Behaviour and attendance
key messages
for SENCOs
Key Stage 3 National Strategy: Behaviour and attendance key messages for SENCOs

This leaflet is for all staff who support and promote positive behaviour and regular attendance in secondary schools. It supplements:

- briefings to LEA and school Key Stage 3 Strategy managers;
- training and dissemination by LEA behaviour and attendance consultants;
- core and additional training materials in LEAs and schools from September 2003.

What is the National Behaviour and Attendance Programme?

The following elements are central to this programme.

- Support for selected schools in Excellence in Cities (EiC) areas facing the greatest challenges. By September 2003 Behaviour Improvement Projects (BIPs) – the behaviour and attendance strand of the EiC strategy – will be supporting well over 200 secondary schools. BIPs are packages of measures tailored to local needs, but typically include:
  - school-based multi-agency Behaviour and Education Support Teams (BESTs);
  - targeted attendance initiatives, including truancy sweeps and first day call;
  - preventative and collaborative measures to reduce exclusions;
  - additional Learning Mentors focused on removing barriers to learning and transition to KS2/3;
  - dedicated senior management time for behaviour and attendance issues;
  - police in schools.

- A new behaviour and attendance strand of the Key Stage 3 Strategy providing review, training and consultancy resources for all secondary schools.

The DfES has recently launched the next stage of its anti-bullying strategy, which will be supported by KS3 behaviour and attendance training materials.

How the behaviour and attendance strand of the Key Stage 3 Strategy will help

'The National Strategy for Key Stage 3 aims to raise standards by strengthening teaching and learning across the curriculum for all 11–14 year olds. The strategy helps schools to improve standards by focusing on teaching and learning. It offers continuing professional development for subject teachers and school managers, plus consultancy, guidance and teaching materials.'
We know that behaviour and attendance training is most effective when it is:

- based on a whole-school perspective;
- targeted to meet identified needs in individual schools;
- informed by a range of training materials designed to meet identified needs;
- provided in school by experienced and successful staff; and
- supported by local consultants.

**Background to the development of the behaviour and attendance strand**

We are aware that:

- raising standards is heavily dependent on staff recruitment and retention;
- recruitment and retention is influenced by standards of behaviour;
- support and training for improving standards of behaviour in schools is in great demand by both staff and pupils;
- standards of behaviour are unsatisfactory in 1 in 12 schools;
- levels of unauthorised absence remain unchanged, with a clear link between poor attendance and poor attainment;
- pupils frequently report that disruptive behaviour prevents their higher attainment in class;
- school managers are too frequently preoccupied with dealing with poor behaviour and are unable to focus on longer-term school improvement issues;
- pupils who are most at risk of poor behaviour and irregular attendance need to be supported to engage in all aspects of school life.

**Aims of the behaviour and attendance strand**

To secure positive behaviour and attendance by:

- supporting secondary school leaders to establish consistent and effective policy and practice;
- providing guidance, training and support to increase schools’ confidence in the management of behaviour and attendance;
- offering appropriate support to school staff to help pupils learn positive behaviour and the habits of regular attendance;
- promoting the kinds of planning, teaching and school routines and procedures that support good learning, constructive behaviour and regular attendance;
- ensuring all pupils are motivated to attend school, and supported to engage fully in their learning;
• sharing best practice across schools to promote effective strategies to improve behaviour and attendance for learning;
• engaging the wider community in a more coherent and imaginative approach to local pupils, particularly those that are disaffected; this could include parents, local health services and residents, who may be encouraged to support extended school activities.

It is important that this new strand of the Strategy is not a bolt-on, but an integral part of the drive to improve standards in secondary schools. These are the underlying principles upon which this strand is based.

**Principles**

• consistent, coherent and sustained approaches to teaching, behaviour, attendance and bullying;
• building on the best of current policies and practice;
• consultation and involvement of pupils, parents, carers and the community;
• identification and sharing of good practice as it emerges.

The KS3 consultants will play a key role in schools to promote the teaching of positive behaviour and regular attendance. Work will take place initially with senior leadership teams, who will be trained to lead developments with the whole-school staff.

**Implementation of the Key Stage 3 Strategy for behaviour and attendance**

This new part of the Strategy will build upon the work of the previous strands. Implementation will be similar to the established strands familiar to staff. The key components will be as follows.

1. A review of behaviour and attendance in school, which may pick out areas for auditing in more depth, designed to identify:
   • the effectiveness of the school’s organisation, policies and practice in promoting positive behaviour and attendance;
   • good practice that can be shared;
   • targeted support required to meet staff needs;
   • an action plan linked to the school improvement plan to secure any necessary changes in organisation, policy and practice.

2. Behaviour and attendance consultants in all LEAs:
   • working with and building upon the work of subject consultants and LEA behaviour support teams;
   • assisting schools with behaviour and attendance audits;
   • supporting schools in identifying their key points for action and follow-up activities;
• supporting school senior leadership teams with further training once needs have been identified through the behaviour and attendance review.

3. Publication of further training materials developed in line with:
   • existing information from Ofsted, DfES and other agencies;
   • lessons learned from materials and strategies used in Behaviour Improvement Project (BIP) areas;
   • the outcomes of schools’ behaviour and attendance reviews.

**Developing roles and responsibilities to support and promote positive behaviour and regular attendance in all schools**

The behaviour and attendance strategy offers a unique opportunity to address an area of educational activity that has consistently been to the fore in terms of the challenges faced by schools and their staff. Evidence suggests that where schools have successfully addressed issues of ethos and organisation, as well as strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning, improved standards of behaviour and attendance are the inevitable consequence.

The LEA plays a key role in supporting the improvement of behaviour and attendance. A number of tasks have been identified to be undertaken in the first year of the behaviour and attendance strand. In order to ensure consistency of approach, other key players in this field might find it useful to view their role in supporting these key tasks.

The following table starts to identify some of the roles and responsibilities of SENCOs in improving pupil behaviour and attendance.
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<tr>
<th>Key tasks</th>
<th>LEA responsibility</th>
<th>SENCO role</th>
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