

Understanding Behaviour: An Assessment Tool

'Behaviour' refers to everything that we do. When we refer to behaviour as being *good*, we mean that it is in line with our expectations. When we refer to it as being *bad or challenging*, we mean that it is out of line with our expectations. It is our expectations which define whether any behaviour is good or bad.

Challenging behaviour is best understood not as a need in itself, but as a consequence of unmet needs; be those unmet social & emotional needs, unmet communication needs, unmet physical & sensory needs, or unmet learning needs. The following principles are helpful when thinking about any behaviour causing concern:

- Children do well if they can; children behave well if they can
- Behaviour can change. Positive, pro-social behaviour can be learned
- Behaviour does not occur in a vacuum, and its meaning can only be understood within the context in which it occurs
- Behaviour is something that people *do*, and is not what people *are*
- There are always exceptions to challenging behaviour
- The behaviour of children is often closely linked to the expectations of adults

Rationale:

This tool would be an appropriate first step as part of a graduated response to a newly identified need. It is intended that this document should be read in conjunction with the guidance available in the Behaviour for Learning (BfL) Room on the SEND corridor on Fronter. The room is accessible free of charge to all schools using 'nottsguest' and 'password' when prompted. The appropriate folder is called Behaviour for Learning Guidance.

This tool is designed to be used by SENCOs, Pastoral Managers or Lead Behaviour Teachers to gather information around a young person where there are emerging concerns about their behaviour. It is anticipated that this document would be completed via a collaborative discussion between people who know the pupil best. It is intended to be an assessment over time and there may be a need to undertake further data collection to answer certain sections. The information can then help to determine the way forward at a meeting between staff and parents/carers.

1. Behaviour(s) causing concern at this time

It is important to acknowledge how difficult the situation may feel at this time. This initial section aims to identify all the current concerns. However, there is a need to identify which behaviour will be prioritised for any subsequent intervention. Ranking the behaviours will help staff to identify the prioritised behaviour.

Behaviour	Rank these in order of concern
▪	
▪	
▪	
▪	
▪	

*Identify just **ONE** behaviour that you wish to support to change. This will be the prioritised behaviour. The prioritised behaviour is:*

2. Specific description of the prioritised behaviour

This section aims to support staff to collate detailed and objective information about the prioritised behaviour. It may require the collection of additional information over time. Check on the Behaviour for Learning Room on Fronter for resources to support information collation e.g. round robin or Antecedents, Behaviour and Consequences (ABC) record.

2a. Contextual information: What does it look like?

Describe the behaviour causing concern in terms of what the child does. Be as specific as possible.

Give specific examples.	
When did the behaviour first become a concern?	
Frequency (How often does it happen?)	
Duration (How long does it typically last?)	

2b. Contextual information: When does it happen?

<p>When is the behaviour most likely to occur?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - where? - during which activities? - at what time of day? - any specific part of the week? 	
<p>Under what circumstances is the behaviour <u>least</u> likely to occur?</p>	<p><i>(Ask colleagues for additional information. The 'Round Robin' proforma in the BfL room on Fronter could support this.)</i></p>
<p>Triggers: Are you able to identify what may happen BEFORE an incident occurs?</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - something being said? - noises? - requests being made? - tasks being given? - physical proximity of others? - other? 	<p><i>(This can sometimes be difficult. What is your 'best guess'? For additional information about triggers please refer to the Breakwell Assault Cycle materials on Fronter)</i></p>

2c. Contextual information: Responses from others

This section aims to help staff to consider if the reactions from others may be reinforcing or reducing the prioritised behaviour?

When the behaviour occurs, what do adults usually do?

How do peers respond?

What do family members usually do in response to the prioritised behaviour?

What strategies have been used in the past to manage the identified behaviour? How effective have they been?

(Consider strategies, length of time it was implemented and impact)

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-
-

How can more appropriate behaviour be reinforced / encouraged?

3. Wider context: What else might be happening for this young person?

This section helps identify any other factors which might be having an impact on the current situation. Take a step back and look holistically at the wider context at home, school and in the community both currently and historically. Check the records held on the young person, especially if they are new to your school.

External factors:
Are you aware of any external factors (at home, school or in the community) which may currently be important?

(e.g. illness, homelessness, domestic violence)

<p>School events: Have there been any significant school events that may have affected the child?</p>	<p><i>(e.g. loss of a key teacher/teaching assistant, friendship issues, school or class transition)</i></p>
<p>Historical events: Anything which may be having an ongoing impact?</p>	<p><i>(e.g. becoming Looked After, bereavement or loss)</i></p>
<p>Emotional / social skills: What skills might the young person need support with developing.</p>	<p><i>(Consider using the Boxall Profile or the Emotional Literacy Assessment Tool*)</i></p>
<p>Learning: Is their current attainment age appropriate?</p>	<p><i>(Consider national curriculum levels. The PSD strand of the PIVATS** tool helps assess the social/emotional skills for learning: (i) interacting and working with others, (ii) organisation and independent learning and (iii) attention.)</i></p>
<p>How does the child see themselves as a learner?</p>	

4. Strengths

Sections 1-3 have explored the current concerns in great detail. This section aims to look at what is working well and identify exceptions to the difficult behaviour which might support a way forward

What do you see as the young person's STRENGTHS in terms of their:

- learning?

- social interactions with adults

- social interactions with their peers?

- behaviour?

What are the young person's views of the current situation?

(Consider using the pupil views activity in the BfL room on Fronter)

What are the parent/carers' views about the current situation?

<p>a. What factors are supporting the young person's appropriate behaviour?</p>	<p><i>(Consider environmental factors, role of key adults, resources, routines)</i></p>
<p>b. What are the strengths that the school currently bring to the situation?</p>	

* See Emotional Health and Well-being Room on Fronter

** Performance Indicators for Value Added Target Setting (PIVATS)

5. Possible explanations:

*All behaviour happens for a reason. It is a form of communication. When thinking about an individual young person it is useful to develop a possible explanation, or a working hypothesis, about **why** the behaviour might be happening.*

All children and young people function within systems (home, school, community) which interact and overlap with each other. Therefore, information about all the factors in the young person's life needs to be considered. Only by doing this can we begin to fully develop our understanding of their behaviour and so formulate working hypotheses.

Adults should develop possible explanations and test these out systematically. If a working hypothesis is correct then the strategies developed and implemented will be seen to have a positive effect. Conversely, if no change occurs then a different working hypothesis may need to be considered. The next section aims to support the adults to find an appropriate way forward.

What are the possible explanations for the behaviour currently being presented?

Given the information collated in this document consider the following possible explanations. Considering how likely this explanation is, use the scale (where 0 means very unlikely and 5 means very likely) to rate each one. Consider the following questions/prompts:

- For this young person, is negative attention better than no attention at all?
- Could this behaviour be an expression of anxiety?
- Does the behaviour mean they achieve a desired activity or object?
- Are they able to engage with the learning? Can they see the board? Has anyone checked their vision and/or hearing?

- Could they have an unmet learning need?
- Is the behaviour about avoiding the task or activity? Is the alternative more motivating e.g. being sent out.
- Do they understand what strong emotions can do to the brain and body?
- Are they not able to express how they are feeling? Do they have the understanding or vocabulary to communicate how they feel?
- Could there be an unmet sensory need?
- Do they have the necessary social skills and/or social understanding to interact appropriately with peers?

Possible explanation	scale	Notes
▪ To gain attention from adults	0 1 2 3 4 5	
▪ To gain control	0 1 2 3 4 5	
▪ To avoid a task or activity	0 1 2 3 4 5	
▪ To avoid a social demand/ situation	0 1 2 3 4 5	
▪ To express an emotion	0 1 2 3 4 5	
▪ To seek stimulation	0 1 2 3 4 5	
▪ Other	0 1 2 3 4 5	

6. Identifying Ways forward: Planning next steps

Having identified a possible explanation for the behaviour, use this to identify a suitable way forward. For example, if you have identified that the young person engages more constructively when they have increased autonomy then your possible explanation is about the need to be in control. Therefore, an appropriate way forward might be the use of 'closed' choices i.e. the young person is offered 2 choices but the options are determined by the adult. Remember to consider the strengths you have previously identified and the existing systems already in place.

Based on your explanation what strategies could be used to increase appropriate behaviours and reduce the prioritised behaviour?

(Refer to the 'Framework for Intervention' and IDP Behaviour resources in the BfL room on Fronter)

<p>If the behaviour does occur again, how will you now respond? How will you make sure that everyone knows how to respond?</p>	<p><i>(e.g. midday supervisors, PPA/cover staff, supply staff.)</i></p>
<p>Given the information collated, what will be your be first step?</p> <p>Who might need to help you to achieve this?</p> <p>When will you review?</p>	
<p>Completed by:</p> <p>Date:</p>	

For further resources to support schools please access the **Behaviour for Learning (BfL) Room** on the SEND corridor on Fronter.

FRONTER can be accessed via www.fronter.com/nottsslpl. You can access the publicly accessible rooms using **nottsguest** when prompted for a username and then **password**. Click on 'Rooms' and choose 'Display all rooms.' Schools can also access related materials via the Emotional Health and Well-Being Room through the same route.