



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

MODULE CODE: ECPT6005

**ASSESSMENT COMPONENT: 1 –
Reflective Assignment**

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Part one – Written Assignment

Behaviour management and learner engagement are widely recognised as central concerns within the post-compulsory education sector, where participation is voluntary, and learners can display diverse academic, social and emotional needs. According to Reeve et al. (2025), student engagement is a multidimensional construct which consists of behaviour, cognitive and emotional involvement in learning, each of which can be associated with motivation, achievement and well-being in the post-compulsory education context. Trowler (2010) expands on this by suggesting that engagement reflects the time, effort and resources spent by both learners and institutions to enhance educational outcomes and development. Lebor (2017) argues that within post-16 education, behaviour cannot be simply understood as an individual's compliance or misconduct and suggests that a learner's behaviour is shaped by complex psychological, social and institutional factors that can impact on meaningful interactions with learning. Behaviour management could therefore be understood as a process that seeks to minimise disruptions while promoting participation, well-being and engagement as supported by Lebor's (2017) thoughts on social and institutional factors. Additionally, Su and Wood (2023) highlight the importance of trust, relational pedagogy and belonging in post-16 education. Considering these viewpoints suggests that effective practice is positioned as being inclusive, trust-based and engagement-centred.

Behaviour management in further education has increasingly shifted away from punitive or compliance-based discipline towards a more relational, preventative and learner-centred approach. This is discussed firstly by Lebor (2017), who states that behaviour models that are traditionally derived from compulsory schooling often translate poorly when applied in a post-compulsory context, where learners are typically older, their participation is voluntary, and there is less emphasis on a hierarchy of authority. Wallace (2014) identifies common behaviour issues in post-16 education, including lateness, incomplete work and low levels of motivation, all of which were seen as manageable through positive teacher-learner relationships, yet it is also acknowledged that wider socio-economic, curricular and wider psychological influences may also be an underlying cause of these issues. Su and Wood (2023) argue further that trust, belonging and meaningful interactions are central to encouraging

and maintaining engagement in post-16 classrooms, further reinforcing the view around the limitation of disciplinary responses alone. This relational shift is also reflected by Zaman (2024), who discusses restorative approaches within further education. A restorative approach emphasises repairing harm, restoring relationships and enabling learners to take responsibility for the impact of their behaviour, positioning behavioural conflict as an opportunity for reflection, reconciliation and safer learning environments. However, Broad (2015) explains that practical strains in post-compulsory education, including teacher workload, funding constraints and accountability expectations, may have an impact on an educator's ability to implement consistent relational pedagogy in practice. This conflict in theory and practice suggests that while relational behaviour models are theoretically persuasive, their effectiveness remains largely dependent on institutional conditions that may not always be in a practitioner's control. The Welsh Government (2025a) recognises that learner behaviour in further education is a sector-level priority requiring inclusive guidance, staff well-being support and coordinated institutional responses, strongly indicating that behaviour management is shaped as much by policy and system design as it is by classroom pedagogy. This would imply that behaviour management in further education could be understood to be preventative, relational and contextually mediated whilst remaining constrained by wider systematic conditions that may ultimately limit sustained implementation.

Psychological and relational perspectives provide further insight into how learner engagement shapes behaviour within post-16 learning environments, as Hartman, Calla Callahan and Yu (2021) demonstrate that meaningful interaction with staff, peers and wider institutional support is closely associated with persistence, progression and successful transition. Additionally, Sharp, Hemmings and Kay (2016) and Jones and Nangah (2021) highlight how emotional disruption, boredom, trauma and alienation can have a direct influence on student disengagement and behaviour, therefore rather than functioning solely as observed participation, engagement could be understood to include emotional connections, cognitive investment and motivational regulation that shape overall learning outcomes and learner persistence. Stenalt, Sorenson and Lindvig (2025) conceptualise engagement further as a socio-culturally situated construct influenced by behavioural participation, emotional belonging and cognitive investment within the learning

environment. These perspectives indicate that student disengagement and behavioural issues are frequently rooted in emotional and relational disruption rather than simply non-compliance. Learner engagement and behaviour in the classroom can therefore be understood as closely interdependent processes shaped by wellbeing, relational security and cognitive motivation. This reinforces the importance of engagement-centred pedagogies within post-16 education.

Barriers to learner engagement and positive behaviour in post-16 classrooms arise from complex structural, social and psychological influences rather than solely individual learner characteristics. Wallace (2014) identifies that disengagement in learning is frequently associated with socio-economic disadvantage, curriculum relevance and limited learner aspiration, suggesting that observable behaviours such as lateness or incomplete work often reflect deeper inequalities. Evidence from the Welsh Government (2024) further indicates that poor mental health, pandemic-related disruption and financial hardship continue to affect participation and progression amongst post-16 learners, particularly those experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage. Broglia, Millings and Barkham (2018) explain that increasing demand for mental health support in post-compulsory education highlighted growing psychological pressures that may hinder academic coping and continuation. Structural pressures within the sector also shape learner experiences, as Broad (2015) argues that funding constraints, as well as workload and organisational demands, can limit the capacity of practitioners and institutions to provide consistent relational and pastoral support. These inequalities are further highlighted in statutory frameworks when considering the Welsh Government (2021) Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales, which requires individualised support, collaborative planning and meaningful learner participation in education. Such expectations highlight that disengagement and behavioural issues cannot solely be interpreted by what is observed but must also be understood within broader systems of inclusion, well-being and social justice. Collectively, this evidence suggests that many drivers of disengagement and behaviour issues lie beyond immediate classroom control, positioning behaviour and participation as both a structural and psychological consideration in post-compulsory education.

Effective approaches to improving learner behaviour and engagement in post-compulsory education increasingly emphasise holistic, relational and resilience-focused support rather than isolated behaviour interventions. Wixcey, Cropley and Shearer (2025) explain that academic resilience and mental well-being are significant predictors of engagement, attendance and attainment amongst post-16 learners in Wales, indicating that psychological support is integral to educational success rather than supplementary to it. Su and Wood (2023) similarly argue that trust, belonging and meaningful teacher-learner relationships are central to sustaining engagement, reinforcing relational pedagogy as a foundation for positive behaviour. Lebor (2017) further suggest that behaviour management in post-16 contexts is most effective when embedded within dialogue, negotiated expectations and supportive processes rather than a punitive discipline approach. Inclusive environments are also emphasised with Welsh statutory guidance, as the Welsh Government (2022) explains through keeping learners safe that post-16 settings hold legal responsibilities to safeguard well-being, promote early identification of risk and coordinate protective support systems. Estyn (2025) also highlights that consistent expectations, supportive relationships and inclusive practice are associated with more positive learner behaviour across institutions, although also notes that currently implementation remains inconsistent and is dependent on available resources and the culture of the setting. These findings suggest that there is no single universal strategy that can resolve behavioural challenges in post-16 education. Instead, effectiveness emerges through sustained alignment between relational pedagogies, well-being support and systemic institutional commitment. Behaviour and engagement in post-16 education should therefore be viewed as holistic, context-dependent and grounded by inclusive practice rather than stand-alone behavioural techniques.

In conclusion, behaviour management and learner engagement in post-16 education is a complex process that is shaped by multiple factors such as psychological, structural and institutional influences rather than the standalone conduct of an individual. Disengagement is consistently linked to emotional well-being, relational belonging and wider socio-economic context, indicating that behaviour challenges reflect broader inequalities that need to be supported where possible rather than non-compliance alone. Consequently, behaviour and engagement in post-16 education should be understood as shaped by both wider structural

influences and learners' psychological experiences, requiring relational and inclusive practice across both pedagogical and institutional contexts.

Part 2 – Professional Observations and Reflection

Following an examination of the current thinking and legislation on behaviour management and student engagement in post-16 education, I observed two experienced colleagues. Throughout this section, the colleagues observed will be referred to as Lecturer A and Lecturer B; this aligns with the British Education Research Association (BERA, 2024, p.22), which prescribes that any data collected should be anonymised to protect participant confidentiality. These observations will critically evaluate their approach to behaviour management, linking this to previously explored literature and the further education (FE) professional standards, as set out by the Welsh Government (2025b)

My observation of Lecturer A demonstrated to me how behaviour management in post-16 education can operate primarily as a preventative and inclusive process shaped by emotional safety and learner regulation. Despite being a level 4 cohort, new to higher education and with a high proportion of additional learning needs (ALN), engagement with learning remained calm and consistent. This was facilitated by Lecturer A through differentiated questioning, flexible seating and sensitivity to sensory regulation, reducing the need for direct behavioural intervention and enabled smooth transitions between activities. When interpreting these observations against a theoretical framework, they align well with the thoughts of Reeve et al. (2025), who argue that this behavioural security in the learning environment is closely linked to emotional security and cognitive investment. This further suggests that regulation and a sense of belonging act as a protection against learner disengagement, which could promote negative behaviours.

The observation demonstrated that embedded expectations and routines act as preventative measures, reducing disruption before it emerges. This also strongly aligns with the views of Lebor (2017) that post-compulsory education is shaped by complex psychological and contextual influences rather than compliance alone. In this case, Lecturer A's approach of knowing their learners and their needs removed any reliance on corrective discipline and

instead stabilised behaviour through environmental design and relational consistency and aligns strongly with multiple Welsh Government (2025b) professional standards, including building positive and collaborative relationships, planning and delivering effective teaching and learning, and finally valuing and promoting diversity.

My observation of Lecturer B provided me with a contrasting perspective in which behaviour management was shaped this time not by preventative measures but by the need to repair relationships within an emotionally tense cohort. An issue in a previous module had contributed to anxiety, disengagement and patterns of absence as a result.

In addressing these issues Lecturer B maintained a calm presence that stabilised the learning environment and enabled continued participation. Given that the module assessment was group-based, learners were given agency in forming groups to prevent further tension. This approach aligns with the Welsh Government (2025b) professional standard of allowing learners to share responsibility for their learning and assessment. Equally, through a theoretical lens, the approach taken to this scenario was in line with the views of Lebor (2017), who suggests that behaviour in post-16 education is strongly influenced by social and psychological factors. This observation illustrated to me how the emotional climate, rather than individual misconduct alone, can determine learner engagement.

Central to Lecturer B's approach was the use of restorative practice and dignity-centred responses to conflict, with any interpersonal tensions being addressed on a one-to-one basis and supportive follow-ups. Taking this approach respected the learner's dignity whilst also encouraging responsibility and reconciliation. This aligns strongly with the Welsh Government (2025b) professional standard around demonstrating dignity, courtesy and respect towards others. Within post-16 contexts, Zaman (2024) emphasises that restorative practice should repair harm, rebuild relationships and enable reflection rather than a punitive sanction. Additionally, Su and Wood (2023) also advocate this approach that repairing relationships reflects the importance of trust and belonging for sustaining engagement in post-16 education.

Taken together, the observations demonstrated that behaviour management operates across a spectrum from prevention to restorative repair. Whilst Lecturer A's practice demonstrated to me that having an inclusive environment can prevent disruption and behavioural issues before they arise, Lecturer B's approach highlighted the ethical and restorative approaches that can be deployed where conflict or behavioural issues have already impacted on learner participation. This comparison suggests that effective practice is neither preventative nor reactive but instead is dependent on a practitioner's capacity and ability to adapt to a range of scenarios.

Delivering my first session to the level 4 cohort provided me with an opportunity to apply my learning gained through observing more experienced colleagues, whilst also managing the pressure of a formal observation. To frame my reflection, I have utilised Gibbs' Reflective Cycle, which McLeod (2025) describes as a six-stage model that is designed to guide reflection on experiences.

The session explored stages and types of play before transitioning to a practical Lego Therapy session, with the second half of the session being observed as part of my PCET professional development. Following the observation of Lecturer A, I made a conscious decision to adopt an inclusive and engagement-driven approach as I felt this aligns most closely to my own developing behaviour management philosophy, where I prioritise participation, targeted questioning and a warm, friendly approach alongside professional boundaries that are clear to my learners. My approach reflects the assertion of Reeve et al. (2025) that engagement is driven by emotional security and cognitive investment, whilst also aligning with the Welsh Government (2025b) professional standards, namely around demonstrating a commitment to learners, their learning, safety and well-being, and building positive and collaborative relationships.

The practical element of my session was characterised by high levels of engagement throughout, and there was an absence of any behavioural disruption; this again affirms for me as a practitioner that relational-based strategies can be effective in post-16 contexts. There was a minor moment in the session where a learner was unsure of what they were required to do during the task, again there was no behaviour issues associated with this

uncertainty however it did emphasise the need for clear instructions to learners as a teacher so that I do not harm their engagement, aligning with the thoughts of Lebor (2017) that engagement often stems through open dialogue and reassurance rather than authority. Additionally, my learners returned from their coffee break earlier than I had requested, as I had explained that somebody was coming in to observe me. This demonstrated to me the importance of how respectful communication and sharing responsibility can positively influence learners' behaviour and attitudes. This was something I ensured I thanked them for on completion of the lesson. This aligned with the relational perspectives around trust and co-operation as outlined by Su and Wood (2023), as well as the Welsh Government (2025b) professional standards of building positive and collaborative relationships.

As I reflect more broadly, this session crystallised a significant professional shift that has developed across my last five years as a teacher. Earlier in my career, my behaviour management style was more authoritative and a disciplinarian in nature. However, as my practice has evolved, I have moved more towards a relational approach to behaviour management built on mutual respect as foundations for behaviour expectations and engagement. This shift in perspective was validated for me at the end of the observation, where it was noted that I had built a strong relationship with my learners, and it was a shock to the observer that I had only met the cohort a few days prior, and it was the first time I had taught them. This reinforced my confidence that my relational approach to classroom management was the correct one for my style of teaching and was effective even when faced with the additional pressure of an observation. As I move forward, this experience has strengthened my commitment to taking a preventative approach to behaviour management and having an environment that is built upon being a safe space that is inclusive and a culture of mutual respect.

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Appendices

Teacher Observation Form



Teacher	Lecturer A
Date	27 th January 2026
Group	Level 4
Topic/Context	Play
Notes on the lesson:	
- Cohort contains a high proportion of learners with Additional Learning Needs. - Lesson focus was around how play is used in Early Years Settings. - Lecturer A has previously taught this cohort meaning expectations and routine are already embedded. - Differentiated questioning from Lecturer A enabled all learners to participate in the session meaningfully - Despite ALN complexities, the room remained calm, engaged and focused throughout. - Lecturer A maintained a relaxed, friendly and respectful atmosphere throughout the lesson and demonstrated behavior management through positive relationships rather than control - This approach appeared to encourage participation in the session and a willingness to engage due to a <u>a</u> increased feeling of confidence, this is important to ALN learners - Previously embedded routines ensured that switching between activities were smooth transitions - The overall atmosphere reduced the need for reactive behavior management which allowed more time for content delivery - Flexible seating and Lecturer A's awareness of sensory and concentration needs reflected a strong adaptive, learner focused approach - This included allowing a learner to leave the room without consequence when feeling overwhelmed, these approaches encouraged sustained engagement and emotional regulation	

What I have learned:	
- Effective behaviour management can be largely preventative and build on positive relationships rather than traditional “teacher-led” power dynamics. By doing this behaviour management becomes invisible where strong relationships with learners are established - Warmth and professionalism are not mutually exclusive or independent, a supportive environment with clear boundaries can be established.	- Being consistent in approach over time is important, this will strengthen classroom expectations, which will then reduce the <u>period of time</u> needed to deal with issues as they arise and increasing time for learning - Inclusive practice and engagement are central to effective behaviour management.
Targets to improve my own practice (mapped to professional standards):	
1. Develop preventative, relationship <u>centred behaviour</u> management techniques STANDARD – Demonstrate dignity, <u>courtesy</u> and respect towards others.	2. Design learning environment that respond to sensory and emotional regulation needs if appropriate. STANDARD – Demonstrate commitment to learners, their learning, safety and well-being.

**3. Embed adaptive teaching
methods to support inclusive
participation to keep all learners
engaged**

STANDARD – Value and promote diversity,
equality of opportunity and inclusion

Teacher Observation Form



Teacher	Lecturer B
Date	4 th November 2025
Group	Level 5
Topic/Context	Safeguarding
Notes on the lesson:	
• There had been previous issues with this cohort during last module which had caused tensions in the group • Lecturer B maintained a calm and relational approach to maintain professionalism in the room despite cohort tensions • Interpersonal conflicts were managed well by Lecturer B to bring disruption to a minimum • Learners were given input into activity and assignment groupings, recognising existing group dynamics. • This helped to reduce anxiety, prevented further confrontation and supported safe engagement with sensitive safeguarding content. • Lecturer B maintained a steady, approachable demeanor, modelling emotional regulation in a heightened environment. This approach helped to <u>stabilise</u> the learning environment. • Any behavioral issues or concerns over group dynamics were dealt with on one-to-one basis in private rather than addressed publicly in front of the group. This preserved learner dignity and <u>aligns</u> with restorative and relationship centered approaches • Absenteeism was higher than normal due to the group dynamics after the previous issues, to address this Lecturer B followed up on email, while this was to promote personal accountability for attending sessions, it was also there as a means of promoting supportive intervention if required	
What I have learned:	
• Providing learners with choice and agency in groupings can help to reduce conflict issues and improve engagement	• Behavior management expands beyond just taking a disciplinary approach and should also look to address the root issues, in this case this was the emotional tension of the cohort.

- Privacy and dignity are essential when there is a need to address negative behaviours especially within a cohort that is emotionally heightened because of previous issues.
- Lecturer B's calm, professional presence influenced the emotional climate of the classroom, enforcing the importance of remaining composed and displaying positive behaviors to learners.

Targets to improve my own practice (mapped to professional standards):

1. Develop my skills in restorative practice when dealing with behavior issues.

STANDARD – Demonstrate dignity, courtesy and respect towards others.

2. Embed check in's either formally or informally to support learner well-being and engagement.

STANDARD – Demonstrate commitment to learners, their learning, safety and well-being.

- Privacy and dignity are essential when there is a need to address negative behaviours especially within a cohort that is emotionally heightened because of previous issues.
- Lecturer B's calm, professional presence influenced the emotional climate of the classroom, enforcing the importance of remaining composed and displaying positive behaviors to learners.

Targets to improve my own practice (mapped to professional standards):

1. Develop my skills in restorative practice when dealing with behavior issues.

STANDARD – Demonstrate dignity, courtesy and respect towards others.

2. Embed check in's either formally or informally to support learner well-being and engagement.

STANDARD – Demonstrate commitment to learners, their learning, safety and well-being.

Lesson Plan Template



Lesson Plan

Topic: Play – Types of Play		Class: Level 4 Early Years Education and Care
Date: 30 th January 2026	Length of lesson: 3 hours	Number of students: 13
Resources required: PowerPoint presentation Lego ~~Youtube~~ video links as back-ups		
Aim of Lesson To explore different types of play, including Parten's stages of play, and examine how play can be used to support children's development in early years settings.		
Learning Outcomes By the end of this session, students will be able to: 1. Identify and describe different types of play commonly observed in early childhood contexts. 2. Explain Parten's stages of play and their relevance to children's social development. 3. Apply knowledge of different types of play to illustrate how play can be used to support children's learning and development across a range of areas.		
Previous student knowledge required for the session: This is the second lecture of the module; previous session was an introduction to the module. This session will build on that knowledge and start to introduce types of play which will be important for the assignment, as well as exploring a play-based intervention (Lego Therapy)		

Anticipated difficulties (if applicable):

Technology issues, if unable to resolve I will send learners for a break while I attempt to address the issue before resuming the lesson, if unable to resolve, slides to be printed and given as a handout.

Session will be starting with a Danny Go floor is Lava brain break, it will be important here to lay down expectations to ensure that the activity is performed safely to reduce risk of injury.

Professional Standards (where are these being met within the session)

Plan and deliver effective learning, teaching and assessment: I will demonstrate this with the design and development of this lesson.

Critically reflect on own values, knowledge and skills to improve learning: Will complete an informal reflection of my own practice, which will enable me to identify areas for development which I will feed forward into future lessons

Demonstrate commitment to learners, their learning, safety and well-being: I will demonstrate this standard by measuring pre-entry behaviors.

Understand the importance of the Welsh culture and language as a bilingual nation: I will use incidental Welsh during my lesson as well as creating bilingual resources in line with the policy of my setting

Lesson Detail:



Stage	Focus	Strategy	Time
Introduction	Welcome and session overview	Bore Da/Croeso – Greet and welcome learners in Welsh	5 mins
Development	Assess pre-entry behaviors (Baseline existing knowledge)	Discussion – what did we cover on Tuesday, what is the assignment asking?	5 mins
			5 mins
	Lecture	Video - Session to begin with video on PPT S.4 which is an explainer for Parten’s stages of play	
		Group discussion – PPT 5-6, rather than inputting information here, the video watched to be used to structure discussion about each of the 6 stages of play, what is involved and age	5 Mins
		PPT. S6 – signpost as a resource to revisit when it comes to assignment writing	
		Discussion – Can you think of examples of types of play?	
		Lecture – PPT. S 7-13	
		Lecturer to cover the types of play and give an overview of each one from notes in presentation	10 Mins
		BREAK	20 mins
	Theory Input	Lecture – Lecturer to introduce Lego Therapy and give very brief overview	10 Mins
Practical Task	Practical Task – Learners to be given opportunity to experience Lego Therapy hands on, if time allows learners to be given opportunity to explore all 3 roles	35 mins	
	Lecture – PPT S. 16-21		
		Lecturer to work through remaining slides including giving learners’ task and having 2 minutes to think of tother uses for a lego brick	20 Mins

Plenary/conclusion	Learner Feedback	Post it notes to be given to learners for feedback, Today I Learnt..... I would like to look at again	5 Mins
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Assessment Strategies: when and how are they included within the lesson?

Assessment within this session is primarily formative and embedded throughout the lesson to monitor understanding and support learning. Baseline assessment is undertaken at the start of the session through whole-group discussion, enabling the lecturer to gauge learners' prior knowledge of play and identify any misconceptions.

Ongoing assessment takes place through questioning and guided discussion following the video on Parten's stages of play and during lecture input on different types of play. Learners are encouraged to provide examples from early years contexts, allowing assessment of their understanding and ability to apply theory to practice.

The Lego Therapy practical activity provides an opportunity for applied assessment, with learner participation and discussion demonstrating understanding of how play supports children's social, emotional, and communicative development.

At the end of the session, learners complete an exit activity using ~~post-it~~ notes to reflect on what they have learned and identify areas for further exploration. This feedback informs future teaching.

Informal reflection (to be completed after the session)

Action Plan

Target	Specific	Measurable	Achievable	Realistic	Time-Bound	Professional Standard
Develop preventative, relationship-centred behaviour management techniques	Intentionally build positive relationships with learners through consistent routines, clear expectations and respectful communication	Reduction in low-level disruption and increased learner participation, evidenced through lesson reflections	Can be embedded within existing teaching practice through planned routines and relational approaches	Appropriate for post-16 settings where engagement and relationships underpin behaviour	To be reviewed end of April 2026	Demonstrate dignity, courtesy and respect towards others.
Design a learning environment that responds to sensory and emotional regulation needs if appropriate.	Adapt seating, pacing and learning environment to support learners who require sensory or emotional regulation	Learner engagement levels and reduced anxiety behaviours were noted through reflections and learner feedback	Adjustments can be made without additional resources by varying the environment and delivery style	Particularly relevant within FE cohorts with diverse ALN profiles	To be trialled and reviewed over the next 6-8 weeks	Demonstrate commitment to learners, their learning, safety and well-being

Embed adaptive teaching methods to support inclusive participation to keep all learners engaged	Use differentiated questioning and varied activities to ensure all learners participate and remain engaged	Increased learner responses during sessions and improved engagement noted in lesson reflections	Can be incorporated into lesson planning and delivery immediately	Aligns with inclusive pedagogy expected in post-16 education	To be embedded across all taught sessions during the next module	Value and promote diversity, equality of opportunity and inclusion
Develop my skills in restorative practice when dealing with behaviour issues	Use restorative conversations to address behavioural concerns, focusing on dialogue, accountability and repair	Behaviour incidents resolved without escalation through reflective logs	Supported through observation, learning and existing relational skills	Appropriate for FE contexts where dignity and relationships are central	To be applied consistently when issues arise. To be reviewed end of May 2026	Demonstrate dignity, courtesy and respect towards others.
Embed check in either formally or informally to support learner well-being and engagement.	Incorporate brief check-ins at the start of sessions to support well-being and engagement	Improved learner attendance, participation and openness during sessions	Requires minimal time and can be embedded naturally into teaching sessions	Fits within FE pastoral and safeguarding responsibilities	To be trialled weekly from the next teaching block and reviewed at the end of May 2026	Demonstrate commitment to learners, their learning, safety and well-being.

