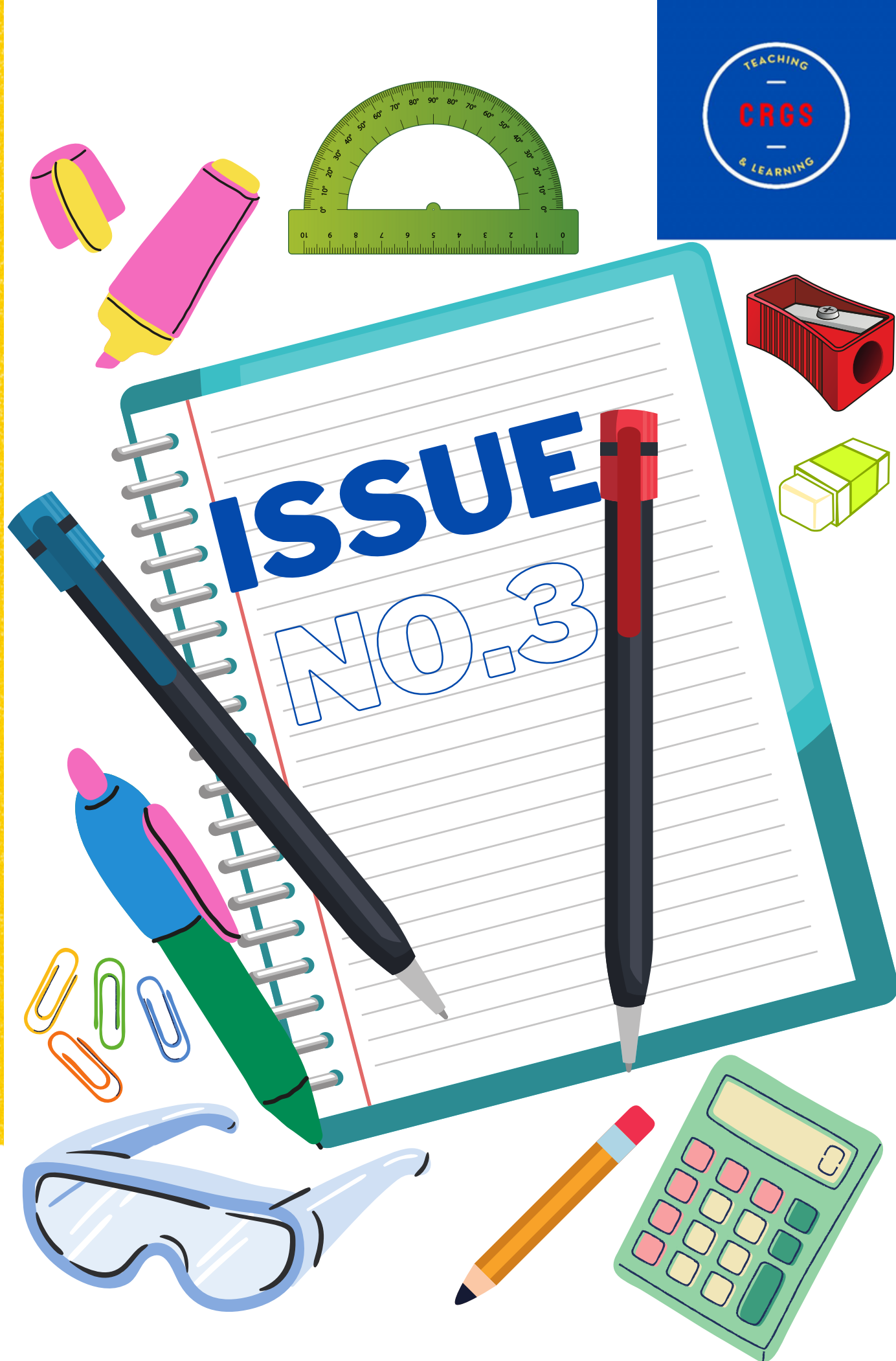


CRGS LEARNING AND TEACHING NEWSLETTER





Learning and Teaching is at the heart of our work at CRGS and is central to our ever developing school culture. The aim of this Learning and Teaching newsletter is to share ideas and prompt discussion as we continue to grow as a whole school, learn from one another and promote best practice.

The newsletter is at times light hearted, at others serious, with some content proving contentious and other simply current learning and teaching fact, backed by academic research.

NEWSLETTER FOCUS

BEHAVIOUR AND RELATIONSHIPS

What do we mean by this?

The theme for this school year has been connections and nowhere is this more evidently important than when it comes to behaviour and relationships.

Forming relationships with students is crucial to help ensure they progress their learning. But what is at the heart of this? What kind of actions are most helpful in relationship building?

Being reliable, humane and consistent are core to forming effective classroom relationships. Intonation, body language and a smile can all help to build a safe, inclusive classroom environment. Students want their teachers to create a learning environment that is calm and encouraging, where their views will be respected and tolerated by all class members.

Students want their teachers to show they care and value their work and class contributions by creating a classroom environment that is thoughtful, productive and a community of learners. They need to trust their teachers will build the right environment for learning. This requires us to adapt our approaches on occasion to meet the needs of each individual class and even to suit the time of day!

In short building behaviour and relationships is a complex process and we hope this newsletter will provide you with some interesting perspectives and practical ideas.



TOP TIPS

- Our body language, intonation and the words we and other students choose to use in the classroom have a massive impact on how comfortable and confident students will be in answering questions and taking risks with their learning.
- To know student's names and remember the successes and challenges they have faced in your classroom shows them that you care about their individual progress.
- The quality of the planned curriculum will be crucial in ensuring that lesson time is used productively. An engaging and energetic lesson draws students in and is fundamental to forming positive learning relationships.

The way in which you interact with your students will change depending on their behaviour, needs, and age. For example, how you connect with Sixth Form students will be very different to how you do so with KS3 students. However, the general methods you use can be the same and can still work with adaptation.

FUN REGISTER

Simple and quick activity to build positive and meaningful relationships:

Pick a topic and ask students to reply when their name is called out with their answer, for example "What is your favourite flavour ice-cream" and the student reply "Chocolate".

Pupils in KS3, KS4 & KS5 enjoy this and appreciate teachers taking an interest and sharing information they might not get to share otherwise.

This can also be used as a plenary to establish what pupils have learnt from the lesson. So, at the end of the lesson ask a question which is relevant to the lessons content.

Creating a positive/productive classroom environment

Managing low level disruption

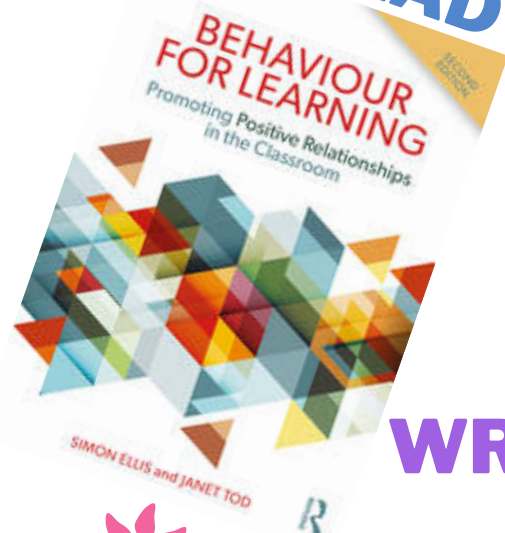
Sarah Mann



WATCH: SARAH MANN SPEAKS ABOUT HOW SHE DEVELOPS A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

"STUDENTS NEED TO FEEL SAFE, SUCCESSFUL AND KNOWN."

RECOMMENDED READ



WRAPPING IT UP



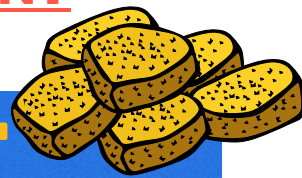
Why not try out the following plenary for a nice review at the end of your lesson:

Ask your students to state one thing they learnt from today's lesson on their way out.

Stand by the door as they exit so the students can provide their answer.

Praise a student when they give a good answer and use each students' name as they exit.

L&T GOLDEN NUGGETS



-We are now in May; have you offered EVERY SINGLE student some praise since the start of the academic year?

-What do you do for those 'hidden students' in your classroom? The ones that do everything asked of them without shouting from the rooftops.



THE EMR METHOD: ESTABLISH-MAINTAIN-RESTORE

A good way to build positive relationships with pupil is the EMR method, which has promising results from a small study. Summarised below, it involves focusing intentionally on the pupil who it is most difficult to connect with, who may be most in need of a consistent positive relationship. It is recommended that this technique should take no longer than 30 minutes per week and can be completed during periods the teacher already spends with pupils, representing an efficient use of time.

	Establish	Maintain	Restore (R ³)
Definition	<i>Intentional practices to cultivate a positive relationship with each student (i.e. build trust, connection & understanding)</i>	<i>Proactive efforts to prevent relationship quality from diminishing over time (i.e. ongoing positive interactions)</i>	<i>Intentionally repairing harm to the relationship after a negative interaction (i.e. reconnecting with student)</i>
Practical strategies	Set aside window of time to spend with student Inquire about student's interests Communicate positively: Open ended questions Affirmations Reflexive listening Validation Reference student info Deliver constructive feedback wisely	5-to-1 ratio of positive to negative interactions Positive notes home Greet students at the door Relationship check-in Random, special activities	R ³ = Reconnect, Repair, Restore Take responsibility for negative interaction Deliver an empathy statement Let go of the previous incident & start fresh Communicate your care for having the student Engaging in mutual problem solving

A-LEVEL FOCUS

At A level, being questioned and challenged by the learners in your subject can result in some great lessons; this questioning and enquiry is exactly the classroom culture that we are trying to encourage at CRGS.

Helping students to develop the confidence needed to form and express their opinions will allow them to become passionate about the topics they study and to engage fully with your subject.

REFLECT AND PERFECT

If we want our learners to progress, we need to designate time for them to respond to feedback. This applies to students of all ages but is particularly true at A level. It's all too easy for learners to just focus on the grade and not actually read the teacher's feedback. Planning this active reflection time into lessons can really help students to develop a metacognitive approach to their learning.

After each extended piece of work, timed response or mock exam, A Level English students are given a section of the lesson time to respond to the feedback they have recently received. We use a method called 'reflect and perfect', this might involve rewriting the introduction to be more of a thesis statement, improving the opening sentences of paragraphs to advance an argument or including more precise detail/textual evidence to make their ideas more convincing. Our students have found the process helpful as it allows them the autonomy of correcting any misconceptions and gives them the confidence to move forward without just being 'stuck' on the grade. This progress enhances the relationship with the teacher.