

Key Stage 3 National Strategy

Key Messages: Behaviour and attendance strand

This leaflet is for all secondary schools. It supplements:

- briefings to LEA and school Key Stage 3 Strategy managers;
- training and dissemination by LEA behaviour and attendance consultants;
- core and additional training materials which will appear in LEAs and schools from September 2003.

Understanding your concerns

Ofsted report that behaviour is satisfactory or better in the majority of schools and that attendance is improving. However, we also know that:

- pupil behaviour affects recruitment and retention of secondary school staff;
- support and training for improving behaviour is in great demand by staff;
- dealing with poor behaviour distracts senior managers from school improvement issues;
- many pupils report that disruptive behaviour makes it difficult to work;
- standards of behaviour are unsatisfactory in one in twelve secondary schools; and
- national levels of truancy remain static.

The Behaviour and Attendance Programme

The DfES's Behaviour and Attendance Programme responds to these concerns. It has two main elements:

- support for selected schools in Excellence in Cities (EiC) areas facing the greatest challenges. By September 2003 Behaviour Improvement Projects (BIPs) – the behaviour and attendance strand of the EiC strategy – will be supporting well over 200 secondary schools. BIPs are packages of measures tailored to local needs, but typically including multi-agency Behaviour and Education Support Teams and police in schools.
- a new **behaviour and attendance strand of the Key Stage 3 Strategy** providing review, training and consultancy resources for all secondary schools. That is what this leaflet is about.

How the behaviour and attendance strand of the Key Stage 3 Strategy will help

We know that behaviour and attendance training is most effective when it is:

- based on a whole-school perspective;
- targeted to meet identified needs in individual schools;
- informed by a range of training materials designed to meet identified needs;
- provided in school by experienced and successful staff; and
- supported by local consultants.

Key messages for schools

- Improvements in behaviour and attendance require comprehensive whole school actions, 'one-off' training sessions are unlikely to lead to embedded change.
- The behaviour and attendance strategy builds upon the existing range of school self-evaluation and improvement activities.
- **All** adults within the school community should become skilled and active in improving behaviour and attendance.
- Behaviour and attendance improvement starts with staff understanding the causal factors and leads on to appreciation of pupil needs.
- Improvements in behaviour and attendance will lead to an improvement not only in standards and inclusion but also in the quality of the day to day experiences for pupils and staff within schools.

Key messages for staff

- The Key Stage 3 behaviour and attendance strand makes the clear link between developments in effective teaching and learning and improvements in standards of behaviour and attendance.
- We should acknowledge the sensitivity associated with this area of education and that all intervention and training activities are designed in the knowledge that this is a challenging area.
- The most serious incidents of misbehaviour are obviously those that receive greatest attention and cause distress; training and support will reflect this fully. It is also important to note that the a good deal of the strand's activity will focus on areas of school activity and practice which are connected with relatively low levels of misbehaviour and attendance rates which are unsatisfactory, but not chronic.

Key messages for other groups

Governors – a national initiative focusing on behaviour and attendance will clearly attract a good deal of attention among those involved in schools. Governors will be rightly interested in the activities within this part of the Key Stage 3 Strategy and schools will no doubt consider how they brief governing bodies on the background to this work, how the activities impact in schools and the outcomes.

Parents/Carers – their views will be crucial in shaping pupils' attitudes to school. Many schools already seek and use valuable information from parents and carers and where this is not the case careful thought should be given to seeking these views. Particular attention should be paid to the needs of families where English is an additional language, where sons and daughters have special educational needs and where there has been a history of disaffection.

Pupils – the perception of pupils is invaluable in shaping a response to attitudes in the areas of behaviour and attendance. In common with parents and carers, schools frequently seek and use this information and the strand seeks to build on this foundation.

Specialist school staff and support services such as SENCOs, learning mentors, Connexions advisers and a range of LEA staff will have much valuable information to offer. It is important to remember however, that the behaviour and attendance strand is concerned with **all** pupils including those that receive specialist support. It is equally important to note that the strand does not replace any of this support but seeks to build upon it.

Implementation of the Key Stage 3 Strategy: behaviour and attendance strand

This new part of the Key Stage 3 Strategy will build upon the work of the previous strands. Implementation will be similar to the established strands familiar to staff. The key components will be:

- 1** A review of behaviour and attendance in school, which may pick out areas for auditing in more depth, designed to identify:
 - the effectiveness of the school's organisation, policies and practice in promoting positive behaviour and attendance
 - good practice that can be shared
 - targeted support required to meet staff needs
 - an action plan linked to the school improvement plan to secure any necessary changes in organisation, policy and practice.
- 2** Behaviour and attendance consultants in all LEAs:
 - working with and building upon the work of subject consultants and LEA behaviour support teams
 - assisting schools with behaviour and attendance audits
 - supporting schools in identifying their key points for action and follow-up activities
 - supporting school senior leadership teams with further training once needs have been identified through the behaviour and attendance review.
- 3** Publication of further training materials developed in line with:
 - existing information from Ofsted, DfES and other agencies
 - lessons learned from materials and strategies used in Behaviour Improvement Project areas
 - the outcomes of schools' behaviour and attendance reviews.

Training for schools

Two core training days are already planned for a member of the senior leadership team of all schools and will take place in October 2003 and January 2004. They will include:

Core day 1 Launch of the Key Stage 3 Strategy: behaviour and attendance strand

- auditing behaviour and attendance
- reviewing the behaviour and attendance policy
- implementation of policy
- effective teaching and learning to promote positive behaviour.

Core day 2 Improving staff skills to promote positive behaviour and increase attendance (a menu of activities for schools to select from following review)

- Focusing on solutions
- School structures to support positive behaviour:
 - creating a supportive learning environment
 - planning for good behaviour
 - school support systems
 - classroom structures to support pupils in special schools
- Focus on teaching:
 - effective use of language in the classroom
 - structuring the lesson to meet the needs of all pupils
 - engaging pupils to promote positive behaviour and attendance
 - engaging pupils with severe and complex special needs to promote positive behaviour and attendance
- Positive intervention:
 - supporting small groups and individuals
 - responding to pupils
 - managing conflict – avoiding escalation to violence
 - intervening with pupils outside the classroom.

Supplementary materials

As the strand develops, more training materials will become available to schools; they will include:

- training sessions on effective anti-bullying policy
- training session for Senior Leadership Teams on developing common language to discuss and describe behaviour
- training session on the use of praise and intervention to support teaching
- training session to develop the pastoral care role
- training session on best practice to include pupils and parents/ carers in implementing the school behaviour and attendance policy
- training session on promoting good attendance.

Making the difference

The behaviour and attendance strand offers a unique opportunity to address an area of educational activity that has consistently been at the fore in terms of the challenges faced by schools and their staff. Evidence suggests that where schools have successfully addressed issues of ethos and organisation, as well as strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning, improved standards of behaviour and attendance are the inevitable consequence. These are the principles on which this new strand of the Key Stage 3 Strategy is based.