

# Learner Discipline and School Management

A practical guide to understanding and managing learners behaviour within the school context

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**WESTERN CAPE**  
**Education Department**



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## Message from the Director: EMDC Metropole North

Learner behaviour problems have, for years, been a major concern for teachers, administrators and parents. More than ever before, teachers are faced with critical problems in their classrooms, and are confronted (on a daily basis) with unacceptable learner behaviour and threatening situations. After the abolishment of the old system of corporal punishment and control, an urgent need arose to deal with behavioural issues in innovative ways.

The new approach to positive behavioural support represents a shift from a focus on deficit and control, towards a developmental and restorative approach. This will enable learners to progress towards responsibility, relationship building and a greater sense of well-being. This approach is also embodied in the South African Constitution, the South African Schools Act and the specific outcomes of the National Curriculum Statement which give priority to the concept of responsibility.

For the past 5 years, the EMDC Metropole North has been involved in an intensive training programme for educators with a view to improving the management of discipline and skill in the handling of learner behaviour. The theme "Understanding and Managing Learner Behaviour" focuses on the shift from the control and punishment of learners to positive behaviour support. It furthermore advocates a shift from behaviour management to relationship building and the promoting of a restorative approach towards challenging behaviour.

This approach is essential for the holistic development of the child. It is important that this approach be supported by clear guidelines for actions, which is why this document has been developed, namely, to create basic guidelines so that every school can develop and maintain a discipline structure. The focus falls particularly on the creation of a code of conduct for learners and the implementation thereof, from the school management team to in the classroom. The document allows room for further development by the school itself and for the addition of other important information.

This document was drawn up after thorough research and takes into consideration legal aspects and the latest education regulations. I would like to encourage principals to implement the principles and guidelines in this document, because the management of healthy, positive discipline remains the duty and responsibility of the school and its partners. The EMDC will gladly provide further support.

I wish to thank **Neville Goliath, Bridget Goosen, Sura Swart and Koos Theron** for their sterling work and contribution towards better education.

**B Volschenk**





## Point of Departure

- Understanding and managing learner behaviour has become a challenge for schools in South Africa.
- The goal of applying positive discipline is the whole development of the child.
- Engaging with learners and considering their needs requires effective systems, skills and a positive attitude.
- The management structures in schools should give clear guidelines on the management of learner behaviour.
- The educator has an important responsibility to facilitate a climate for the development of positive learner behaviour.
- The role of the parent, as primary educator and partner in the shaping of the learner's character is indispensable.
- Schools must create the space and offer the opportunity for learners to develop leadership.
- The code of conduct for learners serves as the basis for the development and promotion of positive learner behaviour.
- Practical skills are needed in times of crisis, when learners are experiencing emotional stress.







# The development and management of a Culture of Positive Behaviour in the school

## 1. The basis for positive behaviour

An important shift of focus in the effective management of learner behaviour is the development and management of positive relationships between children and between children and adults. A climate of trust and understanding of each other is essential as a basis for the building of relationships and it must be developed and implemented by the whole school and class. If this is the case, mutual **respect, caring, knowledge of each other's feelings**, an **"I belong"-feeling** and the willingness to take **responsibility** for own actions and deeds can be achieved more easily.

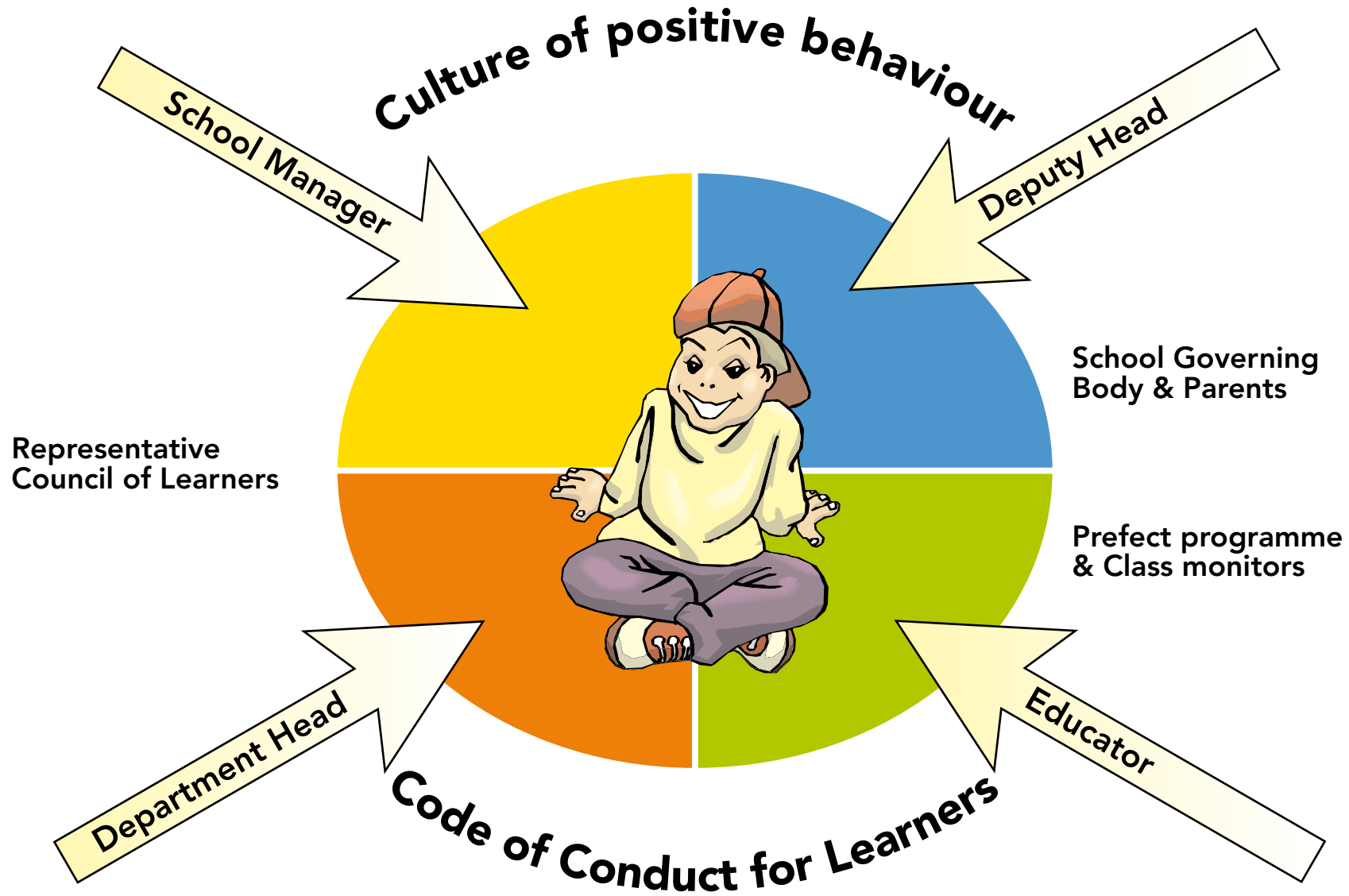
Schools have an important task to teach children to differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Opportunity must also be given for the development of insight and learning. In a positive school situation a breaking of school rules is therefore viewed as not only a negative action towards the school, but also a negative action towards fellow learners and teachers and the disruption of mutual relationships. In a positive school climate, school rules are instrumental to the whole development of the learner.

The strategy for positive behaviour leans heavily on the principles of the "Circle of Courage" model, which are basically the following:

- "I belong"
- "I am achieving"
- "I am independent"
- "I am generous"

This developmental approach focuses on allowing children the opportunity to grow in themselves. Through this, they experience themselves positively and they make good decisions so that they can progress to independence.

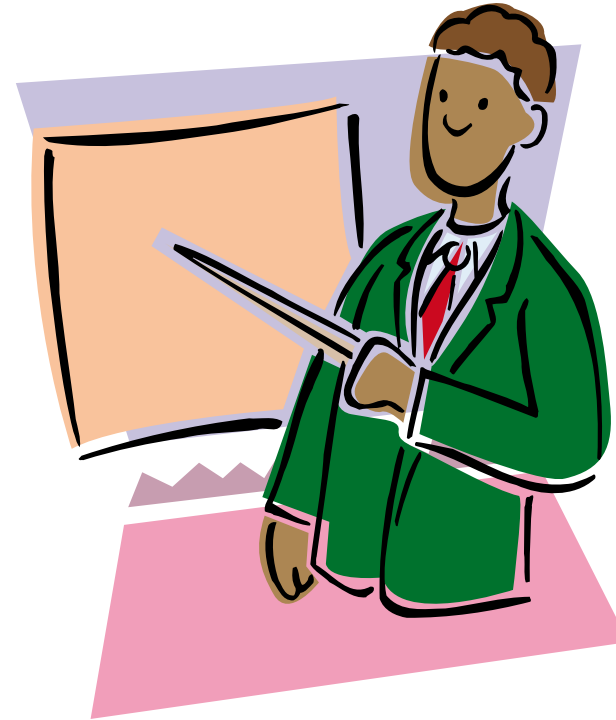
### Behaviour Management within the "Circle of Courage"



## 2. The co-ordinated and integrated management of positive learner behaviour

Whole school development with a focus on a culture of positive behaviour must be well managed, as it involves **an attitude and work ethic that are driven by good professional behaviour, support structures and good planning**. Realising a permanent belief in the system requires active leadership. The important role players are the school management team, educators, learners, representative council of learners, class monitors or prefects and the school governing body (SGB). The management of a culture of positive behaviour is a co-ordinated and integrated approach with a clear task for each role player to ensure positive behaviour. The "Circle of Courage" model is the basis for implementation.

### 2.1 Duties and responsibilities of the School Management Team



The management of a culture of positive behaviour requires **active leadership** to realise a constant flow of positive predisposition towards and belief in the system. It therefore involves firm, co-ordinated and planned actions in the implementation of the general code of conduct for learners and school ethic.

- **The School Manager**

- Primarily responsible for establishing the concept of positive behaviour within the school set-up.
- Ensure that all personnel, parents and learners are aware of the policies regarding positive learner behaviour.
- Ensure that policy regarding disciplinary measures is implemented.
- Ensure that learner behaviour and learner issues are discussed regularly.
- Ensure that record is kept of learner behaviour.
- Organise staff development sessions regarding the management of learners' behaviour.
- Organise interviews with parents about the progress and behaviour of learners.
- Ensure that the school has a good orientation programme for new learners (especially Grade 8).
- Ensure that learners are dealt with fairly and consistently.

- **The Deputy Head**

- Responsible for the application of discipline.
- Support the principal in the performance of duties to create a school culture of positive discipline.
- Support the principal in the provision of learner support and guidance regarding good discipline.
- Supervise the representative council of learners.
- Responsible for the supervision and mentoring of a prefect programme.

- **The Department Head**

- Responsible for regular formal meetings with grade heads, senior educators, phase leaders, etc.
- Conduct discussions about disciplinary tendencies and concerns in the school.
- Provide feedback regarding EST recommendations and interventions.
- Liaison with multifunctional teams from district centres, community organisations and NGOs.

- **Grade Head/Senior Educators**

- Organise regular scheduled meetings with grade, learning area and/or phase educators.
- Hold discussions to identify possible referrals to the EST.
- Organise interviews with parents to discuss learner behaviour and needs.
- Control and manage the administrative system of disciplinary referrals and interventions.
- Report to the SMT on disciplinary tendencies and concerns.

## 2.2 Duties and responsibilities of the Educator

- Create a learner-centred classroom where discussion is allowed between learners, but the discussion takes place in a focussed and orderly manner.
- Prepare well so that lessons can run smoothly and discipline can be applied more easily.
- Expect co-operation of learners. When instructed to “take out books”, the instruction must be followed. Wait until it happens!
- Do not make threats that cannot be carried out.
- Do not just criticise. When commenting on the learner’s work, remember to praise the learner also.
- “Punish” only in accordance with the school’s code of conduct for learners and the classroom code of conduct.
- Make sure that the offender is taken to task. The whole class must not be punished. This is unfair and may not happen.
- Do not allow a queue to form when you are correcting books. Time is wasted and there is a strong possibility that discipline problems will develop.
- Do not sit when you are teaching. Move around and observe learners while they are busy with group activities.
- Approach the EST for advice and support regarding interventions and how to handle specific learner needs.
- The school management team is there to support you. Rather get help than allow disciplinary problems to develop.

## 2.3 Duties and responsibilities of the School Governing Body

- Responsible for the development and regular revision of the code of conduct for learners in co-operation with parents, educators and learners.
- Responsible for the creation of a disciplined and goal-orientated environment to ensure teaching and learning.
- Ensure that the disciplinary practices of the school take place within the framework of the South African Constitution and the South African Schools Act.
- Appoint a disciplinary committee.
- Conduct fair hearings in which the focus is on positive intervention as a restorative option.
- Keep full minutes of disciplinary hearings.
- Hold regular meetings with parents to discuss disciplinary matters.

## 2.4 Duties and responsibilities of the Representative Council of Learners (RCL)

- Develop and promote a positive learner spirit and culture within the school.
- Encourage fellow learners to participate and are responsible for the sound functioning of the school.
- Promote good discipline by holding regular learner meetings and discussions.
- Use communication channels to discuss learner frustrations and fears.
- Promote positive communication with educators and school management.
- Create clubs and special projects to promote learner involvement.
- Take part in school governing body activities.
- Act as ambassadors in the school and community.

## 2.5 Duties and responsibilities of the Prefect Programme/Class Monitor System



- Promote good discipline in class and on the school premises.
- Ensure a clean and tidy classroom.
- Promote classroom pride.
- Monitor class attendance.
- Liaise with class educators about learner issues and learner grievances.



## The Rights of the Educator

- As with every citizen of the country, educators have certain rights protected by the Constitution. The fundamental rights of educators are further protected by the tenets of common law and national legislation.  
**Educators are entitled to the following:**
  - Equality.
  - Human dignity.
  - Privacy: to live your life with the minimum of interference. This includes private, family and home life; physical and moral integrity; honour and reputation. An educator's right to privacy means that he or she also has the right not to be portrayed in a poor light or subjected to embarrassment, and has the right to confidentiality. Owing to the educator's public status, there is, however, a limit to the educator's right to privacy w.r.t. family life, sexual orientation and information about his or her state of health.
  - Freedom of religion and opinion.
  - Freedom of expression: Educators' freedom of expression can, however, be limited insofar as it threatens the other person's rights, or in the interest of education.
  - Freedom of association.
  - Political rights.
  - Labour rights.
  - Language and culture.
  - Protection of and respect for the dignity of the educator. Bear in mind that this cannot be enforced, but is earned through personal conduct.
- The rights of the educator must, however, always be weighed against that which is in the interest of the maintaining of an effective, collaborative teaching and learning environment. Learner behaviour which is in conflict with the rights of the educator must always be evaluated against the background of the characteristics typical of a child, i.e.:
  - Absence of discernment.
  - Absence of rational thought.
  - Emotional immaturity.
  - Impulsive behaviour.







## Positive Discipline: Role of Parents

### 1. The primary school learner

- Know the school's code of conduct and encourage your child to uphold it.
- Strengthen the code of conduct by taking primary responsibility for your child's discipline.
- Create a safe atmosphere for your child so that he/she can grow and develop positively.
- Ensure your child's regular and punctual attendance at school. Communicate reasons for your child's absence to the school.
- Communicate regularly with your child about his/her schoolday. Children always have the need to share what happened at school.
- Get to know your child's teacher. A good parent-teacher relationship ensures a happier child with a strong sense of security. This is an advantage when manipulative behaviour needs support and correcting.
- Reinforce learning at home by going over your child's homework.
- Be involved by supporting his/her academic and extra-mural activities.
- Listen with an open mind to your child and the educator. Guard against being prejudiced and always look for a win-win solution.
- Teach children to find positive solutions to problems that they encounter daily and to manage confrontation without violence.

### 2. The high school learner

- Know the school's code of conduct and encourage your child to uphold it.
- Strengthen the code of conduct by taking primary responsibility for your child's discipline.
- Create a safe atmosphere for your child so that he/she can grow and develop positively.
- Be involved in your child's life. Be aware of what is going on in his/her life. Be informed about the development of teenagers to ensure that you understand the behaviour better.
- Create quality time for your child. Adolescence is a time during which the teenager disengages him/herself from family and spends more time with friends and at school. Time with family and parents is however vitally important for the emotional and social development of your child.
- Listen rather than talk. Adolescents want to be acknowledged and give expression to their feelings. Acknowledge this, listen with understanding and act as a guide.
- Positive reinforcement for positive behaviour! Reinforce positive behaviour – it is more effective than criticism. Disparaging remarks harm the adolescent's feelings and self-esteem. The best instruments available to you for building meaningful relationships are love, caring, sensitivity, encouragement, understanding and communication, attention, appreciation and acceptance.

- Teach your adolescent that rights and responsibility go together. Give them increasing rights and make them part of decision-making conversations. Develop their ability to make choices, solve problems and make decisions.
- Encourage them to get involved in community activities. The adolescent's sense of self-worth is developed through involvement in community initiatives. It shifts the focus from "me, myself" and develops fellow feeling.
- Build memories with your child.
- Be aware that your feelings have an effect on your child. The way in which you handle it will develop an understanding of others' emotions in your child.
- Stay up-to-date on your adolescent's world by having regular discussions with other parents and/or professional persons. Know the danger signs for the "child in crisis" and act in time.

## Sources available:

Department of Social Services	021 9487100	Bellville
	021 4819700	Cape Town
FAMSA	021 4617360	Cape Town
	021 5922063	Goodwood
Parent Centre	021 7620116	Wynberg
Badisa	021 9326721	Elsies River
Planned Parenthood Assoc. of SA	021 4487312	Cape Town

# The School's Code of Conduct for Learners

This is not a set of rules and measures for punishment, but is the **school's framework for behaviour for the creation of a culture of positive behaviour within which learners should conduct themselves**. The code of conduct must be compiled in co-operation with all the relevant persons (teachers, learners and parents) and must be revised regularly.

- A school must reach consensus on a uniform disciplinary structure that is, in spirit and practice, firm, fair, consistent and positive.
- A code of conduct gives expression to the norms and values that are prescriptive for and applicable to learners' behaviour, actions and functioning within that specific school.
- A code of conduct (as prescribed by Section 8 (2) of the South African Schools Act) must be aimed at: establishing a disciplined (**learners have characteristics such as self-control, responsibility, obedience, excellence**) and purposeful school environment (**all activities within the school environment are in accord with the vision of the school**), dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process.

## 1. Objectives of a code of conduct

- To create a culture of teaching and learning within a school through a discipline system that protects all the learners' right to effective education, their right to human dignity and their right to security.
- To give a clear, defined explanation of the behaviour and actions expected of learners so that they can adapt their behaviour accordingly.
- To spell out the consistent and uniform actions in the event of infringements and thereby create a feeling of security amongst the learners, in that it is clear to all what is expected from them.
- To serve as a gauge for fair and reasonable actions.
- To guide the daily functioning of the school and allow activities to happen in an orderly manner.
- To realise a safe environment for learners and educators.
- To support the objectives, as formulated in the school's mission statement.

## 2. Requirements for a code of conduct

A school's code of conduct provides educators with the degree of authority that they need to allow teaching and education to take place in an orderly way. It is therefore very important that attention be given to the requirements set for a valid code of conduct.

- **The following applies for a school's code of conduct:**

- It is subject to existing legislation. The South African Schools Act prescribes how a code of conduct must be drawn up and the Constitution serves as a basis for the content of the code of conduct.
- It must be drawn up against the background of the school's ethics and take into consideration the particular character of the school and the values and culture of the learners and the community.
- It must promote positive discipline and development and not be focussed on punishment.
- It must include a description of the type of behaviour that is not acceptable (and in some instances is acceptable) and must indicate what the school's reaction to such behaviour will be.
- It must be aimed at creating a disciplined and goal-orientated school environment within which quality education can take place.
- It must be set out clearly and unambiguously.
- It must be accessible and user-friendly.
- It must meet the requirements of being fair and reasonable.
- It must set a standard of ethically correct behaviour.

- It must be dynamic and flexible.
- It must give learners the right to and the responsibility for
  - being informed about the behaviour that is expected of them.
  - being informed about the consequences of their behaviour.

## 3. Process for the establishment of a code of conduct

- Section 8 of the South African Schools Act stipulates that all schools must draw up a code of conduct. Although the principal and educators are responsible for the daily discipline in the school, the governing body has a duty to ensure that the school adopts a code of conduct.
- The establishment of a code of conduct involves the participation of all role players, namely parents, educators and learners, in the process. This process must be open and democratic in nature and give opportunity for consultation and negotiation. Through this it is ensured that the whole school community accepts ownership for the code of conduct and the application thereof. It is especially important that all learners are aware of the content of the code of conduct.
- Although every school draws up its own code of conduct, appropriate to the relevant circumstances, the code of conduct must comply with the requirements mentioned above.

## 4. Scope of a code of conduct

- No learner is exempt from the duty of complying with the code of conduct.
- It is, however, important that the whole school community be aware of where and when the school's code of conduct is applicable, namely:
  - On school premises before, during and after school hours.
  - During all school activities – on or off of school property.
  - Outside the school property when the learner is identifiable because of school clothes.

## 5. Structural Framework for a Supportive and Restorative Code of Conduct

A school's code of conduct should be compiled according to the following framework:

- An introduction containing the principles, philosophy and ethos found in the SA Schools Act. Values such as respect, tolerance and reconciliation must be set as guidelines. It must be stated clearly that education is not only the responsibility of the government, but also of learners, educators and parents.
- References to the legislation on which the code of conduct is based.
- A mission and vision, in which the values which form the foundation for all decision-making concerning learners are spelt out clearly. It is, moreover, important that the mission, vision and values be shared by the whole school community.

- Values and general principles that ought to be applicable are:
  - respect for fundamental human rights.
  - respect for educators.
  - acceptance of multiculturalism and diversity.
  - respect for the environment and school facilities.
- General school rules that comply with the requirements of being clear, fair, reasonable and which can be enforced. These can comprise
  - a description of the positive behaviour that is expected from learners.
  - a description of the types of behaviour that are regarded as being unacceptable.
- The rules must be formulated in such a way that they cover all aspects of school life: academic, cultural, sport, human rights, authority of the school, behaviour within and out of the school, as well as the physical facilities and grounds.
- School rules must have educational goals.
- They must be necessary, relevant and applicable.
- They must include a description of the circumstances under which the code of conduct will be applicable, as well as the disciplinary procedures and forms of punishment.

## 6. Learner Infringements with reference to Support Mechanisms

(The following serve as suggestions for supportive and restorative mechanisms and should be implemented together with restorative measures appropriate for each level.)

## Level 1

Learner infringements	Response and Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copying of homework.</li> <li>• Late arrival for class, lines, during assemblies, meetings, etc.</li> <li>• Talking in class, lines, assemblies, during announcements, etc.</li> <li>• Not following reasonable instructions, e.g. work not in class.</li> <li>• Schoolbooks are neglected.</li> <li>• General untidiness.</li> <li>• Vandalism (including littering).</li> <li>• Misuse and unauthorised use of school equipment (fire extinguishers, taps, alarm system, etc.)</li> <li>• Leaving school/classroom without permission.</li> <li>• Use of humiliating and suggestive language and signs.</li> <li>• Disrespectful actions towards educators.</li> <li>• Deliberate disruption of class. Eating in class, playing with cell phone, etc.</li> <li>• Absence without leave/Truancy.</li> <li>• Flouting of class rules.</li> <li>• Inciting fighting, bullying behaviour (needling).</li> <li>• Misconduct on busses to and from school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Class educator/Learning area educator</b> responsible for classroom management of learner behaviour (see Classroom Management ).</li> <li>• <b>Classroom rules:</b> a prerequisite for the management of behaviour and the application of measures (see Classroom Code of Conduct).</li> <li>• <b>Peer help programmes</b> can have a positive influence on the creation of a positive school climate and the management of learner behaviour (see Support Structures).</li> </ul>

## Level 2

Learner infringements	Response and Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Repeated Level 1 infringements.</li><li>• Disruption of class (repeated).</li><li>• Racist, sexist and discriminatory comments and behaviour.</li><li>• Possession and distribution of pornographic, racist, sexist material; or viewing of and/or downloading of such on any computer or cell phone at school.</li><li>• Fraud (falsification of documents, cheating in examinations, etc.)</li><li>• Vandalism: graffiti, writing on desks, breaking of windows, etc.</li><li>• Fighting and causing injuries.</li><li>• Gambling.</li><li>• Smoking cigarettes and possession of cigarettes.</li><li>• Falsification of document with less serious consequences.</li><li>• Serious disruption of class.</li><li>• Refusal to submit to corrective measures.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• EST: the school-based team and senior management team, with use of relevant advisers in the community and the EMDC's circuit team (see Support Structures ).</li><li>• Grade Head (see duties and responsibilities of grade head).</li><li>• Parent involvement (involve parents in joint decision making about support to learner).</li><li>• Development programmes for communities (get learner involved in appropriate development programme, as offered by community source).</li><li>• Corrective measures (decision making by disciplinary committee).</li><li>• Individual education support plan (IESP): keeping of a class report can form part of this (see Support Structures ).</li><li>• Educator as mentor for learners (see duties and responsibilities of educator).</li></ul>

### Level 3

Learner infringements	Response and Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeated Level 2 infringements.</li> <li>• Repeated serious misconduct.</li> <li>• Under the influence of alcohol and drugs.</li> <li>• Theft of a serious nature/Burglary.</li> <li>• Arson.</li> <li>• Serious vandalism.</li> <li>• Sexual abuse (harassment of peer learners).</li> <li>• Sexual misconduct (such as flashing).</li> <li>• Physical assault of peer learners (fighting, throwing of objects, etc.)</li> <li>• Sexual misconduct in which learners are the perpetrators.</li> <li>• Threatening of peer learners or educators.</li> <li>• Involvement in gang-related activities.</li> <li>• Disruption of school programme through rebellion and demonstrating without permission.</li> <li>• Trespassing on school grounds while suspension is still in effect.</li> <li>• Making bomb threats.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community service (corrective measures).</li> <li>• EST: the school-based team and senior management team and also relevant advisers in the community and the EMDC's multi-functional team (see Support Structures ).</li> <li>• Parent involvement (involve parents in intervention process, (see Disciplinary Hearing)).</li> <li>• IEDP (see Support Structures ).</li> <li>• Development-orientated programmes (get learner involved in appropriate development programme, as offered by community source).</li> <li>• Educator as mentor for learners (see duties and responsibilities of educator).</li> <li>• Circuit team (EMDC) (see Support Structures ).</li> <li>• Stop Crime Policy.</li> <li>• Drug Policy for schools for drug-related misdemeanours.</li> <li>• Departmental policy relating to suspension and expulsion.</li> <li>• School Governing Body (see Disciplinary Hearing).</li> </ul>



## Level 4

Learner infringements	Response and Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Repeated Level 3 infringements.</li><li>• Refusal to attend development-orientated programmes.</li><li>• Dangerous weapons: bringing weapons onto school grounds, threatening people with weapon, deliberate assault of persons with weapon.</li><li>• Possession of drugs on school grounds.</li><li>• Dealing in drugs on school grounds.</li><li>• Serious assault.</li><li>• Learner is found guilty in crime court (immediate expulsion).</li><li>• Sexual assault (rape).</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School Governing Body (see Disciplinary Hearing).</li><li>• South African Police Service (SAPS) – criminal offences, such as drugs, weapons, rape, serious assault.</li><li>• Parent involvement (see Disciplinary Hearing and Advice for Parents).</li><li>• Social work service providers (Support services to learner and parents).</li><li>• Kringspan (OBOS) – (sien Ondersteuningstrukture).</li><li>• Expulsion committee (see Disciplinary Hearing).</li></ul>





# The Disciplinary Hearing

## 1. Prescribed procedure

The disciplinary hearing takes place according to a prescribed procedure which is based on the fundamental principles of law. The individual's right to a fair and reasonable hearing is further endorsed in Section 33 of the Bill of Rights, as included in the Constitution. These principles do not only apply to the process to be followed, but also to the way in which arguments are presented.

The following steps should be followed in the execution of the prescribed procedure for a disciplinary hearing:

### • Investigation into the alleged serious misconduct

- An allegation of serious misconduct by a learner must be presented to the principal in writing for consideration. The allegation must then be investigated.
- The principle that a person is innocent until proven guilty must be maintained throughout by the investigator. The application of this principle is subject to the regulations of legislation and protocol as accepted by the WCED.
- Interviews with witnesses must be minuted in the interest of transparency and for the purposes of further enquiries. The maintenance of confidentiality is of the utmost importance.

- Witnesses may not be intimidated and/or influenced. Witnesses must also not be coached or prompted about what to say.
- Caution should be used where young children are involved. Aggressive confrontation or pressuring for a confession must be avoided.
- The alleged offender must be given the opportunity to request the support of his/her parents when it is expected of him/her to make a statement which could be incriminating.

### • Notice of the hearing

- Justice means that the alleged offender must be given the opportunity to be heard and must also be given proper notice of the hearing.
- A notice about the hearing must be delivered in writing to the parents and learner five (5) workdays before the hearing.
- The notice must include information about the alleged offence, as well as information about the time, place and date of the hearing.
- The learner who has been accused must be given the opportunity to present his/her side of the matter and to call witnesses.
- In cases where a learner has, as a preventative measure,

been suspended with immediate effect on the grounds of serious misconduct, the notice of the disciplinary hearing must be given seven (7) days before the hearing.

- **Disciplinary committee**

- A disciplinary committee, consisting of at least two members of the governing body, acts as an impartial tribunal in the hearing of the charge brought against a learner.
- The person who conducted the investigation prior to the hearing may not form part of the tribunal.
- Decisions made by the tribunal must be made in good faith and without prejudice.
- The tribunal should
  - listen to both parties.
  - maintain an open mind and be unbiased.
  - only take the relevant information into consideration.
  - make a reasonable decision, based on facts.
  - not depend on hearsay.

- **Conduct at the introduction of the hearing**

- Determine whether the learner and his/her parents received the written charge, read it and understand it. Opportunity must also be given for questions and the clearing up of anything that is unclear.
- The parents and the learner should be offered access to the information in the school's possession, which could be used in defence of the learner. Copies of the statements must be given to them.
- The seriousness of the charge and the possible punishment that can be given should be explained to the learner and

his/her parents. They must also be made to understand that all evidence can be tested through cross-examination.

- The parents and the learner should be given the opportunity to ask questions/make requests.

## 2. The Disciplinary Hearing

The following procedures should be followed:

- The person who handled the investigation into the charge of serious misconduct (principal or senior educator) acts as prosecutor and reads the charge aloud for record purposes. The chairperson then gives the learner the opportunity to plead "guilty" or "not guilty".
- Should the learner plead "guilty", the chairperson should still ask questions to obtain information in support of the appeal.
- Should the learner plead "not guilty", the following procedure must be followed:
  - The prosecutor presents the evidence from statements given by the witnesses and gives them the opportunity to confirm it.
  - Where the accused learner gives evidence, the prosecutor has the right to cross-examine the learner, or any other witness for the defence.
  - The chairperson and any other member of the disciplinary committee have, in the interest of justice, the right to question any witness in order to get more clarity about the evidence given.

- It is important to keep in mind that the chairperson, on behalf of the disciplinary committee, in terms of Section 33(2) of the Constitution, must provide reasons for their findings. These reasons must be reasonable and fair, and be based on relevant information. The parents and learner must be informed in writing about the outcome of the hearing.
- In the case where the learner has been suspended pending the reaction of the Head of the Education Department (SG) to a verdict of expulsion of the learner, the minutes of the hearing and the findings must immediately be sent to the office of the SG.
- A copy of the minutes must be filed by the school.
- All learners have the right to appeal.

### 3. Deciding the most appropriate punishment (Factors that must be taken into consideration in considering the most appropriate punishment):

- **The Learner**
  - Age and development phase (an 8-year-old and a 15-year-old cannot be dealt with in the same manner).
  - Attitude with regard to school work and fellow learners.
  - Disciplinary record and willingness to change.
  - The learner's reasons for the offence.
  - The learner's regret and willingness to put the offence right.

- **Type of offence and the scope thereof**

- Relevant circumstances.
- The effect that the offence had on others.
- The frequency of the offences.
- The scope of damage and loss.

- **The responsibility of the school community**

- Take responsibility for the guidance of the learner in that the following considerations are built into corrective actions:  
Compensation, restoration, deterrence and prevention.

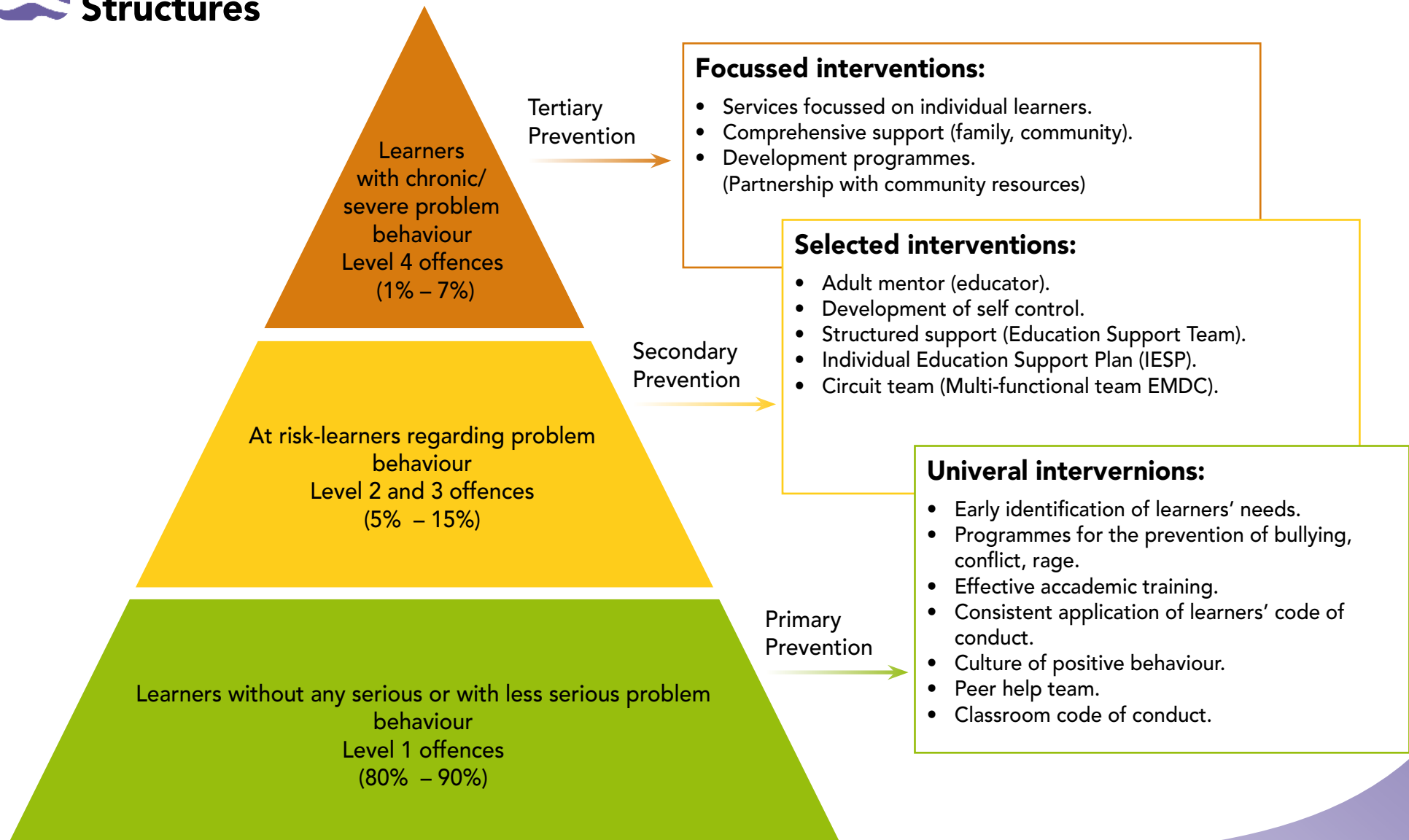
## 4. Disciplinary Review List

To ensure that the disciplinary actions have been fair, the following questions can be asked:

- Is the reason for disciplining valid? (Has the school's code of conduct or any other legislation been violated?)
- Does the learner know the rules?
- Did he/she receive sufficient warning?
- Was the nature of the offence explained to the learner?
- Is there sufficient proof of the offence? Is the proof valid and acceptable?
- Was the hearing held in accordance with the proper procedure in the event of serious misconduct?
- Is the punishment consistent for similar offences, but with consideration of the circumstances?
- Were the learner and the parents informed about the reasons for the punishment?
- Is the punishment justified – were there good reasons?



# Support Structures



 **Support Structures**

- **Peer helper system**
  - System in which learners receive support from fellow learners.
  - Creates a school culture of caring and support.
  - Makes counselling accessible to learners.
  - Puts learners with needs in touch with relevant aids.
  - Offers opportunity for early identification.
- **Circuit team**
  - Multi-functional team attached to EMDC.
- **Education support team (EST)**
  - Assist with the identification and assessment of the strong points and development areas of learners with behaviour problems.
  - Assist with the compilation of an individual education development plan (IEDP) for each learner that is experiencing behavioural barriers and amend the IEDP where necessary.
  - Assist with the referral of the learner to other appropriate service providers where necessary.
  - Monitor and evaluate the progress of the learner.
- **Individual education development plan (IEDP)**
  - This is a focussed plan for intervention and support.
  - It focuses on learners' strong points when determining learners' needs.
  - It is managed by the EST.
  - It is based on regular revision.
- **Educator as adult mentor**
  - Not necessarily class teacher, but educator chosen by learner.
  - Regular discussion (weekly) about learner's progress based on class report.
  - Active involvement with learner.



# The Educator as Professional Person

The focus of the classroom is education. Learner behaviour often displays a lack of understanding of this. It is, however, the task of the educator to manage his or her classroom within the framework of the school's policy and to create a culture of positive behaviour so that maximum learning can take place.

## 1. Discipline and punishment

The word *discipline* has its origins in Latin. *Disco* means to learn and *disciplina* refers to the communication of knowledge to the learner. Discipline that means that educators must exercise their authority in the best interest of the learner with emphasis on the development of self-discipline, independence and maturity. Discipline should, at all times, be firm, consistent and positive.

Discipline	Punishment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Results in creating order in order to realise a climate conducive to learning.</li><li>• Ensures fair actions and places the best interest of all parties first.</li><li>• Protects the learner against him/herself and the actions of other learners.</li><li>• Applied in a caring way, develops responsibility, independence and maturity in learners.</li><li>• Is aimed at preparing the learner for his/her future life situation.</li><li>• Must be aimed at corrective action and the development of self-discipline.</li><li>• Acknowledges children's need to function within a caring environment, characterised by love and encouragement.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is predominantly a reaction to the behaviour itself with the intention of causing discomfort or pain, and not aimed at education.</li><li>• Does not necessarily change behaviour. It just makes the learner more careful not to be caught out again.</li><li>• Is the expression of power within a system of controlling through fear.</li><li>• Is critical, negative and leads to a feeling of rejection.</li></ul>

## 2. Ethical responsibilities in respect of discipline

- The South African Council of Educators (SACE) gives very clear guidelines to teachers regarding their professional conduct. Schools should use this code of conduct as a guide when developing a school's own code of conduct for educators. Implementation of this code of conduct implies that, in practice, the educator will conduct him- or herself as follows:
  - Respect your own professionalism: Take responsibility for your own development and ensure that you keep abreast of curricular and co-curricular developments.
  - A professional educator is dependable and maintains confidentiality.
  - Support your school as a learning institution. Promote sound learning and teaching in your school by providing supporting and co-operative inputs.
  - **Acknowledging your responsibility**
    - Provide personal and social support for each learner. Should you suspect or know that a learner is experiencing problems, show interest and do something to help.
    - Maintain consistent discipline. For instance, it is your responsibility to ensure that all learners abide by the school's dress code. Do not leave discipline to the senior personnel.
    - Insist that learners display good manners at all times.
    - Inform parents of the behaviour of their children.
- **Diligence and co-operation.**
  - Be punctual. Conform to your school's prescriptions.
  - Prepare well for your class teaching. Learners usually know if you have not prepared, and this can sometimes lead to disciplinary problems.
  - Plan effectively for good behaviour. Know your learners and their needs.
- **Classroom management**
  - Do not keep a class waiting for you, especially before the first period and after breaks.
  - Do not keep a class with you once the period is over.
  - Do not leave your class on its own.
  - Do not dismiss your class early.
  - Do not allow latecomers into your class without a letter from a parent or a letter of explanation from a teacher.
  - Do not, as a form of punishment, send learners out of your class. (Every school must have a clear policy about this.)
- **General control in the school**
  - During the change in classes, the behaviour of learners in the passageways must be monitored by teachers. Educators must stand near their classroom doors when learners enter and leave classrooms.
  - Do not ask learners to carry messages.
  - Supervisory periods are not free periods. The learners must be encouraged to do their work.

### 3. Statutory requirements in respect of discipline

- Section 12 of the Bill of Rights, as stated in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996), provides that every person has the right to freedom and security. Section 24 refers to the right to an environment that is not harmful to a person's health or well being.
- The South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act 84 of 1996) places a duty on school governing bodies and educators to ensure that discipline is maintained within schools.
- The Code for Educators, as drawn up by the South African Council of Educators (SACE), places a duty on educators to place the security and the best interest of learners first at all times.
- It is expected of an educator to take the same measure of care in respect of learners as would be taken by a reasonable caring parent.
- In light of the Bill of Rights, disciplinary measures are regarded as being unreasonable when
  - they are excessive and administered in an irresponsible manner.
  - they cause physical or psychological pain and damage.
  - there is no clear reason for the punishment measure.
  - it is not age-appropriate.
- The Bill of Rights determines that
  - positive discipline should be promoted.
  - self-discipline should be developed.
  - exemplary actions should be established through the regulation of behaviour.



# Handling of Stress by the Educator

Our life in a complex community makes many demands on us. The teaching profession makes continual demands on the educator. Within the classroom one works with developing young people who are continually testing boundaries in order to develop their personalities. These factors are stressful and challenge the educator to take responsibility for the development of coping skills.

What are my clients like?	How does this affect me?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are young, defiant and energetic.</li> <li>• They are emotionally immature, impulsive and irrational.</li> <li>• Good manners and respect are not always a priority with them.</li> <li>• They lack adequate parental guidance.</li> <li>• They are mostly dependent on their own judgement, which often fails them.</li> <li>• Learners find themselves in a technologically-driven and permissive culture.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interaction with such clients is extremely stressful.</li> <li>• To act in loco parentis involves additional responsibilities.</li> <li>• Your duty to remain in control places additional stress upon you.</li> <li>• Your preparation, personality and insight are the means with which you handle the situation.</li> <li>• Uncertainty about the continually changing context in which to understand and handle the learner creates tension.</li> </ul>

- **The recognition of excessive stress**

(Stress can manifest itself in various ways. Examples:)

<p><b>Physical</b></p> <p>Backache, changes in appetite, migraine, stomach pains, skin disorders, tiredness, infections, palpitations, abnormal sweating, dry mouth, heartburn, constipation, nausea, diarrhoea, spastic colon, etc.</p>	<p><b>Emotional</b></p> <p>Anxiety/panic, frustration, aggression, restlessness, listlessness, hopelessness, helplessness, depression, tearfulness, feelings of guilt, nervousness, etc.</p>
<p><b>Behaviour</b></p> <p>Emotional outbursts, overeating, smoking, use of alcohol, impulsive actions, sleeping problems, passiveness, reckless spending of money, hand wringing, pacing up and down, etc.</p>	<p><b>Mental</b></p> <p>Inability to make decisions, loss of concentration, forgetfulness, confusion, disconnected thoughts, poor judgement, pessimism, re-occurring thoughts, self-blame, conviction that everything is going wrong, etc.</p>

- **Ways of handling stress**

- Your preparation, individuality and insight are your equipment.
- Avoid excessive smoking and alcohol consumption.
- Eat healthily and take exercise.
- Take up a worthwhile hobby.
- Reflection and meditation sometimes help to create a healthy lifestyle.
- Valuable personal relationships are important for your wellbeing.
- Avoid situations which could frustrate you.
- Appreciate your loved ones. Open and sincere communication helps.
- Try relaxing activities like gardening, walking the dog or going to see a good film.
- Think of ways of spoiling yourself.
- Plan your relaxation and stress relief.
- Plan your time.
- **The above-mentioned techniques**
  - will help you to restrict your stress to manageable levels.
  - will help you not to feel overwhelmed by your circumstances.
  - provide room for personal growth in your relationships.
  - promote spontaneity and creativity. Do not stop playing.



# Classroom Management

## 1. Important principles for classroom management

- Discipline is an important part of the day-to-day classroom management. Discipline is closely bound to teaching and instruction and good discipline can be ensured through good management and teaching skills.
- Know your learners by name and establish a meaningful relationship with the learner.
- Be consistent in your expectations and application of discipline.
- Be punctual, organised and prepared for lessons. This promotes discipline.
- Set realistic and achievable targets for your learners.
- Motivate your learners through awards and encouragement.
- Create positive learning experiences for your learners by presenting well prepared and interesting lessons.

## 2. Basic guidelines for avoiding potholes

### • Preparation for the classroom

- Do lesson preparation – ensure that you know what you must do and that you use teaching time to the full.
- Approach teaching with a positive attitude. It helps if you create a positive classroom atmosphere.

- Try to create a stimulating environment, using pictures and colour in order to make learning a pleasure.
- Plan your discipline to the same degree that you plan your lessons. Equip yourself in advance to handle certain crisis situations.

### • Actions within the classroom

- Create a positive environment by moving around while you teach. Don't try sitting and teaching. A passive teacher easily loses the attention of the class.
- Many problems originate at the **beginning** of the lesson when learners come into the classroom. Try to get the lesson under way as soon as possible – don't have learners wait for you – rather wait for them.
- If you must discipline during a lesson, give short and simple instructions with clear reference to rules. Also make use of **Quick Responses**. Do it quickly and immediately continue with the lesson.
- Do not become angry.
- Should a learner become disruptive during a lesson, or refuse to carry out a task, deal with it immediately. Be consistent.
- Ensure during the **concluding phase** of a lesson that all learners have clarity about your expectations about such matters as homework, assessment tasks and incomplete work.

### 3. General guidelines regarding classroom management

- **Know yourself** – it helps to know what annoys you – do not always react immediately – children sense that and can exploit it. They will, therefore, draw you into a conflict situation where there are only losers.
- If you wish learners to "count up to 10", then you must set an example. It gives you an opportunity to establish the appropriate detachment. Remember that you are the one with the most insight – the classroom is the place where you are in control – the more "equipment" you have to control this space, the easier it will be to manage it.
- **It is of paramount importance to know each child's personal context and background.** If she came to school hungry today, it will influence her behaviour in a certain manner. If his parents had a serious fight the previous night, he may be clowning in class today.
- Keep the child's stage of development in mind.
- Bear in mind that impulsive learners do not always understand the implications of their behaviour, and that we must make them aware of them.
- The emotionally immature learner cannot always handle his conflict and is inclined to blame others. Therefore, create an educational opportunity out of a crisis situation – the learner will probably be afraid to swim through the proverbial river – it is your task to fetch him from the other side.
- Use positive reinforcement. Encourage learners continually and thank them for their co-operation. Your professional actions will create respect among learners.
- Be clear in your instructions. Vagueness confuses learners.
- Be firm and confident – learners always exploit uncertainty. You can be confident only if you are well prepared.
- **Parental involvement** is of great importance. Try to involve parents.
- **In the classroom you act in place of the parent.** This implies that you must do more than pure teaching – good teaching involves the whole child and therefore also his or her emotional needs and growth.
- Classroom discipline must conform to the code of conduct of the school. This ensures consistent actions and creates security among learners.
- Make learners aware of the implications of their choice of behaviour. Guide learners towards accepting personal responsibility.
- Some disruptive behaviour requires a **long-term strategy** to eliminate it. Here you must definitely involve your colleagues so that a uniform and consistent approach can be devised. This done through the education support team (EST).
- Guard against labelling a learner. Do not condemn a learner. Condemn his or her behaviour.
- **Function within a framework of rules, rights and responsibility** and not in terms of your status as an educator.
- Behaviour does not exist within a vacuum – try to discover the source of a learner's behaviour.
- Remember that you are a role model for your learners. Your example is thus of cardinal importance – inspire learners with your example.
- You have an important facilitation role in the development of the child's self-image. A child with a positive self-image usually displays positive behaviour.





## Classroom Code of Conduct

- A classroom code of conduct emphasises the responsibilities and rights of each person in the class. This can be a very useful instrument in the management of discipline and behaviour in the classroom. It can further contribute to the building of learners' self-esteem and improvement in learning.
  - A classroom code of conduct provides learners with an opportunity to take co-responsibility for discipline within the classroom. It encourages a sense of responsibility, because they must not only develop the rules, they must also support them.
  - It encourages esprit de corps and group responsibility. Group pressure is thus channelled in a positive direction.
  - The development of a healthy and positive class atmosphere, where learners participate in discussion and negotiations, is central to this approach. It gives learners a say without giving over the say to learners. It also promotes a positive relationship between educator and learners, which makes a further contribution to the handling of discipline. Learners co-operate better and mutual relationships generally improve.
  - Classroom codes of conduct make a positive contribution to an improvement in learning – an orderly and well-disciplined classroom is a prerequisite for effective learning. Also, learners are, indirectly, made responsible for their learning.
- **Suggestions for drafting of a classroom code of conduct**
    - A classroom code of conduct must be comprehensive, but must not contain too many rules.
    - It is not a rigid document and must be adapted if the need arises.
    - Formulate the rules in the learners' own words. However, draft the rules in a positive style by using **must** instead of **must not**. Rules must be clear.
    - Learners are experts on their own lives and can thus make the best contributions as regards the environment within which they function.
    - The classroom code of conduct must make provision for rules, rewards for observing the rules and disciplinary measures for offences. Rules without consequences are of no value.
    - A classroom code of conduct is of little value if it is not consistently and firmly applied.
  - **Procedure for the drafting of a classroom code of conduct**
    - Use a teaching period for discussing and drafting a classroom code of conduct. Have learners sit in a circle and introduce the discussion by explaining that the discussion and proposals are subordinate to what is non-negotiable, such as the country's laws and the school's code of conduct, as well as to the fact that teaching must take place.
    - Divide learners into groups and provide each group with a sheet of paper and a pen. Ask learners to draw a large circle on the sheet of paper. They must write down, inside

the circle, what aspects will contribute to successful teaching, and, outside the circle, they must write down those aspects which will lead to a poor learning experience.

- After completion of this task, each group reports back to the whole class. The groups then get together to generate rules for the creation of a successful lesson. This is followed by a class discussion of each group's rules and the class then reaches consensus as to which rules should be adopted. Remember that the rules must be worded in a positive way. Also take decisions on the manner in which obedience to the rules is rewarded, and disciplinary measures applicable to transgression of the rules.
- A typed version of the classroom code of conduct is given to the learners on the following day for final approval. The approved code of conduct is then put up on the classroom wall where everyone can see it. Also, each learner receives a copy to keep in his or her desk.

- **Example of a classroom code of conduct**

During the Maths periods, everyone (including Mr X the educator) will try his or her best to:

- Work together where necessary.
- Work as hard as we can.
- Work in an orderly way and without noise (but we will usually be allowed to talk quietly).
- Hand in homework on time.
- Ensure that we have the necessary stationery (pen, pencil, ruler, calculator) with us and that we treat the property of others with respect.
- Listen when someone is talking.

Mr X (educator) will do his best to:

- Give as much support as possible to everyone.
- First listen before he believes the worst.
- Not punish the whole group if just one individual is naughty.
- Plan more practical exercises and computer and games lessons.
- Conclude the week with a maths game or choice of another subject.
- Let us work in groups sometime and on our own at others.

Give an opportunity to play a maths game on the computer:

- Every excellent piece of work.
- Achieving 3 codes 6 or 7.
- Handing in homework on time over the period of half a term.

Extra time after school to catch up work for:

- Not enough work covered during a period (educator determines goal).
- Handing in work late three times over a period of half a term.
- Keeping others from doing their work, e.g. walking around in class or throwing things around.

Opportunity for a "Lucky Dip"\* for:

- Being rude or aggressive towards somebody in the class.
- Backchat or refuse to follow instructions.

\* **Educator keeps a box with cards on which various corrective measures are written, e.g. Clean the classroom; Do writing out; Forfeit opportunity to games periods; etc. Learner picks one of the cards.**



## Teaching of Large Classes

- Large classes make large demands. Good planning and preparation, with a sound awareness of what you wish to achieve, is the key to meeting the challenges posed by a large class.
- **Create a small-class atmosphere in a large-class situation:**
  - Know your learners. Above all, know their names.
  - Move around in the class. This reduces the distance between you and the learners. It also promotes learner involvement.
- **Promote learner participation:**
  - Divide the class into groups. The group receives a task and gives feedback. This puts learners at ease and creates feelings of intimacy. In a large class the group can be used to individualise and to work inclusively. In certain circumstances you can include a certain learner in a group where you know this will be to his or her advantage, and where the other learners can support him or her. In other circumstances you can create homogeneous groups for certain purposes, e.g. those who read at a certain level, those to whom you wish to give more attention, etc.
  - **Plan participation**
    - Tell learners that there will be an opportunity to ask questions.
    - Make sure that learners who participate and ask questions know that you know them and that you appreciate their contributions.
  - Encourage learners to contribute learning material to the class. Example: Newspaper and magazine clippings.
- **Promote active learning.** In a large class the individual can easily “disappear” into the group. Through active participation they assume ownership of the learning material.
  - Give a broad summary of the work you wish to do. Write it on the blackboard or on an overhead projector transparency.
  - Concretise the work – use demonstrations wherever possible.
  - Use audio-visual aids i.e. music, films, slides, video films, transparencies.
  - Be enthusiastic about your subject. When learners realise that you are passionate about your subject and the material you present, it engenders their interest and respect.
  - Use “think breaks”. Ask frequent questions. Give them time to mull it over before you explain. This involves learners in problem solving.
  - Use the problem-solving model to plan your lesson. Instead of conveying information, guide learners through the development processes. Help learners to draw their own conclusions.
  - Teach without your teaching notes. You must, therefore, be very well prepared. This gives you the freedom to monitor your learners and to encourage response.
  - Maintain eye contact with your learners.
  - Speak clearly.
  - Eliminate mannerisms like repeated phrases and gestures.





# Handling Behaviour Problems

(Skills as intervention methods for the handling of behaviour problems)

## 1. Quick ways of handling discipline (Surface skills)

Learners' inappropriate behaviour	Quick responses	Description/rationale
Irritating noise/ Attention-seeking noise	<b>Planned ignoring</b> Educator does not react to the learner's behaviour. Goes ahead with the lesson as if nothing has occurred.	So as not to encourage attention-seeking behaviour.
Disruption	<b>Proximity control</b> The educator stays in the vicinity of the possible disrupters or learners manifesting disruptive behaviour. The educator conducts the lesson from this position in the room.	To reduce negative behaviour.
Concentration problems / Disruption	<b>Signal interference</b> For the learner who is not focussed on the lesson, the educator, while he or she is teaching, gives a physical or verbal indication.	Focus the learner's attention on the learning activities.
Concentration problems Disruption	<b>Support with routine</b> Use classroom rituals to give structure to classroom activities and to help such learners to focus.	Focus the learner's attention on the learning activities.
Concentration problems disruption	<b>Interest boosting</b> Build learners' interest – especially that of possible disrupters – through the presentation of your lesson. This also indicates that you appreciate their interest.	Allow the learner to focus on learning activities, to eliminate disruption.

Concentration problems Disruption	<b>Support through restructuring</b> Some learners bring their frustration, agitation and anger into the classroom. Make provision for brief activities so as to calm them or to re-orientate their feelings (meditation, music, etc.)	Allows learners to focus on learning activities, creates order (especially after breaks).
Aggressive and anti-social behaviour	<b>Direct appeal to values</b> In possible conflict situations you appeal to the values system of learners (justice, equality, reasonableness, etc.)	Appeal to their values system in order to correct their negative behaviour.
Aggressive and anti-social behaviour Disruption	<b>Anticeptic Bouncing</b> Before the conflict can develop, remove the child out of the situation for a purpose (send learner to the office with a letter, have the learner pack books into the cupboard, etc.)	Remove the learner by means of a task or activity in order to prevent aggressive behaviour.
Anger, aggression and feelings of depression	<b>Support by means of humour</b> Change a possible conflict situation into a humorous situation. Allow opportunity for the learner not to feel humiliated, to gain control of him- or herself and to reflect on his or her behaviour. Avoid the expected reaction.	When learners are emotionally upset, e.g. angry, feeling depressed, then the educator uses humour.
Anger, aggression, disruptive, learner is out of control	<b>Physical control</b> When the learner appears 'out of control' and where the learner could hurt him- or herself and others, then the educator can control the learner by firmly holding the learner's arms from behind.	Final resort after all of the above.

Classroom management regarding the use of surface skills is extremely important and the guidelines provided to you are there to implement in practice. Central to all of this is the creation and maintaining of sound relationships between you and your learners. If you apply the basic guidelines and rely on your own creativity, you should be able to handle most situations in the classroom. Remain in control and maintain your dignity.

**2. LCSI (Life-space crisis intervention): Crisis as learning opportunity:** To use a crisis in the school as a learning opportunity

	Learner's Experiences	Educator's diagnosis	interventions and setting of goals
<b>Phase 1: Calm the learner</b>	Learner is disturbed and out of control.	<p><b><i>Use it as an opportunity for learning and for building relationships.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What must the educator do to calm the learner?</li> <li>• How does the educator calm intense feelings that the learner is experiencing?</li> <li>• How does the educator manage the learner's crisis behaviour?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to the learner in a calm manner, be patient.</li> <li>• Calm the learner's intense feelings by acknowledging them.</li> <li>• Do not react to the learner's body language and emotional speech (cursing).</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 2: Timeline</b>	This is how I remember what happened to me.	<p><b><i>Develop a relationship of trust with the learner by listening to the learner's account.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What must the educator do to reassure the learner that he or she is being understood?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get the correct account. What happened and where?</li> <li>• Do not focus on unacceptable behaviour (body language and cursing).</li> <li>• Do not judge and come to conclusions.</li> <li>• Listen, listen, listen.</li> </ul>

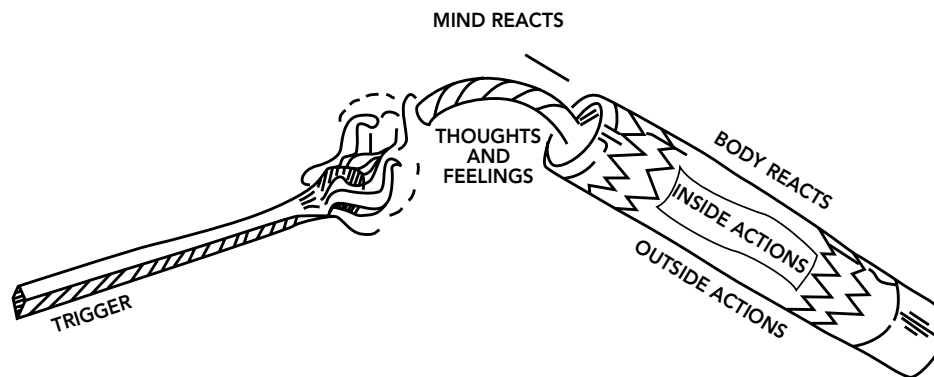
<b>Phase 3:</b> <b>What is the core issue?</b>	<p>I realise what the core issue is.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transferring of conflict.</li> <li>• Irrational thoughts.</li> <li>• Antisocial behaviour.</li> <li>• Impulsiveness.</li> <li>• Lack of social skills.</li> <li>• Peer manipulation.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The same behaviour could originate in various core issues. The educator must therefore determine the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is this behaviour typical of the way the learner thinks, feels and acts in a crisis?</li> <li>• Which short-term interventions are required to normalise the learner?</li> <li>• In which core issue did the learner's behaviour originate?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand, and take the learner's context into consideration.</li> <li>• Understand the six core issues and select the one which fits best.</li> <li>• Use age-appropriate speech to clarify the core issue to the learner.</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 4:</b> <b>Develop insight</b>	<p>Now I understand how I contributed to my crisis and made it worse.</p>	<p><b>The learner now develops insight into the cause of his or her crisis and into his or her personal responsibility for handling it.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does the educator develop the learner's insight into his or her pattern of self-defeating behaviour?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills to handle the core issues.</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 5:</b> <b>New skills</b>	<p>These are the social skills I need in order to better my interpersonal relationships.</p>	<p><b>Development of new skills in order to handle the core issues in a constructive and positive manner.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The educator enables the learner through the learning of new skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social skills.</li> <li>• Self-control skills.</li> <li>• Self-monitoring skills.</li> <li>• Role-play.</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 6:</b> <b>Transfer of skills</b>	<p>This is how I must behave when I return to class and possibly find myself in similar situations.</p>	<p><b>Here the educator facilitates the learner's preparation for and application of his or her new skills in everyday situations.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To facilitate discussions and exchange of ideas so that the learner can be enabled.</li> <li>• Monitoring and support of learner's application of new skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The educator's application of his or her sound insight into the class's dynamics.</li> <li>• Co-operation with staff who can support.</li> <li>• Support other staff with a support programme.</li> </ul>





# Anger Management

- Anger is an emotion and not a behaviour. Something happens (trigger), this lights the fuse (thoughts and emotions) and the explosion results in the person exhibiting physical reactions. Anger is therefore normal, and everyone experiences it at one time or another. It is our instinctive and natural fight-or-flight response when we experience a threat.
- **Diagrammatic representation of how these three components react to each other:**



**Figure 1:** The firecracker model. Adapted from "Novaco's model for Anger Arousal" Fiendler and Ecton 1986

- **Explanation:**
  - The trigger is the match that lights the person's fuse.
  - The fuse is the reaction in the thoughts (mind reacts) – thoughts and feelings, e.g. fear and feeling threatened.
  - The explosive cylinder (body reacts) is the body's physical reaction, and this might give rise to how the anger is expressed.
- **Causes of anger in learners**
  - Arguments about possessions.
  - Fighting.
  - Arguing and teasing.
  - Exclusion from peer group.
  - Pressure to participate in activities.

When children exhibit outbursts of anger and uncontrolled moodiness or threaten violence, it is important to try to understand it and offer support.

- **Preventative measures**

- Create a safe emotional climate within the classroom.
- Model responsible anger management.
- Help learners to develop self-control skills.
- Encourage learners to be able to name their feelings.
- Use books and stories with an anger theme to help young learners to understand and manage anger.
- Provide information and encourage parents in respect of the development of anger management skills in their children.

- **Management of anger**

- The management of anger has as its goal enabling the learner to control the emotional and physiological reaction that anger causes.
- It is not, therefore, about the complete eradication of anger, but about how to keep it within manageable bounds.
- Anger management is a skill that a learner can acquire. Children differ from each other in terms of what causes their anger and how they react to it. Control can also therefore vary from child to child.
- It is better not to confront the child or make comments such as:
  - "you should..."
  - "you are wrong..."
  - "I insist..."
  - "That was stupid..."

- The educator's most important tool in aiding learners with anger, is the effective use of listening skills.
  - Give active attention (nod head, make eye contact, etc.)
  - Show genuine interest in the learner's needs.
  - Give the learner the opportunity to talk about his/her anger without making a judgement.
  - Do not get involved in the learner's anger.
  - Decide on a possible solution together with the learner.

- **Practical steps**

- Allow learners to tell only the facts of the matter.
- Help learners to generate alternatives to how to handle the situation.
- Help learner to make the right decision to deal with the situation.
- Make sure that the learner has got the skills required to carry it out.
- Give learners the opportunity to talk to you again about how things went.

(Distinguish between the behaviour which is unacceptable, and the emotions, which are valid.)



## Handling Conflict

Conflict can be described as differences of opinion of a serious nature. It can also develop where the actions of one person prevent another from achieving his goal or if there is unsolicited interference. Conflict is part of everyday life and is unavoidable. It is also not always negative. It can have a destructive or constructive influence, depending on the perspective of the party and conflict management skills.

Destructive conflict	Donstructive conflict
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When conflict is experienced as disruptive and negative.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When conflict is experienced and it offers the possibility for growth and improving of relationships.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When conflict is experiences as a battle in which there will be a winner and a loser.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When conflict takes into account the long-term relationship and has the extension of it as its goal. When conflict therefore has to do with a specific difference and not with the person as such.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When an isolated incident has an effect on the future of the relationship.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When conflict leads to new initiatives and creative ideas.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When inappropriate conflict management prevents the goals from being achieved, hampers problem solving and confuses relationships.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When conflict results in better and closer human relations.</li> </ul>

- **Basic principles for handling conflict constructively**

- Simple communication principles (clear messages, I-messages, body language, listening, etc.)
- Be thoroughly aware of what you want to achieve and your motives.
- Take into account that the other person concerned also has a goal that he wants to achieve.
- Walk in the other person's shoes/ put on his "glasses" and don't act too hastily. Values/perspectives differ. Every person deserves respect and a chance to present his side of the story.
- Try to get a balance between task and people orientation.
- Use good problem solving skills.
- Take into consideration that children of different ages handle conflict differently (e.g. a young child with inadequate language skills sends out "messages" by means of behaviour). Make the child aware of different emotions and teach him to verbalise them and not act them out. Teenagers have a better command of language, but tend to be too emotional at times and to lose focus. They do not always understand what the consequences of their actions might be.

- **Steps to handle conflict**

- **Identify the problem:**
  - What is the problem?
  - What happened?
  - The child gives own perspective. Feelings and value judgements must be regarded as facts.

- **Expression of feelings:**

- How do you feel about what happened?
- How do you feel now?  
Listen to each parties' honest and subjective expression of feelings – positive and as well as negative. It is important that it is expressed as feelings and not as judgements/accusations. The I-message is important.

- **Develop possible solutions by means of a think tank** (This phase is very important in terms of moving away from what happened and focussing on a constructive solution and change):

- What do you want to happen?
- What would you be comfortable with?
- What are your most important needs in this situation?
- What would you like to avoid?
- What is less important for you?
- What can make the situation better for you?

- **Evaluate the options and make a choice:**

- What can be done realistically?
- Evaluate the various options. Show advantages and disadvantages and choose the options with the greatest advantages and which are acceptable to both parties.

- Programmes on the development of skills for handling conflict must be presented continuously in classes within the school, and not just for the individual learners who are experiencing problems. Values which should continually be endorsed are:
  - Respect every person's right to have his or her own opinion.
  - Try always to understand how others feel.
  - Strive to satisfy your own needs without subordinating the needs of others.



## Bullying

- **Bullying behaviour is clear:** When a child or group of children misuse their power to hurt other children or exclude them.
- The following **three essential elements** are always present in bullying behaviour, namely:
  - deliberate use of aggression,
  - unbalanced power relationship between bully and victim and
  - the causing of physical pain and/or emotional anxiety.
- **Types of bullying**  
**Three types:**
  - Verbal and written, for example name calling, negative/ugly comments, intimidation, threatening or humiliating smses.
  - Physical, for example bumping, scratching, shouldering, hitting, tripping, biting, rolling eyes, showing suggestive signs.
  - Social/Relationships, for example gossiping (verbal or written), revealing personal information, manipulation of the child with a view to humiliation, exclusion from a group.
- **Consequences of bullying**
  - Increased fear of school and absenteeism.
  - Victim's development is affected.
  - Causes handicaps.
  - Feelings of inferiority.
  - Self-esteem problems.
  - Feelings of loneliness.
  - Social isolation.
  - Emotional problems.
  - Psychosomatic symptoms.
  - Communication problems.
  - Depression.
  - Struggle to achieve academically.
  - Some victims commit suicide.
  - Rule-breaking, anti-social behaviour patterns.
  - Risk of criminal behaviour later.
- **Prevention of bullying**
  - Class rules should give, in short and concrete terms, a clear guideline for acceptable behaviour.
  - The class rules should include that bullying is unacceptable, that learners will support the victims of bullying and that the class will work together as a unit.
  - Continuous focus on the development of social skills amongst learners.
  - In the prevention of bullying, a balance must be managed between consequences and prescriptions.
  - All learners who are guilty of bullying should be called to account. It will send out a clear message that bullying will not be tolerated.
  - It is however important that the focus should not be on

punishment so much as on the changing of behaviour and predisposition.

- Suspending the bully for two days only offers the opportunity to watch TV, but does nothing to change the behaviour.
- **Help for bullies**
  - Keep in mind that the bully often comes from a background where there is insecurity, little parent involvement and inconsistency in actions of parents. These learners are often subjected to physical punishment and emotional outbursts.
  - Before formal counselling is necessary, the bully must come to the realisation that his/her behaviour is always going to have negative consequences until the behaviour is changed.
  - Insistence on an apology, development of self-esteem, why-questions and asking nicely to stop have little success in effecting a change, and can aggravate things.
- **Helpful questions for the bully**
  - What did you do?
  - Why was it the wrong thing to do?
  - Who did you hurt?
  - What did you want to achieve?
  - What will you do differently next time, without hurting anybody?
- **The bully must learn the following:**
  - To accept responsibility for their own behaviour.
  - To accept responsibility for the consequences of their actions for themselves.
- To become uncomfortable (my behaviour got me into trouble and I want to avoid it next time).
- To change their behaviour in order to stay out of trouble.
- To find other ways of satisfying their needs.
- To take responsibility for the effect that their actions have had on others.
- To feel guilty about their actions.
- To trust others.
- To built relationships with supportive adults.
- **Support to the victim**

Support to the victims of bullying is provided through:

  - protecting them from further bullying.
  - helping them to understand the bully's actions. This will enable them not to look for the cause of the bully's behaviour in themselves.
  - involving them in educational games of therapy through which they can give expression to their feelings through drawing, writing, drama and verbalisation.
  - involving them in a support group consisting of other victims.
  - linking them with a different group of friends who will act supportively.
- **Advantages of intervention strategies**
  - General discipline in school will improve.
  - Relationships between learners and educators can improve.
  - Parents have more confidence in schools that take direct action after bullying.



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