



Empathy

Focus 1 – Empathy

Empathic intelligence is the ability to engage with others, demonstrate intelligent caring, using mirroring and affirmation effectively, commit to the wellbeing of the self and others.

(Arnold, 2005)

1. Consider these statements about empathy . . .

a	Quality relationships are the foundation of good pedagogy. (Arnold, 2005)
b	Empathy is the capacity to accurately understand the position of others. (Trout, 2009)
c	Empathic intelligence is the ability to use the various intelligence and sensitivities to engage effectively with others. (Arnold, 2005)
d	Somewhere between thinking and feeling. (Damasio, 2003)
e	Empathy is not voluntary - it is the automatic reactivation of neural circuits. (DeWaal, 2009)
f	One of the five major dimensions for good teaching is attending to the affective domain of students by showing high respect. (Hattie, 2003)
g	Learning is an interactive process best achieved in a climate of relatedness, care and mutual respect. (Arnold, 2005)
h	The empathic educator has to judge sensitively the right amount of challenge to set the student, and must allow the student to experience the pleasure of meeting the challenge. (Arnold, 2005)
i	Emotionally intelligent leaders are more sensitive to their own emotions and the effect they have on others. (Ingram & Cangemi, 2012)
j	Empathy is a valued currency; creating bonds of trust and insights into others' feelings and informs our decisions by helping us understand why others are responding as they are. (www.mindtools.com)

Circle the ones you agree with. Give your reasons.

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School Support Cards

2. Choose one of the School Support Cards that relate to a particular disability.

Think about what might be some of the student's experiences socially and for their learning?

What might be three feelings and issues experienced?

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3. Imagine you are a parent of a student with a disability or additional learning need. What concerns may you have about your child attending a mainstream school?

List three here.

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How could I address any concerns they have in my classroom?

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How could we address concerns as a school?

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01	Physical disability
02	Sensory disability
03	Cognitive disability
04	Neurological disability
05	Psychological disability
06	Severe behaviour disorder
07	Severe language disorder
08	Complex needs
09	Empathy and social development
10	Child safety and protection

The School Support Cards are provided as conversation starters and introductory evidenced-based information about disability and related topics.

4. Think of a person on the current staff or in a previous staff group that has displayed empathy for students with disability and additional learning needs.

What did the empathy look like? Which aspects of empathy do you value? Jot down some notes on what you observed in terms of the staff member's behaviour and how it was received by students.

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Discuss this quotation:

Empathy may originate as a warm feeling, but it has the best chance ... to reach a needy target when it is delivered in a less passionate state.

(Trout, 2009)

5. How do you as a professional show empathy in the classroom or empathy to others within the school?

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Which way has the most impact?

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How might I improve my ability to communicate with empathy?

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