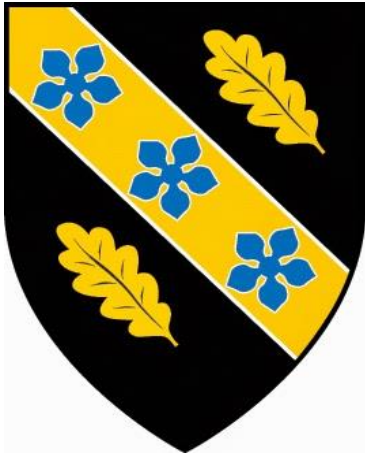




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The Elton Report states 'bad behaviour in schools is a complex problem which does not lend itself to simple solutions' (Department for Education & Skills, 2006, p.2). One of the main factor's teachers must consider whilst planning the curriculum is that teaching is not just based on delivering knowledge, it is having a good understanding of the classroom environment and the pupil's inside. Within this assignment I aim to provide an overview of good practice whilst connecting it to policies, Government guidelines and relating it to theorists to determine the reasons behind some of the frequently used strategies and interventions to manage low level classroom disruptions. 'Behaviour management remains a key issue for all teachers and education support staff' (Watkins, 2011, p.2). Classrooms can be extremely chaotic environments whereby teachers engage in multiple conversations and provide a variety of activities to accommodate a range of abilities. Teachers must often act spontaneously, to encourage students to remain on task, illuminate behavioural issues, tackle disagreements and reduce mild classroom disruption to avoid any further behavioural incidents escalating. To enhance pupil's experiences the Education Union have published a guidance document to highlight the most frequent issues faced in educational settings and offer interventions to diminish poor behaviour. As pointed out by Watkins (2011, p.7):

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

Significant planning is an essential element to teaching in order to maintain a highly functioning learning environment. 'Proactive schools have better behaviour. Schools which aim to pre-empt and prevent difficulties do well' (Watkins, 2011, p.6) Schools who promote active learning, incorporate pupil lead learning tasks and encourage self-discipline quite often experience more advantageously positive behaviours in comparison to teachers who focus their attention of disciplinary procedures, negative reinforcements and ignore potential conflict within the classroom. Teachers with the passion and desire to maintain positive relationships within the classroom and beyond should obtain an understanding of the 5 basic models for understanding student behaviour. These are biological, behavioural, cognitive, systematic and psychodynamic (Welsh Government, 2012, p.4-6)

When focusing on the biological elements we can immediately identify the main instigators surrounding the individuals learning environment which possibly act as a barrier to the learning activity or lead the individual down a very negative mindset. In more recent years there has been significant attention on how some children react differently to others when exposed to failure. Carol Dweck, a psychologist at Stanford University has developed a research study which demonstrates how some children approach challenging situations with a fixed mindset whereas others display a growth mindset. Dweck's theory emphasizes how teaching staff and other educational practitioners can play a vital role in steering the child's mindset in a positive direction. Dweck reinforced that if teachers adopt the method of dictating to students to try hard, this in fact can have a negative effect on their view towards the learning activity. This is also known as a 'false growth mindset' whereby students lack determination, self-motivation to succeed but instead are merely following the instruction provided by the teacher. The main purpose of creating students with a 'growth mindset' is to develop independent, capable learners with the desire to progress and better themselves. Unfortunately, positive praise is a strategy used in most learning environments to persuade students in a positive direction. However, just like Dreikurs, Gross-Loh (2016) shows how 'empty praise can exacerbate some of the very problems that growth mindset is intended to encounter'. Her research suggests that for those students who adopt a fixed mindset this praise will only positively impact them if it is on a personal level. Teachers should avoid coherent whole class praise if behaviour is not considered to be consistently accomplished across the board.

Inclusion is a central focus in most educational settings across the UK. Article 29 of the Children's Rights states:

Education should help develop every child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to the full. It should develop children's respect for their own rights and those of others, for their parents, for their own culture and the cultures of others, and for the natural environment.

All students should be provided with ample opportunity to learn to develop, improve socially and cognitively so they reach their full potential academically. Student engagement is paramount to attain a high achieving learning environment. 'Good behaviour is most prevalent in schools where teachers deliver interesting lessons that

offer sufficient challenge' (Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales, 2006, p.2). To help motivate students' teachers must be able to deliver enthusiastic lessons based on stimulating resources and differentiation to make learning accessible to all. Another way of enhancing pupil outcomes is by incorporating ICT into all learning tasks where possible in all areas of the curriculum. As noted by Stone Group (2020):

Technology in today's society is at the very heart of learning and studies show that an increased level of student engagement occurs far more often when technology is integrated into the classroom and as part of lessons.

During research conducted by Cox, Cox and Preston (1999) it identified the positive effects ICT has on student motivation. They pinpointed a range of other attributes which had a beneficial contribution on learning. The research revealed that ICT 'enhanced commitment to the learning task, enhanced engagement and interest, increased self-esteem and increases in independence and confidence'. Ongoing research orchestrated by School A reinforces their view. School A state that ICT can have an enormous influence on student commitment, encouraging them to have a positive attitude towards their learning and be more conscientious on the work produced. Nowadays most students are technically able and with the added support of ICT incorporated in all areas of learning this is having a measurable impact especially for those with lower academic capabilities.

Failure to provide adequate support to students can often lead to further issues unfolding. As noted by Watkins (2011, p.5):

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 examples, it may demonstrate the damage which has been done to them.

For a minority of children finding the root of the cause of behavioural issues is an essential element to building and sustaining a positive classroom. As acknowledged by Welsh Government (2012, p.4) without this background information 'it is unlikely that any behaviour strategy will be sustainable'. School A, a secondary school in Wales highlights the importance of operating a whole school approach to tackling unwanted behaviour. School A state that teachers who work collaboratively with other staff will obtain overall better-behaved students. By sharing important information

about specific problematic students this then provides other staff the tools to manage these challenging individuals. Teachers must consider that the 'one size fits all' mindset is not effective in classrooms and as noted by Watkins (2011, p.6) 'when they have a particularly difficult problem with a student, they seek help widely, and look for causes and solutions'. Working collaboratively ensures that all teachers are working collectively to achieve positive results for all students.

Teaching is not just about transferring knowledge. Nowadays teachers need to be versatile when developing methods to support and guide students. To create a positive school community, teachers must nurture strong, favourable relationships with students to bypass negative behaviour and create productive atmospheres in all learning experiences. There are several factors which may determine the causes of behavioural problems. 'Challenging behaviour in children and young people may relate to difficulties at home' (School A, 2018). These signs of adverse attitudes towards learning maybe a form of communication to highlight distress they may experience at home. There is a clear link between socio-economic factors and troublesome behaviour. Students living in deprived areas will frequently act inappropriately as a result of feeling frustrated with their current situation, out of place or inadequate amongst their peers. Bonding connections with students allows the teachers to engage with them when they experience heightened emotions of fight or flight mode. When a student reacts inappropriately strategies can be used to calm a situation if the teacher feels confident to put into action. Regrettably, staff who work directly with the more challenging students actually receive no additional training or support (Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales, 2006, p.5). For some staff this can quickly transform into a very daunting experience, leading to students becoming unmanageable and often resorting to further problems escalating due to lack of confidence, control and presence within the classroom.

Another aspect which is important to consider is the low levels of literacy and numeracy used in the individuals homelife which can present a huge barrier within the classroom if a child is unable to keep up with their peers. Children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), physical disabilities, poor communication skills or demonstrate

regular outbursts of anger require more tailored additional support. For students lacking understanding of the task, unable to complete work independently due to poor cognitive abilities this can resort to the child adopting the 'class clown' persona. Proactive schools utilize differentiation to provide scope for all students regardless of ability to participate in the task set. In some educational settings who fail to consider these underlying issues this may result in the individual subject to frequent sanctions and in worst case exclusion.

Alfie Kohn (1997) is considered to be one of the major influential, controversial theorists in education. Kohn challenged other theorists such as Skinner, by disagreeing with the idea that behaviour could be shaped through incentives and punishments. Just like Piaget he argued that if a learning environment was thoroughly planned with highly motivating and interesting tasks there would be no need for students to receive rewards to sustain positive behaviour. Kohn was adamant that reinforcements act as an oppositional tool gaining the reverse to its intentional purpose (Tes, 2017). Although initially his views were criticized, schools across the UK are now recognizing that teachers who strive to engage students through highly stimulating teaching agree that rewards and sanctions are being used unnecessarily in schools. School A reinforce that too often students display problematic behaviour to be removed from the classroom. Their positive behaviour policy aims to encourage 'pupils to develop a sense of self-discipline and a responsibility for their own actions' (School A, 2018).

SecEd (2014) has based their findings on a theoretical approach developed by an Austrian psychologist and educator Rudolf Dreikurs. He believed that misbehaviours could be categorized into four groups. These consists of 'attention, power, revenge and a way of hiding the feeling of inadequacy'. His theory provides teacher's the tools to identify the signs as early as possible and effective solutions to prevent further reoccurring episodes of misbehaviour. Unlike Skinner, a psychologist who developed the conditional response theory, Dreikurs argued that a reward and punishment system would only provide a short-term solution. Just like Kohn, he reinforced that's teachers could play an active role in managing student's progression by frequently encouraging the individual rather than praising them. This would present lasting

positive effects on the child's ability to develop and succeed. Building on pupil self-esteem, motivation whilst creating robust relationships within the classroom to stimulate conversations between peers and staff. Just like Dreikurs, the constructivist approach which was developed by Vygotsky (1978) highlights that a highly socially interactive classroom can enhance the quality of teaching, place responsibility on the individual and allow students to play a more central role in their learning (McLeod, 2019). As stated by Good Therapy (2017) Glasser believed 'that when someone chooses to change their own behaviour rather than attempting to change someone else's, they will be more successful at attaining their own goals and desires'. In recent years schools have moved their focus from traditional disciplinary measures to creating learning experience which place the students at the centre of the decision making.

In classrooms and schools across Wales, we are building on strong foundations to deliver an education system that is a source of National pride and public confidence. Together, we are all responsible for ensuring every young person has an equal opportunity to reach the highest standards (Welsh Government, 2017, p.4)

By 2021, the reformed curriculum will be operating with the intention to create independent, ambitious, confident, creative students with the drive to succeed, ready to learn and develop themselves. To overcome any hurdles which may be present in the classroom teachers will be required to take onboard the systematic approach created by Dreikurs which looks to identify the impacts an individual's outer circle of support can affect their ability to develop in their social, emotional and cognitive abilities. Urie Bronfenbrenner, an American psychologist developed a theory known as the Ecological Systems Theory to provide an understanding on how children develop through highly interactive environments. Bronfenbrenners theory suggests that children who have multiple support networks, ecological systems with develop far greater than those lacking social interaction and communication. The ecosystems begin close to home, looking particularly at the support provided by family and friends, then expand further to support given in schools, extracurricular activities through to the wider community. According to Bronfenbrenner, individuals who have little or no support in the immediate inner circle will display significant delays in the social and emotional capabilities (The Psychology Notes HQ, 2020). Too often in educational

settings children are identified to be lacking in one or both of these areas due to circumstances in their homelife also known as their microsystem. Schools must ensure that this is detected as early as possible and sufficient support is provided to help these individuals. By identifying students who are regularly disruption or are persistent offenders' schools can look to challenge their behaviours and educate them on better choices. Failure to do will often lead to students travelling in a negative path, often becoming NEET, not in any form of education, employment or training.

Well established classrooms contain ingrained rules built on respect, core principles which can be linked to all learning projects. According to the Welsh Government (2012, p.8):

Rules create clear expectations for the children and need to define what is acceptable behaviour. These must be reinforced on a regular basis and placed in a visible place on the classroom wall.

By including students in the development of classroom rules this will not only aim to grant them ownership of their own future success but also encourage them to play a central role in making appropriate choices, comply with the rules and to accept liability of their own actions. In cases where students fail to follow the rules created with their peers this can be used as an instant reminder of the consequences they will face. Teachers can refer to this tool at any given time if behaviour begins to escalate. William Glasser (1965) founded the theory based on the principles of choice. This theoretical approach has been acknowledged by many professional fields of work from education, social services, mental health and other outside agencies. His theory suggests that negative behaviour will present itself if one or more of the five basic psychological needs are not achieved (Good Therapy, 2017). McLeod (2020) highlights:

Maslow (1943) stated that people are motivated to achieve certain needs and that some needs take precedence over others. Our most basic need is for physical survival, and this will be the first thing that motivates our behaviour. Once that level is fulfilled the next level up is what motivates us, and so on.

For some less fortunate students who fail to reach the initial stages of physical survival this can cause further repercussions on their cognitive and mental state. Children who are exposed to adverse childhood experiences, a form of neglect or maltreatment will often require additional pastoral support to tackle any inconsistencies in their current understanding. By producing quantitative life skills through 1:1 sessions with outside

agencies or nurture groups with the added support from the pastoral team this will enable them to develop onto the next psychological level.

However, one of the main issues voiced by staff across the UK is the lack of training on classroom management provided to them during their teacher training. As stated in an article documented by the BBC (2010) since the Education Reform Act of 1988, psychology has been removed from teacher training programmes which has led to teachers feeling unprepared to manage the classrooms behavioural issues. Although teachers are expected to play a significant role in managing unwanted behaviour, due to a lack of knowledge being transferred through training on child development for instance the potential barriers they may face, the obstacles that will potentially hinder progression this is negatively impacting the attainment levels. With data at the forefront of many school's attention this can only suggest that as a result there are higher rates of difficult behaviour and exclusions. Schools with 'lower confidence in their own powers to tackle the problem' are becoming more and more common (Watkins, 2011, p.6). As stated by the Department for Education and Skills (2006, p.3) 'In undertaking the audit schools should reflect on ten aspects of school practice that. When effective, contribute to the quality of pupil behaviour'. These include well established support systems to provide strategies to manage unwanted behaviour, effective classroom management, consistent approaches to learning and teaching and embedding whole school policies to support teaching staff in developing their skills and encouraging positive behaviour within schools. These factors all link to strong leadership creating policies with the intention to guide and support learning for all involved in the process.

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