

**Social Skilling through Cooperative Learning:
a Complementary Approach to Behaviour Management.**

Don Jordan

B.A., Dip. Ed., B.Ed., T.T.C., M.A.C.E

Supervisor: Julianne Moss

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1 Introduction

Hardly a day goes by without some media reference by teachers, parents and the general community at large, to disruptive behaviour in schools. This reported increase in disruptive behaviour has been attributed to a number of factors. The main one, it is argued, is a marked breakdown in student-teacher relationships in many western countries. Teachers have been de-skilled by social changes

... so profound, so rapid, and so extensive [which] have taken place in education that we have a veritable education revolution in these times. Few people realise as well as our teachers the reason for the changes which all of us are experiencing in all phases of life. The teachers recognise they are due primarily to the transition from an autocratic to a democratic society (Dreikurs 1955, quoted by Balson, 1993, p. vi).

According to Balson (1993), disruptive behaviour reflects the inability of teachers to adapt to this post-war transition. Traditionally the lines of authority between teachers and students were very clear. Students were punished, sometimes severely, for their inappropriate behaviour. School principals had, and in some cases still have, the legal authority to use corporal punishment towards their students. Balson suggests that the problem facing teachers is not of their own making. It reflects the loss of the traditional authoritarian status, which reaffirmed their right to control the behaviour of students.

[This change] places the teachers of today in a dire predicament because the traditional methods, the only ones they know, no longer work and new ones are not known. This creates confusion in both children and adults (Balson, 1993, p. vii).

Rationale and methodology

One of the key requirements for securing a classroom in which on-task learning can take place is an absence of misbehaviour, and a great deal of energy is expended in securing this state of affairs.

During my early teaching experience, I had been able to secure a happy and productive relationship with my students without a specific discipline plan. When appointed as a senior teacher, I was expected to demonstrate competence in my own class as well as sharing responsibility for discipline throughout the school. The Assertive Discipline (AD) style [see *Canter, 1976*] adopted in the school conflicted with my teaching philosophy and prior experience. Moreover, it appeared to have only limited success in the school as a whole, suggesting that a behaviour control strategy might not be effective in the longer term. I subsequently transferred to a school with a more cooperative approach to behaviour management, more in keeping with my natural style.

These experiences led me to seek explanations for my preferences by exploring the principles and relative effectiveness of different behaviour management models. I therefore conducted the literature review which follows. This stressed the importance of social skills, the necessity to structure the learning experience of students to take this into account and to examine the curriculum, ethos and teaching style within my classroom in this context.

Group work was a common feature of my teaching, but the literature has alerted me to the need to structure this more formally to ensure that each individual achieves academic and social targets within the group, and is not simply allowed to 'coast' in the shade of his/her more able or more confident peers. I therefore implemented a short programme of structured social skilling and cooperative learning activities in my classroom, to examine the practical implications of social skilling in a cooperative learning environment.

The assumption underlying this action research is that its value lies in the extent to which it supports my practical judgement and increases my capacity to reflect systematically upon the complex situations which I confront in my teaching life (Elliott, 1981).

Chapter 2 of this paper examines some theories of student behaviour and three approaches to behaviour management: the interventionist, the non-interventionist and the interactionist models. The key elements and the implications of each approach for classroom teachers and the students in their care are considered in turn.

Chapter 3 discusses social skills and the ways in which they may be developed and explores cooperative learning strategies which may be used in classrooms to enhance and develop social skills which have already been encountered by most of the students in their family and school relationships.

Chapter 4 reports a case-study which seeks to explore the structured introduction of cooperative learning as part of a social skilling strategy with a Grade 5/6 class. Data were collected over a six-week period to illustrate the process that has been implemented.

Chapter 5 concludes that, despite the brevity of the study, there was some evidence that students became more socially aware and more skilled, as demonstrated by collaboration between wider groups of students and more on-task behaviour. This may be partly due to the consistency between the cooperative learning activities and the interactionist classroom style.

The analysis of theories underlying student behaviour and its management follows in Chapter 2.

2 Theories of student behaviour: a synopsis of key models

A definition of misbehaviour

According to Charles (1992), the label 'disruptive' is applied to any behaviour which is considered to be inappropriate to the setting or situation in which it occurs. Most classroom misbehaviour is considered to be deliberate. However, disruptive behaviour can also be specific to settings. Whilst some children's behaviour causes a problem at home or at school, there may be very little overlap between the two contexts. Similarly, children may display disruptive behaviour with some teachers, in some lessons or in some situations, but not in others (Murphy, 1986). Terms like 'disruptive' or 'misbehaviour' are often used as though they are context-free, but often what is really meant is that the adult finds the behaviour unacceptable. Students might be simply meeting a personal need and not perceive the inappropriateness of their behaviour (Gordon, 1991).

The labels applied to student behaviour are significant. There is an important difference between saying: 'the child is disturbed' and 'the behaviour is disturbing'. The former implies that the problem is within the child, possibly due to some innate physical or emotional problem or faulty upbringing or family life. This results in the view that a classroom teacher can do little about the behaviour of these students, other than hand them over to experts for 'treatment'. The label 'disturbing behaviour' focuses on the action not the individual. What disturbs one teacher may not necessarily disturb another and students' behaviour may vary in different situations (Martin, 1981). Remedial action therefore requires the examination of the various situational factors and in possibly changing these as a way of changing student behaviour. Murphy (1986) delineates the very important distinction between 'the disturbed child' and 'disturbing behaviour' in her medical and educational models of student behaviour (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 Interpretations of student behaviour

	Educational Model	Medical Model
Identification	varies with evaluator	is obvious to most evaluators
Label	disturbing behaviour	disturbed behaviour
Cause	the environment	neurological or psychological illness or upbringing
Behaviour pattern	flexible and may change with environment	stable; will not deviate according to social situations
Intervention	through adaptation of the environment	through individual or group therapy

Murphy, 1986.

Charles (1992) lists five broad types of misbehaviour in descending order of seriousness:

- *aggression*: physical and verbal attacks by students on teachers or other students;
- *immorality*: acts such as cheating, lying, and stealing;
- *defiance of authority*: where students refuse, sometimes hostilely, to do what the teacher tells them to do;
- *class disruptions*: talking loudly, calling out, walking about the room, clowning, throwing objects;
- *goofing off*: fooling around, not doing assigned tasks, daydreaming.

Up to 50% of the misbehaviour that concerns teachers is in the lowest two categories: class disruptions and 'goofing off' (Jones, 1987, Murphy, 1986). Murphy goes on to say that it is sometimes difficult to establish whether teachers contribute to the frequency of misbehaviour through inappropriate responses, which may escalate low-level disruptions into major issues. In this context, some behaviour management strategies might actually 'support poor teaching practices leading to misbehaviour by mitigating the worst effects of those practices' (Stockport Education Psychology Service, 1993).

Some causes of misbehaviour

MacMullin (1994) stresses that misbehaviour has a high academic cost. He argues that most students who misbehave feel left out or poorly-accepted by classmates. They do not use appropriate social skills to form positive relationships with other students and teachers. Most poorly-accepted students lose up to 40 per cent of the 'academic-engaged time' through:

- higher rates of absence than other students;
- more off-task behaviour in class, as they try to engage classmates in social interaction;
- more unhappy thoughts that distract their attention (MacMullin, 1994).

More serious, and longer-lasting, consequences can also follow. One example of great concern in schools is bullying. In both the short- and long-term, poorly accepted students, students without friends and the victims of bullies have a very high risk of developing emotional difficulties. Bullies have a much higher risk in the long term of being charged with assault and of inflicting domestic violence on their partner (MacMullin, 1994).

Besag (1994) suggests that lack of social skills are among the complex and diverse factors which make some people bullies and others victims. She believes that there is something of the bully and the victim in all of us, and that family life and society help to bring out or subdue the different tendencies. In bullies, the aggressive streak has not been modified; they have not learnt that their words and actions hurt others. Some turn to bullying because they have been hurt themselves, perhaps at home. Bullies are often popular and this helps to convince them that bullying works. The victims' lack of confidence can arise from over-protective parenting. In this instance, they have not learnt to be independent and are vulnerable to exploitation by potential bullies. They are often quieter or less agile than bullies and are likely to have fewer friends (Besag, 1994, p. 9).

Slee (1992) suggests that many teenagers perceive the school curriculum as irrelevant. In view of the high rate of youth unemployment among school leavers, such students have come to believe that schooling can no longer be justified primarily in terms of its ability to provide job-related knowledge and skills. How students behave in school is directly related to their understanding of their future and the part that education plays.

This means that school discipline is not simply a question of exerting authority through behaviour management. Nor is it a question of punishment or control. It has become an educational issue which challenges the way we shape the organisation of schools, the way we teach our students, and what we include in the school curriculum (Slee 1992, p. 2).

In his earlier work, Glasser supported the view that what is expected of students is often unreasonable, '...like asking someone who is sitting on a hot stove to sit still and stop complaining' (Glasser 1985, p. 53), but he later came to the belief that it was not the curriculum but the teacher's style which was the cause (Glasser 1990).

Students who have social and emotional difficulties are often identified in their early years of schooling. These difficulties, coupled with an inability to use socially skilful ways to gain teacher support, can result in low academic achievement. Both boys and girls are disadvantaged by their limited repertoires of social behaviour (MacMullin, 1994). There seems to be little point in developing elaborate classroom management strategies for dealing with misbehaviour if it keeps occurring at a high rate because of poor student-student, student-staff relationships. Social skilling should therefore be central to classroom teaching techniques.

Behaviour management

Behaviour management is a series of strategies which aim to secure student behaviour conducive to learning or, in some cases, to bring about the behaviour which reflects well on the teacher i.e. which demonstrates that the teacher is firmly in control. There are numerous models of behaviour management, but they fall broadly into three categories, interventionist (e.g. Canter, 1976), interactionist (e.g. Dreikurs *et al*, 1982,

Balson, 1993) and non-interventionist (e.g. Gordon, 1991). In each category, the emphasis may be on corrective, supportive or preventive strategies.

Clearly, the structure and ethos of the school and the curriculum and teaching style have a major impact on student behaviour and on the effectiveness of any behaviour management strategies which are implemented. Moreover, research has shown that there is a small group of students who do not respond to attempts to modify their behaviour. This analysis will focus on specific classroom behaviour management models aimed at the majority of pupils.

A consideration of some behaviour management models

There is a variety of different approaches to behaviour management, most of which seek to correct undesired behaviour. One way of classifying the approaches is according to the main focus of attention i.e. the teacher, the individual student or the group.

Interventionist models

Interventionist models owe much to the behaviourist work of B F Skinner (1953, 1971), who sought to identify the relationship (or contingencies) between antecedents (the stimulus), the behaviours and the consequences. He concluded that 'behaviour is shaped and maintained by its consequences', where consequences can be either positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement or punishment. Positive reinforcement (presenting something the subject likes, e.g. a reward or treat) and negative reinforcement (removing some aspect the subject does not like, e.g. sitting in the corridor) both contribute to increasing the likelihood that the subject will repeat the behaviour *which immediately precedes* the reinforcement. Punishment, in contrast, makes it less likely for the subject to repeat the behaviour (i.e. weakens it). Thus behaviour is developed and modified in response to external rather than internal influences. Although Skinner never proposed a model of school discipline, others

writers (e.g. Sharpley, 1985, McIntyre, 1989, and Macht, 1989, described as the Neo-Skinnerians by Charles, 1992) have taken up and adapted his ideas.

These models emphasise approaches which put the teacher firmly in charge of determining which behaviour is acceptable and of ensuring that the students keep within these limits. The teacher is held totally responsible for ensuring that students act in their own best interests, with the support of other school personnel and the student's parents. The student develops only by the conditioning of outside forces. The teacher acts to take control of the situation and look for tangible and immediate ways to correct the behaviour of the student. There are clear rules and guidelines, with sets of consequences which follow from adherence to or breach of the rules. Expectations are assertively and clearly communicated to students and teachers follow through on any violation of the rules.

A well-known proponent of this approach is Lee Canter who developed his ideas on Assertive Discipline alone (1976, 1978, 1988) and with Marlene Canter (1986, 1989). Canter's Assertive Discipline (AD) has been widely marketed in the major industrialised countries, including Australia, through materials and training for participating schools. Canter's model was influenced by the neo-Skinnerian ideas and also by many of the approaches advocated by Glasser's earlier work (1969). It assumes that a single framework can be consistently applied to all students in a given class. His model, reinforced by training, therefore requires teachers to set behaviour requirements and follow through with the consequences of non-compliance without differentiating between individual students. It is important to note, however, that Glasser considerably changed his focus in 1985; see non-interventionist approaches below.

Underlying values and assumptions

The principal values being operationalised are those of social control, efficiency and accountability.

Teachers should insist on decent, responsible behaviour from their students. Students benefit from this type of behaviour, parents want it, the community at large expects it and the educational process is crippled without it (Charles, 1992, p.94).

Interventionist models which do not differentiate between individuals assume that there is a consensus between teachers, students, parents and the community at large about what constitutes 'decent, responsible behaviour'. This view is challenged by Gordon (1991) and the effective implementation of, for example, Canter's (1976) model may be undermined by a dissonance of values and expectations.

Canter claims that his model stresses the right of the teacher to teach and their right of the students to learn. These rights operationalise the value of individual freedom. However, the degree of freedom within the learning environment which Canter's model offers varies starkly. Whilst teachers enjoy the right to set, and seek to reinforce, behaviour patterns which they deem appropriate, students are required to conform with these expectations.

Interactionist models assume that misbehaviour is deliberate and under the student's control. They tend towards Murphy's (1986) educational model, interpreting misbehaviour as disturbing (impeding both the students and his peers' progress) but susceptible to modification by the teacher's adaptation of the environment.

Aim and expectations

The aim of interventionist models is to help teachers take charge in their classrooms, not least because teachers feel that lack of adequate classroom discipline is synonymous with failure (Canter, 1976, *et al*).

Canter claims that teachers have basic educational expectations including the right to establish optimal learning environments, to determine, request, and expect appropriate behaviour from their students and to receive help from administrators and parents when it is needed. He emphasises the importance of the teacher's taking control in a calm but forceful way. In the same way, he argues that students have basic educational expectations including teachers who will help them limit their inappropriate, self-

destructive behaviour and who will provide positive support for appropriate behaviour and the right to choose how to behave with understanding of the consequences that follow.

Structure and focus

Assertive teachers maintain a balance between meeting the students' and the teacher's needs. Limits are set, structure is provided, teaching and management strategies are adopted to promote the welfare of all. Interventionist models identify the teacher as the most significant person in the classroom because, more than anyone else, the teacher determines what happens.

Interventionist models focus on the outcome, that is, on the students' conforming with a prescribed pattern of behaviour. Insofar as the standards required are set for the class as a whole, the focus is on the class rather than in the individuals within it.

Teacher style and relationship with students

The teacher's style tends to be autocratic and the relationship between teacher and students is formal and authoritarian, with little value placed on the students' freedom. Proponents of this approach, described by Glasser (cited by Charles, 1992, p. 118) as 'boss teachers', is sometimes criticised for being authoritarian. However, Canter (1976 *et al*) maintains that teachers who are positive, firm and consistent are demonstrating that they care about their students.

Process

Interventionist models of behaviour management focus on the *outcome* and students are only involved in the process when they have complied or failed to comply with expected norms. It is possible, especially in large classes, that students who neither conspicuously conform with nor contravene rules will be only minimally involved.

As stated above, these approaches draw on the behaviourist principles of reinforcement and punishment. Canter's (1976 *et al*) Assertive Discipline model

requires the teacher to determine their expectations of student behaviour and the consequences of non compliance, to communicate these to their students clearly and firmly, to follow through consistently with appropriate actions and to respond to students in ways that maximise compliance, but in no way violate the interests of the students.

In behaviourist terms, the focus is on behaviour in relation to the teacher's expectations. Where students comply, their behaviour is positively reinforced by means of rewards (labelled 'positive consequences') which include personal attention from the teacher, positive notes to parents, special privileges and material rewards. Non-compliance is negatively reinforced by 'graphic reinforcers' on the board and implementation of their associated 'negative consequences'. The consequences are cumulative. The accounting period begins afresh in each new lesson or day.

In terms of preparation Canter (1976; see also *Appendix 10*) argues that teachers should:

- expect good behaviour and apply reinforcements consistently, irrespective of students' emotional illness, brain damage, hereditary or socio-economic background;
- develop a well-thought-out discipline plan to deal with all aspects of behaviour and practice assertive interventions (reiterating expectations, firm tone of voice, eye contact) so that the response becomes established;
- set, limits and consequences and communicate these to principal, students and parents at the beginning of each year.

Outcomes

A consistent application of the pure form of interventionist models is intended to bring about an increase in the desired behaviour and generally a conformist and obedient attitude amongst the students, which will promote on-task behaviour for the whole class (Charles, 1992).

It is, however, logically possible, that successfully 'conditioning' students to respond to the teacher's expectations may, by focusing on 'suppressing bad behaviour to the exclusion of building values towards responsible behaviour' (Charles 1992, p. 107), undermine their ability to set standards and assess their performance independently of the teacher. Westwood (1993) concurs, pointing out that:

[the] child who remains largely external is likely to be the child who fails to assume normal self management in class and who is prepared to be managed or controlled by 'powerful others' such as the teacher, parents, teachers' aide or more confident peers (*op cit*, p. 21).

There is the risk that, where expectations are not clearly defined and consequences applied, inappropriate behaviour may follow.

Limitations of interventionist models

The success of behaviourist models depends on:

- the clear understanding, in each setting, of behavioural expectations and the consequences of non-compliance;
- the students' desire to secure the approval or avoid the disapproval of the teacher;
- the teacher's ability to reinforce the behaviour of each student consistently, appropriately and immediately.

The effectiveness of these models is therefore undermined when the expectations and consequences are not clarified and applied throughout the school, when students are indifferent to the positive or negative reinforces or when the teacher's expertise or the class size prevents effective reinforcement.

The benefits claimed for Assertive Discipline (AD) are not always borne out in practice. In 1993, the Stockport Education Psychology Service (SEPS) evaluated the implementation of Assertive Discipline in four local schools.

The programme raised teachers' feelings of self-efficacy but, by decreasing the feeling of being swamped by misbehaviour, it may distort perceptions of actual misbehaviour. In the school which had the longest experience of AD, 'teachers expressed some doubt

as to whether the improvements they had witnessed represented deep and long-lasting changes in the pupils' behaviour and attitudes' (SEPS, 1993, p.9). Schools reported that the behaviour of pupils with whom they had the greatest difficulty in the past proved the most resistant to change. In a schools where, SEPS found, 'much emphasis was placed on team-building, the raising of the self-esteem of the children and the counselling of children by the staff', the head teacher commented: 'It's only behaviour modification, no one's pretending that we're getting down to root causes' (SEPS, 1993, p. 9).

Whilst principals, teachers, non-teaching supervisors and parents responded positively to the introduction of AD, a more careful examination of the implementation revealed that 'although the majority of teachers professed to use AD, all the observed teachers used AD only in the most superficial respects' (SEPS, 1993, p. 6). The majority of teachers did not impose rules or apply sanctions in a rigid manner because this is 'antithetical to the philosophies of many British teachers, maintaining ... classroom order by assertion of the teachers' rights but at the expense of children's rights' (SEPS, 1993, p. 1). This view is endorsed by Charles (1992, p. 106), and Curwin and Mendler (1988) criticise the 'lockstep' system for failing to recognise circumstantial evidence for misbehaviour and the need to give special attention to, or plan for, an individual student. Moreover, by failing to allow for changes in students' relationship to authority over time and creasing their responsibility for their learning and classroom behaviour, AD could well release the student from personal responsibility and rational decision-making. Slee (1992, p. 6) argues that the change in relationships over time must be acknowledged in the pedagogy, curriculum and organisation of the school.

SEPS found that the unequal relationship between teacher, students and parents, in which the teacher imposes the rules without negotiation, was one of the weaknesses of the AD system. This is all the more significant because, if it fails, Canter reserves the right for teachers not to teach the student unless 'home consequences' bring about the desired behaviour in the classroom.

SEPS concluded that, although AD is not without its good points - such as a set of clearly communicated, consistent expectations throughout the school, the use of positive messages, raising teachers' feelings of self-efficacy - none of these are peculiar to AD.

Non-interventionist models

At the opposite end of the continuum, non-interventionist techniques focus on getting students to exercise their internal control without the direct intervention of the teacher.

Underlying values and assumptions

Non-interventionist models recognise the uniqueness of individuals and their right to freedom of thought and, to some extent, action.

Gordon (1991) suggests that, as each person is uniquely different, it is impossible for one person to make a decision for another. He also believes that there are differences in values, beliefs, personal tastes, lifestyle ideals and personal convictions. Where this is the case, a problem-solving approach may not work as partners cannot accept solutions which deny basic values. This is consistent with Adler's (1927) definition of the individual as an indivisible unity or whole and the importance of respecting the integrity of values and behaviour. As a result, where values conflict, Gordon argues, the teacher should avoid influencing the student by means of the teacher's greater authority and power.

Sutton and Cruickshank (1983) assert that students are motivated by an internal desire to be good. They are rational and capable of solving their own problems. The teacher should provide a warm, accepting and supportive environment in which students can work through, or be assisted to work through, conflicts without any feelings of 'winning' or 'losing'. Adults can, unintentionally and inadvertently, damage students' self esteem, stifle their creativity and break their spirit by the way they talk to children, handle conflicts, discipline them, force values on them and use authority and power.

Ginott (1971) supports the view that teachers have the power to make or break a child's self-concept through the messages they send (cited by Charles, 1992, p. 48). He argues that labelling is disabling because students come to believe, and live up to, a negative self-image. He stresses the importance of dissociating the teachers' esteem for their students from their disapproval of some student behaviours. This is consistent with Murphy's (1986) educational model of student behaviour.

Aim and expectations

The teacher's aim is to assist each student explicitly to talk about his/her difficulties until the student is able to reach his/her own solution. Glasser (1985) stresses that quality teachers befriend, encourage, stimulate students and show an unending willingness to help them. By thus functioning as 'lead-managers' rather than 'boss-managers' (coercing), they enable students to do their best work. However, this view reflects a significant change in emphasis from Glasser's work prior to 1985.

Structure and focus

Non-interventionist models of behaviour management are loosely structured, making no overall assumptions about class behaviour. The teacher responds on an individual basis to the emerging needs of students and to behaviour as it happens, recognising that what (s)he perceives as misbehaviour may not be seen as such by the student (Gordon, 1991). In this event, 'punishment' may not have the desired effect, because the student is not aware that a change in behaviour is required.

These models stress the teacher's supportive role in relation to the individual student's behaviour and needs. The teacher is therefore led by, and reactive to, student needs (Sutton and Cruikshank, 1983 and Glasser, 1985).

Non-interventionist models focus on the individual and on the process of developing the individual's self-discipline through examination of the effect of particular behaviours on others and the negotiation of acceptable solutions.

Teacher style and relationship with students

The predominant style is informal, collaborative, non-hierarchical. The teacher exercises what Gordon (1991) describes as 'desirable' authority, based on his/her expertise, knowledge and experience. Students adjudge the teacher to be worth listening to by virtue of his/her expertise. A teacher in this position can offer his/her consultancy skills much as a lawyer or doctor does, to help a student solve a problem. This contrasts with what Gordon deems to be 'undesirable', power-based authority, which the teacher has by virtue of his/her position of being able to praise or punish.

Sutton and Cruickshank (1983) suggest that teachers following a non-interventionist, supportive approach should develop:

- i) unconditional respect for and acceptance of students and the ability to separate the person from the action;
- ii) empathy, that is, understanding the situation from the point of view of the person involved;
- iii) rapport, characterised by being interested, responsive and sensitive;
- iv) genuine interest and the generation of pleasantness, confidence, cooperation and sincerity;
- v) sincerity, honesty and consistency and be secure in themselves;
- vi) attentiveness and active (reflective) listening strategies.

Process

Non-interventionist approaches warn teachers against accepting inappropriate student behaviour as this is immediately recognised as insincere by the students. Rather, they should focus on 'ownership' of the problem (students, teacher or both). The solution which the teacher employs is related directly to this concept. The overall approach is that of listening to and non-directive counselling for, students, within a negotiated framework of acceptable behaviour.

Gordon (1991; see also *Appendix 11*) suggests that teachers adopt the following techniques:

- clearly indicate when student behaviour is causing a problem, and state how the teacher feels about it. (*I* messages);
- develop his/her own communication skills, particularly the ability to listen actively;
- encourage students to think through the problem for themselves;
- together work through the problem to reach a negotiated solution.

Gordon advocates that teachers use various strategies to fully hear what the student is saying, to define the problem and clarify needs. The teacher and the student brainstorm, and then evaluate possible solutions on which they can agree. The solution is implemented and arrangements are made to assess how it is working at a later time. He also proposes this process for the democratic generation of class rules and consequences and for use in class meetings.

The non-interventionists do not support the interventionists' reward strategy. Gordon explains:

[The] fact is that rewards are used so often and so unsuccessfully by so many teachers and parents proves they don't work very well. Otherwise how can we account for the universal problem of poor discipline in our classrooms and the fact that most parents feel so impotent in dealing with the misbehaviour of their children? (Gordon, 1991, p. 35)

Outcomes

By placing the problem with individual students and supporting their search for a solution, non-interventionist models help students develop a questioning attitude, diversity and independence of mind. They learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour and their progressive success at finding solutions raises their self-esteem. The systematic identification of possible solutions and the evaluation of their effectiveness helps students to become the independent arbiter of what constitutes appropriate behaviour. They thus develop self-discipline.

However, students' perception of acceptable behaviour, possibly based on criteria set in the home, may not be appropriate elsewhere. Given the emphasis placed on the individual's values and beliefs, there is a danger that acceptable compromises may not be achieved (for example in negotiating the framework for behaviour). In the long-term, although students may exercise self-discipline, if their value systems conflict with those of others, their behaviour may continue to be perceived as unacceptable.

Limitations of non-interventionist models

The success of the non-interventionist models depends on:

- the teacher's mastery of the appropriate listening, counselling and negotiating skills;
- the teacher's willingness and ability to delegate authority and responsibility for behaviour;
- the student's ability to think rationally and mastery of the skills and language necessary to solve his/her own problems;
- the availability of enough time to work through the problem;
- a degree of congruence between the underlying values espoused by teacher and students.

The effectiveness of these models in securing appropriate behaviour will be undermined by inadequate teacher skills or if the school culture does not support the delegation of responsibility for behaviour to students. For a 'no-loser' solution to be found, students need to feel part of a classroom environment that allows for caring and sharing and risk-taking to occur. The success of this approach is heavily dependent on the students' having the necessary skills to be able to play their part in arriving at the most appropriate solutions. Given the focus on interaction with individual children, the size of the class will significantly influence the success of non-interventionist models.

Finally, the stress on subjective judgements and on the sanctity of individual values means that, unless an acceptable compromise can be found, the teacher must opt

between condoning unacceptable behaviour or imposing his/her will, in contravention of one of the basic principles of the non-interventionist model.

Interactionist models

These models fall between the interventionist and non-interventionist ends of the continuum. Whilst the former focuses on the class group and the latter on the individual, interactionist models stress the place of individuals within the group or community, in which they function.

Underlying values and assumptions

The underlying values of interactionist models are the worth of the individual, communality and democracy. In accordance with Adler's (1927) individual psychology, interactionists hold that students are individuals with different characteristics and abilities, which they develop from the interaction of inner and outer forces. Individuals are motivated by the unconscious desire to meet particular social needs, the most basic being that of belonging (Dreikurs *et al*, 1982). In the case of students, this need can be satisfied through a pursuit of goals designed to secure their place within the class. They develop through a constant 'give and take' relationship with others and thus emphasise the power of the group.

Dreikurs *et al* (1982; see also *Appendix 12*) suggest that all behaviour (whether social, intellectual or emotional) is purposeful. Misbehaviour is directed to the pursuit of one of four possible goals: attention getting, power seeking, revenge seeking, displaying inadequacy. These goals often reflect the students' mistaken belief that it will gain them the recognition they want. Behaviour may be modified by adaptation of the environment, in the light of the purpose of the behaviour. As with the other models, interactionist approaches are based on Murphy's (1986) educational model, which defines the behaviour (not the student) as disturbing and susceptible to modification in the classroom.

Aims and expectations

Proponents of this approach maintain that it helps students to learn that they are responsible for making the choices which determine their behaviour and that they must therefore accept the consequences of those choices. In determining the acceptability of behaviour, the needs of the other members of the group are given equal consideration.

Structure and focus

Rather than advocating that an individual teacher has total authority in the classroom, or that each student is solely responsible for his/her own behaviour, interactionist approaches place power within the class group, comprising the teacher and the students. The group collectively negotiates the rules and the consequences which follow any breach.

The focus therefore, is on the individual within the group, and on the process of determining and implementing the behaviour strategies.

Teacher style and relationship with students

The interactionist teacher is likely to establish a democratic classroom style, characterised by freedom with order and the development of students' inner control (Balson, 1992). Democratic teachers provide firm guidance and leadership whilst allowing students to have a say in establishing rules and consequences (Dreikurs *et al*, 1982). However, once the policy is in place the teacher is responsible for implementation. This responsibility arises from the teacher's accountability for the educational process and outcomes.

A number of authors (Ginott, 1971, Jones 1987 and 1987a, and Rogers 1991) also stress the importance of teachers' acknowledging and dealing positively with students' emotions and of personally modelling good behaviour.

Process

A major focus of the interactionist model is the proactive prevention of the misbehaviour of individuals in a group setting. For example, Rogers (1991) advocates that teachers prepare a behaviour plan, and practising strategies to deal with student misbehaviour, i.e. planning for, and intercepting inappropriate behaviour before it happens. For example, where a student has already reacted inappropriately to a request, an experienced teacher can predict future confrontation and avoid it by modifying the way in which the request is next made.

Dreikurs *et al* (1982) say that the prediction of potential misbehaviour is made easier if teachers focus on what the student is getting out of the behaviour, that is, which goals they are attempting to meet. The easiest way for teachers to identify students' mistaken goals is to note their own responses to the misbehaviour. Their responses indicate what type of expectations the student has. They are usually sought in sequential order. If attention getting fails to gain recognition, then the student will progress to power seeking. If power seeking is not rewarded then the student moves on to seeking revenge, then to displaying inadequacy. The strategy used to correct inappropriate behaviour should be linked to the student's goal for maximum effectiveness. An understanding of the underlying goal will also help teachers avoid acting in ways which reinforce them and the ensuing behaviour.

Interactive models of behaviour management focus on the *process* and students are actively involved in negotiating and setting expectations and consequences as well as being the subject of their application. Teachers should strive to encourage students' efforts, in pursuit of their objective.

Outcomes

In order to identify behaviour which is appropriate for a group situation, both teachers and students must consider the range of individual differences and needs within the group. This is followed by a systematic analysis of individual rights and the establishment of individual and group responsibilities and rules to safeguard these.

Ideally, and over time, this process helps students to develop understanding and empathy of others, skills and strategies for social interaction and the ability to modify their own expectations and behaviour in the light of changing circumstances.

Limitations of interactionist models

The successful implementation of interactionist models depend on:

- the recognition that teacher's and students share responsibility for behaviour and for the development of self-worth and that this is a long-term strategy;
- the teacher's ability to identify students' behavioural goals;
- the teacher's skill in involving students in the negotiation and implementation of a framework of behaviour strategies; and
- the teacher's and students' ability to identify a series of natural and logical consequences and distinguish these from rewards and punishments.

The achievement and implementation of an agreed framework is heavily dependent on cooperation between teacher and students over an extended period of time. Students must actively engage on this process, and take the risk of making mistakes, if they are to develop skills and judgement which are transferable to other situations. A lack of skill or sensitivity on the part of the teacher and a school environment which is unreceptive, or even hostile, will inhibit students' willingness to take these risks. The failure to recognise that the process as well as the outcome are essential and worthwhile parts of the educational experience, will undermine the effective implementation of this model.

Commentary

There are common elements between the three models, for example, the definition of appropriate behaviour, behaviour as a choice, the creation of a hierarchy of consequences which follow non-compliance, and addressing the behaviour, rather than the student's character. However, there are differences in the

- behavioural objectives (control, self-discipline and attitudinal change);
- main focus;
- stage and degree of student involvement in the developing and implementing the framework; and
- choice and implementation of the consequences.

Behavioural objectives

The interventionist model aims to secure behaviour from students that contributes to their optimal growth and learning, whilst also meeting the needs of the teacher. Whilst interventionist strategies may secure appropriate behaviour, they may not assist students to develop cooperative social and rational decision-making skills.

The non-interventionist model aims to develop the students' self-disciplined responsibility, which

requires participation in decision making, so that students can feel they matter and are in control of their existence. It is learned from confronting problems, finding solutions, and living with the consequences. Any teacher can find ways of giving students responsibility in any classroom (Combs, 1985, cited by Gordon, 1991, p.143).

The process of negotiating solutions may mean that the teacher does not achieve the short-term control appreciated by the interventionists.

The interactive model aims to develop the skills and judgement which will enable the individual to choose the behaviour appropriate to the circumstances, and the needs of others in the group or community. As a developmental approach, interactive models take longer to achieve their objectives than interventionist models. However, it is argued that the change brought about by the interactive model is more sustainable (Stockport Education Psychology Service, 1993 p. 9).

Focus

All the models address the three facets of discipline: preventive, supportive and corrective, but the importance given to the respective elements varies.

All seek to *prevent* misbehaviour by defining expectations and the consequences of non-compliance. Non-interventionists may, in addition, disclose a need which will require future support from students (Gordon, 1991). Interactionists explicitly model the sort of behaviour which they expect from their students, for example, self-control, consideration, respect etc. (Ginott, 1971 and Jones, 1987 and 1987a). They also identify the students' likely misbehaviour and the underlying cause, and modify their own approach accordingly (Rogers 1991, Dreikurs *et al*, 1982).

All *support* good behaviour by simple reminders and by positively reinforcing desired behaviour. Non-interventionists focus on creating a supportive environment within which students can express their needs and explain their behaviour. From this point, a solution acceptable to both student and teacher is sought (Gordon, 1991). Interactionist avoid inflating the incident by setting it in perspective, by addressing the situation rather than the students' character, and by accepting and acknowledging students' feelings (Ginott, 1971, Dreikurs *et al*, 1982, Rogers, 1991).

All models *correct* misbehaviour by 'following-through' clearly defined, hierarchical, consequences. The main distinction here, however, is the degree of differentiation which the teacher employs. Whereas interventionist consequences are non-negotiable, common to all students, to be applied progressively for each subsequent misbehaviour within a given day or period (Canter, 1976), the other models enable the teacher to adjust the consequence to the severity of the incident or the particular circumstances.

Stage and extent of student involvement

Although the behaviour management models outlined are intended to apply to all students, they involved students at different stages of the process and to different degrees. It may also be possible for some students to complete their school career virtually 'uninvolved'. The consequences of 'minimal involvement' in the different models may be inferred as follows:

- Students in the interventionist classroom are not involved in the setting of behaviour expectations or consequences. 'Satisfactory' students may

escape punishment and fail to obtain rewards. Unless the lack of reward undermines their standard of behaviour, they would pass through the year 'uninvolved', although it might be argued that they have responded to the explicit statement of behavioural expectations. In so far as the teacher's prime aim is to maintain control, rather than to develop the students' self control, the lack of involvement does not entail a missed educational opportunity.

- In a non-interventionist classroom, students may not engage actively in the process of setting objectives and, if they never have a behaviour problem, may avoid the process of problem solving. Unless alternative provision is made, they may not practise and develop the negotiating and problem-solving skills.
- In an interactionist classroom, unless the teacher is particularly vigilant, it is possible for some students to remain passive during the negotiation of behavioural goals. Given the developmental objectives of this process, uninvolved students are missing the opportunity to practice the setting of boundaries and the consideration of potential consequences of their actions. This constitutes an important educational loss, unless alternative opportunities are provided.

Consequences, reward and punishment schemes

All the models refer to the 'consequences' which will follow when students infringe behaviour guidelines, often using similar terms for different concepts. It is not possible here to go into a detailed analysis of the respective contributions of incentives, punishment (see, Gordon, 1991 and Balson, 1992) and student self-reward systems (see Lindsley, 1971 and Mahoney and Thoresen, 1972) to behaviour management, but two points need to be made about behaviourist models which rely on external reinforcement.

Firstly, critics contend that reliance on reward and punishment wipes out intrinsic motivation and therefore restrict the effectiveness of behaviourist models to the specific context (Hill, 1990). Secondly, although the teacher may distinguish clearly between 'natural' or 'logical' consequences and punishment, students, because of their age, understanding or level of involvement may not share this distinction. Where the link between 'misbehaviour' and 'consequence' is not clear to the student, the consequence, for example a verbal reprimand, may be perceived by students as random aggression and, in turn, foster aggression and even violence on the part of the student (Gordon, 1991). This would underline the importance of involving the students in the establishment of standards of behaviour and the definition of the consequences.

Conclusion

According to Charles (1992), the interactionist model has the greatest potential for bringing about genuine attitudinal change among students, so that they ultimately behave better because they consider it the proper thing to do. However, behaviour management strategies are not infallible. Any given model may be theoretically sound and practically viable but still fail to work in a given situation. Any management or teaching skill, even if generally effective across a variety of students, may be ineffective with specific students and in some instructional settings.

In discussing classroom management, Martin (1981) describes the process of eclecticism. He suggests that there is some truth in each of the major theoretical models and systems and each is effective to some degree. The challenge is to determine the theoretical approach, or combination of theoretical elements, which works best for each type of situation and problem.

Eclecticism may involve the use of different theoretical and methodological approaches to classroom management depending on the exact nature of the problem at hand; it may involve the integration and combination of elements from different theoretical perspectives in dealing with a specific problem; or it may involve both the problem-specific use of different approaches and the integration/combination of these approaches (Martin, 1981, p. 154).

Martin argues that teachers should not limit themselves to one approach, as the techniques have to be adapted according to the age and ability of the students, the time, place and purpose of the learning activity and, to a certain extent, to the personality, beliefs and values of the teacher. Given that differences of opinion, personality and procedure will inevitably arise between teachers and students, there is a need to consider how behavioural problems will be dealt with when they occur. It is important strategies prevent future problems, rather than causing an escalation of ill-feeling. Teachers should choose from and use each of these models as a deliberately selected strategy for a particular situation.

Alternatively, eclecticism may be interpreted as using different models over time. Sutton and Cruickshank (1983) suggest that the interventionist model might be highly effective with young children because it is not based on the rational capacities of students. As they grow older, they become increasingly concerned with others and the larger social order and then the interactionist models may be more ideally suited. The non-interventionist approaches, they suggest, assume rational thought and independence on behalf of the student and would be more suitable for older children. They acknowledge that this is not necessarily a universally held view. Others would suggest that whatever method is used, the training can start at a very early age and children grow with the model as they develop, maintaining a consistent approach throughout school life.

Dreikurs *et al's* (1982) assertion, that all behaviour is purposeful and goal-directed and that misbehaviour is associated with mistaken goals, is an important indicator to the classroom teacher that curriculum initiatives must be put into place to help students develop skills in social and cooperative behaviour, thereby assisting them to redirect these mistaken goals.

Social skills are an integral component of both the non-interventionist and the interactionist behaviour management models. The more socially skilled the student, the more effective (s)he is in helping establish a framework of behaviour and the better

(s)he resolves any inconsistencies between his/her behaviour and the agreed expectations. Conversely, the process of negotiating expectations and of resolving any inconsistencies (misbehaviour) helps the student to develop social skills. Consequently, non-engagement in the behaviour management process in the interactionist or non-interventionist classrooms represent a lost opportunity to practice these skills. Moreover, as indicated above, the interventionist behaviour management model, consistently applied, does not provide opportunities to develop these skills. For this reason, it is important that the teacher provide alternative opportunities to develop these skills, either by specific social skilling exercises, or by the inclusion of cooperative learning strategies within the students' overall learning experience.

The provision of these additional opportunities will form the focus of the remaining chapters of this paper.

3 Social skills and cooperative learning in the classroom

Significant changes in classroom and school climate can be brought about through the teaching of social skills, using cooperative learning techniques.

Social skills are ways of behaving which help students get on well with each other. The prevalence of guides giving advice to adults on how to improve interpersonal relationships, both on an occupational and social level, might suggest that schools have not successfully assisted the students in their care to develop effective social and personal skills.

MacMullin (1994) argues that many of the students who do poorly at school, who clown around in class, who are cheeky and break rules or who get into fights are generally feeling rejected. He argues that this is due to poor social skills which may extend into adult life. Teaching these students how to get on with others will make an enormous difference to their behaviour at school. Therefore, the creation of a positive learning and social environment is basic to the prevention of misbehaviour.

People are not born socially skilled and do not know instinctively how to interact effectively with others. Students must be taught these skills and be motivated to use them (Graves and Graves, 1990, Hill and Hill, 1993).

A definition of social skills

Westwood (1993, p. 64) defines social skills as 'those components of behaviour that are important for persons to initiate, and then maintain, positive interactions with others'. MacMullin (1994) points to their importance:

- as a right-of-entry requirement into wider society;
- to enhance relationships and reduce academic, sporting and occupational stresses;
- to influence others' behaviour successfully;

- to enhance cooperation and the achievement of group goals; and
- to develop cooperation and to resolve conflict.

Charles (1992) identifies three categories of social skills affecting classroom situations.

- 1 *general human relations skills*, e.g. cooperation, sharing, taking turns, seeing others' points of view, the ability to listen, a positive attitude, friendliness;
- 2 *relations between teacher and students*, 'which improve the quality of classroom interactions, thereby contributing to a positive atmosphere' (Charles, 1992, p. 135), e.g. modelling courtesy and good manners, giving regular attention and reinforcement; and
- 3 *relations between teacher and parents*, which may be enhanced through regular communication and clear descriptions of the school's expectations of the students.

This third aspect is very important given that the school builds on social skills and expectations which have already been developed to a greater or lesser extent in the home (MacMullin, 1994). However, as Kutnick (1994) points out, skills developed in families may not be adequate for larger groups, or environments beyond the immediate family/friendship circle.

The quality of students' relationships with their peers is of particular importance. It is within these relationships that students develop the concepts of cooperation, mutual respect and interpersonal sensitivity, and experience companionship, intimacy and affection. The peer relationship can be viewed as the primary context for the social and emotional growth of the individual.

Social skills are related to all aspects of behaviour in school. All students, not just those who are troubled, benefit from social learning, which should be given the same priority as academic learning. The curriculum can be used to raise awareness of anti-social behaviour among students, including bullying. By challenging students' attitudes, it is possible to increase understanding of the plight of the victims of such

behaviour and build a supportive ethos. It cannot be safely assumed that children will easily develop the necessary social skills just by watching their classmates, for success in these relationships does not come automatically.

Students need to be encouraged to accept responsibility for their behaviour by learning that every action has a consequence. For social skilling to occur in meaningful ways, there must be changes in what is taught, how it is taught and in the organisation of the school. The focus should be on the **needs** of the students and on what the school as a whole can offer, rather than on the delivery of standardised courses regardless of their perceived appropriateness. These strategies must be ongoing throughout schooling to reduce the incidence of high-level dysfunctional behaviour among students.

Social skills in the supportive classroom

McGrath and Francey (1992) take the view that students enjoy learning social skills and that practice is an essential part of the process. Opportunities should be taken throughout the school day to teach and reinforce socially skilled behaviour as it naturally occurs. They list 21 skills which they consider are important for a supportive classroom climate:

- playing fairly;
- being a good winner;
- being a good loser;
- positive tracking;
- giving and receiving compliments;
- approaching and joining in;
- speaking in front of an audience;
- negotiating;
- dealing with fights and arguments;
- suggesting and persuading (instead of bossing);
- making a decision in a group;
- respecting other people's opinions;

- sharing;
- including others;
- listening and asking good questions;
- telling an interesting story;
- having an interesting conversation;
- telling someone to stop annoying you;
- ignoring someone who is giving you a hard time;
- saying 'no';
- asking an adult for support.

Children who are socially well skilled usually have high self-esteem and many other positive changes derive from a feeling of self-worth (McGrath and Francey, 1992).

Social skills which contribute to a positive self-image include:

- sharing and taking turns;
- being positive;
- suggesting and persuading;
- including others;
- respecting others' ideas and opinions;
- negotiating;
- mediating when others cannot agree;
- making decisions in a group;
- managing time.

McGrath and Francey recommend that these activities be practised in the context of cooperative learning activities, in four steps:

1. Helping students see the benefits of learning and using a skill e.g. making friends, having positive experiences and relationships with each other, feeling good about themselves etc.
2. How do you do it? Telling students the do's and don'ts of the skill.

- 3. Practising the skills through role-play and feedback from students and teacher.
- 4. Practice, using general and specific skill practice exercises.

A particularly powerful strategy is positive tracking (see Figure 2). People who are 'positive' are generally liked by other people and have lots of friends. They are nice to be around and other people seek their company. They also like themselves and are successful in most things that they do.

Figure 2 Positive tracking strategies

Do	Don't
Look for the good things that you do and say them to yourself and sometimes out loud.	Don't put yourself down by looking for and saying bad things about yourself.
Look for the good things that other people do and say them out loud.	Don't put others down by looking for and saying bad things about them. Don't criticise all the time.
Look for the good things that happen in your life, however small, and say them to yourself and out loud.	Don't grizzle and complain about the bad things that happen in you life.
When bad things happen to you, try and look for and say out loud one good thing that was part of it.	Don't focus on only the bad parts of the bad things that happen to you.

McGrath and Francey (1992, p. 43)

Developing social skills

Self-esteem programmes for students help to develop a positive image of themselves and others. A variety of other programmes are also needed to develop empathy, social skills, life skills, negotiation skills, problem solving and assertiveness.

Teachers can follow a series of steps in teaching students interpersonal and small group skills. Students must see the need to use the skill. They must believe that they will be better off if they work productively together. They must understand what the skill is and be given opportunities to practise it regularly. This can be done it a number of ways:

- by discussion of the social skill;

- by identification and rehearsal of the non-verbal and verbal behaviour involved in the skill;
- by dramatic enactment of the skill;
- by using games and activities to enable students to practise the skill; and
- by teaching the use of positive self-talk.

Johnson and Johnson (1990) list the following procedure for establishing a social skills programme.

- i) Identify, define and teach a social skill which the teacher wants students to use in working cooperatively with one other.
- ii) Use group points and group rewards to promote the use of the cooperative skill.
- iii) Each time a student engages in the targeted skill, the student's group receives a point.
- iv) Points may be awarded only for positive behaviour.
- v) Points are added and never taken away.
- vi) Students' individual contribution to the group product is never graded or evaluated.

Social skilling cannot be learned in isolation, or from simply observing others. Students need to practise skills and reflect and receive feedback on, their performance. However, simply placing students in groups and telling them to work together does not, in and of itself, produce cooperation, certainly not the higher achievement and positive social outcomes that can result from cooperative learning groups (Westwood, 1993).

A definition of cooperative learning

Graves and Graves (1990, p. 3) define cooperative learning as a strategy which requires students to work together in small learning teams, helping each other to accomplish individual and group tasks. It is sometimes referred to as collaborative learning or team learning. Slavin (1993) points out that, within this definition,

... there is an enormous diversity of cooperative approaches. Cooperative learning methods may be quite informal, as when students are simply allowed to do their individual work together, or they might be structured, with specific ways of forming teams, team structures and team assessments. Cooperative groups may work together on projects or other open-ended, creative activities, or they may work to help one another to master specific academic content.

(Graves and Graves, (1990, p. 1) point out that teachers may

... have students take responsibility for a designated portion of the group's task, or all students may work on the same task. They may bring together groups as large as six or more, or they may only involve groups of three or four. Groups may stay together for many months or they may be constantly reformed.

Within cooperative learning classrooms, the teacher and students constantly observe, practise and provide feedback on the effectiveness of their social skills (Hill and Hill, 1993). In this way, cooperative learning becomes an outcome of social skilling as well as a means towards developing social skills.

Basic principles

Johnson and Johnson (1990) identify five basic principles of cooperative learning.

Interactive learning, through face-to-face heterogeneous learning teams

Learning becomes an active rather than a passive process. Learning teams promote oral summarisation and elaboration of the material being learned and team members learn to value individual differences.

Positive interdependence ('We sink or swim together.')

There are many ways to create a 'we' rather than a 'me' attitude: common goals, group rewards, shared resources, complementary and interconnected roles, division of labour within the task, shared name, symbols and group identity, shared space etc.

Individual accountability ('No hitchhiking or free-loading.')

Team members have two tasks: to ensure they contribute their fair share to completing the task and learning the material and to encourage all other team members to contribute their fair share and to help them learn the material.

Explicit training in interpersonal skills ('We are not born cooperative.')

Team members learn both task-oriented skills for working together effectively and group-maintenance skills for being together positively.

Reflection

Team members identify what they have experienced and learned (both the academic content and their group interaction), they analyse how they learned it and generalise their learning to new situations. Team members set goals for both their team and themselves on how to improve their team performance in the future.

Establishing groups

Johnson and Johnson (1990) suggest that there are three types of cooperative learning groups.

- i) *Formal cooperative learning groups*, which complete specific tasks and assignments such as solving maths problems, completing instructional units, writing reports on themes, conducting experiments and reading stories, plays or books.
- ii) *Informal cooperative learning groups*, which are temporary, ad hoc groups used as part of lecturing and direct teaching to focus student attention on the material to be learned, to create an expectation set and mood conducive to learning, to ensure students cognitively process the material being taught and to provide closure to an instructional session.
- iii) *Cooperative base groups*, which are long-term groups (lasting for one term or year) with a stable membership, whose primary responsibility is to

give each member the support, encouragement and assistance he or she needs to make academic progress.

Processes

Cooperative learning is a general teaching strategy which can be used with any age group and any subject matter. Students work together in small learning groups, helping each other to accomplish individual and group tasks. In order to coordinate efforts to achieve mutual goals, students must:

- get to know and trust one another;
- communicate accurately and unambiguously;
- accept and support one another;
- resolve conflicts constructively.

Although the teacher needs to plan for and support the development of each of these skills, his/her role in conflict resolution is a particularly important one. Because conflict manifests itself as a disruptive, noisy activity, there is a tendency for teachers to step in to restore order (Bellanca and Fogarty, 1987). However, this does not enable students to deal with conflict themselves and teachers should support by suggesting strategies and helping students develop appropriate skills.

Perspectives

Slavin (1993) lists six theoretical perspectives on cooperative learning and achievement.

Motivational perspective

These focus mainly on the reward or goal structures under which students operate. Cooperative incentive structures create a situation in which the only way group members can attain their personal goals is if the group is successful. Therefore, to meet their personal goals, group members must both help their group mates to do

whatever helps the group to succeed and perhaps to encourage their group mates to exert maximum effort.

The theory underlying group contingencies does not require that group members be able to help one another or work together. The fact that their outcomes are dependent on one another's behaviour motivates students to engage in behaviours which help the group to be rewarded; the group incentive induces students to encourage goal-directed behaviour among their group mates (Slavin, 1993).

Social cohesion perspective

Students will help one another because they care about each other and they want individual members, as well as the group as a whole, to succeed. Emphasis should be placed on team-building activities in preparation for cooperative learning activities. This approach rejects group incentives and individual accountability. If the task is challenging and interesting and if the students are sufficiently prepared for skills in the group-work process, then the group-work process itself will be highly rewarding.

Cognitive perspective

Interaction among students increases student achievement for reasons connected with the mental processing of information rather than with motivation. Interaction among children around appropriate tasks increases their mastery of critical concepts. Cooperative activity among children promotes growth by modelling cooperative group behaviour more advanced than those that they could perform as an individual.

Students will learn from one another because in their discussions of the content, cognitive conflict will arise; inadequate reasoning will be exposed, disequilibrium will occur, and higher-quality understandings will emerge (Slavin, 1993, p. 11).

Cognitive elaboration perspective

According to Slavin (1993), research in cognitive psychology has long held that if information is to be retained in the memory and related to information already in the memory, the learner must engage in some sort of cognitive restructuring, or

elaboration of the material. One of the most effective means of elaboration is explaining the material to someone else.

Practice perspective

Cooperative learning increases opportunities to practise or rehearse material.

Classroom organisation perspective

Students have the opportunity to take responsibility for managing themselves in cooperative groups, freeing the teacher to focus elsewhere.

Outcomes

Slavin (1993) maintains that there are well-established rationales and supporting evidence to suggest that each of these perspectives has a direct relationship with effective cooperative learning. He reports that one of the earliest and strongest findings was that people who cooperate, learn to like one another and that students expressed a greater liking for their classmates in general as a result of participation in the cooperative learning process. This applies to the acceptance of ethnic groups as well as to the mainstreaming (inclusion) of disabled students. He also suggests that students in cooperative learning classes have been found to have more positive feelings about themselves than students in traditional classes.

In addition to effects on achievement, positive inter-group relations, greater acceptance of mainstreamed students, self-esteem, effects of cooperative learning have been found on a variety of other important educational outcomes. These include liking of school, development of peer norms in favour of doing well academically, feelings of individual control over the student's own fate in school, and cooperativeness and altruism (Slavin, 1993, p. 21).

According to Dalton and Smith (1986), the potential outcomes of cooperative learning for all students include not only increased achievement and cognitive development, but improved self-esteem and self-motivation. Hill and Hill (1993, p. 5) endorse this view 'Competitiveness, ... tended to be related to conditional self-acceptance (you have to keep winning to accept yourself)'.

By setting up cooperative structures, students are given the opportunity to practise interpersonal skills in ways that are relevant to them. Good and Brophy (1994) argue that various academic and social activities or tasks are associated with different levels of risk. It is when students are faced with new and unfamiliar demands in the classroom that they tend to look for routine and predictable solutions to avoid potential embarrassment. In a cooperative classroom students support each others' learning both academically and socially.

Dalton and Smith (1986) argue that, because cooperative group structuring teaches children the skills of working together, they move beyond surface relationships with each other. As positive peer relations and effective social skills develop, individual differences are more fully understood and respected. Moreover, by structuring groups so that children learn from and with each other, the teacher can 'add instructional resources to the classroom without additional adult personnel' (Villa and Thousand, 1992, p. 122).

There are a number of short-term disadvantages. Children new to cooperative group work will need time to learn how to control their behaviour within this classroom structure (Graves and Graves, 1990). In addition, introducing cooperative working styles may lead to a level of noise which makes a teacher fear being perceived as not being in control.

In the longer term, cooperative learning takes the focus of attention away from the teacher and sole provider of help/teaching etc and may make a teacher feel insecure at relinquishing some of his/her teaching role. However, as Martin (1981, p. 172) points out: 'Ultimately, one of the primary goals of education is that pupils should be taught to control their own actions and direct their own learning'.

The next chapter outlines a case study of the development of social skills in a primary classroom.

4 Developing social skills in practice - a case study

As has already been stated, I have sought to maximise student learning by reducing incidents of misbehaviour. Experience and theoretical studies indicated that corrective models were not, in themselves, sufficient. The lack of social skills on the part of some students was identified as one potential contributory factor in their misbehaviour and the development of social skills, alongside academic skills, therefore became a key learning objective.

Whilst recognising that students may develop social skills in family and friendship contexts, a pilot study was undertaken to see whether a specific teaching approach, namely cooperative learning, would enhance such development.

Aim

The aim was to encourage the students to share and assist each others' learning by working cooperatively together to achieve desired outcomes.

Context

School

The school had a supportive school environment policy with many of the characteristics of the interactive behaviour management model outlined in Chapter 2.

Class

The Grade 5/6 class comprised 26 students (12 boys 14 girls) aged 10-12 years. Given that it is was a mixed-age class, the curriculum is structured to allow for individual abilities and strengths, so that within the same topic, different needs were met and achievements recognised. Opportunities were given for students to organise their day, within a prescribed framework, to allow for individual or group initiatives in their use

of class time. The classroom was open to and extended into the corridor, giving students a degree of freedom concerning their work location.

The students were normally encouraged to work in whatever combinations they chose, helping each other in the activities being undertaken. Whilst they were happy and willing to work in self-selected friendship groups, usually in twos and threes, the observed pattern was the more dominant members of the group were consistently getting their own way. This not only inhibited the timid students from becoming more assertive, it allowed for the development of classroom factions between groups.

During 1994, the class was involved in a computer-immersion programme which required them to do about 80 per cent of their work on computers. There were sufficient computers in the classroom to enable students to work in pairs, one pair to each computer. The students had each chosen one friend with whom they would share their computer.

However, despite the freedom offered by the classroom layout, and time structure outlined above, I noticed that several students rarely ventured far from their 'workstation' and their 'permanent' partner. Moreover, among the pairs ostensibly 'working together', there were situations where one partner was working and the other off-task, or where both students were simply working individually in close proximity i.e. 'parallel play' effect. No student wanted to work with Boy 2. Some had difficulty in joining in, sharing activities and displaying appropriate behaviour when a relief teacher was present.

These observations, and the recognition that social interaction between friends was only one dimension of social skills, led to the speculation that a wider range of partners was necessary to help students deal effectively and supportively with those to whom they are not naturally drawn. Accordingly, the student-selected permanent partnerships were complemented by other groupings, which gave students the opportunity to have a break from their regular partners and to interact with new people. However, the students resented teacher-selected groups as a strategy to

separate them from their friends; there were often arguments within such groups, arising from the work content and from personality clashes. To resolve these conditions, a random method of selecting groups was adopted for the pilot study.

The rights of each member of the class, whether teacher or student, had been identified by the students at the beginning of the year, and they generally listened well, with minimal interruptions. The skill of presenting was practised daily, during 'sharing' sessions, when students were encouraged to reflect and report on the tasks carried out that day.

The day to day life in the classroom was intended to contribute to the development of a range of social skills, which would be explicitly reinforced during the pilot study described in this chapter. The principal skills involved were:

- sharing and taking turns, through daily review and report by individuals and groups to the whole class, on the tasks they had undertaken during the day;
- suggesting and brainstorming, in the course of setting and explaining the daily tasks;
- working and making decisions in a group, both in computer pairs and in other groups;
- respecting others' ideas and opinions, through listening skills;
- negotiating: access to computers with partners; special activities with the teacher; and
- including others through the encouragement of participation in all the above activities.

Teacher

My philosophy is that effective learning requires mutual trust between student and teacher, that students must feel free to take risks in their learning and that this can best be done in a supportive and friendly classroom. One way to teach children to work

together is first to teach them specific cooperative learning skills for working in groups.

In terms of classroom management, my style most closely reflects the interactionist models (see, especially, Jones, 1987 and Rogers, 1994). To secure on-task behaviour, I

- arrange the classroom to allow for easy access to all students;
- use humour and positive praise;
- provide individual help briefly and positively ;
- tactically ignore some misbehaviour;
- use physical proximity, non-verbal and as verbal communication; and
- avoid public reprimand.

The class was perceived as being a well-organised and well-functioning unit by the school management. However, relief teachers experienced difficulties with the behaviour of some students.

Method

Given that the school ethos supported collaboration between staff (for example, the relocation to 'buddy teachers' of misbehaving students) and that the predominant working style of the class (only partly as a result of the immersion programme) was in groups, the cooperative learning strategy was a natural choice.

A programme of targeted social skilling and cooperative learning activities was introduced over a period of six weeks. The activities were drawn from *A Part to Play* (Graves and Graves, 1990), *Friendly Kids Friendly Classrooms* (McGrath and Francey, 1992) and *Different Kids Same Classroom* (McGrath and Noble, 1993). These materials were appropriate to the age-range and covered the relevant skill areas. The activities were easy to use, being well-presented in a systematic and methodical way.

Given the restricted time scale, I decided to focus on the performance of six students, in terms of their task-oriented and social cooperation with students beyond their immediate friendship circle. In addition, I observed the social interaction of the class as a whole within and beyond the classroom to see what the effect was for students at different levels of development. This would help demonstrate whether 'all students, not just those who are troubled, benefit from learning social skills' (McGrath and Francey, 1992).

Sample

The sample comprised 26 students, but particular attention was paid to the effects of the programme on 4 boys and 2 girls aged 10-12 years. These students displayed a range of academic and social abilities.

Boy 1 was friendly, outgoing, able to interact well with peers and adults, popular with peers, academically capable, and looked for opportunities to work cooperatively. Like Boy 3, he had very good computer skills so, in the context of the immersion programme he was very much in demand, having the expertise and the social skills to help peers without dominating or patronising. He differs from Boy 3 in that he was more outgoing, but still modest.

Boy 2 had difficulty interacting with peers and adults and was very unpopular with peers. He often displayed inappropriate use of social strategies (bossing, name-calling, criticising others, very insular behaviour). Within his partnership he tended to dominate use of the computer. Moreover, he wandered around the classroom interfering with others' computers, taking disks, copying others' programmes etc., therefore he was not really wanted by any of the other students.

Boy 3 was a competent student academically and socially skilled. Despite his quiet, unassuming manner, he was a natural leader, helpful and capable, and set an example of good behaviour. He was looked up to and liked by peers. Like Boy 1, he had excellent computer skills and was much in demand.

Boy 4 was an enigma. In terms of academic ability, he was middle of the range, did the right thing in class and got on with his work. However, when things did not work out as he wanted or when he or his team lost, he cried. His poor sportsmanship was recognised by others throughout the school who, nevertheless, acknowledged his giftedness in sport.

Girl 1 tended to seek to control activities in any group, which were usually restricted to her special friends. She was prepared to work with others but only if she could select them. For example, she did not want to participate in the computer immersion activities and needed continual encouragement. She left her computer work station and took her clique of three friends into the corridor to work away from others. During the social skilling activities, she exerted a negative influence (from the teacher's point of view) on her close circle of friends, always wanting to revert to the pre-existing work patterns and working group. Outside the classroom she was frequently in trouble for making inappropriate comments and statements about other teachers.

Girl 2 was very quiet, got on with her work. An unobtrusive achiever, middle of the range academically, she had many social attributes: smiled a lot, friendly, pleasant to be with, supportive of her friends, with whom she spent most of her time. Whereas Girl 1's group is exclusive (them versus us), Girl 2 is part of a friendship group within the body of the class, and is therefore predisposed to expanding the group and her own social circle when circumstances allow.

Programme

It was deemed important to start cooperative work slowly. After working in pairs, the students graduated to larger groups demonstrating the cooperative skills they would need for good team work.

Using the McGrath and Francey (1992) material, the students were first given a number of diagnostic activities to measure their social acceptance and their social competence.

Bellanca and Fogarty (1991), stress the importance of giving feedback to individuals as well as to the group. At the end of each cooperative learning lesson, time was taken to help students reflect on what they had learned, both academically and interpersonally. The groups gave examples of how they felt the specific social skills were used. I added my own observations as to how the 'process was working'.

Phase 1

This phase involved information-gathering activities which focused the students' attention on their school relationships, raised awareness of friendship groupings and considered behaviour likely to foster or inhibit friendships. Students were encouraged to look at their peers as individuals, each with different skills and attitudes.

There was a considerable amount of teacher-led, whole-class discussion at the start of each activity. For the first two activities, the concept of confidentiality was stressed, making sure that each student understood what it meant and was prepared to give a commitment. The third activity stimulated discussion on the qualities expected of a good friend and what it meant to be a good friend to somebody else. Students were encouraged to consider, privately, behaviours which they were good at and which things they needed to learn or to practise.

The tasks were individual, but the follow-up discussions required the social skills of listening and presenting i.e. expressing thoughts and opinions in public.

Activity 1 Who do you play with? (Appendix 1)

I explained that to develop a happy classroom, it was necessary to look at friendship groupings. Students were asked to score each of their peers on a scale ranging from 'I don't like to play with this person' to 'I like to play with this person a lot'.

Activity 2 Descriptions Task (Appendix 2)

The second activity required students to rate his/her peers on a range of activities or attributes. The task elicits objective assessments (this person often plays alone, hits

and punches, gets into fights a lot), subjective opinions (this person is really good to play with, this person is good looking) and interpretations (this person thinks no-one likes them). Students were asked to read each description carefully and to write the names of one or two class members who fitted that description.

Activity 3 Friendship skill (Appendix 5)

This was an individual activity, requiring students to choose the three best 'ways to make friends' (from a choice of eight) and the three best 'ways to keep friends' (from a choice of 15). A complementary activity required them to choose two 'ways to make sure you have no friends' (from four) and two 'ways to lose friends' (from nine). There was a prior discussion on the issues and a follow-up discussion on the students' choices.

Findings Phase 1

The results in Activity 1 were very negative. Whilst students graded between three and 14 of their peers in the 'I don't like to play with this person' column, they only graded between one and six peers in the 'I like to play with this person a lot' category. The scores revealed a gender intolerance, as the boys tended to place all the girls at the lowest end of the scale ('I don't like to play with this person') and generally vice versa.

The results for Activity 2 were scored on a separate summary sheet, grouping the positive and negative statements together (see *Appendix 3*). The results revealed the standing of each student in the class but, because the forms are anonymous, it is not possible to determine how each individual student felt about each of his/her peers.

Whilst there was a great variation in choices expressed in Activity 3, reflecting the personal experiences of each student, the high degree of consensus concerning the 'best ways' was unexpected. The most popular strategies were:

good ways to make friends

- have interesting conversations with them about what they're interested in

- share your things with them
- include them in what you and your other friends are doing

good ways to keep friends

- if you say that you will do something for your friend, make sure that you do it
- wait for them so that they don't get left behind
- keep the secrets that they share with you

guaranteed ways to have no friends

- boast about yourself and tell everyone how great you are
- always talk about yourself and don't listen to what anyone else has to say

guaranteed ways to lose friends

- bad mouth them when they are not there and tell their personal secrets
- be jealous if they like other people as well as you

Commentary

The findings for Activities 1 and 2 generally supported my observation/expectation of how most of the students would score. However, the popularity of Girl 2 was surprising, because she is very quiet and unassuming.

Girl 1's tendency to exclude those outside her immediate clique was underlined in Activity 1. Boy 2 did not attract any positive comments at all. The students' ability to recognise both strengths and weaknesses was demonstrated, for example Boy 4 came out very strongly as 'very good at sport' but also as 'a very poor loser who won't play by the rules'. He has a reputation throughout the school as being a very bad sport, but he is given a great deal of recognition for his sporting prowess.

Phase 2

I used the data from the information gathering phase to identify the negative descriptions most frequently attributed by students to their peers. Using the diagnostic chart from McGrath and Francey (1992) (see *Appendix 4*), it was clear that the skill areas that needed improvement were firmly based in the overall area of self-esteem. This phase sought to make students aware of, and celebrate, similarities and differences between themselves and students outside their immediate friendship circle, as a foundation to the self-esteem activities planned for Phase 3. The questions in this phase were impersonal, factual and non threatening, and therefore the need for confidentiality, raised in the first Phase, did not arise.

This phase introduced implicit cooperation within pairs and with different respondents, to secure the data. Individuals within each pair had to assume the roles of questioner and recorder, but they were free to determine how they allocated and fulfilled them. The extent to which each student acted as respondent depended whether they shared (Activity 4) or did not share (Activity 5) characteristics such as birthday month, breakfast cereal preferences etc. with other questioners.

Because students resented teacher-selected groups (see page 44 above) a random-selection process was adopted. By preparing a pack of cards and inviting each student to draw one, I created pairs or teams, as the activity required by grouping students with the same number, suit etc. It was made clear to the students at the outset that, as the grouping was random, there was no point in complaining about their allocated partners and no changes would be made.

Activity 4 Hunt the human (see Appendix 6)

Each pair interviewed other students to find classmates who shared attributes of experiences e.g. born in the same month, had the same breakfast cereal. Students were given 20 minutes to complete this task. There were no right answers and no winners, so there was no competitive element.

Activity 5 Opposites attract (see Appendix 7)

This activity is similar to 'hunt the human', except that the students focused on differences. Working in random pairs, they identified a different student for each description and asked that person to sign his or her name.

Findings Phase 2

The selection method, though random, nevertheless provided a balance between male, and female and mixed pairs for these activities. After the first occurrence, students looked forward to the 'card shuffle' to allocate partners. They formed into their partnerships quickly and without complaint.

Most pairs took only a short time to find their information for each activity. Each pair completed the activity and discussed its findings in a reporting back session with the whole class. Most students appeared to enjoy enthusiastic cooperation, but a few actively tried to avoid cooperative situations. Some girls, in particular, did not enjoy or want to work with the boys.

Boy 1 completed Activity 4 as required with his partner, interacting positively with a cross section of his peers. Initially, Girl 1 was reluctant to cooperate with her male partner (Boy 3). However, he displayed the appropriate social skills which enabled the pair to undertake this activity. I encouraged and supported them by suggesting that they approach those students with whom they felt comfortable. In contrast, in Activity 5, Girl 1 was unhappy to be paired with (a less socially skilled, male) partner, who was not a member of her close circle. Because she was unable to dominate, she was unwilling to cooperate during this activity and removed herself to a different location.

During Activity 4, Boy 2 appeared uncomfortable with this activity and was reluctant to work with his male partner. However, in Activity 5, he was paired with a more socially skilled (male) partner and exhibited a more cooperative approach.

Phase 3

This phase required students to achieve tasks as a cooperative group and to practise identified social skills so as to raise individuals' self-esteem. The skills required fell into two groups:

- *task-oriented*: sharing and taking turns; suggesting and persuading; negotiating; mediating when others cannot agree; making decisions in a group; and, for Activity 7, managing time;
- *person-oriented, specifically to raise self-esteem*: including others; positive tracking; respecting others' ideas and opinions; conflict resolution and dealing with rejection of proposed ideas (McGrath and Francey, 1992).

A number of these skills were already being practised implicitly as part of the normal classroom routines (see page 44). However, these activities raised awareness of the skills and introduced four new ones.

1 *Inclusion (securing the participation of all members)*

The class discussed the cooperative skill of encouraging everyone to participate. What does it look like? sound like? Encouraging participation by supporting (academically and socially) individuals to fulfil assigned roles in which they do not feel confident.

2 *Valuing others' ideas and opinions, being positive*

I introduced the concept of positive tracking and displayed stimuli and reminders around the classroom. I emphasised that during group work the cooperative skills coach, in particular, should model these cooperative skills, but that it was the job of all group members to practise them.

3 *Persuasion and consensus*

The class discussed the cooperative skill of reaching agreement. What does it mean? Does everyone have to agree? Legitimate forms of persuasion. Distinguishing between persuasion on the basis of evidence and persuasion by means of concessions/trade-offs and the appropriate

context for each strategy. How do you legitimately indicate dissent from a majority decision?

4 *Conflict resolution and mediation when others cannot agree*

The class discussed ways in which a third person might help bring together two opposing factions by using task-related skills (e.g. providing alternative suggestions, offering evidence in support of proposals) or person-related skills (e.g. reaffirming the validity of the person, even if the idea is not the most appropriate for the situation). I recognised that these skills are of a very high order, which are not mastered even by some adults. However, I felt that their inclusion in a programme of social skill development was essential.

Activity 6 Tropical island (see Appendix 8)

Groups of four students with randomly assigned roles focused on their own and each others' strengths to find ways to survive together on a tropical island. No time limit was set and other curriculum areas were shelved, to take advantage of students' intrinsic motivation. In the event, the activity was completed in one day.

The activity identified and gave value to non-academic skills normally used outside school e.g. scouting skills. It also encouraged the use of cognitive skills to identify trade-offs e.g. ability to light fires without matches enables another useful item to be saved from the boat.

This was the first of the activities which required students to take on a role. There were four assigned roles: cooperative skills coach, map drawer, reader and recorder, writer. The roles were rotated on the hour, so that every member had to take a turn in each role.

Activity 7 Untitled story (see Appendix 9)

This activity aimed to practise the cooperative skill of encouraging everyone to participate and to reach agreement using positive tracking. It illustrates a cooperative

learning format transferable to discussions of text materials within a normal classroom context.

The students were randomly divided into groups of four and the roles of leader/reader, facilitator, recorder/checker and spokesperson were, again randomly, assigned. Students had 20 minutes to read a short story, discuss a series of questions and devise a title for the story. It was an open ended activity with no correct answer. All group members had to seek consensus. Those who agreed, signed the answers to indicate their agreement; dissenters did not sign. This underlined the reality of life that it is possible, and sometimes desirable, not to 'join the group' and to make this explicit in a socially acceptable way.

Findings Phase 3

Activity 6, although quite complex in nature, was completed by the groups in a day. The terminology of positive tracking strategies was being used around the classroom. e.g. 'look for the good things that you do and say them to yourself and sometimes out loud' (see Figure 2, page 35). In general, the students set about this task very enthusiastically.

However, Boy 2 and Boy 4, hovered around the other two (girl) members of the group or busied themselves with other activities. When asked to participate, Boy 2 started swearing and was generally disruptive to the rest of the group, while performing the role of skills coach. He was more successful in the practical roles of map drawer and writer. The two girls in this group, whilst able to cooperate and work together, were not assertive enough to cope with the boys, whose behaviour remained generally dysfunctional to the group.

Within another group, Girl 1 continued to be reluctant to join in, asking if she could 'get on with the task' on her own. One of the reasons for her reluctance to participate in social skilling activities was resentment at being taken away from her circle; she wanted to get this activity out of the way so she could return to the security of her role of bossing her little clique. In particular, she did not like working with boys.

The students enjoyed Activity 7 very much. Interestingly, Boy 2 contributed more enthusiastically, maybe due to the fact that for this activity he worked in an all-boy group and that his role (recorder/checker) led to a concrete outcome.

In discussion, the students indicated that they felt more relaxed about working with others outside their 'permanent pair'. I observed that students who had previously remained very close to their workstation, moved more freely around the classroom. Students also indicated that these new 'friendships' carried over outside the classroom; this was confirmed by my playground observation. This reflects the findings of Gordon:

once cooperative learning brings children together, they continue to spend time with each other after their lesson is over (Gordon, 1991, p 142).

Discussion

The students were now working in groups of four. The objectives of these activities were both social and academic. However, given that students perceive academic skills to be more important than social skills, not least because they lead to a visible product, it is not surprising that they focused on specific familiar tasks (e.g. drawing the map) to the detriment of the social skilling task (positive tracking).

These tasks also revealed two potential weaknesses of random selection as a device for forming groups. First, it is not the most effective way of securing task achievement and, having encouraged students to be aware of their own and others' strengths, it is logical that they should wish to draw on those strengths in allocating roles. This, after all, is what the effective manager aims to do in 'real life', and one of the aims of the whole social skilling process. This may have accounted for some of Girl 1's reluctance, given her strengths as a map drawer.

Secondly, it may be difficult for students to recognise the invisible contributions to an activity. This may partly account for the problems experienced by Boy 2 in the role of skills coach.

Follow-up

As Westwood (1993) points out, the short-term benefits of single projects may not be durable. Graves and Graves (1990) concurs, suggesting that most cooperative skills are best taught within the context of the academic lesson in which they are to be used. Therefore, these social skills were systematically incorporated into the cooperative learning strategies of the normal curriculum. This process is ongoing, as part of the routine of the classroom day. Random selection of longer term groupings to undertake various tasks has become a regular feature and role allocation is changed, depending on the activity being undertaken.

For example, during a health unit on 'body systems', the students were randomly assigned to groups of four to investigate and report on how our circulatory, respiratory, nervous and reproductive systems all combine to ensure that we stay healthy. Roles for this unit included:

- the *artist*, responsible for the artwork on the project. This involved doing the artwork or delegating parts of it to others.
- the *skills coach*, who helped the group to practise a particular group skill, work skill, or learning and thinking skill by modelling it throughout the activity for others, reminding them to use the skill and counting how often the group as a whole used the skill.
- the *recorder*, who kept records of the group's results, decisions, goals, etc. and wrote these up on a class chart.
- the *reporter*, who acted as a spokesperson for the group and, at the completion of the activity, reported to the rest of the class about what the group did or decided.

Evaluation

This health unit was a very successful activity over a number of weeks. I observed that most of the students stayed in role, undertaking their tasks very responsibly. They approached new activities in a positive way and formed into their prescribed groups

enthusiastically. Their behaviour was better focused, for example, their conversations were restricted to group members and to the task in hand and students took enhanced pride in their group achievements. Several groups continued to work on their activities in their own 'free time'.

It soon became evident that previously reluctant students were now participating more, according to their role, e.g. reporting back to the whole group (reporter) and encouraging group mates (skills coach). Interpersonal relationships between students and teacher improved considerably for the isolated students.

Boy 1 and Boy 3 continued to demonstrate a high level of social skill through their cooperative actions and the use of appropriate metaphor which indicates a raising of consciousness of social interaction. The most pleasing aspect was that Boy 2 began to show some lessening of the behaviour that prevented easy acceptance by others, e.g. interrupting, cheating at games etc (Westwood, 1993).

Students' awareness that they were able to take risks in their own learning was central to the success of these social skilling activities. The students quickly came to the realisation that they, either individually or as a group, 'owned the problem', when there were academic or social difficulties within the group. If a disagreement arose, my intervention (if any) was limited to encouraging the group to strive for what Gordon (1991) describes as a 'no loser' solution. For example, Week 7 activity required students to be able to take a disagreement to the group for solution. They were able to achieve this with some success; for example, Boy 2's group had exerted a positive influence on his behaviour.

The students embraced the opportunity given to work meaningfully with their peers on common learning tasks. Cooperative learning opportunities can facilitate a more inclusive ethos, not only between students, but between student and teacher. The role of the class teacher shifted from that of expert to that of learner, sharing with the students in the exploration of more relevant and effective ways to enhance teaching and learning outcomes.

Social interactions became noticeably more varied as the group dynamics in the classroom began to shift towards a more inclusive ethos. This was evident from the different informal groupings that started to emerge. The students seemed more willing to open themselves to the suggestions and alternatives put forward by their peers.

Despite the limited duration of the pilot study, there was some evidence that placing students in a series of situations where they were required to work together on a task, had helped to build social cohesion through a team focus. Students who had previously been reluctant to get involved were now drawn into the process through their particular role as part of the group. By putting students in role, those who would otherwise have coasted along were using and developing various skills. It is hoped that, over time they will develop a range of skills and gain confidence to participate even when not in role.

The pilot study's stated goal of encouraging the students to assist each other's learning by working cooperatively was being achieved to the extent that some of the students agreed to work in assigned groups even though they did not like some of members in their group.

5 Conclusions

In the case study, I sought to examine the practical implications of social skilling in a cooperative learning environment and to develop my students' social skills as a means to improving behaviour. For the reasons detailed in the intentions of the pilot programme, cooperative learning was used as a vehicle to achieve this. There was some evidence of better task-related and person-related behaviour, particularly in the case of the isolated and exclusive students. These findings are supported by MacMullin (1994), who contends that an improvement in social skills reduces misbehaviour.

Whilst the reduction of misbehaviour in a classroom is important, the choice of classroom management style is crucial. The class teacher is the key person to set the classroom tone and his/her style is reflected in the classroom ethos. The basis for an effective cooperative classroom is mutual trust between student and teacher and students must be, and feel, part of a supportive classroom environment that will allow them to take risks in their learning and in developing self-discipline. The Stockport Educational Psychology Service found that Assertive Discipline operates on adversarial relationships, necessitating control rather than cooperative relationships in which the classroom is viewed as a battleground (SEPS, 1993, p. 13) and replaces a cooperative approach to preventing or resolving conflict by a power-based model (Render, Padilla and Krank, 1989). This would suggest an incompatibility between Assertive Discipline and cooperative learning.

I believe that the case study shows that effective cooperative learning strategies can be put into place over a short period of time, given an interactionist classroom and school environment. However, classroom innovation takes time and energy to implement; according to Graves and Graves (1990), even good teachers will need about two years before cooperative methods become second nature.

Reflection on the methodology

As indicated above, the literature review achieved my objectives. However, there are some weaknesses inherent in action research, namely the difficulty of securing independent verification of the findings and mitigating the effect of researcher influence. I was unable to secure third party evaluation of the processes and outcome of the case study.

I was also aware of the tension between my roles as a teacher, promoting the progress of the students, and the objective detachment required of me as a researcher, minimising my influence on the outcome. My strong commitment to cooperative learning inevitably affected the way in which the above activities were carried out and my perceptions of the outcome. The cooperative learning activities, in particular, are highly consistent with the school, classroom and teacher culture and with the requirements of the computer immersion project which the class was undertaking. This very consistency makes it virtually impossible to disaggregate the contribution of each of these factors to the outcomes of the case study. In particular, the influence of the curriculum, namely the novelty and status of being one of only two classes involved in a computer immersion programme, on the motivation of at least some of the students should not be underestimated. However, this only serves to underline the contention that behaviour management should consider curriculum content as well as discipline strategies (Slee, 1992).

This study confirmed that there is sound theoretical and empirical support for my preferred teaching style, but has made me aware of elements from other models which can usefully be incorporated into my overall framework. The literature review has also enabled me to construct frameworks for reflecting on my future practice and for evaluating descriptions of others' practice with which I come into contact through meetings and publications. I believe that this study provides a sound basis for future development of my teaching practice.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Activity 1: *Who do you play with?*

“WHO DO YOU PLAY WITH?”

Put a tick in the box which shows how much you like to play with each person. Make sure you give each person only one tick.

Your name: _____

Today's date: _____

[illegible]

Appendix 2 - Activity 2: Descriptions Task

DESCRIPTIONS TASK

On these two pages are some descriptions of different ways some kids behave. Read them through, and then write the names of the two kids in your class who best fit each description. Don't

write more than two names, but you can just write one name, or none, if you can't think of two people who are like that.

This person is really good to play with.

1 _____

2 _____

This person often plays alone in the playground.

1 _____

2 _____

This person hits or punches others.

1 _____

2 _____

This person often says kind things to other kids.

1 _____

2 _____

This person tries to boss other kids around a lot.

1 _____

2 _____

This person often looks sad.

1 _____

2 _____

This person never says very much to other kids.

1 _____

2 _____

This person gets into fights a lot.

1 _____

2 _____

This person is good looking.

1 _____

2 _____

This person thinks no-one likes them.

1 _____

2 _____

This person often says mean things to other kids.

1 _____

2 _____

This person is very good at sport.

1 _____

2 _____

This person is a poor loser.

1 _____

2 _____

This person will help you if you need help.

1 _____

2 _____

This person is very quiet and doesn't take part in things much.

1 _____

2 _____

This person gets teased a lot by other kids.

1 _____

2 _____

This person doesn't share.

1 _____

2 _____

This person often won't play by the rules.

1 _____

2 _____

This person does good work and works hard at school.

1 _____

2 _____

This person is not very good at sport.

1 _____

2 _____

Appendix 3 - Descriptions Task: Summary Sheet

DESCRIPTIONS TASK SUMMARY SHEET

		Positive Descriptions					Negative Descriptions														
STUDENTS' NAMES		Good to play with	Says kind things	Good looking	Very good at sport	Will help you	Does good work & works hard	Plays alone	Hits or punches	Busses others	Looks sad	Flower says much	Gets into fights	Thinks no-one likes them	Says mean things	Poor loser	Doesn't take part	Gets teased	Doesn't share	Won't play by rules	Not good at sport
J H	Grade: <u>5/6</u> Date: <u>21/10/94</u>	2						3			4	7	3	3		2	4	2			2
C M		2	1		1					3	1	2	2				2	2	5		
A W		2	1	1						4	3			3		1	1				1
D B		1		1		1			1	1	1		2	1	3					1	
A K		1					1	2	2		1		6	4	2			4	2	2	1
C L									2	4	1		1	1	2	1	1		1		1
T C						1	2			2		2				1			2		
A D		2	1	1		1			4	2			2		1					1	1
T J		2											1		1			1		2	
C L		5					5	4				1				1	1	1	1		3
J L				1			1		6	6	2		7		5	1	1	2	4	2	2
T M		1	4	1		1	2				2	1		1					3	1	
W P			1		4	1				1	2	1		2							
T S		2			4				4	2			1		3	2			1	1	
A S		5	2	2	6	3	1		1	1	1								3	2	1
J S		1	1						2		1	1			2			1	2		1
L S		1			6						2		1	1		14	1	2		8	
R B		1	2		1	3	7		1		1				1			1	4		
M D		2	5	1	4	1	1					1									1
A G		2	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	1		2					3				1
F H		3			2		1			1		1			1		1	1			
N H				1				1	2	3	1	1	2	2	5		2		2	1	3
M P		1	2	1	1	1	6					1			2				1	1	
K S		3	2	1	1	3			4				2	1	2			2			
R W		2	1	1				1				1	2				6	1		1	4
C S		3	1	1																	

Appendix 4 - Descriptions Task: Diagnostic Chart

A Diagnostic Chart Based on Your Observations and the Scores from the Descriptions Task

Description of the Child	Try Teaching these Skills:	On Pages:	And Use these Other Parts of the Book:	See Pages:
A student usually plays alone at recess and lunchtime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approaching and joining in. Telling an interesting story. Having an interesting conversation. Sharing. Including others. 	47 72 74 64 66	Self esteem activities. Happy classroom activities. Acting confidently.	104-112 96-100 115-117
A student gets into fights a lot or hits and punches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive tracking. Approaching and joining in. Negotiating. Handling fights and arguments. Being a good loser. 	42 47 54 56 38	Self esteem activities. Happy classroom activities. Chance cards.	104-112 96-100 120
A student is very bossy and tries to tell others what to do and how to behave, or points out what they've done wrong.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggesting and persuading. Respecting others' opinions. Negotiating. Sharing. 	58 62 54 64	Self esteem activities. Happy classroom activities.	104-112 96-100
A student rarely smiles and looks sad most of the time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive tracking. 	42	Counting social skills. Self esteem activities.	31 104-112
A student is very quiet and withdrawn, or doesn't take part, or never says much.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approaching and joining in. Having an interesting conversation. Telling an interesting story. Listening and asking good questions. Speaking in front of an audience. 	47 74 72 70 50	Self esteem activities. Happy classroom activities. Acting confidently.	104-112 96-100 115-117
A student complains, whinges or gruzzies a lot.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiating. Being a good loser. Positive tracking. 	54 38 42	Self esteem activities.	104-112
A student puts others down all the time and says mean things.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive tracking. Respecting other people's opinions. 	42 62	Self esteem activities. Happy classroom activities.	104-112 96-100
A student disrupts others' games by not playing by the rules, or by being a bad winner or loser.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playing fairly. Being a good winner. Being a good loser. 	34 36 38	Self esteem activities.	104-112
A student gets upset if they lose in competitive situations or get bad calls in sports.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being a good winner. Being a good loser. Positive tracking. 	36 38 42	Self esteem activities.	104-112
A student is teased or bullied a lot by others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All of the skills in the category of "Standing Up For Yourself". 	76-86	Self esteem activities. Happy classroom activities. Bullying poster. Social problem solving.	104-112 96-100 78 89
A student pushes in a lot and always tries to be first, or doesn't share anything with others, or hogs materials and equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing. Negotiating. 	64 54	Self esteem activities. Happy classroom activities.	104-112 96-100
A student never volunteers and is reluctant to do anything risky.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speaking in front of an audience. Approaching and joining in. Telling an interesting story. 	50 47 72	Self esteem activities (especially <i>Challenge Box</i> and <i>Keys to Success</i>). Happy classroom activities. Acting confidently.	110, 112 96-100 115-117

Description of the Child	Try Teaching these Skills:	On Pages:	And Use these Other Parts of the Book:	See Pages:
A student puts himself down a lot.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking in front of an audience. • Telling an interesting story. • Approaching and joining in. • Positive tracking. 	50 72 47 42	Self esteem activities. Acting confidently poster.	104-112 115
A student tries to avoid school by finding excuses to stay home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approaching and joining in. • Positive tracking. • Having an interesting conversation. • All the skills in the category of "Standing Up for Yourself" (if needed). 	47 42 74 76-86	Self esteem activities. Happy classroom activities. Acting confidently poster.	104-112 96-100 115
A student is very attention seeking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive tracking. • Telling an interesting story. • Having an interesting conversation. • Speaking in front of an audience. • Approaching and joining in. • Listening and asking good questions. 	42 72 74 50 47 70	Self esteem activities. Happy classroom activities. Be Yourself! poster. Acting confidently poster.	104-112 96-100 116 115
A student rarely looks at others — instead they look at the floor or up at the ceiling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approaching and joining in. • Listening and asking good questions. 	47 70	Social Skills Counting. Self esteem activities.	31 104-112

Appendix 5 - Activity 3: Friendship Skill



Your Name _____

FRIENDSHIP SKILLS

Here are some good ways to make friends and keep friends. Tick the boxes to show what you think are the three best ways for making friends and the three best ways for keeping friends.

SOME GOOD WAYS TO MAKE FRIENDS

- ☐ Have interesting conversations with them about what they're interested in
- ☐ Always smile and greet them when you see them.
- ☐ Be genuinely interested in what they have to say.
- ☐ Find out what you've got in common.
- ☐ Tell them things about yourself. Don't tell really personal things until you've known them for a while and you think you can trust them.
- ☐ Share your things with them.
- ☐ Include them in what you and your other friends are doing.
- ☐ Accept that you have to reach out to make friends.

SOME GOOD WAYS TO KEEP FRIENDS

- ☐ If you say you will do something for them, make sure you do it.
- ☐ If you accidentally hurt their feelings, say you are sorry.
- ☐ Take turns — sometimes do what your friend wants to do and sometimes do what you want to do.
- ☐ Forgive them if they let you down occasionally. Friends aren't perfect.
- ☐ Share your good news with them.
- ☐ Wait for them so they won't get left behind.
- ☐ Be pleased for them when they succeed.
- ☐ Keep the secrets that they share with you.
- ☐ Stand up for them. Be loyal.
- ☐ Offer to help them without being asked.
- ☐ Include them in what you're doing and in your plans.
- ☐ Consider their feelings and their point of view.
- ☐ Spend time with them.
- ☐ Return favours.
- ☐ Give them some time to themselves. Don't crowd them.



Your Name _____

FRIENDSHIP SKILLS

The next two sections describe some guaranteed ways to lose friends or have no friends. Tick the two best ways to lose friends and the two best ways to have no friends.

SOME GUARANTEED WAYS TO MAKE SURE YOU HAVE NO FRIENDS

- ☐ Always talk about yourself and don't listen to what anyone else has to say.
- ☐ Boast about yourself and tell everyone how great you are.
- ☐ Never tell anyone anything personal about yourself. Keep yourself hidden from them.
- ☐ Hang around, do nothing, and wait for someone to try to be friends with you.

SOME GUARANTEED WAYS TO LOSE FRIENDS

- ☐ Crowd them all the time. Demand that they spend all their time with you and have no other friends.
- ☐ If they ask for a favour, don't help them.
- ☐ Bad-mouth them when they're not there and tell their personal secrets.
- ☐ Sometimes ignore them when you see them.
- ☐ Be jealous when they do well, and say or do mean things.
- ☐ Be jealous if they like other people as well as you.
- ☐ Always be too busy to spend time with them.
- ☐ Let them down. Don't return favours. Don't stand up for them. Don't do what you said you would do.
- ☐ Leave them out of your activities and plans.

What other ways can you think of to make and keep friends? List them in two columns.

To make friends

To keep friends

Appendix 6 - Activity 4: *Hunt the Human*

HUNT THE HUMAN!

Your task is to work in pairs to find a different person to fit each category and to write in his or her name. You cannot put the same person in more than one category. You have twenty minutes. Do not share your 'hunted humans' with other pairs.

Your names: _____



Find two classmates who:

- have the same last number in their phone number as each of you.

1 _____ 2 _____

- were born in the same month as each of you.

1 _____ 2 _____

- like the same ice-cream flavour as each of you do.

1 _____ 2 _____

- are wearing shoes similar to those worn by each of you.

1 _____ 2 _____

- had the same cereal for breakfast as each of you.

1 _____ 2 _____

- are taller than both of you.

1 _____ 2 _____

- who have the same number of letters in their combined first name and surname as both of you have in your combined first names.

1 _____ 2 _____

Appendix 7 - Activity 5: *Opposites Attract*

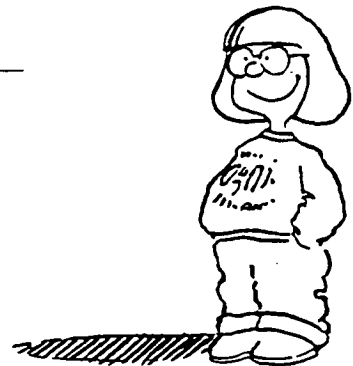
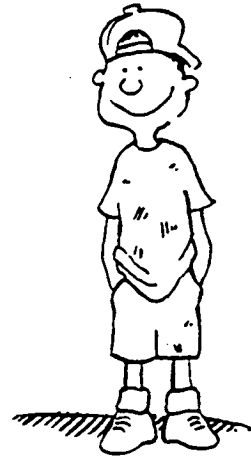
Name _____

OPPOSITES ATTRACT

Below are some descriptions. Try to find someone who fits each description and have that person sign his or her name on the line. Try to find a different student for each description.

Find someone who:

- Has a different number of brothers and sisters from you _____
- Likes a different after-school activity from you _____
- Has their birthday in a different month from you _____
- Likes a different favourite TV show from you _____
- Likes a different favourite colour from you _____
- Likes a different favourite food from you _____
- Has a different type of pet from you _____
- Likes a different type of holiday from you _____
- Likes to play different kind of sport from you _____
- Has a first name with a different number of letters from your name _____
- Has a family car a different colour from your family's car _____
- Barracks for a different football team from you _____

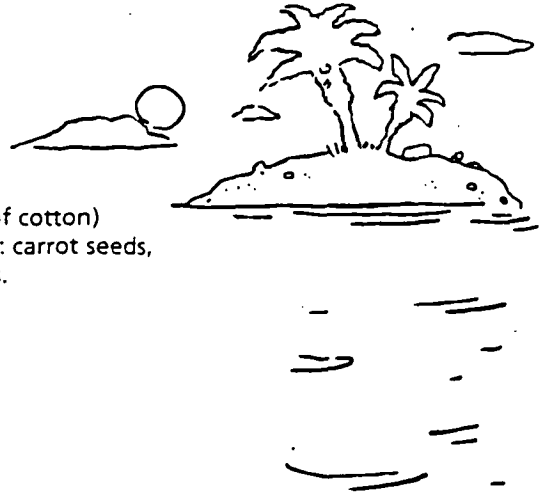


Appendix 8 - Activity 6: *Tropical island*

TROPICAL ISLAND

Which four of the following things will you take with you from the sinking ship? (You can wrap each item in a waterproof container.)

- A box of fifty matches
- Torch plus two batteries
- Length of rope
- A pair of scissors
- Sharp peeling knife
- Box of 20 nails
- A small tack hammer
- A sewing kit (two thick needles and reels of cotton)
- Packets of seeds (you can only choose one): carrot seeds, bean seeds, spinach seeds, or tomato seeds.
- A Bible
- A pen
- A plate
- A cup
- A compass
- Two bars of chocolate
- A small trowel
- One spare shirt (everyone is wearing a shirt and jeans already)
- A small blanket



Here are some things that could be on or near your island:

Fish and animals

Sharks
Crocodiles
Edible fish
Wild boar
Rabbits
Poisonous snakes
Deadly spiders
Birds
Wild turkey
A herd of wild goats

Plants

Coconut trees
Wild edible berry plants
Pineapple plants
Yams
Sweet potatoes
Poisonous berry plants
Bamboo plants
Palm trees

Landscapes

Hills
Flat ground
Rivers
The ocean
Quicksand
Swamp
Dangerous rocks

In this section, you can also add any other things you can think of.

The students were randomly divided into groups of four and then randomly assigned roles, by using playing cards.

The students focused on their own and each others' strengths to find ways to survive together on a tropical island. No time limit was set, to take advantage of students' intrinsic motivation, and other curriculum areas were shelved. In the event, the activity was completed in one day.

The group had to imagine that they had been shipwrecked and had managed to swim to a small tropical island. Before they all abandoned the wrecked ship, they had time to choose four items to take with them, each person carrying one item as they swam to shore. There was no hope of rescue for at least three months, when the next ship was scheduled to sail near the island.

- i) Each group had to write down the four items they would save and why they had chosen them.
- ii) Each group had to draw a tropical island and devise symbols for the things on and around the island.
- iii) Each group had to list two or three ways in which group members would contribute to the survival and well-being of the group as a whole. To do this, each member had to list his/her skills and experiences and the group as a whole then brain-stormed around each person's skills and experience. The focus was on what each student can do, is good at or has knowledge of, not just on what they would have liked to do.
- iv) Each group had to write up the group's story from their shipwreck until they had been happily surviving on the island for a month.

There were four assigned roles: cooperative skills coach, map drawer, reader and recorder, writer.

- i) The *cooperative skills coach* had to set a good example for the cooperative skill being practised (positive tracking) and remind others to use it by ensuring that the members of the group only made positive comments to and about each others' contribution.
- ii) The *map drawer* drew the map of the island and explained it to the class at the end of the activity.
- iii) The *reader and recorder* wrote down all suggestions and what the group decided to include on the two lists (items to be saved and the individual contributions to group welfare) and reported to the class at the end of the activity.
- iv) The *writer* wrote up the final story and read it to the rest of the class.

The roles were rotated on the hour and every member had to assume each role.

Appendix 9 - Activity 7: *Untitled story*

Untitled Story

Student Task Sheet

As he left for a visit to his outlying districts, the jealous Baron warned his pretty wife: 'Do not leave the castle while I am gone or I will punish you severely when I return!'

But as the hours passed, the young Baroness grew lonely and despite her husband's warning, decided to visit her friend who lived in the countryside nearby.

The castle was located on an island in a wide, fast-flowing river, with a drawbridge linking the island and the land at the narrowest point in the river.

'Surely my husband will not return before dawn,' she thought and ordered her servants to lower the drawbridge and leave it down until she returned.

After spending several pleasant hours with her friend playing music, talking and dancing, the Baroness returned to the drawbridge, only to find it blocked by a madman wildly waving a long and cruel knife.

'Do not attempt to cross this bridge, Baroness or I will kill you,' he raved.

Fearing for her life, the Baroness sought out a boatman on the river, explained her plight to him and asked him to take her across the river on his boat.

'I will do it, but only if you can pay my fee of five Marks.'

'But I have no money with me!' the Baroness protested.

'That is too bad. No money, no ride,' the boatman said flatly.

Her fear growing, the Baroness ran back crying to the home of her friend and after explaining the situation, begged for enough money to pay the boatman his fee.

'I never loan money to anyone,' he said, 'not even to my best friends. Besides, if you had not disobeyed your husband, this would not have happened.'

With dawn approaching and her last resource exhausted, the Baroness returned to the drawbridge, attempted in desperation to cross to the castle and was slain by the madman.



Untitled Story

Response Sheet

1. Which one person, in the opinion of your group, was *most* responsible for the death of the Baroness? Who was the *least* responsible? Check over the list below. Put a 1 by the person your group feels is most responsible. Put a 2 by the person your group feels is the next most responsible. Continue until everyone in the story has a number, 1 through 5. Be sure everyone in your group agrees.

FRIEND

BARON

BARONESS

BOATMAN

MADMAN

Be prepared to give supporting reasons for your group's order.

2. Write *three* possible titles for this story. Choose *one* title which your group believes is the most appropriate. Be prepared to explain why your group thinks this title is the best.

Signatures of Group Members

I agree with these answers. (If you don't agree, don't sign!)



This activity aimed to practise the cooperative skill of encouraging everyone to participate and to reach agreement using positive tracking, and to illustrate a cooperative learning format widely applicable to discussions of text materials.

In groups of four, students had 20 minutes to read a short story together. They then answered a series of discussion questions. It is an open ended activity with no correct answer. All group members had to seek agreement on the answers and sign the answers to indicate their agreement. Those who did not agree did not sign.

Procedure:

- I set the academic goal, namely, for students to work together cooperatively to read a story and then answer questions on it.
- The students were randomly divided into groups of four and the roles of leader/reader, facilitator, recorder/checker and spokesperson were, again randomly, assigned.
- The class discussed the cooperative skill of encouraging everyone to participate. What does it look like? sound like?
- The class discussed the cooperative skill of reaching agreement. What does it mean? Does everyone have to agree?
- I explained that, during group work the cooperative skills coach, in particular, should model these cooperative skills, but that it was the job of all group members to practise them.

Appendix 10 - Canter's (1978) Interventionist model

Canter's model, known as Assertive Discipline involves:

- identifying expectations clearly;
- a willingness to say what is acceptable and what is unacceptable;
- persistence in stating expectations and feelings;
- use of a firm tone of voice;
- maintenance of eye contact;
- use of non-verbal gestures in support of verbal statements.

He maintains that an assertive teacher is one who clearly and firmly communicates needs and requirements to students, follows those words with appropriate actions and responds to students in ways that maximise compliance, but in no way violates the interests of the students. Teachers who are positive, firm and consistent, never employing indecisive, hostile, abusive, or threatening, negative behaviours that are certain to fail are, in Canter's view, demonstrating that they care about their students.

Implementation

To become more assertive in discipline, Canter argues that teachers should do the following:

- practise an assertive response style;
- set clear limits and consequences;
- emphasise the positive;
- follow through consistently;
- make specific Assertive Discipline plans and mentally rehearse them.

He goes on to identify six steps to effective discipline.

1 Recognise and remove road blocks

One possible road block is negative expectations of students' behaviour. Teachers who expect bad behaviour or excuse bad behaviour on the basis of family problems etc. are making a mistake. Canter stresses that student misbehaviour should not be tolerated on the basis of emotional illness, brain damage, poor hereditary or socio-economic background. He also stresses that teachers need to recognise that:

- students need limits and teachers have the right to set them;
- teachers have the right to seek administrative and parental back-up;
- students cannot always be treated exactly alike; some students will need more intensive or specific programmes to reach a particular standard than others.

2 *Practice the use of assertive response styles*

Canter differentiates between three styles of responses that characterise teachers' interactions with misbehaving students:

- i) *Non-assertive response style.* This is typical of teachers who have given in to students or who feel it is wrong to place strong demands on student behaviour. They do not establish clear standards or fail to back them up with appropriate action.
- ii) *Hostile response style.* This is used by teachers who are struggling with class control. They use sarcasm and threats and often shout. They believe that they must rule with an iron glove.
- iii) *Assertive response style.* Teachers using this response style make their expectations clearly known to students and insist that students comply with those expectations. They back up their words with actions.

3 *Learn to set limits*

Canter makes the point that irrespective of the activity, in order to be assertive teachers need to be aware of what behaviours are wanted and needed from the students. They need to think in terms of very specific behaviours which can be listed and taught. A system of reinforcement and logical consequences should follow the performance or non-performance of these specific behaviours. Teachers should not ignore inappropriate behaviour. Instead they should stop it with firm, clear reminders of what the student should be doing. If the behaviour persists, teachers should follow through with the consequences.

4 *Learn to follow through on limits*

By limits, Canter means the positive demands which are made on students. By following through he means taking the appropriate action when students refuse to meet or to act in accordance with the demand. This is done by making promises, not threats, establishing in advance your criteria for consequences, selecting appropriate consequences in advance and practising the verbal confrontations which call for the follow through.

5 *Establish a system of negative consequences*

Canter suggests setting up a system of negative consequences (see Figure 3) that can be easily enforced. He emphasises that individual teachers must develop a system with which they feel comfortable. The consequences are for individual students, starting at the beginning of the day or period. Each day or period starts afresh.

Figure 3 System of negative consequences

Misbehaviour	Teacher's Action	Consequence
First	name noted on clipboard	warning issued
Second	tick placed by name	10 minutes time-out from lesson
Third	second tick by name	15 minutes time-out from lesson
Fourth	third tick by name	student phones parents to explain
Fifth	fourth tick by name	student meets with principal and parents

Consequences include: loss of privilege or of preferred activity, detention or referral to the principal. It is emphasised that this should be unpleasant, for teachers have the right to expect back-up and principals should not project the image of being everyone's friend. A final consequence, or 'home consequence' is a frank admission by the school that other measures have not helped. Canter claims that, unless home measures can be effective, the teacher should not be expected to teach the student.

6 *Implement a system of positive assertions*

Despite the emphasis on the negative consequences of misbehaviour, Canter also points to the need for positive consequences when students are behaving. Personal attention, positive notes home, special awards, special privileges, material awards, home rewards and group rewards are all encouraged.

Finally Canter makes four suggestions:

- i) At the beginning of the school year, teachers should be clear about the rules and consequences, these should be displayed and listed. The list should be taken home for parents to read. Students should be told exactly what will happen when they break the rules.
- ii) Teachers should have a well-thought-out discipline plan which they rehearse, on how to deal with all aspects of behaviour. Mental rehearsal is important so that the response becomes an established one.
- iii) It is the visualisation of specific situations in which the teacher needs to respond assertively.
- iv) Specific interventions should be practised.

Appendix 11 - Gordon's (1991) Non-interventionist model: a summary

Implementation

- 1 The student owns the problem. He/she is angry or upset because of the way he/she was treated. In this situation the teacher uses counselling skills, incorporating a range of methods.
 - *Non-directive observations* which basically give the message 'I see what you are doing. I have faith in your ability to correct yourself. If you need my help, I am here'. Gordon believes that teachers should avoid directing, except where the student is in immediate danger and quick action is required. Statements designed to be ordering, warning, moralising, advising, giving logical reason, judging, criticising or analysing are to be avoided. He also believes that teachers should avoid praising and agreeing in an evaluative sense, as students then learn to say what pleases that teacher.
 - *Active listening*, which involves reflecting back to the student what he/she is saying and showing that the teacher is listening by verbal and non-verbal behaviour. It means getting below the surface level and really identifying what the student is saying and mirroring that content back to the student.
 - *Door-opening, or open-ended, questions* to get the student talking. They are non-evaluative and are designed to help the student explore the problem more fully.
 - *Modelling correct responses* and the teacher's value system in a way that enables the student to experience and evaluate for him/herself.
- 2 The teacher owns the problem. If a student disrupts a lesson, the teacher should not claim false acceptance of the student's behaviour, nor ignore or condone the action. Gordon suggests three solutions:
 - i) *Modify the student* by using 'I' messages. These are matter of fact, low key, directive statements containing the word 'I', which express to the student a description of the student's behaviour and the effect which that has on the teacher and the class. It also tells the student how the teacher feels about the behaviour. 'I' messages show that the teacher is taking responsibility for his/her feelings about what has happened and is confident enough to express them. They also leave the responsibility for the student's behaviour with the student. It also avoids blaming the student and avoids over-generalisation. The idea is to concentrate on specific behaviour.
 - ii) *Modify the environment* by taking into consideration all the aspects of organisation and management in the classroom which may be contributing to the problem. The physical environment should be as pleasant as possible. It may sometimes need to be restricted and simplified to avoid disorder and clutter. The teacher should also aim to reduce what Gordon calls 'diffused time', when students are flooded with stimuli from a mixture of diverse sources. At the same time, the teacher should aim to increase 'individual time', when the student can get away from the flood of stimulation around him/her and 'optimum time', when the student is

engaged in a meaningful interpersonal one-to-one relationship with the teacher.

- iii) *Modify oneself* by being aware of one's personal characteristics and skills as an accepting, accommodating, relaxed and loved person. The more a teacher likes her/himself as a whole person, the better he/she will like the students and be able to cope with them.
- 3 Both the teacher and the student own the problem and they are in conflict. In this situation a conflict arises because student behaviour and teacher behaviour interfere with the attainment of the other's goals and needs. Again, Gordon suggests three types of solution:
- i) the teacher wins using power and authority, perhaps leaving the student feeling resentful;
 - ii) the student wins, by forcing the teacher to back down, perhaps feeling weak and resentful;
 - iii) the 'No Loser' solution.

Gordon distinguishes between the following two types of authority.

- 'desirable' authority, is based on a person's expertise, knowledge and experience. The 'expert' is judged to be worth listening to by virtue of his/her expertise. A teacher in this position is worth listening to and can offer his/her consultancy skills much as a lawyer or doctor does.
- 'undesirable', power-based authority, which the teacher has by virtue of his/her position of being able to praise or punish. This is an abuse of power.

Appendix 12 - Dreikurs *et al*'s (1982) Interactionist model: a summary

The basic tenets include:

- Students can choose to behave or misbehave, their behaviour is not outside their control.
- Misbehaviour reflects the students' mistaken belief that it will gain them the recognition they want.
- Teachers should teach students that unpleasant consequences will always follow inappropriate behaviour.
- Discipline is not punishment, it comprises teaching students to impose limits on themselves.
- Teachers should identify mistaken goals and then act in ways that do not reinforce them.
- Democratic teachers provide firm guidance and leadership. They allow students to have a say in establishing rules and consequences.
- Teachers should strive to encourage students' efforts, but avoid praising their work or character.

Implementation

Dreikurs *et al* attribute all inappropriate behaviour in the classroom, whether social, intellectual or emotional, to the pursuit of one of four possible goals: attention getting, power seeking, revenge seeking, displaying inadequacy. These goals identify the purpose of student misbehaviour.

They believe that establishing discipline in the classroom must involve teaching four concepts.

- i) Students are responsible for their own actions. Discipline entails freedom of choice and the understanding of the consequences.
- ii) Students are responsible for knowing what the rules and consequences are in their classrooms. Good behaviour brings reward. Poor behaviour always brings undesired consequences.
- iii) Students must respect themselves and others. By choosing to behave in certain ways individuals learn to gain acceptance from others and, consequently, acceptance by themselves.
- iv) Students have the responsibility to influence others to behave appropriately. It involves allowing students freedom to choose their own behaviour. They can do this because they understand exactly which consequences follow from their chosen behaviour.

They also suggest that the teachers who are most effective in establishing discipline are those who teach democratically. They identify three types of teachers, autocratic, permissive and democratic. These are categorised on the basis of the behaviour they show in the classroom.

- i) *Autocratic teachers* force their will on students to prove that they have control of the class. They motivate students with outside pressure instead

of stimulating motivation from within. They need to feel powerful and superior to their students.

- ii) *Permissive teachers* do not expect their student to follow rules. Consequently students in a permissive classroom do not learn that living in society requires rules and that failure to follow rules results in consequences; they believe that they can do whatever they want.
- iii) *Democratic teachers* are neither permissive nor autocratic. They provide firm guidance and leadership by establishing rules and consequences. They motivate students from within, they teach that freedom is tied to responsibility. They allow students freedom to choose their own behaviour.

According to Dreikurs *et al*, the following conditions foster a democratic classroom:

- order;
- limits;
- firmness and kindness: firmness from teachers shows they respect themselves, kindness shows that they respect others;
- student involvement in establishing and maintaining rules;
- leadership from the teacher;
- cooperation rather than competition between teacher and students;
- a sense of belonging to the group;
- freedom to explore, discover and choose acceptable behaviour through understanding the responsibilities and consequences associated with it.

They suggest that discipline involves ongoing teacher guidance to help students develop inner controls. They propose that teachers:

- identify students' mistaken goals;
- do not react instinctively to misbehaviour;
- provide lots of encouragement;
- encourage students to evaluate their own behaviour;
- apply natural and logical consequences. Natural consequences follow misbehaviour, requiring no action by another person. These flow naturally from the behaviour and cannot be avoided. e.g. if you leave your lunch at home you will go hungry, if you break your ruler you will have to manage without one. Logical consequences do not occur as a natural result of the behaviour, requiring instead that someone administer the consequence in response to the behaviour. Logical consequences need to be decided upon and clearly understood by the students. The consequences need to be logically related to behaviour. The student who is late for class makes up the time, a student who is rude to the teacher apologises later on, the student who does not complete an assignment on time loses marks;
- help students to become aware of their reasons for misbehaving, their mistaken goals;
- formulate classroom procedures through classroom meetings;

- treat students as their social equals.