



FIRST DAY FIRST WEEK - CHECKLIST

ONSETTING THE HUMANE CULTURE. BY DESIGN

"Hi there, I'm excited that you are eager to make your school more student-centric and are looking forward to try out the 'First Day First Week' process for yourself! I hope you found value in and have enjoyed going through the pack and resources so far.

*I invite you to use this **Quick 'At a glance' checklist as a reference** to ensure that you do not miss out on any of the ingredients! It's really very simple to execute, and here are some things that I keep in mind during the process. **Feel free to innovate, translate and implement the way you want.** And I would love to know how you have done it. **Do Share your experience**".*

- **Jahnavi Mehta**

SETTING THE TONE

- ❑ Just before the summer break, share with students and parents the school re-opening date and the **importance** of the 'First Day First Week' in setting the tone for the year. This communication will help in bringing everyone on the same page and build **anticipation** for the new academic year.
- ❑ A **reminder email** regarding the school re-opening can also be sent to parents a week before school re-opens.

BEFORE

- ❑ Just before the school re-opens, schedule an **orientation program for new parents**. Ensure that during this session, new parents are introduced to the school **culture, protocols** and also informed about the **purpose** of the 'First Day First Week' process.
- ❑ It's also a great idea for teachers to do **home visits** before the first day for all new children especially the Pre-K students. When the child sees familiar faces on the first day, it lowers his/her anxiousness.
- ❑ Make sure that the teacher team comes in a week before the students join back to **plan the activities** for the first week. If you have **alumni**, do invite some of them as well and get their inputs while designing the experiences.
- ❑ Make spaces more welcoming by **collating resources** for livening up the school and classrooms such as balloons, decoration materials, games, etc.
- ❑ For very young children, teachers could take turns to **board** the buses from the first stop for each bus route. The presence of the teacher on the bus ride to school will definitely make the students feel **welcome and comfortable**.

DURING

During the first week, come together as a school community to co-create a culture which will help children move from anxiousness to anticipation.

Step 1: Welcome the children enthusiastically as they walk in

- ❑ Right from 'Day One', make **relationship building** with your students a priority. Once each child feels valued and welcome, they will be ready to embark on the learning journey with you as their ally.
- ❑ Once the children settle down in the class, start with a **Conglom** for sharing how the children spent their vacations and applaud their stories.
- ❑ A great strategy is to start with a **tone-setting game** that will bring the students closer and help them to bond with each other.
- ❑ Next, organize a **school tour** for walking through the spaces of the school with the children to give them a sense of belonging and ownership.
- ❑ On Day 2/3, start with introducing **new teachers and students** during the school/Key Stage assembly. Also, take this opportunity to introduce and thank the **support team** to highlight the important role they play in making the campus safe and welcoming.

Step 2: Build readiness and anticipation for the learning journey

- ❑ Take the time to co-create the class **routines and protocols** with the students and display them in the classroom. These could be related to sessions, lunch-time, bus journey, transition time, bathroom usage etc.
- ❑ You can also ask every grade to co-create a '**Goal for the Year**' which could serve as an anchor for them through the year. They can then make it visible in the class through an **installation or art-work**.
- ❑ To make the first week fun and exciting, introduce a **challenge** that could get children to collaborate and come up with a solution by applying **design thinking**. The challenge could be related to creating an eco-friendly aid, dressing up a school space, working on a dance/music composition etc.

Step 3: Closing the loop for the day

At the end of each day of the week, have a **dialogue** with students to point out what stood out for them and what their **takeaways** were from the day.

- ❑ Be sure to check with children on the **hot spots** of the day and **co-create solutions** to ensure that they don't carry forward to the next day.
- ❑ **Share some aha moments and shout-outs.**

AFTER

- ❑ It's now time to **unpack** the beacons (academic subjects) and onboard children for a meaningful learning journey.
- ❑ **Reflect** at the end of week 1 to check for the **readiness of the students** to start their learning journey, and plan accordingly for the next week.
- ❑ **Create & share** memories of the first week in the form of pictures, videos and shout-outs.

SOME IMPORTANT TIPS |

- ❑ Help children in identifying the **relevance** of the activities, games and challenges that they engage in through the first week.
- ❑ Identify a few extra hands to help in **settling** Pre-K children in the first week.
- ❑ Take help from **older buddies** to settle the children in Key Stage 1.
- ❑ Take note of the **interests** of children, so that you can **create opportunities** for every child to shine through the year.
- ❑ **Meet new students** separately and have a conversation with them to check if they are settling in comfortably. You can also schedule a telephonic conversation with their parents to **re-assure** them of their child's well-being and answer any questions that they may.