

The National Programme for Specialist Leaders of Behaviour and Attendance

innovative, effective, practical

**Strategies for
promoting positive
behaviour and
attendance**

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Aims

Through study of this topic you will:

- Examine the importance of quality relationships in promoting positive behaviour and attendance
- Explore a range of strategies that are designed to promote positive behaviour and full attendance
- Explore the leadership skills involved in supporting others to develop skills to improve behaviour and attendance

The aims for this session are on slide 2

Aspects of leadership

The study of this topic will help you reflect on how you:

- Encourage colleagues to develop shared values, principles and beliefs
- Communicate effectively in a way that values the opinions of others and strives for mutual understanding
- Develop solution-oriented and resourceful approaches to behaviour management
- Support the development of staff skills in positive behaviour management

You will want to share this information with the group

Learning outcomes

The study of this topic will help you achieve the following learning outcomes:

At level 3

Unit 3.1

- 3.1.6 Explain the importance of the implementation of policy and plans for behaviour and attendance

Unit 3.2

- 3.2.4 Describe how the role of team leader can contribute to the content and support the implementation of strategic plans and policies relating to behaviour and attendance

Unit 3.5

- 3.5.2 State systems and practices in an educational setting which identify issues relating to behaviour and attendance
- 3.5.3 Describe how they would promote a whole-school/setting action plan which addresses the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved
- 3.5.4 Explain the contribution that the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance can make to the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance

Unit 3.8

- 3.8.2 Describe the current policies and practices in their school/setting which relate to behaviour and attendance and identify how these relate to recognised good practice

Unit 3.10

- 3.10.1 Describe a range of methods and systems used to monitor behaviour and attendance
- 3.10.2 Describe how they would work with other team members to enhance their ability to use information to promote positive behaviour and full attendance

You will want to share this information with the group

Learning outcomes

The study of this topic will help you achieve the following learning outcomes:

At level 4

Unit 4.1

- 4.1.5 Analyse the role of the lead behaviour professional/specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in influencing senior managers and subject leaders in schools/settings to understand and implement a policy of social inclusion and reinforcing positive behaviour, and how that can impact on whole-school/setting improvement
- 4.1.7 Explain why the implementation of policy and plans for behaviour and attendance is important in promoting positive behaviour and full attendance

Unit 4.2

- 4.2.4 Evaluate team and individual skills and knowledge development needs in respect of behaviour and attendance

Unit 4.5

- 4.5.2 Evaluate systems and practices in the school/setting, to identify issues and make recommendations for modification and improvement
- 4.5.3 Develop a whole-school/setting action plan which addresses elements of the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved and plan its promotion
- 4.5.4 Analyse the role of the specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance
- 4.5.6 Explain how they could support others to develop, implement and maintain systems and practices that will improve behaviour and attendance

Unit 4.8

- 4.8.1 Analyse the links between recognised good practice and the policies which have been developed for behaviour and attendance in the school/setting
- 4.8.3 Explain the role of the specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in using recognised good practice to inform the development of policies and approaches in the environment in which they operate
- 4.8.4 Recommend strategic approaches and interventions that might address the causes of and promote positive behaviour and full attendance
- 4.8.5 Develop and implement approaches and interventions for promoting positive behaviour and full attendance

Unit 4.10

- 4.10.3 Evaluate and explain a range of methods and systems for the monitoring of behaviour and attendance
- 4.10.6 Explain how they would work with others to enhance their ability to use information to promote positive behaviour and full attendance

You will want to share this information with the group

Links to national behaviour and attendance strategies

The Behaviour and Attendance Strand of the National Strategy for School Improvement

The Primary National Strategy has produced a range of continuing professional development materials with a focus on promoting a positive ethos that will encourage understanding of behaviour and attendance issues. You will find the continuing professional development materials listed to the rear of this topic particularly relevant.

The NPSLBA study topics are also linked to the range of Secondary National Strategy continuing professional development materials, including the audit and self-review tools for auditing behaviour and attendance in secondary and middle schools.

You will find the toolkits listed to the rear of this topic particularly relevant.

Every Child Matters, DCSF Five-Year Strategy

The Every Child Matters agenda sets out five outcomes for every child. The creation of a positive learning environment through the application of effective strategies for promoting good behaviour and attendance is linked in the following ways to each of the outcomes.

Being healthy:

One of the key roles of leaders in behaviour and attendance is to promote a positive learning environment where good relationships are a significant resilience factor in supporting positive mental health. Support for positive mental health can be further enhanced by encouraging all staff in fostering children's and young people's skills and by exploring perceptions of how conflict is managed (Intersessional Activities 4 and 5). This link can be made explicit during the session

Staying safe:

The promotion of a climate that supports the development of children's social and emotional skills through the application of effective strategies will contribute to this outcome. The views of children should be taken into account when considering developments in this area (Intersessional Activity 4). An organisation that values the views of children means that they are more likely to value themselves and to be able to discuss personal issues or concerns with staff. The promotion of an anti-bullying and non-violent climate (see links outlined above) will also help to protect children and young people from harm.

Enjoying and achieving

The deployment of effective strategies for managing behaviour at a whole-school, class and individual child level will support achievement of this outcome. Consistency of application of agreed strategies is crucial to success in this area. This requires consultation with key stakeholders and embedding of good practice (Activity 3 and Intersessional Activities 3 and 5).

Making a positive contribution:

The deployment of effective strategies at a whole-school, group and individual level will enable children to make a positive contribution. By investigating views of children about behaviour and attendance issues, their contribution to the development of good practice is assured (Intersessional Activity 5).

Economic well-being

There is evidence that people who have good social and emotional skills experience more success in the workplace (p.34, DfES Research Report 456, see references) and clearly academic achievement and good attendance also contributes to long-term economic well-being. The deployment of effective strategies at a whole-school, class and individual child level will support learning behaviour and good attendance and so contribute to the achievement of this outcome.

Attendance

Poor attendance at school and in other settings arises for many reasons, some of which relate to the experiences of children who have poor social and emotional skills or who find themselves within environments which do not meet their needs, or in which they do not feel they have anything to contribute. A focus of this topic is the development of staff skills and the establishment of a positive learning environment which is inclusive and based on positive relationships. The importance of adults as role models is stressed within the topic. Intersessional Activities 5 and 6 specifically focus on attendance issues.

More information can be found at www.dfes.gov.uk/attendance/

Anti-bullying

The DCSF is working to create a climate in which bullying is recognised as intolerable and has secured a very broad consensus, with all the teaching associations and a national Anti-bullying Alliance signing up to the anti-bullying charter. The charter is a voluntary commitment to creating a community where bullying is not tolerated, and is signed by the head teacher, chair of governors and a children's and young people's representative.

Settings are expected to tackle bullying on two levels – the preventative and the reactive. This topic focuses on establishing a positive learning environment through the application of effective strategies to promote good behaviour and attendance, where bullying behaviours are less likely to occur or be tolerated, and is therefore concerned with the preventative level. This relates primarily to Activity 2 and Intersessional Activities 5 and 6, which consider the importance of ethos and environment.

Violence reduction in schools

Teachernet has advice for schools on violence reduction. This advice has two key aims:

- To help schools create a climate where violence will not flourish
- To help schools and individuals learn from any incidents to prevent recurrence.

The advice is available at:

www.Teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/violencereduction

The advice is grouped under five themes which have informed NPSLBA study materials on violence reduction. The themes are:

- Safe school – knowing what is happening
- Involving pupils and families
- Curriculum
- School organisation
- Travel and safe surroundings

Under each theme there is advice about effective strategies for conflict resolution and restorative approaches.

In addition, on page 64, you will find references to relevant DCSF behaviour and attendance professional development materials.

Links to NPSLBA topics

Vision, values and beliefs

Our own responses and actions are dependant on the beliefs and values that we hold, exemplified in the ethos we create within the setting. The beliefs and values of the leaders within organisations have great significance for this ethos. You can consider how values and beliefs underpin practice through investigating the perceptions of staff and children in Intersessional Activities 4 and 5.

1b Developing and implementing a vision for behaviour and attendance

Leadership

One of the key roles of the specialist leader is to support a range of professional development opportunities that will promote positive behaviour and full attendance.

2f Leading professional development in behaviour and attendance

2j The role of senior leadership in behaviour and attendance

2k The management of provision for individual needs

Conceptual frameworks and underlying causes

Poor behaviour and attendance can be explained by a number of underlying causes. One possibility is that children lack the social and emotional skills to cope with the social, emotional and academic demands of the setting.

3a Underlying causes of challenging behaviour and poor attendance

3b Applying learning theories to behaviour and attendance practice

Systems and strategies

Specialist leaders have a key role in supporting colleagues to develop and apply strategies to promote positive behaviour and full attendance. This will include the development of effective systems at an organisational level.

4e The impact of peer support on behaviour and attendance

4g Using counselling skills with staff, children and young people, parents and carers

Self-review, monitoring and evaluation

Self-review, monitoring and evaluation is an essential aspect of developing and enhancing effective systems to address the underlying causes of challenging behaviour and attendance.

5b Monitoring improvement in behaviour and attendance

Violence reduction

There are clear links between an ethos that promotes the development and practical application of strategies for promoting positive behaviour and one that promotes a climate of non-violence.

7a Creating a climate of non-violence

You will also find it useful to review the DVD Rom

David Moore Presentations

- The circle of intimacy
- Ofsted findings on good practice
- Making a difference in secondary schools

You will want to share this information with the group

Preparing to lead the session

To do before the session	Check
Familiarise yourself with the content, session leader notes and delivery methods for this topic. You will want to adapt the materials to suit the needs of your group	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare the necessary resources	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arrange any visitors or speakers as necessary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure that the group has access to the pre-reading and any additional preparatory activity prior to the session	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure that the group has access to the intersessional activities prior to the session	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure that the group has information regarding when and where the session will take place. <i>You may already have provided this in the forward look at the previous session</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
During the session	
The previous session leader will review intersessional activities from the earlier topic	<input type="checkbox"/>
Focus the attention of the group on the key questions that will help them gain most benefit from the session	<input type="checkbox"/>
These questions will also help focus reflection in the reflective log	<input type="checkbox"/>
Introduce the activities and take feedback	<input type="checkbox"/>
Review the learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lead the group in a discussion about the intersessional activities and ensure they understand the options	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encourage group members to reflect on each section of the 'Framework for evaluating options' and to complete the section 'My next three steps are...'	<input type="checkbox"/>
Follow up	
Collate and distribute any material that you have agreed to circulate	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reflect on your role as session leader in your reflective log	<input type="checkbox"/>
At the beginning of the next meeting you will have a 10-minute slot to review intersessional activities with the group and to share ways in which learning might be further developed	<input type="checkbox"/>

Equipment	Check
Data projector and screen or interactive whiteboard	<input type="checkbox"/>
Presentation slides	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flip chart and marker pens	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sticky notes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refreshments	<input type="checkbox"/>

Resources	Check
Preparatory reading and reflection	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supplementary reading 2 <i>Managing challenging behaviour</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supplementary reading 3 <i>Absence from school: A study of its causes and effects in seven LAs</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 1	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resource A <i>Getting started</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resource B <i>Building on success</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resource A <i>Staff perceptions of challenging behaviour</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resource B <i>Pupil perception of effective teachers</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 3	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resource A <i>The future</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resource B <i>Principles for embedding change</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Activities

Review of intersessional activities

Preparatory reading and reflection

Preparatory activity

Activities

1. *Strategies for promoting positive behaviour and full attendance*
2. *Quality relationships and behaviour improvement*
3. *Spreading and embedding good practice*

Session review

You might want to adapt these activities or use alternative materials to help you meet the particular needs of your group

Review of intersessional activities

Write each of the four headlines below on a large sheet of paper. Display these around the room.

Read out the questions in full and allow the group five minutes to jot down their responses to each question on sticky notes. Ask group members to place each note under the appropriate heading.

Allow the group a further five minutes to look at the responses of others in the group.

5. In carrying out your chosen intersessional activity, were there any important leadership issues that arose?

'Leadership Issues'

5. Were there any organisational or structural issues that particularly supported you in, or prevented you from, carrying out the activity successfully?

'Organisational Issues'

5. Were there aspects of your own skills and knowledge that helped, or prevented you from carrying out the activity successfully?

'Skills and Knowledge'

4. What were the most successful and enjoyable aspects of your experience with the intersessional activity?

'What went well?'

After 10 minutes move on to discuss the reading and preparatory activity for this topic

Preparatory reading and reflection

Purpose

Carefully read the preparatory reading and bring any notes to the session.

- Supplementary reading 1 Managing challenging behaviour
- Supplementary reading 2 Extract from Heather Malcolm, Valerie Wilson, Julia Davidson and Susan Kirk. *Absence from school: a study of its causes and effects in 7 LAs*, The SCRE Centre, University of Glasgow – DfES Research Report No 424

Questions for reflection and discussion

What do you feel are the main issues for specialist leaders in supporting colleagues to develop strategies for promoting positive behaviour?

How are strategies for managing behaviour similar and different to those designed to improve attendance and what are the skills required by staff?

The reading provides a summary of commonly used behaviour management strategies – how successfully used are such strategies in your setting?

You should bring along any notes you make to the session

Preparatory activity

Purpose

To prepare a detailed profile of a child for whom you have particular concern relating to behaviour and/or attendance

You will use this profile during the study session to inform discussion

Suggestions

Following the preparatory reading, you will need to gather as much background information on the particular child as you can.

You may need to consult a variety of sources, for example, teachers, teaching assistants, pastoral staff or outside support services such as educational psychologists, behaviour support teachers and educational welfare officers.

You will need to ensure that you follow the protocols for your educational setting in undertaking this activity. You must ensure that the information collected remains anonymous and that all confidentiality protocols are strictly followed.

You will find it useful to gather information relating to:

- Strengths and resources
- Family circumstances
- Attainment and any special educational needs
- Learning, teaching and classroom management
- Relationships with adults
- Relationships with peers
- Social and emotional skills

This will help you to clarify your perception of the particular concerns.

You will also want to ensure that you have explored the perceptions of the individual child.

Activity 1

Strategies for promoting positive behaviour and full attendance



40 minutes

Purpose

To explore a range of strategies for promoting positive behaviour and full attendance

Resources

Resource A *Getting started*

Resource B *Building on success*

Resource B provides information on solution-focused questions. Those who are not familiar with this approach will find the information useful. Solution-focused questions will be used during discussion to question each other about the child.

You will have opportunity to practise using solution focused questions. You can find out more about solution-focused discussions in *Using counselling skills with staff, children and young people, parents and carers*.

Suggestions

In pairs and using your notes from the preparatory activity.

Spend two minutes telling each other about the child you have profiled. Agree on one child who will be the focus for this activity. Include as much information and detail as you can, remembering to maintain the anonymity of the child.

Work in pairs on the agreed profile under the following headings, filling in the information where it is available:

- Strengths and resources
- Family circumstances
- Attainment and any special educational needs
- Learning, teaching and classroom management
- Relationships with adults
- Relationships with peers
- Social and emotional skills
- Description of behaviours causing concern (including attendance and punctuality if appropriate)

Allow 10 minutes to finalise the detail of the profile.

Discuss how scenarios such as these are often useful in professional development activities and suggest the group exchanges individual profiles.

Now work in groups of four to address two of the profiles in detail. The aim is to identify as many practical strategies as possible that the group feels will support staff in managing the behaviour and attendance difficulties that have been described.

You could use Resource B *Building on success* to help you ensure that the discussion is solution-oriented.

During this discussion bear in mind the following:

Are the strategies that are being suggested practical?

What staff development would be needed before staff could successfully implement such strategies?

How would you know that the strategies you have suggested are successful?

Are the strategies being suggested specific to the profile of the child or more universal in nature?

What next steps would the specialist leader need to take in order to ensure improvements in a) the behaviour and attendance of the child and b) staff effectiveness in understanding and using the suggested strategies?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of structuring a discussion in a solution-oriented way?

Activity 2

Quality relationships and behaviour improvement



35 minutes

Purpose

To explore the vital contribution of high-quality relationships in supporting behaviour and attendance improvement

Resources

Resource A *Staff perceptions of challenging behaviour*

Resource B *Pupil perceptions of effective teachers*

Slide *The 5 Rs*

One sheet of flip chart paper for each group divided into two, with each half headed 'Child behaviours that staff find challenging' and 'Staff behaviours that children find challenging'.

Suggestions

The group should split into two and taking the flip chart, list the behaviours under each heading.

The two groups should join together to share and compare their lists. Use Resources A and B to support further discussion.

Next, return to the small group to list the new behaviours that you would like to see under each of the headings below:

Child – behaviours that promote learning (and meet expectations of staff)

Staff – behaviours that maximise learning opportunities, motivate, engage and support children in behaviour change

Draw out the specific qualities and skills of staff that are at the heart of the high-quality positive relationships underpinning behaviour and attendance improvement. Summarise the skills and qualities under the two headings below:

Personal qualities

Skills

Use slide *The 5 Rs* to discuss how relationships provide an overarching framework for behaviour management.

As a whole group, discuss the possible benefits of including such an activity as part of a staff development opportunity designed to raise awareness of the importance of relationships in promoting positive behaviour.

This task has the potential to raise sensitive issues surrounding adult-child interaction; facilitate the group in a brief discussion concerning the aspect of their leadership skills that they would need to draw upon in order to promote staff development in this area.

Activity 3

Spreading and embedding good practice



30 minutes

Purpose

To focus on spreading and embedding good practice within your particular setting

Resources

Resource A *The future*

Resource B *Principles for embedding change*

Suggestions

Working in pairs, use Resource A *The future* to explore what the future will look like, in your educational setting, when approaches and strategies designed to improve behaviour and attendance are all in place, are being used successfully, reviewed, evaluated and adapted as part of the regular cycle.

Give out Resource B *Principles for embedding change* and allow a few minutes to look at it before exploring the following in groups of four:

- The leadership issues and skills involved in encouraging and sustaining change (focus on any of the following: en-skilling others, the notion of consistency, developing effective rewards and sanctions, modelling, coaching)
- The nature of effective support systems for children that will embed and develop positive change
- How best to lead others to embed such support systems

Draw the group together and suggest they reflect, individually or with a partner, on the following:

- What are the styles of leadership (in behaviour and attendance) which seem likely to be most successful in embedding changes in approaches to behaviour management in your setting?
- What are the key issues a leader of behaviour and attendance needs to address when focusing on embedding good practice?
- What are the risks or barriers to sustaining behaviour and attendance improvement?

The ideas emerging through this activity can be followed up through intersessional activities.

Session review

You could use the questions below to help the group focus on the learning from this session.

What has been the key learning for individuals?

Ask group members to suggest one thing that has stimulated, interested or surprised them and that they will share with others.

What aspect(s) of their practice, as a leader, will change as a result of studying this topic and participating in this session?

Ask group members to focus on leadership knowledge, skills, and understanding.

Session leader only

What has been the key learning for you? Record your thoughts in the reflective log.

Now spend 20 minutes looking at the selection of intersessional activities.

Remind the group to complete feedback forms and send to your Local Lead.

Intersessional activities

1. Leading staff development on strategies for promoting positive behaviour and improving attendance 23
2. Praise and reward: how does this promote positive behaviour and improve attendance? 26
3. Evaluating support for staff in applying strategies for promoting positive behaviour 29
4. Reviewing and developing behaviour and attendance improvement 32
5. Investigating the views of children on behaviour and attendance issues 34
6. Developing and reviewing strategies designed to improve attendance 37

Intersessional Activity 1

Leading staff development on strategies for promoting positive behaviour and improving attendance

Purpose

To develop skills and experience in leading staff development

Audience

All group members

Use of expert

You do not need to involve an expert

Short-term

Short-term over a period of one month

Links to the learning process

Practical application
Feedback and reflection
Embedding the experience

Suggestions

Before you begin this activity you should meet with senior colleagues to agree protocols.

Work with senior colleagues and build on Activities 1, 2, and 3 to first identify an area of need.

Lead a development opportunity for colleagues designed to focus on a particular area. For example:

- Explore strategies for promoting positive behaviour or improving attendance of a particular child
- Positive behaviour management (class management, positive use of language, rewards, managing conflict, improving attendance, etc.)

Research the area you have selected. Prepare a development opportunity that has:

- Clear aims
- A balance between input and opportunities for colleagues to share ideas, successes, experience and expertise

In designing your session think about:

- The audience (teachers, teaching assistants, support staff, lunchtime supervisors, etc.)
- The prior learning, experience and expertise of the audience
- The need you are trying to meet
- Learning styles and how these will be addressed
- The learning environment
- How you will know that it has been useful (in the short- and longer-term)

Ensure you have a brief evaluation form for staff to complete.

You will find it useful to refer to the *Session Leader Guide* to remind yourself of some tips.

Share your plan with a colleague and elicit feedback. Amend your plan in the light of this feedback.

Deliver your session and in light of participant evaluation suggest changes you would make if you were to deliver a similar session in the future.

At the end of the intersessional activity you should meet again with senior colleagues to discuss the impact this activity has had within your workplace.

You should record the key points from this conversation.

Outcomes

You will have worked with colleagues to develop your skills in identifying a staff development need

You will have developed skills in designing, presenting and evaluating a staff development session

Reporting

The plan produced and its outcomes should be summarised for sharing information and for the purposes of accreditation. Other evidence for accreditation could include an account of the staff feedback session (or video evidence), any materials used to support the session and any action plan produced as a result of the activity. You could provide a rationale for carrying out the activity, an account of how the activity contributes to your overall role as leader and how the outcomes of the activity will inform organisational policy and practice.

Accreditation

This intersessional activity offers the potential to help you meet the following learning outcomes, depending on the nature of the assessment chosen and the elements you choose to include in your evidence:

Level 3

- 3.1.4 Describe the role of the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance
- 3.5.2 State systems and practices in an educational setting which identify issues relating to behaviour and attendance
- 3.5.3 Describe how they would promote a whole-school/setting action plan which addresses the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved
- 3.5.4 Explain the contribution that the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance can make to the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance
- 3.8.2 Describe the current policies and practices in their school/setting which relate to behaviour and attendance and identify how these relate to recognised good practice
- 3.8.3 Explain the role of the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance in encouraging teams to apply recognised good practice to their approach and practice
- 3.10.4 Explain why it is important to share, with colleagues and agreed partners, information relating to behaviour and attendance according to organisations' protocols for information sharing

At level 4

- 4.1.5 Analyse the role of the lead behaviour professional/specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in influencing senior managers and subject leaders in schools/settings to understand and implement a policy of social inclusion and reinforcing positive behaviour, and how that can impact on whole school/setting improvement
- 4.5.3 Develop a whole-school/setting action plan which addresses elements of the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved and plan its promotion
- 4.5.4 Analyse the role of the specialist leader role in the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance
- 4.5.6 Explain how they could support others to develop, implement and maintain systems and practices that will improve behaviour and attendance
- 4.8.1 Analyse the links between recognised good practice and the policies which have been developed for behaviour and attendance in the school/setting
- 4.8.3 Explain the role of the specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in using recognised good practice to inform the development of policies and approaches in the environment in which they operate
- 4.8.4 Recommend strategic approaches and interventions that might address the causes of and promote positive behaviour and full attendance
- 4.10.6 Explain how they would work with others to enhance their ability to use information to promote positive behaviour and full attendance

Intersessional Activity 2

Praise and reward: how does this promote positive behaviour and improve attendance?

Purpose

To develop leadership skills in evaluating the effectiveness of praise and reward as a strategy for promoting positive behaviour and improving attendance

Audience

All group members

Use of expert

You do not need to involve an expert

Short-term

Short-term, but could be long-term as part of ongoing behaviour and attendance improvement activity

Links to the learning process

Practical application
Feedback and reflection
Embedding the experience

Suggestions

Before you begin this activity you should meet with senior colleagues to agree protocols.

Research the value of praise and reward in improving behaviour and review practice in relation to praise and reward in your own setting.

With reference to your behaviour and attendance policy and audit information, identify and list the types of praise and reward currently available to children in your own workplace.

Investigate whether the praise and rewards are accessible to all children (including those whose behaviour and attendance is consistently good) and whether there is a relationship between praise, reward and improved behaviour.

Devise a questionnaire or interview schedule to explore staff perceptions of the praise and rewards systems used in your workplace.

Examine, for example, how the praise and reward systems of the school recognise effort, achievement, attainment, attendance and behaviour improvement and how effective they are perceived to be.

Devise a questionnaire or interview schedule to explore children's (and parent's) views and perceptions of the types of praise and reward used (are they meaningful, motivational, differentiated, valued and accessible to all?).

After analysing the information you have collected, prepare a list of key issues and possible action points for consideration. Ensure your recommendations are focused on enhancing the scope of praise and reward to promote positive behaviour and to improve attendance.

Discuss your findings, the feedback from colleagues and children and your recommendations together with a senior colleague.

Thank and feed back to all who took part in the information gathering.

Aim to influence the implementation of at least two of these action points and to report on the outcomes. It might be useful to buddy with a colleague who has also selected this activity and will be carrying it out in a different setting. Compare notes with your partner on the process and outcomes of this intersessional activity.

Reflect on the leadership of behaviour and attendance issues and required skills that are highlighted through this intersessional activity.

At the end of the intersessional activity you should meet again with senior colleagues to discuss the impact this activity has had within your workplace.

You should record the key points from this conversation.

Outcomes

You will have developed or practised skills in gathering and analysing data, and in using this analysis to make strategic recommendations

You will have developed or practised skills in interviewing and feeding back to both colleagues and children (and parents)

You will have influenced the implementation of one or more of the recommendations you made.

Reporting

The action points produced and its outcomes should be summarised for sharing information and for the purposes of accreditation. Other evidence for accreditation could include an account of the feedback sessions (or video evidence), any materials used to support the activity and any recommendations produced as a result of the activity. You could provide a rationale for carrying out the activity, an account of how the activity contributes to your overall role as leader and how the outcomes of the activity will inform organisational policy and practice.

Accreditation

This intersessional activity offers the potential to help you meet the following learning outcomes, depending on the nature of the assessment chosen and the elements you choose to include in your evidence:

Level 3

- 3.1.4 Describe the role of the team leader of behaviour and attendance in helping members of their team in schools and other settings to understand and implement a policy of social inclusion and reinforcing positive behaviour, and how that can impact on whole-school improvement
- 3.2.4 Describe how the role of team leader can contribute to the content and support the implementation of strategic plans and policies relating to behaviour and attendance
- 3.5.3 Describe how they would promote a whole-school/setting action plan which addresses the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved
- 3.5.4 Explain the contribution that the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance can make to the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance
- 3.8.5 Describe the role of team leader in enhancing the understanding of their team in the use of approaches and interventions for promoting positive behaviour and full attendance
- 3.10.4 Explain why it is important to share, with colleagues and agreed partners, information relating to behaviour and attendance according to organisations' protocols for information sharing
- 3.10.5 Describe how they would work with other team members to enhance their ability to use information to promote positive behaviour and full attendance

Level 4

- 4.1.5 Analyse the role of the lead behaviour professional/specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in influencing senior managers and subject leaders in schools/settings to understand and implement a policy of social inclusion and reinforcing positive behaviour, and how that can impact on whole school/setting improvement
- 4.2.3 State their own leadership styles and describe their effectiveness in different situations
- 4.3.3 Explain how specialist leaders of behaviour and attendance can lead the development of a shared vision across the whole community
- 4.5.2 Evaluate systems and practices in the school/setting, to identify issues and make recommendations for modification and improvement
- 4.5.3 Develop a whole-school/setting action plan which addresses elements of the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved and plan its promotion
- 4.5.4 Analyse the role of the specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance
- 4.8.4 Recommend strategic approaches and interventions that might address the causes of and promote positive behaviour and full attendance
- 4.10.6 Explain how they would work with others to enhance their ability to use information to promote positive behaviour and full attendance

Intersessional Activity 3

Evaluating support for staff in applying strategies for promoting positive behaviour

Purpose

To enable you to develop skills in evaluating mechanisms for supporting staff to develop their skills in applying strategies that promote positive behaviour and attendance

Audience

All group members

Use of expert

You do not need to involve an expert

Long-term

Long-term as part of ongoing improvement process

Links to the learning process

Practical application
Feedback and reflection
Embedding the experience

Suggestions

Before you begin this activity you should meet with senior colleagues to agree protocols.

Interview a range of colleagues with differing roles and responsibilities, in your own workplace, to explore their views on the most useful and effective support they have received (at an organisational level and at a personal level), as they develop and apply strategies for promoting positive behaviour.

For example: CPD opportunities, INSET, personal research, coaching, mentoring, peer mentoring, informal discussion, formal support from a group.

You are aiming to find out the most effective support that staff have received in their efforts to develop the skills to implement strategies for promoting positive behaviour and improving attendance.

You might find it useful to refer back to the preparatory reading and to your own references and resources.

Based on the information you capture, describe the staff support that appears to be most successful in your setting. Compare the findings from your research with the results of your interviews. Consider any opportunities for development.

Discuss your report with key members of staff and negotiate an action plan to improve practice in your workplace.

If you want to develop this activity further you could consider how you could identify and use this information to work with influential colleagues to prepare an action plan designed to improve practice in your workplace.

Work to implement one or more of the action points, reporting on the outcomes as part of a plan-do review cycle.

At the end of the intersessional activity you should meet again with senior colleagues to discuss the impact this activity has had within your workplace.

You should record the key points from this conversation.

Outcomes

You will have developed or practised your skills in designing and using interview schedules with a range of colleagues

You will have developed your skills in collating and analysing information and using this data to inform your recommendations for action

You will have compared findings from your action research to those from evidence-based practice

You will have developed your skills in influencing senior colleagues

Reporting

The recommendations produced and the outcomes should be summarised for sharing information, and for the purposes of accreditation. Other evidence for accreditation could include an account of the discussion of impact (or video evidence), any materials used to support the activity and any action plan or recommendations produced as a result of the activity. You could provide a rationale for carrying out the activity, an account of how the activity contributes to your overall role as leader and how the outcomes of the activity will inform organisational policy and practice.

Accreditation

This intersessional activity offers the potential to help you meet the following learning outcomes, depending on the nature of the assessment chosen and the elements you choose to include in your evidence:

Level 3

- 3.2.1 Describe different leadership styles and concepts and how they impact on the actions of others
- 3.5.2 State systems and practices in an educational setting which identify issues relating to behaviour and attendance
- 3.5.3 Describe how they would promote a whole-school/setting action plan which addresses the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved
- 3.5.4 Explain the contribution that the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance can make to the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance
- 3.8.2 Describe the current policies and practices in their school/setting which relate to behaviour and attendance and identify how these relate to recognised good practice
- 3.8.3 Explain the role of the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance in encouraging teams to apply recognised good practice to their approach and practice

Level 4

- 4.5.1 Identify and access relevant and up to date information which supports systems and organisational procedures for behaviour and attendance in their own school/setting
- 4.5.2 Evaluate systems and practices in the school/setting to identify issues and make recommendations for modification and improvement

- 4.5.3 Develop a whole-school/setting action plan which addresses elements of the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved and plan its promotion
- 4.5.4 Analyse the role of the specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance
- 4.8.3 Explain the role of the specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in using recognised good practice to inform the development of policies and approaches in the environment in which they operate

Intersessional Activity 4

Reviewing and developing behaviour and attendance policy

Purpose

To develop leadership skills in reviewing and developing behaviour and attendance policy

Audience

All group members

Use of expert

You do not need to involve an expert

Long-term

Long-term

Links to the learning process

Practical application
Feedback and reflection
Embedding the experience

Suggestions

Before you begin this activity you should meet with senior colleagues to agree protocols.

Work with a group of colleagues, parents and children from your workplace to review the behaviour and attendance policy. This could be done as a series of discussion forums, by interview or by questionnaire. You might want to explore some of the following questions. DfES guidance on whole-school behaviour policy can be found at www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/

- When was the policy last reviewed and what was the outcome of that review?
- Who was involved in the review and were the contributions acted upon?
- Is the whole community aware of the contents of the current policy?
- Is it written in such a way that everyone can understand the underpinning values and beliefs, the content and how it applies to them?
- To what extent does the policy reflect the 5 Rs (relationships, rights, responsibilities, rules, routines)?
- Does the policy encourage solution-focused approaches?
- What are the strategies it currently promotes (and how could these be developed)?
- Is the policy consistently applied?
- What is the approach to social and emotional skills development?
- How does it promote the achievement of the five outcomes for children and how do you know this?
- How does the policy relate to the most recent guidance on behaviour and attendance policy?
- How do you measure the impact of the policy on behaviour and attendance in your setting?
- Which aspects of the current policy work particularly well?
- Which aspects do not work well?
- What parts of the policy would you like to see change?
- What would you like to see in the policy?

Following your discussions, work with a group of colleagues to recommend changes to the policy.

At the end of the intersessional activity you should meet again with senior colleagues to discuss the impact this activity has had within your workplace.

You should record the key points from this conversation.

Outcomes

You will have developed your skills in communicating with colleagues, parents and children

You will have developed your skills in analysing existing data and gathering new information to inform your recommendations in behaviour and attendance policy development

Reporting

The recommended changes agreed should be summarised for sharing information and for the purposes of accreditation. Other evidence for accreditation could include an account of the staff feedback session (or video evidence), any materials used to support the session and any action plan produced as a result of the activity. You could provide a rationale for carrying out the activity, an account of how the activity contributes to your overall role as leader and how the outcomes of the activity will inform organisational policy and practice.

Accreditation

This intersessional activity offers the potential to help you meet the following learning outcomes, depending on the nature of the assessment chosen and the elements you choose to include in your evidence:

Level 3

- 3.3.5 Explain the importance of specialist team leaders of behaviour and attendance in contributing to the development and promotion of policies and practice which address reduction of violence within schools and other settings
- 3.5.3 Describe how they would promote a whole-school/setting action plan which addresses the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved
- 3.8.2 Describe the current policies and practices in their school/setting which relate to behaviour and attendance and identify how these relate to recognised good practice
- 3.8.3 Explain the role of the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance in encouraging teams to apply recognised good practice to their approach and practice

Level 4

- 4.5.1 Identify and access relevant and up to date information which supports systems and organisational procedures for behaviour and attendance in their own school/setting
- 4.5.2 Evaluate systems and practices in the school/setting, to identify issues and make recommendations for modification and improvement
- 4.5.3 Develop a whole-school/setting action plan which addresses elements of the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved and plan its promotion
- 4.8.1 Analyse the links between recognised good practice and the policies which have been developed for behaviour and attendance in the school/setting
- 4.8.2 Evaluate the current policies and practices on behaviour and attendance at national and local level and describe their potential impact on behaviour and attendance

Intersessional Activity 5

Investigating the views of children on behaviour and attendance issues

Purpose

To develop skills in promoting and embedding positive behaviour and attendance by taking into account the views of children

Audience

All group members

Use of expert

You do not need to involve an expert

Short-term

Short-term although could become part of the self-review cycle

Links to the learning process

Practical application
Feedback and reflection
Embedding the experience

Suggestions

Before you begin this activity you should meet with senior colleagues to agree protocols.

Identify a group of children who you know are approachable, articulate and prepared to share their views on their experiences relating to behaviour and attendance.

Assure the children of confidentiality and ensure that anonymity is preserved.

Agree with the children the behaviour and attendance issues which you will explore. For example, how the praise and reward systems of the school recognise effort, achievement, attainment, attendance and behaviour improvement. Do they find the rewards motivating? What are the most effective motivators? How consistent are the rewards with the values and beliefs espoused by the setting?

Formulate the questions which will facilitate children in expressing their views on the agreed behaviour and attendance issues.

Use a 'critical friend' (this could be a colleague or a group of children) to check your questions and revise them, if necessary, based on this feedback. If appropriate, undertake the interviews, making notes.

Following the interviews, analyse your information and categorise responses. You may want to involve children in this activity.

Use the information gained to support work in reviewing and revising aspects of the behaviour and attendance policy; inform staff development opportunities; support work on the development of social and emotional skills.

At the end of the intersessional activity you should meet again with senior colleagues to discuss the impact this activity has had within your workplace.

You should record the key points from this conversation.

Outcomes

You will have developed your skills in working with children to elicit their views and to use the information to inform policy and practice

You will have developed your communication skills

You will have developed skills in analysing data and using this information to make recommendations for change in policy and practice

Reporting

The recommendations agreed should be summarised for sharing information and for the purposes of accreditation. Other evidence for accreditation could include notes of children's responses (or video evidence), any materials used to support the activity and any action plan produced as a result of the activity. You could provide a rationale for carrying out the activity, an account of how the activity contributes to your overall role as leader and how the outcomes of the activity will inform organisational policy and practice.

Accreditation

This intersessional activity offers the potential to help you meet the following learning outcomes, depending on the nature of the assessment chosen and the elements you choose to include in your evidence:

Level 3

- 3.1.4 Describe the role of the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance
- 3.5.1 State how to access relevant and up to date information which supports systems and organisational procedures for behaviour and attendance in your school/setting
- 3.5.2 State systems and practices in an educational setting which identify issues relating to behaviour and attendance
- 3.5.3 Describe how they would promote a whole-school/setting action plan which addresses the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved
- 3.5.4 Explain the contribution that the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance can make to the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance
- 3.8.3 Explain the role of the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance in encouraging teams to apply recognised good practice to their approach and practice

Level 4

- 4.1.5 Analyse the role of the lead behaviour professional/specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in influencing senior managers and subject leaders in schools/settings to understand and implement a policy of social inclusion and reinforcing positive behaviour and how that can impact on whole school/setting improvement
- 4.5.1 Identify and access relevant and up to date information which supports systems and organisational procedures for behaviour and attendance in their own school/setting
- 4.5.2 Evaluate systems and practices in the school/setting, to identify issues and make recommendations for modification and improvement
- 4.5.3 Develop a whole-school/setting action plan which addresses elements of the

- systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved and plan its promotion
- 4.5.4 Analyse the role of the specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance
 - 4.8.3 Explain the role of the specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in using recognised good practice to inform the development of policies and approaches in the environment in which they operate
 - 4.8.4 Recommend strategic approaches and interventions that might address the causes of and promote positive behaviour and full attendance
 - 4.8.5 Develop and implement approaches and interventions for promoting positive behaviour and full attendance

Intersessional Activity 6

Developing and reviewing strategies designed to improve attendance

Purpose

To develop skills in evaluating the effectiveness of strategies designed to improve attendance.

Audience

All group members

Use of expert

You do not need to involve an expert but you might find it useful to consult with an educational psychologist

Short-term

Short-term, could take over two terms

Links to the learning process

Practical application
Feedback and reflection
Embedding the experience

Suggestions

Before you begin this activity you should meet with senior colleagues to agree protocols.

Use attendance data, information from colleagues and the education welfare officer to identify three children whose attendance is a source of concern. Define the nature of the concerns.

In your discussions with colleagues and support services, seek to clarify any underlying causes which could relate to the attendance issues of these particular children.

Based on this information, formulate an action plan to include specific strategies that will support the children to improve their attendance, consult with the children and key personnel internal and external to ensure strategies are practical.

Agree who will do what, when and how. Record this agreement. Set a date for review.

Following the review, share successful outcomes and strategies with colleagues. Establish a communication system and/or resource where colleagues could share and develop good practice in this area.

Reflect upon and note which leadership skills enhanced your ability to be successful in this task and where the barriers to success lay.

At the end of the intersessional activity you should meet again with senior colleagues to discuss the impact this activity has had within your workplace.

You should record the key points from this conversation.

Outcomes

You will have developed skills in collecting and analysing pupil level data relating to attendance

You will have developed skills in using data to inform the development of strategies designed to improve attendance.

You will have reflected on the leadership skills necessary to be successful in developing strategies for improving attendance

Reporting

The outcomes should be summarised for sharing information and for the purposes of accreditation. Other evidence for accreditation could include notes on data and discussions with colleagues, any materials used to support the activity and any action plan produced as a result of the activity. You could provide a rationale for carrying out the activity, an account of how the activity contributes to your overall role as leader and how the outcomes of the activity will inform organisational policy and practice.

Accreditation

This intersessional activity offers the potential to help you meet the following learning outcomes, depending on the nature of the assessment chosen and the elements you choose to include in your evidence:

Level 3

- 3.5.1 State how to access relevant and up to date information which supports systems and organisational procedures for behaviour and attendance in your school/setting
- 3.5.2 State systems and practices in an educational setting which identify issues relating to behaviour and attendance
- 3.5.3 Describe how they would promote a whole-school/setting action plan which addresses the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved
- 3.5.4 Explain the contribution that the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance can make to the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance
- 3.8.3 Explain the role of the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance in encouraging teams to apply recognised good practice to their approach and practice
- 3.10.1 List a range of methods used to gather data on behaviour and attendance

Level 4

- 4.5.1 Identify and access relevant and up to date information which supports systems and organisational procedures for behaviour and attendance in their own school/setting
- 4.5.2 Evaluate systems and practices in the school/setting, to identify issues and make recommendations for modification and improvement
- 4.5.3 Develop a whole-school/setting action plan which addresses elements of the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved and plan its promotion
- 4.5.4 Analyse the role of the specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance
- 4.8.3 Explain the role of the specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in using recognised good practice to inform the development of policies and approaches in the environment in which they operate
- 4.8.4 Recommend strategic approaches and interventions that might address the causes of and promote positive behaviour and full attendance
- 4.8.5 Develop and implement approaches and interventions for promoting positive behaviour and full attendance
- 4.10.2 Identify and describe a range of methods to gather information about behaviour and attendance and explain how they are used

Resource materials

Preparatory reading and reflection		40
Activity 1		
Resource A	<i>Getting started</i>	55
Resource B	<i>Building on success</i>	56
Activity 2		
Slide	<i>The 5 Rs</i>	
Resource A	<i>Staff perceptions of challenging behaviour</i>	59
Resource B	<i>Pupil perception of effective teachers</i>	60
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Resource A	<i>The future</i>	61
Resource B	<i>Principles for embedding change</i>	62
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Preparatory reading and reflection

In 2002, Charles Clarke, the then Secretary of State for Education, heralded the need for continuing professional development and behaviour leaders so that staff in schools could become confident and equipped to deal with pupils' behaviour and attendance, and to share their knowledge and skills with colleagues. *The Guardian*, 2002)

In October 2005 Sir Alan Steer submitted the Practitioners' Group on Behaviour and Attendance *Discipline* to the Government, the core beliefs of that report are:

The report which follows is based on a series of six core beliefs, to which the group collectively subscribes:

- The quality of learning, teaching and behaviour in schools are inseparable issues, and the responsibility of all staff
- Poor behaviour cannot be tolerated as it is a denial of the right of pupils to learn and teachers to teach. To enable learning to take place preventative action is the most effective, but where this fails, schools must have clear, firm and intelligent strategies in place to help pupils manage their behaviour
- There is no single solution to the problem of poor behaviour, but all schools have the potential to raise standards if they are consistent in implementing good practice in learning, teaching and behaviour management
- Respect has to be given in order to be received. Parents and carers, pupils and teachers all need to operate in a culture of mutual regard
- The support of parents is essential for the maintenance of good behaviour. Parents and schools each need to have a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities
- School leaders have a critical role in establishing high standards of learning, teaching and behaviour

Undoubtedly, behaviour and attendance issues can have a negative impact on the teaching and learning process. However, in contrast to other issues faced by staff in educational settings, pupil behaviour and attendance has particular salience as this can sometimes be perceived as intensely personal. When this occurs a range of factors come into play: staff may find difficulty in maintaining a dispassionate perspective; they may become defensive and negative in their relationships with pupils and colleagues. Some staff can become inflexible and unable to respond to suggestions and advice.

As staff become less and less confident and struggling with poor relationships they are less able to access the training and support that is offered. As the cycle of failure in addressing behaviour and attendance issues continues, strategies can become more and more punitive. 'Quick fixes' and 'tricks' are not effective in maintaining behaviour change, the development of social and emotional skills or improved attendance. Strategies for promoting positive behaviour must be built on sound knowledge, understanding and on positive relationships within a supportive and collegial ethos. This will depend on a range of factors, all of which can be systematically developed.

For example:

- All staff should have access to support to develop their professional skills in positive behaviour management. Schools should create individual and institutional support systems that recognise professional development in the promotion of positive behaviour and good attendance as a valued and endemic part of the culture of the school and the teaching and learning process.

'Schools should institutionalise systems of collegial support so that they operate on grounds of professional responsibility as well as upon goodwill.' (O'Brien, 1998 p97)

- Behaviour and attendance policies should be regularly reviewed to ensure that the framework of rules and expectations are effectively and consistently applied.

'A school's behaviour and attendance policy should be seen as integral to its curriculum, for all schools teach values as well as knowledge and skills. It must be based on clear values such as respect, fairness and inclusion.' (Advice on whole-school behaviour and attendance policy (2003 p7) New advice will be on the DCSF website from Spring 2007)

- Schools should aim to foster an ethos and sense of community designed to support all children through the promotion of positive relationships between children and staff.

'... the important role that constructive relationships play in minimising conflict and encouraging desirable behaviour should not be underestimated.' (MacGrath, 1998, p.62)

The ways in which behaviour and attendance can be improved often relate to the quality of interpersonal and communication skills. These interactions can be either positive and constructive, or negative and damaging. They are intertwined with each other and the boundaries between them are often far from clearly defined. It is critical that educational communities create opportunities to share, explore and reflect on their own values and beliefs and to clarify roles and responsibilities.

Inappropriate and challenging behaviour should be seen in context, explanations sought and underlying causes examined. If adults work from the assumption that children can be supported to develop new social and emotional skills, leading to new behaviours, which are appropriate within the context of the learning situation, then the strategies developed to support this improvement will be successful.

It should be acknowledged that it is unlikely that a child will totally abandon inappropriate behaviour and it is commonly acknowledged that behaviour often 'gets worse before it gets better!' The role of the specialist leader is that of effectively communicating and establishing positive structures that encourage the development of new staff skills within a supportive ethos.

Specialist leaders in behaviour and attendance also have an important role in effectively communicating to others that a child's progress in developing new social and emotional skills or improving attendance should be viewed as incremental and that small achievements should be celebrated. The specialist leader can be a dynamic catalyst in promoting the development of positive strategies at both an organisational and individual skill level. This is critical in ensuring that the school community realises that it really can make a difference.

References

KS3 Behaviour and Attendance Strand – Behaviour and Attendance Training Materials – Core Day 1 DfES 0392/2003

O'Brien, T. (1998) *Promoting Positive Behaviour*, London: David Fulton Publishers

Primary National Strategy: Developing and reviewing your whole-school behaviour and attendance policy DfES0759-2003

MacGrath, M. (1998) *The Art of Teaching Peacefully: Improving Behaviour and Reducing Conflict in the Classroom*, London David Fulton Publishers

'Discipline in schools', *The Guardian*, December 12 (2002), retrieved on 9 November 2004 from the Internet: <http://education.guardian.co.uk/schools/story/0,5500,858908,00.html>

Learning Behaviour: The Report of The Practitioners' Group on School Behaviour and Discipline. <http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/learningmentors/downloads/steer.pdf>

Supplementary reading 2

Managing challenging behaviour

In contrast to some of the many challenges faced by adults in educational settings is that challenging behaviour can often be seen as intensely personal. If adults perceive the issue in this way, particular problems or 'road blocks' to solution-finding can occur: some adults may find it difficult to remain dispassionate and to manage strong feelings that can be generated, this can lead to defensive and negative relationships with both children and colleagues.

Other adults can become withdrawn, inflexible in their approach and unable to respond to suggestions or advice on how they might manage behaviour. In this climate it can become impossible to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding that they need. A specialist leader will therefore appreciate the importance of a supportive and positive ethos, which respects the skills and expertise of individuals and values all within the community as successful learners.

Behaviour management is therefore critically concerned with:

- The quality of relationships between adults and between adults and children
- The nature of interventions between adults and children
- The need to preserve the right to respect, self-esteem and dignity of all individuals involved

Behaviour is contextual, influenced by all who work and learn with the organisations, together with the features and systems of the organisation. Therefore, thinking about the behaviour of children requires more than just thinking about the children. In order to improve the behaviour of others, we may just need to look at ourselves.

I've come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It's my personal approach that creates the climate. It's my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I have a tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanised or dehumanised.

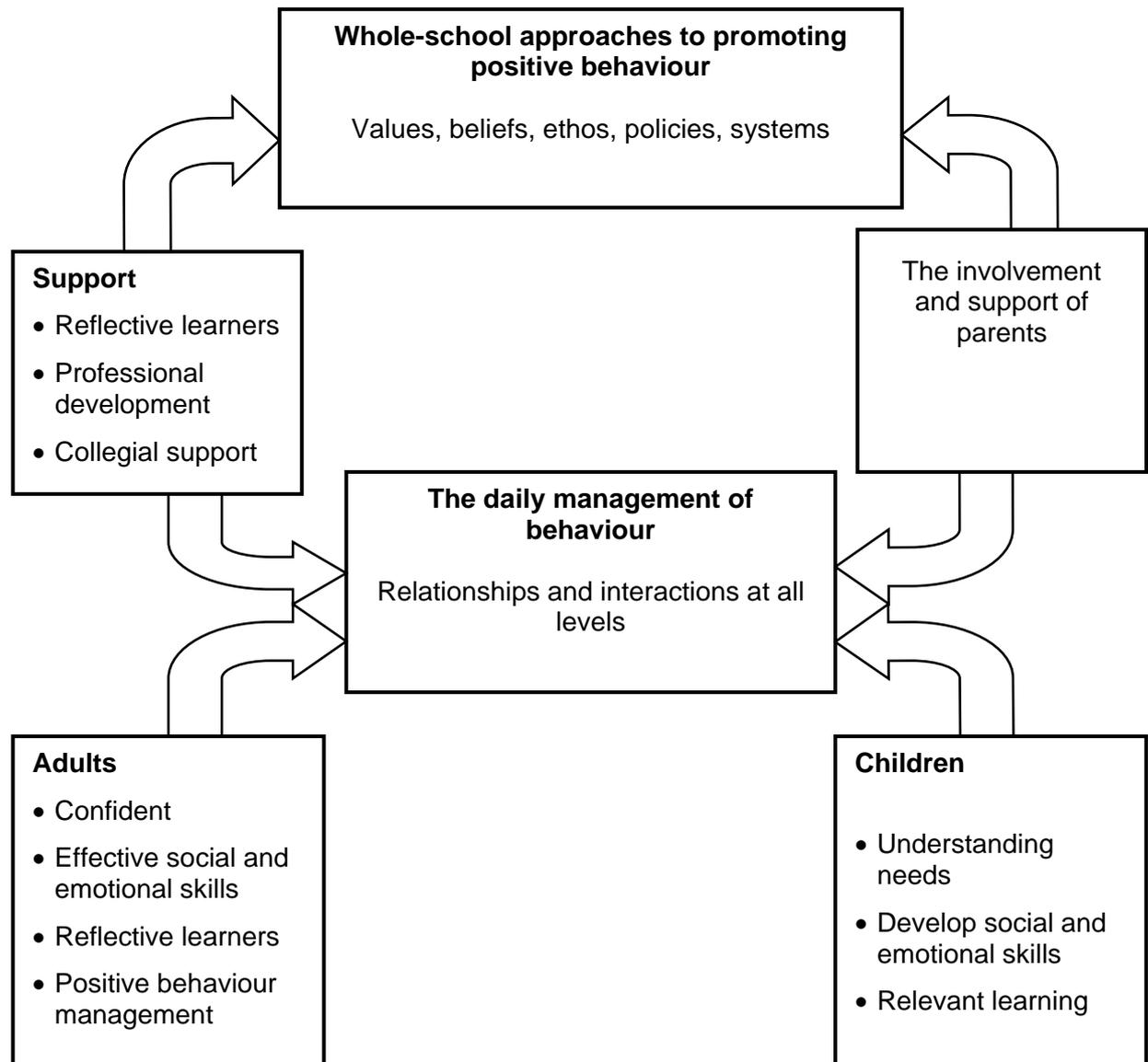
Hiam Ginnot, *Between teacher and child: A book for parents and teachers* (1972)

An important aspect of behaviour management is the 'motivation' to change and to develop new skills. We may need to ask how motivated are the adults in our setting. Are we willing to try out new ideas or strategies? To exercise persistence when things are tough, progress is minimal or strategies are perceived as is effective.

What is it about the organisation that supports the adults to 'keep trying' in difficult circumstances, to 'stick with' children who can create strong and uncomfortable feelings in the adults who work with them.

One important feature of a behaviour management toolkit is 'praise' positive recognition and the use of rewards.

Influences on behaviour and attendance



The daily management of pupil behaviour

As far as managing classroom behaviour is concerned staff are the most important people in the classroom. It is their behaviour that is the principal factor in maintaining a positive and vibrant learning environment, where positive behaviour is promoted and new skills developed. A teacher's behaviour and attitude will influence and affect how pupils behave. The evidence for this is obvious – classes and pupils behave differently for different teachers.

The following are common examples of skills and strategies, taken from a wide variety of sources that are known to be effective in promoting positive behaviour.

Staff skills

Effective staff ensure that they appear to be in control. They deal with difficult situations in a quiet and confident manner. They recognise that it is more effective to talk to an unruly child in a quiet and private way rather than to subject children to public humiliation which, in most cases, will lead to further disruption.

- Teaching expectations
- Develop a set of expectations with children based on the 5 Rs diagram (Activity 2 Resource A)
- Work with children to agree rules (or expectations of behaviour for learning) so that everyone clearly understands what is needed so that learning can take place
- Refer to and regularly review rules and routines together with the children
- Agree achievable behaviour and attendance targets and acknowledge efforts to improve

Separate the behaviour from the person

- Make the *behaviour* unacceptable, not the child
- Linking poor behaviour to a child's identity or personality inhibits positive change; linking good behaviour to a child's identity builds self-esteem, motivation and promotes change

Adult-child interaction

How do thoughts and feelings influence behaviour?

How does the behaviour of the adult influence the behaviour of the child?

- *Do I model the social and emotional skills that I want children to develop?*
- *Do I shout or 'nag'?*
- *Do I talk too much or expect children to listen for too long?*
- *Do I teach children how to meet expectations?*
- *Do I have positive relationships with children, parents and colleagues?*

How does the classroom environment influence behaviour?

- *Is the physical layout of the classroom appropriate?*
- *Is the environment as attractive and tidy as possible?*
- *Is the social context of the class a source of difficulty?*
- *Is there antagonism between certain children?*
- *Does the problem occur at certain times of the day or week?*

Does the challenging behaviour relate to particular teaching episodes, methods or activities in the classroom?

- *Is the curriculum causing concern?*
- *Are different learning styles being addressed?*

Remember – effective discipline comes about through positive reinforcement. Emphasise the positive as a mechanism for altering the negative – O'Brien (1998)

Positive use of language

- Be fair and consistent – it is the *certainty* of the response and the *follow-up* that has the most impact
- Provide choices so that children take responsibility for their own behaviour
- Make mistakes a normal part of learning
- Remove the struggle for power
- Have a positive emphasis

Remember – doing nothing is not a choice – Gordon (1996)

Phrase instructions and requests in a positive way

- Explain clearly what you expect
- Say thank you following each instruction – it conveys the expectation that it will happen

Praise and reward are the most effective motivators in getting pupils to behave appropriately. Despite strongly held beliefs (by some leaders) that sanctions and negative consequences solve the problem of pupils' challenging behaviour, in the majority of cases they do not.

The Art of Teaching Peacefully by Macgrath, M., David Fulton 1998

- Create an atmosphere whereby children feel that they are important, valued and successful and that their efforts are noticed and celebrated
- Give positive reinforcement and praise for appropriate behaviour
- Praise should be personal, specific, credible and differentiated

Follow up on issues that count

Follow up on the choices children make with appropriate feedback. This shows that you care and that what you say is important

Confrontation management

Conflict and confrontation are part of everyday life. Low-level, relatively minor misdemeanours can turn into serious confrontations, depending on how they are managed. Frequently sanctions are given, not for the original misdemeanour, but because the child's reactions to correction has annoyed the adult.

Modelling social and emotional skills in conflict situations

By modelling the social and emotional skills we want to see children develop, we help them to meet our expectations, for example:

Be a good listener and give a right of reply

Treat children with respect, be fair and consistent

Give space and time to help children learn to manage their feelings

Be prepared to apologise after a mistake; apologising does not weaken authority – it helps to teach respect

Stay calm even it's just on the outside; resolve conflict calmly

Use humour, not sarcasm, to diffuse a situation

Many confrontations begin or are escalated by the response of the adult, for example, striding towards a child, glaring and pointing

Show confidence. Staff with the greatest flexibility of thought and behaviour can – and generally will, control the situation.

Confrontation can often result from an attempt to remove some object from a pupil (for example, mobile phone, a hat)

Grabbing at an object moves the situation into a more unpredictable dimension, it may also become 'free theatre' for the rest of the group

Instead make the request, state simply that this is a choice but that the choice brings with it certain consequences.

Saving face

Public humiliation will stir up resentment and hostility. If a pupil loses face with peers they may seek to regain it through further negative behaviour. Children do not like to be shouted at, it raises the emotional temperature and can be seen as bullying (which arguably it is).

Try to leave yourself and the child a gracious way out of a difficult situation (the older the pupil the more important this is). Anyone who feels cornered can become more aggressive as the 'fight' and 'flight' mechanism kicks in. Avoid cornering children in an 'I win, you lose' situation by offering a compromise that will convey a sense of fairness. Avoiding audiences reduces pressure on a child not to back down in public. Lastly, take time to check facts before accusing a child or issuing a sanction.

Avoid threats

Threats from an adult will increase the likelihood of a child reacting aggressively and therefore escalating the conflict. In heated situations, threats can be made that are impossible to carry out and adults can soon lose face. Threats can provoke retaliation and even if a pupil gives way, can generate feelings of hostility and resentment

Finding solutions

Look for a compromise, be prepared to show you are looking for a way forward that is acceptable to all concerned.

Returning to normal

After any confrontation it is important to find time to speak briefly to the person concerned in order to begin to repair the relationship. This is not a post mortem but a way of showing that the dispute is over and done with and normal interactions can be established. The aim is to re-establish a cooperative working relationship as soon as possible.

Any policy on behaviour should specify a clear plan for those staff who may find themselves in confrontational situations. Staff who are prepared and know what they need to do in the event of an emergency feel more confident and able to deal with the situation calmly.

Staff support

Major roadblocks to effective staff support occur in a climate in which the adults imagine that disclosure of problems with behaviour management is in some way an admission of weakness or inadequacy.

Bad behaviour in schools is a complex problem which does not lend itself to simple solutions.

The Elton Report (1989) *Enquiry into Discipline in Schools*, London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office 1989

Staff should not be expected to work in isolation, all of us need support from colleagues at certain times and need to provide support for others. Teamwork and collaborative relationships create effective working practices.

Regular team meetings should provide opportunities to discuss behaviour sensitively, provide a common language for talking about difficulties and create a solution-oriented approach to behaviour management.

There is clearly no virtue in professional isolation, staff should feel able to seek support during difficult times. Responses to such requests should be positive, effective and clear. Effective schools develop systems of collegial support based on professional care and responsibility.

On airlines, flight attendants tell the adults to place their own oxygen masks on before placing masks on others, yet in education we spend a great deal of time placing oxygen masks on other people's faces while we ourselves are suffocating.

Watkins (2000)

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Supplementary reading 3

Absence from school: a study of its causes and effects in seven LAS

Ways of improving attendance (Excerpt from 'Absence from school: a study of its causes and effects in seven LAS'; Heather Malcolm, Valerie Wilson, Julia Davidson and Susan Kirk, The SCRE Centre University of Glasgow, May 2003)

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR424.pdf>

Key findings

Previous researchers identified a variety of ways to improve attendance. These included service level strategies, prevention strategies, initial response to absence, early intervention, strategies aimed at pupils who had attendance problems and initiatives with disaffected pupils.

School registration and immediate follow-up procedures

Systems in use

All but one of the primary schools and all the secondary schools visited used some form of electronic system to process their attendance data. The means of inputting data varied: six of the primary and three of the secondary schools transferred information manually from registers; others made use of optical mark recognition (OMR) sheets and four secondary schools employed a complete electronic package. Two secondary schools were planning to upgrade their systems either this year or next, but all the schools were able to generate class and individual statistics for pupil reports, reward schemes and identification of poor attenders.

Follow-up after registration

Schools varied in the way they followed up absences. 21 of the 27 schools from all the LAs made 'first day calls'; 14 called the homes of all absent pupils and seven targeted those of the most persistent absentees. 17 of the schools, six primary and 11 secondary, had dedicated staff such as attendance officers, learning mentors, home-school liaison teachers and school-based EWOs to help with attendance issues. Schools with dedicated support staff tended to make first day calls. However, a large secondary school in LA 1 was considering the use of a commercial company to undertake first day calling because existing staff felt they could not cope with the volume of absences. 12 of the 14 secondary schools operated a first day calling system, compared to only nine of the primary schools.

First day calling was complemented by other tactics to chase up absenteeism. These included letters to parents and visits to homes by EWOs, home-school liaison officers, teachers and even head teachers. At best, this could help establish a working relationship with the parent, especially if the class teacher or head teacher made the call; at worst, teachers would be given reasons which they felt bound to accept as authorised absence, but which some thought might be masking parentally condoned truancy.

Satisfaction with registration procedures and immediate follow-up

Teachers' satisfaction with existing registration systems was mixed. They made the following points:

- Many teachers expressed nostalgia for the old registers, in which it had been easier to look for patterns of absence. Most, however, also appreciated the advantages of electronic systems, which enabled rapid retrieval of statistics
- Staff who were accustomed to all-electronic registration systems were generally pleased with them
- First day calling was widely regarded as effective. An LA 2 secondary school showed that 60% of those contacted on the first day of absence returned to school the next

day. Several secondary schools reported a sudden drop in unexplained absence when first day calling had been introduced and pupils realised their parents would be contacted

- Most teachers were happy to have someone else contacting parents
- Staff making the calls, even when their remits were dedicated to attendance matters, did not always have time to call every parent on their list
- Staff in some schools reported great difficulty reaching parents by telephone. This happened when telephone lines had been disconnected, mobile phone numbers changed or when parents possessed new caller display equipment
- The efficiency of registration and immediate follow-up systems depended on teachers' prompt receipt of messages, which was not always possible when the attendance officer or equivalent was part-time

Several of the secondary school pupils made additional points about registration and follow-up systems. These included:

- Electronic systems deterred internal truancy
- Pupils were more likely to be internal truants when taught by supply teachers who may not detect their absence
- Some pupils believed determined truants would find a way to cheat 'swipe-card' systems, and others worried that they would be bullied into 'swiping' cards on behalf of absent classmates

School strategies to promote good attendance

Schools described five broad means of promoting good attendance:

- Group competitions
- Individual awards
- Improved school ethos and facilities
- Building good relationships with parents
- Information-sharing between primary and secondary school staff

Group competitions

13 of the 27 schools employed group competitions. These were especially common at primary school level. These usually took the form of 'attendance challenges' in which classes competed with each other for the best attendance and fewest late arrivals. The winning classes received rewards which might be tangible prizes, their choice of a class activity, or the status of being recognised at school assemblies.

Individual awards

Almost all schools (11 of the primaries and 12 of the secondaries) used individual awards. Definitions of 'good attendance' varied from better than 90% to not less than 100%. Rewards were often badges or certificates, sometimes supplemented by voucher prizes or sweets. In one secondary school the overall winner each year could choose a prize or a trip. Winning pupils in two schools, a primary and a secondary, were given membership of an 'over 95% club' for which attendance had to have been 95% or better in the preceding half-term period. This entitled pupils to privileges such as non-uniform days, trips out of school and entitlement to enter a draw for local Premiership team football tickets (with alternative prizes for those not keen on football). Winners in four of the secondary schools were given automatic entry to prize draws, with cash prizes of (typically) £100 or desirable items such as mountain bikes and televisions. Teachers in two LA 4 schools reported that they sometimes used their own incentives within their form groups, giving prizes 'from their own back pockets'.

Improved school ethos and facilities

Interviewees in five LAs tried to make the school's ethos and facilities more attractive to pupils. These included activity clubs to encourage poor attendees to come to school clubs and breakfast clubs to provide children with a good start to the school day.

Three secondary school head teachers in LAs 1 and 5 emphasised the need to treat pupils more like adults and give them greater ownership of their school. In an LA 1 secondary school the head teacher had re-introduced school uniform in an effort to improve school ethos. The head of the other secondary school aimed to improve the quality of teaching and learning by reducing class sizes. 'Staff will be able to teach smaller groups and give them more attention,' he explained. Pupils said they were more likely to come to school if relationships between staff and pupils improved and where there were improved facilities for them to meet their friends.

Building good relationships with parents

Primary teachers believed that building good relationships with parents from as early a stage as possible was important. Four primary school head teachers thought it particularly important to get to know parents who had difficult lives because they were more likely to have problems in getting their children to school regularly.

Human resources to build these relationships varied widely and having an attendance officer, learning mentor or liaison teacher with time to go out and visit the family was seen as helpful. One head teacher became personally involved by taking a box of biscuits as a 'thank you' to a mother whose children's attendance had improved. 'The staff thought I was absolutely crazy,' she said. 'But as a result of that [the mother's] six children's attendance improved and one of them actually got 95% in one of the terms.'

Information-sharing between primary and secondary school staff

Staff in three secondary schools in LAs 1, 2 and 7 drew attention to their focus on primary-secondary school transition. The head of Year 7 in a LA 7 school visited all 34 of her school's feeder primaries in the autumn term. She used information about pupils' primary school attendance to identify pupils likely to find transition difficult and prepare support for them. The attendance officer attached to an LA 2 secondary school held individual meetings with each primary school child about to transfer who had less than 90% attendance.

School strategies to deal with poor attendance

The first half of this chapter looked at ways in which LAs, schools and other agencies supported good attendance. We now turn to the measures they take to deal with pupils whose attendance is poor. These can be grouped into three categories:

- EWS and other agency involvement
- Supporting and reintegrating pupils
- Catching and punishing truants

Educational welfare service and other agency involvement

EWOs supported parents by visiting them at home or meeting them in school. This not only supported families but also reminded them of their legal responsibilities and the possibility of prosecution. The frequency of EWO visits to schools varied according to LA policy, but usually entailed weekly or fortnightly visits to primary schools and at least once a week or more in secondary schools.

Teachers' satisfaction with the work done by EWOs varied. A Year 6 primary school teacher in LA 1 expressed concern at the approach taken by the EWO appointed to her school because she appeared to be over-reluctant either to make home visits or to go out into the community looking for absentees and bringing them back to school. In contrast, the home-school liaison teacher in one of the LA 2 primary schools appreciated the flexible

relationship she had with her school's EWO, whom she felt she could telephone for advice anytime. 'We try to work together,' she said.

Staff in three of the secondary schools in LAs 6 and 7 praised the input of the EWOs, pointing to their flexibility, skill and knowledge of professional networks. The head teacher of an LA 1 secondary school felt that the EWO allocated to the school helped only marginally because of the size of the school and scale of its problems. He stressed that he understood why many local schools were buying the services of former LA EWOs for themselves. 'They are being snapped up,' he said. Other obstacles to seamless school-EWO working included communication difficulties with other LAs when schools took in pupils from outside its own LA and EWOs' inability to share all the information uncovered in their case work with school staff, for reasons of confidentiality.

Views in schools were mixed with regard to the support that came from other professionals. Secondary teachers in the two LA 6 schools were satisfied with the multi-agency input they received from workers from outreach, health and youth agencies. Both schools praised the efforts of a social worker who ran an extra-curricular programme for disaffected young people, including poor attenders. In contrast, the head teacher of an LA 4 primary school expressed dissatisfaction with the support that her school received from health and social services. The difficulty was especially acute in relation to the social services because they required parental consent before getting involved. She viewed the future with foreboding:

It's that watching the back and playing the legalistic game which in the long run is going to harm children because schools can't do it alone. We can only do it [in] cooperation with health, with housing, with the education welfare service, the psychological service. Unless that support is forthcoming, our ability to do our job is going to be seriously limited and children are going to suffer, fall through the system.

Supporting and reintegrating pupils

EWOs in all schools were able to support and reintegrate absentees. They drew on social services, mental health professionals and other agencies to help them achieve this. Established pastoral systems in secondary schools were also an important ongoing element of the support for pupils with poor attendance. Form tutors emphasised their own roles here and stressed the need for one-to-one discussions with the pupils in their groups because, as one put it: 'These kids would rather die than lose their street-cred'. However, some tutors pointed out that there was little time for extended discussion of individual issues in the meetings with their form groups.

In addition to these systems, staff in approximately half the schools reported that special arrangements were in place to support and reintegrate poor attenders on their return. They included:

- The availability of learning mentors
- Social inclusion or equivalent units staffed variously by teachers, learning mentors, Connexions staff, pastoral staff and counsellors
- Adapted or negotiated timetables
- School-developed work packs
- Group work for poor attenders, including sessions for anger management, boosting self-esteem and bereavement counselling
- Attendance clinics aiming to understand the cause of pupils' absence and encourage attendance; and sports leadership projects for Y9s to boost self-esteem
- One-to-one counselling
- Clubs, such as the attendance club of a LA 5 school, which brought together poor and good attendees

- Other ‘buddying’ and befriending schemes whereby older pupils mentored young poor attenders; and arrangements for staff to collect children and bring them to school if their parents could not

Primary and secondary school teachers acknowledged that it was helpful to have other adults with whom children could talk. These included learning mentors, social inclusion managers and home-school liaison officers. Their ability to visit homes during the teaching day was especially valued, as was the possibility of their finding solutions without referring truants to the EWS. Staff in two schools pointed out how learning mentors could make ‘dramatic changes’ in helping teachers build relationships with poor attendees. A learning mentor explained how it was helpful to have ‘a lot of bodies’ working on poor attendance so that a ‘whole range of tracking and support’ measures could be put in place.

However, not every school had this level and variety of support. One teacher in a LA 2 secondary school argued that as schools tried to become more inclusive:

‘There should be other professionals established within school or in a group of schools that we can call upon, who can get to know children, mentor them and counsel them. We simply don’t have the time and I am not trained to do that...’

However, a head teacher in another school had no desire to manage such multi-disciplinary teams and suggested that a designated appointee would be helpful.

Catching and punishing truants

Schools used a variety of measures to detect truancy. These included:

- Tight security systems controlling entry and exit points, sometimes with CCTV cameras and security guards on the gate
- Truancy patrols in the school vicinity
- School-based truancy sweeps, sometimes requiring the help of other schools’ EWOs as well as a school’s own

In one school, senior staff started the day by rounding up post-registration truants who congregated in an adjacent sports ground to plan their day. They also used reports from shopkeepers or local residents (especially in the rural LA 6) and formal truancy sweeps in conjunction with the police. School-based truancy sweeps were mentioned in three secondary schools, but were very demanding of staff time.

Despite the security, pupils reported that there were still ways to ‘escape’ from school. Pupils suggested that internal truancy often went undetected, especially in the presence of supply teachers. Some pupils, who would not skip whole days of school because they knew that their parents would be informed, were prepared to skip some classes because they were less likely to be detected and reported.

Punishments usually involved putting the pupil ‘on report’, which meant that each teacher had to sign a form for them at every lesson and detention. Pupils did not think that this was an effective deterrent. In LA 3, a form tutor explained how the pupils were more likely to stay away to avoid designated detention days. ‘Children are clever at manipulating when they are to be in school and when’s best to stay away,’ she commented. ‘So avoiding detention is normal.’ In a LA 5 school, a teacher reported that persistent absentees would be excluded from special activities. Most pupils indicated that the greatest deterrents were fears of parental reaction and that parents would be taken to court and fined, or sent to jail.

Effectiveness of measures dealing with attendance

Teachers had mixed views on the efficacy of measures taken against truants. Teachers in five schools thought it was difficult to judge; while those in three primary and one secondary school thought the measures were succeeding. However, both groups offered no real evidence to substantiate their views. In contrast, the head teacher of a LA 1 primary school could point to an overall rise from 91% to 94% in the school’s attendance figures. A school-based attendance officer in a LA 5 primary school attributed her success

to the lunchtime attendance club. Teachers in a secondary school felt the improvement in the school environment, an all-electronic registration system and removing the names of very long-term absentees from the school register had resulted in attendance rates rising from 70% to the 90%.

In contrast, staff in a large LA secondary school felt that little headway was being made in spite of a heavy investment of staff time in different measures and the school's attendance figures had dropped since the previous year. In most schools, however, staff opinion about the effectiveness of various measures was mixed.

Features associated with effectiveness

Teachers associated the following with effective ways of dealing with poor attendance:

- Offering returners a gradual way back into learning, through negotiated timetables, social inclusion units, help from learning mentors and being taught by a limited number of teachers
- Developing pupils' and families' pride in the school
- Ensuring that families saw education as offering something positive
- An improved school environment
- Appropriate rewards for different age groups
- Perseverance
- Using different approaches with different pupils and families

Obstacles to effectiveness

Obstacles to dealing effectively with poor attendance were:

- Concern that reward schemes were not sustainable, because pupils got used to them and expected more sophisticated and costly rewards
- The limited value of some award schemes, which some classes and children felt they would never win
- The difficulty of reaching 'hardline' poor attendees with award schemes
- The amount of staff time and effort given to setting up and running some of the measures
- The amount of staff time spent in communicating with parents who spoke no English
- Children's dislike of measures that targeted them because of their ethnicity and reluctance to make use of this help
- The difficulty of improving stabilised attendance levels

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Activity 1 Resource A

Getting started

Briefly note some of the strategies you feel staff in your setting could adopt to ensure that improvements in behaviour and attendance for the child in your profile.

Use the headings below to help structure your thinking:

Strengths and resources
Family circumstances
Attainment and any special educational needs
Learning, teaching and classroom management
Relationships with adults
Relationships with peers
Social and emotional skills
Description of behaviours causing concern (including attendance and punctuality if appropriate)

Activity 1 Resource B

Building on success

Where teachers are experiencing difficulty in managing children's behaviour they frequently focus only on what's going wrong and find it difficult to identify anything that is working for them. School cultures can feed into this phenomenon so that it is 'OK' to complain about the difficult child or class, but not 'OK' to talk about any successes that have occurred in teaching them. The less we share success the less we develop a language to talk about it.'

- *Bring pupils' successes to their attention*
- *Amplify small successes through questioning*
- *Give feedback constructively, objectively and genuinely*
- *Reinforce identified strengths in order to increase the likelihood of their being used in future*
- *Reward, encourage, motivate*

(DfES: *Primary National Strategy: Focusing on solutions: a positive approach to improving behaviour*, p8)

http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/publications/banda/940075/ba_cpdcd173305modb.pdf

The solution-focused model encourages those adults involved in developing positive behaviour to adopt a positive stance in which energy is directed towards finding satisfactory ways forward rather than on focusing on what is going wrong in a given situation.

Asking the right questions becomes very important in a solution-focused approach because the language we use and the way in which we explore situations can powerfully determine whether we magnify the problem or generate and amplify ways of overcoming it.

Problem-identifying questions

These can make even relatively minor problems appear insoluble:

- What is the problem?
- How long have you had it?
- Where does the fault lie?
- What/who else?
- Who is to blame?
- Who/what else?
- What's your worst experience of this?
- What has prevented you from solving this problem?

Solution-focused questions

This type of question can help maintain a focus on inner resourcefulness and promote a positive attitude to solving the problem.

Exception-finding questions

Very few problems exist all the time – they just feel as though they do. Exception-finding questions are designed to tease out and explore those times when things go well.

General questions

- Is there a time when the behaviour doesn't occur or occurs more or less strongly?
- Tell me about when this doesn't happen
- Can you think of a time when the situation has been better, however slightly?

Specific questions

- Are there times when he/she does listen to you?
- Are there times when you feel less angry about it?
- Have you ever noticed a time when he/she does finish his/her work?
- Tell me about a time when you have come close to feeling calm when working with this child
- Are there times when he/she does work/play/attend appropriately?
- When have you felt most pleased about how things are going?
- What things are already happening that you would like to see continue?

Exploratory questions

- What is different about the times that are better?
- How can you explain these differences?
- How did you contribute to the difference?
- What did you do that was different?
- What else did you do?
- What else?
- How could more of that happen?

Where people feel really stuck and close to despair about a situation ask:

- How do you manage to cope with this?
- What are you doing to stop things getting worse?
- What does that tell you?

Reinforcing expectations

- Is there anything else that might be making a difference at those times?
- Is anyone else contributing to success?
- Who notices the differences?
- What do they notice?
- What would colleagues say that you do that helps you to make a difference?

Preferred future questions

A focus on goals, vividly and in detail, rather than the barriers to achieving them, is much more likely to provide opportunities and creative ways of exploiting them.

Preferred future questions help us see our goals in vivid detail.

General questions

- If you could wave a magic wand and make the problem disappear, what would things be like?
- What would be the first signs that this change had happened?
- What would you be doing that was different to what is happening now?

Exploring the preferred future

- Who else would notice that the problem had disappeared?
- What would they notice?
- What would the parents/family/carer of the pupil notice that is different?
- What would people in the staffroom say about this change?

Add other questions you find useful:

-
-
-

Activity 2 Resource A

Staff perceptions of challenging behaviour

Adapted from W. E. Grundy and D. J. Jones, 2003

Context

The following lists are the result of staff development work in 12 mainstream schools. Groups were asked the following questions:

Which pupil behaviours challenge staff?

Which staff behaviours do you suppose challenge pupils?'

Staff perceptions of pupils' challenging behaviour

Dismissiveness/non-compliance, ignoring, stubborn silences
Getting the last word in, answering back
Making it intensely personal to you
Absconding/lateness
Physical attacks on staff and peers
Passive/lethargic
Bullying
Sexually explicit and insulting language
Persistent talking
The 'know all'
Discussing irrelevant topics

Staff perceptions of adult behaviour that pupils find challenging

Low expectations, not listening, being rejected, ignored
Boring repetitive activities, routines, resources
Inconsistency, moving goal posts, having favourites
Being taken for granted, talking *about* them not *to* them
Personal space invaded, dominating
Treating age inappropriately, not treated individually
Treated with no dignity or respect
Being humiliated, made fun of, belittled
Lack of tolerance, being shouted at
Not being given choices, not being consulted
Lack of differentiation (personal and curriculum), inflexibility of staff

Activity 2 Resource B

Pupil perception of effective teachers

Comments by Year 8 pupils

A good teacher

- Is kind
- Is generous
- Listens to you
- Encourages you
- Has faith in you
- Keeps confidences
- Likes teaching children!
- Likes teaching their subject
- Takes time to explain things
- Helps you when you're stuck
- Tells you how you are doing
- Allows you to have your say
- Doesn't give up on you
- Cares about your opinion
- Makes you feel clever
- Treats people equally
- Stands up for you
- Makes allowances
- Tells the truth
- Is forgiving

(DfEE 2000 *Research into Teacher Effectiveness*, Hay McBer)

Hay McBer (2000) *Research into Teacher Effectiveness: A Model of Teacher Effectiveness*. The full report is vast, but a 70-page version of the report is available online at the DfES website: <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=1487>

Activity 3 Resource A

The future

It is now some time in the future. The behaviour and attendance issues that currently trouble children, staff and parents in your setting are no longer a concern to you.

Problems have not entirely disappeared, that would not be realistic, but children and staff continue to develop the social and emotional skills they need in a coherent and planned way. Disruption to learning is minimised and where difficult behaviour or attendance issues do occur, then these are managed successfully in a positive and constructive way.

Use the solution-focused questions below to explore, in detail, the preferred future for your educational setting.

What are things like now that you are satisfied that things are the best they can be?

What is the outcome for children? For colleagues? For parents?

What did you contribute to this change taking place?

What were the skills you needed to use?

What are you doing differently now?

What are your colleagues doing differently now?

What are the children doing differently now?

What have parents noticed is different?

What would visitors to your educational setting see, hear or experience that tells them everything is going well?

Activity 3 Resource B

Principles for embedding change

Facilitating behaviour change

Desire alone, however sincere, is often insufficient; more is needed if change is to be lasting. Indeed there are at least four ingredients vital for change: a genuine desire to change; detailed knowledge of how to do so, practice and perseverance.

What helps in embedding change?

- *A reason to change*
- *Motivation and will*
- *Sufficient self-esteem to risk making mistakes*
- *A belief that change is possible*
- *Some inevitable success*
- *Support, encouragement and safety*
- *Time to develop new skills*
- *Perseverance, patience and practise*

(Adapted from: McGrath, 1998 p.121)

Embedding change

- Significant change involves a certain amount of ambiguity, ambivalence and uncertainty for the individual
- Assume that conflict and disagreement are not only inevitable but fundamental to successful change
- Assume that people need pressure to change
- Assume that effective change takes time: persistence is a critical attribute of successful change
- Do not assume that lack of implementation is outright rejection of the values embodied in the change; reasons could relate to inadequate resources to support implementation or insufficient time
- Assume that you will need a plan to instigate the change
- Assume that no amount of knowledge will ever make it totally clear what action should be taken; (action decisions are often based on a combination of valid knowledge, on-the-spot decisions and intuition)
- Assume that changing the culture of the institution is the real agenda, not implementing single innovations

(Adapted from: Fullan, M. 1991 pp.106-107)

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Links to national professional development materials

Secondary Behaviour and Attendance – Resources and publications

www.standards.gov/publications/ks3/

DfES 0392-2003 Core day one

These materials are designed for schools to use, supported by behaviour and attendance consultants. They cover sessions on:

- Reviewing a behaviour and attendance policy
- Implementing a behaviour and attendance policy
- The audit for secondary and middle schools
- Effective classroom teaching

A booklet containing policy advice for head teachers, behaviour and attendance leaders and consultants and LEA support services is also available.

DfES 0055-2004 Core day two

These materials are designed for schools to use, supported by behaviour and attendance consultants. They cover sessions on:

- Focusing on solutions
- Developing staff skills to support pupils
- Creating a positive whole school climate
- Meeting specific staff training needs using development materials

These four sessions follow a particular sequence but can be taken out of context and used separately as training units. It is intended that all schools will deliver the first three sessions. Schools can differentiate to meet their needs by selecting the most appropriate tasks and exploring some of the key ideas in the session.

Behaviour and attendance strand

These toolkit units provide consultants and schools with a comprehensive resource that supports post audit action plans.

The intention is to build on existing good practice and support development activity.

The final versions of all units in CD format are available to order separately.

DfES 1261-2005	Unit two	Everyday policies: rewards, sanctions and promotion of positive behaviour
DfES 1262-2005	Unit three	Dealing with consistently poor behaviour
DfES 0153-2004	Unit six	Classroom behaviour
DfES 1264-2005	Unit seven	Out-of-class behaviour
DfES 0156-2004	Unit nine	Attendance

Primary Behaviour and Attendance – Resources and publications

Excellence and Enjoyment:

Improving behaviour and attendance... improving learning

www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/publications/

DfES 0110-2005 Kit – Social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL)

The SEAL resource provides a framework for explicitly promoting social, emotional and behavioural skills, with built-in progression for each year group within a school.

The resource is designed to facilitate a systematic and spiral approach to learning. It should be seen as a stimulus or starting point, rather than a finished product.

It is hoped that it will provide structured support to the creativity and initiative of schools who use the materials.

The materials include:

- A guidance booklet
- A 'getting started' poster
- A whole-school resource with photo-cards

Seven sets of thematic materials that each have:

- An assembly and overview
- A red set booklet – for the Foundation Stage
- A blue set booklet – for Years 1 and 2
- A yellow set booklet – for Years 3 and 4
- A green set booklet – for Years 5 and 6

In addition there are booklets that contain materials for all seven themes:

- Purple set booklets – activities for exploring the theme in the staff room
- Gold set booklets – family activities
- Silver set booklets – small-group activities (Years 1 and 2)

Staff Development – These consist of ideas for whole school sessions and are appropriate for staff meetings or in-service training days. The materials are organised under the headings used in the electronic audits. These are:

- Leadership and management
- Whole-school ethos and framework
- School organisational factors and the management and deployment of resources
- Continuing to improve the quality of teaching and learning through classroom-level factors
- Pupil support systems
- Staff development and support

The staff development materials mentioned above are as follows:

Working with colleagues on behaviour issues

The emotional aspects of professional development on behaviour management issues

Working with staff with varied attitudes, beliefs and experience

Planning your delivery – structuring a session and identifying potential 'hotspots'

Meeting your responsibilities and maintaining the focus

Focusing on solutions: a positive approach to managing behaviour

Building on success

Exception-finding: when is success being experienced and how can we build on this?

Preferred futures

Rating scales: where are we now and how close are we to our desired solution?

Attendance and punctuality

The impact of poor attendance and punctuality on achievement

Registration

Using attendance data

Improving attendance and punctuality – sharing good practice

Attendance teamwork

Positive behaviour and the learning environment

Influencing the environment

Exploring how the environment can promote behaviour for learning

Evaluating the physical environment

Effective lessons and behaviour for learning

Key factors in lesson planning and delivery which can influence children's behaviour

Using lesson structures to promote positive behaviour

The importance of classroom routines

Exploring ways to teaching the behaviours needed for learning

Setting expectations and teaching positive behaviour

Rights and responsibilities

Setting expectations and teaching the behaviour that you want to see

Developing a classroom behaviour plan

Consequences

Exploring beliefs about rewards and sanctions

The use of consequences to promote positive behaviour and reduce unwanted behaviour

Whole-class positive consequences schemes

The use of negative consequences

Responding effectively when children show inappropriate behaviour

Principles for using consequences for inappropriate behaviour

Ensuring win-win outcomes

Using more intrusive consequences and involving school-based support

Understanding behaviour

How patterns of behaviour develop

A way of looking at behaviour in the classroom: the ABC model

The influence of group dynamics on children's behaviour

Relationships in the classroom

The importance of establishing positive relationships with all pupils

Building relationships where it is more difficult

The 'relationship bank' – building relationships with those hardest to reach

Building a classroom community

The importance of emotions in the classroom

Exploring why it is important to understand emotions in the classroom

Four key concepts and ideas about emotions

Implications for school and classroom planning

Classroom communication

Introduction: types of communication

Barriers to effective communication

Communication that can create or reinforce negative behaviour

Communication that promotes positive behaviour

Optional additional activities: transparent communication, 'I message'

Conflict and confrontation

What lies behind behaviour?

The processes involved in conflict and confrontation

Strategies for reducing conflict and confrontation in the classroom

Optional additional activities: the assertive teacher

Managing conflict and confrontation

Reference number for all the above is DfES 1732-2005CDO-EN

School self-evaluation and staff development

This CD Rom provides a range of tools for primary schools and local authority staff to use in their work to promote positive behaviour and regular attendance. Materials include: The initial review, In-depth audits, Behaviour in the classroom: a course for newly qualified teachers; and the staff development materials listed above.

DfES 0101-2004 Kit – Leading on behaviour: a handbook for leading teachers

The aim of these materials is to help leading teachers reflect on their practice and make explicit to colleagues those elements that promote positive behaviour.

Exploring the role of the leading behaviour teacher and identifying personal strengths in behaviour management

A structure for understanding how we promote positive behaviour and regular attendance

Supporting colleagues in professional change

Skills, strategies and techniques for promoting change

Other relevant materials:

Introductory training for school support staff

Behaviour management

Self-study materials for supply teachers

Classroom and behaviour management

Available from *TeacherNet* as downloads www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications/supplyteachers

Behaviour management module

Induction training for teaching assistants in primary schools

Strategies and approaches for positive behaviour management
Effective practice in action

Behaviour management module

Induction training for teaching assistants in secondary schools

Strategies and approaches for positive behaviour management
Behaviour management in action