

AN INDEPENDENT EDUCATION
FRAMEWORK · PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Atomic Schools

P N G

Building Better Habits, Systems &
Futures



WRITTEN BY
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*Small Habits.
Big Future.*

ATOMIC SCHOOLS PNG

Building Better Habits, Systems & Futures

By Michael Basse

Small Habits. Big Future.

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Atomic Schools PNG: Building Better Habits, Systems & Futures

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to the students of Papua New Guinea — to the child who walks far to reach the classroom, to the student who studies by lamplight, and to every young person who dreams of a better future.

It is dedicated to the **teachers** who give their best in difficult conditions, to the **parents** who sacrifice so their children can learn, and to the **communities** that protect and support their schools.

You build the nation, one small habit at a time.

This is for you.

Foreword

Papua New Guinea does not have a shortage of talent. Walk into any classroom, from the Highlands to the coast, from a town school to a remote community school, and you will find bright, curious, capable children. The potential is everywhere.

So why do many of our schools still struggle?

For years, the answer we reached for was motivation. We told students to work harder. We told teachers to care more. We held assemblies, gave speeches, and made promises. Motivation is good — but motivation alone is like rain without a garden. It comes, it feels powerful, and then it dries up. Nothing grows that lasts.

What our schools truly need is not more speeches. **They need better systems.**

A system is the quiet, repeated way a school does things every single day. It is the routine for entering the classroom. It is the way reading happens every morning. It is the method for marking attendance, supporting struggling students, and recognising good behaviour. When the systems are strong, a school keeps improving even on the days when motivation is low — and there will always be days when motivation is low.

This book is different from a motivational talk. It is a practical guide. It will not ask you to feel inspired and then leave you with nothing to do on Monday morning. Instead, it gives you routines, checklists, trackers, and a clear ninety-day plan. It treats school improvement the way a builder treats a house: brick by brick, day by day, until something strong is standing.

The ideas here are simple on purpose. A good system is not complicated. It is something a tired teacher can run on a busy Friday, something a young student can follow, something a parent can support at home. Small things, done well, repeated daily.

If you are a head teacher, this book is your blueprint. If you are a classroom teacher, it is your toolkit. If you are a parent, it is your guide. If you are a student, it is your invitation to become the kind of learner who builds a future.

Papua New Guinea will not transform overnight. But schools can improve every single day. That improvement begins not with a grand plan, but with one small habit, practised consistently, by people who refuse to give up.

Let us begin building.

Michael Basse

Introduction

Imagine two students sitting in the same classroom. They have the same teacher, the same textbooks, and the same lessons. One year later, one of them is thriving and the other is falling behind. What made the difference?

It was rarely a sudden event. More often, it was the small things, repeated day after day. One student read a little every day, came to school on time, and finished homework. The other skipped reading, arrived late, and let homework slide. None of these single days seemed important. But added together over a year, they built two very different futures.

This is the heart of *Atomic Schools PNG*: **small daily habits, supported by strong systems, build big futures.**

PNG has talented students

Let us be clear from the start. The children of Papua New Guinea are not lacking in ability. They are clever, hard-working, and full of dreams. The talent is real. This book never blames students for being incapable, because they are not.

So why do students struggle?

Students often struggle not because of weak minds, but because of weak systems around them:

- **Inconsistent routines** — things happen differently every day, so nothing becomes a habit.
- **Poor tracking** — no one measures attendance, reading, or homework, so problems are noticed too late.
- **Low reading culture** — reading is not built into the daily life of the school.
- **Reactive discipline** — schools wait for problems and then punish, instead of building good habits in advance.

- **Limited support** — students who fall behind have no clear path to catch up.

These are not problems with children. They are problems with systems. And the good news about systems is simple: **systems can be built**.

What this book is

This book is a practical, step-by-step system-building guide for PNG schools. It is not a theory book and not just a book of encouragement. It is a working manual.

Inside you will find:

- Clear explanations in simple English.
- Real PNG school examples.
- Activities for students.
- Reflection tasks for teachers.
- Checklists for parents.
- Printable templates you can photocopy.
- A complete 90-day school transformation plan.

The goal

The goal of this book is to help your school build **daily discipline and measurable improvement**. Not vague hope — measurable change you can see in attendance, reading, homework, behaviour, and teacher planning. By the end of ninety days, you should be able to compare your school to where it started and see real progress.

Every chapter follows the same simple shape: a short opening story or context, the main teaching, a practical system you can use, an activity, reflection questions, and a key takeaway. Read it, then do it. That is how habits are built.

Let us start where every honest improvement must start — by understanding that the problem was never the potential.

Small Habits. Big Future.

PART 1 — WHY PNG SCHOOLS NEED BETTER SYSTEMS

Chapter 1: The Problem Is Not Potential

Opening Story

At a community school not far from town, a teacher named Mr. Aua kept a list in his notebook of his "bright ones" — students he believed could go far. Top of the list was a boy named Joseph. Joseph could solve a maths problem faster than anyone in the class and could explain a science idea so clearly that other students understood it better from him than from the textbook.

But by the middle of the year, Joseph was falling behind. He came late three days a week. He often forgot his homework. He missed the start of lessons and then could not catch up. Mr. Aua was confused. The talent was obviously there. So what was going wrong?

One afternoon he asked Joseph directly. The answer was simple and honest. "Sir," Joseph said, "no one at home wakes me. There is no time I read. There is no place I do homework. Each day is different." The problem was never Joseph's mind. The problem was that there was no system around him.

The Main Teaching

We often talk about students as if their success depends only on how clever they are. We say, "He is gifted," or "She is not a strong student," as though ability is fixed and explains everything. But ability is only the starting point. What turns ability into achievement is **consistency** — and consistency comes from systems, not from talent.

Papua New Guinea is full of talented young people with real dreams. That has never been our shortage. What holds many students back is not a lack of potential but a collection of weak conditions around them:

- **Inconsistency** — every day runs differently, so nothing becomes automatic.
- **Lack of routine** — there is no fixed time to read, study, or prepare.

- **Poor systems** — the school has no clear, repeated way of doing the important things.
- **Weak tracking** — no one measures attendance, reading, or homework, so problems grow quietly until they are large.
- **Reactive discipline** — the school waits for bad behaviour and then punishes it, instead of building good behaviour ahead of time.

Notice that none of these are about the child being incapable. They are all about the environment. And that is encouraging, because an environment can be changed far more easily than a personality.

This is why a school must make an important shift: **from punishment-based discipline to system-based growth**. Punishment reacts after the damage is done. A system prevents the damage in the first place. Punishment asks, "Who do we blame?" A system asks, "What routine was missing, and how do we build it?"

The Practical System

The "Missing System" Question. Whenever a student struggles, train yourself and your staff to ask one question before reaching for punishment:

"What system was missing that allowed this to happen?"

If a student is always late, the missing system may be a morning routine. If homework is never done, the missing system may be a fixed study time and place. If a class is noisy at the start of every lesson, the missing system is an entry routine. Once you find the missing system, you can build it — and the problem usually shrinks on its own.

Keep it simple. For one week, instead of recording who misbehaved, record **which routines were missing** when problems happened. You will quickly see patterns.

Activity

Student Reflection Questions 1. Think of one thing you struggle with at school. Is it because you cannot do it, or because you have no daily routine for it? 2. What is one routine that would make your school day easier?

Teacher Reflection Questions 1. Name one student you believe has strong potential but inconsistent results. What system is missing around that student? 2. In your classroom, do you spend more time reacting to problems or building routines that prevent them?

School Discussion Task As a staff, list the three most common problems in your school. For each one, write down the missing system instead of the student to blame. Discuss which system you could build first.

Reflection Questions

- Where in our school are we blaming potential when the real issue is a missing system?
- What would change if we treated discipline as building good habits in advance, instead of punishing bad habits after?

Key Takeaway

*The problem is rarely potential. The problem is usually a missing system.
Build the system, and the talent will show.*

Chapter 2: Small Habits Shape Big Futures

Opening Story

A head teacher once decided to try something very small. Instead of a big new programme, she asked every class to read together for just ten minutes each morning before lessons began. Ten minutes. Some teachers thought it was too small to matter.

At first, nothing dramatic happened. But she kept the routine going every single day. After one term, students were reading more smoothly. After two terms, their vocabulary had grown, and they wrote longer, clearer answers. By the end of the year, the school's results had risen — not because of one big effort, but because of one small habit repeated more than a hundred and eighty times. Ten minutes a day had quietly become more than thirty hours of extra reading.

The Main Teaching

Big futures are not usually built by big, dramatic actions. They are built by **small actions repeated many times**. This is one of the most important and most overlooked truths in education.

A single day of reading does not make a scholar. A single day of skipping it does not make a failure. The power is in the repetition. Small habits **compound** — that is, they build on themselves and grow larger over time, the way a small amount of savings grows when you add to it again and again.

Think about everyday school habits and what they become over a year:

- **Daily reading** becomes a strong reader with a wide vocabulary.
- **Punctuality** becomes a student who never misses the start of learning.
- **Doing homework** becomes deep understanding and confidence.
- **Cleaning the classroom** becomes pride and respect for the school.
- **Respectful speech** becomes good relationships and a calm classroom.

The opposite is also true. Skipping reading, arriving late, ignoring homework — each small skip seems harmless on the day. But repeated, they compound into a serious gap.

Understanding "1% better" in simple school language

Imagine you become just one percent better at something each day. One percent is tiny — almost nothing you can feel. But here is the secret: when you improve a little every day, those tiny improvements stack on top of each other. A student who reads slightly better today, and slightly better tomorrow, and keeps going, becomes a very strong reader by the end of the year — without ever doing anything that felt difficult on a single day.

Picture it like climbing a hill by taking one small step at a time. No single step is hard. But step after step, you reach the top. The same is true for the student who falls one percent each day by skipping small good habits — they slide slowly to the bottom without noticing. **The direction of your small daily habits decides where you end up.**

The Practical System

The Daily Improvement Tracker. Choose a small number of habits that matter — for example: came to school on time, read today, did homework, kept my area clean, spoke respectfully. Each day, the student simply marks whether they did each one. The goal is not perfection. The goal is to make progress visible so it can grow.

When students can see their own small wins added up across a week, the habit becomes real to them. What gets tracked gets done.

Activity

Daily Improvement Tracker (try it for one week)

Day	On time	Read today	Homework done	Area clean	Respectful speech
Mon					
Tue					
Wed					
Thu					
Fri					

"One Habit I Will Improve This Week" Worksheet - The one habit I will improve this week is: ____ - *I will do it at this time each day:* ____ - I will know I succeeded if: ____ - *One person who can help me keep going:* ____

Reflection Questions

- What is one small habit in your school that, repeated daily, would make a big difference in a year?
- Which small daily "skips" are quietly costing your students the most?

Key Takeaway

You do not need a big change to build a big future. You need a small good habit, repeated every day, in the right direction.

Chapter 3: Systems Beat Motivation

Opening Story

Two teachers started the year with the same goal: to make sure every student read more. Mr. Kila relied on motivation. Every few weeks he gave a powerful speech about the value of reading. The students felt inspired — for a day or two. Then life got busy, the feeling faded, and reading stopped until the next speech.

Mrs. Tema relied on a system. She made reading the first thing the class did every morning, at the same time, in the same way, with no exceptions. There were no speeches. There was just the routine. She did not depend on the students feeling motivated, because the routine carried them on the days they did not feel like it.

By the end of the year, Mr. Kila's class had read in bursts and forgotten most of it. Mrs. Tema's class had read every single school day. The difference was not passion. Both teachers cared deeply. The difference was that one had a system and the other had only motivation.

The Main Teaching

Motivation is a feeling, and feelings change. Some mornings you wake up ready to conquer the world. Other mornings you are tired, discouraged, or distracted. If a school depends on everyone feeling motivated, it will improve only on the good days and slide back on the bad ones.

Systems remain even when motivation disappears. A system does not ask, "Do you feel like it today?" It simply says, "This is how we do things here." That is its power. A good system carries a tired teacher, a discouraged student, and a busy day. It removes the daily decision and replaces it with a dependable routine.

So what exactly is a school system? A system is any **routine, structure, checklist, schedule, or accountability tool** that makes the right action happen automatically and repeatedly. Systems are not bureaucracy. They are the simple, repeated ways your school does its most important work.

Here are some everyday school systems:

- **Reading routine** — every class reads at the same time each morning, every day.
- **Homework routine** — homework is given, recorded, and checked the same way each time.
- **Attendance routine** — attendance is marked at the same moment daily, and absences are followed up the same way.
- **Classroom entry routine** — students enter, settle, and begin in the same calm way every lesson.

Notice that each of these works whether or not anyone feels inspired. That is the whole point. **Motivation gets you started. Systems keep you going.**

A school that wants lasting improvement should stop asking, "How do we motivate everyone?" and start asking, "What systems can we build so that the right things happen even on the hardest days?"

The Practical System

Spot the Missing System. Take any goal your school keeps failing to reach — better homework completion, cleaner classrooms, on-time arrival. For each goal, ask: "Are we relying on motivation, or do we have an actual system?" If the honest answer is motivation, then you have found why it keeps failing.

Then build **one** simple system for that goal. A system needs four things to be reliable: 1. **A fixed time** — when does it happen? 2. **A fixed way** — what exactly is done, step by step? 3. **A person responsible** — who makes sure it happens? 4. **A simple record** — how do we know it happened?

Activity

Identify Missing Systems in a Classroom Walk through a normal school day in your mind and list three moments that feel chaotic or inconsistent (for example, the start of the morning, the change between lessons, the end of the day). For each, write whether a system exists or whether the class is just hoping for the best.

Moment in the day	Is there a system?	What goes wrong without one?

Build One Classroom Routine Choose one moment from the table above and design a simple routine for it using the four parts: - Fixed time: ____ - Fixed way (steps): ____ - Person responsible: ____ - Simple record: ____

Reflection Questions

- Where is our school depending on motivation when it should depend on a system?
- Which single system, if built well, would carry us through our hardest days?

Key Takeaway

Motivation comes and goes. Systems stay. Build the routine, and you no longer have to depend on the feeling.

PART 2 — BUILDING THE ATOMIC STUDENT

Chapter 4: The Atomic Student

Opening Story

A girl named Serah was not the cleverest student in her class, and she knew it. But one day she decided something simple. She said to herself, "I am a disciplined learner." She did not say, "I will try to study more." She decided who she was.

From that day, small choices became easy to make. When her friends wanted to skip homework, she thought, *I am a disciplined learner — disciplined learners finish their work*. When she felt like sleeping in, she thought, *That is not who I am now*. She was not fighting her feelings every day; she was simply acting like the person she had decided to be. By the end of the year, Serah was not just behaving like a disciplined learner. She had become one.

The Main Teaching

What is an **Atomic Student**? The word "atomic" means something small but powerful — like the tiny building blocks that everything is made of. An Atomic Student is built from small, powerful daily habits. They are:

- **Disciplined** — they do what is right even when it is hard.
- **Responsible** — they take ownership of their learning and belongings.
- **Consistent** — they show up and do the work every day, not just on good days.
- **Respectful** — they treat teachers, classmates, and the school with respect.
- **Growth-focused** — they believe they can improve, and they keep trying.

Here is the deepest idea in this chapter: **lasting habits come from identity, not just rules**. When a student follows a habit only because of a rule, they break it the moment no one is watching. But when a student believes "this is who I am," the habit holds even when no one is looking.

This is called **identity-based habits**. Instead of saying, "I want to read more," the Atomic Student says, "I am a reader." Instead of, "I should be on time," they say, "I am a punctual person." Each time they act in line with that identity, they prove it to themselves a little more, and the habit gets stronger.

The order matters. Many people try to change their results first. The Atomic Student changes their identity first, and the results follow. Decide who you are, then act like that person, every small day.

The Practical System

The Student Habit Contract. A habit contract is a simple promise a student makes to themselves and to someone who supports them. It turns a vague wish into a clear commitment.

My Student Habit Contract

I am becoming a disciplined, responsible learner.

The habit I am building is: ___ I will do it every day at: ___ Because I am the kind of student who: ___

Signed (student): ___ Witnessed by (teacher / parent / friend): ___

Activity

Student Habit Identity Worksheet 1. Write down the kind of student you want to become (use "I am..."): ___ 2. *What does that kind of student do every day? List three actions.* - ___ - ___ - ___ 3. Which one of these will you start with this week? ___ 4. *When you feel like giving up, what will you remind yourself?* ___

Personal Weekly Goal Planner

Day	My main goal today	Did I act like the student I want to be?
Mon		
Tue		
Wed		
Thu		
Fri		

Reflection Questions

- What kind of student do you truly want to become, and do your daily habits match that identity?
- For teachers: how can you help students see themselves as readers, leaders, and disciplined learners — not just tell them to behave?

Key Takeaway

Do not just change what you do. Decide who you are. The Atomic Student first chooses an identity, then proves it with small daily habits.

Chapter 5: Building a Reading Culture

Opening Story

When a small primary school decided to put a "Reading Streak Board" on the classroom wall, the teacher expected little. Each day a class read together, they coloured one box on the board. The children quickly became proud of their growing line of coloured boxes. Soon they were reminding the teacher: "Sir, we must not break the streak!"

What began as a wall chart became a culture. Students started bringing in any book or newspaper they could find. The shy ones who once avoided reading aloud began volunteering. Within a year, reading was no longer something the teacher forced. It was simply *what this class did*. That is what a reading culture looks like — when reading stops being a task and becomes part of who the school is.

The Main Teaching

If a student can read well, they can learn almost anything. Reading is the **core success habit** of school, because every subject depends on it. A strong reader understands questions faster, learns independently, and grows in confidence. A weak reader struggles in every subject, not because they lack intelligence, but because the doorway to learning is harder to open.

Building a reading culture is one of the highest-value things any PNG school can do, and it does not require expensive resources. It requires **routine and visibility**. Here are the key systems:

- **Morning reading system** — the school sets a fixed time, ideally first thing each morning, when every class reads. Same time, every day. It becomes as normal as the morning bell.
- **Reading streak board** — a simple wall chart that records each day the class reads. The growing streak builds pride and keeps the habit alive.

- **Vocabulary growth** — students collect new words they meet while reading and use them in speaking and writing. A "word of the day" wall costs nothing and builds language steadily.
- **Peer reading groups** — students read in pairs or small groups, helping one another. Stronger readers support weaker readers, and both improve.

The aim is to make reading **frequent, visible, and shared**. Frequent, so it becomes a habit. Visible, so progress is celebrated. Shared, so it becomes part of the school's identity rather than a lonely chore.

The Practical System

The 15-Minute Morning Reading Routine. Every class, every morning, reads for fifteen minutes before lessons begin. The steps are always the same: 1. Bell or signal for "reading time." 2. Every student opens a book or text. 3. The class reads quietly (or in pairs for younger students). 4. One day each week, a few students briefly share what they read. 5. The class colours one box on the Reading Streak Board.

No new materials are needed beyond whatever books, papers, or printed pages the school can gather. Consistency matters far more than the quantity of books.

Activity

Reading Log (students keep this daily — see Appendix C for a full printable version)

Book / text title	Pages read	New words learned	One thing I learned

Book Reflection Page - The book or text I read was about: ____ - *The most interesting part was:* ____ - A new word I learned and its meaning: ____ - *I would / would not recommend it because:* ____

Class Reading Challenge As a class, set a streak goal (for example, "30 school days of reading without breaking the streak"). Track it on the Reading Streak

Board. When the class reaches the goal, celebrate it publicly — a certificate, an assembly mention, or a class reward.

Reflection Questions

- Is reading currently a daily habit in our school, or an occasional event?
- What is one no-cost way we could make reading more visible and shared this term?

Key Takeaway

Reading is the master habit of school. Make it daily, make it visible, make it shared — and watch every subject improve.

Chapter 6: Homework and Study Systems

Opening Story

A boy named Timothy used to dread homework. Each evening it was a battle. His mother would shout, he would cry, and the books would stay closed until late at night when everyone was tired. Homework had become a source of fear in the home.

Then a teacher suggested something to the family. Instead of fighting about homework, they would build a small routine. After the evening meal, Timothy would sit at the same small table, with the lamp, for thirty minutes — every night, same time, same place. No shouting needed. The routine simply happened. Within two weeks, the battle was gone. Homework was no longer a fight; it was just part of the evening, like washing the plates. Timothy was not a different boy. He just had a system.

The Main Teaching

In many homes and classrooms, homework is driven by **fear** — fear of punishment, fear of shame, fear of failing. But fear is a poor engine. It makes students hide their work, copy from friends, or avoid homework altogether. The better engine is **routine**.

When homework is supported by a clear routine, it stops depending on the student's mood or the parent's temper. It just happens, the same way every day. A strong study routine has four simple parts:

- **Study cue** — something that signals "it is study time now" (for example, finishing the evening meal, or a certain time on the clock). The cue starts the habit automatically.
- **Study place** — a fixed spot where study always happens, even if it is just one corner or one table. The place tells the brain, "here, we work."

- **Study time** — a fixed length and time of day. Short and regular beats long and rare. Thirty focused minutes every day is far better than three hours once a week.
- **Study reward** — something small and positive that follows study, so the brain links studying with a good feeling (a tick on a chart, a few minutes of rest, a word of praise). A reward makes the habit want to repeat itself.

This is the simple chain of a good habit: **a cue starts it, the place and time hold it, and a reward makes it stick.**

How parents can support study habits

Parents do not need to be teachers or know the subjects. They only need to protect the routine. A parent can: - Keep the study time and place consistent. - Reduce noise and distractions during study time. - Ask one simple question: "What did you work on today?" - Praise the effort and the consistency, not just the marks.

When the home protects the routine and the school sets clear, reasonable homework, the two work together and the battle disappears.

The Practical System

The Same-Time-Same-Place Study Routine. The family agrees on a fixed cue, place, time, and reward, and keeps them the same every day: - **Cue:** ___ (e.g. after dinner) - **Place:** ___ (e.g. the table by the lamp) - **Time:** ___ (e.g. 30 minutes) - **Reward:** ___ (e.g. tick the chart, then rest)

The teacher's part is to give homework that is clear, recorded, and reasonable in length, so the routine is achievable.

Activity

Homework Checklist (see Appendix D for the full printable version)

Subject	Task	Due date	Done?	Parent signature

Weekly Study Plan

Day	Subject focus	Time	Place	Done?
Mon				
Tue				
Wed				
Thu				
Fri				

Reflection Questions

- Is homework in our school driven more by fear or by routine?
- What is one small change that would make homework calmer and more consistent at home?

Key Takeaway

Homework does not need fear. It needs a routine: a cue, a place, a time, and a reward. Build the routine, and the battle ends.

Chapter 7: Discipline and Self-Control

Opening Story

During exam preparation, a student named Daniel noticed something about himself. Every time he sat down to study, within minutes he was distracted — friends calling outside, a phone, a noise, his own wandering thoughts. He always blamed the distractions. "If only it were quieter," he said, "I could study."

A teacher gave him a small task: for three days, write down every time you got distracted and what caused it. When Daniel looked at his list, the truth was clear. Most distractions were not forced on him — he reached for them. He picked up the phone. He went outside. Once he could see the pattern, he could change it. He put the phone in another room during study time and faced the wall instead of the window. His "distraction problem" was really a self-control system he had never built.

The Main Teaching

There is a common and harmful belief that discipline means punishment — that a "disciplined school" is one that canes, shouts, or punishes hardest. This is wrong.

Discipline is not punishment.

True discipline is **doing what is right even when it is hard**. It is the student who studies when friends are playing. It is the teacher who marks the books even when tired. It is the quiet strength to keep a good habit when no one is forcing you. Punishment comes from outside. Discipline grows from inside. A school that only punishes produces students who behave when watched and misbehave when free. A school that builds discipline produces students who do right because it is who they are.

A huge part of discipline is **self-control**, and self-control is mostly about managing your environment, not just fighting your feelings. The strongest

students are not the ones with superhuman willpower. They are the ones who **remove distractions before they start**, so willpower is barely needed.

Here is the key lesson: it is much easier to control your surroundings than to control your urges in the moment. If the phone is in another room, you do not have to resist it. If you sit facing a quiet wall, there is less to pull your eyes away. **Make good habits easy and distractions hard, and self-control becomes simple.**

The Practical System

The Distraction Audit and Removal. First, the student observes their distractions honestly for a few days (the audit). Then they make a simple plan to remove the biggest ones before study begins (the removal). The order matters: see it first, then change the environment.

A simple rule to teach students: "**Before I start, I remove what will pull me away.**" Put the phone elsewhere. Sit away from windows and crowds. Tell others you are studying. Prepare everything you need so you do not get up. Win the battle before it begins.

Activity

Distraction Audit (do this for three days)

Day	When I tried to study	What distracted me	Did I choose it or was it forced?
1			
2			
3			

Self-Control Plan - My biggest distraction is: ____ - *Before I study, I will remove it by:* ____ - A better place for me to study is: ____ - *One thing I will do right (even when it is hard) this week:* ____

Reflection Questions

- In our school, do we mostly *punish* poor behaviour or *build* self-control?
- What environment changes would make self-control easier for our students?

Key Takeaway

*Discipline is not punishment — it is doing what is right even when it is hard.
And self-control is easier when you remove distractions before they start.*

PART 3 — THE TEACHER SYSTEM

Chapter 8: Teachers Build Systems

Opening Story

Two teachers worked in classrooms next to each other. From the corridor you could hear the difference. In one room, every lesson began with shouting to settle the class, papers were lost, and the teacher seemed always to be putting out fires. In the other, lessons began calmly, the same way each day, and the teacher seemed to have time to actually teach.

The second teacher was not louder or stricter. She had simply built systems. Her students knew exactly what to do when they entered, how to hand in work, and how to move between activities — because she had taught these routines until they ran by themselves. She was not working harder than her neighbour. She was working through systems, and her systems carried much of the load that her neighbour was carrying alone.

The Main Teaching

Teachers do far more than deliver lessons. **Teachers shape the entire culture of a classroom.** The way a class behaves, the energy in the room, whether time is wasted or used well — all of this flows from the systems the teacher builds, or fails to build.

This is good news, because it means a teacher is not at the mercy of their students' moods. A teacher who builds strong routines is building a classroom that largely runs itself, freeing the teacher to do the real work of teaching.

Here is a truth that surprises many teachers: **good systems reduce teacher stress.** It feels like systems are extra work, but the opposite is true. Without systems, the teacher must make a hundred small decisions and corrections every day — Where does this go? Why are they noisy again? Who has not handed in work? With systems, those questions are answered once, taught to the class, and then handled automatically.

And crucially, **classroom routines help students behave better** — not because students fear the teacher, but because they know what is expected. Most misbehaviour grows in the gaps where students are unsure what to do. Fill those gaps with clear routines, and much of the misbehaviour simply has no room to appear.

A teacher who thinks like a system-builder asks a different question. Instead of "How do I control this class today?" they ask, "What routine can I build so this runs smoothly every day?"

The Practical System

The Teacher's System Mindset. For one week, every time something in the classroom goes wrong or wastes time, do not just fix it in the moment — write it down as a routine to build. By the end of the week you will have a list of the systems your classroom needs most. Build them one at a time. Each routine you establish removes a daily source of stress for good.

Activity

Teacher Classroom Systems Checklist (tick what you already have a clear routine for)

System	Do I have a clear routine?	Needs work
Entering the classroom		
Settling and silence		
Handing in / returning work		
Moving between activities		
Cleaning up		
Dealing with latecomers		
Marking and feedback		

Weekly Planning Reflection - Which classroom moment caused me the most stress this week? ____ - *What routine could remove that stress?* ____ - What is the one system I will build or improve next week? ____

Reflection Questions

- Am I spending my energy reacting to problems, or building systems that prevent them?
- Which single routine, if I taught it well, would most reduce my daily stress?

Key Takeaway

Teachers do not just teach lessons — they build the systems that shape the whole classroom. Good systems lower stress and raise behaviour at the same time.

Chapter 9: The Organized Classroom

Opening Story

A new teacher named Mr. Wari spent his first weeks feeling exhausted. Every lesson was a fresh struggle just to get started. Students wandered in slowly, took long to settle, lost their books, and turned every transition into chaos. By the time the class was ready, half the lesson was gone.

An experienced colleague gave him simple advice: "Stop trying to control everything in the moment. Build six routines, teach them once, and let them carry you." Mr. Wari built an entry routine, a silence routine, a transition routine, a homework routine, a cleanup routine, and an assessment routine. He practised each one with his class until it became automatic. Within a month, his classroom looked completely different — calm, ordered, and ready to learn — and he was far less tired. He had not become stricter. He had become organized.

The Main Teaching

An organized classroom is built from a small set of clear routines that handle the predictable moments of every school day. Once taught and practised, these routines run by themselves and free the teacher to teach. Here are six essential classroom routines every teacher should build:

- **Entry routine** — exactly how students enter, where they sit, and what they begin doing immediately (for example, opening their book for morning reading). No wasted minutes at the start.
- **Silence routine** — a single clear signal (a raised hand, a word, a bell) that means "stop and listen." Taught and practised so the class responds in seconds, not minutes.
- **Transition routine** — how students move from one activity to the next quickly and calmly. Transitions are where the most time is lost, so a strong routine here saves huge amounts of learning time.

- **Homework routine** — a consistent way homework is given, written down, collected, and returned. Students always know where and when.
- **Cleanup routine** — a fixed way the class tidies the room and their materials before leaving, building responsibility and pride.
- **Assessment routine** — a regular, predictable way tests and checks happen, so students are not surprised and the teacher tracks progress steadily.

The secret to all six is the same: **teach the routine explicitly, practise it until it is automatic, and keep it consistent.** A routine that changes every day is not a routine; it is just another instruction. The power comes from sameness.

The Practical System

The Six-Routine Setup. Rather than trying to fix everything at once, build the six routines one per week over six weeks. For each routine: explain it, demonstrate it, practise it with the class two or three times, then expect it every day. Spend a little time teaching it now to save large amounts of time forever after.

Use the **Classroom Routine Design Template** below (and the full version in Appendix F) to plan each one.

Activity

Classroom Routine Design Template

Routine	The cue (what starts it)	What students do	What the teacher does	How it ends / reward
Entry				
Silence				
Transition				
Homework				
Cleanup				
Assessment				

Fill in one row each week and teach that routine to your class.

Reflection Questions

- Which of the six routines is weakest in my classroom right now?
- How much learning time am I losing to moments that a routine could fix?

Key Takeaway

An organized classroom is not about being strict. It is about six clear routines, taught once and kept consistent, that quietly run the room and protect learning time.

Chapter 10: Teacher Productivity and Weekly Workflow

Opening Story

Mrs. Lena was a dedicated teacher, but she always felt behind. Marking piled up. Lesson plans were rushed late on Sunday nights. Struggling students were noticed too late. Reports were a panic at the end of term. She was working hard, but the work felt scattered and never finished.

A head teacher suggested she give each day of the week a single main job. Monday for planning, Tuesday for assessment, Wednesday for student support, Thursday for progress review, Friday for reporting. Nothing about her workload changed — but now each task had a home. She was no longer doing everything at once and finishing nothing. By giving her week a rhythm, she found she was calmer, more on top of her work, and able to catch struggling students far earlier.

The Main Teaching

Teaching is one of the busiest jobs there is, and the work never truly ends. The danger is trying to do everything every day, which leaves a teacher scattered and overwhelmed. The solution is a **weekly workflow** — a simple rhythm that gives each major task a regular home in the week, so nothing is forgotten and nothing piles up.

Here is a clear weekly structure any teacher can adapt:

- **Monday — Planning.** Plan the week's lessons and learning outcomes. Start the week knowing where you are going.
- **Tuesday — Assessment.** Focus on marking, checking, and giving feedback on student work while it is still fresh.
- **Wednesday — Student support.** Give attention to students who are falling behind. Mid-week is the time to catch problems before they grow.

- **Thursday — Progress review.** Step back and review how the class and individuals are progressing against the week's goals.
- **Friday — Reporting.** Record results, update trackers, and prepare any communication for parents or leadership. End the week with your records up to date.

The point is not to do *only* that task on that day — teaching still happens daily — but to give each important job a **dedicated focus** so it actually gets done. A teacher with a weekly rhythm is calmer and more effective, and importantly, **catches struggling students early** instead of discovering problems at the end of term when it is too late.

The Practical System

The Five-Day Teacher Rhythm. Write the five focus areas at the top of your weekly planner. Each day, in addition to teaching, give real attention to that day's focus. Keep three simple records running through the week: a marking tracker (what is marked and what is pending), a student support log (who needs help and what you did), and your weekly plan. These three tools, kept consistently, turn a chaotic week into a managed one.

Activity

Teacher Weekly Planner (see Appendix E for the full printable version)

Week of:	Focus	Key task	Done?
Monday	Planning		
Tuesday	Assessment		
Wednesday	Student support		
Thursday	Progress review		
Friday	Reporting		

Marking Tracker

Class / subject	Work to mark	Date received	Marked?	Returned?

Student Support Log

Student	What they are struggling with	Support given	Follow-up date

Reflection Questions

- Which teaching task most often piles up on me, and which day could become its home?
- Am I catching struggling students early, or noticing problems too late?

Key Takeaway

A teacher does not need to do everything every day. Give each major task a day, keep simple records, and a scattered week becomes a steady rhythm.

PART 4 — BUILDING SCHOOL CULTURE

Chapter 11: Discipline Is Culture

Opening Story

A visitor once asked a head teacher how his school stayed so clean and orderly when other schools nearby struggled. He expected to hear about strict rules and punishments. Instead the head teacher smiled and said, "We do not really have more rules. We just have habits that everyone keeps."

He explained: every morning, students arrived on time because that is simply what was done here. They picked up rubbish without being told because that is what students at this school do. They greeted teachers respectfully out of habit, not fear. "Our discipline," he said, "is not a rule book. It is our culture — the things we do every day without thinking about them." That was his real secret. The discipline lived in the daily habits of everyone, not in a list of punishments.

The Main Teaching

Here is a simple but powerful definition: **culture is what people repeatedly do**. Not what is written on the wall. Not what is said in assembly. Culture is the actual, repeated behaviour of everyone in the school, day after day. If students repeatedly arrive late, lateness is the culture, no matter what the rules say. If everyone keeps the grounds clean, cleanliness is the culture.

This means discipline is not really about punishment at all — **discipline is culture**. A disciplined school is one where good behaviour has become the normal, repeated way of doing things. You build that not by punishing harder, but by establishing good habits and keeping them consistent until they become "just how we do things here."

A strong school culture is built from repeated habits like these:

- **Punctuality** — arriving on time is normal and expected of everyone, including staff.

- **Respect** — students, teachers, and visitors are treated with courtesy as a matter of habit.
- **Cleanliness** — keeping the school grounds and classrooms clean is everyone's daily habit.
- **Accountability** — people take responsibility for their actions and their work.
- **Fairness** — everyone is treated justly, and rules apply equally.
- **Professionalism** — staff model the standards they expect from students.

Notice that culture is built from the top. When teachers and leaders model these habits, students follow. When leaders are late, careless, or unfair, no rule will fix the culture, because the loudest message is always what people see repeated.

The Practical System

The Culture Audit. You cannot improve a culture you have not honestly examined. As a school, look at what people *actually do* every day in each key area — not what the rules say, but what really happens. Then choose one or two areas to strengthen by building a clear, consistent habit and modelling it from the top. Culture changes when behaviour changes and stays changed.

Activity

School Culture Audit

Culture area	What actually happens daily now?	What we want it to be	One habit to build
Punctuality			
Respect			
Cleanliness			
Accountability			
Fairness			
Professionalism			

Classroom Standard Poster Template Create a simple poster for each classroom titled "How We Do Things Here," listing 4–6 daily standards in positive language, for example: - *We arrive on time and ready to learn.* - *We speak with respect.* - *We keep our classroom clean.* - *We finish what we start.* - *We help one another.*

Reflection Questions

- If culture is what people repeatedly do, what is our school's real culture right now — not on paper, but in practice?
- Are our leaders and teachers modelling the habits we expect from students?

Key Takeaway

Culture is what people repeatedly do. Discipline is not a punishment book — it is the good habits a school keeps until they become "just how we do things here."

Chapter 12: Merit, Fairness and Leadership

Opening Story

When it was time to choose class prefects, a teacher tried something new. In past years, the roles often went to the loudest students, or to those whose families were known to staff. This time, the teacher set clear standards in advance: a prefect must show good attendance, help others, complete their work, and treat people with respect. Then she chose openly, based on those standards.

A quiet, hard-working student named Grace, who had never been chosen before, became a prefect. The change in her was remarkable — and so was the change in the class. Other students realised that leadership here was earned through effort and character, not granted through favour. They began to lift their own standards, because they could see that fairness was real. When leadership is based on merit, everyone has a reason to do their best.

The Main Teaching

Leadership in a school sends a powerful message. When students see *how* leaders are chosen and *how* they behave, they learn what their school truly values. So it matters greatly that leadership is built on the right foundations.

Good school leadership should be based on **service, effort, integrity, and responsibility** — not on popularity, connections, or favour. A leader serves others rather than seeking status. A leader is chosen for their effort and character. A leader acts with integrity, doing right even when unseen. A leader takes responsibility rather than blame.

This brings us to a sensitive but important issue: **favouritism**. When positions, praise, or opportunities are handed out based on who someone knows rather than what they have earned, it quietly damages a school. Students who work hard lose hope when they see effort ignored and favour rewarded. The fairest and most

motivating path is **merit** — recognising and rewarding genuine effort, character, and contribution.

Let us be clear and professional about this. Promoting merit is not about accusing anyone. It is about building a system where opportunities are open, standards are clear and known in advance, and everyone has an equal chance to earn recognition through their effort. **Merit, fairness, and equal opportunity** are not just moral ideas — they are practical tools that motivate a whole school to do its best, because effort is seen to pay off.

When fairness is real and visible, trust grows. And a school that students trust is a school where students try harder.

The Practical System

Clear, Public Standards for Recognition. Before choosing leaders or giving awards, set the standards in advance, write them down, and make them known to everyone. Choose openly against those standards. This single practice removes most suspicion of favouritism and turns recognition into something students can aim for and earn.

A simple rule: *"Standards before names."* Decide what earns the role before deciding who gets it.

Activity

Student Leadership Reflection - What kind of leader do I want to be: one who seeks status, or one who serves? ___ - *Which leadership qualities (service, effort, integrity, responsibility) am I strongest in?* ___ - Which one will I work on this term? ___

Fairness Discussion Guide (for class or staff discussion) 1. What does it feel like when effort is ignored and favour is rewarded? 2. How can we make sure recognition in our school is based on merit? 3. What clear standards should we set before choosing leaders or giving awards? 4. How can leaders show integrity even when no one is watching?

Reflection Questions

- Are leadership roles and recognition in our school earned by merit, with clear standards known in advance?
- What would change for our students' motivation if fairness were obviously real?

Key Takeaway

Leadership should be earned through service, effort, integrity, and responsibility. Set clear standards before names, and let merit and fairness motivate the whole school.

Chapter 13: School Pride and Identity

Opening Story

A struggling school decided to do something simple but powerful. They created a school motto — "We Rise Together" — and printed it on a banner at the gate. They started a small recognition assembly each Friday, where students were named for effort, kindness, and improvement. They introduced clean, simple badges for prefects and a shirt for the reading challenge champions.

Slowly, something shifted. Students began to stand a little taller. They spoke of "our school" with pride instead of embarrassment. Attendance improved, not because of new rules, but because students now felt they belonged to something worth showing up for. The lesson was clear: when students are proud of their school and feel they belong, they protect it, and they rise with it.

The Main Teaching

People give their best to things they are proud to belong to. This is deeply true in schools. **Schools improve when students feel proud to belong.** Pride is not vanity — it is a sense of identity and belonging that makes students want to protect their school's name and live up to it.

A strong school identity is built from visible, shared symbols and practices that say, "You belong here, and this is who we are." These can include:

- **Uniforms** worn with care, signalling shared identity and equality.
- **Badges** that mark roles and recognise achievement.
- **Shirts** for special groups and achievements (such as a reading challenge or leadership team).
- **Posters** that display the school's standards and values.
- **Mottos** — short, memorable phrases that capture the school's spirit.

- **Recognition systems** that regularly celebrate effort, improvement, and good character.

These symbols work because they make identity **visible and shared**. A motto on the wall reminds everyone daily who they are striving to be. A recognition assembly tells students that effort is seen and valued. A badge says, "You earned a place of responsibility." Together they build a culture students want to belong to.

Optional apparel integration. Some schools choose to strengthen identity through simple, optional apparel managed by school leadership — for example, **school leadership shirts** for the prefect or student council, **reading challenge shirts** for students who reach reading milestones, **prefect shirts** that mark earned responsibility, and **teacher polos** that present staff professionally and unite the team. This is entirely optional and should be guided by school leadership, kept affordable and fair, and used to celebrate belonging and achievement — never to divide. Where used well, such apparel can make recognition visible and reinforce a proud, united school identity. Schools that would like help designing or producing school apparel can enquire with FlexWear Ltd at enquiries@flexwearltd.com or +675 7160 7693 (call or WhatsApp).

The Practical System

Visible Identity and Regular Recognition. Give your school a clear motto and display your standards where everyone sees them daily. Then build a simple, regular recognition system (such as a weekly assembly or board) that celebrates effort, improvement, and character by name. Visible identity plus consistent recognition turns a group of individuals into a proud community.

Activity

School Motto Creation - In a few words, what does our school stand for? ___ -
Draft three possible mottos: 1. ___ 2. ___ 3. ___ - Which one is short, positive, and memorable? Choose and display it.

Recognition System Planner

What we recognise	How often	How we recognise it	Who is responsible
Effort			
Improvement			
Good character			
Reading milestones			
Leadership			

Reflection Questions

- Do our students feel proud to belong to our school? What tells you so?
- What is one simple symbol or recognition practice we could introduce to strengthen belonging?

Key Takeaway

Students give their best to schools they are proud of. Build a visible identity — motto, standards, and regular recognition — and pride will lift the whole school.

PART 5 — PARENT AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Chapter 14: Parents as Habit Builders

Opening Story

A teacher noticed that two students from similar backgrounds were doing very differently. She visited both homes. In one home, there was no set bedtime, no quiet time, and mornings were rushed and chaotic. In the other, the parents had built small, simple routines: a regular bedtime, a fixed homework time after the evening meal, and a calm morning where the child's uniform and bag were ready the night before.

The second child arrived at school rested, on time, and prepared. The first arrived tired, late, and flustered. Neither parent was wealthy or highly educated. The difference was simply the **habits** the home had built. The teacher realised that much of a student's success or struggle was shaped before they ever reached the school gate — by the routines of the home.

The Main Teaching

Parents are among the most powerful habit-builders in a child's life, often without realising it. Long before and after school hours, the home shapes the habits that decide how a child shows up to learn. **Parents shape** their children's:

- **Bedtime** — a rested child learns; a tired child struggles.
- **Attendance** — parents who value and ensure regular attendance set their child up to succeed.
- **Homework** — a protected time and place at home makes homework happen calmly.
- **Reading** — even a few minutes of reading or being read to at home builds a lifelong reader.
- **Respect** — children learn how to treat others largely from the home.
- **Responsibility** — small chores and expectations at home build a responsible student.

Here is the encouraging truth for every parent: **you do not need to be a teacher, and you do not need money, to support your child's success.** You need simple, consistent home routines. A regular bedtime. A fixed homework time. A calm morning. A few words of encouragement. These small habits, kept consistently, do more for a child's learning than almost anything else.

When the home builds good habits and the school builds good systems, the two reinforce each other and the child thrives. When they pull in different directions, the child is caught in the gap. So the partnership between home and school is one of the most important relationships in education.

The Practical System

Three Simple Home Routines. Parents do not need a complicated plan. Three consistent routines make an enormous difference: 1. **A regular bedtime** so the child arrives rested. 2. **A fixed homework time and place** so study happens calmly each day. 3. **A calm, prepared morning** — uniform and bag ready the night before — so the child arrives on time and settled.

Keep these the same every day. Consistency is the whole secret.

Activity

Parent Habit Checklist (see Appendix I for the full printable version)

Daily habit	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Child went to bed on time					
Uniform and bag ready					
Homework time kept					
Read or talked about reading					
Encouraged my child					

Home Study Support Guide (for parents) - Our family's fixed homework time is: ____ - *The quiet place for study is:* ____ - I will ask my child each day: "What

did you work on today?" - I will praise effort and consistency, not only marks. - I will keep bedtime regular so my child is rested.

Reflection Questions

- For parents: which of the three simple home routines could you strengthen this week?
- For teachers: how can we help parents understand the power of small home routines?

Key Takeaway

Parents are powerful habit-builders. You do not need to be a teacher or have money — just simple, consistent home routines: regular bedtime, fixed homework time, and a calm morning.

Chapter 15: Community Responsibility

Opening Story

In one village, the school had struggled for years with broken fences, rubbish on the grounds, and students wandering off during the day. Then the community decided the school was everyone's responsibility, not just the teachers'. Parents took turns helping maintain the grounds. Community leaders spoke up about the importance of attendance. Neighbours watched out for students and reported anyone leading them astray.

The change was striking. With the whole community protecting the school, teachers could focus on teaching, students felt safe and valued, and learning improved. The community had learned a simple truth: a school does not belong only to its teachers and students. It belongs to everyone, and it rises or falls on whether the community protects it.

The Main Teaching

Schools do not exist in isolation. They sit within communities, and they are far stronger when the **community protects learning**. When a community values its school, supports its teachers, and watches over its students, the school can thrive even in difficult conditions. When a community is indifferent, even good teachers struggle against the tide.

Community responsibility for a school shows up in several practical ways:

- **Respect** — the community treats the school, its teachers, and learning itself with respect, setting a tone that students absorb.
- **Safety** — the community helps keep the school and the journey to it safe, so children can learn without fear.
- **Punctuality** — the community values regular, on-time attendance and supports families in achieving it.

- **Cleanliness** — the community helps care for and maintain the school grounds and facilities.
- **Accountability** — the community holds itself, and the school, responsible for supporting children's learning.

The key idea is partnership. Teachers cannot do everything alone, and they should not be expected to. When parents, leaders, churches, and neighbours each take some responsibility, the load is shared and the school becomes a true centre of the community. **A protected school is a learning school.**

This partnership works best when it is organised, not left to chance. Regular meetings, clear roles, and simple shared commitments turn good intentions into real support.

The Practical System

The Community Learning Partnership. Bring parents, community leaders, church representatives, and the school together regularly — even a simple termly meeting — to agree on shared responsibilities for the school. Decide together how the community will support attendance, safety, cleanliness, and respect. Write down a few clear commitments and review them each term. When responsibility is shared and organised, support becomes reliable.

Activity

Community Education Meeting Guide (for a termly community-school meeting) 1. **Open** with the school's progress: attendance, reading, behaviour. 2. **Celebrate** recent improvements and recognise contributors. 3. **Discuss** one challenge the school faces and how the community can help. 4. **Agree** on two or three clear community commitments for the term. 5. **Assign** who is responsible for each commitment. 6. **Close** by setting the date of the next meeting.

Parent-Teacher Partnership Checklist

Shared commitment	Who is responsible	How we will know it is working
Supporting attendance		
Keeping the school safe		
Maintaining cleanliness		
Showing respect for learning		

Reflection Questions

- Does our community see the school as everyone's responsibility, or only the teachers'?
- What is one way our community could better protect and support learning this term?

Key Takeaway

A school belongs to its whole community. When parents, leaders, and neighbours protect learning together, the school becomes strong — a protected school is a learning school.

PART 6 — 90-DAY SCHOOL TRANSFORMATION PLAN

How to use this part: *The next three chapters turn everything in this book into a clear, practical ninety-day plan. Month 1 prepares the ground. Month 2 puts the systems into daily action. Month 3 measures the change. Move at a pace your school can sustain — consistency matters more than speed.*

Chapter 16: Month 1 — Preparation

Opening Story

Before a builder lays a single brick, they prepare the ground, gather materials, and measure carefully. A house built in a hurry on unprepared ground will not stand. School transformation is the same. The first month is not about dramatic change — it is about preparing well, so that everything built afterwards is strong and lasting. Schools that rush past preparation often find their new systems collapse within weeks. Schools that prepare patiently build something that holds.

The Main Teaching

Month 1 has one job: **prepare thoroughly**. This means three things. First, **measure where you are now** (your baseline), so that in Month 3 you can prove how far you have come. Second, **prepare your people** — teachers, parents, and students — so everyone understands the plan and is ready. Third, **prepare your tools** — print the trackers, posters, and templates you will use.

You cannot improve what you do not measure. So before changing anything, record honest baselines in three key areas: - **Baseline attendance** — what percentage of students attend regularly now? - **Baseline reading** — how often and how well do students read now? - **Baseline discipline** — what are the most common behaviour issues now?

Then prepare your people through **teacher orientation** (explain the systems and assign responsibilities), **parent awareness** (share the plan and the simple home routines), and **classroom setup** (organise rooms for the new routines). Finally, **print the trackers and posters** from the templates in this book so you are ready to begin Month 2 without delay.

Resist the urge to launch everything at once. A well-prepared Month 1 makes Months 2 and 3 far easier.

The Practical System

The Preparation Checklist. Work through the checklist below over four weeks. Do not move to Month 2 until the essentials are in place: baselines recorded, teachers oriented, parents informed, classrooms set up, and materials printed.

Activity / Month 1 Checklists

Baseline Measurement Checklist

Task	Done?	Notes / figures
Recorded baseline attendance		
Recorded baseline reading habits		
Recorded baseline discipline issues		

Preparation Checklist

Task	Done?	Responsible	By when
Teacher orientation held			
Roles and responsibilities assigned			
Parent awareness meeting held			
Classrooms set up for routines			
Daily habit trackers printed			
Reading logs printed			
Attendance trackers printed			
Classroom standard posters printed and displayed			
School motto agreed and displayed			

Reflection Questions

- Have we honestly measured where we are now, so we can prove our progress later?

- Are our teachers, parents, and students truly ready, or are we rushing into action?

Key Takeaway

Month 1 is preparation, not performance. Measure your baselines, ready your people, and print your tools. A strong foundation makes lasting change possible.

Chapter 17: Month 2 — Implementation

Opening Story

A school that had prepared carefully in Month 1 began Month 2 with quiet confidence. On the first morning, the reading bell rang, and every class opened their books at the same time. Attendance was marked the same way in every room. Homework was recorded and checked. At first the routines felt new and a little awkward — but by the second week, they began to feel normal. By the fourth week, they ran almost by themselves. The school had not become strict or stressful. It had simply started *doing* what it had prepared, every day, the same way. That daily consistency was the engine of change.

The Main Teaching

Month 2 is where the systems go live. The single most important principle is **consistency**: the same routines, every day, without exception, until they become automatic. New routines always feel awkward at first. The temptation is to give up when they do not run perfectly in week one. Do not. Routines become real only through repetition.

These are the core systems to run daily through Month 2:

- **Daily reading system** — every class reads at the same fixed time each morning, tracked on the reading streak board.
- **Attendance system** — attendance is marked the same way every day, and absences are followed up consistently.
- **Homework tracking** — homework is given, recorded, and checked using the homework checklist, with parent support at home.
- **Classroom routines** — the entry, silence, transition, homework, cleanup, and assessment routines run in every classroom.
- **Weekly teacher review** — once a week, teachers review how the systems are working, what is going well, and what needs adjusting.

The job of leadership in Month 2 is to **protect the routines**. Walk the school. Encourage teachers. Keep the trackers visible. Celebrate early wins, however small. When a routine slips, calmly restore it rather than abandoning it. The goal is not perfection but persistence — keep going until the systems run on their own.

The Practical System

The Daily Consistency Loop. Each day: run the routines, mark the trackers. Each week: hold a short teacher review to check the systems and make small adjustments. Repeat for the whole month. This simple loop — do daily, review weekly — is what turns new routines into permanent habits.

Activity / Month 2 Checklists

Daily Systems Checklist (tick each day they run)

System	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Morning reading ran					
Attendance marked and followed up					
Homework recorded and checked					
Classroom routines kept					

Weekly Teacher Review (complete once a week)

Question	Notes
Which systems ran well this week?	
Which systems slipped, and why?	
What small adjustment will we make next week?	
One early win worth celebrating	

Reflection Questions

- Are we keeping our routines consistent every day, or letting them slip when they feel awkward?

- Is leadership actively protecting the routines and celebrating early wins?

Key Takeaway

Month 2 is about consistency. Run the systems daily, review them weekly, and protect the routines until they run by themselves. Persistence, not perfection, builds the habit.

Chapter 18: Month 3 — Evaluation

Opening Story

At the end of the ninety days, a head teacher gathered her staff and placed two sheets of paper side by side. One showed the school's figures from Month 1 — the baselines they had honestly recorded before starting. The other showed the figures from Month 3. The room went quiet as they compared.

Attendance had risen. Reading participation had more than doubled. Homework completion was far higher. Behaviour issues had dropped. Teachers were planning consistently. The numbers told a story that feelings alone never could: the systems had worked. There were still challenges, of course. But for the first time, the school could *prove* it was improving — not hope so, but show it. That proof gave everyone the confidence to keep going.

The Main Teaching

Month 3 has one job: **measure the change honestly**. This is why Month 1's baselines mattered so much. Without a starting point, "improvement" is just a feeling. With baselines, you can compare **before and after** and see the truth.

Evaluate the same areas you measured at the start, plus the new habits you built:

- **Attendance improvement** — compare attendance now to the baseline.
- **Reading participation** — how much more are students reading now?
- **Homework completion** — what proportion of homework is now completed?
- **Behaviour improvement** — have the common discipline issues reduced?
- **Teacher planning consistency** — are teachers following the weekly workflow?
- **Parent feedback** — what do parents notice and say about the changes?

Evaluation is not about judging people. It is about learning. Where there is improvement, celebrate it loudly and recognise those who contributed. Where progress is slower, ask what system needs strengthening — not who to blame. Then the cycle begins again: the systems that worked become permanent, and the next ninety days build on this foundation.

The deepest lesson of the whole plan appears here: **change that is measured can be sustained.** What you can see, you can grow.

The Practical System

The Before-and-After Review. Place your Month 1 baselines next to your Month 3 results in each area. Calculate the change. Gather brief parent feedback. Hold an evaluation meeting to celebrate wins, identify what to strengthen, and decide which systems become permanent. Then plan the next ninety days.

Activity / Month 3 Evaluation Sheets

Before-and-After Evaluation Sheet (see Appendix J for the full dashboard)

Area	Baseline (Month 1)	Result (Month 3)	Improvement	Evidence
Attendance				
Reading participation				
Homework completion				
Behaviour				
Teacher planning consistency				

Parent Feedback Sheet

Question	Responses / notes
What positive changes have you noticed in your child?	
What is working well at home with the new routines?	
What support would help your family more?	

Evaluation Meeting Guide 1. Review the before-and-after figures together. 2. Celebrate improvements and recognise contributors. 3. Identify the areas that need strengthening. 4. Decide which systems become permanent. 5. Set goals and a plan for the next ninety days.

Reflection Questions

- What does our before-and-after comparison actually show — and can we prove it with evidence?
- Which systems clearly worked and should become a permanent part of our school?

Key Takeaway

Month 3 measures the change honestly. Compare before and after, celebrate real progress, strengthen what lagged, and keep the systems that worked. What you measure, you can sustain.

FINAL CHAPTER

Chapter 19: Building the Future of Papua New Guinea

Opening Story

Picture a school in Papua New Guinea ten years from now. The students arrive on time, books in hand, reading the moment they sit down. Teachers move through their week with calm rhythm, catching struggling students early. Parents protect the routines at home. The community guards the school as its own. Leadership is earned by merit and service. None of this happened through one grand event. It happened through small habits, kept consistently, by ordinary people who refused to give up.

Now picture that this school is not a dream. Picture that it is *your* school, and that the future began the day you decided to build better systems, one small habit at a time.

The Main Teaching

Let us be honest as we close this book. **Papua New Guinea will not change overnight.** The challenges in our schools are real, and there is no single speech, programme, or person that will fix everything at once. Anyone who promises instant transformation is not telling the truth.

But here is the truth that should fill us with hope: **schools can improve every single day.** Not all at once, but a little at a time — one routine, one reading session, one well-marked book, one encouraged student, one fair decision, one proud morning. These small improvements, repeated and protected, compound into something powerful over months and years.

This is the heart of everything in this book. **Students, teachers, parents, and communities can build better futures through better systems.** Not through wishing. Not through blaming. Not through waiting for someone else to act.

Through systems — the quiet, repeated, daily ways we do the important things — built and kept by all of us together.

Every reader of this book has a part to play: - **Students**, you build your future one habit at a time. Decide who you are, and prove it daily. - **Teachers**, you shape culture through the systems you build. Your routines change lives. - **Parents**, you are powerful habit-builders. Simple home routines lift your children. - **Leaders and communities**, you protect and grow the school. Your fairness and support set the tone.

The future of our nation is being built right now, in classrooms across the country, in the small daily habits of its young people and those who guide them. There is no more important work.

The Practical System

Begin, and do not stop. You do not need to wait for perfect conditions, more resources, or permission. Choose one small habit or system from this book and begin it tomorrow. Keep it consistently. Then add another. The compounding of small, consistent improvements is the most reliable path to lasting change there is. Start small, but start.

Activity

My Commitment - The one habit or system I will begin building tomorrow is:

___ - *I will keep it consistently by:* ___ - The future I am helping to build is: ___ -

Signed: ___ *Date:* ____

Reflection Questions

- What is the one small habit you will commit to, starting tomorrow?
- If every person in your school built just one better habit and kept it, what would your school look like in a year?

Key Takeaway

Papua New Guinea will not change overnight, but schools can improve every single day. Through better systems, built by all of us, we build better futures.

Small Habits. Big Future.

Bring Atomic Schools PNG to Your School

This book is a free resource, shared so that every school in Papua New Guinea can begin building better habits and systems. If it has been useful to you, there are two simple ways we can help you go further.

Book a School Workshop

We offer practical, hands-on workshops for teachers, head teachers, school boards, and community education leaders. In one session, your staff will build their own classroom routines and trackers and leave with a clear 90-day plan ready to start the next morning. The workshop turns the ideas in this book into action your whole school can feel.

To enquire or book a workshop, contact us using the details below.

School Identity & Apparel

Strong school pride is easier to build when identity is visible. We can help your school design and produce simple, affordable apparel — leadership and prefect shirts, reading-challenge shirts, and teacher polos — to recognise effort, mark responsibility, and unite your school. This is entirely optional and always guided by your school's leadership.

Contact Us

Michael Basse — FlexWear Ltd

- **Email:** enquiries@flexwearltd.com
- **Phone:** +675 7160 7693
- **WhatsApp:** +675 7160 7693

We would be glad to hear from your school. Small Habits. Big Future.

APPENDICES — PRINTABLE TEMPLATES

These templates may be photocopied for non-commercial classroom, school, and home use within your own school community. Standalone copies of each are also provided in the /templates folder of this project.

Appendix A: Student Daily Habit Tracker

Name: ____ Class: __ Week of: ____

Tick (✓) each habit you complete each day. Write a short reflection at the end of each day.

Date	Attendance	Reading	Homework	Respect	Cleanliness	Reflection

Small habits, done daily, build a big future.

Appendix B: Weekly Student Goal Planner

Name: ___ Class: __ Week of: ____

Goal	Why it matters	Daily action	Progress	Result

My reflection at the end of the week: _____

Appendix C: Reading Log

Name: _____ Class: _____

Book title	Pages read	New words	Lesson learned	Teacher signature

Readers become leaders. Keep your streak going.

Appendix D: Homework Checklist

Name: ___ Class: __ Week of: ____

Subject	Task	Due date	Completed	Parent signature

Appendix E: Teacher Weekly Planner

Teacher: ____ Class/Subject: _____

Week	Learning outcomes	Lessons	Assessment	Support students	Notes

Weekly rhythm reminder: Mon — Planning · Tue — Assessment · Wed — Student support · Thu — Progress review · Fri — Reporting

Appendix F: Classroom Routine Planner

Teacher: _____ Class: _____

Routine name	Cue (what starts it)	Student action	Teacher action	Reward / recognition
Entry				
Silence				
Transition				
Homework				
Cleanup				
Assessment				

Appendix G: Attendance Tracker

Class: __ Week of: _____ (Mark P = Present, A = Absent, L = Late)

Student name	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Weekly total	Follow-up needed?

Appendix H: Behaviour Reflection Sheet

Name: ____ Class: __ Date: ____

This sheet is for learning and growth, not punishment. Answer honestly.

What happened?

What choice did I make?

Who was affected by my choice?

What better habit will I practise next time?

Signed (student): __ Teacher: ____

Appendix I: Parent Support Checklist

Child's name: _____ Week of: _____

Tick (✓) each day you supported the habit.

Daily support	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Attendance (child went to school)					
Uniform ready and clean					
Homework time kept					
Reading at home					
Bedtime kept					
Communication with school					

Appendix J: 90-Day School Evaluation Dashboard

School: _____ Evaluation period: _____

Area	Baseline	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Improvement	Evidence
Attendance						
Reading participation						
Homework completion						
Behaviour						
Teacher planning consistency						
Parent engagement						
School cleanliness						
Punctuality						

Overall reflection and next 90-day goals:

Small Habits. Big Future.

What if stronger schools came not from more money, but from **better habits?**

Papua New Guinea is full of talented students with real dreams. Yet many schools struggle — not because the children lack ability, but because they lack strong systems: consistent routines, daily reading, fair leadership, and steady support. *Atomic Schools PNG* is a practical, easy-to-use guide for building exactly those systems, written in simple English for the PNG school context.

INSIDE THIS BOOK

- ◆ Clear, practical chapters with real school examples
- ◆ Student activities & teacher reflection tasks
- ◆ Parent checklists and home-support guides
- ◆ Printable trackers, planners & templates
- ◆ A complete 90-day school transformation plan

This is not another motivational speech. It is a working manual for daily, measurable improvement — for students, teachers, head teachers, parents, and whole communities.

Small Habits. Big Future.

Michael Basse
Independent Edition · 2026

