for all supply teachers. The background to all safeguarding legislation lies in the Children's Act of 1989 and it is an area that is regularly reviewed and updated. It pays to keep up-to-speed with these changes. Most recent amendments to policies include the areas of sexual exploitation and peer-to-peer abuse.

The school will have its own version of a child protection and safeguarding policy, which needs to be read alongside *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

The Prevent strategy regarding anti-extremism and anti-terrorism again is an essential area to do homework on. If you have any suspicions in school regarding such activity the referral is made directly through the police.

School policies to read if you are able (depending on the length of your placement and the time you have to prepare) include behaviour and discipline including anti-bullying, marking, homework, assessment and the staff handbook in preparation for the placement.

In addition, familiarise yourself with the policies of the subjects you will be teaching in a secondary school.

The Equality Duty

The Equality Duty is a legal requirement for schools. The duty helps schools to focus on key issues of concern and addresses how to improve pupils' outcomes. The history of the Equality Duty and schools is that previously public bodies were bound by three sets of duties to promote disability, race and gender equality. In April 2011 these were replaced by a single Public Sector Equality Duty.

The new duty relates to all aspects of a person's identity known as "protected characteristics" –

Safeguarding is at the core of school practice and procedure. Establish who the safeguarding leads in the school are, and the key policies and procedures around keeping children safe

challenge for supply teachers. Find out quickly the rewards and sanctions used at the school to promote a positive behaviour management strategy.

However, also find out the name of the person to whom you can refer pupils who display behaviour that compromises the learning of the class.

On a longer term placement, supply teachers may be asked to plan lessons. Before the placement starts find out if specific schemes of works are used and make sure that you are given access passwords from the school. Many schools use generic plans – find out so that you can be prepared well in advance.

Safeguarding is at the core of school practice and procedure. Establish who the safeguarding leads in the school are – in case of a need for referral of any disclosures – and the key policies and procedures around keeping children safe. All schools will robustly follow set procedures which are good to be familiar with.

As you will be teaching children with many diverse medical needs directly, find out the names of the pupils who require asthma inhalers, epi-pens, etc. What are the procedures for first aid in the school? Is there a medical room and is there a timetable of first-aiders to refer children with injuries to?

Before you begin your placement find out if there are vulnerable pupils in the class. Are there any trigger points that you can avoid, such as not seating certain pupils next to one another?

An important first line of enquiry for a secondary school placement is which subjects you will be required to teach and to which year groups. Will there be a pastoral role, such as being a form tutor which necessitates registration? If so what are the procedures?

You will need to have a realistic and honest view of the make-up of the class or classes you will be required to teach. What are the methods of behaviour management and who can you call upon in an emergency? Is there a particular method for

namely race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maturity and gender reassignment. All schools (and teachers) should consider each aspect of the duty having due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination. This is in addition to the need to actively promote equality of opportunity.

The Equality Duty supports good education as it helps to identify priorities such as underperformance, poor progression and bullying. Schools are required to collate evidence such as submitting Racial Incidents Reporting Forms to their local authority which helps to collate evidence and what has been done as a result to combat it. Make sure that you report any such incidents to a senior manager.

Conclusion

It can be daunting starting a placement at a school but the guidance outlined above hopefully will act as a useful aide memoir. All school communities vary in terms of ethos and welcome but the best course of action if in any doubt about practice or procedure is to go to the named person for supply teacher induction.

Teachers are not taught to be supply teachers during their teacher training and it really is a different job from a regular class teacher. The key to a successful placement lies in communication on both sides.

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Further information

For safeguarding guidance and policy documents from the DfE, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, *Working Together to Safeguard Children* and *What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused* (all March 2015), visit <http://bit.ly/1iVHC91>



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SecEd's supply teaching series continues. This week, we offer advice on your rights, entitlements and responsibilities as a supply teacher. We also offer safeguarding advice for supply staff, including practical advice about fulfilling your child protection duties and responsibilities



By Matt Bromley

There's no doubting the fact that being a supply teacher can be tough. You never know what tomorrow will bring and, as an unfamiliar face at the front of class, personification of the fact the regular teacher is absent, you may sometimes find it difficult to establish rapport with students and may struggle to control their behaviour by means of positive reinforcement rather than hard sanctions.

However, for all its challenges, supply teaching can also be hugely rewarding. After all, variety – as they say – is the spice of life and as a supply teacher you are afforded the privilege of working in a range of different schools and with a variety of staff and students.

But, for all its uncertainties, there are some constants you can rely on as a supply teacher. Your rights, for example, are written in stone and you must ensure that, no matter where you're posted and for how long, you are supported both by your agency and by the school in which you're teaching to do the best you can do.

Employment rights

From the very first day, your school (legally known as "the hirer") must provide you with equal access to collective facilities and amenities. In other words, you are entitled to access those facilities which are provided for permanent members of staff.

This might include access to physical facilities such as the canteen and the staffroom, as well as access to transport facilities and car parking. But it might also include access to a permanent job as and when this is advertised internally or externally.

After 12 weeks in a school, your entitlement increases. At this stage, for example, your supply agency is responsible for providing you with the same basic pay and conditions you would have received if you had been employed directly by the school. This includes the same basic pay rate (in other words, the same rate paid to teachers in similar roles in the same school), the same hours of work, rest breaks, lunch breaks, etc., and the same holiday entitlement (included in the daily pay rate payable by schools which are covered by the *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document – STPCD*).

This also includes paid time off for ante-natal appointments, and alternative work should a risk assessment require this.

What's more, after 12 weeks in the same role and with the same "hirer", that school has responsibilities towards you under health and safety legislation.

The 12-week period is calculated from the first day of your placement with a school. Crucially, you do not have to work full-time in order for the week to count towards the qualifying period. What's more, any school closures – such as school holidays – are not counted when calculating the 12-week period. A week is counted from Monday to Sunday.

“Your rights are written in stone and you must ensure that, no matter where you're posted and for how long, you are supported both by your agency and by the school”

If you have a break of more than six weeks, however, you will need to restart the clock and accrue another 12 weeks of qualifying service. Any school closures are not counted when calculating the six-week break.

However, if you are unable to work because of sickness or injury then the qualifying period is paused rather than restarted and will resume when you return to work. The time you take off for sickness or injury will not count towards the 12-week qualifying period or towards the six-week break.

If you are on maternity leave then any leave taken for maternity reasons for up to 26 weeks after childbirth will count towards your qualifying period for equal treatment. If your contract with the school ends during your maternity leave, you will stop

accruing qualifying service.

If you're on paternity leave then any paternity leave counts towards your qualifying period for equal treatment. If your contract with the school ends during your paternity leave, you will stop accruing qualifying service.

Pay and conditions

What else do you need to know about your rights as a supply teacher?

First, if you crossed the threshold before you started working as a supply, you will not automatically receive payment from the upper pay scale.

Rather, schools have the discretion to place newly appointed teachers on the main or upper pay scale range. You will, therefore, need to negotiate an appropriate salary with the school.

Ideally, the school's pay policy should articulate how they will calculate the pay of a newly appointed teacher and the same method should be used for supply teachers when they become entitled to equal treatment after 12 weeks.

Once you qualify for equal treatment, you are not entitled to back pay for the qualifying period.

If you are pregnant, once you have qualified for equal treatment, your school must offer you paid time off to attend antenatal appointments. Your school must also complete a full risk assessment as soon as you notify them, and they must offer you an alternative role if this is deemed necessary. If no suitable alternative role is available you are entitled to be suspended on full pay.

However, you should note that supply teachers are not entitled to maternity or paternity pay while employed by an agency.

Neither are supply teachers able to contribute to the Teachers' Pension Scheme while employed by an agency.

Once you have qualified for equal treatment you are, however, entitled to holiday pay. This may be paid to you at the end of your contract if you have been unable to take your entitlement to holiday during your placement.

Your responsibilities

With rights come responsibilities, of course, and supply teachers who are paid by the terms set out in the STPCD – which covers teachers working in local authority-controlled and most voluntary-aided and faith schools, as well as many academies – must also assume the contractual duties that are attached.

In other words, because the STPCD does not differentiate between supply teachers and permanent teachers, schools can reasonably expect that, if a supply teacher is being paid under the STPCD, they will carry out all of the duties of a teacher.

For example, the STPCD sets out a series of teachers' duties in addition to their key duties in the classroom. These additional duties include communicating with parents and carers, and contributing to the development, evaluation and implementation of a school's policy, practices and procedures.

These additional duties might also require a supply teacher to work outside the timetabled day. With the exception of planning, preparation and assessment time (PPA), all of the duties directed by the school will fall within the 1,265 hours' directed time budget, which will be spread over 195 days within the school year.

If a supply teacher is not employed in accordance with the STPCD, then their working hours and duties should be set out in the terms of their contract and, in such circumstances, it pays to be diligent in reading the small print!

Many private schools and some academies, for example, do not employ teachers in accordance with the STPCD and these schools set out in their contract of employment the duties which they expect teachers, including supply teachers, to perform.

It is wise to exercise caution before agreeing to accept a supply contract from schools which vary the number of hours worked per day. In some of these circumstances, teachers may only be paid for actual lessons taught, taking no account of the other duties undertaken by the teacher and thereby significantly reducing their pay.

Health and safety

Finally, schools are expected to give the same level of attention to the health and safety of supply teachers as they do to permanent members of staff.

Schools must take specific steps to ensure that supply teachers are adequately prepared for work at the school.

Schools are required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASAWA) to ensure, as far as is reasonably practical, the health and safety of all employees and non-employees – including supply teachers – in their workplace. This includes assessing risks to health and safety and taking steps to reduce or eliminate these risks.

As the school's duty covers non-employees as well as employees, the fact that a supply teacher is employed by an agency does not remove the school's duty to ensure their health and safety. Rather, agency supply staff must be afforded the same protection as teachers permanently employed by the school.

And this works both ways, of course: supply teachers are also required by the HASAWA to ensure the health and safety of all other employees and non-employees they work with. SecEd

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Supply Teaching: SecEd Series

SecEd's current series of best practice articles for supply teachers will run until January. See below for links to specific previous articles and the list of forthcoming pieces:

- Classroom advice: The element of surprise, *SecEd*, November 2: <http://bit.ly/2ID24SQ>
- Preparing for a placement, *SecEd*, November 2: <http://bit.ly/2znOmt8>
- Managing behaviour & CPD (November 16)
- SEND (November 23)
- Your legal obligations as a supply teacher & safeguarding and child protection (December 7)
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Safeguarding: A shared duty...

By Sam Preston

Child abuse is illegal under UK law and as educators it is our mandatory duty to safeguard both those deemed vulnerable, and those where protective intervention has been too late.

However, this presents challenges for educators working as supply teachers, who often may be meeting new students on a weekly if not daily basis. So, how can they meet their safeguarding responsibilities without knowing the individual student's circumstances nor being party to the bigger collective picture of knowledge?

First, regardless of how long you spend with a school and set students, never underestimate the vital role that you play in their protection. Your safeguarding training and expertise can enable you to spot the signs of abuse, or that something just isn't right, just as proficiently as a teacher working in a permanent position.

No, you won't have the deep knowledge of a specific child's behaviour, however, you do have the opportunity, with a fresh approach, to spot worrying signs.

All schools aim to ensure children have access to someone they feel they can talk to, who they can trust. As a supply teacher, you are actually in a strong position to meet this need and identify concerns, as you may be perceived by children as a neutral source of help and be seen as an impartial person who can be trusted.

First steps

To ensure you are fully prepared to meet your safeguarding duties, it is extremely important that you seek out the following on arrival (most schools should provide this to you, but keep this checklist just in case):

- The designated safeguarding leads (DSL), their classroom/offices and contact details.
- The school's safeguarding and pastoral procedures including the process of reporting (e.g. are there forms you must fill out or do they use their learning platform?).
- If you have been seconded to a school for a longer term placement, you should request a briefing with the safeguarding lead to identify students who are particularly vulnerable, known to be at risk or have specific safeguarding needs

As a supply teacher, it is your responsibility to ensure you are kept up-to-date with the latest safeguarding knowledge

Spotting the signs

Listed below are some top behaviours to look out for when working with students. Understandably, progressive changes in behaviour might be difficult to spot without deeper knowledge of a child, however, there are many signs you would still be capable of spotting:

- Behavioural: changes in eating habits, shrinking away from or seeming threatened by physical contact (e.g. during PE music lessons, drama classes), age-inappropriate sexual behaviours, sudden unexplained personality changes, mood swings and seeming insecure.
- Physical: cuts and bruises (especially those presenting as defensive wounds), unrealistic descriptions of events to explain injuries, signs of self-harm.
- Verbal: using words or phrases that are "too adult" for their age, unexplained silences, withdrawal, or suddenly being less talkative in class.

Concerned about a student?

You have spotted something you're concerned about, so what should you do now? While every school will have its own individual policy and procedures to follow, it is imperative that you refer your concerns to the school's DSL/pastoral lead as a starting point. If they're unavailable, make sure you tell someone employed by the school, fill out the appropriate paperwork and detail your concerns while fresh in your mind.

If a student discloses abuse to you

So, what should you do if a child chooses to disclose to you? If a child proactively opens a conversation with you, then it is imperative that you record your discussion in line with the school's safeguarding procedures. Here are some tips to help you during discussion:

- Be an empathetic listener. Remind the student that it is not their fault. They did whatever they needed to, to cope.
- Be receptive and understanding of their view on the situation despite your potentially differing opinion. It might be tempting to "rail road" in with a suggested solution or your personal perception of the situation, however, it is imperative to allow the student to air their thoughts in an open and trusting environment.
- Honour their boundaries: ask for permission before any reassuring appropriate touch. It is important that they feel in control of their body at all times.
- Let the student know you're going to report it – otherwise they may feel like you're going behind their back and they should never have told you in the first place. If a student says they want to speak to you but don't want you to tell anyone, you must make it clear that information may be shared. A good way of achieving this is to positively reinforce first, e.g: "I'm really glad you felt able to approach/speak to me and I am here to listen/help. I want you to know that if I think you are at risk I will share information."

And if the alleged perpetrator is a member of the school staff, you still follow safeguarding reporting procedures but you should also request the school's whistleblowing policy and report such allegations to the headteacher. If the allegation is about the headteacher then you must speak to the DSL. You should also ask for confirmation that your concern will be reported to the chair of governors/trustees. Remember: if you suspect abuse, you are legally required to report it.

School trips

As an accompanying adult, you are responsible for minimising the risk of harm by identifying and managing potential risks and having a positive and open relationship with the children in your care. If you do have any child protection concerns, you should report them to the DSL lead with you on the day.

As you will be out with students at an unfamiliar location, occurrences may arise where they need personal assistance from you, e.g. chaperoned to the toilet, or for physical activities, maybe strapping into a harness or help with a seatbelt. In these situations, it is important that you avoid situations where you are completely unobserved when physical touching is required.

Seek permission from the student before helping, and do it openly – ideally with other staff present.

Protect yourself

So, how do you ensure that your behaviour is always appropriate and professional? With the rise of social media, for example, how are you to deal with student communication? Here are some top pieces of advice:

- Always adhere to the Department for Education (DfE) guidance and school's procedures and guidance at all times.
- Avoid physical contact and over familiarity with children, as this could be misinterpreted. Avoid being alone with a child in confined and secluded areas.
- Where possible, make sure that classroom doors are left open or that you can be seen by other people.
- Do not arrange to meet a student on their own outside of school hours.
- Never take photographs of students, add them to your social media accounts, exchange emails or text messages, or give out your own personal details.
- Be mindful of what you post on social media. As with many other professions, teachers have been fired following evidence placed on Facebook and Instagram posts, tweets, and other social media. Expect private social media posts to be viewed by a wider public audience and use responsibly.

Stay up-to-date with legislation/guidance

The world of legislative protection for young people is continuously evolving in line with case learnings and outcomes. For example, the DfE has released updates to its *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (September 2016) statutory guidance and *Child Sexual Exploitation: Definition and guide for practitioners* (February 2017).

It is essential that any frontline professional trained before these dates understands the latest requirements they are required to embed in everyday safeguarding practice. Check with your employer: under the latest statutory guidance they must provide you with regular safeguarding updates throughout the year. As a supply teacher, it is your responsibility to ensure you are kept up-to-date with the latest safeguarding knowledge and how to adhere to the latest safeguarding guidance. [SecEd](#)

• Sam Preston is safeguarding director for SSS Learning, an e-learning training provider offering training on a broad range of child protection and safeguarding issues.

Further information

For safeguarding guidance and policy documents from the DfE, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (last updated September 2016), *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (last updated February 2017) and *What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused* (last updated March 2015), visit <http://bit.ly/1iVHC91>



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SecEd's supply teaching series continues. This week, we offer advice on accessing high-quality professional development as a supply teacher, as well as some behaviour management guidance for those constantly working with new classes from school to school

Managing pupil behaviour

By Ben Solly

Managing pupil behaviour is a perennial hot topic in education – everyone seems to have a strong opinion on how to achieve a calm and purposeful learning environment.

Teaching is a demanding profession and each day brings with it a plethora of challenges, particularly in relation to pupil behaviour in class. Even for the most experienced and effective teachers, who are well established in their school, poor pupil behaviour can often derail a lesson and affect the learning of other pupils.

So, for supply teachers, it should come as no surprise that behaviour is high on the list of anxieties that a temporary member of staff might have as they enter a school for the first time.

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The last decade in education has seen a change in the way schools tackle teacher absence. The introduction of “rarely cover” has meant that teachers now do not very often step in to teach a class when colleagues are absent; cover supervisors are commonly employed in schools to provide a consistent presence within the organisation and provide short-term cover solutions.

However, where cover supervisors are not employed, or when a more long-term absence is anticipated, most schools will turn to a supply agency to provide a subject expert in order to ensure their pupils' learning is not adversely affected.

Additionally, a shortage of teachers nationally has compounded recruitment problems for schools and this has led to many short-term contracts being offered to supply teachers up and down the country.

Considering the substantial challenges facing

supply teachers in both primary and secondary schools, what strategies can be employed to maximise the chances of securing good levels of pupil behaviour throughout the duration of their contract at a school? This article will provide practical examples for supply teachers to implement in order to maintain good levels of student progress in difficult circumstances when teacher absence occurs.

Get the basics right

From the perspective of a headteacher, I want supply teachers to fit into their new role as seamlessly as possible and to hit the ground running from day one.

My advice to new colleagues on their first day of supply teaching is to focus on the basics – don't try anything too flashy or ambitious and keep things simple for the first few lessons with a group while you establish yourself.

Supply teachers should aim to get to school early for a variety of reasons. You may need to familiarise yourself with key school policies or processes, or

it might be as simple as getting yourself set up in the classroom you are going to be based in and acclimatising yourself with the resources available to you.

Your preparation can begin before your placement. Before your first day, get your hands on key documentation such as the school behaviour policy as well as the procedures for rewards and sanctions.

The school website would be a good place to start, but if you cannot find what you are looking for then there will be key members of staff within the school who can provide you with this information. Be proactive and well prepared so that you can focus on your teaching when you arrive on your first day.

Making a good first impression with the students is incredibly important for a supply teacher; those initial interactions with a group of pupils can strongly

influence the chances of successful relationships being established.

Consequently, supply teachers should think strategically about how to ensure pupils' initial perceptions of you are positive. Having your resources and materials set up in advance of the start of the lesson is ideal, hence why arriving early at the beginning of the school day is crucial. Meet students at the door, greet them positively and have an activity ready for them to complete as they enter the room.

If this is the first time you are meeting the group, strategies such as giving students stickers for them to write their names on is advisable, as is requesting a seating plan or class profile with key information such as SEN requirements, Pupil Premium information etc.

Implementing the behaviour policy

As a supply teacher you need to understand the school's behaviour policy so that you can respond consistently to unacceptable behaviours within a framework that pupils understand. However, a behaviour system will not get pupils to behave, it should be used to deal with pupils in a fair, consistent and transparent way if they do not meet the behaviour expectations of the school.

Most successful teachers will focus on well-planned, well-taught lessons that engage pupils in stimulating learning activities and therefore they will not often need to use the school behaviour system.

However, for supply teachers, who do not have the benefit of well-established relationships with pupils, this is not always possible. You will often be faced with a set of instructions (which aren't always there, or aren't always good or clear) left by the regular teacher and the ability to think on your feet is absolutely essential.

Some pupils will try and push boundaries with a new supply teacher to see what they can get away with and this is a real challenge in the first few interactions with a class. My advice is to be firm, fair and consistent – apply the policy and associated sanctions where appropriate but do your very best to find positive behaviours to praise and reward.

Sometimes a pupil might need to be removed from the classroom because their behaviour has escalated, or they have done something extreme or outrageous in the lesson.

In these circumstances it is crucial that supply teachers have a point of contact who can be easily reached. This might be a head of department or a member of the leadership team, however it can be counter-productive to use this option too frequently as it can quickly disempower the teacher, as pupils will rapidly realise that the teacher cannot cope with

this class and needs to be continually supported by others within the school.

However, if a class understands that poor behaviour will be dealt with in a firm, fair and consistent manner and sanctions will be followed through on a short timescale, and where appropriate more senior members of staff will be involved, then this can help a supply teacher in establishing credibility with a group of challenging pupils.

Choose your attitude

The approach and attitude of a teacher towards a class is often mirrored back in the approaches and attitudes of a class towards a teacher. My advice to everyone working with young people is to speak to them in a calm, confident and measured manner; be the adult in the conversation, regardless of how much you are provoked. If we expect a mature and calm response from young people, then everything we do as the responsible adults in the situation should model and exude these qualities and characteristics.

Supply teachers can be seen as an easy target for some challenging pupils so it is critical to exude confidence and control from day one. Body language, appearance and tone of voice are tremendously important, so dress to impress and be confident and calm at all times, even if on the inside you are feeling quite the opposite.

The swan analogy here is a good one, above the water you are a picture of calmness, elegance and serenity, but under the water your feet are kicking and flapping like crazy in order to stay afloat!

Supply teachers should also put themselves in the shoes of the students too. It might be that this class has not had their regular teacher for some time and you might be the latest in a string of short-term solutions that, as yet, have not worked out for the school.

Don't take it personally if the class doesn't instantly warm to you, and be resilient. It will take even the most effective teachers some time to pick up a class mid-year and hit the ground running with them, especially if the group have had a negative experience of inconsistent teaching. Be persistent and consistent and you will eventually win them round.

• Ben Solly is principal of Uppingham Community College in Rutland.

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Supply Teaching: SecEd Series

SecEd's current series of best practice articles for supply teachers will run until January. See below for links to specific previous articles and the list of forthcoming pieces:

- Classroom advice: The element of surprise, SecEd, November 2: <http://bit.ly/2ID24SQ>
- Preparing for a placement, SecEd, November 2: <http://bit.ly/2znOmt8>
- Know your rights, SecEd, November 9: <http://bit.ly/2znJGm4>
- Safeguarding: A shared duty, SecEd, November 9: <http://bit.ly/2hbbTSW>
- SEND (November 23)
- Your legal obligations as a supply teacher & safeguarding/child protection (December 7)
- Dealing with other staff & handling difficult placements (January 4)
- CPD & moving from supply to full-time (January 11)

All articles in this series are available as a free pdf at www.sec-ed.co.uk/supplements/supply-teaching-advice-and-best-practice/

