Smart Schools, Smart Behaviour

Advice to the Minister on
behaviour management in Queensland schools

Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal

The Report of the Behaviour Management in Queensland
Schools Sub-Committee of the Ministerial Advisory Committee
for Educational Renewal

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Queensland Government
Department of **Education and the Arts**

Queensland **the Smart State**

Membership

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Contents

Background

In September 2004 the Minister for Education and the Arts announced the establishment of the Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal (MACER) and highlighted behaviour and behaviour management as one of the priority topics for the independent advice from the Committee.

In early October 2004 MACER held its inaugural meeting and the Minister discussed concerns about behaviour and behaviour management in Queensland schools. MACER resolved to establish a Behaviour Management Sub-Committee on 7 October 2004.

Membership of the Behaviour Management Sub-Committee included teacher union, academic, education and wider social sciences and human service experts.

The terms of reference (shown below) were to make recommendations to the Minister to redefine the field of behaviour management to include 'student achievement'; and to identify preferred principles and practices for behaviour management in Queensland schools.

Terms of reference

To further support students, families, school administrators and teachers, the Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal will examine, provide advice and make recommendations to the Minister for Education and the Arts by 31 March 2005 on a range of matters associated with behaviour management including:

- redefining the field of 'behaviour management' to include 'student achievement'; and
- identifying preferred principles and practices for 'behaviour management'.

Preamble

This report contains advice to the Queensland Minister for Education and the Arts on behaviour and behaviour management in Queensland schools. It contains advice on ways in which the practices in classrooms and schools can be improved to ensure a quality education for all students. In particular, it provides advice about:
- the redefinition of 'behaviour management' to focus on 'student achievement'; and
- the identification of principles and practices for 'behaviour management' in Queensland schools that lead to an increased emphasis on learning outcomes.

The Queensland Government is committed to provisions that ensure all young Queenslanders have a right to receive a quality education. The success in achieving this outcome for all is inextricably linked to the aspirations of the Smart State policy. 'State schools should provide a safe, tolerant and disciplined environment that allows all students the opportunity to learn'[1]. The conditions that encourage school learning include a supportive school ethos, constructive and respectful relationships between teachers and students, and engagement in significant and relevant learning experiences that are in turn associated with the academic, social, economic and personal benefits of education on which the Smart State relies.

In this context, behaviour and behaviour management issues in schools and the development, approval, application and review of school-based policies on behaviour management, including school disciplinary absences, remain contentious and the subject of ongoing public and political debate. The historical connotation of 'behaviour management' is that of negative behaviour and its amelioration.

Therefore, it is important to stress that while relationships between most students and their teachers are appropriate, there are incidents involving minor infringements of expected behaviour and, occasionally, some that involve serious misdemeanours that are severe and contravene social mores. Schools everywhere are likely to experience incidents ranging from minor infringements to serious misdemeanours because of the maturation of students, the lack of fit between curriculum and students' interests and experiences, social and technological change and the evolving aspirations of student cohorts.

In this respect, teachers' unions and research reports indicate that teachers face an increase in the numbers of serious misdemeanours that confound their attempts to undertake the work of teaching[2].

Accordingly, the balance that might be provided by examples of exemplary practices and achievements in Queensland schools are absent from this report. Instead the Sub-Committee has concentrated on a range of issues that are indicated by the terms of reference. In this respect, this report makes no claims to present a comprehensive description of behaviour and behaviour management in Queensland schools, but contains advice to the Minister for Education and the Arts about improvements and modifications that might be made to behaviour management policies and practices to better fit the conditions of schooling in Queensland today.

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[1] Education Queensland (2000) 2010: Queensland State Education.
http://education.qld.gov.au/corporate/qse2010/pdf/strategy.pdf

[2] Queensland Teachers Union (2005) Newsflash 06/05: Student Responsibility Package.
http://www.qtu.asn.au/nf06-05.pdf; HM Inspectorate of Education (2005) A Climate for Learning: A Review of the Implementation of the 'Better Behaviour – Better Learning' Report. Livingston, Scotland, p. 11.

Context

There are quite serious matters associated with behaviour and behaviour management that schools systems everywhere have identified as requiring attention and to which this report is directed. However, it is necessary to put the issue into perspective by emphasising that the extent and nature of 'poor behaviour' in schools is difficult to identify[3]. The United States and Canadian figures on challenging behaviours appear similar to those in the United Kingdom[4]. Even in the United States, where dramatic and tragic incidents in schools involving weapons appear in the world's media, acts of extreme or challenging behaviour in schools are not statistically common.

Challenging behaviour is mostly associated with boys aged 8 to 9 and 12 to 15, most often with students with special educational needs and with students from low-income families among whose adult members 'anti-social' behaviour is common. Differences in the incidence of challenging behaviour may be a reflection of differing perceptions of what constitutes challenging behaviour[5].

Ofsted reports that there is little agreement about the meaning or use of terms to describe challenging behaviour. The observer's expectations, conditioned perceptions about what is acceptable and the context of the behaviour encourage relative judgments about what comprises challenging behaviour. This fundamental point is abundantly clear in media reports of incidents in schools, where there are frequently as many interpretations of the 'challenging behaviour' as there are commentators.

Many commentators have noted that the effects of social change constantly shape social mores, family socialisation patterns and the predispositions and styles of the young. Hugh Mackay's most recent book summarises the situation as follows:

Monumental changes in the Australian way of life are making the present into one of the most challenging periods in our history. Such issues as the 'new woman', a record divorce rate, multiculturalism … the onrush of technology, the rise of the swinging voter, a rapidly shrinking middle class all contribute. Because we are all living through an Age of redefinition, many of us are suffering from anxiety, stress and insecurity that are the inevitable consequences of having to adjust to such radical social, cultural and economical upheaval[6].

Mackay, in discussing the impact of social change on younger generations, suggests that:

They are the generation that 'beeps and hums', one of their fathers recently remarked, and so they are. They are the generation who, having grown up in an era of unprecedentedly rapid change, have intuitively understood that they are each other's most precious resource for coping with the inherent uncertainty of life.
Their desire to connect, and to stay connected, will reshape this society. They are the harbingers of a new sense of community, a new tribalism, that will challenge everything from our old-fashioned respect for privacy to the way we conduct our relationships and the way we build our houses. The era of individualism is not dead yet, but the intimations of its mortality are clear[7].

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[3] NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (2005) *School violence and its antecedents: Interviews with high school students*. http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/bocsar, p. 1.

[4] NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (2005) *School violence and its antecedents: Interviews with high school students*. http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/bocsar, p. 2.

[5] Ofsted (2005) *Managing Challenging Behaviour*. Document reference number: HMI 2363, p. 6.

[6] Mackay, H. (2003) *Reinventing Australia*. Sydney: Harper Collins Publishing. http://www.dymocks.com.au/ContentDynamic/Full_Details.asp ISBN=0207183147

[7] Mackay, H. (2002) One for all and all for one: it's a tribe thing. *SMH*, July 13. www.smh.com.au/articles/2002/07/12/1026185109842.html

Partly as recognition of such social change, schools are now much more strongly committed to the inclusion of pupils who are less easy to motivate and engage[8]. These changes present heightened challenges for teachers and others working to support young people[9]. In this sense, 'behaviour management' becomes the management of teaching and learning itself.

In particular, minor infringements of expected behaviour, while neither inevitable nor endemic in Queensland schools, can have an adverse impact on learning for the students involved and for those around them, and can create uncomfortable conditions for teaching and other school staff. Where this happens, it causes a loss of learning opportunities, and schools and teachers need a range of strategies to deal with it in the normal course of events.

At the same time, there is widespread agreement that two types of behaviour are especially 'challenging' and therefore unacceptable, whatever the circumstances.

The first is overtly aggressive behaviour: physical acts such as biting and pinching, throwing furniture and assaulting people. The second is aggression that is mainly verbal, for example, streams of abuse, temper tantrums, and invasion of personal space intended to be threatening. The second type includes behaviour which defies teachers' authority in refusing to follow instructions[10].

In a recent survey of 2616 NSW students in Years 8 and 9, the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research[11] reported a number of school-related factors were found to be associated with physical violence (that is, beyond the expected behaviour standards in any setting in Figure 1, see page 11), even after controlling for a student's personal characteristics and family and demographic background[12]. Among this sample, the probability that a student would report physically attacking another student at school (or on the way to or from school) increased if:

- a student felt that he/she spent a lot of time in class copying out of textbooks or off the blackboard
- a student felt his/her teacher spent more time controlling the class than teaching
- a student felt that his/her fellow students were racist
- more than 25 per cent of the student's school teachers had less than five years experience.

Moreover, in the same report, individual and family-related factors were examined for the contribution they may make to a student attacking another student. It was higher for students who:

- were male
- lived in a sole parent family or with neither parent
- had experienced a punitive parenting style
- often had problems with their family in the past six months
- often acted impulsively
- had problems with reading and/or writing[13].

In this social and educational context, behaviour management issues in schools and the development, approval, application and review of school-based policies on

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[8] Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal (2003) *The Middle Phase of Learning: A report to the Minister*. www.education.qld.gov.au/etrf/pdf/macermid03.pdf

[9] Graham Donaldson, HM Senior Chief Inspector, in HM Inspectorate of Education (2005) *A Climate for Learning: A Review of the Implementation of the 'Better Behaviour – Better Learning' Report*, p. vi.

[10] Ofsted (2005) *Managing Challenging Behaviour*. Document reference number: HMI 2363, p. 7.

[11] NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (2005) *School violence and its antecedents: Interviews with high school students*. http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/bocsar, p. vii.

[12] 'Standards' are the criteria used to perceive, predict, interpret and develop code of expected behaviours.

[13] NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (2005) *School violence and its antecedents: Interviews with high school students*, p. vii. http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/bocsar

behaviour and behaviour management require close attention in order to work towards positive outcomes for all stakeholders.

It can be appreciated that behaviour management is a complex issue encompassing the school community and family, teacher and student capacities and predispositions, geographical location and a host of local and school agency peculiarities. Other MACER reports deal with aspects of this complexity and complement the focus of this report[14].

It is also important to record that behaviour management can have different consequences for students and their families in different school settings. Students whose enrolment cannot be continued in Independent and Catholic schools often move to state schools. Students from state schools in the same predicament do not always have the same choices due to factors such as cost and location. Accordingly, the state schools have a special duty of care to provide for these students that presents conceptual and practical challenges to any school.

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[14] Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal (2003) *The Middle Phase of Learning: A report to the Minister*. http://education.qld.gov.au/etrf/pdf/macermid03.pdf. Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal (2004) *Report on Indigenous Education: Recommendations to the Minister for Education and the Arts*. www.education.qld.gov.au/publication/production/reports/pdfs/indigenousreport.pdf. Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal (2005) *School improvement* (forthcoming).

Current legislation

All state schools in Queensland are governed by the *Education (General Provisions) Act 1989* that makes reference to the need for 'good behaviour' and an 'acceptable standard of behaviour'[15]. However, these categories are not defined or stipulated. The Act mandates that each school should ensure a documented behaviour management plan.

More specifically, Section 27 of the Act states that, 'the principal is responsible for behaviour management plans'. Clearly outlined in the legislation are the following guidelines:

1   The principal of each State educational institution must ensure a process is put in place for developing a behaviour management plan for the institution.
2   The plan for an institution must—
   a.   promote a supportive environment at the institution so all members of the institution's community may work together in developing acceptable standards of behaviour to create a caring, productive and safe environment for learning; and
   b.   promote an effective teaching and learning environment at the institution, that allows positive aspirations, relationships and values to develop; and
   c.   foster mutual respect among all individuals at the institution; and
   d.   encourage all students attending the institution to take increasing responsibility for their own behaviour and the consequences of their actions.
3   The principal of an institution must take all reasonable steps to ensure the institution's behaviour management plan is implemented consistently, fairly and reasonably.
4   Also, the principal must ensure the plan is reviewed from time to time.

Coupled with the *Education (General Provisions) Act 1989*, Section 21 of the *Education (General Provisions) Regulations 2000* reinforces that the principal is responsible for monitoring the general standard of behaviour once it has been defined[16]. What the current legislation and corresponding regulations fail to stipulate or define are the actual ***standards of behaviour***. In addition to the Education Act, there are numerous other pieces of legislation that have a real or implied impact on behaviour management in schools, exemplified by, but not limited to:

- *Criminal Code Act 1899*;[17]
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*;
- *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000*;
- *Judicial Review Act 1991*; and
- *Freedom of Information Act 1992*.

These pieces of legislation and associated regulations together with internal Department of Education and the Arts policies are complex. While there are provisions for simplifying the complexity in place, principals, teachers, students and parents have few prospects of understanding the complications in anything but a cursory manner. Most, in the Sub-Committee's view, would not be aware of either their full legal responsibilities or the sanctions to which they might be subjected under this legal web.

[15] The *Education (General Provisions) Act 1989* is a Queensland State Government law. Reprint No. 6C.

[16] This differs from the *Education (General Provisions) Act 1989*, with an emphasis on the responsibilities of the school principal.

[17] All of these are Federal legislation except for the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act and the Judicial Review Act that are both State government legislation.

Existing policies and mindsets

As the number of policies, regulations and legislative frameworks increases, their weight and complexity impose a bureaucratic burden on school administrators and teachers with the real possibility of legal action for errors of commission or omission.

Behaviour management within the public schooling sector means *SM–06: Management of Behaviour in a Supportive School Environment — Schools and Discipline*[18]. This policy states that:

> *Education Queensland is committed to providing school environments which maximise the educational opportunities and outcomes for all, through quality practices in the areas of curriculum, interpersonal relationships and school organisation; the employment of fair and just practices which comply with relevant legislation; and the consideration of and use of suspension and exclusion procedures only when all other approaches have been exhausted.*[19]

In this policy statement, behaviour management connects pedagogy, learning, quality practice, curriculum, interpersonal relationships and school organisation with punitive measures, such as suspension and exclusion, only considered when all other approaches have been explored. However, behaviour management is not defined within *SM-06*. While the Department of Education and the Arts provides prescriptive detail on the proformas to be used in outlining their current behaviour management plans, it leaves the detail to the imagination and management skills and knowledge of over 1300 local school principals.

The current review of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 1989* is timely and provides the opportunity to streamline the legislative complexity around behaviour management. There is an urgent need to both review and subsequently provide principals and school staff with uncomplicated, but sophisticated, advice about the legislation and its implementation in schools. Recent research suggests that inconsistencies in the application of behaviour management policies and practices lead to confusion among educators and the public[20]. This confusion can be further exacerbated when inconsistencies in responding to behaviour management incidents are highlighted in the media[21]. There is also the risk of inconsistencies for families, students and staff as they transfer across schools and systems.

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[18] This is known anecdotally as the 'Behaviour Management Policy' among Education Queensland teachers and principals and was issued in December 1993.

[19] Education Queensland (1993) SM-06: Management of Behaviour in a Supportive School Environment – Schools and Discipline. *Department of Education Manual, Queensland State Government*. www.education.qld.gov.au/corporate/doem/studeman/sm-06000/sm-06000.html

[20] Didaskalou, E. & Millward, A. (2002) Breaking the Policy Log-Jam: Perspectives on policy formulation and development for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. *Oxford Review of Education*, 28 (1), pp. 109-121.

[21] Win News, *The Courier-Mail*, 2004, *The Sunday Mail,* 13 March 2005.

Taking a stand

This set of circumstances draws attention to the cultural and interpretative mores of individuals in the teaching profession, who then need to interpret and implement behaviour management policy and procedures. This signals two significant factors. First, there is the policy and professional *expectation* that individual principals, and in turn teachers, will 'correctly' interpret and be able to accomplish a seamless connection between the requirements of a raft of whole-school policies, whole-of-state education policies and child-directed policies and in some cases, Commonwealth legislation, across a host of agencies. Second, there are many interpretative schemas that teachers use to evaluate the conceptual terms contained in policy documents. These range across professional and personal philosophies that people use to make sense of their worlds.

These expectations and schemas are bound to come into play when teachers and principals are faced with infringements of expected behaviour or serious misdemeanours in the schoolyards and classrooms. Moreover, teachers often have strong personal commitments to terms such as 'inclusiveness', 'social justice', 'democracy' and 'tolerance' that are invoked in educational policy. In a pluralist society, there are numerous and competing 'versions' of these value-loaded terms. Strong local community influences can often be reflected in a teacher's style and perceptions. There is always the possibility of real or potential tension and occasional conflict, between community expectations and the legal, policy and educational frameworks in which teachers and principals work. By and large, teachers and principals have successfully balanced their personal and public stances in these environments.

Difficulties arise when it is assumed that all values, beliefs and behaviours are equally valid and in turn, no one position can be adopted as a standard. Terms such as 'tolerance', 'open-mindedness' and 'inclusiveness' are themselves 'values'. These terms can hardly be defended by arguing that there are no objective values, or at least, values around which individuals and institutions can make a stand.

The present behaviour management system requires implementation. However, there are no specific guides for expected behaviour or for corresponding processes for facilitating expected behaviour and responding to minor infringements and serious misdemeanours. Moreover, there is an expectation that cultural variations within a pluralist society will be accounted for while balancing the need for equity and fairness. It is possible then that principals and teachers can find themselves in a 'classical relativist' position where variation suggests that there is no position that can be adopted, as an *effect* of the behaviour management system.

In order to foster consistency of application and to avoid public controversy when personal interpretations clash with community and, occasionally, official expectations, a set of core principles, with corresponding standards of expected behaviour, and a code of expected behaviour are necessary. Before proceeding to explore any core principles on which to base behaviour management, it is instructive to compare the Catholic and Independent sectors in the way in which behaviour management is approached. The behaviour management section of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 1989* is applicable to state schools only. Non-State schools are governed by the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2001* and the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001* which provides, in Section 6, that a school must have a written statement of philosophy and aims, adopted by its governing body, that is used as:
- the basis for the school's educational program; and
- a guide for the school's educational and organisational practices.

The statement must be consistent with the Adelaide Declaration on the National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century. Common to both the Catholic and Independent sector, but different from the State system, is the notion of a contractual rather than legal mandate with parents.

Independent schools

Independent schools operate in parallel to each other and with other systems of schooling in Queensland. Behaviour standards, codes of behaviour, and behaviour management are linked to 'mission' statements that express stipulated values, beliefs and attitudes that in turn underpin the image constructed by the school community. Members of particular school communities both know and understand the values, beliefs and attitudes upon which the standards and expected behaviours are based. There is an expectation that Heads and senior managers, from their recruitment onwards, are committed to and work towards achieving the core values of a particular school.

Catholic Education

Similarly, the Catholic Education sector has a set of guidelines for behaviour. These guidelines are based in Catholicism as well as policies that originate from groups such as MCEETYA. They nominate common values and understandings so that Catholic schools are directed to 'model and practise fair, equitable, non-discriminatory language and behaviours, using safe and legal procedures'[22]. These languages, behaviours and procedures are based on the principles of equity, excellence, authenticity, relevance and social justice.

Common to both the Independent and Catholic sectors is the connection between a supportive school environment and the school culture, where the code of behaviour is based on a set of principles reflecting the underlying values, beliefs and attitudes of the school community. Clearly demonstrated here is the notion that cultural pluralism implies *taking a position* rather than suggesting that all value positions are equally valid.

Two different strategies emerge from the legislative and policy directives and the dilemmas associated with relativist positioning. The first strategy concerns a change in recruitment processes where principals/Heads are appointed and who are then responsible for behaviour management in a corporate sense, thus mirroring the Independent and Catholic school strategy. The second strategy is the adoption of a code of behaviour such as that suggested by MCEETYA[23]:

> *Best practice related to addressing student behaviour issues is, in the first instance, likely to be based on a clearly articulated and comprehensive behaviour management policy at a system, district/community, school and classroom level*[24].

Similarly, the American Federation of Teachers urges that 'district wide discipline codes' be enacted and 'rigorously and fairly enforced'[25]. The HMIE in Scotland emphasises the need to establish *coherent links* between policy and behaviour management[26]. While Queensland state schools have a behaviour management plan that describes the nature of the school environment, these plans do not spell out the standards or expected behaviour and an associated code of expected behaviour or principles from which to develop such as code. Queensland state schools also have a legal mandate to be responsible for 'all children' and thus potentially draw students from a wide range of communities. To manage both the cultural plurality and

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[22] Brisbane Catholic Education (2000) *Guidelines for Management of Behaviour; Managing Drug Related Incidents and Managing Police Investigations*, Brisbane Catholic Education; Archdiocese of Brisbane.

[23] MCEETYA, (2004) *Student Behaviour Management Project Report on: Best Practice in Addressing Student Behaviour Issues in Australia*, p. 14. Emphasis added.

[24] See also NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (2005) *School violence and its antecedents: Interviews with high school students*. http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/bocsar, p. 2.

[25] American Federation of Teachers (2004) *Setting the Stage for Strong Standards: Elements of a Safe and Orderly School*, p. 3.

[26] HM Inspectorate of Education (2005) *A Climate for Learning*. HMIE: Livingston.

inclusiveness imperative, a Code of Expected Behaviour (known as the Code) could consist of two parts:

- Part A contains, identifies and names expected behaviour and comprises the non-negotiable set of principles established centrally and promulgated as a system-wide consistent 'position' from which the standards of expected behaviour are articulated.[27]
- Part B sets out the processes for facilitating the development of expected behaviour, the processes for responding to minor infringements and serious misdemeanours, and a list of agreed actions that are sensitive to community expectations and do not contravene or contradict Part A.

Part A is documented as a code of expected behaviour that would give principals and teachers *de jure* authority to act locally, while being supported globally. In short, they would have the certainty of authority from the Central Office.

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[27] The establishment of the principles, this report proposes, should be subject to the three over-arching criteria suggested in Section 9 of this report.

Common sense as a limit of acceptability

The commentary thus far illustrates the volatile, contentious, complex and reactive practice associated with behaviour management. This report will now move forward to present a re-configuration of behaviour management that potentially leads to preventative and proactive practices.

Most authors in recent years have defined 'behaviour' in relation to the actions of an individual who responds to influences. Typically, these actions are in the context of one's own and others' social and emotional wellbeing. That is, behaviour is linked to how individuals feel about themselves (their self-esteem) and is heavily influenced by the social support surrounding them. Therefore, it could be argued that behaviour broadly falls into two major categories: that which meets some predetermined expected standard (variously described as 'good', 'acceptable', 'tolerated') and behaviour that falls outside this category (variously described as 'bad', 'unacceptable' and 'not tolerated'). We have used the term 'expected behaviour' in this document to highlight that it is behaviour that the school community and its participants have agreed is expected. The behaviour is also clearly articulated and known to all participants.

Figure 1: Within and beyond expected behaviour[28]

Expected behaviour in the home   **Expected behaviour in schools**

**Broader community values
and
expectations**
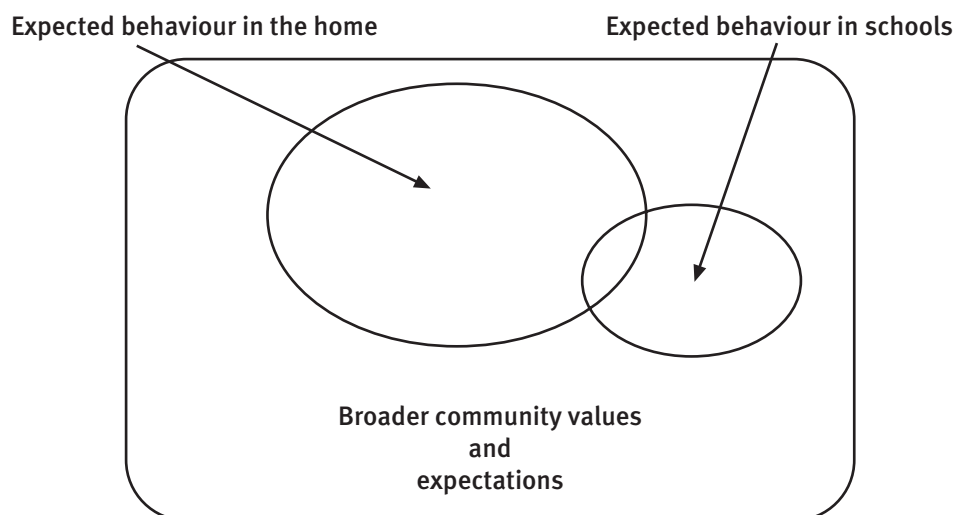
When behaviour does not meet expected standards within a school it (the behaviour/actions) may be seen as a concern. Behaviour that causes concern may range from minor infringements of expected standards (for example, talking out of turn, passing notes in class, incorrect uniform, making sarcastic and hostile remarks to others) to more serious misdemeanours to criminal behaviour. Behaviour that does not meet expected standards has been variously termed: misbehaviour, problem behaviour, negative behaviour, disruptive behaviour, norm-breaking behaviour, antisocial behaviour, aggressive behaviour, challenging behaviour, and the like.

Figure 1 depicts a diagrammatic image of the school–family–community situation where there is often a difference between the expected behaviour at school and expected behaviour of the home. This is a difference model rather than a value judgment. These boundaries lie within a framework of values and expectations at a community level. In other words students inhabit spheres of difference in regard to community, family and school expectations of behaviour and the boundaries around these expectations are not always clearly defined for individual students.

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[28] Discussion of MACER meeting October 2004

There is always a value judgment to be made about where the boundaries for the school lie, implied in the earlier discussions of relativity and behaviour codes. The determination of boundaries is at the heart of the 'behaviour management' debate[29]. It is MACER's steadfast view that schools ought to be 'student-centred' so that every child will achieve well at school in the interests of the individual, their families and communities and the wider Australian society. Schools are responsible for managing the conditions under which learning can be reasonably expected to occur and the research is clear about these conditions.

The term 'behaviour management' is often used as code to mean management of 'bad' behaviour or of behaviour outside that deemed as minor infringements and which is therefore punishable. For some students misbehaviour disguises learning difficulties or underachievement. In other words misbehaviour is a coping mechanism for academic failure. There is evidence from the United States and Australia which suggests that the causes of student underachievement (for example, reading failure) in the regular classroom are not being addressed, instead there is a pattern of withdrawing these students (who may also be misbehaving) from their classroom further reducing contact with their peers and teachers[30, 31].

A similar pattern of underachievement (and possible misbehaviour) can be detected among many Indigenous students and, as a consequence, learning outcomes for these students are seldom met. Ethical questions could be raised as to why a large proportion of Indigenous students do not achieve the same learning outcomes as their peers and why there appear to be 'no consequences' for these poor outcomes in the educational system[32].

Ideally, the term 'behaviour management' in a school context refers to the processes by which explicitly stated, expected standards of behaviour are fostered in a supportive school environment and infringements and/or misdemeanours are prevented, reduced and responded to by identified processes that consider both social and academic dimensions. In the context of Figure 1, learning the expected behaviour at school for some children results in them making mistakes that, in turn, can be used as opportunities for learning to reinforce expected behaviour. In this way behaviour management can be re-conceptualised as the *promotion of expected behaviour that fosters learning*.

This report affirms the academic, social and personal requirements of students operating in a 'knowledge economy' environment, the direction of QSE–2010 and the Smart State. Students must remain at school until they reach the International Standard Classification of Education qualification levels 3–7, gaining the necessary social capital to operate in the 21st Century[33]. If schools are to achieve these ends, students need to be taught how to take responsibility for their own learning behaviour, and develop strategies of self-regulation and self-discipline; and schools require the organisational ability and curriculum flexibility to do this[34].

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[29] The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs' (MCEETYA) *Student Behaviour Management Project*.

[30] American Federation of Teachers (2004) *Early Intervention for Students with Learning and Behavior Problems*, http://www.aft.org/topics/specialed/downloads/earlyinteventionres.pdf, p. 1.

[31] van Kraayenoord, C. E. (2005) Literate lives. In A. Ashman and J.Elkins (Eds.) *Educating children with diverse abilities*. (2nd ed.) French's Forest, NSW: Pearson Education Australia, pp. 183-214.

[32] Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal (2004) Report on Indigenous Education: Recommendations to the Minister for Education and the Minister for the Arts.
http://www.education.qld.gov.au/publication/production/reports/pdfs/indigenousreport.pdf

[33] See *A Guide to the New Legislation Youth Participation in Education and Training Act 2003*
http://www.education.qld.gov.au/etrf/legis.html. There is a requirement once a young person completes Year 10 or has turned 16 to participate for two years beyond Year 10 or turning 16; or until they have gained a Senior Certificate; or until they have gained a Certificate III; or until they turn 17. Flexible arrangements will apply to this phase.

[34] See MCEETYA (2004) *Best Practice in Addressing Students Behaviour issues in Australia* and OECD (1998) *Human Capital Investment: An international comparison*. Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, p. 93.

This approach from the perspective of 'personal responsibility' is important. Harker argues that 'victim myths', particularly the myth that 'how I feel and behave is "caused" by my past', are on the increase. He proposes that such myths are reinforced by parents, teachers, helping professionals such as school counsellors, psychologists, social workers and the law courts. This myth, he says, is not only profoundly inaccurate and seriously damaging, but is open to correction through appropriate education and re-education[35]. It is of some consequence also that Long, Carpenter and Hayden conclude that the 'effects of school achievement are largely, but not totally, independent of family background'[36]. Having staked a claim to personal responsibility, there are clear synergies between this and other approaches such as restorative justice[37].

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[35] Harker, Phil. *Beyond Passive Compliance: Influencing Fundamental Change*. Brisbane: Presentation to the Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal (MACER) Behaviour Management Sub-Committee, 1 May 2005.

[36] Long, M., Carpenter, P. & Hayden, M. (1999) Participation in Education and Training 1980-1994. Melbourne: Longitudinal Studies of Australian Youth, Research Report Number 13, p. 119.

[37] Strang, H. (2001) *Restorative justice programs in Australia: a report to the Criminology Research Council*. http://www.aic.gov.au/crc/reports/strang/school.html; Sullivan, Dennis & Larry Tifft. (2001). *Restorative Justice: Healing the Foundations of Our Everyday Lives*. Monsey, NY: Willow Tree Press.

The relationships among behaviour, teaching and learning

Current research and theoretical writings in teaching and learning suggest that the relationships among behaviour, teaching and learning are complex and non-linear [38]. This understanding forms a 'pedagogy–discipline' link that has been further exploited through such examples as the Productive Pedagogies concept and Dimensions of Learning[39, 40, 41].

Classroom management is the *foundation of effective instruction and curriculum design*, with studies showing a correlation between teacher effectiveness and student achievement[42]. As Marzano points out, individual teachers, rather than schools or student backgrounds alone, have significant effects on student learning[43]. Similarly, Wright, Horn and Sanders argue that:

> *the most important factor affecting student learning is the teacher. In addition, the results show wide variation in effectiveness among teachers …* **Effective teachers appear to be effective with students of all achievement levels regardless of the heterogeneity of their classes** *(emphasis in the original).*[44]

Effective teachers have knowledge and skills about the design of curriculum that is appropriate for classroom learning and assessment. They know about the sequencing, pacing and presentation of knowledge that will achieve learning outcomes, as well as having the knowledge of assessment and reporting practices. They also have a skilful grasp of classroom management techniques that underpin successful curriculum design and pedagogical, assessment and reporting strategies. However, the mere use of exciting classroom materials and activities is not the answer to behaviour problems in classrooms[45]. If teachers cannot obtain student cooperation to proceed with instruction, then it is most unlikely that teaching of any level of effectiveness will ensue[46].

More significantly, if teaching and learning are perceived as purposes of schooling, then behaviour management is a significant core input into schooling. Education attainment and completion rates remain a key indicator of system performance and these completion rates are linked to democratic, civil and economic processes[47]. While there are many ways to define education and to debate whether schools, as

38 Glasser, W. & Dotson, E. (1998) Choice Theory in the classroom. New York: Harper Collins; Hayes, D, Lingard, B & Mills, M. (2000) Productive Pedagogies. Educational Links. No 6. Retrieved January 20, 2005 from www.138.25.75.110/personal/dhayes/Education_Links.html

39 Fields, B.A. (2000) Productive Pedagogies and discipline: The challenge of aligning teaching and behaviour management. See http://www.education.qld.gov.au/corporate/newbasics/html/pedagogies/pedagog.html

40 http://www.education.qld.gov.au/public_medial/reports/curriculum-framework/productive pedagogies

41 Dimensions of Learning is an instructional framework based on five dimensions of thinking.

42 Haycock, K. (1998) Good teaching matters … a lot. *Thinking K-16*, 3: 2, 1-14. See also Hattie, J. A. (1992) Measuring the effects of schooling. *Australian Journal of Education*, 36, 1, 5-13.

43 Marzano, R. J. (2000) *A New Era of School Reform: Going Where the Research Takes Us*. Aurora, CO: Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (ERIC document Reproduction Service No. ED454255).

44 Wright, S. P., Horn, S. P. & Sanders, W. L. (1997) Teacher and classroom context effects on student achievement: implications for teacher evaluation. *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education*, 11: 57-67.

45 Long, J. D. & Frye, V.H. (1985) *Making it till Friday: A guide to successful classroom management*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Book Company, pp. 3-4.

46 Of course, the assumed model of education here is that of schooling: a teacher with a 'class' of students.

47 Cullen, R., Cosier, I., Greco, F. & Payne, J. (1999) *Participation and attainment targets for Queensland schools*. 2010 Queensland State Education Working Paper prepared for Education Queensland, p. 3.

currently known, will survive or change, it is the conventional school to which the public directs its attention in behaviour management issues[48].

In disorderly situations children cannot concentrate, teachers cannot teach and classroom time is lost. This compromises the individual's right to learn and their social and emotional wellbeing[49]. Recent reports from Scotland clearly illustrate that improving the quality of teaching and learning drives improvements in the standard of student behaviour (see Table 1)[50]. The management of school behaviour requires caring and respectful relationships and open communication among all the participants in the school community. In short, what happens in the hallways, the playgrounds, the gym, the bus queues and the tuckshop also sets standards of expected behaviour. 'Standards' are the criteria used to perceive, predict, interpret and generate expected behaviours[51].

We propose therefore that communication using respectful dialogue serves as the framework for the expected code of behaviour and the behaviour management processes. Such dialogue emerges when different points of view are listened to and acknowledged, without the automatic need for acceptance.

Table 1: Common features of best practice in learning and teaching in Scottish schools[52]

Classes entered classrooms in calm and orderly fashion, and pupils settled quickly and prepared for their lesson.

Teachers had established clear rules of behaviour in their classes, engaging pupils in agreeing to these rules and the importance of observing them.

Teachers had prepared lessons well and ensured that pupils knew the objectives of the lesson.

Teachers explained new work clearly and gave pupils clear instruction on timing of tasks and what they were to do next, to ensure a good pace to learning.

Teachers sustained good discussions with their pupils, demonstrating their own interest and engaging the interest and the enthusiasm of their pupils. They made learning seem important to pupils.

Pupils were active in their learning and involved in different learning contexts in the course of a unit of work. These contexts included individual work, interactive sessions with their teacher, working with their peers to discuss ideas and/or to design and make products, researching and note taking, and presenting their views to the teacher and the class.

Pupils used ICT regularly for an appropriate range of purposes and often they saw their best work displayed.

Teachers drew on clear assessment information to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities and aptitudes, both supporting them and challenging them appropriately, to consolidate and extend their learning. They worked closely to a clear plan, with support for learning staff when they provided additional support in classes.

Pupils were encouraged to develop their own skills of evaluation. They evaluated ideas, opinions, products, events and vicarious experience in what they read, saw and heard, and also their programmes of study, their own work and the work of their classmates[53].

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[48] See MACER (2004) *A creative workforce for a smart state: Professional development for teachers in an era of innovation*. Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal. March.

[49] American Federation of Teachers (2003) *Setting the stage for strong standards: Elements of a safe and orderly school*. Educational Issues Department. Item No. 39-0235.

[50] HM Inspectorate of Education (2005) *A Climate for Learning: A Review of the Implementation of the 'Better Behaviour – Better Learning' Report*, pp. 19, 24, 25.

[51] 'Standards' are the criteria used to perceive, predict, interpret and generate expected behaviours.

[52] HM Inspectorate of Education (2005) *A Climate for Learning: A Review of the Implementation of the 'Better Behaviour – Better Learning' Report*.

[53] HM Inspectorate of Education (2005) *A Climate for Learning: A Review of the Implementation of the 'Better Behaviour – Better Learning' Report*, pp. 19, 24, 25.

Foundations for a new direction in behaviour management

Recent research demonstrates strong links between self-esteem and social support in school settings. Students are less likely to be involved with problem behaviour if these links are in place[54]. Students are less likely to develop anti-social behaviour when they experience the following:

- effective instruction, consistent management practices, and the opportunity to acquire and utilise pro-social behaviour management skills[55];
- a sense of support and connectedness[56]; and
- a sense of community[57].

As the HMIE observes:

> *Given the close links between pupil learning and behaviour, promoting positive behaviour in schools must be a key element in ensuring the best possible outcomes for our children ... For pupils, acquiring the ability to manage their behaviour and relationships appropriately is a key part of preparing them for life in an adult society, including the workplace.*[58]

The relationship between in-school behaviour, social support and members of the school community is clearly substantial. This supportive school environment, in turn, is linked to teaching and learning practices and outcomes. Therefore, it is important for school leadership and teachers to create positive learning opportunities to engage their students and to meet teaching and learning outcomes. The latter is the social justice issue of the day.

[54] Moran, B. & DuBois, D., (2002) Relation of social support and self-esteem to problem behaviour: Investigation of differing models. *Journal of Early Adolescence*. 22 (4) November, pp. 407-435.

[55] Bru, E., Murberg, T. & Stephens, P. (2001) Social support, negative life events and pupil misbehaviour among young Norwegian adolescents. *Journal of Adolescence*. 24, pp. 715-727.

[56] Juvonen, Le, Kaganoff, Augustine & Constant, (2004) *Focus on the wonder years: Challenges facing the American Middle school*. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Education.

[57] Battistich, V., Solomon, D., Watson, M. & Schaps, E.(1997) Caring school communities. *Educational Psychologist*, 32 (3), 137-151.

[58] HM Inspectorate of Education (2005) *A Climate for Learning: A Review of the Implementation of the 'Better Behaviour – Better Learning' Report*. HMIE: Livingston, p. 1

Principles based on individual rights and responsibilities, wellbeing and the achievement of learning outcomes: Establishing a new era in behaviour management

The model of behaviour and behaviour management proposed in this report is depicted in Figure 2. The model comprises Part A: Identification and naming of expected behaviour and Part B: The behaviour management processes. Part B emerges out of Part A. There are three aspects to the identification and naming of expected behaviour. At the base/foundation are a number of principles. These principles are informed by:
- individual rights and responsibilities;
- the wellbeing of self, others and the environment; and
- the individual achievement of learning outcomes.

The implication is that these criteria should ideally apply in all Queensland schools.

Figure 2: The code of expected behaviour
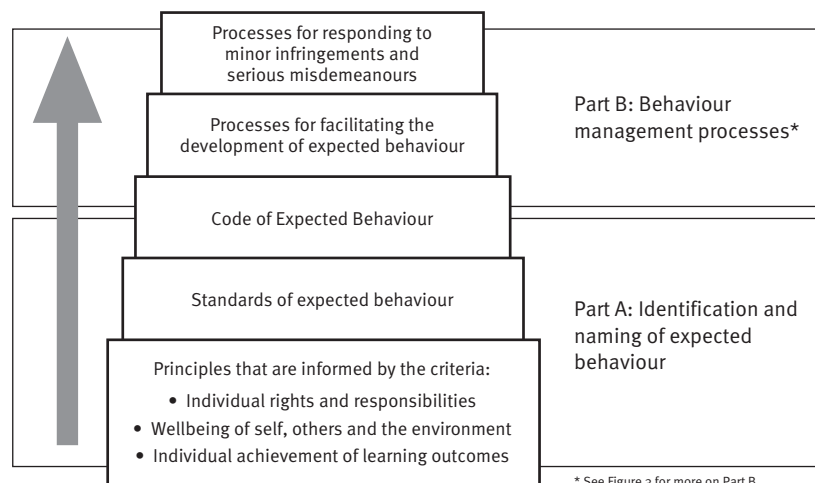
Once the principles have been identified, a set of expected standards related to the principles is articulated. These standards then suggest the expected behaviours that are documented in a code of expected behaviour and the consequences. Once the three aspects described above have been identified and named (Part A), schools will establish the processes for managing behaviour (Part B). Specifically two types of processes will be established and operate concurrently. The Behaviour Management Processes include:
- the processes for facilitating the development of expected behaviour; and
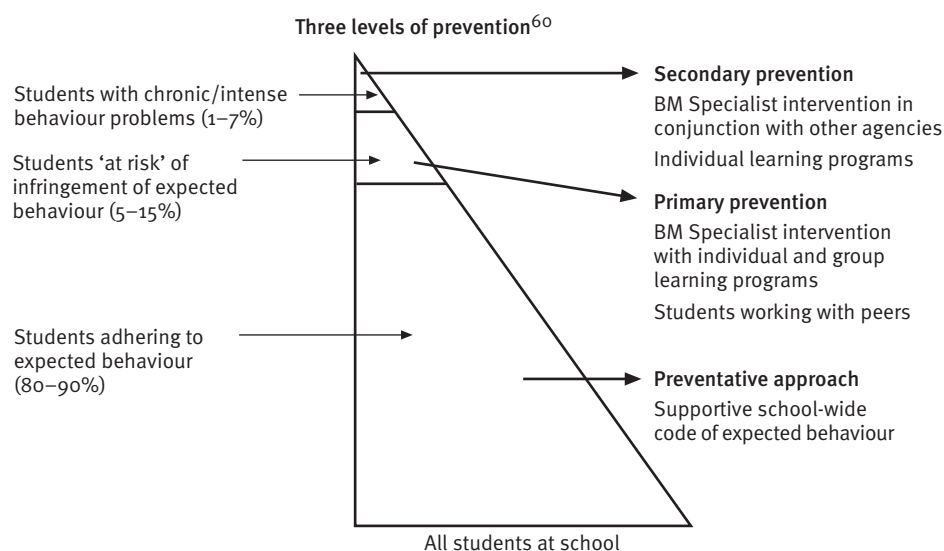- the processes for responding to minor infringements and serious misdemeanours.

Both Part A and Part B are recorded as the school's Code of Expected Behaviour. Thus the school's Code of Expected Behaviour becomes a 'learning management' plan with a code of expected behaviour that has emerged from a set of standards, which in turn, has been based on a set of principles. The principles are associated with the rights of the individual, awareness of the common good and with the achievement of learning outcomes. They can become the foundation of an array of expected behaviours and processes that comprise core components of the Code of Expected

Behaviour in all schools, irrespective of location, cultural composition and the local community. These principles also underpin the teaching and learning agenda of schools. Defined in this way the Code of Expected Behaviour becomes a documented strategy for achieving learning outcomes.

Identifying the contents of Part A would be undertaken centrally in a collaborative manner with principals, teachers, teachers' unions and parent groups. The product of this collaboration would be a set of principles, a set of standards and a 'code of behaviour' that explicitly document the expected behaviour for which the principal is accountable and that are supported at all levels of the system including the Central Office.

In addition, the three criteria can be used to identify any optional additional principles that provide for local sensitivities. School principals and their communities could, under this provision, add to the core principles of the Code of Expected Behaviour. Similarly, the day-to-day behaviour management processes can be enacted swiftly and with already established authority without having to interpret legal documents. The Sub-Committee notes the exemplary model and parent-friendly example of a code of conduct for student transport provided by Queensland and Western Australia Governments[59].

Figure 3: Three phase prevention program

Three levels of prevention[60]

Students with chronic/intense behaviour problems (1–7%) →

Secondary prevention
BM Specialist intervention in conjunction with other agencies
Individual learning programs

Students 'at risk' of infringement of expected behaviour (5–15%) →

Primary prevention
BM Specialist intervention with individual and group learning programs
Students working with peers

Students adhering to expected behaviour (80–90%) →

Preventative approach
Supportive school-wide code of expected behaviour

All students at school

The three levels of prevention depicted in Figure 3 represent the behaviour management processes that will operate in Queensland schools and illustrate the processes for responding to minor infringements of expected behaviour and/or serious misdemeanours in schools. The specification of (1) the code of expected behaviour and (2) the consequences for the minor infringements of expected behaviour and (3) for the serious misdemeanors, by Education Queensland is a similar example of an attempt to standardise those behaviour management matters about which there should be little debate[61].

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[59] Queensland Department of Transport (1999) *Code of Conduct for School Children Travelling on Buses*. http://www.transport.qld.gov.au/qt/PubTrans.nsf/ReferenceLookup/code_of_conduct.pdf/$file/code_of_conduct.pdf. Government of Western Australia (2002) *Way to Go: Better Transport to School: A Guide for Parents and Students for Safe School Bus Behaviour*. Department of Planning and Infrastructure. http://www.pta.wa.gov.au/upload/pta/B4943F0882FC44298B771DBAAD3701B8.pdf.

[60] Figure 3 is adapted from Walker, H.M., Horner, R.H., Sugai, G.H., Bullis, M., Sprague, J.R., Bricker, D & Kaufman, M.J. (1996) Integrated approaches to preventing antisocial behaviour patterns among school-age children and youth. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioural Disorders*. 4, pp. 193-256.

[61] The State of Queensland (Department of Education and the Arts) (2004) *Education Laws for the Future*. pp. 19-21.

School leadership

The school leadership must take a prominent role in further developing and implementing the Code of Expected Behaviour. The principal plays an important role in fostering a sense of community, connectedness and belonging within the school community and ensuring consistency and fairness in the application of the behaviour management processes.

School leadership, like effective teaching, is also associated with student learning outcomes. In a meta-analysis of the relationship between leadership and student achievement (see Table 2), the average effect size (expressed as a correlation) between leadership and student achievement is 0.25.

> *To interpret this correlation, consider two schools (school A & school B) with similar student and teacher populations. Both demonstrate achievement on a standardised, norm-referenced test at the 50th percentile. Principals in both schools are also average — that is, their abilities in the 21 key leadership responsibilities at the 50th percentile. Now assume that the principal of school B improves her demonstrated abilities in all 21 responsibilities by exactly one standard deviation.*
>
> *Our research findings indicate that this increase in leadership ability would translate into mean student achievement at school B that is 10 percentile points higher than school A ... Expressed differently, a one standard deviation improvement in leadership practices is associated with an increase in average student achievement from the 50th percentile to the 60th percentile. This represents a statistically significant difference in achievement[62].*

Table 2: Research-based characteristics of effective school leadership[63]

Responsibilities	The extent to which the principal ...
Culture	fosters shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation
Order	establishes a set of standard operating procedures and routines
Discipline	protects teachers from issues and influences that would detract from their teaching time and focus
Resources	provides teachers with materials and professional development necessary for the successful execution of their jobs
Curriculum, instruction, assessment	is directly involved in the design and implementation of curriculum, instruction and assessment practices
Focus	establishes clear goals and keeps those goals in the forefront of the school's attention
Knowledge of curriculum, instruction assessment	is knowledgeable about current curriculum, instruction and assessment practices
Visibility	has quality contact and interactions with teacher and students
Contingent rewards	recognises and rewards individual accomplishments
Communication	establishes strong lines of communication with teachers and among students
Outreach	is an advocate and spokesperson for the school to all stakeholders
Input	involves teachers in the design and implementation of important decisions and policies
Affirmation	recognises and celebrates school accomplishments and acknowledges failures
Relationship	demonstrates an awareness of the personal aspects of teachers and staff teachers and staff

[62] Waters, T., Marzano, R. J. & McNulty, B. (2003) *Balanced Leadership: What 30 years of research tells us about the effect of leadership on student achievement*. Aurora: McREL, p. 2.

[63] Waters, T., Marzano, R. J. & McNulty, B. (2003) *Balanced Leadership: What 30 years of research tells us about the effect of leadership on student achievement*. Aurora: McREL, p. 4.

Table 2: continued

Responsibilities	The extent to which the principal ...
Change agent	is willing to and actively challenges the status quo
Optimiser	inspires and leads new and challenging innovations
Ideals/beliefs	communicates and operates from strong ideals and beliefs about schooling
Monitors/evaluates	monitors the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning
Flexibility	adapts leadership behaviour to the needs of the current situation and is comfortable with dissent
Situational awareness	is aware of the details and undercurrents in the running of the school and uses this information when dealing with current and potential problems
Intellectual stimulation	ensures that faculty and staff are aware of current theories and practices and makes the discussion of these a regular aspect of the school's culture

This research underscores the interconnected nature of school leadership factors that produce the kinds of environments where the work of students and teachers flourishes. The fact that that principal leadership is significantly correlated with student achievement is a highly salient cue for the provision of professional mentoring[64].

[64] Waters, T. & Grubb, S. (2004) *The Leadership We Need: Using research to strengthen the use of standards for administrator preparation and licensure programs*. Research for education and Learning, p. 2. See also Miller, K. (2004) Creating conditions for leadership effectiveness: The District's role. Aurora, CO: McREL policy briefs http://www.mcrel.org/topics/productDetail.asp

Behaviour management specialists and facilities

While most students comply with expected behaviour, in all school systems there are some 5 to 15 per cent who will require support beyond that provided by a classroom teacher to comply with expected behaviour. An even smaller number, up to 5 per cent, are unable to meet behavioural expectations without very extensive support including alternative placement programs[65].

International best practice in behaviour management makes use of named specialists who provide support for students with challenging behaviour in regular classes. These include teachers who provide support for learning difficulties, behaviour support teachers and auxiliary staff. Such people are well qualified in specialist areas[66]. Some auxiliary staff from across government agencies are there to primarily deal with serious emotional and behavioural difficulties, in contrast to providing learning support, in the normal day-to-day classroom setting. These people have the specialist qualifications and experience to undertake the work.

The research identifies that class teachers and behaviour support teachers have clearly defined roles and work as a team to achieve outcomes with classes and individuals. In this context advice from these behaviour support teachers is directed at helping classroom teachers deal with issues as they arise so that only seriously challenging behaviour is referred to more specialist help. For example, in the United Kingdom:

> Currently, some 23 authorities were participating in the national pilot and all reported favourably on its effectiveness. … The strong focus on identifying problems early, and providing effective support to help teachers resolve them successfully within the mainstream classroom, was a very positive aspect of the FFI [The Framework for Intervention] approach[67].

In this approach, the expectation is that class teachers are well prepared to implement strategies that support the school's Code of Expected Behaviour for promoting and maintaining expected behaviour. Some students may need to be removed from the classroom and be dealt with at the level of primary intervention (see Figure 3). For the small group of students who fall in the category of chronic infringement and/or serious misdemeanours, alternative agencies may be called upon to assist the classroom teacher in the development of the student's individual programs. Such students are best served by an alternative, flexible, individualised education program aimed at:

> re-igniting the student's desire to learn and creating opportunities for planned future pathways which can range from reintegration into the regular classroom, to accessing the education system in general or finding employment[68].

Such students require highly specialised attention that meets their needs for supervision, remediation of behaviour and maintenance of academic progress[69].

While the precise investment details have not been provided to MACER, there appears to be a resource commitment to 'behaviour' programs in schools that have accumulated

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[65] American Federation of Teachers (2004) *Setting the stage for strong standards: Elements of a safe and orderly school*, p. 3. See also Figure 3 - Walker et al., (1996) Integrated approaches to preventing antisocial behaviour patterns among school-age children and youth. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioural Disorders*, 4, pp. 193-256.

[66] The Position Descriptions for Teacher A61 (TSS: Tch-General), Teacher A157 (TSS: Tch-AVT (BM)), and Education Adviser (Behaviour Management) A129 do not specify specialist qualifications beyond those of being a registered teacher. While people holding these positions perform credibly, a Masters degree in Educational Psychology or associated areas appears to be the industry standard for behaviour management staff.

[67] HMI Inspectorate of Education (2005) *A Climate for Learning: A Review of the Implementation of the 'Better Behaviour – Better Learning' Report*, pp. 14-15.

[68] MCEETYA (2004) p. 19.

[69] ibid., p. 13.

over the years in response to different initiatives across agencies. For example, there are police officers stationed in some but not all schools. There are funds that flow to schools under the ETRF initiative that deal with disengagement. There are behaviour management designated staff and professional development funds in some schools. Together, the resources are considerable and they might be refocused on a shift from 'behaviour' management to 'learning' management. In particular, the specialist capacity of well-qualified personnel to support and complement classroom teachers should be investigated as an alternative to classroom teachers acting as behaviour support officers.

A common thread running throughout the international literature is the need for consistency, and fairness in enforcing expected behaviour. In addition, consistency and shared understanding for the consequences of non-compliance is emphasised. Again, respect and strong cooperative working relationships with parents and students to improve social skills, anger management and personal interaction are well documented. Curriculum flexibility is a key in achieving this outcome, especially in the secondary school where there are multiple alternative educational pathways. The behaviour support officer, in this situation, works as a conduit between the student, classroom teacher, principal, agencies and the parents. For those students who do not readily 'fit' the school system, alternative intervention programs that focus on both learning outcomes and skill development may assist with entry to the workplace (see Table 3).

Table 3: Characteristics of quality alternative placements[70]

Staff
A highly qualified well trained administration and staff who choose to teach in alternative programs and who are present in sufficient numbers to guarantee a strong, positive adult presence.
Adults who balance constant vigilance and consistent, firm enforcement of school rules with caring, respectful, consistent support for students.
Structure of program
A strong, well-defined, universally understood and consistently enforced discipline code, ensuring that students understand what is expected of them, the consequences for noncompliance and how and by whom their performance will be judged.
Emphasis on intensive instruction in academic content to assist students in meeting high academic standards, particularly students who have fallen behind.
Effective and frequent communication among students, families, teachers and other school staff, most especially with the teachers who send students to the alternative setting and with those to whom they will return.
A well-structured and sufficiently long intake and orientation process that fully prepares students and parents to participate successfully in the program.
Small class sizes in order to closely monitor academic performance and behavior.
Intensive instruction in social skills, problem solving, anger management and conflict resolution to teach students how to have successful interactions with peers, authority figures and the general public.
Intensive shaping and management of behavior based on well researched, proven practices.
A transitional program that prepares students to return to the mainstream successfully.
Extensive opportunities for research-based professional development in the subject areas, skills and insights needed to handle troubled youth.
Strong cooperative relationships with community-based social service, juvenile justice and health/mental health agencies and a sharing of responsibilities with those agencies for providing services to the students.
Accountability measures that indicate how well the program is succeeding in its mission.

[70] American Federation of Teachers. (2004) *Setting the Stage for Strong Standards elements of a safe and orderly school*, pp. 13-15.

Need for professional learning

In order to improve the capacity of Queensland schools to deal with a redefinition of '*behaviour*' management to '*learning*' management, focused professional learning is a prerequisite. Professional learning can serve both the individual needs of teachers and the strategic ends of schools and employers.

A smooth transition from reactive to proactive approaches to behaviour management implies that teachers and principals have the knowledge and skills that provide capability at the individual and organisational levels. The links between teaching, learning and behaviour need to be made explicit and that means that professional learning should dwell on *the combination of pedagogical and assessment strategies* that work, *curriculum* selection and planning, and the *management of learning*. There will be an opportunity to achieve this kind of outcome broadly in Queensland through the professional learning pathways framework set out in a recent draft discussion paper to the Higher Education Forum:

> *The professional learning pathways framework is intended to assist education professionals in Queensland State Schools to engage in quality professional learning that is recognised in a variety of postgraduate qualifications in the higher education sector*[71].

This framework can be used to promote and preferably mandate professional learning and continuous improvement as priorities in the enhancement of a supportive school environment. The outcomes of a behaviour management focused professional learning program for all Queensland schools should aim to develop teacher and principal:

a) confidence in their ability to develop and implement the code of expected behaviour and the behaviour management processes, irrespective of the changing circumstances in the workplace;

b) belief in their power to identify principles and standards of expected behaviour and perform behaviour management processes effectively under conditions of risk;

c) ability to engage effectively and constructively in the formulation and solving of operational behaviour management problems;

d) habits of sharing ideas and learning about behaviour management with others;

e) ability to judge the effectiveness of their own behaviour management performance and its contribution to the performance of the organisation; and

f) capacity to contribute to the shared values of the organisation by the exercise of the Code of Expected Behaviour[72].

As part of that supportive school environment enhancement, it is imperative to include parent groups who have a particular stake in the learning outcomes and the safety of their children at school. In addition, there is a need to ensure that the teachers' unions endorse this behaviour management strategy so that there are optimistic and affirmative outcomes for their members. Furthermore, it is important that there is continuous improvement through staff development across all areas of the school workplace, from the bus driver to the groundsperson, to ensure consistency and shared understanding of expected behaviour and how to deal with incidents.

Another aspect of professional learning is a well-formulated understanding of intentions and practices across all three 'employer groups' in Queensland. This is necessary because of movement between schools and systems and because of the need to provide alternative facilities for those students who do not readily 'fit' regular school

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71 Education Queensland, (2004) *The Professional Learning Pathways Framework*. Draft discussion paper to the Higher Education Forum, p. 3.

72 Adapted from Stephenson, J. (1999) *Corporate capability: implications for the style and direction of work-based learning*. Formal public lecture delivered at University of Technology, Sydney, pp. 6-7. www1.lle.mdx.ac.uk/iclml.asp

models. While this does not imply uniformity, there is the potential for shared understandings across the three sectors.

An important but neglected element of professional learning is that of the students' role in identifying the principles and standards of expected behaviour, as well as in the processes of behaviour management. There are many examples of schools teaching the code of expected behaviour to students that are useful illustrations for other schools. Such teaching need not be tedious but can be based around the dynamics of youth cultures. Key Learning Areas such as Health and Physical Education (HPE) and Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) are examples where teaching and learning of a school's behaviour code might occur.

Recommendations

With this report in mind MACER advises the Minister to consider the following recommendations:

1. That school systems and schools develop definite policy expectations on behaviour and behaviour management that explicitly link expected student behaviour, effective learning and teaching and school leadership.

2. That a Code of Expected Behaviour be established by school systems and adopted by schools. The code should be based on principles informed by the criteria of:
   - individual rights and responsibilities;
   - the wellbeing of self, others and the environment; and
   - the individual achievement of learning outcomes.

3. That representatives from Education Queensland, the Catholic and Independent sectors, teachers' unions and peak parent bodies develop a statement of agreed principles for expected behaviour in Queensland schools to inform the development of system-specific codes of expected behaviour.

4. That the code consist of two parts: Part A includes principles, standards of expected behaviour and the code of expected behaviour and consequences. Part B contains the processes for facilitating the development of expected behaviour and for responding to minor infringements of expected behaviour and/or serious misdemeanours.

5. That Part A of the code of expected behaviour is centrally determined while Part B allows local variation based on community negotiation involving school administrators and staff, principals, teachers, parents, guardians, students and agencies[73].

6. That Part B contains a continuum of graduated responses to infringements of expected behaviour and/or serious misdemeanours.

    6.1 That Part B allows for decisive intervention if the safety of students and staff demands it.

    6.2 That exclusion is only considered when all other options have been exhausted. In such cases opportunities to achieve individual learning outcomes must be provided.

    6.3 That there be provision for the care, support and learning in a safe environment for students who exhibit chronic infringements of expected behaviour and/or serious misdemeanours including alternate placements and the use of other government and non-government agencies.

7. That school authorities mandate professional development for classroom teachers, senior school staff and Principals on the combination of pedagogical and assessment strategies, curriculum selection and planning the Code so that learning outcomes occur.

8. That school Principals and senior school management undertake professional mentoring and training that provides the underpinnings necessary for the implementation of Part A and Part B.

9. That the capacity to implement Part A and Part B be a key selection criterion for Principals and senior school staff.

10. That all school staff, including tuckshop volunteers, bus drivers and others be trained in and be able to implement the Code.

11. That initial teacher education graduates be able to articulate and apply the Code with specific attention to the behaviour–pedagogy link.

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[73] In some cases this will be a 'system' decision. In others, it will be a decision of a school's governing body.

12. That school students be explicitly and systematically taught the Code through modelling and scaffolding through the Key Learning Areas, for example, Health and Physical Education or Studies of Society and Environment, as well as in the everyday environment of the classroom and school.

13. That the proposed enrolment agreement outlined in the *Education Laws for the Future* consultation draft include a requirement for parents and/or carers and students to sign a commitment to abide by the Code.

14. That there be additional professional support from well-qualified personnel for classroom teachers dealing with challenging behaviours in regular classes.

15. That behaviour support staff have formal expertise in behaviour and behaviour management, the learning outcomes required by schools and the relationships between the two (for example, Masters of Educational Psychology or similar degrees).

16. That a research-based evaluation of the impact of the Code be undertaken.