

Item no: 21	Classification: OPEN	Committee: Education, Youth & Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee	Date: 14 January 2003
From: Head of Corporate Strategy		Title: Behaviour Management (low-level disruption)	

Context

1. At the first meeting on this topic on 11th November 2002, members decided to focus their scrutiny of behaviour management on the issue of low-level disruption and, in particular, the identification and sharing of best practice for dealing with low-level disruption in Southwark schools.
2. Members have had an opportunity to debate the issues with senior local professionals, including the Director of Education Services and the Head of Mainstream Support Service of WS Atkins, and local stakeholders, including headteachers and governors. They have also had the opportunity to visit a range of local schools to discuss approaches to managing behaviour with headteachers. Background information has been provided to the sub-committee on best practice, and on the Southwark Behaviour Support Plan and Behaviour Improvement Programme.

For decision by the sub-committee

3. At the meeting of 10th December 2002, members decided not to adopt a monitoring role with regard to the Behaviour Improvement Programme but rather to formulate specific recommendations (via Overview & Scrutiny Committee) to the Executive. The following are proposed:
 - That the Executive instruct officers to prepare a strategy for the minimisation of low-level disruption in all maintained schools in the borough;
 - That the strategy and its implementation are based on the identification and sharing of best practice in all schools where it exists, both those within and those outside of the current reach of the Behaviour Improvement Programme.

Resource implications

4. The drafting of the strategy could be accomplished within existing resources.
5. In order to identify best practice wherever it exists in the borough (to underpin the strategy), it would be necessary to support schools in conducting a behaviour audit of every school in the borough. It is estimated that the additional cost of performing such an audit for all schools not currently participating in the BIP would be approximately £250,000.
6. The net cost of implementation of the strategy is more difficult to assess. It would depend on the recommended approach and what funding streams are available. If the BIP model of Behaviour and Education Support Teams was followed, there

would be a revenue cost equivalent to approximately 3-4 key staff for the authority and some additional administrative costs for schools.

7. However, there have been indications from the Secretary of State for Education and Skills that further specific grant funding may become available to support wider behaviour improvement programmes. This issue might best be addressed in the context of a report back to the Executive with concrete proposals for a strategy.

Review of evidence

8. Key issues raised by education professionals and stakeholders

- Low-level disruption might not result in immediate exclusion or significant teacher action but still had a significant impact on teaching, learning and attainment.
- If low-level disruption is not properly addressed, it can escalate over time to behaviour which results in exclusion.
- The Behaviour Support Plan does not address low-level disruption, as its focus is on identifiable bad behaviour, meaning that there is no key plan or strategy addressing this issue borough-wide.
- There are 17 schools (4 secondaries and 13 primaries) participating in the Behaviour Improvement Programme pilot; the BIP provides a model for enabling schools to link together and share best practice through: the establishment of multi-disciplinary Behaviour and Education Support Teams; funding to release key professionals in the 4 BIP secondary schools to support colleagues and visit other schools; an extensive behaviour audit for each school.
- Understanding and sharing best practice is a key theme in tackling this issue; there might well be schools exhibiting best practice which are not involved in the BIP.

9. Key issues arising from members' visits to schools

- Good practice exists in schools which are not involved in the BIP but there would appear to be inadequate mechanisms for sharing this; one beacon primary school was already sharing best practice with schools in Hackney, Merton and elsewhere but not in Southwark, even though the headteacher expressed enthusiasm for doing so.
- A "whole school" approach to behaviour management, with a focus on praising and rewarding good behaviour was a common theme.
- Behaviour that leads to exclusion is often "cut and dried" and so easier to deal with than the gradual "drip, drip" of low-level disruption.
- Communication with parents and their support are important for the effective implementation of behaviour management policies.

Additional background information

10. The most recent Half-termly Implementation Report on the Southwark Behaviour Improvement Programme (Autumn Term 2002, second half) is attached as Appendix A.
11. There are a variety of mechanisms in use for sharing best practice in schools in Southwark.

12. For schools involved in the BIP, there are two main mechanisms:

- Two Behaviour and Educational Support Teams, each serving two secondary schools and their feeder primaries, which draw together a range of specialists providing support to young people, including adolescent mental health workers, social workers, education welfare officers, police officers and lead behaviour professionals from the participating schools.
- Funding has been made available to each BIP secondary school, to enable their lead behaviour professional to take the time to meet with others to share experiences.

13. More generally:

- Cluster groups provide a forum for schools to share practice and experiences
- Link advisers of the School Improvement Division share knowledge, practice and experience with one another and disseminate out to the schools they serve.
- Officers of the SID have joint internal meetings with officers of the Mainstream Support Service, sharing knowledge and understanding about behaviour issues and their impact on attainment in individual schools.

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Background Papers	Held at	Contact
Minutes of EYL Scrutiny Sub-Committee meetings on 11.11.02 and 10.12.02.	Southwark Town Hall Peckham Road SE5 8UB	Louise Gardiner 020 7525 7460
EYL Scrutiny Sub-Committee : Item 10 – Behaviour Management – Framework for debate (11.11.12)	Southwark Town Hall Peckham Road SE5 8UB	Louise Gardiner 020 7525 7460
EYL Scrutiny Sub-Committee : Item 13 – various Best Practice (10.12.02)	Southwark Town Hall Peckham Road SE5 8UB	Louise Gardiner 020 7525 7460