

# Managing Classroom Behaviour: from research to diagnosis

Chris Watkins  
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in association with [theeducationunion](http://www.theeducationunion.org) Association of Teachers and Lecturers

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## PREFACE

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### About this publication

The original version of this publication was created for the Association for Teachers and Lecturers, under the title *Managing Classroom Behaviour: a bit like air traffic control*, (1998; ISBN: 0-902983-97-0). It is free to ATL members and £4.99 to non-members from Publications, ATL, 7 Northumberland Street, London WC2N 5DA

This work would not have been completed without the support of ATL.

In that version was the statement: It's not the sort of publication which is peppered with references, but each of the ideas and almost every paragraph in this publication has a link to well-researched studies, rather than merely the author's pet interests."

This version offers the evidence behind that statement.

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Publications include:

with Wagner P (2000), *Improving School Behaviour* London: Paul Chapman/Sage. 0-7619-6337-5.

(2000) *Managing Classroom Behaviour: a diagnostic guide*, Dundee, Scottish Consultative Council for the Curriculum. 1-85955-690-6

(1995), *School Behaviour*, University of London Institute of Education, Viewpoints series, No. 5

with Wagner P (1995), "School Behaviour and Special Educational Needs - what's the link?" in Stobbs P (Ed.), *Schools' SEN Policies Pack: Discussion Papers 1*, London, National Children's Bureau. 1-874579-41-5

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## PREFACE

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This publication aims to take the perspective of the classroom teacher in addressing classroom behaviour. In some ways it contrasts with publications which take more of the perspective of the senior manager or policy maker.

It aims to offer ideas and frameworks for any teacher to consider difficulties which may arise in classrooms. In that way it supports professional reflection and development. It is not guidance on what to do in an emergency in your school, nor is it legal guidance.

### Why this publication and these concerns now?

There are a number of reasons:

1. concerns about school behaviour seem heightened at the moment. Media reporting of school behaviour issues and of teachers' views has been intensive in 1996/7. Such attention seems to rise and fall periodically.
2. support and training for the core task of a teachers' role - classroom management - seems hard to find, especially when contrasted to courses available on curriculum orders, preparation for Ofsted, target-setting, and so on.
3. present demands on the curriculum, monitoring, governance and performance of the school system can, if not handled well, have a negative effect on teachers. Stress can lead to teachers becoming increasingly isolated from each other, which in turn leads to matters getting worse. This sometimes shows up in more reactive attitudes towards pupil behaviour.

### Some starting thoughts about the context

Is school behaviour getting worse?

If we only believed what we see in highlighted media coverage we might think so, but there is not an available database which could provide us with evidence that pupil behaviour is in fact getting worse - or better, for that matter.

Nevertheless many teachers feel that behaviour is getting worse. That feeling is real and is worthy of concern.

What is clear is that some responses to difficult behaviour have become more used. For example,

secondary school exclusions have gone up four-fold<sup>1</sup> in four years: primary exclusion have tripled in two years<sup>2</sup>. But this cannot be taken at face value as a direct reflection of changed pupil behaviour. Rather it can be seen as a reflection of the reactive approach encouraged by central government policy making and legislation over a number of years. It also relates to the sudden growth of "pupil referral units" - there are now over 300 in England & Wales<sup>3</sup>.

The picture is therefore one of an escalating situation, where increasingly reactive provision is put in place and once it is available it is used. When such a process has been started it is difficult to stop, without an explicit reversal of policy.

The education system is now more divided and divisive than a decade ago, thanks to forces such as competition between schools. This has its impact on how matters of difficult behaviour are handled: there is a more widespread sense that exclusion is an acceptable response. In the process some young people have lost their right to full-time education thanks to a very brief clause in the 1994 Education Act.

### Using this publication

The main section "What can I do about difficult behaviour in my classroom?" offers you a series of considerations and possible lines of action, but is not a workbook of recipes. The order of the ideas is from the immediate to the longer term: incidents then patterns in classroom behaviour. Ideas for spotting those patterns are given on page 12, linking to the other headings in the text. In this way I hope you may find the most relevant considerations for your concerns. Although this paper was not designed to be read like a novel - from cover to cover - you might find value in reading areas which are not your most immediate concern - single sections have less impact on their own, and their context is always important.

### The language and style of this paper

I have used direct language in addressing you the reader. I know that a few people are put off by this style, and wish for something more distanced. But the purpose of this paper is to be direct, so I hope you will accept the style.

The term school behaviour is used in the introduction:

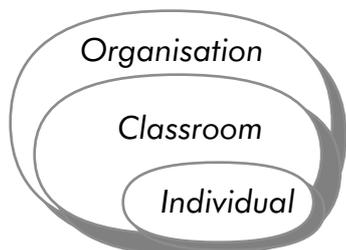
- (i) as a reminder that the behaviour which occurs in a school is influenced by aspects of teachers, pupils and features of the organisation. Thinking about

pupil behaviour requires more than thinking about pupils.

(ii) as a reminder that everyone's behaviour is influenced by context. So let's be clear that we're concerned with pupil behaviour in a classroom or school, and we have little or no evidence on their behaviour elsewhere - where it can be very different.

### Some basic principles underlying this paper

- teaching is a highly skilled activity which makes a real difference. One of the differences it makes is to pupils' behaviour
- reactive approaches to difficult behaviour can and do make matters worse<sup>4</sup>
- when behaviour is a concern, it is often effective to identify and examine the patterns which exist in that behaviour
- patterns in school behaviour, even sometimes in a single incident, draw our attention to a range of influences. It is useful to consider these influences and to recognise them at individual, classroom, and organisational level.



Interventions which address all three levels are most likely to be effective<sup>5</sup>. This paper focuses on the classroom level in the main, with brief reference to patterns at individual and organisational levels.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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*"Young people today think of nothing but themselves. They have no reverence for parents or old age."*

Who said it? Peter the Hermit. When? 1274. And we could quote from even earlier sources to remind us that the behaviour of young people is an age-old concern. Which is not to minimise that concern, but to set it in context.

There are real concerns which we share about some young people's behaviour because it may on occasion damage them, their relationships, their education and chances of a satisfying future, or in the worst of examples it may demonstrate to us the damage which has been done to them.

But it's pretty difficult to hold on to those concerns about pupil well-being when someone is behaving in a way that we find rude or aggressive, or when we feel they are being personally attacking to us, or when we feel they demonstrate zero deference. All of which can happen with pupils in classrooms - and with colleagues in the staff-room!

So how may we keep all the concerns in an effective balance? By continuing to keep things in context, and by illuminating the behaviour which concerns us, and our response to it. This section illuminates the context in three ways:

- understanding "the big picture" on school behaviour
- understanding the classroom.
- ways of understanding difficult behaviour.

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### "THE BIG PICTURE" ON SCHOOL BEHAVIOUR

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Behaviour in most schools is good. The national picture from, for example, inspection reports regularly turns up this finding<sup>6</sup>. But it is a different picture to that which is portrayed in some sections of the press. Such reports have a role in amplifying deviance. As a result, with regard to crime generally, many people in the United Kingdom believe there is much more crime than there actually is, and with regard to school behaviour, difficulties are distorted. The problem is that people do seem to believe such accounts, including journalists in neighbouring countries, one of whom recently stated "UK teachers are regularly subject to intimidation and assault"<sup>7</sup>. This is not the case from available records. The last time that extreme press reports portrayed schools as

--"blackboard jungles", the Government appointed a committee of enquiry into School Discipline<sup>8</sup>. Research for that body found that the behaviours which teachers most often deal with are repetitious low-level forms such as "talking out of turn", "calculated idleness or work avoidance", "hindering other pupils" and "making unnecessary (non-verbal) noise"<sup>9</sup>.

It is useful to consider what purpose is served by amplifying a problem. Sometimes those who do it cry "something has to be done!"<sup>10</sup>. While this may be partly true, their cries may promote a distorted picture, and action based on such a picture can bring about a deteriorating rather than improving situation. In many staff-rooms there are voices which seem to amplify difficulties, and it is sometimes difficult to know how to respond. One approach is to seek clear evidence to place alongside their view, so that whatever action follows is based on fact, not just feeling.

So what are the facts on school behaviour?

## Schools make a difference

The behaviour which pupils display in school is not a simple reflection of their behaviour elsewhere, including at home<sup>11</sup>. When teachers and parents report on the same children at home and at school, there is comparatively little overlap in the difficulties identified<sup>12</sup>. Further, most teachers know model pupils who they have later found to live under very adverse home circumstances.

## Different schools make different differences

Different schools have different overall effects, independent of the make-up of their student intake<sup>13</sup>. Some schools are high excluding schools, some have high levels of truancy, and so on.

Key staff in different schools vary in the extent to which they believe the problem of disruptive behaviour to be within the power of schools to resolve<sup>14</sup>. These beliefs are crucial for they inform action and can become self-perpetuating. It is suggested that higher rates of difficulty and exclusion are to be found amongst those schools with lower confidence in their own power to tackle the problem.

So when explaining difficult behaviour, we cannot leave the school out of the picture. Aspects of it as an organisation need to be engaged. The four statements below use key research studies.

### 1. Proactive schools have better behaviour.

Schools which aim to pre-empt and prevent difficulties do well. They recognise they contribute to the patterns of behaviour in the school, take steps to understand and analyse such patterns, and intervene through preventive approaches at organisational, classroom, and individual level. Reactive schools on the other hand can experience behaviour getting worse through reactive practices<sup>15</sup>.

### 2. Schools with a strong sense of community have better behaviour

Schools that form tight communities do well. They give attention to how students affiliate to the school, they provide a rich spectrum of adult roles, and adults engage students personally and challenge them to engage in the life of the school<sup>16</sup>. Teachers display a 'diffuse' teacher role, having frequent contact with staff and students in settings other than the classroom.

### 3. Schools with teacher collaboration have better behaviour

In collaborative settings teachers share information about particular students to find ways to help the student learn more effectively. When they have a particular difficult problem with a student, they seek help widely, seek to identify causes and then to solve problems<sup>17</sup>.

In contrast, teachers in isolated settings share information about students by swapping stories about a child's errant behaviour or sympathising with one another. For them, problems invariably means behaviour problems, and punishment is seen as the solution.

### 4. Schools which promote pupil autonomy have better behaviour

Schools which promote self-discipline, and active involvement in the learning process, and show an interest and concern for pupil development do well. In contrast, schools can generate a conflictual climate, with severe punishment and a sense of constant tension, or a libertarian climate with low severity of punishment, apathy, and a lack of self-direction. Both of these latter are linked with high levels of misbehaviour<sup>18</sup>.



Where does the school in which you presently teach figure on the four considerations above? They may help you notice something important at the overall level, notwithstanding important differences within the school.

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# UNDERSTANDING THE CLASSROOM

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Most of teachers' working time in school is spent in the classroom: most of pupils' lives as pupils is spent in the classroom. Yet the classroom is at the same time the most complex and least understood situation on the face of the planet.

If you ask yourself the question "what situation which is not a classroom is most like a classroom?", you may come up with some answers which highlight a similarity or two, but nothing which describes the unique complexity of the classroom. Teachers often say a theatre, a family, a church and so on: less often they say a restaurant, an office, ...

The following points may remind us of some of the complexities which go un-recognised in common-sense views of classrooms<sup>19</sup>.

## Key Features of the Classroom Situation

### 1. Classrooms are Busy Places

Teachers are regularly engaged in 1,000 interactions a day, sometimes more. The nearest job to it in that respect is an air traffic controller. Events happen quickly and teachers make decisions quickly. If they do not find means of coping with the busy-ness, teachers experience tiredness, or at worst stress and breakdown.

### 2. Classrooms are Public Places

Teachers' and pupils' behaviours are visible to everyone else in the class. There's a public evaluation of somebody or somebody's performance every two or three minutes in a classroom. Teachers who are yet unused to the publicness may feel "on stage".

Many members of the public take a view on classrooms, and these views have been increasingly brought into conflict. Teachers may experience role strain, and cope with it by isolating their performance from view.

### 3. Classroom Events are Multidimensional

People in classrooms have a variety of purposes, experiences, interests goals. The teacher may have thoughts about the staff meeting this evening, or the mortgage: the pupils may have thoughts about what's on television or what someone said to their friend. And in the middle of this, teaching and learning takes place.

Personal-social aspects of pupils' and teachers' lives are always affecting classroom life.

### 4. Classroom Events are Simultaneous

The multiple events on so many dimensions do not occur in a step-by-step fashion, especially from the teacher's point of view. One group is happily working away, another group wants attention for something, and meanwhile someone is climbing out of the window! Teachers learn to monitor, or at least appear to monitor, simultaneous events, and some pupils learn to avoid that monitoring.

### 5. Classroom Events are Unpredictable

No-one can predict classroom events with complete accuracy. Disruptive effects are easily generated by interruptions of external and internal varieties. Nevertheless, teachers properly and professionally attempt to predict pupils' responses to work, pacing of work, and so on.

Routines are developed in classrooms: they attempt to engender predictability and reduce ambiguity.



*What examples which illuminate classroom life came to your mind as you read each of the sections above?*

The skills which teachers exercise in the classroom will be given under each of these headings in a later section [page 13].

## EXPLAINING BEHAVIOUR

## DIFFICULT

Whenever we describe or explain behaviour, the way we do it can display certain trends and effects. For example, we explain other people's behaviour in terms of them as persons, but we explain our own behaviour in terms of the situation(s) we're in<sup>20</sup>.

When we describe to ourselves or to others, or explain difficult behaviour displayed by another person, there is a range of language which we might use. Below are given five general sorts of "explanations", each with a few particular examples.

"they're that sort of person"

'Jeremy is an aggressive boy' 'she's an attention-seeker' 'he's a special needs kid'

"they're not very bright"

'they can't cope with the work' 'they're frustrated in class and mess around'

"it's just a tiny minority"

'there's just some key ring-leaders' 'a few rotten apples'

"it's their age"

'it's the hormones' 'it's adolescence: they have to challenge authority'

"this is a difficult neighbourhood"

'the parents don't support us'

Clearly these forms of language may serve to express frustration, or even to maintain public image amongst colleagues. But over-use of these explanations has some negative effects. They externalise and off-load, but by the same token they divert attention away from the contribution made by the school, and thereby disempower us. Indeed some teachers have said that they contribute to lower morale and may leave us stuck with the problem.

In some cases, they may be used in an attempt to pass on a problem, but that is not a positive goal. Similarly if they function to gain agreement or support from a few colleagues, this may be a doubtful gain.

We need to remember that each of these "explanations" may signal a factor in difficult behaviour, but that they are not simple facts.



Schools vary in terms of the predominant explanations used. Think about conversations in your school when pupil behaviour is being discussed. They

could be in meetings, in general conversation, in case conferences, and so on. Leave out those "conversations" at coffee break which are more about letting off steam than explaining! Which of the above 'explanations' predominate? With what effect?

### Why reactive approaches aren't effective

By "reactive" I mean any approach which focuses on action **after** an incident. For example, those staff-room conversations of the form "What do you do if they do X?" Clearly it's a case of closing the stable door after the horse has bolted. Another example is the sort of "tariff of punishments" which some people call policy - "if they do X we'll do Y". In each case, the person adopting this approach is being led by the person doing "X" - in this way they're not exercising optimum control.

At the level of classroom incidents, detailed research shows that the reactive approach to incidents, usually involving threats or hard commands, is four times less likely to lead to the situation being resolved<sup>21</sup>. All difficult incidents require some degree of negotiation.

At the broader classroom level one detailed series of studies concluded: "The action teachers take *in response* to a 'discipline problem' has no consistent relationship with their managerial success in the classroom. However, what teachers do *before* misbehaviour occurs is shown to be crucial in achieving success"<sup>22</sup>. Hence our attention should turn to the management of the classroom and the management of learning.

At the school level there is a similar finding: when schools adopt the tariff approach to student behaviour policy and enforce it in an automatic way, matters can deteriorate rather than improve<sup>23</sup>.

In a similar vein, the reactive use of "referral" is counter-productive. In schools with low levels of disruptive behaviour, class teachers are not encouraged to pass problems to senior staff<sup>24</sup>. In well-disciplined schools teachers handle all or most of the routine discipline problems themselves<sup>25</sup>. Indeed, the over-use of hierarchical referrals is a characteristic of high excluding schools. A recent survey stated that in these schools "year heads and heads of house worked hard but were often overwhelmed by numbers of pupils referred to them for indiscipline by classroom teachers. Frequently such referrals short-circuited established systems and merely reflected the unwillingness of some staff to deal with problems at source. As a result, such problems often escalated and, although pastoral heads spent much time with

difficult pupils, often that time achieved little other than to register concern and pass sentence<sup>26</sup>.

In a reactive climate, pressure for “action” can be very strong, and some voices in the staff-room do not accept that investigation and resolution are sufficiently significant action.

So if we want to become more proactive, we may need to accept that sometimes what people claim is ‘proactiveness’ is reactivity in disguise. True proactiveness comes from seeing how we contribute to our own problems<sup>27</sup>.

### A word about punishment

Our society is full of beliefs about punishment and its effectiveness or otherwise. One of the most worrying aspects about theories of punishment is that they lead us into a fallacy: if we try to diminish a behaviour by mild punishment and it does not prove effective, the logic is to try more severe punishment. In other words, one is led into a fallacious escalation, rather like the postcard notice: “The beatings will continue until morale improves”. At worst, a focus on punishment leads some people to believe there are only two possible responses in our repertoire: punitive action or inaction. This is very disempowering.

A more particular concern for teachers in the classroom is that a focus on control through punishment, or through reward for that matter, demands a high degree of surveillance and thus turns teachers into monitors rather than managers of learning. Indeed it has been argued that being “an effective disciplinarian” actually interferes with achieving a productive classroom.

Similarly for pupils, a focus on punishment or reward may serve to generate compliance rather than learning<sup>28</sup>.

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## 2. WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT DIFFICULT BEHAVIOUR IN MY CLASSROOM?

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This section contains various suggestions for action (and inaction) on the part of a classroom teacher experiencing difficult behaviour.

- Not all of these suggestions will be appropriate for your situation
- Not all of these suggestions will be appealing to you as a teacher
- Not all of these suggestions will “work” - especially if we take that to mean producing obedience!

Indeed, anyone who felt they had to do *all* of what follows would be overwhelmed straight-away.

But if you use these suggestions to set off trains of thinking about the situation you know and find difficult, and if you professionally select and modify the suggestions to your own situation, there may be some value gained.

There is a very real problem about the ordering of this section. It starts with what seem to be the most immediate considerations: what to think about and do in a difficult interaction. The problem is that this might appear to promote a “What do I do if they do X?” mentality, which is exactly the sort of reactive approach which does not work. Somewhat better would be to ask the proactive question “How can I create a classroom where these things don’t happen?”, which is considered in the latter parts of this section. I do not want any of these later suggestions to appear any less immediate because they appear later - we can start changing our classroom climate tomorrow, for example. Nevertheless I retained the ordering of this section, with incidents first, in order to speak to the perhaps tired and frustrated teacher who has a focus on particular individuals and incidents - let’s consider them first before moving to the wider scale and equally immediate matters of classroom patterns and classroom community.

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## CLASSROOM INCIDENTS

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### Aiming to respond rather than react

#### a. Styles of responding

Consider the following classroom situation:

Timothy grabs Rosemary's ruler and appears to hide it from her.

Consider the following options for the teacher:

- a. "Timothy, stop being childish and give Rosemary her ruler back"
- b. "Timothy we ask before borrowing in this classroom"
- c. "Timothy, you're quite able to get on with your work, so return Rosemary's ruler and let her do the same"

These three simple options have both similarities and differences. They are similar in that they all indicate to Timothy that the teacher has noticed his behaviour and decided it is inappropriate. In that sense they may all serve to mark a boundary on behaviour. But they also have differences:

- a. has elements of judging the person, negatively
- b. points to an agreement previously made
- c. refers to responsibilities in learning

The impact of these different styles, if generalised over time, can be quite marked. Style a. can be counterproductive in terms of improving behaviour because it may build up resentments: it may be the style of the "deviance-provocative teacher" [see page 12]. Style b. can be effective if it is set against a background of making and reviewing agreements regarding classroom behaviour. Style c. makes the important link with what we aim to achieve in classrooms, it reaffirms our purpose.

But style a is quite prevalent in our classrooms. And the most frequently occurring teacher comments are very brief: "Stop it" and "Shut up!".



*Think about your responses to small-scale incidents. What messages do they convey:*

- a. about the pupil
- b. about the classroom climate and control?
- c. about the purposes in your classroom?

#### b. Teachers' ways of conveying to pupils that behaviour is inappropriate

When things are going well, the communication between teachers and pupils is complex and reflects shared meanings which have developed between them. For example, the teacher who, without looking up from the work she is checking with a pupil, says "someone's being silly" and two pupils at the back of the room stop the behaviour they're involved in - because they know and can interpret the informal rules of that classroom.

But sometimes teachers haven't built up this shared meaning with a class and their ways of conveying the inappropriacy of behaviour aren't successful.

A research study<sup>29</sup> identified the following eleven teacher strategies:

- 1 Descriptive statement of the deviant conduct: "you're taking a long time to settle down"
- 2 Statement of the rule which is being invoked: "rulers aren't for fighting with", "when I'm talking no-one else talks"
- 3 Appeal to pupil's knowledge of the rule: "you know you're meant to write it in the book"
- 4 Command/request for conformity to the rule: "shut up" "put that away"
- 5 Prohibitions: "don't" "stop that"
- 6 Questions: "are you listening?", "what's going on over there?"
- 7 Statement of the consequences of the deviant conduct: "I won't bother to read if you go on like this", "someone will get hurt if this equipment is left lying here"
- 8 Warnings and threats: "I'm going to get annoyed", "you'll be in detention", "I'll send you to the Head"
- 9 Evaluative labels of the pupil and her/his conduct: "stop behaving like a baby", "don't be daft"
- 10 Sarcasm: "we can do without the singing", "have you retired?"
- 11 Attention-drawers: "Sandra!", "girls!", "5C!"

#### What are effective strategies?

Strategies 2 and 7 achieve two goals: they signal that the behaviour is unwanted and they communicate the rule. As such they are likely to have the most effective long-term contribution



*Can you monitor this in your classroom, and adjust if necessary?*

### c. Responding to aggression - assertively

Aggression comes in many forms - verbal, indirect, and so on. Direct physical aggression towards a teacher is comparatively rare: reported and recorded non-accidental injuries involve one third of one per cent of teachers<sup>30</sup>.

When faced with direct aggression, the two main responses are "fight" (returning the aggression) or "flight" (non-assertion). These may seem natural, or indeed sensible in evolutionary terms! But it is possible to develop a new response - *learning to respond to aggression assertively* so that you retain control of your own behaviour.

When developing this response as an addition to our repertoire, two connected things become noticeable. First, our predictions - we often predict that we will get a violent reaction to our assertive response. This is inaccurate. Second, our predictions shape our range of behaviour - this can be in either a limiting or expanding fashion.



Remember or anticipate a situation where you were on the receiving end of someone else's aggression. Try to notice your own "inner dialogue". This may be very brief, but can have strong effects, both on how you subsequently feel and on your range of possible behaviour. You can practice spotting this and its effects. Here are some examples:

Inner dialogue	Possible Feelings	Possible Behaviour
1 "Who does s/he think s/he is?"	Anger	Aggression
2 "How could he behave like that in my classroom?"	Hurt	Non-assertion
3 "This looks nasty: I'd better go along with it"	Fear	Non-assertion
4 "He's getting annoyed but I've seen this before"	Calmness	Assertion



Does one of the above "ring bells" for you? Can you rehearse some new inner dialogue more along the lines of example 4?

Professionals who behave confidently and who give the impression that things are under control are less likely to be assaulted or to witness assaults<sup>31</sup>.

### d. How can I get myself to react less?

Here it's worth considering the very fast sequence which occurs when we're faced with any incident. It starts with the lower part of the brain firing off some very quick feelings. Then follow, we hope, the higher parts of the brain which bring in a range of considerations and previous experiences. Finally, we decide what to do and act. So with emotionally intelligent behaviour<sup>32</sup>, the sequence is:



The problem with some of our reactions is that the "think" stage is by-passed, so that what we do is driven by what we feel.



To reduce our reactivity we could:

- (i) deliberately make more of a gap between the Feel and the Do:
  - count to ten (or less)
  - consider more than one option

Try being open-handed about this, saying what is going on as you are doing it, for example: "I'll count to five now, and consider whether it would be best to ... or ..." This can be very effective for demonstrating that you retain control.

- (ii) spot your inner dialogues which make you most reactive, i.e. the thoughts which perpetuate feelings rather than move on from them.

Examples:

- "That Terry is a mean little blighter"
- "He's always trying to take advantage of me"
- "She shows no respect for me or for anyone"

- (iii) Occasionally try something counter-intuitive to break the pattern:

- "Nigel, I want you to walk round the classroom shouting"
- "Wayne, what a nice pair of shoes, are they new?"



Developing new flexible responses will also test out our beliefs. Test yourself by noticing how you feel about this comment from a headteacher:

The individual with the greatest flexibility of thought and behaviour can and generally will control the outcome of any interaction.

## e. What the pupil says next

There are some classic responses<sup>33</sup> which pupils give when teacher has suggested they're doing something inappropriate:

- "it wasn't me" "it was X's fault"  
(denial of responsibility)
- "we were only having a laugh" "it didn't hurt"  
(denial of injury)
- "it was only Y" "he deserved it"  
(denial of the victim)
- "I bet you've done it" "you let Z off"  
(condemning the condemners)
- "it was important to show him ..."  
(appeal to higher loyalties)

Notice how you perceive these responses:

- as "excuses"?
- as testing you out?
- as the sort of responses which self-respecting people give when accused?



What will our next response be?

- *escalate*? "Don't give me those excuses" or "Don't speak to me like that". Remember that hard commands can lead to hard responses<sup>34</sup>
- *hostile*? "You should be ashamed of yourself". Many pupils love to play the wind-up game, and need to save face if they are to wind down, especially when in front of their peers<sup>35</sup>
- *passive*? "Why are you doing that?" We don't want an answer to that question! We want the difficulty to reduce and constructive working relations to resume. Asking this sort of question can give pupils a wonderful opportunity to side-track you with lots of creative answers to your question<sup>36</sup>.

Preferable to these is something which is both assertive (not aggressive) and non-escalatory, something which brings attention back to the important matters of the classroom and productive relations for learning. Perhaps "That's as may be - now let's get this activity done"

Some of the skills in asserting yourself<sup>37</sup>:

- give a clear statement of what you want:  
'I want you to return to your table'
- stick to your statement, repeating it as necessary
- deflect the other person's responses, the ones which may undermine your statement, e.g. irrelevances or argumentation, perhaps by prefacing your re-statement with a short recognition of their view  
'I've heard your reason for looking at the fish, but I want you to return to your table'

## f. Managing conflict

The background: what helps reduce conflict?<sup>38</sup>

1. *Co-operation*. Helping children learn to work together and trust, help, and share with each other.
2. *Communication*. Helping children learn to observe carefully, communicate well, and listen to each other
3. *Respect*. Helping children learn to respect and enjoy people's differences and to understand prejudice and why it is wrong
4. *Expressing themselves positively*. Helping children learn to express feelings, particularly anger, in ways that are not destructive, and learn self-control.
5. *Conflict resolution*. Helping children learn how to resolve a conflict by talking it through.

Managing Conflicts - Basic Principles

- You don't solve conflicts by sweeping them under the carpet
- You don't solve conflicts by force

When you're managing conflicts between others

- Get the parties to talk in a structured way- one at a time - taking turns to speak and to listen
- If appropriate, get both parties to take more distance on the situation by writing down how they see it
- Get them to make suggestions for how to end the conflict
- Treat it as a practical problem-solving exercise, rather than a moral lesson: "what can we do to solve this" rather than "I want you to apologise right now"
- Make sure that each person's proposal for resolving the conflict is put in clear practical terms, and that the other person has had a chance to indicate whether they agree to the proposal<sup>39</sup>.

A conflict ends when each person has aired their views, and they have questioned each other enough to ensure that this airing has been properly achieved.



*Have you tried a structured and practical approach to managing conflicts between others? What else would you add to the points above?*

*How would you vary the points above for the situation in your class?*

## g. The deviance-provocative teacher and the deviance-insulative teacher

This is an idea about how teachers may vary in their handling of difficult incidents. We all vary, so it's not an idea for putting us into fixed categories.

When we're a deviance-provocative teacher<sup>40</sup>, we believe that the pupils we define as deviant do not want to work, and will do anything to avoid work. It is impossible to provide conditions under which they will work, so the pupils must change. Disciplinary interactions are a contest or battle - which we must win.

When we're a deviance-insulative teacher, we believe that these pupils really want to work, but that the conditions are assumed to be at fault. These can be changed and it is our responsibility to initiate that change. Disciplinary interactions relate to a clear set of classroom rules which are made explicit to the pupils.

The deviance-provocative teacher is unable to defuse situations, frequently issues ultimatums, and becomes involved in confrontations, whereas the deviance-insulative teacher allows students to 'save face', and avoids confrontations.

Thus the deviance-insulative teacher has some beliefs and responses which make up a "virtuous cycle" in which behaviour goes well.



Whereas the deviance-provocative teacher has some beliefs and responses which make a "vicious cycle" in which behaviour does not go well.



In lessons managed by the deviance-provocative teacher, deviant pupils are neglected other than for the many negative evaluative comments made about them. Pupils are referred to higher authority when they refuse to comply - which they do. The deviance-insulative teacher avoids favouritism, or other preferential treatment in lessons.



Can you think of occasions when you have become deviance-provocative? What led to this happening? Can you think of occasions when you have become deviance-insulative? What led to this happening? Are there any ways through which you can ensure more of the latter and less of the former?

## CLASSROOM PATTERNS

### a. Identifying the patterns in classroom difficulty

Many "solutions" which are proposed for difficult behaviour in classrooms are not based on a diagnosis of the situation. They are favourite solutions which may work but may not.

The following questions attempt a starting diagnosis based on the *extent* of difficulty, and thence provide a more particular focus. Given the complexity and connectedness of classrooms, an "accurate" linear diagnosis will not be forthcoming.



Is there a *particular* disaffection in this classroom?

If Yes, does the disaffection relate to:

1. particular sorts of teacher-pupil interactions  
Examine skills in handling conflict, avoiding escalations [pages 9 to 11]
2. a particular *classroom* context  
Analyse the physical, social and psychological features of this classroom [page 13]
3. particular *activities*  
Analyse the design and message of these activities [page 14]
4. a *subgroup* of pupils  
Analyse the role of this group within the class and the roles of key members within the group [page 18 onwards]

If No:

Is there a *general* disaffection in this class?

If Yes:

1. Is the *curriculum* offered appropriate for this class? Do they feel they achieve something valuable? [page 14]
2. Are the *activities* and activity structures clear and engaging?  
Are pupils involved in the activities? [page 15]
3. Are the *responsibilities* in this class developed and shared?  
Are pupils involved in planning? [page 15]
4. Are *classroom rules* agreed, understood, accepted and used? Are pupils reviewing the success of this class? [page 16]
5. Does the *climate* need improvement? [page 16]
6. Is there a positive sense of *community* in this classroom? [page 17]

## b. Skills in managing the classroom context

Creative teachers display many skills. The few selected here relate to the particular complexities of the classroom which were outlined on page 6.

Teachers managing the classroom situation are:

- managing the physical setting
  - layout, seating, resources, etc.
- managing the social structure
  - groupings, working patterns, etc.
- managing the psychological setting of the classroom:
  - handling the timing and pacing, developing effective routines
  - giving a personal yet public performance, with a focus on group participation
  - being aware of the multiple dimensions of classroom life - and showing it
  - managing more than one event at the same time, ignoring as appropriate
  - recognising and tolerating the unpredictable nature of classroom life



To identify some useful pointers for your own action:

(A) Identify an occasion when a classroom you were managing created a positive, purposeful atmosphere. Apply the headings above to that example. What aspects of your classroom management went well?

(B) Now think of a less positive example where the behaviour concerns you. Apply these headings to that example. What aspects of your classroom management are highlighted?

Identify two areas which it could be useful to develop.



*Is there a particular classroom which is causing you concern?*

Analyse these features of this classroom:

- physical setting: layout of furniture, positioning of seats, resources, lighting, display, etc.<sup>41</sup>

Do any of these seem linked to the difficulty? If so, can you experiment with some aspect?

Remember that managing the physical setting is one of the teacher's key skills, but they often de-skill themselves by saying that someone else wouldn't like a change on this front.
- social structure: the groupings of pupils, patterns of working together, rationales given, etc.<sup>42</sup>

Is there any link to the difficulty? If so, can you imagine some modification to try out?

Re-grouping using some random process can be useful now and again, to break patterns which may have become unproductive. Re-teaching the skills of working together can be important. Reviewing the rationales for groupwork can be needed.

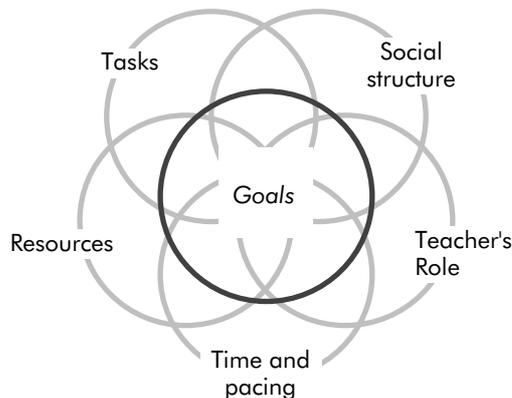
- psychological setting;
    - this is mainly managed through the type of activities in the classroom and the way they are conducted<sup>43</sup>
  - the busy-ness is managed through timing and pacing of activities. Too few activities can lead pupils to seek diversion: too many can get them confused. The transitions between classroom activities can be unstable periods which need effective orchestration. They are well handled when preceded by some advance warnings: "There are three minutes before we return to the whole group", "We've been working on this experiment for 10 minutes now so you should be about half way through".
  - the publicness of classrooms can create difficulties if it becomes exaggerated. It is constructive to have private interchanges in the classroom, including with those pupils whose behaviour concerns you. The sense of being on stage declines as the relationship with a group develops.
  - the multidimensional nature of classroom life needs recognition. Those teachers who try to keep the rest of life firmly outside the door operate less effective classrooms. The rest of life can be acknowledged and sometimes linked to the learning.
  - the simultaneity of classroom events demands skills of selective ignoring. Effective teachers are effective at deciding what to overlook. They give a "smooth" performance, which maintains a sense of momentum, and conveys the sense that they are steering the events. By contrast, the teacher who does not use such skills well gives a "lumpy" performance, responding to something here then something there so that momentum is lost and the events seem to be in control.
- Sometimes our own approaches to managing the classroom constitute interruptions, and disturb the flow in a non-productive way!<sup>44</sup>
- the unpredictability of classroom life has to be recognised and accepted as well as managed. This is where routines and rituals are useful and need to be established<sup>45</sup> and reviewed with a particular class.



*Are there any of these preventive skills you wish to enhance. Can you observe a colleague in their handling of these aspects?*

### c. Analysing particular classroom activities

When we've identified that a classroom difficulty relates to particular activities, we can identify whether there's something about the way we construct the activities which might be improved. The basic ingredients of a classroom activity are shown below



The element Goals is central: it hangs the whole activity together. Yet very often the goals of classroom activities are not made clear<sup>46</sup>.

(A) Identify an occasion when a classroom activity seemed linked to difficulty. Apply these headings to that event and the management of it. Make some notes on which aspects of the activity are highlighted as important.

Is it a particular task?

Is it the social structure?

Is it the timing or pacing of the activity?

and so on.

(B) Now think of a more positive example, an activity with the same pupils which is not linked to difficulty. Apply these headings to that example. What aspects of the activity are highlighted as important?



*What suggestions emerge about how to improve the activity where difficulty occurs?*

*Identify a manageable experiment you will undertake.*

*Anticipate some of the things which might work against the change you've planned. How will you cope with them?*



**Remember:** if an activity system is not established and running in a classroom, no amount of discipline will create order.

### d. Reviewing classroom curriculum

Some approaches to difficult classroom behaviour separate these concerns from any consideration of the curriculum. This is potentially counter-productive. Classroom management is not an end in itself: what is learned in the classroom is crucial, and informs the patterns of behaviour which develop.

The classroom curriculum is the important one which is lived day by day in your classroom(s). Clearly a proportion of the classroom curriculum is your own interpretation of how to offer the National Curriculum, but there's a lot more to it than that. We could think of three major strands, each with aspects that are planned and aspects that are responsive to the events which arise.



*Think through the headings and enquiries below. See whether any ideas for development emerge*

#### i. The assessed curriculum

Has the purpose of each element of the curriculum been conveyed, so that pupils feel they achieve something valuable?

Has the level of difficulty been reviewed so that pupils feel the work is not too easy or too difficult?

Has the work been related to the personal experience of pupils and people they know, and to examples in local life?

#### ii. The interpersonal curriculum

Is the way that pupils cooperate and work together a topic for structured review and discussion?

Are suggestions for improving classroom relations made, both by teacher and pupils?

Are communication skills, including the constructive communication of emotions, supported and developed in this class?

#### iii. The personal curriculum

Does the curriculum offer each pupil the chance to feel more competent at something?

Has the purpose of the curriculum been linked to pupils' views of their futures?



*What approaches have your colleagues used to make their classroom curriculum engaging?*

## e. Looking at the profile of activities and engagement

Talk about teaching methods is debased by polarised and over-simplified ideas like 'traditional' and 'progressive'. Instead we need to recognise the overall profile of activities in a classroom, and their success in creating pupil engagement. Here are some pointers under headings with the acronym TARGET<sup>47</sup>:

### Tasks

- engage personal interest, variety and challenge
- help pupils establish short-term goals, so that they view their classwork as manageable, and can see progress

### Authority

- help pupils participate actively in the learning process via choices and decision-making
- help them develop and use strategies to plan, organise and monitor their work

### Recognition

- recognise individual pupil effort, accomplishments and improvement, and give all pupils opportunities to receive reward and recognition
- give recognition and rewards privately so that the value is not derived at the expense of others

### Grouping

- promote and support co-operative group learning and the skills in peer interaction
- use mixed and varied grouping arrangements, helping pupils learn from the experience in different groupings

### Evaluation

- evaluate pupils for individual progress and improvement: offer feedback and opportunities to improve their performance
- vary the method of evaluation and make evaluation private

### Time

- adjust task or time requirements for pupils who have difficulty completing their work
- allow pupils opportunities to plan their timetable. and progress at an optimal rate.

Studies of teachers' and pupils' perceptions of effective classroom learning show that they prioritise active approaches such as group/pair work, drama/role-play, story-telling and drawing<sup>48</sup>.



*Will you make any changes to the profile of activities to achieve greater engagement?*

## f. Reviewing classroom responsibilities

At worst, classrooms can become very anonymous places. This is often associated with poor behaviour on the one hand, and a lack of development in the range of pupil roles on the other.

When developing the range of roles for pupils, we may think about allocating responsibilities for classroom duties. This is fine as far as it goes, but may be available to only a few, and may feel trivial to some.

So we should consider responsibility and a range of roles in wider aspects of classroom life. Well-structured work in groups allows pupils to learn about roles in working together. The more direct work of this sort might allocate roles in the group - reporter, timekeeper, arbiter etc.. For learning to be ensured, all such work requires a structured review of how the role felt, what responsibilities emerged, and how others in the group viewed the role.

The most crucial responsibility a pupil takes is responsibility for their learning. This again will not necessarily develop without structured support at first. Giving pupils opportunity to plan their learning activities and to review their learning through a range of appropriate methods is the key to them seeing themselves as active agents in a cycle of learning.

For this to happen, it will be necessary for us to:

- clarify the overall curriculum and its goals in pupil-friendly ways
- make plain the tasks and how the assessment will work
- arrange for resources to be accessible
- support pupils' planning and organisation skills, together with monitoring and review.



Think about one of the classes you manage. How does the present profile of responsibilities look under these headings:

- classroom duties
- roles in groups
- responsibility for learning.



*Can this profile be enhanced?*

*What would pupils suggest?*

## g. Classroom rules and routines

Rules in classrooms aren't operative just because the teacher says so. They have to be set up, agreed, used, and periodically re-examined. This is not a once-and-for-all process.

Routines have an equally important contribution to make: they may not be framed as a "rule", but they're the way of making things happen: how resources are accessed, how homework is handed in, how the classroom is entered, and so on.

*Establishing* - needs a lot of communication/ teaching at the early stage

*Agreeing* - pupils are likely to agree if rules are few in number and their purpose is clear

*Using* - all parties need to publicise and refer to the rules, and mediate them in so doing

*Reviewing* - periodically the class examines whether the rules in use are fulfilling their purpose

Classroom rules often refer to these five broad areas<sup>49</sup>:

- Talk
- Movement
- Time
- Teacher-pupil relationships
- Pupil-pupil relationships

*Negotiation* of classroom rules is something you can't avoid<sup>50</sup>. If you act as though you are imposing a rule system, pupils will spend some of their time testing it out. If you negotiate more of it from the start, pupils will be more involved in applying it and are likely to learn more about themselves and behaviour in the process.

The level of detail at which rules are phrased can be a trap: if you become too detailed, you end up with too many and some of them will be easy targets. One good example connected rights with responsibilities:

1. We have the right to learn in this classroom according to our ability  
We have the responsibility not to ridicule others for the way in which they learn, or to disturb the learning of others
2. We have the right to be treated with respect by everyone in this classroom  
We have the responsibility to respect all others within the classroom
3. We have the right to express our own opinions and to be heard  
We have the responsibility to allow others to express their opinions and be heard

## h. Discussing the climate

"Climate" can seem like a broad, even nebulous word, but it's necessary and appropriate for this, the more general level of considerations associated with difficult behaviour in classrooms.

For sixty years studies have shown that the teacher's style of running a group has a major effect on young people's behaviour. Classrooms which are run on laissez-faire lines are linked to more aggression between pupils - as are those run on authoritarian lines, when the leader leaves the room!<sup>51</sup> Developing a democratic climate is the productive approach.

Classroom climate can be led by the teacher, but you can't be a leader without followers, so pupils will need to be engaged and supported in a variety of ways as outlined in preceding pages.

Important aspects of the social climate include affiliation (pupils' sense of wanting to join in and be a part) and cohesiveness (pupils' sense of wanting to work with each other)<sup>52</sup>, but most crucial is the climate of learning.



*If climate can be identified by comments of the style "it's the way we do things around here", what would be said about the way we do things in this class?*

*Praise and reward.* Schools and classrooms can become very un-rewarding places, just because we forget to say "I thought the way you did ... was especially good because ...".

Pupils welcome direct personal praise from their teachers. It is effective when it is:

- spontaneous and credible,
- clearly linked to the pupil's accomplishment
- personalised to the particular pupil and what they might find difficult.

When consider rewards, recognise that what is a privilege for some will not be perceived so by others. An over-emphasis on rewards can interfere with efforts to promote learning for its own sake. Routinised reward schemes can become paper-chases and lose pupil credibility fast. They throw up issues such as "uniformity" in use of rewards: this cannot be achieved, nor would it be fair.



*Does your classroom climate or profile of reward and praise need improvement?*

## i. Building classroom community

Building classroom community helps to achieve many of the wider and important goals of school: as a contribution to managing classroom behaviour it goes well beyond those methods which seem designed to produce compliance<sup>53</sup>.

Community in a classroom is built slowly but surely through:

- paying attention to how pupils affiliate to the class: do newcomers get included effectively? do class members feel comfortable to describe the class positively?
- challenging pupils to become engaged in the class, and to support the activities related to it
- encouraging a wide variety of roles and contacts between all members of the class

Some of the methods which may contribute to this development include:

- class meetings, perhaps using a circle time or other appropriate methodology, to achieve new tasks and arrange events for the class
- class reviews, which specifically address how the community feels and what would improve its working
- class problem-solving which addresses issues which arise, and through its workings creates more effective solutions at the same time as building *self-discipline*

For the teacher responding to difficult behaviour, this means a shift from "What will I do as a result of this incident?" to "How are we all going to solve this problem?", and conveying that acts (not actors) are unacceptable when they break a community agreement or damage the community and its goals.

Development of a classroom community also needs the pupils to learn skills of listening, anger control, seeing other's point of view, and solving problems collaboratively. Teachers need to display these skills.

An underlying theme to these methods is that of regularly asking "What sort of classroom do we want?", and following through with the responsibilities which we take on in order to achieve the things we want. The teacher can feel challenged at times by really taking on class ideas which s/he may not have chosen. The teacher will also have to challenge any community outcomes which are not genuine solutions, for example false compromises or subtle bargains.



*Classroom community is built in small steps. Which will you take first?*



A final thought.

The themes and issues raised at the end of this section have moved some way from those raised at the start. It will probably not have escaped your notice that this section has not promoted the "add-on package" or the "quick-fix" to behaviour problems - the research does not suggest they are an effective, long-lasting approach<sup>54</sup>. Neither have the proposals tried to re-live a nostalgic and seductive picture of classrooms in which teachers had unquestioned authority and pupils were happily compliant. Rather, the overall position is one of trying to manage this complex situation in such a way that it promotes the qualities and skills which pupils will need to develop for their unknown and changing futures - learning skills and pro-social skills. The teacher who manages such a setting knows that they are not "in control" of this complexity, but they are in a myriad of ways exercising control.

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## 3. MAKING SENSE OF AN INDIVIDUAL'S BEHAVIOUR

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The language we use to describe, to ourselves or to others, the behaviour of an individual can sometimes help us and sometimes hinder.

The following have proved useful in illuminating an individual's behaviour<sup>55</sup>.

### Ten Important questions

- WHAT behaviour is causing concern?  
specify clearly, do not merely re-label
- IN WHAT SITUATIONS does the behaviour occur?  
in what settings/contexts, with which others?
- IN WHAT SITUATIONS does the behaviour NOT occur?  
(this can often be the most illuminating question)
- What happens BEFORE the behaviour?  
a precipitating pattern? a build up? a trigger?
- What FOLLOWS the behaviour causing concern?  
something which maintains the behaviour?
- What SKILLS does the person demonstrate?  
social/communication skills? learning/classroom skills?
- What skills does the person apparently NOT demonstrate?  
and how may these be developed?
- What view does the person have of their behaviour?  
what does it mean to them?
- What view does the person have of themselves?  
and may their behaviour enhance that view?
- What view do others have of the person?  
how has this developed? is it self-fulfilling? can it change?

Note: I have used the term "person" above because many teachers regularly tell me that they find this framework applicable to people other than pupils.



*Using the 10 important questions to inform your own thinking*

Think about a pupil whose behaviour puzzles you - don't choose the most publicly difficult pupil in the school. Read down the 10 questions, thinking about each in turn.

Note what happens, both in terms of answers you might come up with, and in terms of how your thinking is led/influenced.

Do some questions "ring bells"?

Do some lead to important enquiries?

Are some difficult to answer?

Sometimes the use of these questions helps you to understand the elements (people and events) which make up a vicious cycle of behaviour and those which make up a virtuous cycle. They generally help you to identify a pattern and move beyond simple person explanations [page 7]. On some occasions if these ten do not move you on, try question 11:

Who is most concerned by this behaviour?

This can sometimes re-direct our attention in a useful way, when the difficulty is not so much with the identified person's behaviour, as with the person who reports a concern



Now consider discussions with colleagues over an individual's behaviour. When you talk with a colleague, do you have a framework, a useful set of questions? Could you use the ten important questions to help your dialogue?

### Making sense of behaviour in groups

Sometimes it seems that a group of pupils is associated with difficult behaviour on a regular basis. If it is a class group, the first issue to consider is the stage this group has attained in its development<sup>56</sup>. Is it:

1. Inclusion and membership

Pupils seeking to find a niche for themselves in the group, with much focus on comparisons

2. Influence and collaboration

Testing the authority of the teacher and establishing the group dominance and work patterns

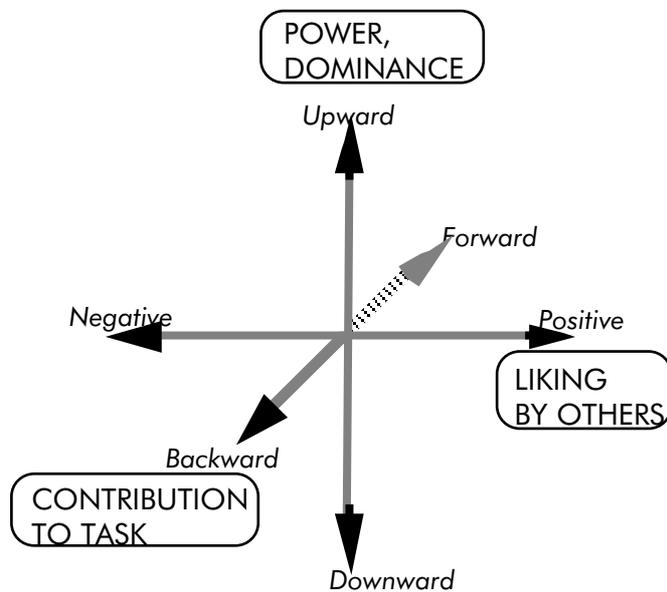
3. Working together and alone

Pupils can set and accomplish goals and work productively together on tasks.

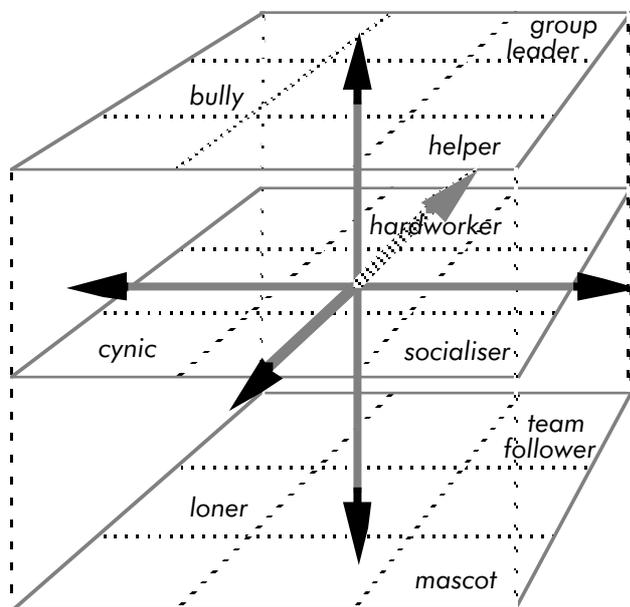
4. Self-development

Taking on continued growth and new challenges.

When we look closer, there's often informative variety in the picture: groups do not act the same way in all situations. In a particular situation, group members may take up roles on a reasonably regular basis. These roles can be described along three dimensions<sup>57</sup>: power/ dominance, liking, and contribution to the task.



It can be useful to think of group members and the positions they take up on these dimensions. For example, using some general role terms:



Group interventions may aim to:

- reduce negative dominance of some members in the group<sup>58</sup>,
- increase participation of the isolated members in the group<sup>59</sup>, or
- promote broader learning about social skills such as working in groups

## 4. GETTING HELP FROM OTHER PEOPLE

It would be tempting here to consider the formal referral models which schools create. Over-use of such mechanisms is counter-productive [see page 8]. It could also disempower you. So we need to think about ways of getting help which are not calling on colleagues "up the hierarchy".

Remembering that collaborative schools have better behaviour, it is useful to ask how teachers can collaborate to improve behaviour. Generally teachers seek sources of help which:

- give rapid payoff
- are practical and extend repertoire
- have been devised by fellow practitioners or adapted locally
- are flexible and open to further adaptation
- are near at hand, easy to access, and above all continuous<sup>60</sup>

This means we need to think of arrangements where pairs of colleagues who choose each other can set up joint observation and feedback for their own problem-solving. Such partnerships have to be set up with care. Partners need to establish guidelines and agree on their responsibilities to one another and to others who may have an interest or involvement in the work.

In a similar vein, colleagues in schools regularly say that there's no more potent a learning experience than to track a pupil around the lessons/activities that constitute her/his day.

Such work starts to build up a constructive shared language for discussing classrooms, and acceptance of differences between teachers in a school. When this has happened, it is also likely that the staff will gain a great deal from "cause for concern" meetings about individuals and groups. These may need some careful structuring at first, ensuring that all voices are heard in a constructive way.

Finally, other professionals may be of help. Your local behaviour support team, or one of the increasing number of educational psychologists who are adopting a consultation approach to their work with teachers, may be available.



*Which of your colleagues would you choose to start developing collaborative work?*

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## 5. THE WIDER SCHOOL CONTEXT

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Classrooms are influenced by the context they're in: they are also major elements in creating that context. So as we come to the end of our focus on the classroom, it is useful to remember a few key features of the school context.

Different schools make different differences to the patterns of behaviour which emerge within them. Research on these differences [page 5] suggests it is profitable for a school to:

- become more proactive about difficulty
- develop a stronger sense of community
- promote teacher collaboration
- promote pupil autonomy

This implies working towards policies which help the school monitor and learn, codes which promote an effective community, resources for teachers to work together and respect for a wide range of learners.

If some of the above are being worked for, we may get nearer to a situation in which both teachers and pupils are learning the same things about behaviour in their school:

- it pays not to react
- it pays to care about the organisation
- it pays to work together
- it pays to be responsible

This is in marked contrast to the worst of cases where there are double standards for pupils and teachers, and cases where the message seems to be that bullying works - between teachers as well as between pupils.

Perhaps that final point is best made by Lord Elton:

"Members of staff who treat their pupils with discourtesy, impatience or contempt, or are late for those from whom they demand punctuality, who scribble illegibly on words which they insist must be impeccably clear and tidy, who will not listen to those from whom they demand absolute attention, who bawl their heads off at those from whom they demand soft and respectful speech, who hold up to ridicule those whom they instruct to treat all men with respect, or who treat any of their own colleagues with anything but courtesy and respect in the presence of any of the pupils, are suffering a painful and obvious discontinuity of logic."<sup>61</sup>

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## 6. OTHER RESOURCES

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