



**Report on Low-Level Disruptive
Behaviour**

White Paper

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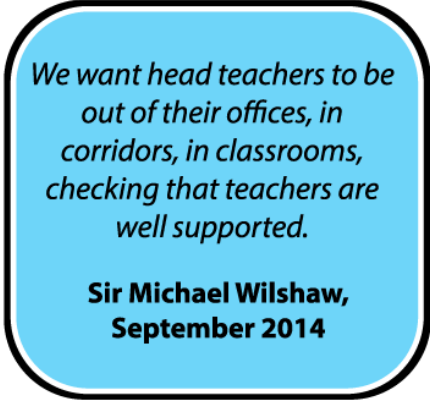
Executive Summary

- Wilshaw's focus on low-level disruption in the classroom as reported in the Ofsted document, *Below the Radar*, highlights the amount of time being lost in education
- Having a consistent whole-school behaviour policy is the first line of defence in being able to tackle this issue hands-on
- Developing pupil responsibility and ownership of their own behaviour is crucial
- Rewards and sanctions should be given appropriately, fairly and consistently
- Setting a positive behaviour culture and discouraging bad behaviour is a shared responsibility

Introduction

In September 2014, Sir Michael Wilshaw, chief inspector of Ofsted, launched his campaign against low-level disruptive behaviour in the classroom with the publication of the report [*Below the Radar: Low-Level Disruption in the Country's Classrooms*](#).

In an interview with the BBC in September 2014, Wilshaw was asked why he believed the problem of low-level disruption was largely the responsibility of the head teacher. Wilshaw stated that head teachers can “determine the culture of the school”. He continued, “If you have a weak head teacher, behaviour gets worse”.



We want head teachers to be out of their offices, in corridors, in classrooms, checking that teachers are well supported.

**Sir Michael Wilshaw,
September 2014**

Wilshaw initially raised these concerns about low-level disruption in schools in his Annual Report 2012/2013. On speaking about these issues in December 2013, Wilshaw identified a “casual acceptance” by teachers who are failing to crack down on misbehaviour ([BBC](#)).

Teaching unions have responded heatedly to this perceived attack on school leadership, believing the results of the report to be contradictory to Ofsted’s own findings.

As reported by the [BBC](#) in September 2014, Brian Lightman, head of the Association of School and College Leaders, rejects Wilshaw’s claims:

"If low level disruption is as widespread as he says, it certainly isn't backed up by inspection grades, which show that pupil behaviour is one of the strongest aspects in schools," said Mr Lightman.

"Of course we want behaviour to be excellent in all schools, but to publicly berate heads and teachers for something that contradicts Ofsted's own evidence is unacceptable."

The report identified that teachers had indicated in the YouGov surveys that they felt unsupported by members of leadership and management teams: ‘These teachers believed that some leaders are not high profile enough around the school or do not ensure that the school’s behaviour policies are applied consistently’. They continued by stating that ‘Some school leaders are failing to identify or tackle low-level disruptive behaviour at an early stage. Some teachers surveyed said that senior leaders do not understand what behaviour is really like in the classroom’.

Russell Hobby, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, conceded that although he believed the statements of Ofsted contradicted their own findings, the teacher comments highlighted in the report could not be ignored.

On speaking to [The Guardian](#), Wilshaw states that although improvement has been made in the level of “outrageous behaviour” in schools, low-level disruption is still prevalent and undermines the authority of teachers.

The scale of the disruption should not be taken lightly, as Ofsted’s Annual Report that was published in December showed ‘that 700,000 pupils were attending schools where behaviour needed to improve.’ ([Ofsted](#), Jan 2014) This is rightfully a concerning statistic that needs to be addressed.

The YouGov surveys were commissioned by Ofsted and gathered samples of 1,024 parents and 1,048 teachers. The surveys show that ‘pupils are potentially losing up to an hour of learning each day in English schools because of this kind of disruption in classrooms. This is equivalent to 38 days of teaching lost per year. A large number of pupils, therefore, are being denied a significant amount of valuable learning time.’ Wilshaw comments that this level of lost time is “unacceptable”.

In light of this focus on behaviour, EDLounge has conducted its own research into the issue of low-level disruption. This report will serve to analyse its causes and consequences, draw up strategies for combating the issues with possible rewards and sanctions, and to share models of good practice with an analysis of the Positive Discipline model used by Rodillian MAT, which is actively supported by the EDLounge system.

What is low-level disruptive behaviour?

Below the Radar emphasises the fact that although there has been improvement in examples of serious misbehaviour in the classroom, low-level disruptive behaviour is prevailing and its damaging effects continue to negatively impact teaching and learning throughout the country. So, what classes as low-level disruptive behaviour? Tom Bennett defines low-level disruptive behaviour as ‘anything that undermines the flow of your lesson without actually blowing it out the water’. This definition is straightforward, and it encompasses the many examples we can generally think of: playing on mobiles, swinging on chairs and fidgeting, for example.

‘if a pupil’s behaviour causes the teacher to have to interrupt the flow of a lesson so that the whole class ceases to be taught for a measurable length of time or if that behaviour prevents just one or two pupils, even the pupil himself, from benefitting from the teacher’s input for those pupils or that pupil, the lesson has been disrupted’

Tom Trust

Teachers identified actions such as chatting to others, getting distracted from their work and calling out as the main types of disruption they faced in their classroom, as depicted in the YouGov survey poll pictured on the following page.

Low-level disruptive behaviour is something that all teachers will have to deal with to a greater or lesser extent. The reasons for students exhibiting low-level disruptive behaviour are plentiful, from a pupil being bored, struggling with the work, or simply trying to get a reaction from the teacher.

With the Ofsted report showing that up to 38 days are potentially lost every year, it is evident that prevention is the biggest form of defence against misbehaviour. Upholding clear whole-school guidelines in the classroom is vital, as is setting up a positive learning environment that clearly sets the expectations for positive behaviour, achieving a common understanding from the outset.

It is all too evident that what you may initially see as trivial misdemeanours have a severe accumulative effect, particularly when presented with persistent acts by one or more students.

YouGov poll for Ofsted

This poll, presented in *Below the Radar*, presents the acts of low-level disruptive behaviour as identified by teachers, and shows which actions occur most frequently and are thus areas of concern. It is evident that talking and chatting is a major issue, with 46% of parents also identifying this as a key area of concern.

Below the YouGov poll, we have also provided the results of the EDLounge survey identifying the main types of disruption as identified by teaching staff and members of SLT. We also gave respondents an 'other' field, in which they were invited to include their own examples. One respondent stated that 'Throwing paper and stationery across the room' was a disruption present in their classes. The EDLounge research conducted was consistent with the results of the YouGov poll.

Main types of disruption identified by teachers in all types and phases of schools surveyed	% of teachers reporting this
Talking and chatting	69
Disturbing other children	38
Calling out	35
Not getting on with work	31
Fidgeting or fiddling with equipment	23
Not having the correct equipment	19
Purposely making noise to gain attention	19
Answering back or questioning instructions	14
Using mobile devices	11
Swinging on chairs	11

Main types of disruption identified by teachers in the EDLounge survey	% of teachers reporting this
Talking and chatting	67
Calling out	60
Disturbing other children	60
Not getting on with work	60
Not having the correct equipment	53
Making noise to gain attention	47
Arriving late to the lesson	47
Answering back or questioning instructions	33
Fidgeting or fiddling with equipment	33
Using mobile devices	27
Swinging on chairs	27

Causes and Consequences

As mentioned in the previous section, low-level disruption may appear trivial in its nature; repeatedly tapping a pen or staring out of the window may not seem particularly problematic. The Ofsted report, however, highlights the extent of which attempting to control these minor acts of misbehaviour affects learning time.

In Wilshaw's comments in December 2013, he claimed that teachers were not doing enough to combat the issue.

Many Ofsted reports identify that much of the low-level disruptive behaviour observed stems from a lack of engagement in the lesson, when teaching is failing to meet their needs or failing to challenge the students adequately.

Another highlighted issue within the report is that of insufficient training. It is evident that a greater focus should be given to adequately prepare teachers to deal with this kind of disruptive behaviour effectively. Although the majority of teachers who responded to the YouGov surveys indicated that they felt confident in dealing with low-level disruptive behaviour, Ofsted claimed that 'some teachers lack the skills to enforce consistently high standards of behaviour'.

The report also stated that 'One fifth of the teachers surveyed indicated that they ignored low-level disruption and just 'tried to carry on'. However, this behaviour disturbs the learning of perpetrators as well as that of others.' We will return to look at the strategies for dealing with low-level disruptive behaviour in a later section of this report.

The consequence of the prevalence of low-level disruptive behaviour is the fact that it prevents teachers from teaching and learners from learning. In this report, we will look at strategies and ideas about the importance of developing a whole-school positive learning environment and its function in behaviour management.

It may seem obvious, but if one teacher punishes a behaviour that other teachers ignore, this creates problems for the teacher following the correct course of action for the situation. It is evident that this issue is still commonplace in many schools and further supports the need for a whole-school change that is consistent for all. The pupil knows where they stand; Punishment will occur with the same level of severity regardless of the teacher or lesson. This prevents persistent offences accompanied by the excuse that Mr X lets them do it.

Over 400,000 pupils attend a secondary school where behaviour is poor, preventing pupils from learning and teachers from teaching

**Ofsted Annual Report
2013/14**

Strategies for Tackling Low-Level Disruptive Behaviour

In this section, we look at some popular methods for dealing with low-level disruptive behaviour, analysing pros and cons and evaluating the most effective rewards and sanctions for promoting a positive learning attitude as well as discouraging negative behaviour that disrupts the learning of students in your class.

‘If you can solve these minor difficulties in a calm and consistent way, you should be able to encourage better behaviour from all your students. In addition, it is likely that you will avoid serious confrontations in your classroom, because the students will see that they cannot get away with anything, no matter how minor! On the other hand, if you deal with these problems badly, you might exacerbate the situation so that more serious incidents do occur’. (Cowley, 2003)

Here we will look at the importance of implementing a whole-school behaviour policy, the role of rewards and sanctions and a brief analysis of some strategies such as tactical ignoring, monitoring, the ABC approach and developing pupil responsibility.

As mentioned earlier in this report, the reasons behind a pupil exhibiting disruptive behaviour are plentiful. Along with some of the strategies we look at in this section, it is also worth stepping back and evaluating your teaching methods. Are you sufficiently engaging your students? Are they being adequately challenged? Tactics for dealing with occurring behaviours is important, but being proactive to reduce the likelihood of such behaviours is paramount. As Watkins and Wagner identify, ‘The teacher’s ability to manage the classroom group through planned activities is a key element in developing constructive behaviour patterns’ (2000).

In the best schools, creating a positive climate for learning is a responsibility shared by leaders, teachers, parents and pupils. Leaders in these schools are uncompromising in their expectations and do not settle for low standards of behaviour.

Ofsted, *Below the Radar*

Many schools have introduced rules that specifically target certain areas of disruption; the issue of students playing on mobile phones, for example, has been met with the enforcement of a school-wide mobile phone ban. This method has worked successfully in schools such as Burnage Media Arts College.

Whole-School Behaviour Policy

The necessity of the consistent application of a whole-school behaviour policy is paramount. Universal understanding about what behaviour is expected and equally what behaviour will not be tolerated is essential for staff, parents and students alike.

Establishing high expectations whilst challenging low expectations for the whole school to uphold is a joint responsibility for all stakeholders. Communication is vital for this to be established and enforced, particularly between the school and parents. This pursuit of developing a positive learning culture will ensure issues can be identified at an early stage and thus be nipped in the bud.

Whatever our own personal gripes and foibles are, it is important to remember that effective schools have some kind of common ground: a leveller of behaviour expectations that all teachers aim to maintain, and that are upheld by senior management and the behaviour policy, strengthening the message about what is and is not acceptable.

Leaman, 2007

Charlie Taylor's 2012 behaviour checklist 'Getting the Simple Things Right' identifies that the most important element in dealing with behaviour issues is consistency; 'where there is inconsistency in schools, children are more likely to push boundaries.' The evidence presented in *Below the Radar* and its conclusion that the most effective schools at controlling low-level behaviour have a consistent approach backed up with a strong behaviour policy supports this. Likewise, teachers express their frustrations at an inconsistent behaviour policy as it needs to be in place to support both teaching and learning, which are ultimately both thus at continued risk.

One of the most important things about upholding a whole-school behaviour policy is the fact that it creates a positive learning culture throughout the school. Within this behaviour policy, having clear rewards to promote positive behaviour that serves to deter poor behaviour is as important as having a system for sanctioning negative behaviour once it occurs.

Tactics for prevention and strategies for early intervention rather than allowing the behaviour to escalate are vital, further supporting the establishment and development of a positive learning culture. While it is easy to focus on the behaviours we do not want in the classroom, in order to establish a positive learning environment we must try to shift this focus to the positive behaviours we would like to see:

Many teachers spend a lot of time emphasising what the pupils shouldn't be doing instead of focusing on what they should be doing: what you want and what you praise must be synonymous. (Thody et al., 2000)

This focus on positive behaviour should therefore be reflected in choices of rewards and sanctions for behaviour. Good behaviour should be a permanent expectation, which can be effective when supported by appropriate incentives, whether this is a simple "well done" for positive behaviour exhibited in itself, rather than, for example, rewarded for the pupil not exhibiting a certain bad behaviour.

A pupil would therefore be rewarded for showing exemplary behaviour that would be incompatible with a disruptive behaviour. You are not rewarding a pupil because they have refrained from chatting to their peers when you are speaking; rather you are rewarding them for listening attentively when being given instructions.

Rewards and Sanctions

Having a clear structure to rewards and sanctions is highly beneficial to a behaviour policy that is consistent and fair. Knowing that there is a clear-cut progression ladder allows a teacher to be prepared to tackle low-level disruptive behaviour and to be supported in its implementation.

Verbal warnings, removal from the classroom and lost break times were identified as sanctions most often used in the research carried out by EDLounge, and many identified adhering to a well-defined structure for issuing sanctions.

Punishments such as whole-class or no notice detentions have often been identified as unfair sanctions, as Leaman states, 'Whole-class detentions, because some student were mucking about, are usually viewed as cruel and unfair, and will cause resentment' (2007).

Ensuring sanctions are fair is vital to making them effective. If a pupil feels they are being treated unjustly, their behaviour may worsen as a backlash, respect for the teacher may diminish and they may disengage entirely from the subject.

Whatever rewards and sanctions are put into place, it is clear that the consequences need to be something that is going to be effective in working towards the goal of improving behaviour.

Consequences (or sanctions), in particular, have their limitations. How many of the difficult students in our schools have been that way for years? How often does challenging behaviour occur and then reoccur? Clearly, sanctions are not the deterrent we would wish them to be. That said, they can be a useful way of showing that actions have consequences, and will also demonstrate, in the eyes of the rest of the class, that justice has been done. (Leaman, 2007)

Sue Cowley identifies various effective rewards that can work towards developing a successful system for rewarding positive behaviour, for example:

- Verbal praise
- Written praise
- Certificates
- Merits

- Phone calls home
- Letters home
- School awards

As long as they are applied fairly and with consistency, rewards and sanctions can perform a valuable role in tackling low-level disruptive behaviour.

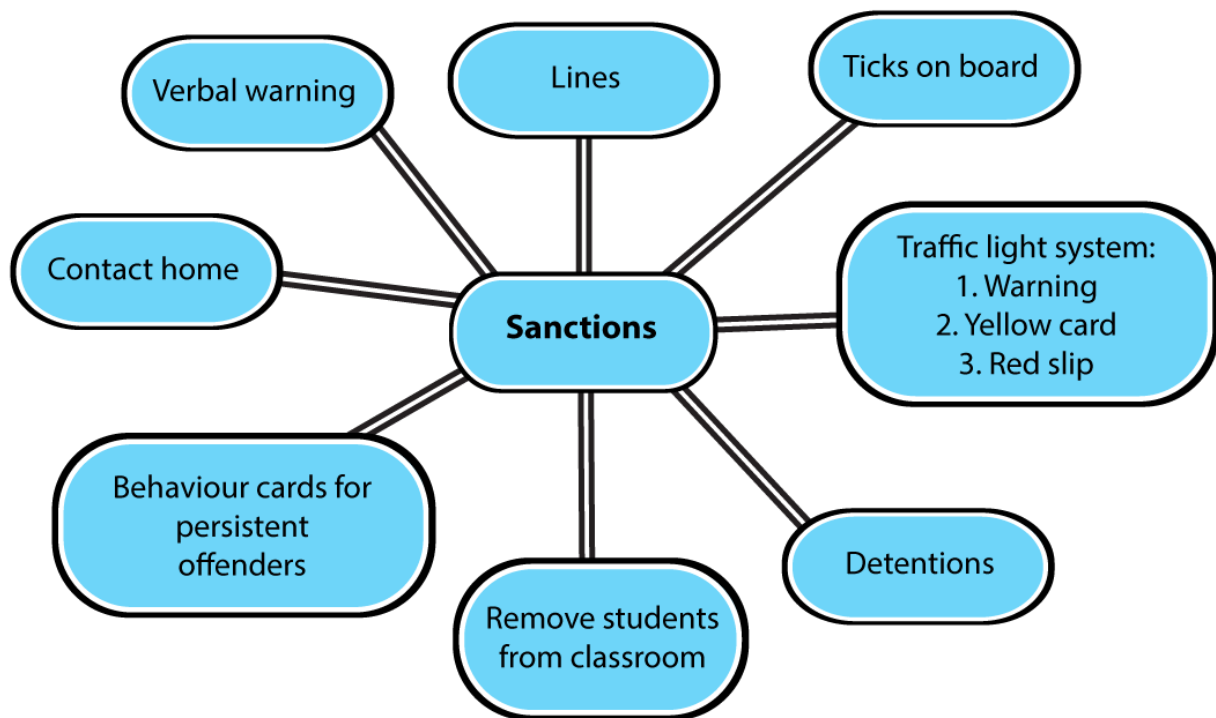
Praise given to somebody exhibiting the appropriate behaviour can work effectively to deter a simultaneously occurring disruptive act by another pupil in the class.

Here are some of the great responses given from SLT and teachers who completed our survey:

Rewards



Sanctions



Zero-Tolerance

One of the main debates for dealing with low-level disruptive behaviour is how heavy-handed we should be in our approach. Some believe that a zero-tolerance approach, squashing any misbehaviour in its tracks is the way to go.

From this viewpoint, by cracking down on low-levels of misbehaviour, the chances are that we will deter further points of misbehaviour and prevent incidents escalating into offences that are more serious.

As Leaman states, 'if you have a firm handle on low-level behaviours, they are unlikely to escalate into more serious difficulties or loss of classroom control'. (2007)

Tactical Ignoring

Some researchers highlight the benefits of tactically ignoring a pupil who is exhibiting low-level disruptive behaviour. This method, as any other method we have analysed in this report, needs to be used in the correct context.

It is worth considering how much time will be wasted on dealing with an incident of low-level disruptive behaviour and how disruptive this will be to the other members of the class. In these cases, choosing an approach that consciously ignores the issue to deal with at a later point in the lesson may be the most appropriate course of action. It should be noted that this is not the same as simply ignoring the problem and its source, but rather damage limitation for the sake of the flow of the lesson.

This will of course depend on the form the disruption takes; if the pupil is disrupting other students in their learning and affecting your ability to teach the lesson, it would not be in the best interest of all involved to allow the disruption to continue without being challenged.

The ABC Approach

The ABC approach is a popular method which seeks to have clear structure when setting a method for dealing with behaviour issues. The ABC approach consists of:

Antecedent – Shapes the context of the exhibited behaviour

Behaviour – The form in which the misbehaviour takes

Consequence – The result of the behaviour

Of this approach, *The Teacher's Survival Guide* states it is 'a useful starting point when we want to reduce the occurrence of inappropriate behaviour. Reflecting on the antecedent, the actual behaviour and the consequences of the behaviour helps us to understand the problem'.

Monitoring

Having a system to record and monitor behaviour allows you to become more aware of recurring issues and to pinpoint emerging patterns in behaviour. It is important to not merely record incidents of bad behaviour, but the positive also.

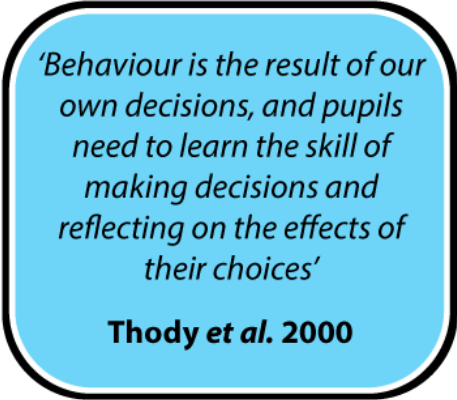
Young (2013) states that, 'When students realise that their behaviour is being systematically monitored and recorded then there is a powerful innate tendency for that behaviour to improve'. He suggests keeping a record of good behaviour and small improvements a pupil has made in order to feed this information back to the pupil privately.

This could therefore be a powerful motivator for the pupil, which will deter negative behaviour and promote a positive learning environment.

Developing Pupil Responsibility

As we mentioned earlier in this report, having a positive learning environment is a joint responsibility; students included.

Although strategies will differ from primary to secondary school, it is evident that the development of a pupil's responsibility over their own choices of behaviour should be introduced as soon as possible in a child's education.



'Behaviour is the result of our own decisions, and pupils need to learn the skill of making decisions and reflecting on the effects of their choices'

Thody et al. 2000

Students need to be aware of the impact their behaviour has on not only their own personal ability to learn, but also the effect it has on the learning of their classmates. By having clear guidelines set about what is expected of the pupil in terms of behaviour, along with being aware of the consequences of their actions is vital to developing this responsibility.

Although we have discussed early on in this report that elements such as not being stimulated enough in the classroom has effect on low-level disruptive behaviour, students also need to understand that boredom is not an excuse for disrespectful behaviour and will therefore not be tolerated.

Analysis of Teacher Findings

EDLounge has conducted its own research into the issue of low-level disruptive behaviour, collecting the experiences of teachers and members of SLT in both primary and secondary schools.

Our results found that consistency was an issue in regards to upholding a whole school behaviour policy, and many identified the belief that a whole school ethos was central to controlling low-level disruption. Of the teachers asked, 33% believed that the school behaviour policy was consistent, 67% believed it was not. SLT members being asked the same question, there was a 50/50 split.

Problems identified included the need of more support from parents to be able to deal with students' emotional needs more effectively.

All respondents who chose to answer the question stated being either very confident or somewhat confident in regards to their ability to deal with low-level disruptive behaviour, supporting the findings of the YouGov survey.

Having worked in two schools, I can see how having a clear and fair behaviour policy has a huge effect on behaviour. If it is consistent and interesting (e.g. changed to match the topics and rewards changed), then pupils are more motivated.

(Primary school teacher)

It is the major problem for classroom teachers in my opinion and is what forces teachers out of teaching more than any other single issue.

(Secondary school teacher)

Promoting high quality teaching leads to fewer instances of poor behaviour.

(Secondary SLT)

We have policies on behaviour and pupil welfare, but I would say that it is the ethos and clear guidelines we give the pupils that has the biggest controlling effect on low-level disruption.

(Secondary SLT)

Model of good practice – Positive Discipline at Rodillian

The Rodillian Multi Academy Trust is a newly established MAT in Yorkshire, specialising in transforming under-performing schools by allowing them to benefit from "The Rodillian Experience". EDLounge is proud to be working in partnership with Rodillian, resulting in dramatic improvements in behaviour, attendance and attainment.

A traditional approach to behaviour management underpins The Rodillian ethos, allowing innovative curriculum design and excellence in teaching to deliver the best possible outcomes.

Rodillian runs conferences to demonstrate the Positive Discipline model and to see it in effect in their school. I attended one of these conferences as a delegate to view the policy in action.

At the centre of the success of this model is the fact that Positive Discipline defines the ethos of the school. The result is a culture where high standards are expected of each student, they arrive knowing exactly what is expected of them, and they are ready to learn.

In turn, this ethos develops pupil responsibility. The students are in charge of their own planner, which is expected to be carried at all times. The planner is placed on the desk in lessons so that all staff can immediately deliver praise or sanctions accordingly, in the form of stamps or comments respectively. The planner allows the student, their parents and staff members to view progress immediately.

Great emphasis is placed on the fact that behaviour is the responsibility of all involved. One of the biggest problems we face is the fact that in many schools, many head teachers will not admit that they have a problem with low-level disruptive behaviour. Rodillian addresses this and states that acknowledging it is the first step to being able to overcome the problem and that any other initiative in a school where behaviour is not being addressed will fail, as behaviour is the number one influential factor on a school.

Below the Radar identified the importance of the role of senior leadership teams in managing low-level disruptive behaviour. In The Rodillian Academy, members of leadership are prominent figures in the school, present in corridors rather than hidden away in offices.

Without support, staff members are demoralised. Tactics in place may work to return a student back to their task temporarily; however, the root of the problem has been ignored, so the actual behaviour has not been modified.

EDLounge has saved the Rodillian Academy over 170 days in isolation and exclusion days whilst increasing attendance by 0.8% this academic year. Alongside this, another academy using Positive Discipline and EDClass has increased their attendance by an impressive 2.8%.

Senior leaders have developed a highly systematic policy on behaviour which is well understood by all students. It contains a good balance of rewards with sanctions. One parent wrote to praise the impact of this policy and in particular 'the positive way that this encourages children' to behave and learn. Expectations of behaviour are high and the school takes a 'zero tolerance' approach to misbehaviour. For example, fixed-term exclusions are used as a deliberate strategy to emphasise the importance placed on high standards of behaviour for all students.

Ofsted report 2012

Positive Discipline and EDLounge go hand in hand. Students are therefore able to access the resources on EDLounge off-site, so that they are able to continue to complete meaningful work once they have been excluded. A result of this is that students can complete behaviour repair work to enable their return to the mainstream classroom.

The impact of using the positive discipline model has enabled Rodillian to develop an innovative curriculum that allows teachers to be creative without risk. Members of the SLT provide full support to all members of staff, ensuring the staff member's decisions are upheld. This prevents many problems such as those incidents reported of students being sent to the head's office for being disruptive and they are simply sent back to apologise; not dealing with the problem or supporting the teacher in the decision to remove the child from the classroom.

By using this model, students who may otherwise fall off the radar, are included with sessions for positive discipline, in which time for praise is built into the timetable. As a result, all students benefit from time spent with members of SLT to discuss their progress and receive praise. This emphasis on developing and encouraging good behaviour is as important as having clear sanctions in place for those who disrupt within the school. Rodillian has found that this approach has a long-lasting effect on all aspects of the school, improvement in teaching and exam performance, for example. This is evidenced by the dramatic rise of students gaining 5 A*-C GCSEs, from 19% in 2007 to 76% in 2014.

Rules within the behaviour policy are made black and white, all students understand this and the consequences to their actions are clearly stated and understood. As we saw earlier in this report, many schools have enforced a mobile phone ban. Rodillian has enforced such a ban ensuring that any phone seen to be used between 8.30am and 2.30pm is confiscated and returned at the end of the week.

The Featherstone Academy

The Featherstone Academy is part of the RMA academy chain and finds following the positive discipline methodology highly effective. The result has meant a vast culture shift in the academy, spreading the message that poor behaviour will not be tolerated and therefore developing respect.

The Featherstone Academy uses EDLounge's alternative provision for exclusions, EDClass. By setting work on EDClass for students to complete from the first day of their exclusion, students do not miss out on work whilst off-site, ensuring they don't fall behind their peers. This results in fewer incidences of low-level disruptive behaviour on a pupil's return to the mainstream classroom as they do not need to use disruption as a means to cover up embarrassment or a lack of understanding of a topic due to missed sessions. The students at Featherstone engage with EDLounge, as they are adept to learning on the screen, finding it a successful tool to engage those excluded students in order to reintegrate them back into the mainstream classroom after a fixed-term exclusion.

Low-level disruptive behaviour can be cyclical. One of the biggest causes of low-level disruptive behaviour, as identified by Jason Kenneally, Associate Head Teacher of Featherstone Academy, can be a pupil's apathetic attitude towards learning. There is therefore a cycle of being off-task and keeping up a reputation with peers. Similarly, if work is not being pitched to an appropriate level, this leads to despondency in the pupil.

Having developed a culture where students are allowed to fail helps to combat this. Students may be afraid of failure; as a result of this they simply don't try. Learning in an environment that embraces failure and the opportunities for development it breeds is considered a successful attitude to adopt, as its overall effect on behaviour is significant. If a pupil fears failure, causing disruption may be the way that child chooses to disguise their fears. A fail-safe environment needs to be created where we can be open if we make mistakes – for students and staff alike.

In addition to the positive discipline pyramid system, Featherstone also has systems in place including additional support with a keyworker to identify additional needs for students with SEN statements. This enables bespoke intervention to prevent escalating behaviour.

As we have seen in the previous section, one aspect identified by teachers in the EDLounge survey was the support of parents in the battle against low-level disruption. Jason Kenneally also identified with this, as he stated that the most successful instances of the approach work when parents are on board and encourage their children to complete the work. Apathetic parents will unfortunately continue to be an issue in some cases, so trying to engage the students and develop their sense of responsibility is vital in those instances. Jason also stated that with an approach that is innovative and gets results, most parents are on board and embrace the change.

The improvement in students' attitude to learning in The Featherstone Academy is highlighted in the dramatic reduction of students being referred out of the classroom. Between September and December of the 13/14 school year, there were 355 incidents of students being referred out of classes. By comparison, since the Positive Discipline approach has been adopted, the number of students being referred out of the classroom between September and December of the 14/15 school year has reduced to 60 incidents.

This significantly highlights the impact of Positive Discipline, EDClass and a policy that tackles low-level disruptive behaviour.

Conclusion

From the empirical research conducted by EDLounge, we have established a range of factors that have the biggest impact on low-level disruptive behaviour.

Consistency is brought up most frequently, with evidence clearly stating that teaching staff in schools where consistency is not applied feel the least supported by members of the senior leadership team. These teachers also state the belief that a lack of consistency is their key concern in tackling low-level disruptive behaviour.

In schools where low-level disruptive behaviour is dealt with consistency, they attribute this to the fact that there is a high level of consistency that shapes the ethos of the school.

For some schools this may include a huge culture change that may face opposition from many people; parents, students and teaching staff included. Once implemented however, increased support can be given to teaching staff along with the development of pupil responsibility over their own behaviour, creating greater awareness of the impact they have on the learning of other students.

As part of this behaviour policy, it is useful to have appropriate sanctions in place along with rewards that promote good behaviour rather than simply punishing bad behaviour once it occurs. Ensuring these rewards and sanctions are communicated effectively is vital for them to be successful in promoting a positive learning environment and discouraging behaviours from escalating into more serious offences.

Examples from schools such as The Rodillian Academy and The Featherstone Academy present the consistent behaviour policy in action, with clear links to increased attainment on top of a dramatic reduction in the occurrence of low-level disruptive behaviour.

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The Rodillian Academy and EDLounge are hosting conferences on Positive Discipline on the following dates:

- Wednesday 18th March
- Wednesday 6th May

We will also be conducting road shows in London, Birmingham and Manchester; dates TBC.

To express your interest in these conferences email pdenquiries@rodillianacademy.co.uk



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