

[Press release: New report with practical advice for teachers on pupil behaviour](#)

An independent review providing practical guidance to teachers about how to tackle bad behaviour in the classroom has been published today (24 March 2017).

Teacher and behaviour expert Tom Bennett spent several months meeting classroom teachers and leaders from a variety of schools to identify successful strategies used to tackle disruptive behaviour.

His report [‘Creating a culture: how school leaders can optimise behaviour’](#) concludes that while there is no ‘silver bullet’, there are a variety of strategies that can be used to tackle poor behaviour.

It also highlights that although standards of behaviour can be a challenge for schools, leadership is key to creating the right culture to tackle this issue.

Tom Bennett said:

How well students behave in school is crucial to how far they succeed, socially and academically. There are many tremendous schools doing a superb job, and some schools that could improve a great deal.

I spoke to leaders of coastal schools, inner-city schools, rural, primary, secondary, alternative provision and asked them what they did. Every school has different circumstances and challenges, but we found that some themes were almost universal: clear routines, robustly administered, high expectations and a focus on building a strong sense of identity and good relationships where children feel they belong, are safe, and are expected to do their best. That’s why I called it ‘creating a culture’. Because these things don’t happen by accident.

We also need to acknowledge that in some schools, challenges faced are greater than in others, and in these circumstances we need to look at better ways of guaranteeing that provision, skill sets and support are available. The skills required to improve school behaviour cultures already exist within the ecosystem of schools. The challenge now is for us to collaborate as a community to do so.

The Department for Education has welcomed the report and will now use its findings to inform ongoing work to help and support schools to deal with this issue.

Edward Timpson MP, Minister for Vulnerable Children and Families, said:

Part of our plan for Britain is building a fairer society – with a good school place for every child. That means children being able to learn in classrooms that are free from disruption. Tom Bennett's report is relevant, insightful and draws on tried and tested methods that will provide real help to teachers across the country.

I would encourage all school leaders to use its practical examples to help create a positive environment that addresses the needs of their pupils.

National Association of Head Teachers General Secretary Russell Hobby said:

The design of a culture to support good behaviour is a central duty of every school leader. It requires clarity, consistency and courage. It is a conscious choice, constantly maintained. Tom's report distils practical advice from excellent schools, alongside the evidence from research, to help leaders reflect on and develop their own impact.

John d'Abbro, executive headteacher of New Rush Hall School, said:

This is a refreshingly powerful, down to earth, and practical report, which distils and recognises effective good practice. Tom makes the key point that continuous professional development in behaviour management is vital for both teachers and senior leaders and more needs to be made available. The case studies exemplify these points and further demonstrate that behaviour is a whole-school issue.

Alison Colwell, principal of Ebbsfleet Academy, which was visited as part of the review, said:

This fascinating report should be read by every school leader. It rightly emphasises the critical importance of culture, attention to detail and consistent practice, all of which are at the heart of strong and successful school leadership.

In its response to the report, the government has set out a number of measures that are being taken forward to address the points raised. These include:

- reforming National Professional Qualifications to equip school leaders with the knowledge and skills they need to deal with bad behaviour. The new qualifications will be delivered from September 2017

- encouraging providers to bid for funding from a pot of £75 million from the [Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund](#) to develop and run professional development programmes tackling bad behaviour for leaders in challenging areas
- revising our existing advice for schools including the mental health and behaviour guidance to ensure they support teachers and school leaders as best as they possibly can
- conducting further research into what works to help young people with behavioural issues, and as such, continue to develop our long-term ambition to give control of alternative provision budgets to mainstream schools, allowing these to commission their own such provision and take responsibility for educational outcomes of their pupils

Several schools are identified in the report as exemplars of good practice. These include:

Robert Clack, Dagenham

In one of the poorest boroughs of London, children from traditionally underachieving demographics exceed national expectations, and have done so for many years. The school uses practical measures such as wall displays to emphasise achievements, school awards and other opportunities. In this way, a culture of high expectation is in place for all students, regardless of their circumstances.

New Rush Hall, Redbridge

The school's philosophy is that the most vulnerable, the most challenging pupils, need greater support, not less. The school ensures staff receive training throughout their careers to meet the needs of the student body.

Seymour Road Primary, Manchester

A school that went from requires improvement to good in just 2 years by developing good relationships with both parents and pupils. They have done this by having an open door policy for parents, a support worker who visits homes, and they have held behaviour training sessions for the parents.

Since 2010 the government has introduced a range of measures to give teachers more powers to tackle poor behaviour. These include:

- stronger powers to search pupils
- removal of the requirement to give parents 24 hours' written notice of 'after-school' detentions
- clarified teachers' power to use of reasonable force
- updated advice on tough but proportionate sanctions for misbehaviour as well as ensuring schools' decisions on exclusions can no longer be overruled
- ensuring that all teachers are equipped with the skills to tackle both the serious behaviour issues that compromise the safety and wellbeing of pupils, as well as how to deal with low-level disruption that stops children from learning properly