

All groups – whether in education or anywhere else – have ways of behaving, and quickly establish norms for this behaviour which delineate the ways things are done in the group. Eventually, of course, the norms of behaviour – if the group is big enough – can become full-blooded cultural norms that a whole society adheres to. School and classroom groups have their own norms of behaviour, too. Some of these are stated explicitly by a school (e.g. the wearing of school uniforms in some countries, no running in the corridor, etc.). Some are laid down by the school and the teacher (students have to put their hand up if they want to ask a question; they must stand up when the teacher comes into the room; at the end of the lesson the students must not pack their things away until the teacher tells them they may); some seem to spring up from within the group itself (or are the result of years of norms adhered to by previous groups which have been picked up by current groups, e.g. the norm of mediocrity, see 9.1). They have no ownership of these norms, but are expected to acquiesce in them.