



# What to do about... Disruptive Behaviour

# Introduction

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A significant priority facing class teachers today is how to effectively manage the demanding range of disruptive behaviour which confronts them on a daily basis.

It is highly taxing work attending to the dynamics which can occur in the classroom at any given time. Teachers may feel drained and weary with the ongoing demands. Frustration can set in when the learning environment is affected by constant disruptions.

The school's behavioural policy may encompass strategies for tackling more severe problems, but there are those relentless low-level disruptions which do not respond to existing approaches.

This guide does not focus solely on the behaviour, but looks beneath the surface at the mood that triggers it. Our aim is to add to a teacher's repertoire of skills and strategies, both in understanding and addressing disruptive mood and behaviour.

Although the skills and strategies are mainly targeting Key Stage 2, the principles can be adapted to work with Key Stage 1.

## Part 1: Understanding Disruptive Behaviour

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In order to respond more effectively to disruptive behaviour, it may be useful to examine the behaviour from a broader perspective.

Two significant issues which can be overlooked in the management of disruptive conduct are the context in which it occurs, and the feelings or mood surrounding it.

The contexts of disruptive behaviour are outlined in the following sections:

- Child factors
- School factors
- Environmental factors

To expand the concept of mood or feelings surrounding disruptive behaviour, it may be helpful to explore the following illustration. Imagine this familiar scenario. An angry incident has erupted in the playground and, once the children involved are back in the classroom, it is evident that they are hostile and unwilling to focus on the scheduled maths lesson. Attempts to get them to settle down are not effective and the three children concerned become increasingly disruptive and unresponsive to the measures which the teacher adopts.

What is going on here? It would appear that the hostile feelings resulting from the incident in the playground have not been adequately resolved and are rumbling away in the background. An escalation in disruptive behaviour is taking place. The approach taken by the teacher is not proving to be successful in this situation. Perhaps there has not been an effective evaluation of what is causing the disruptions and an appropriate strategy has not been selected for resolving it.

Within the humanistic field of educational psychology, it is generally recognised that feelings or mood significantly affect behavioural outcomes. The example already used illustrates that when hostile feelings are not taken into account and attended to, they may generate disruptive behaviour.

When putting strategies into place, the teacher would find it helpful to look at the context in which the behaviour occurs. Equally, the feelings that precede and accompany such behaviour, can inform the teacher and help them to handle the situation more effectively.

## Child Factors

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### Psychological Development

The way a child develops can be a significant factor in relation to disruptive behaviour. Delays in psychological development can affect conduct. A poorly developed self-structure and a confused framework for evaluating life experience can lead to immature behaviour.

Children who experience their value in the context of dysfunctional family systems may develop a range of behaviours which are difficult to manage in the classroom. Children whose parents are rigid and controlling may, in turn, try to control their peers by being bossy or by bullying them. This can lead to volatile and disruptive interactions.

Parents themselves may be emotionally disturbed, suffering from anxiety or depressive states. Unintentionally, they may cause their children to experience neglect. Such conditions at home may result in children being anxious and withdrawn, or aggressive and volatile at school.

### Physiological Issues

Physiological issues can affect conduct. Children can experience a range of unpleasant conditions such as asthma, eczema and ear, nose and throat disorders. All of these may trigger disruptive mood and behaviour.

## School Factors

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### Teacher/Class Relationship

Each teacher and class develop their own style of relationship. Sometimes the relationship is working well, at other times it may be working less well. When it's working well there is often a lively stimulating atmosphere where meaningful work is produced. When it is working less well, interruption and disruptive incidents can occur.

### Curriculum Issues

Different aspects of the curriculum can be stimulating for some and draining for others. There are those children who dread Maths, others for whom it is an adventure. When a child is fearful or disinterested in the particular aspect of the curriculum, it can create difficult behaviour. Also, the teacher may find different aspects of the curriculum stimulating or draining.

### Lesson Planning

When a lesson is well prepared with planned learning objectives, it is less likely to generate disruptive behaviour. In lesson preparation, disruption is minimized when the content and presentation are interesting and dynamic.

### Classroom Management

If there are strategies in place that reduce the need to walk around the classroom looking for books and pencils etc., potential trouble spots can be limited.

### Classroom Dynamics

Group dynamics play a significant role in determining how the class functions. The way individuals and clusters of children relate to each other can spark off disruptive behaviour.

## Environmental Factors

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### Times and Seasons

Different times of the day affect mood and behaviour. Energy levels fluctuate both for teachers and children. When children are tired and restless they can be irritable and disruptive. Seasons are significant. Christmas events and holidays can lead to excitable, demanding behaviour.

## Weather

Weather affects children's moods and behaviour. Wet playtimes, windy days, heatwaves! Medical research into S.A.D. (Seasonal Affective Disorder) indicates the link between depression and the winter months. Weather affects the way we feel.

## Changes

Changes influence classroom behaviour. There are some children who love change and some who are resistant to it. Change can be unsettling whether it's change of routine, absence of particular children or teacher.

## Crisis

Crisis events do not happen every day but they can range from a child being sick in assembly to an intruder in school. They are usually unpredictable and take everyone by surprise. Extreme behaviour can be a reaction to a crisis

## Summary

Any Changes	Something as seemingly minor as a furniture move around can create an unsettled mood and for some children a sense of insecurity.
Teacher/Class Relationship	Be brutally honest. Is it generally good and stimulating? Is it dull and lifeless? Is it strained with frequent loss of control?
Children with Difficulties	Be aware of children who seem to display characteristics of psychological tension – withdrawn, anxious, hostile.
Class Dynamics	Become familiar with the way individuals and clusters of children relate to one another. Their interactions have a significant bearing on disruptive conduct.
Curriculum Obstacles	Are there certain children or groups of children who struggle with the aspects of the curriculum? Note: when are children struggling and when are they motivated?
Seasonal Influences	Are the days dark and miserable with wet playtimes which restrict activity and affect mood?

## Part 2: Sensing Disruptive Behaviour

Developing the ability to sense and evaluate disruptive moods is a fundamental skill when addressing disruptive behaviour. We are not always conscious of the subtleties of our moods. It is easier to identify very strong feelings, less easy when our feelings are vague. Take a look at the chart below. It identifies mood and possible behavioural outcomes.

Mood	Indicators	Behavioural Characteristics
Positive	Animated	Alert, cooperative behaviour. Good quality work.
Bored	Distracted	Disinterested, disruptive behaviour. Slow work.
Excitable	Noisy	Erratic behaviour. Variable work.
Anxious	Preoccupied	Nervous behaviour. Sparse poor-quality work.
Angry	Aggressive	Antagonistic behaviour. Difficulty in concentrating and settling down to work.
Frustrated	Irritable	Quarrelsome behaviour. Mediocre or variable work.
Hostile	Defiant	Openly challenging behaviour. Non-productive work.
Tired	Lethargic	Lack of alert behaviour. Very slow work.
Unwell	Not coping	Breakdown of normal behaviour and work patterns.

Carl Rogers, a pioneer of humanistic psychology, along with others in the field, emphasised the importance of working with feelings or mood. His views have had a universal impact on education. He was not just a theorist but also worked with educators helping them achieve a more meaningful learning environment: be it in the classroom or lecture theatre.

*His research and practice revealed that if feelings or mood could be recognised by the individual and integrated as valuable aspects of experience, then behavioural change could result.*

The following illustration may increase understanding of the research. A class teacher is aiming to conduct a science lesson which involves a significant amount of practical preparation. During the last part of the lunch hour she gets under way with the preparation but is aware of a toothache that has been nagging all morning. The lesson starts well but Daniel begins to play about with the equipment. A confrontation develops between Daniel and the teacher whereby he becomes more defiant and the situation becomes more and more unmanageable. On reflection, the teacher is aware that she is less patient than usual and could have diffused the situation by a more light-hearted approach. If prior to the lesson, the teacher had been able to clarify feeling low because of the nagging pain, she may have questioned her effectiveness in conducting a lesson which would demand so much by way of preparation and teaching.

Clarification of feeling in this case may have led to a more realistic evaluation of the teacher's resources. She may have been a little easier on herself and planned a less demanding and potentially less disruptive lesson. It's not always easy to reschedule lessons or adapt them to be less demanding. However, such a course of action may limit disruption.

If teachers can develop the skill of clarifying and working with the prevailing mood, both of individuals and the class as a whole, it's a further step to restricting the dynamics of disruptive behaviour. In Part 3, ways of working with feelings will be explored.

It sounds relatively simple to develop awareness of feelings but, as already stated, the more subtle the feelings; the less easy they are to detect. Most would recognize the stomach churning feelings of a driving test or a dentist visit but what about feelings generated when a change of plan has to be implemented or when a comment made in the staffroom is perceived as criticism. These examples relate specifically to adults but experience would show that children likewise are not always good at detecting what is going on in their inner self.

The following practical skills are a means of becoming more familiar with mood or feelings.

<b>Develop Observation and Listening</b>	<b>Note changes in expression and voice tone.</b>
Look Beneath the Surface	Pay as much attention as you can to the feeling tone of children's conversation as well as the content.
Trust Your Intuition	Rather than dismiss your speculation, learn to trust it. How often have you looked back on events and thought 'if only I'd acted on my gut feeling'.
Get Used to Naming Moods	Try to bring moods into focus by naming them. For example: Emma appears tired. David seems bored.

## Part 3: Changing Disruptive Mood and Behaviour

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Parts one and two have been concerned with increasing awareness of some of the issues that give rise to disruptive behaviour and developing the skills necessary for change.

In this final part, we suggest strategies for three key areas and also some 'Quick Fix' measures.

As already discussed, there are a number of specific influences which affect children's mood and behaviour. However, the focus for strategy can be narrowed to three major target areas:

- Teacher Class Relationship
- Curriculum Management
- Code of Conduct

Troublesome moods which give rise to disruptive behaviour can be largely avoided by consolidating good practice in these three areas.

### Teacher Class Relationship

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What makes an effective relationship? What elements create an environment where learning is pleasurable and disruption minimal?

#### Trust

If trust can be developed between the class and teacher then disruptive behaviour is less likely to be a problem. Trust is a vital aspect of the relationship between the teacher and class, but it requires definition. Respect is an important part of trust. It's an attitude that helps to create a trusting relationship. Respect grows when certain traits of character are perceived – understanding, openness and a non-judgmental approach.

If teachers genuinely try to understand the individuals in their class, they will be met with positive responses. One of the most meaningful experiences in life is to be understood, rather than judged or condemned. It starts with a desire to get to know how the world looks through the eyes of a particular child. Teachers do not have significant periods of time at their disposal, so a child's world is discovered by building up a profile gradually, spending a moment here and there to understand their excitement and frustrations.

Most people have experienced the sense of injustice when a judgmental conclusion about them is reached. Trust is undermined when judgmental impressions are conveyed. Accusing children using exaggerated or generalised statements set up bad feeling.

"You are always losing things. You are careless."

Could be replaced with:

"You seem to be losing things frequently, Matthew. Could you try to be more careful?"

*Trust demands understanding, a non-judgmental approach and genuineness. Another way of putting genuineness is to be natural and open, where appropriate.*

#### Consistent Boundaries

Clear and consistent boundaries are essential in building the teacher class relationship. If they are not established or kept they can give rise to disruptive behaviour.

To some degree, boundaries in the classroom are established when a teacher has a new class. They usually relate to such things as equipment, level of noise and ways of doing things. It may be helpful to explain that boundaries

are lines which are not to be crossed. In order to help children stay in the lines, a boundaries check list could be worked on and put up in the classroom.

### **Example boundaries list**

What to do when you:

- Are late
- Want to get the teacher
- Have lost something
- You want to move about

There may be some other aspects of boundary setting to consider such as personal boundaries (both for teacher and child). What boundaries does the child need to put them in place when someone on their table keeps talking to them?

The relationship depends on these boundaries being negotiated and consistently applied. They may feel that one class member is treated differently from another for the same offence.

*Children's perception of inconsistent boundaries and the subsequent sense of injustice are a major cause of disruptive incidents.*

### **Meaningful Communication**

*Meaningful communication requires skill! In dialogue such skills can advance the immediate meaning and understanding as well as the relationship itself. In the classroom communication can be adversarial and closed rather than open and conciliatory.*

A confrontational, closed style may be the source of much disruptive behaviour. A teacher may be unaware that their manner of verbal communication is becoming more harsh and confrontational in an attempt to control increasing disruption. A mirroring process can be inadvertently set up where the noise level of disruption is matched by the teacher's rising tone. New skills need to be developed.

What makes communication open, inviting and fruitful?

Two skills:

- Listening for meaning
- Negotiating for outcome

### **Listening for meaning**

Listening for meaning can operate in two ways. One is listening to the content of what is being said: the other is listening to the more hidden meaning. The latter involves trying to discover what the communication means for the person delivering it.

How is that done practically? Listening demands attention! It is a skill which requires practice. There are many distractions to listening both from inward and outward sources. What is being said may have set you off on your own train of thought. For example, when a child recalls an incident in the playground you are reminded of a message that you have forgotten to deliver. Before you know it, you have missed a chunk of dialogue.

*If the individual talking feels you are only half there, it can be destructive to that particular dialogue and set up subtle mistrust which militates against further dialogue.*

How much more difficult it is to listen in the classroom when 101 things are going on. However, the principles still apply. Listening may be difficult because, legitimately, your attention needs to be elsewhere. An example of good communication in this situation would be:

“I really want to listen to what you are saying, Jason, but I can see a problem needing my attention. Can I go and sort that out and then pick up where we left off?” Needless to say, it is essential to do what you’ve said.

Communication is hindered when there is insufficient verbalising of what is going on. The nuances of content need clarification as to their meaning. There are a number of ways that can be done. Asking; “Do you mean...?”, or “You said...”

The dialogue that is conducted between teacher and individual can be patchy because the content hasn’t been understood. You may think you have been able to pre-empt what is being said or deduce it without listening fully. Misunderstandings can occur as a result.

The other task in effective communication is to understand its personal meaning. What is the person conveying of what it means to them? Are they disappointed, excited, anxious?

### **Negotiating for Outcome**

Negotiating for outcome is a concept that can alleviate disruptive behaviour when applied carefully. The teacher can achieve this by involving the child or class in discussion, so that an agreed outcome is reached.

*When individuals are genuinely consulted and can contribute their own opinions and feelings about the outcome, it encourages ownership. If children have played a part in negotiating an outcome they will be more ready to go along with it.*

### **Working with Feelings**

It seems an almost insurmountable task for the teacher to effectively manage the feelings and moods that exist in the classroom; particularly those that lead to incidents.

*When the disruptive behaviour is triggered by underlying feelings, it’s necessary to learn how to work with them to prevent them seething underneath the surface and erupting in trouble spots.*

Gaining skills in this area is, perhaps, one of the most successful ways of dealing with disruptive behaviour.

The following scenarios illustrate ways of working with feelings.

#### David

Whenever story writing tasks are undertaken, David appears to be disinterested. He is easily distracted and finds it difficult to settle down. In addition, he annoys other children and is generally disruptive.

Take time to find out how David feels about story writing. It is not necessary to do it in the context of story writing itself. However, if you are addressing it at another time, it would be helpful to let him know what you’ve observed during story writing. Encourage him to think of ways that story writing can be more stimulating for him. If the problem is having to write what he considers a lot, maybe you could discuss with him a length he would find manageable. If the problem is not knowing where to start, then you could give him some guidelines. At the end, check out if he feels better about story writing.

#### Emma

You notice over time that Emma is paler than usual and doesn’t seem to be able to concentrate. She used to be more lively and energetic, but seems to have lost some of her spark. Looking back over her work, you see that its quality has deteriorated.



Reflect back to Emma what you have noticed; that she seems pale and less energetic, and her work seems to be suffering. Find out how she feels about what you have said. If she says she is OK, have a look at her work with her and try to reach an agreement about the change in her work. Explore with her what could account for the change. Check out if she feels more tired, or “under the weather”. She may be tired, but it has become habitual and she is unaware of it. However, she may be unwell and afraid of telling you or her parents.

### **Key Points for Working with Feelings**

- Encourage discussion of feelings and mood so there is familiarity with them. Initially, it may be helpful to focus on the feelings of others rather than on children’s own feelings. E.g. “How do you think the boy in the picture is feeling? Does his face give any clues?”
- Extend children’s vocabulary by focusing on words and phrases associated with feelings. Generally, children use words like good, bad, upset etc. to describe feelings. Help them to become familiar with more subtle feelings and the appropriate words.

Discussion of the following could begin some specific work on feelings: embarrassed, proud, pleased, depressed, jealous, frustrated.

If they can distinguish and name their moods, it is a step towards intervention.

- Make sure that the children are aware that all feelings are legitimate and part of the human experience. Many children will be uncomfortable with certain feelings and may be ashamed or embarrassed and would not want to own them, e.g. jealousy. If teachers are able to disclose their own troublesome feelings, children will feel more able to disclose theirs.
- Ensure that you do not foster a judgmental attitude to children’s feelings. Invite the children to talk to you about their feelings.
- Develop skills associated with active listening by:
  1. Paying attention to what is being said – not letting your mind wander.
  2. Understanding what is being said and how the child feels.
  3. Reflecting back the feelings. For example; ‘You seem to be upset.’ Or ‘You look confused.’

## **Teacher Class Relationship**

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*If the curriculum is unbalanced in content and pace, disruption may result.*

*Lesson preparation and teaching style are vital issues in relation to children’s conduct.*

### **Curriculum Content**

If the content of the curriculum is unbalanced it can trigger disruption. If a lesson with the potential for boredom takes place it may spark trouble spots. A lesson with less stimulating content could be offset with one where the content is lively. This would leave the class and the teacher feeling energized.

When a lesson is fairly heavyweight, with new concepts being introduced, which demand a high degree of attention, it is unrealistic to plan a subsequent lesson requiring the same attention span. If attention can drop a little, there will be less likelihood of disruption.

The pace of the curriculum also requires consideration if disruptive behaviour is to be minimised. *Changes of pace within the lesson will maintain interest and motivation.*

When individuals are working, their ability to stay on task may lessen. Some children, like adults, need to change in order to boost energy and complete the task at hand. Sometimes a change of pace is all that is required.

*Drawing the class together to discuss how they are getting on, explaining the obstacles and suggesting ways forward may be the solution. The promise of a pleasurable activity at the end of the task may also spur them on!*

## Lesson Preparation

Good lesson preparation can reduce disruptive incidents. When the teacher is confident about the lesson's objectives and clear about the teaching strategy, the atmosphere is more likely to be stimulating. Having the necessary resources at hand contributes to a well-prepared learning environment. Needless to say, when the teacher feels confident and optimistic about the planning, it will be conveyed to the class.

Honest evaluation will reveal disruptive pockets of behaviour and enable the teacher to pinpoint the trouble spots. This evaluation will inform future lesson planning and preventative action can be taken.

If the teacher is motivated and energized, children will pick it up – it becomes infectious. Similarly, the opposite is true: Being in the company of people who feel drained has a draining effect.

## Code of Conduct

*When there is a code of conduct which has been negotiated between the teacher and the class it can help to minimize disruptive behaviour.*

Setting up an agreed code of conduct in the classroom may be a priority already for some teachers. However, two significant areas can be overlooked:

- Involvement of the class
- Process of setting values

## Involving of the Class

Time, negotiation skills and persistence are needed when working with the class on such a code. It means inviting them to contribute their opinions and feelings to a process which will result in agreed conduct.

The end product may be as simple as the following outline:

<b>Class 5 Code of Conduct</b>	
1.	We try to treat each other with respect which means trying to be honest and fair.
2.	We try to treat our belongings and equipment carefully. We try to treat each others possessions in the same way.
3.	We recognize the importance of learning new skills. We want to learn and try to work hard.

Although the above example appears simple, it will have taken time to draw up this statement that the class can adhere to. Work will already have been done finding out what respect means and, practically, what it means to care for possessions, particularly when they belong to someone else. Also, there will have been discussion about the value and meaning of learning. If children perceive its value, a more co-operative environment will be created.

It may be useful to initiate such a discussion with key questions such as:

1. If you were choosing a friend how would you like him/her to behave towards you?
2. What is your most treasured possession? What would be the worst thing that could happen to it?
3. What happens when you are in a lesson you don't like?

### **Value as Part of Conduct Setting**

The second potentially overlooked area is the importance of setting values and taking ownership of them. The teacher may feel that honesty, for example, is an important human value and may encourage the class to be truthful. However, when no discussion has taken place as to whether honesty is a value that the class want to adopt, it can become an imposed value rather than an owned one.

*When children do not take responsibility for their own values, but rather experience them as imposed they can feel controlled. Hostile, defiant or confused behaviour may result.*

Arriving at a place of ownership of values requires on-going discussion, even fierce debate! Value setting does not have to be done in one go: it's usually something that takes time to evolve. On an encouraging note, it's amazing how much is accomplished through this sort of open discussion and exchange of ideas.

One of the most useful tactics for encouraging the adoption of a value is for the children to discuss how they feel when they experience the opposite value: in this case, when they are lied to. Compare this with how they feel when they experience the actual value: being told the truth.

However, it is one thing having a discussion in class about honesty, and another getting someone to own up when they've done something wrong and want to lie to save their skin!

To go a step further with the class, discussion could even produce a discipline procedure to apply when the code of conduct is not kept. Posing questions like: "What do you think should happen when a class member hits or pokes another person in class?" could lead to the production of their own code of discipline.

Discussion doesn't always have to involve the whole class at once. Carefully selected groups could work together for one hour long sessions to come up with their answer to the question above. They could tell the rest of the class their suggestion. Again, the purpose of such a task is to encourage personal ownership of the code. It is important to remember that when discussion is open, and when suggestions cover a wide range of options, it is necessary to establish a decision-making procedure. For example: if the class disagrees about the discipline needed for hitting or poking etc., it is important to have a predetermined strategy. The class could take a vote and go with the majority, or the teacher could decide.

*If meaningful discussion can take place where children feel they can be involved in formulating a code of conduct, they are more likely to remember it and apply it personally. They will be taking responsibility for their own attitudes and actions, achieving self-regulation, as opposed to the teacher constantly having to take that responsibility.*

It may well be that the code of conduct could be used as a basis for involving parents in behavioural management. They may agree to using aspects of the classroom code for home conduct too. Going a step further, it may be possible to set up code of conduct sessions with groups of parents and children to jointly work out a home/school code of conduct. A home/school contract may be drawn up as a result.

### **Quick Fix Measures**

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Short term strategies seek to affect the disruptive mood and behaviour in a way that is immediate and spontaneous and aim to be a 'quick fix'.

## Self Check

The purpose of a “self check” is to provide a meaningful self-evaluation procedure, which will interrupt the disruptive mood and behaviour. Its goal is to develop self-awareness, so that individuals can detect their own personal triggers and take responsibility for change.

The example self check questionnaire below could be given to the person concerned.

Self Check			
1. How have you been feeling mostly today?			
Bored	Excited	Worried	
Angry	Fed Up	Tired	Unwell
2. Has anything in particular upset you today? For example, falling out with friends. (You can be honest—no one will see your answer)			
.....			
3. What do you feel about the way you have been behaving?			
Ashamed	Disappointed	OK	Embarrassed
4. What activity could you do now that would help to change your mood?			
Time away	Talk to my teacher	A lesson I enjoy	Other—explain below
.....			

## Calming Measures

Bringing about a change of mood can head-off disruptive behaviour and provide a strategy for dealing with it when it occurs.

### Activity Changes

In life generally, mood can be changed by different activities: feeling down can be alleviated by exercise. Similarly with children, their mood can be changed by different activities. Sometimes a change of pace or going out to play will do it. A key to averting ‘disruptive’ problems is familiarisation with children’s moods and behaviour patterns.

*When a teacher senses that an individual’s coping mechanism is under pressure it’s more helpful to intervene and relieve their stress rather than push the individual beyond their limits.*

## Time Away

Time away can be helpful in diffusing a disruptive incident. A quiet corner could be established for time away. Another teacher may be willing to offer support in allowing time away in their classroom.

## Active Valuing

This can include listening, verbal praise, encouragement and physical attention – a smile or eye contact.

## Acknowledging Feelings

It cannot be emphasised enough, how significant it is for the teacher to acknowledge feelings and learn the skill of empathy. A statement as simple as “You seem upset, Amit”, can help the individual enormously and diffuse potential difficulties. It’s not always necessary to add more. However, a further comment may be beneficial: “If you still feel upset at the end of the lesson, Amit, and want to talk about it, I will be glad to listen”.

## **Peer Support**

A research project in Leeds, developing peer support in selected primary schools, proved to be effective. Peer support lessons took place to help 10 year olds develop skills in listening and supporting younger children who had worries regarding making friends, school work and getting on with their parents. Children being chosen for training had already shown signs of the necessary skills. Groups of up to six children met, without a teacher, for 20 minutes a week. Over a ten week cycle, children in these groups can discuss anything bothering them. The children were being trained in keeping confidences. However, they could alert teachers to more serious issues. Developing a simple and appropriate structure for peer support may alleviate some of the issues that give rise to disruptive behaviour. However, it is important to have necessary checks and balances in place.

# **Concluding Comment**

*“As a society we are increasingly recognising that an individual’s capacity to perform (in sport or at work) depends largely on how they feel about the situation they find themselves in.”*

Briefing Resources T.E.S

This comment identifies the importance of feelings related to outcome. Behavioural management can overlook the significance of working with underlying feelings to achieve the desired changes.

This series of blogs seeks to address some of these more hidden issues, so that relentless draining disruptions can be worked with in creative and effective ways. If the skills and strategies outlined are to become useful in the teacher’s repertoire, they require familiarisation. It may be helpful to pin up key principles or phrases as a reminder.

If this content can be consistently applied, enhanced relationships will result. If individuals feel increasingly understood and secure within consistent boundaries, trust will be reduced and a more pleasurable learning environment will be created.

The copy in this guide was taken from the book ‘What to do about... Disruptive Behaviour’ written by Judith Warren and published by Primary Teaching Services.

