

improving relationships and
promoting positive behaviour
in scotland's schools



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IMPROVING RELATIONSHIPS AND PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR IN SCOTLAND'S SCHOOLS

Good relationships and positive behaviour across whole school communities are fundamental to the successful delivery of a *Curriculum for Excellence*. The Scottish Government and local government have agreed, under the terms of a new concordat, specific commitments and national outcomes. This includes a commitment to developing and delivering a *Curriculum for Excellence*, and national outcomes that include:

- Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors, and responsible citizens.
- Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.
- We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.

Underpinning the delivery of these outcomes are the creation of a positive ethos, peaceful learning environments, improved relationships, and positive behaviour in our schools; and making sure our children and young people are included, engaged and involved throughout their school careers.

The Scottish Government's approach to this will be to work in partnership with local government and with key stakeholders to deliver:

- guidance on promoting positive behaviour and on tackling indiscipline in schools;
- an anti-bullying strategy;
- guidance for parents on attendance and absence at schools;
- new guidance on extended provision beyond the classroom;
- new guidance on exclusion; and
- support for local authority and voluntary sector networks to promote and share policy and good practice on approaches to improving relationships and behaviour.

The Discipline Stakeholder Group (DSG) comprises the Scottish Government, COSLA, Association of Directors of Education (ADES), General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS), all the key teaching unions (EIS, SSTA, HAS, AHDS, NASUWT, PAT), and is advised by HMIE. The DSG continues to input a valuable steer to this work nationally and to develop consensus where we can around the key issue of discipline in school.

The Discipline Stakeholder Group developed a joint action plan *Working together to improve school discipline* in October 2006 in response to the last national behaviour survey. This plan set an expectation that:

- the good practice demonstrated in some local authorities and schools should become standard practice across all our local authorities and schools;
- every local authority and headteacher should use an appropriate mix of approaches (outlined below) which improve behaviour; and
- local authorities and headteachers must provide strong local leadership, co-ordination, and engagement, with all staff including additional support staff, parents and pupils, in developing and sustaining approaches to promoting positive behaviour. HMIE will continue to monitor the effectiveness of this leadership.

The Scottish Government is committed to building upon this work and will continue to support this through the Positive Behaviour Team (PBT). The PBT supports local authorities and schools to introduce and embed approaches to positive behaviour based on improved relationships, staged interventions, engagement and motivation, and emotional well being. The team members are based locally with a region of 3-4 local authorities, and work at a number of levels: with local authority strategic planning groups on behaviour; with networks of local authority contact officers; and through training for trainers with local authorities or directly in schools. Training can range from twilight sessions to longer courses and joint training with other local authority or voluntary sector partners.

Support and training is currently based around the following approaches:

- Staged Intervention
- Solution Oriented
- Restorative Practices
- The Motivated School and Social, Emotional Learning Frameworks
- Being Cool in School
- Positive Emotional Health and Well Being programmes
- Inclusion for children with social, emotional or behavioural difficulties
- Nurture.

Staged Intervention

Framework For Intervention (FFI) or Staged Intervention is a systemic approach to the management of low-level disruptive behaviour in the classroom. It uses a peer support model, enabling teachers to support each other in forming solutions. A “no blame” approach is adopted, creating a supportive environment for any member of staff expressing a concern, so no-one should feel apprehensive or insecure about raising a problem. The emphasis on teachers opting into the strategy and the commitment to confidentiality, which is an absolute must, sets a positive context for problem solving. A member of staff is trained as the School Behaviour Co-ordinator – someone who is respected but need not be a member of the SMT. The behaviour co-ordinator supports the teacher to identify key elements of classroom problems and develop strategies to overcome them. Systems are widespread, and there are many successful and different models in operation.

Solution Oriented Approaches

SOA training offers a range of skills that enables school staff to explore every aspect of a school and the activities and relationships within it. The programme aims, firstly, to provide a framework within which school staff use solution-oriented approaches in their day-to-day practice through guidance under ‘teacher skills’ and ‘school elements’ and secondly, to provide a three-level, staged intervention, strengths-based support system for supporting pupils, parents and staff.

SOA encourages a pragmatic approach through focusing on:

1. the future, acknowledging the problem but not getting bogged down in the past...
2. what people can do rather than what they cannot do...
3. what is working well...
4. times when the problem is either less or not there at all...
5. working with others to generate solutions.

Restorative Practices and Approaches

The Scottish Government’s recent research evaluation of three local authority pilot areas defined Restorative Practices (RP) in an educational context as: developing school ethos, policies, and procedures to reduce the possibility of conflict or harm arising; and restoring good relationships where there has been conflict or harm. The research found that RP can offer a powerful and effective approach to promoting harmonious relationships in schools and to the successful resolution of conflict and harm. Where there is commitment, leadership, enthusiasm and staff development, restorative practices had a clear, positive impact on schools.

Restorative practices cover a range of strategies including:

- developing a restorative climate in schools with activities such as peer support and circle time;
- developing restorative conversations when teachers or peer mediators intervene in a situation; and
- developing more formal restorative meetings and conferences involving all these affected by an incident, including families where appropriate.

Research evaluation of local authority pilots:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/195982/0052537.pdf>

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/196078/0052553.pdf>

The Motivated School and Social, Emotional Learning Frameworks

The Motivated School programme provides a comprehensive framework for staff in schools to consider what motivates young people (and adults) to learn. It hinges on the interaction between learning environment and learner characteristics, challenging us to think differently about managing pupil disaffection. The aim is to optimise the learning environment, whilst progressing pupils towards greater autonomy and self motivation. The approach gives teachers advice on how to motivate children displaying different levels of motivation from energetically engaging to opposing/threatening.

The Motivated School development links directly with the 'Social, Emotional Learning Framework' (SELF) which enables schools to assess more rigorously and monitor pupils' personal educational needs and plan for them appropriately.

Further information can be obtained from www.themotivatedschool.com

Being Cool in School

Being Cool in School is a personal and social development programme developed by Fife Council to help children and young people learn the skills of getting on with others, coping positively with everyday situations, and showing sensitivity and respect while holding true to who they are. This approach encourages parents, staff and pupils to work together to help children learn respect for themselves and others.

Positive Emotional Health and Well Being programmes

A number of personal and social development programmes are emerging to improve relationships, emotional literacy, resilience and well being, for example, the Creating Confident Kids resource PSE pack developed by the City of Edinburgh Council.



Barnardo's Inclusion Resource for children with social, emotional or behavioural difficulties

How children experience education makes a difference to their outcomes in the short, medium and long term. For those with Social and Emotional Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD), adapting and behaving appropriately in school can be a particular challenge. For their teachers, managing this behaviour can be personally and professionally demanding.

The Inclusive Education pack offers realistic advice and strategies for primary teachers and support staff based on Barnardo's work to support inclusive education for children with SEBD.

Nurture Groups

Nurture groups provide targeted support to vulnerable children whose barriers to learning arising from social, emotional or behavioural difficulties prevent them and other pupils to fully access the curriculum. Self evaluations have identified positive impacts for those children assessed and selected for nurture groups and those who remain in the mainstream. The approach is consistent with early intervention, raising attainment, and working with the most vulnerable children. The approach involves small groups (6-12) of (mostly) primary school children where the focus is on appropriate social and emotional development while also providing access to the formal curriculum. Based on a formal assessment tools including Boxhall Profiles, strength and difficulties questionnaires, and data on attendance, well being, curricular progress, pilots have identified benefits and improvements including self esteem, confidence, behaviour, concentration, social skills, relationships, numeracy and literacy skills and engagement with learning.



Building Positive Relationships – A Training Pack for Support Staff

The Positive Behaviour Team has also developed a training pack for support staff. This provides staff with a range of approaches and strategies that promote good behaviour linked to those approaches outlined above.

Further information: get in touch with your regional team member for more information on how the team can support your local authority or school.

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Web links

Scottish Government web site:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/welfare/Behaviour>

Positive Behaviour website:

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/positivebehaviour>

Working together to improve school discipline

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/182068/0051716.pdf>

HMIE Journey to Excellence

<http://www.hmie.gov.uk/generic/journeytoexcellence>

HMIE A Climate for Learning, 2005

<http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/rbblr.pdf>

HMIE Case Studies of Good Practice in improving the Climate for Learning, 2006

http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/hmie_csgp.pdf

Pupil Inclusion Network Scotland – PINS

The Pupil Inclusion Network Scotland is for practitioners and managers in the voluntary sector who work with young people who are excluded, disaffected or disengaged from school. It creates opportunities for the sharing of good practice across sectors:

<http://www.pinscotland.org/>

Respectme – Scotland’s Anti Bullying Service

<http://www.respectme.org.uk/>

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www.scotland.gov.uk

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