



## TERUG-SKOOL-TOE-GIDS VIR BEGINNEROPVOEDERS

### Beginneropvoeders – Moets en moenies



Jy het jou loopbaan gekies, gaan studeer en nou staan jy voor 'n klas as 'n gekwalifiseerde onderwyser. Skielik wonder jy of jy regtig geroepe is hiervoor. Het dit wat jy op universiteit geleer het, jou werklik voorberei vir al die uitdagings wat jy op 'n daaglikse basis gaan ervaar? Leerders, ouers, bestuur en boonop nog beplanning én stapels merkwark.

Moenie bekommerd wees nie! Jy is nie alleen nie. Baie sal saamstem dat die teorie en die praktyk soos dag en nag verskil. Bou egter vir jou 'n arsenaal van idees, strategieë en metodes op en jy gaan die jaar baie makliker omkry as wat jy gedink het. Hier is solank 'n paar wat reeds op die proef gestel is en werk!

Een van die grootste uitdagings wat hedendaagse onderwysers beleef, is dissipline en klaskamerbestuur. Talle beginneropvoeders het al die raad gekry: "Jy *smile* nie voor April nie." Net soos wat elke leerder in jou klas sy eie persoonlikheid en verkose leerstyl het, so het elke onderwyser sy/haar eie onderrigstyl wat jy met ondervinding sal ontdek, aanpas en verfyn. Wees ingelig oor die skool se dissiplinêre beleid en vind wat vir jōu binne die riglyne van die beleid werk.

Onthou om altyd betyds en goed voorbereid te wees. Dissipline begin met die voorbeeld wat jy as persoon stel. Dit begin ook voordat die leerders jou klas betree en gee die toon aan vir die res van die les. Wees ferm, stel duidelike grense en hou daarby. Kinders kom dadelik agter indien jy nie reëls konsekwent toepas nie, waarskuwings nie deurvoer nie of leerders onregverdig behandel. Wanneer leerders deel is van die besluit en verstaan waarom die spesifieke reëls belangrik is, sal hulle dit makliker volg. Waardes moet gebruik word as basis vir die klasreëls wat dan in die klaskamer vertoon en gereeld na verwys word. Hoe harder hulle werk en hoe besiger die kinders is, hoe minder tyd is daar vir streke.

Met verloop van tyd sal jy jou klasse leer ken en weet hoe om elkeen te hanteer. Onthou



dat jy die volwassene in die klas is wat in 'n professionele hoedanigheid voor die kinders staan. Moet daarom nooit in 'n argument met 'n leerder betrokke raak nie. Veral nie voor die res van die klas nie. Nie-verbale waarskuwings kan aangewend word om die situasie te ontloft voordat dit eskaleer. As jy leerders afkraak en slegsê voor ander, gaan jy net jouself benadeel en boonop baie sleg voel as jy daardie aand in jou bed lê en terugdink aan die dag. Gewoonlik is daar 'n rede vir 'n leerder se uitdagende gedrag. Doen dan moeite om die leerder te leer ken en saam strategieë te vind wat vir julle albei werk.

Alhoewel dit met groeiende klasgroottes toenemend moeiliker raak, probeer om jou leerders persoonlik te leer ken. Hoe gouer jy die leerders se name ken, hoe makliker sal jou dissipline wees, maar wees versigtig om nie te wys dat jy eerste die moeilikste kinders in die klas se naam ken nie. Prys positiewe gedrag meer as negatiewe gedrag. Nie net laat dit leerders goed voel nie, maar motiveer ook ander om die positiewe gedrag na te boots. Laat hul spesiaal voel deur te vra hoe dit nou met Sokkies, die woef, gaan of gesels oor hul belangstellings.

Ongelukkig wil baie beginneronderwysers hê dat leerders van hulle moet hou en tree dan onvanpas op. Bly professioneel, vermy fisiese kontak en moenie te vriendelik met leerders wees nie - maak vriende met jou eie ouderdomsgroep.

Almal hou van 'n mooi werksomgewing en die kinders in jou klas is geen uitsondering nie. 'n Mooi en georganiseerde werksomgewing is inspirerend, maar onthou dat elke prentjie of plakkaat toepaslik en van opvoedkundige waarde moet wees. Dit moet aangepas kan word na gelang van konsepte wat leerders moeilik vind. Indien hulpbronne die eerste keer behoorlik gemaak word, kan dit tyd en geld oor die lang duur spaar. Neem beheer van jou klas en modelleer jou verwagtinge. As jy netjiese leerders, boeke en werk verwag, moet jy dit demonstreer aangesien kinders leer deur te sien. Jy is 'n rolmodel; vir sommige die enigste positiewe rolmodel.

In 'n onlangse studie is bevind dat hedendaagse onderwysers, ouers as die tweede grootste uitdaging beleef. Navorsing in Duitsland, Amerika en Engeland het getoon dat dit nie net in Suid-Afrika is waar ouers die rede is dat soveel beginneropvoeders die onderwys verlaat nog voor die ink op hul kwalifikasie behoorlik droog is nie. As onderwyser sal jy met verskillende tipes ouers te doen kry. Van die helikopter-ouer wat té betrokke is en alles namens hul bloedjie wil doen, tot die spook-ouer. Jy sien die naam op die kind se rekord, maar kan teen die einde van die jaar nog nie 'n gesig by die naam plaas nie. Dan is daar ook Vulkaan-ouers wat oor die geringste dingetjie ontplof. Die ideaal is natuurlik die duikboot-ouer wat uit die oog bly, maar vinnig na vore kom indien nodig.

Ongeag watter tipe ouer jy mee werk, jy moet altyd professioneel en bedagsaam bly. Kommunikasie is van die uiterste belang. Onthou om die regte vrae te vra sonder om aanvallend te wees. Soos jy, wil ouers net die beste vir hul kinders hê. Probeer egter om nie een van daardie onderwysers te wees wat net die draer van slegte nuus is nie. Wanneer jy ook goeie nuus huis toe stuur, sal ouers baie meer gewillig en ondersteunend wees



wanneer daar wel probleme opduik. Moenie wag tot die einde van die jaar nie, kontak ouers dadelik en hou rekord van alle kommunikasie wat ook as bewys van intervensie dien. Aangesien baie ouers werk, is dit 'n goeie idee om uit te vind watter tydgleuf en vorm van kommunikasie hulle pas. Die onderwyser en ouer(s) staan in 'n vennootskap en moet saamwerk aan die gemeenskaplike doel. Dit is egter nie aanvaarbaar dat 'n ouer jou boelie nie en indien 'n ouer jou ongemaklik laat voel, mag jy vra dat 'n senior personeelid teenwoordig is. Onthou die goue reël: Hanteer ander soos jy wil hê hulle jou moet hanteer.

Jy het die universiteit se stof van jou voete afgeskud en staan nou in 'n professionele wêreld met sy eise. Jy staan heeldag voor kinders en moet daarom gepas aantrek. Rek en buk soggens voor die spieël om seker te maak dat niks onweloweglik uitsteek nie. Sekere juweliersware kan steurend wees vir leerders, aandag trek na die ongepaste areas of selfs 'n veiligheidsrisiko vir jou en die kind wees.

Menigmaal ontstaan konflik onnodiglik as gevolg van kultuurverskille. Wees sensitief ten opsigte van kultuurverskille en vra indien jy onseker is. Baie van ons vergeet dat ons nie almal uit dieselfde agtergrond kom nie. Voorbeelde wat in die les gebruik word, take of selfs sommige tekste kan onsensitief voorkom. Hoe weet jy dat almal in die klas weet hoe die see lyk? Baie leerders kom uit enkelouerhuise of het nie eers vanoggend brood gehad om te deel nie, wat nog van 'n lekker ryk sjokoladekoek wat in drie gedeeltes moet word om die som op te los!

Moet nooit te bang wees om te vra nie, selfs al moet jy die kwaai juffrou wat al jare op dieselfde groen stoel in die personeelkamer sit, vra. Volg die korrekte lynfunksie en beskerm jouself deur al die moontlike beleide te ken. "Ek het nie geweet nie ..." is ongelukkig nie 'n geldige verweer nie. Bou goeie menseverhoudinge met kollegas al hou jy nie noodwendig van hulle nie. Moenie skinder nie en hou jou persoonlike lewe van die stoepe af. Dit word vir 'n rede 'n "privaatlewe" genoem – want dit is privaat! Om jou hele lewe by wyse van onvanpaste foto's en opmerkings op Facebook uit te blaker, is nie 'n goeie idee nie. Om die leerders in jou klas op Facebook te bevriend is 'n nog swakker idee. Die ergste is natuurlik om jou werkgewer of 'n kollega op sosiale media swart te smeer. As jy nie wil hê jou ma moet dit sien nie, moet dit nie op Facebook wees nie! As dit eers daarbuite is, kan jy dit nooit weer verwyder nie en boonop kyk werkgewers toenemend na die sosiale mediaprofiel van voornemende werknemers.

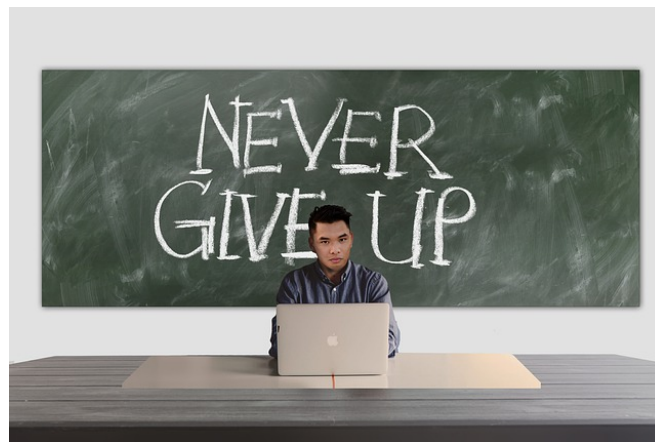
As jy by wyse van WhatsApp kommunikasiegroepe vestig, moet elke deelnemer bewus daarvan wees dat dit nie 'n informele gespreksforum is nie. Die moet verkieslik 'n eenrigting groep wees waarvolgens met ouers en/of leerders gekommunikeer kan word. Daar is die afgelope ruk twee baie prominente voorbeelde van skoolbesprekingsgroepe wat tot groot verleentheid verkeerdelik gebruik is vir informele kommunikasie. Die oogmerk moet wees om formele inligting betreffende die skool- of sportreëlings, toetse, eksamens, ens. te deel – niks anders nie!



Niemand weet dadelik alles nie, selfs al dink jy op hierdie stadium so. Die waarde van mentorskap moet nooit onderskat word nie en het ten doel om ondersteuning, groei en werksbevrediging te bevorder. Daar is gevind dat baie nuwe onderwysers geïsoleerd voel en dikwels met selfvertroue sukkel. Een van die beste maniere om te leer, is deur waarneming. Dit kan die kleinste dingetjie wees wat jy by 'n kollega sien wat baie waarde kan toevoeg. Observasie van ander onderwysers is van onskatbare waarde en nog 'n manier om jou arsenaal van strategieë op te bou. Hoe meer jy leer, hoe meer weet jy!

Jy gaan hierdie jaar baie harder werk as vantevore en daarom is dit baie belangrik om na jou gesondheid en persoonlike verhoudings om te sien. Jy gaan nagte om, naweke en vakansies werk en jy gaan ongelukkig belangrike mense in jou lewe minder sien. Maak tyd vir jousef, neem vitamienaanvullings, maak seker jy eet gesond en slaap genoeg. Luister as jou liggaam begin protesteer. Onthou, ongeag hóé baie jy dit geniet, skoolhou bly net 'n werk en mag nie die oorsaak wees dat jy jou eie gesin, familie of vriende afskeep nie. Prioritiseer en leer om nee te sê, want jy kan nie uit 'n leë beker skink nie!

Indien jy probleme ervaar, praat met iemand. Almal was op een of ander stadium 'n beginner. Leer elke dag, kyk na jousef en die belangrikste van alles – geniet dit!



Adel Jacobs  
Adviseur: Professionele Ontwikkelingsdiens



## BACK-TO SCHOOL GUIDE FOR BEGINNER TEACHERS

### Beginner Teachers – Do's and Don't's



You chose your career. You qualified yourself through study and now suddenly you find yourself standing in front of a class. With some trepidation you silently ask yourself, "Is this truly MY vocation?" Vaguely, you wonder if what they taught you at university has adequately equipped you to cope with the challenges that you face on a daily basis: learners, parents, school managers, unending preparation and piles of marking that seem to spontaneously multiply the moment you turn your back.

Don't be too concerned by these thoughts. All beginner teachers have them. You are not alone. The startling disconnect between theory and practice is centuries old and is nowhere more clearly demonstrated than when you are standing in front of a class full of energy-filled learners for the first time. On first encounter it seems that the floodlit idealism of theory wonderfully supported by a desire to go out and change the world, transforms with chilling force into a sickening sense of yourself drowning before your very own eyes. Take heart. You are a professional after all. Equip yourself with a mind full of new, innovative ideas, challenging strategies and novel methods; engage your learners in stimulating journeys of your own (and their) discoveries and you will find the year flying by with the thrill of professional self-development and empowering, energising confidence. In short, you will come to know, without a shadow of a doubt, that you chose the right career.

As with any profession, on-going, frequent reality checks are essential to growth.

One of the greatest challenges that the modern-day teacher faces is discipline and classroom management. Scores of beginner teachers have been told: "You don't smile at your class before April." How inane is that? Every learner in your class has his or her own personality. And so do you. Children, young people, hate pretence. Let your own youthful



enthusiasm shine through, develop and refine your own, unique teaching style – your learners will help you to do this if you are not too proud to accept that you will make some mistakes along the way - and soon a shared, cooperative teaching and learning style will emerge that satisfies both the ‘teacher’ and the ‘taught’ without the intrusion of an authoritarian ‘fear’ factor.

Of course, most schools have a discipline policy. It is there to guide and support you at those times when you are absolutely not sure about exactly what to do (and such moments certainly do arise). But don’t lean on others to discipline on your behalf. In finding your own direction and strengths work in and around the discipline policy, seek and listen to advice where you need it and, in that way, you will be significantly contributing to the whole school’s discipline.

It goes without saying that you must always be punctual and prepared. Imagine a surgeon arriving late and unprepared to perform an operation: he is in danger of losing his patient. By the same analogy you can as easily lose your learner(s). Discipline and educate by example. Set boundaries, set the height of the bar and apply both rigorously to yourself and the learners. Be as firm with yourself as you are with those you are there to teach. Be fair, be just, be consistent. Your class needs to know exactly where they stand and be equally sure of what to expect. Whatever you do don’t hand out empty threats. They never work and are, frankly, unprofessional. Once you are reduced to threatening learners you’ve in any case lost them. In cooperation with your learners establish a set of values-driven rules which are then displayed in the classroom. If the class ‘owns’ the rules it often happens that they are more strictly applied by the learners than by yourself. If you have to constantly labour the point take a good hard look at what you may be needing to change or modify. Address issues efficiently. Don’t waste teaching/learning time.

As time passes you will get to know each learner individually and they will, in their own manner, learn to know and trust you. Mutual respect is in reality the secret ingredient here, even if you feel you don’t necessarily like someone. As the professional adult in the situation it is your responsibility to guide and manage each person both as an individual and as part of a collective whole. Having a spat with a learner is professionally unacceptable and if you feel bad about it afterwards you have deserved it. It is up to you to professionally control and manage a potentially explosive situation by skilfully diffusing it before it gets out of hand. Ensure that you know the difference between retributive and restorative discipline. Bear in mind that you, as the teacher, have the power to make or break a young person. The absolutely worst thing you can do in a fraught situation is resort to insult and sarcasm. A simple hand or facial gesture, a considered change of tone of voice can often avert disaster. Try always to remain cool, calm and composed. It works. And if you do lose it, as they say, because teachers are also and only human.... well then, be big enough mature enough to apologise. You will lose nothing but you will regain your dignity.

Increasing numbers in classes increases the difficulty of getting to know the names and interests of each individual learner but the quicker you are able to master this skill the



easier your discipline will become. Be quick to praise and slow, very slow, to censure. Rather, turn negatives into opportunities to encourage 'another try.' Be empathetic, sympathetic and genuinely interested without descending into familiarity and prying and trying to make the learner(s) your friend. (Read this last sentence again: these skills are often difficult to learn and almost always dangerously difficult to control.) Remember, that as a teacher it is part of the reward of the job to see learners develop and flourish, gain a sense of their own self-worth and confidence and develop their own individuality.

Everyone enjoys a pleasant work environment. The learners in your class are no exception. An ordered attractive environment is an inspiration. Be sure, however, that the pictures you put up in your classroom are appropriate and have educational value. Where possible it is helpful to choose visual material that speaks to concepts or ideas that children may find difficult to grasp or understand. By owning your space and keeping your work environment neat, ordered and stimulating you are leading by example and the learners will be more likely to follow your lead. You are, after all a role model and in this way, you are positively modelling the behaviour you expect from your learners.

A recent study showed that parents are the second largest source of worry and concern for the modern-day educator. German, American and British research has also shown that it is not only in South Africa that parents are one of the direct reasons for beginner teachers leaving the profession before the ink has dried on their qualifications. As a teacher you will encounter various kinds of parents. From the 'helicopter' parent who wants to do everything for their little darling to the 'ghost' parent: there is a name on the child's records but by the end of the year you cannot put a face to the name. As in any walk of life there is also the 'volcanic' parent; that is the one who erupts spectacularly about the least little thing. The ideal parent, of course, is the 'submarine' parent who sensibly disappears out of sight only to surface when needed or required to do so. What a pleasure.

Irrespective of what kind of parent you encounter, always behave in a considered and professional manner. Communication is of utmost importance. Always ask the right questions and never be confrontational or aggressive. Remember that like you, parents only want the best for their children. Do yourself and the profession a favour by not being a teacher who is always and only a bearer of bad news and complaint. Rejoice in the positive and send happy news of achievement home for celebration. You will find that parents will be far more willing to be supportive and cooperative if you focus on the positive. If, or when you do encounter a problem address it immediately. Don't wait to unload the avalanche of trouble at the end of the year. Contact parents timeously and keep a written record of all communication in order to have proof of your professional interventions and the parents' responses. In this regard bear in mind that most parents work, so find out when contact will be most suitable and also what form of communication will be effective for them. Educators and parents are in a partnership with the same aim: to benefit the child.



Be aware: it is not acceptable that a parent should try to bully you – ever. Should a parent show any signs of having such tendencies or intentions you may request to have a senior member of staff present during any communication with that parent.

You have shaken the dust of the university off your feet and now stand in front of a class of learners. Question: Are you dressed like a professional or are you still attired like a student? No one expects you to be fuddy-duddy but you have entered a profession where your influence as a role model is inestimable – do it proud. Do yourself proud. If you tend to use your arms and hands a lot when you talk don't wear jewellery that bangs and clashes about and distracts the learners' attention. Also, be careful not to wear clothes that should actually be in your younger brother or sister's cupboard. Appropriate profiles are important

Remember that we live in a multi-cultural society. Be sensitive to cultural differences and if you are not sure about something, ASK rather than rushing in like a bull in a china shop – it's difficult to put the pieces together again. Also remember that not everyone comes from the same background. Work sensitively with lifeworld experience being careful not to make anyone feel inferior or left out. This applies as much to reading-texts as it does to using a rich chocolate cake to explain fractions when most of the learners may simply need a healthy sandwich to keep them going for the next few days. And single-parent homes? Be careful about what you say and what you simply assume. Young people are fragile.

Ignorance is no excuse. If you don't know – ask. Follow the correct line-functions in all your dealings and protect yourself with a sound working knowledge of all the policies. Build good, cordial relations with your colleagues, mind your own business, keep your private life just that: Private and stay far away from those who would seek to make you an ally. Don't fiddle about on Facebook with questionable photographs and even more questionable comments and whatever you do don't 'befriend' your learners on Facebook. You really don't need that complication in your life. Keep your thoughts regarding your employer and colleagues to yourself. Facebook entries are forever and future employers often consult the social media profiles of prospective employees. If you set up a WhatsApp communications group ensure that every one of the members is aware of its purpose. It is best to set up a one-way communication group so that parents and/or learners can remain informed about important arrangements for tests, exams, sports events and so on. Why would you want to have conversations on that sort of WhatsApp group, it can only lead to upsets.

And by the way, you know what? You don't know everything even though you may just have graduated cum laude. Mentorship is an awesome privilege which exists to offer support, promote growth and enhance work satisfaction. It has been shown that many new teachers feel isolated and have difficulty with self-confidence. One of the best ways to overcome these feelings is through observation. The smallest observed detail in the actions of a trusted colleague can be life-changing. It's the little details that become a





whole bank of experience in the end and allow you to build your own strategies and methods. The more you learn. The more you know.

Your first year of teaching will be challenging and demanding. You will work harder in this year than you have ever worked before. Nights, weekends, holidays (or what was supposed to be a holiday) will simply be swept away by piles of scripts, preparation, preparation, preparation...

But, after all is said and done, remember to look after yourself. Eat healthy. Sleep well. Work hard but make time to play. Remember that it does not matter how much you enjoy teaching it is a job after all and you must not allow it to alienate you from family, friends and life itself. You can't pour refreshment from an empty jug.

If you have a problem: share it. Everyone was a beginner at some stage. Look after yourself and learn. That way, you can't but enjoy teaching.



Adel Jacobs  
Advisor: Professional Development Services