



Promoting and Sustaining Good Behaviour: A Discipline Strategy for Schools

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The creation and maintenance of an orderly working environment is a pre-requisite to effective learning and teaching. Pupil behaviour is therefore, in a very real sense, a school improvement matter, as important as development planning or target-setting; and in those classrooms where, for whatever reason, discipline cannot be effectively managed, the most committed teacher will find it particularly difficult to bring about improvements in pupils' attainments. Conversely, it is also true that efforts to improve pupils' learning can often have a beneficial effect on classroom behaviour: the pupil who feels he or she is succeeding in his or her schoolwork is less likely to pose a behaviour problem.
- 1.2 By contributing positively to raising pupils' attainments, therefore, a wide range of measures which the Government has already announced, or which are part of the School Improvement Programme, will all contribute directly to the promotion of good behaviour and discipline, by helping schools to identify early those pupils who are having problems in learning, and by effective early intervention. If pupils' difficulties can be addressed at an early stage, many subsequent behaviour problems can be prevented. The implementation of the 5-stage approach set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice will ensure early identification of problems, and measures to help pupils include:
- the measures to raise standards in literacy and numeracy;
 - support to the weakest schools to help them improve their provision and their pupils' attainments;
 - the phased reduction in class sizes in Key Stage 1 to 30 pupils or less;
 - the 'Making a Good Start' initiative, providing classroom assistance in all Year 1 classrooms; and
 - the expansion of pre-school education.
- 1.3 In addition to these measures, this booklet sets out a strategy for focused support for schools and pupils in addressing behaviour problems which already exist.

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- 1.4 A Review of discipline in schools was launched in December 1996 in response to continuing concern from teachers and their unions that discipline problems in recent years had increased in number and severity. The work of the Review was undertaken during the course of 1997 with the aim of producing a strategy for promoting and sustaining good behaviour in schools.
- 1.5 Fact-finding to inform the development of a strategy had a number of strands:
- a questionnaire was issued to all schools, to which some 55% responded, seeking information about the levels of disruption, and views on the support which is available to help in dealing with difficult pupils;
 - the Department's Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) undertook a series of visits to schools where the poor behaviour of pupils had been identified as a concern during recent inspections;
 - a series of conferences and focus group discussions was held with representatives of the primary, secondary, grammar and special education sectors;
 - discussions were held with staff in the Education and Library Boards and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) who are involved in providing support to schools; and
 - research was commissioned into suspensions and expulsions from schools in Northern Ireland.
- 1.6 The strategy set out in this booklet is based on the findings about the nature and scale of the problem of poor behaviour across all school sectors and age groups, and the effectiveness of the current support arrangements for schools. The wide range of suggestions and comments received, written and oral, have been taken into account in developing the strategy. An analysis of the findings from the questionnaire survey will be sent to all schools later this term.
- 1.7 **The aim of the strategy is to provide a coherent and consistent approach, throughout the education sector, to promoting good behaviour in school, beginning in the classroom with appropriate and targeted support for teachers and pupils.**

2. The Nature and Scale of Poor Behaviour

- 2.1 The overall picture which emerged from the Review is that, for most schools, the behaviour of pupils is not a problem. Of those schools that do have concerns about the behaviour of some of their pupils, most are confident that, with the appropriate support, they can help such pupils to adjust to the demands of mainstream schooling. However, a small number of schools are experiencing problems because they have a concentration of very difficult pupils; and there are a very small number of pupils whose behaviour is so challenging that they cannot be managed within the normal school setting.
- 2.2 Behaviour which is considered to be **mildly** disruptive typically occurs in the classroom, and includes such features as slowness to settle for the lesson, talking out of turn, distracting other pupils and being inattentive: in brief, low-level 'nuisance value' behaviour which can usually be checked by a spoken correction by the teacher. The majority of schools reported levels of 20% or below of pupils who engage in this type of behaviour.
- 2.3 Behaviour which is classified by schools as **moderately** disruptive is of broadly two types: in the classroom, it takes the form of a persistent pattern of talking while others are working, talking back to the teacher, distracting other pupils and regular failure to keep up with work demands; outside the classroom, it consists of behaviour which schools regard as undermining the ethos of the school if allowed to persist, and includes petty theft, bullying behaviour and damage to property. The majority of schools reported levels of 10% or below of pupils who engaged in this type of behaviour.
- 2.4 Behaviour considered by schools as **seriously** disruptive includes aggression, violence, defiance and apparent total disrespect for others, and may occur in the classroom or elsewhere in the school. The majority of schools responding to the questionnaire survey reported levels of seriously disruptive behaviour ranging from 0% to 5%. In total, they identified around 850 pupils, or 0.25% of the total school population, as pupils who could not be managed within existing resources and who might benefit from a withdrawal placement.
- 2.5 While any school could have a seriously disruptive pupil on its roll at any time, a small number of schools reported levels of pupils as unmanageable, and in need of alternative provision, which were well above what might be considered 'normal'. Thirty secondary schools and 9 primary schools indicated that they had levels above 5% of pupils in this category, with a further 32 primary schools reporting levels of 3% to 5% of pupils as unmanageable.



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- 2.6 The evidence from the consultation with schools supports inspection findings over the past 5 years that there are a small number of schools where a relatively small number of pupils' behaviour gives cause for concern. The findings from the inspection visits to schools where behaviour was noted as a particular problem indicate that, in these schools, around 2% of pupils are seriously disruptive, with a further 10% to 15% who present less serious problems. It should be noted that, even in these schools, the behaviour of at least 85% of pupils is not considered a cause for concern.
- 2.7 In discussion, schools often described their seriously disruptive pupils as having become alienated from the school, marginalised and disengaged from the educational process. While it was acknowledged that pupils' behaviour may undergo a sudden deterioration at any time due to a change in circumstances, there appears to be a pattern of 'flash point' years for the emergence of poor behaviour - Years 6 and 7 (the final two years in primary school), and Years 10, 11 and 12 (the final years of compulsory education).
- 2.8 Pupil absenteeism, from skipping classes through to prolonged periods of unexplained absence, was included by many schools in their definition of disruptive behaviour. While the overall pattern of school attendance rates has remained steady over the past three years and the Education Welfare Service reports no significant increase in the number of pupils being referred as persistent non-attenders, their experience is that individual cases are increasing in complexity because of the multiple nature of the pupils' problems.
- 2.9 Schools' experience has indicated that seriously disruptive behaviour is more frequently associated with boys. Most of the seriously disruptive pupils are to be found in Years 10, 11 and 12 in post-primary schools. Schools with higher than average numbers of seriously disruptive pupils are usually located in urban areas with high levels of social deprivation, and often with ongoing paramilitary activity. These schools report that their most disruptive pupils often come from families where parenting skills are poor. They noted, however, that there were also seriously disruptive pupils who came from good homes and had concerned parents who found it impossible to manage their behaviour. Disruptive behaviour is frequently linked to the wider problem of pupils considered 'at risk' through educational underachievement, persistent non-attendance or being 'looked after'. It was often observed that disruptive behaviour which begins as an individual pupil problem can quickly escalate into 'cliques' within classes and the wider school population if it is not dealt with swiftly.

Implications of Findings for Strategy

2.10 While the overall picture which emerges is that pupil misbehaviour is not a major concern for the majority of schools:

- all schools have some pupils who misbehave from time to time. Effective school-based approaches to dealing with the behaviour of these pupils are essential if teachers are not to be distracted from catering for the needs of all pupils in their classes;
- many schools do have pupils whose behaviour, though challenging, is manageable with appropriate external support;
- a small number of schools have a concentration of very difficult pupils who make disproportionate demands on staff time and resources and hinder the learning of other pupils. Suitable internal and external support is required to assist these schools to meet the challenge presented by these pupils; and
- there are a small number of severely disruptive pupils who cannot be managed within mainstream schools.

2.11 All the evidence indicates that disruptive pupils are not a homogeneous group: they vary in age, ability and family circumstances, and present a range of emotional, behavioural, disciplinary and, occasionally, medical problems. The complexity of each individual case has a bearing on how best the problems of the individual pupil may be addressed.

3. Strategy for Supporting Schools

3.1 The evidence of the Review indicates that the majority of schools are managing pupil behaviour successfully within their own resources, and have developed a range of approaches through their discipline and pastoral care policies which meet their pupils' needs. There is a firm belief on the part of schools, which the Government shares, that the best place to manage pupils who are presenting behavioural problems is within the school, and a strong preference that any external support be directed to assist in this objective. Schools which are successful in promoting and sustaining good behaviour are characterised by :

- a discipline policy which is based on a whole-school approach, is widely disseminated to and readily understood by staff, pupils and parents, has clear stepped procedures for dealing with breaches of discipline, and is consistently and fairly applied;
- a system for early identification of pupils presenting behavioural problems which is based on effective integration of policy and provision for school discipline, pastoral care and special needs;
- appropriate staff development, and effective links with the relevant external support agencies;
- arrangements which acknowledge the formative influence of parents on children's behaviour and engage parents' support in promoting good behaviour at school; and
- an appropriately restrained use of the suspension and expulsion sanctions.

3.2 Even the most successful schools will acknowledge that sustaining good behaviour creates a need for continuous assessment of the effectiveness of approaches to behaviour management, the encouragement of innovation and flexibility in interacting with pupils. The challenge of establishing a climate where good behaviour is the norm is more difficult in those schools where there is a concentration of disruptive pupils, or where there are already concerns and perceptions about the general behaviour of pupils. The support which is available to schools in promoting and sustaining good behaviour must therefore cover the spectrum from that which assists those schools which are managing successfully and wish to review and improve their current position, to additional school-based support for those schools where the standards of behaviour are less than satisfactory.

3.3 The development of an effective and co-ordinated support system for schools which will equip schools to manage all but the most difficult of

pupils within their own resources is, therefore, the first part of the strategy. The objectives are:

- to support schools in addressing the promotion of good behaviour as an integral part of their development planning and school improvement strategies;
- to provide school-based support in the development of whole-school behaviour management and support with individual pupils where this is appropriate;
- to encourage parental involvement in supporting good behaviour in schools;
- to encourage schools to make greater use of curriculum flexibilities and work experience as vehicles for engaging pupils at risk of disaffection;
- to promote the appropriate use of the suspension and expulsion sanctions;
- to promote early identification and effective intervention approaches with seriously disruptive pupils; and
- to facilitate schools in drawing appropriate support in dealing with seriously disruptive pupils from agencies outside the education sector.

Discipline Policies

3.4 All schools seek to establish a positive ethos which is conducive to learning and in which the individual pupil is respected. Reflecting this ethos, the school's discipline policy should seek to set out guidelines that support all pupils within a caring framework and lead them to a position of self-discipline and personal responsibility. Integral to the discipline policy is the way in which incidences of poor behaviour are managed. Although required by law to do so, some schools still do not have a written discipline policy; or, even where they have a written policy, some still do not make it available to parents. The scope, content and process by which their policies have evolved varies from school to school. While many schools' policies do reflect current best practices, some are not the result of a whole-school approach, and may therefore be inconsistently applied; and some do not cover important issues such as bullying behaviour.

3.5 More recently, the need for good discipline has been recognised, and acquired a new prominence, as a key element in the challenge to raise standards. In response to schools' requests for more information about effective approaches to discipline and best practice, **a Working Group will be established to prepare best practice guidelines on**

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successful discipline policies and practices, including action to deal with bullying behaviour, for issue to all schools. Appendix 2 provides examples of the actions which 2 schools have taken to promote good behaviour; the Group, which will include representatives of schools, Boards, CCMS and the Department, will draw on effective approaches which have been used in Northern Ireland schools such as these, and the Making Belfast Work Discipline Project and the findings of the ongoing ETI inspection survey of Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD) provision. The Guidance will be prepared for issue to schools early in the 1998/99 school year.

- 3.6 In new legislation to be introduced during 1998, Boards of Governors will have a duty to ensure that discipline policies are implemented within the school.

Early Identification of Pupils with Problems

- 3.7 Whether the tendency towards persistent misbehaviour stems from peer pressure or is a manifestation of a more fundamental psychological disorder is often difficult to discern, and causal factors may only be identified at a later date with the aid of psychological assessment. Teachers must also be mindful that misbehaviour can often be a symptom of a learning difficulty. Early identification of pupils with behavioural difficulties is therefore essential if appropriate support is to be provided for the pupil, and to prevent the problem escalating to the point where withdrawal from school becomes a necessity. An effective early identification system requires, therefore, that discipline, pastoral care and special needs policies are brought together within the school, and that all staff are aware of the early indications that a pupil is experiencing difficulties, and of the appropriate action to take.
- 3.8 Irrespective of its origins, persistent misbehaviour represents a special educational need, and schools will therefore find that using the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice will help them tackle pupils' behaviour problems in a more systematic way. The 5-stage approach set out in the Code of Practice should be applied in all cases. By doing so, pupils with behavioural difficulties can be identified early in their school careers and the appropriate remedial measures can be put in place. The great majority of discipline problems will be capable of being dealt with by the school within its normal resources. For example, experience in many schools has shown that an early intervention programme devised by the class teacher, in conjunction, as appropriate, with the school's special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), perhaps involving a suitable incentive package to encourage good behaviour, will often solve the problem.

- 3.9 Should the action taken at Stages 1 and 2 of the Code fail to effect sufficient improvement in behaviour, the Code provides for a third stage which will involve support from outside the school. There are a further two stages which, if circumstances require them to be invoked, could result in the pupil in question being withdrawn from the school for a period. The basic aim of the Code remains, however, that the mainstream school should ultimately resume full responsibility for the pupil.
- 3.10 Training for schools in implementing the Code of Practice is already well under way. It will be important in that context to ensure that due emphasis is placed on the application of the Code to cases of poor behaviour. **To assist schools and Boards with the discharge of their responsibilities under the Code, extra resources are being made available, starting with an extra £3m in the 1998/99 financial year.**

External Support

- 3.11 It is also essential that the external support required at Stage 3 of the Code is available to schools when needed. The main sources of support to schools in promoting good behaviour are the Education and Library Boards' Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS), the Educational Psychology Service (EPS), the Education Welfare Service (EWS), and, in some areas, support is available from outreach teachers in special schools and educational guidance units or from peripatetic teachers. Support at school level may take the form of:
- assistance in the development of a whole-school approach to discipline and behaviour management;
 - staff development in aspects of discipline and classroom management;
 - specific classroom-based support for individual teachers aimed at improving specific skills such as diagnosis and interpretation of pupil behaviour;
 - and, in some instances, direct support with individual pupils.

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Curriculum Advisory and Support Services and INSET

- 3.12 While all Boards offer inservice training (INSET) in the development of discipline policies and related matters, most schools do not identify to Boards a need for training in the area of behaviour management, and those who do request training support usually place the topic well down on their priority list. It is suggested that schools would find this support valuable, even though the role of CASS in providing support to schools in the area of whole-school INSET on discipline, classroom management skills and related staff development is generally acknowledged by Boards still to be not fully developed. There has



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increasingly been a shift within CASS towards a whole-school development emphasis, and a recognition that in the area of behaviour management **all** the support services for schools have an expertise to contribute which can be utilised in the delivery of appropriate training. In one Board area there is a dedicated member of staff working with individual schools on a whole-school basis to promote good behaviour through a positive approach to discipline. Other Boards may find that this is a useful strategy to follow.

3.13 Boards will review their current provision for INSET on discipline and behaviour management, and re-focus where appropriate to ensure that it is consistent across the Province, as far as possible school-based, draws on the expertise of CASS, EWS and EPS, and specifically provides training in:

- the development of whole school discipline policies, based on current best practice;
- the development of coherent school policies encompassing discipline, pastoral care and special needs to assist in the early identification of pupils with behavioural difficulties and in meeting their needs in the most effective way; and
- support in the classroom for teachers in the development of classroom management expertise.

While all schools will be able to avail of this training, initial priority should be given to those schools known to be experiencing difficulty with pupil behaviour.

3.14 In new legislation to be introduced in 1998, Boards will be required to produce plans setting out the arrangements they will make in connection with the education of pupils with behavioural difficulties, including arrangements for the provision of advice and support to schools, both on disciplinary matters generally and in relation to individual pupils.

Educational Psychology Services

3.15 The Review findings indicate that EPS was regarded by schools as the primary source of support in dealing with individual disruptive pupils. Some schools considered, however, that the waiting time before a pupil was seen was usually too long, the focus for the assessment was often on educational rather than behavioural needs, and the advice provided was frequently too general to be of much practical help in the classroom. The quota system used in some Board areas to allocate psychologists' time to schools was considered by some to have created a situation of unequal access, given the widely differing needs of

schools and the unpredictable nature of crisis situations. As well as statementing procedures (both at school and at pre-school levels), educational psychologists are currently involved in time-consuming work in relation to the assessment of pupils for 'special consideration' for GCSE examinations, 'special circumstances' in transfer procedure cases and cases of retention of overage pupils in primary school.

- 3.16 Some schools expressed concerns about the follow-up to an assessment of a disruptive pupil, particularly where withdrawal was recommended - schools still had to find ways of coping with the pupil, sometimes for a considerable period, until a place became available. It was also apparent from the Review findings that the range of external support available to schools varied from Board to Board; and, within Board areas, an individual school's experience of any of the support services depended heavily on the quality of the service provided by the Board officers concerned. The individual services were perceived by many schools to operate as separate entities which did not communicate or co-ordinate with each other as effectively as they might.
- 3.17 **An inter-Board group will examine the current functions of the Educational Psychology Service to determine the most efficient and consistent ways of working, and to make recommendations for freeing up educational psychologists' time to ensure a more prompt, appropriate and consistent response to schools' needs.**

Accessing external support

- 3.18 Effective school-based support for pupils who have behavioural problems will require that schools are in a position to identify such pupils early and to put in place or access appropriate support. Before seeking external support, however, schools will need to ensure that:

- discipline, pastoral care and special needs policies are properly integrated so as to address the full needs of the pupils;
- all staff are aware of the early indications that a pupil is experiencing difficulties;
- a range of approaches for dealing with difficult pupils is available within the school, including support from the SENCO and other members of staff;
- roles and responsibilities are clearly understood by all; and
- the point of referral to external support is clearly defined.

- 3.19 **Boards will be asked to develop, within their plans for pupils with behavioural difficulties, whole-school training which encourages this form of development within schools, and agree with schools the arrangements for referring pupils for assistance. Where a pupil**

is identified by the school as in need of support additional to that which it can provide from within its own resources, Board officers, in consultation with the school, will determine the nature of that support and whether it should be school-based or by means of withdrawal provision.

Behaviour Support Teams

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3.20 As indicated earlier, a point may be reached where a school needs access to external expertise in order to help deal appropriately with a pupil who continues to present behaviour problems. In some Board areas, support is available from 'outreach' teachers based in local special schools or educational guidance units, who can bring particular expertise in dealing with disruptive or emotionally disturbed pupils, and in other areas peripatetic teacher support may be available.

3.21 **Additional resources will be made available from September 1998 to ensure that there is a broadly consistent level of support available to all schools in all Board areas. This may include elements of outreach and peripatetic teacher support, as well as expertise from CASS, EPS and EWS, to form a Behaviour Support Team within each Education and Library Board area. These teams will provide support at a number of levels:**

- advice to schools on appropriate behaviour programmes and, in certain cases, short-term support for individual pupils;
- general advice on developing whole-school approaches and teachers' classroom management skills; and
- immediate advice on action in response to serious incidents.

Initial Teacher Training

3.22 All newly qualified teachers should be fully equipped with knowledge of the range of behaviours they are likely to encounter in the classroom, and have developed, through teaching practice, a repertoire of strategies to manage pupils' behaviour within the classroom. They should also be aware of the range of support which is available to them, on taking up a post, in continuing to develop these skills. **In future inspections of initial teacher training courses, the Education and Training Inspectorate will ensure that sufficient emphasis is placed on the development of classroom and behaviour management skills. Newly qualified teachers will be required to take a training module on classroom management, including behaviour management, within their first three years of teaching. In addition, the Department will exercise its role in the approval of existing and new initial teacher training courses to ensure that all such courses**

include appropriate emphasis on helping new teachers acquire the necessary skills in classroom and behaviour management.

Suspensions and Expulsions

3.23 Recent research into suspensions and expulsions from schools in Northern Ireland commissioned by the Department from The Queen's University of Belfast, found that, in the 1996/97 school year, 2631 individual pupils were notified to Education and Library Boards as having been suspended from school. Returns from schools show that 683 of these pupils were suspended more than once. The great majority of these pupils were in post-primary education, male and in Years 10, 11 and 12. The reasons given by schools for suspension covered a wide range: more than half were for reasons such as disruptive behaviour, abusive language to a teacher and serious or persistent misbehaviour. However, reasons such as smoking, failure to conform to school uniform, unsuitable hairstyle and truancy were also given. In 1996/97, 76 pupils were reported as having been expelled from school, the majority of whom were from secondary schools and male. The most common reasons for expulsion were serious or persistent misbehaviour, some form of physical aggression or illegal activities. The research has indicated a particular problem with the length of time expelled pupils spend out of full-time education.

3.24 Many schools in discussion expressed concerns about aspects of the suspension and expulsion arrangements. There have been circumstances where the limit of 15 days suspension per term has proved too short for the resolution of very difficult cases when expulsion action is in hand, such as cases of violent assault. Schools also considered that expulsion appeal tribunals, in reaching their decision on an appeal, did not give due weight to the school's grounds for taking expulsion action and, in particular, to the interests of other pupils and staff at the school. School staff were also concerned about the repercussions of having to take action to restrain a pupil physically, especially given the increased tendency among parents to litigation.

3.25 **New legislation will be introduced in 1998 which will provide additional support to a school's position in the matter of suspensions and expulsions. The specific provisions are:**

- **schools will be permitted to suspend pupils up to a maximum of 45 days per year, rather than 15 days per term as at present;**
- **schools expelling pupils, and schools refusing admission to expelled pupils, will have the right to be represented at expulsion and admissions appeals tribunals; and**

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- **expulsion appeals tribunals will be required to have regard to the interest of other pupils and teachers when making their decision.**

In addition, a power will be introduced permitting school staff to use reasonable force to restrain pupils who pose a threat to themselves or others, or to property.

- 3.26 The development of better systems within schools and Boards for the identification of pupils with difficulties and for the provision of appropriate support should reduce the need to use suspension as a sanction. The common system for reporting and recording information about suspensions introduced by the Boards in 1996/97 will allow for better monitoring and provide an early indication of schools which may be experiencing difficulties. **The Department will provide guidance for schools which will cover the new legislative provisions, and promote the use of the common reporting system and a more consistent and appropriate use of suspension as a sanction for seriously disruptive behaviour.**

Parents

- 3.27 Parents are the first educators of their children, and it is in the home that respect for others and the basis of self-discipline are acquired. The good behaviour of the vast majority of pupils in Northern Ireland schools is a tribute to the sound foundation established by their parents. Most parents, by far, want their children to do well in school, and are keen to support schools in ensuring this outcome. Many schools are building on the goodwill of parents, and actively seek to engage their support in sustaining good behaviour through, for example, the use of home-school contracts or school-based parenting help, and seek their contribution on aspects of school development.
- 3.28 In discussion, however, some schools reported their concern that, despite all efforts on the school's part to engage their support, there existed a small minority of parents who tended towards the automatic championing of their child regardless of the facts of individual cases. They also described a small number of parents as appearing not to consider themselves accountable for the behaviour of their children, and seeming increasingly to be abrogating their role in defining the limits of unacceptable behaviour - on the basis that the school would address their child's disciplinary needs. Some staff felt that the new climate of 'parents' rights' had put them, as teachers, on the defensive and reduced their capacity to enforce disciplinary measures.
- 3.29 **The Department will commission the production of an information leaflet for parents on the subject of discipline in schools, and in particular the role of parents in the promotion of good behaviour.**

There will be an equal emphasis in the leaflet on parental responsibilities and rights and those of all other parties in the partnership between home and school.

- 3.30 **New legislation will be introduced in 1998 in which schools will be permitted, in accordance with their discipline policy, to detain pupils without parental approval, provided that 24 hours' notice is given and appropriate regard is given to the age of the pupil, any religious or special educational needs he/she may have and the parents' ability to arrange transport home.**
- 3.31 Some schools expressed their concern about the increased numbers of pupils being diagnosed as having Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and the link between this diagnosis and eligibility for Disability Living Allowance. It was felt in some quarters that this had served to create a financial disincentive for some parents to encourage their children to behave properly.
- 3.32 **The Department will consult with the Department of Health and Social Services on the concerns of the education sector about ADHD.**

The Curriculum

- 3.33 Following representations from teachers about overload when the statutory curriculum was first introduced in the early 1990s, the statutory Northern Ireland Curriculum has in recent years been extensively reviewed and revised to reduce the content and provide additional flexibility, especially in Key Stages 1 and 4. It is now estimated that the statutory content should be capable of being taught to the majority of pupils in approximately 85% of teaching time in primary schools, and around 60% of timetable time in Key Stage 4. The revised curriculum was fully implemented for the first time in September 1996. While the content is prescribed, the teaching approaches are a matter for the professional judgement of teachers.
- 3.34 It is clear from the responses to consultation that some teachers are more successful than others in exploiting the existing flexibility to provide imaginative and engaging lessons, which are particularly necessary for lower-attaining pupils who may have a shorter than average attention span and difficulty in grasping more sophisticated concepts. Dull and uninspiring teaching can often lead to impatience and frustration among such pupils, with classroom behaviour suffering as a result.
- 3.35 Equally as important as high quality teaching, however, is the need for the statutory curriculum content to provide the scope for devising imaginative lessons and activities. In discussions with teachers, many

expressed the view that the current curriculum requirements restricted their scope to engage less able and poorly motivated pupils - those most likely to become disaffected. The content of the Home Economics and Technology and Design programmes of study in particular, were felt now to be too heavily weighted towards the 'academic', and had lost much of the scope for practical activities which had previously offered opportunities for the less able to achieve. In other subjects, such as Modern Languages and aspects of science, some pupils found elements of the content of the programme of study difficult to understand in terms of, for example, concepts and language. The opportunities to focus on personal and social development and raising self-esteem for low-attaining and demotivated pupils were often felt to have been crowded out by the pressure of implementing the full statutory curriculum.

- 3.36 **The Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) will be asked to bring forward the schedule of curriculum review for Key Stage 4 programmes of study in Home Economics and Technology and Design to consider the issue of practical content in these subjects. The Council is conducting a planned review of the full statutory curriculum, during which concerns about any other areas of the curriculum, whether generally or for specific groups of pupils, will be taken into account. The Council will also be asked to draw up guidance for schools on the content of an effective Personal and Social Education programme.**
- 3.37 **The Department, in the draft Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, which has recently been the subject of consultation, has made provision for institutions of further education to be able to offer secondary education on their premises, to facilitate and extend the possibilities for co-ordinating course provision between schools and colleges for young people in Key Stage 4. To ensure that a proper strategic approach in each Board's area will be maintained, provision made by the colleges will be subject to approval by the Education and Library Boards.**

Work Experience

- 3.38 While work experience is not a compulsory part of the curriculum, it is widely recognised as playing an important role in giving young people an insight into the world of work and in guiding them towards a career of their choice. The right placement can provide the incentive for a disruptive pupil to improve behaviour and give direction to his or her time in school. A survey carried out by the Northern Ireland Business Education Partnership (NIBEP) in 1995/96 showed that over 80% of pupils in Year 11 and above received work experience, though all

should; and there are some concerns about the quality of the placements for many pupils.

- 3.39 **CCEA is preparing guidance for schools, following discussions with NIBEP and employers, on how the maximum benefit can be achieved from these placements. This guidance will be available later this school year. The period during which work experience placements can be made is being extended to cover the whole of Key Stage 4, rather than four terms only as at present.** This will allow greater flexibility in the timing and organisation of placements.
- 3.40 NIBEP has also embarked on a project aimed at establishing a computer-based work experience database. Schools often find that the time spent on arranging placements is disproportionate to the benefits achieved, and the aim of this project is to help schools co-ordinate the work experience needs of their pupils with the opportunities available. The project will be piloted initially in Belfast, but it is intended that it should cover all schools in Northern Ireland in due course.

Support from Other Agencies

- 3.41 Effectively addressing the problems presented by seriously disruptive pupils, particularly those who are disturbed, have a psychological or medical disorder or come from difficult home circumstances, requires the support of skills and expertise from others outside the education sector. Schools should be alert to the need to tackle the problems of pupils in the broader context of their medical conditions or home circumstances. Schools do co-operate with, and receive support from, a wide range of statutory and voluntary agencies, in particular the Health and Social Services Boards, but they have expressed some concerns about the length of waiting time and the adequacy of the support.
- 3.42 The commencement of the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 has created a new onus on all agencies involved with promoting children's welfare to co-operate in that objective. New structures are emerging which will facilitate greater co-ordination of services and joint planning of provision. From April 1999, the Health and Social Services Boards will be required to publish Children's Services Plans, which will set out the existing services provided by all relevant agencies for children deemed to be at risk and the priorities for service development over the three year period of the Plan. These Plans will be produced in collaboration with Education and Library Boards and other service providers. **The Department will work with the Education and Library Boards to ensure that the needs of schools for support in dealing with seriously disruptive pupils are given due consideration in the process.**

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4. Strategy for Out of School Support

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- 4.1 It is axiomatic that all pupils, including those with behavioural problems, remain entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum. The overall aim of the strategy, as set out earlier, is thus to secure that, as far as is practicable and consistent with minimising disruption to the education of other pupils in the class and school, pupils with discipline and behavioural problems will be dealt with in their normal school setting, through the application of intervention measures including the provision of school-based support for schools and pupils.
- 4.2 The findings of the Review indicate, nevertheless, that there is a small minority of pupils for whom all such in-school measures may not prove effective. For some of these, a detailed psychological assessment undertaken as part of the Code of Practice procedures may point to a more acute underlying emotional disturbance that may warrant a special school placement. For others, there may be a need for a period of specialised provision geared to breaking the cycle of underachievement, disaffection and disruption. It is primarily this latter group which is the focus of this part of the strategy.
- 4.3 There are many concerns about the current educational provision for pupils who are out of school. The actual number of withdrawal places catering for pupils with discipline problems - that is, places other than in special schools or units - is around 225, and falls well short of the demand for withdrawal places indicated by schools. It is therefore not surprising that many schools considered the waiting time too long for such alternative provision to be made. Home tuition is used by Boards as a stop-gap arrangement when no place is available and the pupil cannot be managed within a mainstream school.
- 4.4 The range of current educational provision which falls within the definition of 'withdrawal' is very broad. The range includes such diverse provision as:
- school-based pupil withdrawal units, which form part of the school's own arrangements for dealing with poor behaviour;
 - withdrawal units catering for pupils from a cluster of schools, which offer full-time places for 1 or 2 terms and have re-integration as the objective;
 - tuition centres, which cater for pupils while admission to a school is sought: the length of stay can vary, and the educational provision is normally less than the equivalent of a school day;
 - participation in an alternative education programme, usually a joint provision with another agency outside the education sector: the

places are usually full-time, for older pupils (normally in Key Stage 4) unlikely to return to mainstream schooling, and the focus is on improving basic skills and employability; and

- educational guidance units, where pupils may be placed in a therapeutic educational environment: the places are full-time, intended to be short-term up to a maximum of one year, with the objective of subsequent re-integration or, as appropriate, placement in a special education setting.

- 4.5 The actual options and number of places available within each Board vary, and, while efforts are made to ensure the most appropriate provision for a pupil, the limited number of places means that pupils of different ages, abilities and behavioural problems can be placed in the same setting. Doubts were expressed by some schools about the effectiveness of the current provision, as their experience had shown that withdrawal places had worked only for a limited number of pupils. Current withdrawal arrangements were considered by some schools to be too short to be of benefit to the pupil, and there was a general view within the education sector that there was a small but significant number of older pupils for whom return to mainstream schools would not be appropriate.
- 4.6 Since there is a wide variation in the nature, extent and origins of pupils' behavioural difficulties, and the pupils themselves are of widely differing ages and abilities, it follows that there is no single model of provision that would fit the needs of every individual pupil and of every school. It is therefore important that the procedures of the SEN Code of Practice are followed to ensure that each case is examined on its individual merits.
- 4.7 From the Review findings, it is evident that there also needs to be a more consistent approach taken across the Province in relation both to the nature of the facilities for the short-term withdrawal of seriously disruptive pupils for whom a special school placement is not considered to be appropriate, and to the arrangements for access to these facilities. The objective should remain that the needs of pupils with the same behavioural problems, in similar circumstances, in different areas of Northern Ireland should be addressed through similar levels of support, including (where withdrawal is considered appropriate) access to similar facilities.
- 4.8 The aim of this part of the strategy is, therefore, to develop effective out-of-school support provision for those pupils whom schools and Board personnel agree are in need of a period of special provision outside a school. The features of such provision should include:



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- withdrawal (short stay) provision in pupil referral units located in each Board area so as to permit reasonable geographical access;
- clear, common procedures for withdrawal and for re-entry into the pupil's school;
- provision and programmes suited to the age and abilities of the pupils concerned;
- a consistent focus on effective short-term intervention, designed to address the pupils' behavioural difficulties and permit early return to school; and
- supported re-integration to school, in order to sustain and consolidate the benefits of the withdrawal provision.

Short Stay Places

- 4.9 The dominant feature of short stay provision is the clear understanding and presumption that the pupil will return to his or her usual school. The regime during withdrawal must be focused on achieving that objective through the pupils' development of appropriate behaviour management skills and the maintenance of sufficient progress with school work. It is vital, particularly where re-integration is the objective, that links with the 'parent' school are sustained during the period of withdrawal, and the operating arrangements for pupil referral units should reflect this. The general principles should be:
- places will be short-term and for a fixed period of no longer than one year;
 - pupils will remain on the rolls of their 'parent' schools;
 - staff of the unit and the 'parent' school will work together to ensure that curricular links are sustained;
 - the aim of the withdrawal should be to work on behaviour management; and
 - there will be a structured re-integration phase.
- 4.10 **Boards will be asked to prepare plans to increase the number of withdrawal places available, bearing in mind the requirement for differentiation appropriate to the broad range of pupils' ages and needs. Additional resources to facilitate the creation of up to 200 additional places across Northern Ireland will be made available to Boards from September 1998. Plans for this expansion, including the ongoing funding arrangements, will require Departmental approval with the aim of securing broad equity of provision across the Province.**
- 4.11 **The legal basis for educational provision for pupils other than in schools or through home tuition will be clarified through new**

legislation to be introduced during 1998, under which Boards will be given a new power to establish pupil referral units.

Alternative Education Provision

- 4.12 The findings of the Review indicated that there will be a very small number of pupils, particularly older pupils in the last two years of compulsory schooling, for whom a return to mainstream school will not be appropriate. Placement in short-term withdrawal provision is therefore not suitable for these pupils, and alternative education arrangements are necessary. All Boards are aware of the need to develop educational arrangements for this type of pupil. Moreover, the change on foot of the Children Order, which has meant that pupils can no longer be sent to Training Schools for persistent non-attendance at school, has required that all Boards explore other options for their education. To date, this has been done in the main by buying places or contributing to the costs of the teaching on existing programmes which were established to cater for marginalised young people who had offended or were considered 'at risk' of offending.
- 4.13 This type of provision draws on the expertise of staff from other statutory agencies, particularly the Probation Service, Social Services and voluntary organisations such as EXTERN, who are experienced in dealing with difficult young people, as well as teachers and youth workers. The programmes offered have focused on the acquisition of basic skills, both academic and personal, and employability, and have in many cases proved successful in engaging the interest of young people who exhibit deep-seated disaffection, not only with the formal education system but with society at large. The number of places available throughout Northern Ireland is currently very limited, and tends to be concentrated in the large urban centres.
- 4.14 This type of provision provides a model for the further expansion of places. It is feasible to develop such provision drawing on the expertise which exists within the education sector, particularly within the EWS, Youth Service and Further Education, as well as engaging with other agencies in jointly developing programmes. **Boards will be asked to assess the need for this type of provision in their area and to work with other agencies to increase the number of places available on a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency basis as part of their overall plan to support schools and pupils in promoting good behaviour. The plans will be subject to Departmental approval, and the Department will make additional resources available to ensure an equitable distribution of places across the Province.**

Pupils with various clinical conditions

- 4.15 Pupils who are diagnosed as having a clinical condition usually require a placement outside the education sector during the period of treatment. The care and treatment of pupils so diagnosed comes within the responsibility of the Health and Social Services Boards and Trusts. This will normally involve placement at a psychiatric facility on a day patient or residential basis. Educational provision is normally made at the facility by the relevant Board, and is available for pupils when treatment permits.
- 4.16 Two particular concerns were raised with the Department during the course of the Review about these arrangements. There is an apparent shortage of places to cater for the needs of pupils with clinical conditions. Requests for psychiatric consultation often take a very long time. This time delay inevitably means that the education sector is having to make provision for pupils whose immediate needs are not educational and for whom the existing placement options within education are not suitable.
- 4.17 The second area of concern was with the arrangements within psychiatric facilities, where pupils, once they have reached the age of 14 years, are classified as adults and moved to adult wards. This mixing with older patients is not considered suitable, and there is some anecdotal evidence that it has on occasion exposed pupils to undesirable practices, such as exchanging medication, which has a detrimental impact on their progress.
- 4.18 **The Department will consult with the Department of Health and Social Services on the requirements for pupils with various clinical conditions.**

Quality Assurance of Support

- 4.19 The commencement of the new legislation on the establishment of pupil referral units will bring all such provision within the ambit of the normal quality assurance arrangements which apply to schools. All pupil referral units will be subject to regular inspection by the Education and Training Inspectorate, with published reports of the findings.
- 4.20 The programmes on offer in many existing guidance or referral units involve staff from disciplines other than teaching, such as the Educational Psychology Service and the Education Welfare Service. These two services are unique within the education sector in that they are not subject to the regular inspection regimes which apply to teaching staffs in schools and to staff of CASS.

- 4.21 **An inter-Board Group will be established, with representation from ETI and the Department, to explore options for the inspection of the EPS and EWS and to make recommendations on how this might be introduced.**

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The findings of the Discipline Review have revealed the nature and extent of problems of poor behaviour in schools, and it is clear that, as well as general levels of minor misbehaviour, in some schools there is a minority of pupils whose behaviour the staff find it difficult to manage. The strategy set out in this booklet, involving concerted action and support from all partners in the education service, provides a range of measures to address directly the needs of schools and pupils, and target support and resources more effectively. Appendix 1 sets out the main points for action, with target dates. Measures set out in other booklets in the *School Improvement* series, notably *A Strategy for the Promotion of Literacy and Numeracy in Primary and Secondary Schools in Northern Ireland* and *The School Support Programme*, as well as other Government measures listed in the Introduction, set out further action which will also have a positive impact on behaviour and contribute to the creation of an effective working environment.

The Department of Education wishes to record its thanks to colleagues in the schools who provided the material for the case studies in this booklet.

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Appendix 1

Action List and Timetable

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Proposed Action	Target Date
A Working Group will be established to prepare best practice guidelines on successful discipline policies for issue to schools. (paragraph 3.5)	September 1998
New legislation in 1998 will place a duty on Boards of Governors to ensure discipline policies are implemented within the school (paragraph 3.6)	Autumn 1998
Boards will re-focus INSET, as appropriate, to provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• training in the development of whole school discipline policies;• training in the early identification of pupils with behavioural difficulties and meeting their needs; and• support in the classroom in the development of classroom management expertise. (paragraph 3.13)	from June 1998
Boards will be required to produce plans setting out the arrangements they will make in connection with the education of pupils with behavioural problems and for the provision of advice and support to schools. (paragraph 3.14)	Autumn 1998
The current functions of the Educational Psychology Service will be examined to determine the most efficient ways of working and to make recommendations for freeing up educational psychologists' time. (paragraph 3.17)	December 1998
Boards will be asked to agree the arrangements for referring pupils for assistance. (paragraph 3.19)	September 1998

Proposed Action

Target Date

A behaviour support team will be established in each Board area to provide advice to schools on appropriate behaviour programmes and short term support for individual pupils. (paragraph 3.21)

September 1998

ITT courses must place sufficient emphasis on the development of classroom and behaviour management skills (paragraph 3.22)

ongoing

Newly qualified teachers will be required to have training in classroom management, including behaviour management, within their first three years of teaching. (paragraph 3.22)

September 1998

New legislation will be introduced which will have the following provisions:-

Autumn 1998

- Permit schools to suspend pupils up to a maximum of 45 days per year, rather than 15 days per term (paragraph 3.25)
- Schools expelling pupils and refusing admission to expelled pupils will have the right to be represented at expulsion and admissions appeals tribunals (paragraph 3.25)
- Expulsion Appeals Tribunals will be required to have regard to the interests of other pupils and teachers when making their decisions (paragraph 3.25)
- School staff will be permitted to use reasonable force to restrain pupils who pose a threat to themselves or others, or to property (paragraph 3.25)

The Department will provide guidance for schools on suspension and expulsion arrangements (paragraph 3.26)

June 1998

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Proposed Action	Target Date
The Department will commission the production of an information leaflet for parents about discipline in schools, and their role in the promotion of good behaviour. (paragraph 3.29)	June 1998
In new legislation schools will be permitted to detain pupils without parental approval, provided that 24 hours notice is given. (paragraph 3.30)	Autumn 1998
DENI will consult with DHSS on the concerns of the education sector about ADHD. (paragraph 3.32)	March 1998
CCEA will review the practical content of the KS4 Home Economics and Technology and Design programmes of study, and will draw up guidance on Personal and Social Education programmes (paragraph 3.36)	December 1998
FE colleges will be able to offer secondary education on their premises and extend the scope for co-ordinating course provision. (paragraph 3.37)	Autumn 1998
CCEA will prepare guidance for schools on how the maximum benefit can be achieved from work experience. (paragraph 3.39)	April 1998
The period during which work experience placements can be made will be extended to cover the whole of KS4. (paragraph 3.39)	Autumn 1998
DENI and the Boards will ensure that the needs of schools for support with seriously disruptive pupils will be given due consideration in the preparation of Children's Services Plans. (paragraph 3.42)	March 1999
Boards will be asked to prepare plans to create up to an additional 200 withdrawal places bearing in mind the requirement for differentiation appropriate to the broad range of pupils' ages and needs. (paragraph 4.10)	From September 1998
Boards will have a power to create pupil referral units. (paragraph 4.11)	Autumn 1998

Proposed Action

Boards will be asked, following an assessment of need, to prepare plans to develop alternative educational provision on a multi-agency basis for pupils for whom mainstream education is not suitable. (paragraph 4.14)

DENI will consult with DHSS on the requirements for pupils with various clinical conditions. (paragraph 4.18)

A Working Group will be established to explore options for the inspection of the EPS and EWS. (paragraph 4.21)

Target Date

From September 1998

March 1998

December 1998

Appendix 2

Promoting positive pupil behaviour

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Case study 1

In 1994, the school identified the need to develop more effective approaches to the promotion of positive pupil behaviour. A professional development day was used for the whole staff to examine this issue.

Consideration was given to factors affecting children's behaviour, identified as:

(i) Individual Factors

- temperament
- intelligence
- health
- mental illness
- development
- sex
- age

(ii) Family Factors

- marital disharmony
- parental inconsistency in maintaining discipline
- rejection
- neglect
- sense of loss

(iii) Social and Cultural Factors

- child care legislation
- deprivation
- socio-economic background
- unemployment
- crime

(iv) School Factors

- ethos
- classroom organisation
- curriculum inaccessibility
- teaching styles
- peer relationships

There was an acceptance from the staff that consideration of these multi-factoral influences might more accurately identify the source of the problem in individual cases. Staff accepted that there was strong evidence which suggested that schools and teachers could minimise the occurrence of behavioural problems.

As a result of whole-staff exploration of the issue, there emerged agreement that, if the school could respond appropriately to the most difficult pupils, the needs of the whole school would be met more effectively.

The school code of conduct and its pastoral/discipline policy were reviewed. A 'Year Team' approach was developed to promote a greater integration of the pastoral and curricular aspects of school life.

A graduated referral system for pupils exhibiting behavioural problems evolved, with the Year Head ensuring that a consistent approach to rewards and sanctions was taken. At all stages in the referral system the Form Tutor and Year Head were in constant dialogue with parents, promoting partnership and support. The majority of parents were co-operative.

A Guidance/Support Centre was established in the school. Its purpose was defined as:

- to help pupils with behavioural difficulties to cope with the curriculum; and
- to help teachers to teach the curriculum.

The key concept of this centre was support. It existed to support pupils both in the classroom and as required within the centre itself. Most importantly it provided support for staff as part of the overall disciplinary, pastoral and educational structure of the school.

The aims of the support centre were:

- a. to offer a variety of individual support strategies to help the school to cope with difficult pupil behaviour, by examining and addressing the needs of pupils significantly failing to realise their potential for positive behaviour and performance;
- b. to assist and support teachers and departments, both by referral of pupils to the centre and through advice on strategies for pupil management;
- c. to maintain pupils within the normal timetable wherever possible, and to aim for speedy re-integration when it was not; and
- d. to maintain contact with the mainstream curriculum, year groups, subject departments and individual teachers.

Pupils were admitted to the centre only after referral to, and consideration by, an Admissions Group chaired by the Vice-Principal. This process ensured a consistent application of agreed admissions criteria.

In 1996, the Guidance/Support Unit was evaluated, taking into account the new draft Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs. As part of the evaluation, the Principal and Senior Management Team decided that the Guidance/Support Unit should merge with the school's Learning Support Unit,

and all pupils referred for behavioural reasons should be supported through learning support programmes. The Special Needs Co-ordinator in the school assumed responsibility for liaison with the relevant Year Head regarding a staged approach to provision for these pupils. Pupils with behavioural difficulties were managed through the stages of the Code of Practice.

The school is currently attempting to develop strategies for increasing positive behaviour and securing self-esteem. The staff work on the principles that it is important to reflect on the behaviour and not the child, to plan for success, to keep parents involved and to set high expectations; they acknowledge that this is a long and difficult road and that significant external support will be required.

The school has noted significant success during the past five years, as evidenced in a positive school ethos, enhanced academic achievement, greater parental involvement and most importantly a minimal suspension/expulsion rate.

Case study 2

This school is a boys' non-selective school with an intake drawn from a wide geographical spread of urban and rural primary schools. Pupils transferring have low grade transfer results or have opted out of the transfer tests. A significant number of children come from large housing estates in the immediate area. 46% of the school's population are on free school meals.

An area for improvement identified by this all-boys' school was the need to change the culture for the better. While the pastoral dimension/discipline is its focus, there are many inter-related elements which influence the culture. Much of the work has been seen by the school as part of the developmental process to improve the quality of education for all the pupils in the school. Initially some of the school's discipline practices required immediate change to ensure a more orderly environment. The cultural changes had to be planned for recognising the strengths and targeting areas of improvement. These issues were part of the school development plan. The process of improvement has been slow, but the school feels that establishing and sustaining good discipline is now recognised as requiring a team effort by all staff, and the enhancement of the school culture will continue to be an area for development.

Issues of concern

These issues were identified through staff discussion, parental comment and inspection reports:

- Low self-esteem and self-worth of both pupils and staff
- Male 'macho' culture
- Poor pupil/teacher relationships with a small minority
- Poor image in the community
- Insufficient breadth in the curriculum
- Low attendance, particularly in Year 12
- Low achievement and expectations
- Physical environment - corridor and classrooms dull and unstimulating
- Parental partnership insufficient; school not seen as an encouraging contact
- Discipline not seen in the context of pastoral care
- Discipline seen as the remit of a few teachers
- The school community was seen in isolation
- Poor links with support agencies eg CASS and other external agencies
- Little or no whole-school staff development.

Nature of indiscipline

- Fighting - particularly in the school playground
- Foul and sexually explicit language
- Smoking
- Bullying
- Indiscipline in corridors
- Classroom - cheek to teachers and disruption to classroom teaching
- Graffiti and destruction of school property
- Truancy

Action taken

- Development of pastoral care policy including discipline - in-service days spent with all staff in reaching acceptance of ownership of the policy
- Implementation of policy into practice
- Clear pastoral structure put in place
- Head of Year established, with a specific job description and time allocated for pastoral duties - a clear identifiable role and status. Year Head link with parents regarding absenteeism on a daily basis. Attendance monitored monthly
- Head of Year weekly meeting with VP Pastoral
- Development of middle management
- Development of corporate responsibility for discipline: respective roles of Subject Teacher, Form Teacher, Head of Year, Head of Department clearly defined in relation to discipline matters
- In-service training:
 - a. for Heads of Year, in-house with the support of CASS
 - b. stand-alone courses eg assertive behaviour
 - c. whole-school eg self-esteem of staff and pupils, team-building
 - d. after-school meeting time devoted to discipline/pastoral issues.
- Clearly defined procedures for handling discipline
- Pastoral document/Code of conduct booklet posted to parents each year inviting comment, and any changes adopted
- Involvement of Governors, EWO, parents in the case review conference procedure on indiscipline
- Links with external agencies in the pastoral/discipline role eg Social Services, outreach, Probation Service

- Development of anti-bullying policy - display of commercially-produced anti-bullying posters. Register kept of bullying incidents. Counselling in school for victims
- School took part in Board Project on attendance
- Drugs policy document set in place and given to parents.

Pupils

- Development of Learning Support Unit and use of peripatetic service
- Student Council in Year 12 - development of roles of head boy and deputy
- Peer reading support scheme
- Mentoring - Year 12 with Year 8 pupils
- Introduction of new school uniform
- Rewarding achievement: introduction of Junior Prizegiving, with parents invited
- Monthly and Yearly attendance rewards
- Promoting school - music, brass band, choir playing at church services and primary schools
- Acknowledging success of pupils in events outside school
- Local press involvement in promoting the school profile
- End of term rewards for each year group - promoting positive discipline.

Teaching and learning

- Class groupings reorganised to avoid creation of 'sink' classes who did not complete Year 12
- Time allocation on timetable for each subject; pupils with different abilities were timetabled for different time allocations for same subject
- Equality of opportunity - all children now afforded same curricular opportunities
- Introduction of new subjects to curriculum at KS3 and KS4, eg
 - Music to GCSE level
 - English Literature
 - Photography
 - PE
- Wider curricular activities - storytelling, Pushkin Writers, Paired Reading, Paired Mathematics, Health Education activities

- Whole-school - Mathematics across the curriculum
- Development of library as a multi-media learning centre
- Development of extra-curricular activities at lunch-time and after school
- Promotion of newsletter and school magazine
- After-school tutorials
- Reorganisation of school day - because weaker pupils were unable to sustain learning in the afternoon, they contributed to indiscipline
- Development and implementation of Personal and Social Education programme links with pastoral and academic policies
- Induction programme for Year 8 pupils
- Development of KS2/3 transition with a feeder primary school, and applied the same model with other main feeder primaries. (This development is supported by CASS.)

Improving the learning environment

- Repainted corridors in bright, welcoming modern colours - corridors broken into different colour schemes after consultation with painting companies
- Glass-fronted notice boards put up: improved arrangements for displaying pupils' work
- Modernised classrooms by painting, curtaining. Provided OHP, whiteboards, TV and videos to facilitate a broad range of teaching strategies
- Modern updated IT suites in the promotion of ICT
- Landscaping of grounds and new entrance
- Removal of mobile classrooms
- Providing for structured play in the playground - basketball courts, football pitch lined out for use at lunch time and after school.

Success criteria

- Improve the examination results
- Increase in numbers taking GCSE
- Excellent achievement at KS3
- Improvement of the self-esteem of staff and pupils
- Parents feel better about sending their son to the school
- Little or no graffiti or damage to school property (parents at a recent open evening commented on this)
- Improved image in the community - positive feedback from parents

and feeder primary schools

- Reduction in number of expulsions and suspensions
- More open culture - parents willing to come to the school to discuss discipline matters
- Home/School partnership enhanced through paired reading, mathematics, prizegiving, musical events
- Reduction in number of discipline referrals
- Improved attitude towards work and achievement
- Support agencies and staff working in partnership.

Development work - future action

- Rewards and sanctions - looking at 5 key factors at KS3:
 - Attendance
 - Punctuality
 - Homework
 - Classwork
 - Behaviour

Presently being discussed and developed by all staff. Staff have agreed there is a need to move from sanctions to a more positive approach - which rewards pupils
- Target Setting: setting targets for:
 - a. Whole School
 - b. Department, including pastoral
 - c. Classroom level
 - d. Pupil level

so as to monitor and evaluate the work of the school and evaluate the pastoral support for learning. Discipline/pastoral provision is continually reviewed and enhanced where necessary.

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- Telephoning: 01247 - 279749
- E-mail: deni@nics.gov.uk

The document may also be accessed on the DENI Internet site:

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