Behaviour Management Handbook

Elyse Purkis

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Introduction

A teacher's job is much more than inserting content into students' minds. Aside from the art of teaching itself, teachers are constantly waging a war against misbehaviour from students. Some classes will be lovely and have hardly any disruptive students, and other will feel like they contain 30 teenage devils.

Luckily, there are many educational and behavioural theorists who have studied and exposed many strategies for teachers to use in their classroom to combat this disruption, all while continuing the learning in the classroom. These strategies can be split into 3 categories**: Preventive, Supportive** and **Corrective Discipline**. This handbook is a brief insight into the important aspects of each of these categories, and examples of useful strategies for teachers to include in their classrooms.

The most important thing for teachers to remember, in all forms of discipline, is that they need to create a safe, positive and nurturing environment for all students – including the naughty ones! According to psychologist Abraham Maslow, each individual has a set of needs that need to be fulfilled. If we apply this to the students in our classes, misbehaviour can quite possibly be occurring because a student's needs have not been satisfied. This also can be compared to William Glasser's theory that behaviour issues in schools will not erupt if students' needs for belonging, power, fun and freedom are met (more on William Glasser on pages 9 and 15).
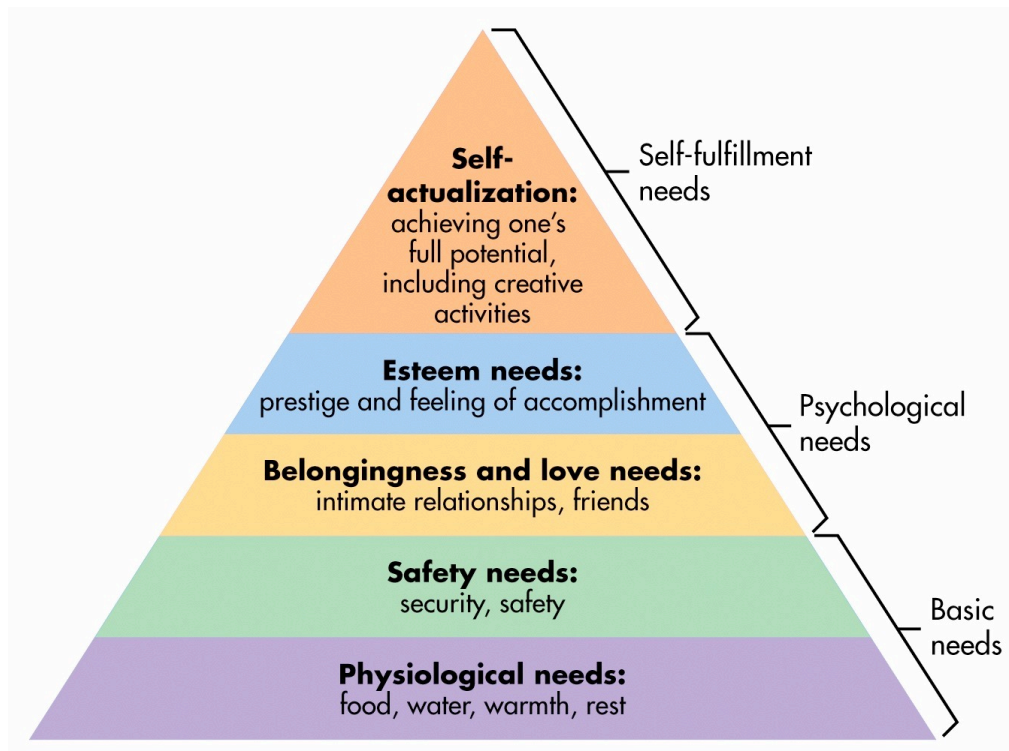
Figure 1: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

So when considering the discipline strategies included in this handbook, and when devising and implementing your own discipline system in your classrooms, always be aware of your students' needs and whether you are protecting and fulfilling them.

Preventive Discipline

> "You can prevent most misbehaviour if you treat students sensitively, provide an interesting curriculum, and use a helpful teaching style." **(C.M. Charles, 2002)**

There are many strategies teachers can employ in an attempt to prevent unwanted behaviours before they occur. In fact, it is necessary to put these *preventive discipline* measures in place in order to maintain a productive learning environment with motivated and on-task students.

The most important aspect of preventive discipline is ensuring that, as a teacher, you strive to meet the needs of the students – these needs being structure, limits, routine, security, hope, acceptance, dignity, power, enjoyment and competence **(Charles)**. When the students feel that their needs are being considered and met, they are much more likely to behave and be motivated to succeed in their classes.

Jacob Kounin

Theorist Jacob Kounin has some excellent ideas for preventative measures to take in the classroom. Possibly the most important aspects of his theory are the momentum and flow of the lesson, and 'withitness'. Teachers should be sure to not interrupt the class in order to manage behaviour – this creates a loss of *momentum*. *Withitness* involves the teacher visually scanning the room constantly, even when working with an individual student. A 'withit' teacher is aware of and able to prevent potential disruptive behaviours.
More of Kounin's strategies will be seen on page 5.

Gardner's Multiple Intelligences

Howard Gardner debated the belief that intelligence is "a single, general capacity for conceptualization and problem solving" (Gardner, 1993). He was able to determine eight *intelligences*, and claimed that an individual's cognitive ability can be described as a set of these intelligences. You will find more detail on the intelligences themselves in Appendix A. If a teacher can target class activities to different intelligences, students are more likely to be interested in the work and succeed, and misbehaviour will be deterred.

Preventive Strategies

Below are some useful *preventive discipline strategies*:

- Discuss and devise classroom rules and logical consequences with students **(Dreikurs, Canters)**
- "About me quiz" – find out from students how they like to learn, and what kind of environment they might come from
- Plan activities that suit the intelligences and learning types you have in your class* **(Gardner)**
- Build respect and rapport with the students
- Reward systems*
- Give students the opportunity to have choices in their class work*
- "Withitness"* **(Kounin)**
- Make sure class has momentum and flow **(Kounin)**
- Allow/set up students to succeed
- Demonstrate good manners/behaviours you want students to exhibit* **(Jones)**

*These strategies could also be used as *supportive discipline strategies*, depending on the timing and context of their use.

More *preventive discipline strategies* will be discussed below in case studies 1 and 2.

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**Case Study #1
"Praise and Preparation"**

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Amy is an inspiring teacher who uses continuous, genuine praise and extensive preparation in her classrooms. By being prepared, Amy claims she is "free to manage behaviour" at all times. The students seem to respond incredibly well to her constant praise – she believes that many of her students don't receive praise at home, and that teachers should "tell them how wonderful they are, that's all any kid needs".

Some of Amy's strategies:

- Students wait outside the door until teacher is ready
- Makes a note on the board of students doing the right thing
- Incentive system
- Proximity **(Jones)**
- Praise entire class for working well (7:10)
- Scaffolding (7:20) **(Vygotsky – Appendix B)**
- Shows attention/interest in students work (8:20)
- Encourage thinking outside the square/using imagination **(Piaget – Appendix C)**

Link to video: http://www.schoolsworld.tv/node/273

> **Case Study #2**
> **"A Lesson from the Best"**

Phil Beadle demonstrates a perfect example of selecting course work and teaching strategies to suit the students learning preferences and abilities. He identifies a class with many boys who are kinesthetic learners, and creates a curriculum which allows them to move around and argue opinions – deterring misbehaviour.

In this case, Phil had this class system set up before the year began, so it is being considered *preventive*, but could also be *supportive* depending on context.

Some of Phil's Strategies:

• Provides predominantly kinetic and visual approach to texts for students who are predominantly kinetic and visual learners **(Gardner)**

• Competitiveness – encourages students to keep on task and work harder to keep up with their peers **(Charles)**

• Silent signals, such as smiles (praise) **(Jones)**

• Reading examples of excellent student work to the class (7:30)

Link to video: http://www.schoolsworld.tv/node/263

Supportive Discipline

> "Despite your best efforts, students will at times become restive and can easily slip into misbehaviour. This is the time for you to make use of supportive techniques, which are pleasant yet effective in keeping students engaged in their work." **(C.M. Charles, 2002)**

When *preventive measures* fall through, and students begin to misbehave, the teacher can use *supportive discipline strategies* to encourage students to get back on task, and to learn to control their own behaviours. Whenever employing *supportive strategies*, it is important to remember that supportive action is "an offer to help, not a judgement or imposition of will" (Taylor & Baker 2001).

Quite a lot of the time, this slip into misbehaviour is due to lesson structure and activities – such as a loss of flow or momentum (see Jacob Kounin above). And quite often, teachers can use subtle signals and questioning to remind students to get back on track.

Frederic Jones

Frederic Jones' *positive discipline approach* describes teacher communication as being largely non-verbal; incorporating body language and silent signals to positively remind students to return to good behaviours. Jones emphasises the importance of not embarrassing students in the process of positive discipline, and avoiding comments that might provoke arguments. He also believes that many discipline problems occur due to mismanagement in the classroom (e.g. not setting up proper routines for the students to follow).

More of Jones' *supportive discipline strategies* will be seen on page 9.

William Glasser

William Glasser is a theorist whose approach to discipline and classroom management could be utilised in all three ways; *preventive, supportive* and *corrective.* In this case we will discuss his *supportive strategies*, and some of his *corrective strategies* will be seen on page 15.

Glasser's ideas "focus on personal choice, personal responsibility and personal transformation", and that behaviours are intrinsically motivated by "what that person wants or needs at that moment in time" (The William Glasser Institute, 2010). Teachers should focus on helping students, not blaming them, and encouraging them to self-evaluate their behaviour.

More of Glasser's *supportive strategies* will be seen below.

Supportive Strategies

Below are some useful *supportive discipline strategies*:

- Use of non-verbal signals, such as eye contact, facial expressions and hand signals **(Jones)**
- Physical proximity
- Praise students when they do the right thing*
- Seating arrangements **(Jones)**
- Remind students of class rules and the consequences for keeping and breaking them*
- Use incentives to motivate students to get back on task
- Tactical ignoring
- Restructure/change activity if students are getting off track
- Avoid interrupting learning in order to manage behaviour – this can lead to other students getting bored and misbehaving themselves **(Kounin)**

* These strategies could also be used as *corrective discipline strategies*, depending on the timing and context of their use.

More *supportive discipline strategies* will be discussed below in case studies 3, 4, 5 and 6.

**Case Study #3
"Girl Talk"**

This video follows Nicola, a maths teacher who has a pair of very chatty girls in her class. With some help, she adopts some supportive strategies which encourage the girls, who are capable students, to stay on task.

Some of Nicola's strategies:

• Ignoring attention seeking behaviour

• Spends time with students who are on task, even though chatty girls are calling out for her attention **(Glasser)**

• Only rewards their on task behaviour with her full attention

• Rewards girls at the end of class by talking about her wedding rings and showing photos – something they are interested in

Link to video: http://www.schoolsworld.tv/node/126

This is a video in a series that attempts to address the gap between boys and girls' grades in English. In this case, the *supportive discipline strategy* used was to adapt the course (e.g. texts and activities) to include more kinetic and active learning. The students are much better behaved and engaged in the lessons.

Some of the useful strategies:

• Assigned seating

• Using a text that appeals to the students

• Get students involved in reading the text out loud

• Let students burn off excess energy by standing up and moving around

• Boost students' self esteem by fulfilling their need for attention **(Dreikurs)**

Link to video: http://www.schoolsworld.tv/node/900

**Case Study #5
"Too Much Talk"**

This video follows John, a young Geography teacher struggling with keeping students' focus. He finds that when talking for too long a period of time, the students lose motivation and struggle to pay attention, take in the content and remain on task. He found that by employing some *supportive teaching and discipline strategies*, this behaviour and the students' engagement in the class greatly improved.

Some of John's strategies:

- Asking specific students to repeat information in their own words (9:30)

- Avoid student embarrassment by allowing them to nominate another student to answer for them

- Encouraging and facilitating success from students who normally wouldn't experience success

- Discuss time limits with students – lets them "haggle" (6:50)

- Changing the activity – students are visibly more engaged when activity changes

Link to video: http://www.schoolsworld.tv/node/271

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Case Study #6
"Attention Seekers"

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This video follows Jane's year 7 French class, which houses many attention seeking students. With the use of *supportive discipline strategies*, including proximity, praise and discussion, she is able to calm this attention seeking behaviour and

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keep students on task for longer.

Some of Jane's strategies:

• Naming individual students during discussion

• Proximity – stands near a student not facing the front (10:45)

• Includes whole class in discussion and immediate assessment – "See if you agree with what she's doing on the board…" (9:45)

• Including group work – lets attention seekers get attention from their peers in the context of learning

Link to video: http://www.schoolsworld.tv/node/1044

Corrective Discipline

> "We have to accept that while good discipline systems can prevent most misbehaviour, your students will nevertheless break the rules at times and you must deal with the transgressions. If you approach misbehaving students in a sensitive manner, you can help them to return to proper behaviour with no ill feelings." **(C.M. Charles, 2002)**

There will inevitably be times that a teacher is forced to take action on disruptive behaviour from students. It is important that teachers never ignore disruptive behaviour, for students will be given the impression that they can continue this behaviour with no consequence. Any corrective measures taken should still be carried out as calmly and positively as possible, so as not to encourage any argument or ill feelings between teacher and student.

Employing *corrective discipline strategies* obviously causes a slight disruption in teaching, which is why it is of upmost importance that teachers have a *preventive* and *supportive discipline* system in place, to prevent the need for *corrective discipline* as much as possible.

Bill Rogers

Bill Rogers has some fantastic ideas and strategies for teachers struggling with misbehaviour in their classrooms. He reminds teachers to look at the "big picture" of the classroom – not just focussing on the misbehaviour. When attempting to correct students' behaviour, ask politely yet firmly for them to do the right thing, not tell them to "stop" what it is they are doing. Giving the students a choice between getting back on task and another, less desirable option, is also a great way to get students to correct their own behaviour.

More of Rogers' strategies will be seen on page 15.

William Glasser

It is important to discuss Glasser again in terms of his *corrective discipline* approaches. Glasser's Triplets are a very useful tool when dealing with constantly disruptive students – "What are you doing? Is it against the rules? What should you be doing?". This is a very positive way of having the students evaluate and correct their own behaviours, which can teach them to control themselves in the future. This ties in with Glasser's *Control Theory* – which focuses on the causes of misbehaviour, and the student's responsibility for controlling their own behaviour.

Corrective Strategies

Below are some useful *corrective discipline strategies:*

- Offer a choice – e.g. "You can either put your mobile phone away, or it can go on my desk" **(Rogers)**

- Time-out in or out of class

- Invoke the known and agreed upon consequences for certain behaviours **(Charles, Canters)**

- Repair & Rebuild – extremely important that after any intense corrective moments, especially if the teacher has become visibly emotional or frustrated, to calm down and explain why, and repair & rebuild the relationship between teacher and student **(Rogers)**

- Give 3 warnings, then follow up with consequence **(Canters)**

More *corrective discipline strategies* will be discussed below in case study 7.

Case Study #7
"Manage That Class"

This video shows Jenny taking a science class with year 8s, on a Friday afternoon. This is going to be a difficult class time for any teacher, and Jenny uses a mixture of *preventive, supportive and corrective discipline* to manage her class.

Some of Jenny's *corrective strategies:*

- Warning students doing the wrong thing – "Vulcan, I don't want to hear calling out"

- Give a choice to do the right thing – "Your pocket, or my desk" (8:39) **(Rogers)**

- Less disruption of whole class for discipline – lets students choose their behaviour, deals with it later **(Kounin, Glasser)**

- When boys pushing each other, says "I'm going to come speak to you in a moment" – boys are aware they have been caught doing the wrong thing, but teacher continues giving attention to on task students **(Rogers)**

Link to video: http://www.schoolsworld.tv/node/1752

Conclusion

There is no single discipline system that works best for each and every class and teacher, and there is no preventive strategy to end all misbehaviour in classrooms. Every teacher needs to find what works best for them, and always be flexible – what works for one group of children might not work for the next.
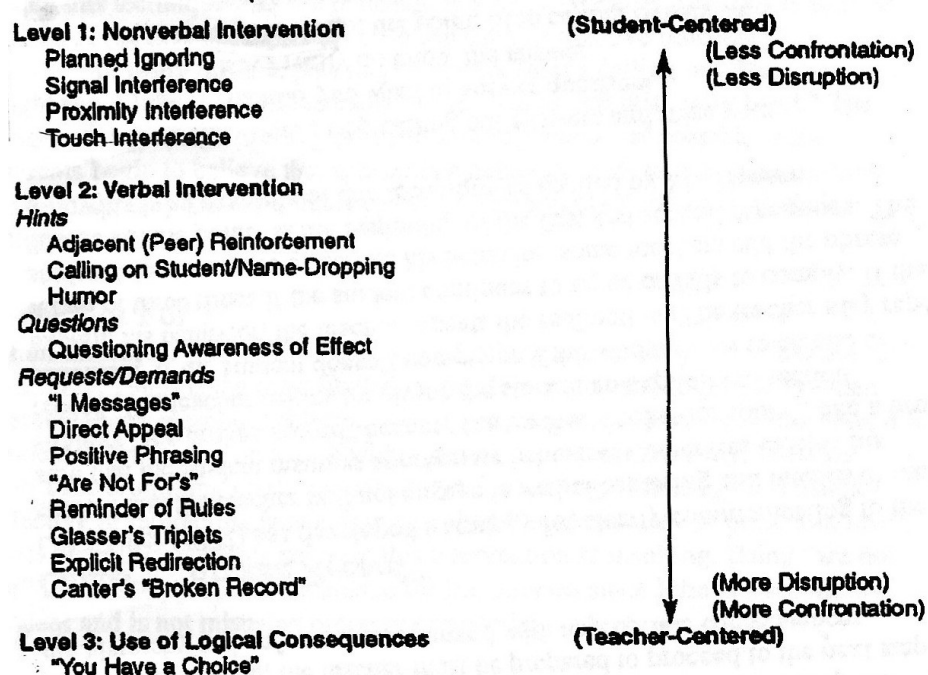

Figure 2: Levin & Nolan – Hierarchy of Management Strategies

The above diagram is an extremely useful way of visualising the different levels of supportive and corrective discipline strategies, and their effects on the classroom. The higher up in the hierarchy the strategy appears, the less confrontation there is between teacher and student, and the less disruption occurs for the whole class.

Obviously these less intrusive strategies are more desirable in the classroom, but the more disruptive behaviour that students show, and when they don't respond to these less disruptive supportive strategies, it becomes necessary to move down the hierarchy through Levels 2 and 3.

The most important thing to remember is to always treat students with respect, and they will do the same to you. There is most likely a reason they are acting the way they are – need for attention, struggling with the work etc. By creating a rapport and relationship with their students, a teacher can work to identify the reasons behind a student's behaviour, and work together to get the best out of their learning as possible.

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Figure 1:

Yoon, W 2015, *Abraham Maslow was a brand strategist*, Wunderkind, viewed 29 March 2015,

http://wunderkindworld.com/2015/01/abraham-maslow-was-a-brand-strategist/

Figure 2:

Levin, J & Nolan, J.F 2005, *What every teacher should know about classroom management*, Pearson Education Inc., New Jersey, p. 43

Appendix A

Gardner's Multiple Intelligences

Howard Gardner's set of eight intelligence's include: Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical, Musical, Spatial, Bodily-Kinaesthetic, Intrapersonal, Interpersonal and Naturalistic intelligences. He argues that a person's cognitive ability is determined by which of these intelligences they favour. So a person who has a strong bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence would process and learn information differently to a person with a strong logical-mathematical intelligence.

There are tests available online in which students to fill out a questionnaire, and are then told which intelligences they might favour (based on their answers). This could be a useful tool for teachers to include in their classrooms – by getting students to complete the test, not only can the teacher structure the lessons to suit the learners, but the learners themselves understand more about how and why they might learn best.

A Multiple Intelligence test can be found here:

http://www.literacynet.org/mi/assessment/findyourstrengths.html

Note: this test is not black and white, and cannot give a definitive result, but is quite useful to see which intelligences a person seems to prefer.

Appendix B

Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (Scaffolding)

Lev Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), more commonly referred to now as the concept of *scaffolding*, is known as "the distance between children's current level of competence on a task and the level they can achieve with support or guidance" (Krause et al, 2003 p. 63). The aim for a teacher is to set work for students such that they are working within this zone – they are pushed beyond what they can do easily by themselves, but not to the point where they cannot achieve at all.

Where this concept applies to behaviour management, is predominantly in the *preventive* and *supportive* categories – as a method of encouraging and challenging students, while they still have the chance to feel success. This can be extremely useful to combat bad behaviour. The students aren't bored, might need some assistance, and will strive for that feeling of success – spending less time and energy on misbehaviour.

Appendix C

Piaget's Cognitive Stages

According to Jean Piaget, children at secondary school age are in his fourth stage of cognitive development – the Formal Operations stage. He claims that during this stage, students will begin to "think abstractly and logically, to form hypotheses and to solve problems systematically" (Krause et al, 2003 p. 51). This means it is important for teachers to encourage this wherever possible – such as Amy does in case study 1.