

## The Behaviour Improvement Programme (BIP)

Ofsted inspectors have, over a two-year period, monitored the development of the Behaviour Improvement Programme (BIP) funded by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). This leaflet is to share initial findings with schools and local authorities (LAs) as to what has been most effective and where there is room for improvement.

These findings will be relevant to all schools and LAs and not only to those involved in BIP.

## What is BIP?

The BIP developed in phases and targeted schools serving complex catchment areas. Most secondary schools selected were located in areas where there was high pupil mobility. BIP aims to reduce non-attendance and exclusion while improving pupils' behaviour. Across the LAs visited the key elements of the BIP were:

- development of behaviour and education support teams (BEST)
- introduction or extension of 'learning mentor' roles
- appointment of attendance workers (usually administrative staff)
- establishing provision for disruptive pupils
- developing provision for excluded pupils from day one of the exclusion.

## Outcomes

Local authorities, despite some difficulties in recruiting and retaining core staff, have managed BIP well. The link between BIP and Excellence in Cities (EiC) partnerships is a strong feature, and successful schools can demonstrate how they have used BIP to build on and extend success under EiC. All LAs supplied schools with robust data on attendance and exclusions. Advice offered about developing behaviour strategies, though not always taken, has been good. Other LA services, such as education welfare and the school psychological service, have contributed to the establishment of BESTs. Recruiting other professionals from social services and the child and adolescent mental health services has been more problematic. As a result, there is considerable variation in the composition quality and working of BESTs.

What LAs do well:

- give sound and helpful advice to schools on behaviour and attendance strategies
- provide quality in-service training
- facilitate opportunities for schools to share good practice
- monitor the work of BIP through EiC partnerships.

Across all LAs, BIP has made a positive contribution to schools facing high levels of challenge to improve pupils' attitudes, motivation, attendance and behaviour.

Secondary schools identified for BIP struggle to manage circumstances of extreme complexity. Levels of pupil mobility are significantly above the national average: in some cases, as many as 60% of children move school during the academic year. Additionally, many BIP secondary schools receive large numbers of pupils excluded from other schools who are demotivated and disaffected with learning. Where these pupils are supported by parents who do not value education, schools struggle to maintain their involvement. Poverty is at the heart of the challenge to these schools in maintaining good attendance and motivating pupils. Half the schools visited had between three to five times the national average level of pupils entitled to free school meals.

A minority of secondary schools did not make or sustain progress in improving attendance or behaviour. In some of these schools the situation deteriorated because of a combination of factors, such as ineffective senior management, high levels of staff turnover, weak teaching and inconsistency in implementing behaviour strategies. However, most schools did use funding effectively and, as a result, brought about change.

The characteristics of the changes were:

- effective leadership at all levels that used the behaviour and attendance audit, alongside other data, to identify weaknesses
- more informed and honest discussion to develop and agree strategies
- improved monitoring and evaluation systems

- an inclusive philosophy established throughout the school that changed the staff and pupil culture and challenged assumptions about behaviour
- clearly articulated expectations, rigorously reinforced by the headteacher and senior staff
- better focusing of BIP and other funding to where it would have the greatest impact
- better targeting of non-teaching staff to support pupils and manage behaviour and attendance
- working more closely with other professionals, including BEST
- building BIP ways of working explicitly into the school's improvement plan.

BIP is only effective when headteachers use additional money and resources to change or enhance good practice. Where they work closely in partnership with the LA and a range of other agencies, changes made to ways of working are nearly always sustainable. In contrast, where headteachers use funding to maintain systems that are not working well, outcomes are poor.

The Behaviour Improvement Programme has enabled well managed schools to improve attendance and behaviour. Sustaining such gains in these schools is likely because of fundamental changes to how the schools work and how they monitor progress and evaluate their own performance.

© Crown copyright 2005

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated