



# EDITION 9: PODCAST WITH A MENTOR

## HOW ARE WE GOING AND WHERE TO NEXT?

### *Transcript*

Ben Pisani & Rachel Patterson

Ben:	<a href="#">00:02</a>	Hi, welcome to the graduate teacher learning series podcast channel. I'm Ben and I will be hosting this session. In this podcast series. We will be talking to graduate teachers, mentors and experts about a variety of different topics that relate to each editions framing question. We will also get the graduates and mentors to share some reflections on their practices that may assist you in yours. In each podcast, the graduates and mentors will be asked the same questions so you can hear the different perspectives on each topic. Okay, so sit back and relax and let's get into this edition of the graduate teacher learning series podcast, talking to a mentor.
Ben:	<a href="#">01:00</a>	Hi, thanks for being part of this podcast. Can you please introduce yourself and tell us a little about where you were working in some of your experiences?
Rachel:	<a href="#">01:08</a>	So my name's Rachel Patterson and I work at Grey Street Primary School in Traralgon as a prep teacher and I mentor Jo Hayes
Ben:	<a href="#">01:23</a>	In this first section of the podcast and discussion will focus on the framing questions for this edition. What do you think makes a great teacher?
Rachel:	<a href="#">01:31</a>	I think a great teacher needs to be passionate about what they do. They need to care about their students, also patients is probably a very good trait to have as a teacher. Kids are not predictable. Lots of different things happen all the time and you need to be patient and you need to be caring and adaptable. We go in with a lesson plan and it doesn't always work, and we

		need to be willing to change and learn and grow and not think we have all the answers because we don't.
Ben:	<a href="#">02:11</a>	We have three quarters of the way through the year. If you reflect upon your progression thus far, how do you think things have gone?
Rachel:	<a href="#">02:18</a>	So far has been a really positive start to the year. The students have settled really well, the rooms quite calm and routines and procedures are all in place. So, it's a real focus on learning at the moment. I've learned a lot of things from last year even though I've been in prep for a while, that some strategies that I can use to get a bit of a head start with the kids in particular areas, which has helped me sort of progress them along I guess. So, I'm really happy with where they're all, um, at the moment and hopefully it'll put them in good stead leading into grade one next year.
Ben:	<a href="#">03:05</a>	Moving forward what are the areas of your practice that you would like to improve on?
Rachel:	<a href="#">03:09</a>	One area that's particularly a focus for myself this year is extending my higher performing students. I find I am really good at doing ability groups and sometimes those kids might be a group that tend to drop off when other things come up. So I've really tried to make that a focus and I'm continuing to make that a focus for myself along with students setting individual goals for themselves so that they know where they're at and they know their next step of learning and all kids are working, always in the pit and challenging themselves
Ben:	<a href="#">04:01</a>	Student voice is an important part of the modern classroom. How have you incorporated the student voice in your teaching practice?
Rachel:	<a href="#">04:08</a>	So over the last few years, we've as a school really been working on implementing proficiency scales within the classroom where the kids move through the learning pit. So, they start in the pit, they start reaching the top and then they'll celebrate and look forward. And then it's a continuous cycle. So, they're moving through and through all their different learning goals. It helps kids to actually know their next step in their learning. They know what they're learning, they can look at the scale to see

		<p>what's next. Once they've achieved that and it gives them a real ownership about what they're doing in the classroom and with their learning. The kids are starting to have some input into the topics when we have the proficiency scale because they are aware of what's happening next. The kids are able to verbalize how they might want to do that next level of learning. So, it gives them that real ownership and that voice into what they do in their learning.</p>
Ben:	<a href="#">05:16</a>	What advice do you have for other graduates out there?
Speaker 4:	<a href="#">05:18</a>	<p>My first piece of advice to graduates would be to build relationships not only with your students but with parents and the other staff, particularly in your teaching team. If the kids know that you're there and you care and you want them to do their best, they're going to do their best. So, at the very start I would focus on the relationships. The next piece would probably be to just be organized and ask questions when you don't know. So, we're not perfect. Every lesson's not going to go the way you want it to and if things aren't working, be prepared to ask for help because that's what other teachers are there for.</p>
Ben:	<a href="#">06:06</a>	What are your time management tips?
Rachel:	<a href="#">06:08</a>	<p>I'm very big on having lists for your jobs, so when you have your release time, you have a list of what you actually have to get through and you can see yourself ticking them off as you go. Another thing that's helped with our school, with time management is we work in collaboration with the other staff, the other teachers in our team. So, working with your team members and planning collaboratively can really help manage your time and make sure you are getting the things done that need to get done because it's really hard at the start to know what's the most important and what's not. So, working together with others, those teachers are there to help you know what you need to tick off first and then what can be next.</p>
Ben:	<a href="#">07:03</a>	What department resources have you found to be particularly useful in your classroom practice as a teacher?
Rachel:	<a href="#">07:08</a>	As a school we use the High Impact Teaching Strategies to guide us, particularly in writing. We have an observation model, that we've implemented across the school that focuses on the HITS

strategies of lesson structure and explicit teaching. So, they've been a real focus for us this year in building our practice. And we also have an induction program that reflects the department's graduate, resources. It's been personalized for a Grey Street approach, I guess that fits the needs of our graduates, but it does reflect a lot of the guidelines that come from the induction guide online

Ben: [07:59](#) In a new career it can sometimes be difficult to ask for help. Who should graduates turn to for assistance?

Rachel: [08:05](#) I think graduates need to really take advantage of their mentor. The mentor is there to help. A good strategy that I found with Jo when I was mentoring her is that she'd write things down and we had an allocated time each week that we sort of got together and any questions that had come up, anything she wasn't sure of, that's when she addressed them then. It allowed us both to have time to mentor and work together, but also still have our other time to plan and do those things that we needed to do on our own. There's also other staff, even though it's not your mentor, other staff that have been teaching for a while are always willing to help and they've got a lot of great knowledge base to be able to share with new teachers. Your mentor knows a lot, but they're not going to know everything. So, you need to make sure you take advantage of all the staff at the school, including the leadership team, to gain their expertise in different areas. So, lots of people that can help.

Ben: [09:14](#) And finally give us your words of wisdom.

Rachel: [09:16](#) Okay, so words of wisdom, I guess around teaching. One thing to always remember is that it's not going to be perfect. Working with kids is never going to be perfect. Things aren't going to go the way that you plan all the time. So just go with the flow and be willing to have a laugh and share, share things with your colleagues, because we're all there, we all have those days that might not go how we plan. So, you need to really use other people that know what you're going through to talk to when things might not go how do you think they should. It's not just graduates that it happens to, it happens to the most experienced teachers. So just be willing to laugh and make sure you don't take yourself too seriously.

Ben:

[10:09](#)

And that's it for the graduate teacher learning series podcast. Thank you to our guests for sharing their experiences and thank you for listening. We'll see you next time. Bye for now.