

Appendix 8 (2)

Interview schedule with four principals and focus group interviews with one group of teachers and two groups of pupils (Appendices 3 & 4). Questions and answers given to the ten questions put to principals, teachers and pupils.

- Q1** (Behaviour Support **Needs** at School-Level)
(similar to Q2 in Research Proposal and Q6 Principal/Teacher, and Q4 Pupil Questionnaires)
- I:** What help/supports are needed to manage behaviour at school level?
- Principal 1** Well, you need co-operation between staff and parents so that they'll both have a good understanding of what's required, similar values, similar aims in behaviour, similar boundaries between staff and parents and among the staff themselves. Yea?
- Principal 2** I suppose the first thing I would notice or mention is to have a very watertight policy on codes of discipline and approaches towards it and the recording of indisciplines and major indisciplines. Having said that much then, you also need to approach discipline from various angles, there's no point in having a set of sanctions only because from where I stand, a lot of the indiscipline in our school would come from children, their behaviour is driven from something outside of the child, whether it be, just immediately outside of themselves - in the home in their environment or even in their learning environment, that behaviour can be highly driven and we just don't have enough information, that kind of information is not given to enough of teachers, parents, children themselves even that there is a reason for some of the behaviour other than just the person being disciplined, or whatever so I think information should be given to teachers, parents, and to the general educational body around about why behaviours are as they are.
- I** And do you feel that the teachers are trained enough on behaviour?
- Principal 2:** Almost not at all, unless people specifically pick up on summer courses and doing psychology courses and things like that. Teachers aren't aware of it at all. They just have a discipline policy. You tick boxes and the child is either disciplined or undisciplined. There is no step or looking into what drives that behaviour or misbehaviour
- Principal 3** To manage behaviour at school level, I think that it is essential that there would be a whole-school agreement which would involve parents, teachers and children as a tool for managing behaviour or assistance that would be put in place and I think that it is essential that it would be at whole-school level because sometimes different teachers do a lot of wonderful things in each classroom but unless a staff agree together what we, as a group of people feel we need in place in the school for the school to be an effective organisation. Sometimes children go from class to class and different rules apply and there can be some confusion and a lot of information can cause either confusion, frustration, or anger because of different types of management....
- I:** Yes....
- Principal 3:**essential that a school would agree exactly what kind of tools they want to put in place.
- Principal 4** Am.....I would say to manage behaviour at school level, am....a whole-school policy on behaviour, number 1 would be imperative. You'd also need....am....to devise a means of approaching parents and calling them in if there was an issue with regard to behaviour in the school. Am...I think that's where a very strong home school link would be imperative, that the home were aware what the acceptable behaviour was at school and they could impart that information onto

their child...in a positive way and.....that's what I feel - a whole school approach and continuity also, between one class and the next - what's accepted in one class or what's unaccepted is the same in the next class.

I: Consistency among staff...

Principal 4: Consistency among staff in their approach, yea, yea..

Teachers Focus-Group:

T1 (Resource): Well, school rules are essential. School rules need to be democratically selected when the children come in and I suppose that everybody would be informed about them – parents, pupils. I always think that it is extremely important to teach proper routines around a school, and respect. Also for new staff members, for somebody to go through the school rules because they can be interpreted differently so with new staff, you need to have a run-through on how the rules are actually implemented. We also have a system of people with posts of responsibility take on a pastoral care role and responsible for behaviour within a class groupings so every person with a post of responsibility would be a year head for a different year and then co-ordinate any behaviour difficulties. So that is the first line for the teacher to go to and then if the teacher and the year head couldn't sort it out, then the Principal or the Deputy Principal would sort it out. So that would be the systems that we have.

T5 (class T): would that be a big school?

T1: Yes, a very big school. We have streams of two and sometimes three.

T4 (Class): And when would that happen, between the teacher and year-head, would be after school?

T1 (R): Yea, after school, usually. It would be their first port of call for advice and help in dealing with a behaviour issue. That would be the niggling on-going behaviour issues. There are certain behaviours that, straight away, the Principal is involved in, extreme behaviours – we wouldn't have extreme disruptive behaviour really, a major disruptive behaviour in the school but that is one of the systems we have to try and prevent and deal with those behaviours. It's part of our new code of discipline. It really is working very well. We put a lot of work into developing our code of discipline, with parents. It's on-going, it took a lot of work. I think for most schools difficulty arose, when it came down to, like the positive element, everything was about the positive element, but when something happened and something had to be done about it, that's the sticking point in every code of discipline, having a workable solution.

T2 (Resource): It's about prevention.

T1 (R): Yes, prevention is the main aim of it. Sanctions are the difficult bit. We had the problem that children did something and sanctions were given out. Parents came in giving out about the sanctions. But we said, listen, we sent you home this code of discipline, you signed it, you agreed to it. When it's signed, it makes it a lot easier for you to do what you have to do.

T6 (6th class T): I think what is significant is that all the children understand that they can be corrected by all the teachers. Sometimes they think that they can be corrected only by their own teacher and I think that has to be

- put in the code of behaviour I think and if they accept that and if a child of mine offends another teacher, I take it as if I have been offended. I deal with it in that manner. I think that is very significant.
- T2 (R): The flip side of that is that you get other teachers who get insulted almost that somebody else is telling off their child.
- T6 (6th Class): That's right.
- T2 (R): so you need to be aware of that. I went on a school trip yesterday and I got the feeling that some teachers weren't happy that I was instructing their children about what to do, so I think you have to work on that.
- T6 (6th Class): I think that it is the Resource teachers that children think they have no authority.
- T1 (R): Sometimes with younger teacher, you know older children think they can pull one over on them. I think collective responsibility, that has to come from the top. In order to foster that, we do what we call rules mornings and everybody takes a different class, so we have a rota, so maybe I go to Junior Infants today. Say every month, we do two mornings. Different teachers than the class teacher goes into the class and we have a script, say this month, we are working on say: manners and going in and out of the school gate and we do it from 20 past 9 to ½ 9 to try and get that message across. We are all working, all the teachers are working on the same rules. It doesn't always work out that way, say parents let children away with things, some teachers tend to let children away with things.
- T2: Yea, lack of consistency.
- T1: Yea, I think in any human situation, you are going to get that – lack of consistency. People tend to see things differently you know.
- T6: I think that it is the little things that eventually break down. If you correct the little things, you are ½ way there. Begin as you mean to go on.
- T4: I think for yourself as well that other teachers would pick up on the kids who are misbehaving. Sometimes you seem to be the one who is always correcting. It would be good if there was another teacher.
- T1: I think that you notice it very much when people are doing yard duty. Some teachers are out there correcting. Other teachers just stand there with their arms folded and don't get involved. Teachers have to be constantly, teachers have to be constantly reminded that all teachers are responsible for all behaviours.
- I: Actually that came up in the children's focus-groups about behaviour. They said that the older teachers always correct them and the younger teachers tend not to and they say, we'll get you the next time.
- T2: What you need is consistency. You need a behaviour management group as such. In a school I worked in, we had a whole-school behaviour policy and all teachers were talking from the same page. All kids knew the rules and what the consequences would be. It worked so well, partly because of the head teacher. When she left the next head carried it on.
- T1: When I worked in Dublin, we used discipline for Learning. I mean it's mostly used in schools where there would be major problems, mainly disadvantaged areas. It's very time consuming to maintain. In the school where I worked there was a person whose post of responsibility

was Discipline for Learning so every week, you got your sheet to nominate your child who would receive a reward. Detention was part of it, you know that the children would receive detention and the Principal had to oversee that detention. It was very strict. No other system of punishments were allowed. Children had books, they got little cards that they got stamps on for prizes and that. You had to use it exclusively. It was used extensively in schools in Tallaght.

T5: We use it in our school now. Actually it's working really well. But you are rewarding kids that are always going to be good. You ask why are the kids being good, are they doing it for themselves, I mean altruism or is it for the stamp. But it does work as well. It's a nice way of being consistent. It work all the way from Infants to 6th class but it does take a lot of time.

T1: It demands really really constant work. It was devised for schools where there are particular behaviour problems. At the time, the learning wasn't happening because of the discipline problems. But it has stood the test of time. I mean that's nearly 30 years ago now that it was devised. But as you say, it does take up a lot of time, you have to say - do you need it? In our school, we don't need that level of constant support, you would need it if it was impacting on the learning in the school. It is only the odd child, that would be, you know..... There is a lot of work with it, yea, stamps pile up and you might have 3 or 4 days stamps to do. It works but everybody has to be on the same page. There's staff training for it, you know in Dublin. Staff were trained in the system and it was operated very rigidly. I did see when I visited the school in ___ and it is still operating there.

Pupils Focus-Group 1

Q1 (Behaviour support Needs at School Level)

Interviewer: If you were the Principal, what do you think is needed in the school to make sure everyone behaves well?

Pupil 1: School Rules are enforced and are put into practice

Pupil 2: It would probably help if all classrooms had their own school rules, like each pupil made up a classroom rule, about 5 of them, and then that would probably help better to keep all the rules intact.

Pupil 3: If there are like, children behaving, and the principal is up to his eyes with work and he's getting sent children down to him all the time for misbehaviour and the teacher can't deal with him, try and get someone in to help the teachers deal with behaviour.

Interviewer: We are talking now about rules for the whole school:

Pupil 4: More discipline and punishments.

Pupil 5: Maybe if the parents at home encouraged good behaviour.

Pupil 1: Maybe if 6th class acts as prefects and stopped all the bullying and that.

Interviewer: OK, to be on the watch-out.
How could the teachers help?

Pupil 4: Maybe if there were more teachers, like on yard duty, if there were two teachers and even if they were on one side of the yard, they can't be looking over.

Pupil 1: Or even if there were 2, they always walk together, and maybe if they were like that (showed them opposite and going clockwise), walking around the school separately, it would be better.

Pupil 3: Maybe if the principal employed a counsellor to help the children with behaviour problems.

Pupils Focus-Group 2

Pupil 1(b): I think we should be rewarded more because we get in trouble for a lot more things than we do. If we were rewarded, we wouldn't get in as much trouble.

I: So more rewards, you think.

Pupil 2: (b) We should have more leeway. People get in trouble because they want to get in trouble because it's risky. They wouldn't be cheeky or go out in the yard if they didn't think they'd get in trouble for it.

Pupil3: (b) There needs to be stricter rules and punishments. People get in trouble and they don't really care. If there were stricter rules, and stricter punishments, they'd stop, sooner.

I: OK, so we said stricter rules, rewards, and punishments and you said something...

Pupil 2: More leeway.

I: So you said stricter rules and you said more leeway.. ha, ha.

I: Why do you think you need more leeway?

Pupil 2: Because, when you get in trouble you hardly ever get in trouble. Well if you go to the yard, people wouldn't go to the yard if they get in trouble. Some people want to go to the yard if they get in trouble. They think they are funny and want to get in trouble. If you didn't want to get in trouble for going to the yard, nobody would do it.

I: So you said, going in the yard, is it?

Pupil2: If you don't go near the oil tank...

I: If you don't go near the oil tank? Oh, I see, so there's a certain part of the yard that you are not allowed go to, is it?

Pupil2: Yea, but everybody still goes.

I: And why would they go when they are not supposed to go, do you think?

Pupil2: To get in trouble.

I: And do they mean to get in trouble?

Pupil2: Yea, some of them do to try and be cool.

I: Oh, I see, yea. So you think people go over there to get in trouble because it's cool. Is that what you are saying?

Pupil2: Yea.

I: Would you all agree with that?

Pupils together: Yea

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1 **Q2** (Behaviour Support **Needs** at **Classroom/Group** Level)
2 (similar to Q2 in Research Proposal and Q13 Principal/Teacher, and
3 Q11 Pupil Questionnaires)
4 **I:** What help would support **teachers** in the classroom to manage
5 behaviour so that the teacher can carry on teaching
6 **Pr 1:** Well, I know in schools where there is serious misbehaviour, they have
7 a Support teacher and I know that works well in Secondary Schools.
8 Some schools don't need that though and misbehaviour is easily dealt
9 with and it doesn't distract the class too much. It could be a learning
10 process for the child who is misbehaving and for the other pupils. You
11 don't have to eliminate the child who is misbehaving, you can use it as
12 a learning process.
13 **I:** And when you say the support teacher, do you the Learning Support
14 teacher?
15 **Pr1:** No, no. There's a specific job, a Support Teacher for behaviour.
16 **I:** Oh, right.
17 **Pr1:** Yea, some schools have that. You know that, do you?
18 **I:** Well, yes, I know they have it in the North but I didn't know there is
19 such a job here.
20 **Pr1:** Oh, yea, there is such a job in _____, in _____ Primary School, and
21 children are withdrawn from the class because of their behaviour.
22 They need it in some schools especially in Urban and disadvantaged
23 schools. Every school should have a Support Teacher. They call them
24 support Teachers, they're not Learning Support or Language Support,
25 they're just called Support, but they are Behaviour Support teachers.
26 **P2**
27 I think an understanding - same as the first one, an understanding of
28 the behaviour itself would be the first great help and then working
29 along and having some way of recording it, and building a body of
30 information about this behaviour and if it were possible at all then that
31 some outside agency could deal with the reasons for the behaviour
32 because certain children suffer an awful lot. Their suffering is
33 manifested further then in certain misbehaviours and they are punished
34 further for suffering and there is a kind of circularity going on there
35 which drives misbehaviour inside their own environment and that is
36 being caused by something else besides themselves, so I don't know
37 how to intervene there. I think again it's all around information and
38 taking up some sort of course that would assist us to intervene and
39 counsel children setting up some kind of system, to intervene and help
40 children in some way and help the children and help the people who
41 work with them as well to understand.
42 **I:** You mentioned outside agencies, you mentioned counselling.....
43 **Pr2:** Well, I think.....well, it could be from inside school but it would be
44 better if it were people from outside if they could come in and interpret
45 this behaviour and give us a plan to deal with it, whether it is behaviour
46 modification programmes or behaviour analysis to understand it ,
47 modification to change it and also behaviour support. Most children
48 would try to be good but they need support in being good. They are
49 coming from a different background.

50 **P3** Essential I think that every class would have a list of class rules and
51 essential I think that they would be drawn up in conjunction with the
52 children and that people would.....children would understand that
53 this is the reason that rules are in place, it's for the protection and the
54 welfare of everybody and not just for the teachers or the Principal but
55 that it's so that the school can be an effective organisation as I was
56 saying already. And I think essential to that, is when the rules are
57 drawn up, and posted in the room, that every day, the attention of the
58 children would be brought to them, because I think that we do
59 wonderful work and sometimes set it up and then forget about it but
60 that the discipline and the programme would be part of school life -
61 everyday school life, the same as coming in in your uniform or having
62 your homework done, that this is the way we operate in the classroom
63 in this school.

64 **Pr4** Within the class.....yes.....to establish classroom rules....the ground
65 rules are established from the very early stages and then
66 continuity...that there's no lacking in that, that the children are very
67 very aware of their limits and the limitations...am.. and then a reward
68 system as well, I meanthat the rules are kept and the teacher could
69 on a particular day acknowledge that reward...for commitment to the
70 school....to the classroom rules. I find, talking to my class, repeatedly,
71 about the fact that I'm disappointed, I find by telling them that I am
72 upset....what is happening in the class has really made me feel quite
73 upset.....it taps into their emotion but it does...am .bring the
74 behaviour right back to a very basic level of acceptance am -
75 unacceptance really.

76 **Teachers Focus-Group**

77 **T1** Just like Question 1 there, I think it's important that at the very start of
78 the year the children and yourself make up the rules and each year, you
79 have to be consistent yourself, especially with staff. But it is very easy
80 to feel sorry for somebody and if they do something wrong, that you
81 don't deal with them in the same way as somebody that usually carries
82 on like that. And children understand what are the consequences if
83 they don't behave properly and those consequences must be the same.
84 I think the teaching of routine is very old fashioned but they have stood
85 the test of time. If you actually teach children how you want to
86 manage your classroom because it might be different from the way the
87 teacher managed it the year before - what happens when the bell rings,
88 what happens when they get their coat, what happens on a wet day, and
89 if you teach it and consistently enforce it for the month of September,
90 the room operates in an organised way. I think though that it has to be
91 taught, you can't presume that it's going to happen. Each year, it
92 needs to be taught.

93 **T6:** I think if the carrot is big enough, you won't need a stick at all. If what
94 they're deprived of is really what they'd like to have, if that is what
95 you're depriving them of for example fun and games, if that is what
96 you are depriving them of, that really gets to them.

97 **T1:** They really need to care about it though.

98 **T6:** They really do.

99 **T1:** Some of the teachers in our school, operate, you know, Golden time,
100 Jenny Moseley Golden Time. You know they lose their minutes of
101 Golden Time individually you know and they might have lost a 10
102 minute of a 20 minutes slot so they have to do work when others are
103 involved in Golden Time. That really gets to them. Some people
104 operate you know- homework passes and you can get with so many
105 points and you can redeem it for a homework pass and you can use
106 your homework pass, you can use it, you know any night. You can
107 save it up if you want to go somewhere.

108 **I:** That's a good idea.

109 **T2:** We used the same, you know the Jenny Moseley behaviour as well.
110 We used the yellow card, and red card fairly rigidly. The kids knew
111 they were getting a warning when the yellow card was placed on their
112 table. It was almost like a silent warning. You could see with a lot of
113 them that, like, their shoulders just dropped if you put a yellow card on
114 the table. Then with the red, their hearts really nearly stopped and for
115 most kids, that was the view. I remember one time that I had a
116 boisterous 20 6th class. We, myself and the other teacher went through
117 the behaviour policy with them. We actually taught them the
118 behaviour policy that other troublesome kids had never actually seen.
119 We showed them the responsibilities that they had, we showed them
120 what their sanctions would be, what they would be expected to fill out
121 and I think that it worked because they knew exactly what was going to
122 happen. We would question them at the Golden Time, what was going
123 to happen now and they knew exactly. It was almost like putting them
124 on a level, like an adult. Like you waste so much time

125 **T1:** the Jenny Moseley thing, that is very silent....you are not like,
126 interrupting because like, that's the big thing.

127 **T2:** Yea, like you waste so much time. I had a blue one and it had a sad
128 face on it and it said 'I will speak to you later' on it. You just put it on
129 the table without kind of saying anything.

Pupils' focus-Group 1

130 **Q2** **(Behaviour support Needs at Classroom/Group Level)**

131 **Interviewer:** If you were the **class teacher**, what help would you need from your
132 pupils and from others on behaviour so that you can carry on teaching?

133 **Pupil 1:** You need other pupils, like, not to encourage them by laughing, saying
134 well done, that was funny, encouraging them. Saying maybe 'well
135 done', Don't give them praise, don't notice it, like, just ignore it.
136

137 **I:** If they misbehave, is it?

138 **Pupil 1:** Yea, or like if they are trying to look for attention, just ignore them.

139 **I:** So if you were the class teacher, what would you need from your
140 pupils?

141 **Pupil 3:** You'd need respect from your pupils and they should encourage good
142 behaviour too.

143 **I:** Good

144 **Pupil 3:** And every pupil would participate in all the work, in the games and
145 everything.

146 **I:** Say that again.

147 **Pupil 3:** It would give the teacher an easier time if every pupil like participated
148 in like Science, and PE and everything.

149 I: In all the subjects?
150 Pupil 3: Yea.
151 I: Instead of maybe misbehaving, is it?
152 Pupil 6: If the pupils were obedient and paying attention to all the subjects, then
153 pretty much the school would get on better and the teacher would probably get on a
154 lot better with the students and probably give them no homework maybe once a
155 week.
156 Pupils' Focus-Group 2
157 **Pupil 4:** More respect for the teachers
158 **I:** Yes, everybody needs respect.
159 **Pupil 4:** Yea, if a teacher gives respect to you, you should give respect back

160 **Q3** (Behaviour Support **Needs** for Pupils at **Classroom/Group** Level
161 (similar to Question 2 in Research Proposal but with emphasis on the
162 pupil in the classroom)

163 I: What help would support **pupils** in the classroom so that they can
164 learn?

165 **Pr1:** Well, as you say, it is a learning thing. They have to be taught the
166 rules. They have to be explained to, not just at the beginning of the
167 year but regularly. They have to be helped to understand the rules,
168 maybe to create the rules for their own class, maybe not for the whole
169 school, but for their classroom. And when they do misbehave, it has to
170 be explained how they misbehaved and the consequences. So there has
171 to be clear understanding and clear communication.

172 **Pr2** Again, I think a good programme set-up, that they are given a bit of
173 information about their behaviour, that it can be changed. Behaviour
174 modification programme can be set up then and run and they have
175 input into it, particularly over half of the school that the child would
176 have a say in the plan first of all but in looking back over a week's
177 behaviour, that they will be able to say why they did this and why they
178 did that and they get an understanding of their own behaviour because
179 a lot of the behaviour is totally outside a child's understanding unless
180 they examine it or analyse it somehow.

181 I: Do you think that well-planned lessons would come into that?

182 Pr2: It would, yea. But I was talking of our context here, where you find
183 that almost all of the misbehaviour has an environmental basis, that
184 there is something going on in the child's environment whether it is
185 home issues, monitory issues, people losing work, in the family, illness
186 in the family, marriage break-downs, things like that, manifesting in
187 behaviour and the children don't have a clue about what is going on.
188 Now, a very structured classroom would work alright. Not always.

189 **Pr3**

190 I think that the rules would be put into force so that people realise well,
191 the rule about working quietly at that particular time is for everybody,
192 it's to allow people to concentrate, it's not to ruin your fun at school,
193 it's to....that each rule applies to a different stage, and it's there for the
194 welfare of each child and I think the children would need to be taught
195 that and particularly children maybe who have difficulty around their
196 behaviour for whatever reason, maybe because of a named condition or
197 maybefor whatever reason that there is a poor pattern of
198 behaviour, I think they need to be taught carefully the rules and taught
199 why they're there and maybe supported in...in establishing those rules,
200 whether that would be a reward system, and I think the one that works
201 best is, you know, catching them when they are being good as the old
202 saying goes.

203 I: Mm mm, and do you feel that the teacher has input there, you know
204 for example, well-planned lessons, otherwise the children might get
205 bored and mightn't behave.....

206 Pr3: Oh, absolutely, I think, you know, essential for every class teacher to
207 come in well-prepared because children are very clever at spotting the
208 day that you're winging it and it makes some children uncomfortable,
209 it gives other children a reason to....you know, carry on so I think,

210 essential that you come in, you know, ready for the day's work, you
211 know, a plan for the day and all the things you are going to need to put
212 that plan in place.

213 **Pr4** Le me see - children - I would sayI'd say this is where an
214 individual education plan would come in.... am....obviously for
215 academic work also but for behaviour and to pinpoint maybe one
216 particular behaviour that the child is consistently carrying out in the
217 room, that is unacceptable and that again, like, a reward system would
218 be put in place and that his good behaviour would be acknowledged -
219 so a very targeted approach, to a child, and a meeting with the mum
220 and to identify what is happening in the class that is upsetting the rule
221 of things, that is interfering with his learning and perhaps even
222 distracting others in the class....so a very very targeted approach, a
223 very clear cut and realistic....a very .realistic set of objectives for each
224 child.

225 I: And for the pupils, in general, in the classroom, what would they need
226 so that their teacher can carry on teachingyou know, rather than the
227 individual child in the class, the class as a whole, what do they need,
228 do you feel?

229 Pr: A structured time-table - children love routinemake it very very
230 clear to them what is happening - what is happening at 11 o'clock,
231 what is happening at ½ past 11, and if they're told in advance I feel
232you know, later on today, we have PE and if there is a shift in the
233 time table that they are informedfor some reason, for example if
234 the halla (hall) is not available or if it's raining outside, well, that that's
235 explained to them and not just all of a sudden, well, we're not going to
236 PE.....you know that they are actually informed if there is a change in
237 the time table..... they need routine and continuity.

238 I: And what should they expect from their class teacher, you know in the
239 line of lessons?

240 Pr4: Well, differentiation, absolutely, you know, to cater for each person.
241 We're lucky here in that we have small numbers per room and that's
242 not to say that we've no issues either but just, you know, by scanning
243 the room, you can pick out the groups, you can see whose on routine
244 and who has needs extra support and then you'd always have children
245 who need to be challenged, who need to be occupied...they have to be
246 .kept on task. They could be at the opposite end of the scale and that
247 their needs are also catered for, they are as much in need of an
248 Education Plan I feel...so they don't get bored and switch off...that
249 they are constantly challenged.

250 **Teachers focus-Group**

251 T2: I think you need to teach social skills because it is a big, big thing and
252 it is what children are lacking. From having done critical skills, I don't
253 know if it is over here but basically I qualified in Jersey. You would
254 give a group....., there is a lot of group work. It was a project, say the
255 Vikings as an example and they had to do a poster project between
256 them and every person had a role, say you were the timekeeper,
257 another the resource person, you know there was a role for everybody
258 so they had that sense of responsibility. They had to problem solve
259 together, they had to discuss, they had to listen, and you had to teach

- 260 all these skills individually beforehand, but, you know, what would
 261 make a quality project, etc, and you would have all these pinned up on
 262 the wall before you even started the project so the kids would know
 263 what we have to do, discuss it and that. You know it takes a good
 264 month to teach the skills in themselves but once they had the skills, and
 265 you put a challenge in front of them, they would be able to do the
 266 challenge. Then you would have a report at the end but they would be
 267 able to play their role. It just worked really really well.
- 268 T1: The thing that we had like that is co-operative groups, you know that
 269 girl in Galway that did the work. Everybody gets a card and each
 270 group has a role and you teach the role very consistently before they do
 271 the work. It's something like that. I think differentiated work in a
 272 class also. You know every child purposefully engaged. I think a lot
 273 of the misbehaviour comes from children who are bored. Some of the
 274 work put in front of them is either too hard or too easy and they are
 275 looking for challenge really. I think really proper differentiated work
 276 adds to.....
- 277 T4: I think with the grouping and co-operative work, it's something that
 278 has to come up through the school as well because you know at senior
 279 level, you're trying to introduce it and if they haven't been doing it
 280 before, so I think like a whole-school programme where everybody is
 281 doing the same.
- 282 T6: You'll get a particular day when you find that this child just doesn't
 283 want to do work. On that day, I think that the child has to be
 284 withdrawn and for a teacher to understand that that facility is there for
 285 them. I think that's significant as well.
- 286 T1: I think that teachers need to feel supported. I've had a junior infant
 287 child who had really extreme behaviour. I just couldn't manage her at
 288 all. She trashed all round her. She ended up having to go to a special
 289 school for behaviour difficulties. I felt vulnerable really and I'd hate if
 290 my colleagues had judged me, but I used to say 'Will you please come
 291 in and help me, this child is really frightening me' or whatever but I
 292 think the support of your colleagues, you really need to feel supported
 293 and non-judgemental of your teaching skills or of you management
 294 skills.
- 295 T4: I feel sometimes when you look for help, especially with senior
 296 teachers, it's expected that you should be able to get on with it and
 297 when you go for help sometimes, it's not fair, you do feel on your own.

Pupils Focus-Group 1

Q3 (Behaviour Support Needs of Pupils in the Classroom)

- 299 I As pupils, what do you need from the teacher and from others so that
 300 you can learn?
 301
- 302 Pupil 4: You need a quiet atmosphere, it's hard like and you need the teacher
 303 not to be interrupted, like when she is interrupted, she loses her train
 304 of thought and it can make it harder as well.
- 305 I: That's a good idea.
- 306 Pupil 5: respect from your friends and that in the class and them not to be
 307 interrupting when the teacher is trying to explain something.
- 308 I: Ok, that's good.

309 Pupil 3: Maybe if there is someone misbehaving in the class and you can't get
310 on with your work, or maybe behind the teacher's back, just tell the
311 teacher, maybe send them to the corner where they can think about
312 what they have done wrong, and come back and say sorry.

313 **I:** Like kind of time-out, you mean?

314 **Pupil 3:** Like let them think about what they have done wrong.

315 **I:** Yes, that's good.

316 **Pupil 4:** Maybe tell someone in the classroom a problem.

317 **I:** Maybe be able to talk to someone, is it?

318 **Pupil 1:** Yea, there is something like that in Secondary, yea, like a Year Head,
319 like 6th Year.

320 **Pupil 1** If someone is writing on the blackboard, and if someone comes in to
321 the class and watches the class while he is writing and someone is
322 talking, he'll get caught easy.

323 **Pupils' Focus-Group 2**

324 **Pupil 4:** More discipline so you could learn more in the classroom.

325 **I:** So he or she needs to be strict on discipline?

326 **Pupil 5:** We get away with too much in the classroom.

327 **I:** Do you? You feel that there should be stricter rules.

328 **Pupil 5** Yea, let's say we are doing a test and everyone needs to be quiet so we
329 can concentrate.....

330 **I:** Say that again

331 **Pupil 5:** Say we are doing a test and everyone needs to be quiet and they are all
332 messin and that.

333 **I:** Yes, you need quietness for a test. Anything else that you need from
334 your teacher and from others so that you can learn?

335 **Pupil 6:** If a child like keeps misbehaving, say you are doing a subject, and they
336 keep misbehaving, they should be sent to a different room if you start
337 messin or something.

338 **I:** Ok,

339 **Pupil3:** If you are in our class and you get in trouble, you get sent to a black
340 line.

341 **I:** You get sent to.....?

342 **Pupil 3:** A black line.

343 **I:** A black line on the floor?

344 **Pupil3:** Yea, which really doesn't do much to stop you.

345 **I:** Oh, right. I'm just throwing it out there that if you get sent to another
346 room, is that interfering with another class?

347 **Pupil1:** Yea, but there's no one to mess with.

348 **I:** There's no one to mess with, so you think that it's a good idea.

349 **Pupil3:** Or you could be sent to the staff-room.

350 **Pupil 2:** But you still have to do your work, you have to bring your work with
351 you.

352 **I:** But if you went to the staff-room, who is in the staff-room?

353 **Pupil 7:** There's always someone in there.

354 **Pupil 3:** Just say someone got in trouble for talking, they go back and do it
355 again as soon as the teacher turns around.

356 **I:** So are you saying that the penalties are not enough?

357 **Pupil 3:** Yea.

1 **Q4** (Behaviour Support **Needs** at **Individual** Level)

2 I: What help would support **individual** pupils with behavioural
3 difficulties in school to enable them learn?

4 **Pr1** Well, some children definitely need to be withdrawn for a chat or a bit
5 of Counselling, listening to them to know what their problems are, and
6 I think the Learning Support Teachers could work on that and the
7 Principal teacher if she or he is free, to have individual sessions with
8 children who continually misbehave.

9 I: Right, OK.

10 **Pr2** I think the individual needs support from the class teacher, from the
11 Principal, perhaps from an outside agency as well to understand what
12 they are doing and give them hope that there is a change in their
13 behaviour. About half of misbehaviours, the ordinary day-to-day
14 routine ones change immediately but the ongoing ones, the recurring
15 ones, are the ones that we need to get a hold of some kind of
16 programmes to work with.

17 I: And the individual pupil, where would they get that help. Would they
18 get it within the classroom, or would it be outside of the classroom.

19 Pr: I would prefer if they got it in a kind of holistic thing - both inside
20 classroom, outside classroom, within the school in general, with their
21 parents, with their home and that is a matter of a lot of information, we
22 are able to give the home and we are able to give our community a lot
23 of information about other school issues - the revised curriculum, about
24 sporting things, just about everything except behaviour and just
25 castigating children just because they misbehave on a continual basis,
26 and without having the full information and the knowledge about how
27 behaviour is driven. I think it is unfair both to the school and to the
28 child. So I would think an information dissemination would be very
29 very important, why behaviour show themselves the way they are.

30 **Pr3**
31 I think they would need to work with their resource teacher or learning
32 support teacher to actually first of all understand the rules and the
33 reasons for them and then if the child has difficulty around it, maybe
34 tailoring the school programme but keeping it very much as part of a
35 school programme that they wouldn't be a separate programme for
36 them but a tailored programme built around the existing programme,
37 otherwise you might be setting them apart and I think they feel
38 themselves that if they are set apart that they are different so it
39 establishes well, maybe that they don't really need to behave as well as
40 others so as far as they are capable of behaving, we have to support
41 them and demand that they do.

42 **Pr4**
43 Yes, highlighting the particular behaviour. I suppose, Kay we
44 have to go back to the root also, there could be an underlying issue that
45 may not present itself verbally from the child, why he's upset or acting
46 out - that's where the home-school link is important. In a case here,
47 where the child had a particular health complaint and as a result, it was
48 stressful on him and by talking with mum, we established what was the
49 root of it and we are aware now of this particular issue which is
50 stressful and it definitely is the root of all his anger, his aggression, his

51 defiance, we can put it all right back to this particular condition that he
52 has and by talking about it I'm sure his parents are aware of it at
53 home but in school....he can now leave the roomto use the
54 bathroom, we say 'don't worry if you have to leave the room'. He
55 has come on in leaps and bounds. We had a visitor to the school
56 recently and he personally thanked me for organising the visit and that
57 wouldn't have been the same child a few months ago. So I think....
58 am...children, I don't feel they are not born with this behaviour but
59 they don't learn this aggression, you know what I mean, I don't think
60 it's fair to say 'Oh, he's like that and there's no reason for it and we'll
61 move on and try and cope' but well do everything we can and go right
62 back to the issue and in so doing, the child has the opportunity to
63 perform and achieve on the same level as everybody else and not to be
64 a target for this negative behaviour.

65 I: Yes, and what do you put in place for that individual child with
66 behavioural difficulties?...What supports are in place for a child with
67 behaviour problems?...

68 Pr: We have a particular programme operating here...the name of the
69 programme escapes me but it's where the child fills out what he's good
70 at...

71 I: Oh, yes, strengths and needs.

72 Pr: Yes, strengths and weaknesses. This is the child's opportunity to focus
73 on his positives.

74 I: Does he go out separately with another teacher or does he do it as part
75 of his class work?

76 Pr: Am...

77 I: What steps are there for a child like that?

78 Pr: This child that I am thinking of doesn't leave the class but there are
79 other children in the school that have to leave the room, yes.

80 I: And who would they go out to?

81 Pr: Another teacher, sometimes the secretary might just speak to him.
82 Sometimes, he just needs some quiet time away from the class, he just
83 needs to be out of the classroom situation. And it's difficult because
84 you can't always provide that, and we're lucky because we have the
85 School Completion Programme here as well and we have a project
86 worker and where children have missed out, the project worker can
87 step in and take the child one-to-one, obviously with the consent for
88 the parents, and build confidence and address key learning issues that
89 he's missed in the time he's been away.

90 I: What is the School Completion Programme?

91 Pr: School Completion is a targeted approach to children who would be
92 considered at risk of not competing secondary school....

93 I: Although this is primary school.....

94 Pr: Yes, they target the primary level....

95 I: From about what age?

96 Pr: We are currently working with a boy in Junior Infants who is working
97 with the project worker, employed under School Completion. He
98 missed a significant number of days, and there were concerns over his
99 home environment as well, his confidence is very very low and he is
100 quite aggressive in himself also. With regard to School Completion,

101 then, that facilitates that child, the fact that he's out of synch in the
102 class, he's missed so much, so this is his opportunity to
103 shine....am....he's given his one-to-one, whatever the timetable
104 allows.

105 I: Is that teacher here every day?

106 Pr: She's not a teacher, she's a project worker. She's here 15 hrs. a week.

107 I: Like a carer, is it? What qualification has she?

108 Pr: She's a Special Needs Assistant, a Classroom Assistant.... is her
109 background.

110 I: Oh....yes.

111 Pr: Well, on the School Completion then and the fact that attendance is
112 monitored ...she would be monitoring attendance in a way of
113 informing who her next client/child would be. We have an after school
114 club as well and she is involved in that.

115 I: that's good, everyday is it?

116 Pr: Well, she's here Monday to Friday but no, after school club ...the girls
117 come down from the girls' school every Tuesday and there's cooking,
118 there's games, sewing, crafts, different times, different times, it
119 depends on what's available.

120 I: And is there after school club for boys as well?

121 Pr: Well, this is our school and the girls come down to us.

122 I: And the boys do it too.

123 Pr: Yes, the boys do it as well, 3rd, 4th and 5th class, and next year I'm
124 hoping that we'll have a computer club here on a Wednesday. My
125 background is IT, I'm completing a Master's in IT. So what I'm
126 hoping to do is use IT as a means of, just attracting children who might
127 not engage as well in a classroom and in my research, I've discovered
128 that IT is an outlet, a literacy that they might engage in a bit
129 more.....and to support their learning in the classroom as well. I have
130 a few ideas that I have put together,.... am....school web site,
131 uploading our pod cast or our blogs which is uploading documentation
132 that they have done per day....am....small groups,....group
133 activity,....and when I mentioned School Completion, we will be
134 targeting the children that we would like to involve, it will be open to
135 everybody but we will ensure that Johnny and Frank, that they would
136 definitely benefit from it and we would contact parents and parents
137 would be involved and they would be reminded of the benefits of it.

138 I: And is that every week?

139 Pr: My hope is that we will have the 'computer club every Wednesday and
140 it will be suitable for the boys here.

141 I: Or girls?

142 Pr: Well, I suppose my preference is that I would just have it for the boys
143 here on a Wednesday because they will have the opportunity for them
144 to mix with the girls on a Tuesday. So Wednesday will be just the
145 computer club.

146 I: And on the Tuesday, you mentioned that there's crafts and cookery, is
147 that for boys and girls?

148 Pr: Yes.

149 I: and do you find that the boys take on those topics?

150 Pr: Yes, and when I've gone down there, I have observed some of our
151 boys from 4th class and they were all given a plain pillow cushion and
152 some embroidery thread, and they decided to do maybe the first initial
153 of their name, some did flags, more did the colour of their jerseys- their
154 favourite football team etc. And I've noticed obviously the girls were
155 concentrating a bit more but the boys were trying to get the hang of it
156 as well so I sat with some of the boys and I put dots on the pillow
157 cushions - I gave them a little guide. Yea, yea, there was cookery as
158 well and the boys would engage in the cookery also.

159 **Teachers Focus-Group**

160 (Behaviour Support **Needs** at **Individual** Level)

161 I: We'll look now at behaviour support needs at Individual level:
162 What help would support **individual** pupils with behavioural
163 difficulties in school to enable them learn?

164 T1: I suppose analysis of the behaviour difficulties - an assessment of why,
165 you know, are there behaviour difficulties or.....Most behaviour
166 difficulties are driven by a need.....All behaviour I suppose is driven
167 by a need.....Well, constructive behaviours in general and then there
168 are problems, something within the child like ADHD, Asperger's or
169 that, and which need outside professional help or maybe environmental
170 issues, something gone wrong at home or something gone wrong in the
171 child's environment so I feel that it is one of the biggest needs we have
172 is an understanding of the child's behaviour and what's causing it. I
173 think that if we kind of know whether the child can't really control
174 because of maybe a brain dysfunction or a neurological difficulty like
175 ADHD. The only thing is we would deal with it differently if we have
176 the background knowledge about environmental issues, say disruption
177 in the family or a death or even, you know some sort of a dispute in the
178 home, then we are able to look at it differently. We might still follow
179 the same procedures for dealing with it but we may also be able to
180 access help from outside for dealing with it.

181 T5: You know you said about analysing their behaviour, it could be the
182 time of the day, they could be fine in the morning and then in the
183 afternoon, they just gomad. At the start, earlier, you were talking
184 about when are they going to go out for resource, when are they going
185 to go out for.....well, you need to take them out for those times, they
186 are not able to be in the classroom. If they are going to go out, I
187 suppose it is important to analyse it beforehand.

188 T6: I think there are some dysfunctions that you can't remediate at all.
189 There are children who are coming from very troubled backgrounds,
190 they're not responding to anything.

191 T2: I think you need to have a very good relationship with the parents, you
192 know as far as you can to work together on it. Children think they can
193 get away with it, in certain environments. Consistency again across the
194 different divides need to be maintained as well. Sometimes all you
195 need is a quick phone call home.

196 T6: But sometimes the parents are in open conflict and it is the staff at the
197 school that they are in open conflict with.

198 T1: I think sometimes if you have an SNA (*Special Needs Assistant*),
199 sometimes children have to be removed, children with severe

200 behaviour difficulties but to let other children in the class learn and not
201 be intimidated by them. Sometimes there has to be someone there to
202 take the child from the class, either the Principal or the SNA, or
203 somebody, you know to bring them out to the school garden and letting
204 them dig. We also have a sensory room where we take them if they
205 really need to calm down.

206 T6: We had an interesting one in our school lately. One teacher was
207 recently doing her Diploma and the Inspector requested that two
208 children be removed from the classroom because they were disruptive.
209 The inspector said that the teacher couldn't perform her duty and
210 couldn't qualify herself with the presence of the two children. Of
211 course, the children are back in the classroom today, and yesterday and
212 will be again next week. You don't always have the convenience of
213 doing that some days, we don't all have back gardens and that.

214 T2: We did have a Support person in one school that I worked in, and her
215 timetable was set up so on a specific day, and time, she would go to
216 specific classes and take a group, you know a mixture of all the classes
217 and she would do an activity with them, some type of behaviour-
218 related self-esteem kind of work, but then you know, in some ways, the
219 kids thought that that was a reward as well for misbehaviour in class,
220 you know, they were going to get their treat at the end of the day. And
221 then the other kids see them taken away and say 'that's not fair, they
222 are getting rewarded'.

223 **Pupils Focus-Group 1**

224 **Q4 (Behaviour Support Needs at Individual Level)**

225 I: And what help does a pupil who is inclined to misbehave need so that
226 they can learn?

227 Pupil 6: A counsellor.

228 Pupil 3: Maybe if don't get enough attention off the teacher, they feel that they
229 are not getting enough attention, and while we are all working, the
230 teacher could go over and have a chat with them and ask them what is
231 going on.

232 Pupil 2: Maybe if the Principal informs the parents, the parents should
233 encourage good behaviour at home.

234 I: Good idea, ah, hum.

235 Pupil 6: Pupils who misbehave, they do it for attention, they crave that. Maybe
236 they need one-to-one time so that they get their full attention. If they
237 get attention at home, they wouldn't be craving it so much in class.

238 I: Ok, so you are saying give attention to them, one-to-one.

239 Pupil 6: Yea.

240 I: And who would give them that attention, would the class teacher have
241 time or should it be someone else?

242 P3: The class teacher doesn't really have time.

243 Pupils Together: There should be someone special, someone else.

244 Pupil 5: A counsellor.

245 I: We don't really have Counsellors in Primary schools.

246 Pupil 1: Well, someone who is well experienced. Maybe someone else.

247 P5: Someone that deals with behaviour.

248 Pupil 1: Or maybe someone with a degree

249 P3: Or maybe a psychologist.

250 I: So a psychologist could help in that way?
251 Pupils Together: Yea,
252 Pupil 4: Or maybe someone coming in once or twice a week.
253 I: So somebody besides the class teacher?
254 Pupils Together: Yea.
255 I: Could it be the class teacher?
256 Pupil 3: Well, it could be but it could make things awkward, like they would be
257 giving out to them in the middle of the class.
258 I: So you are saying that pupil needs attention from someone besides the
259 class teacher.
260 P3: Yes, he or she could step out of class and the other person talks to
261 them.

262 **Pupils'Focus-Group 2**

263 Pupil 7: well, if they are really in trouble, for doing all the stuff they do, they
264 should have someone to help them calm down and all and go off on
265 their own. They should still be doing the work that they should be
266 doing. But like,..... they should be getting help for getting in trouble
267 but then, they shouldn't be getting in trouble either.
268 I: And who would give them the help?
269 Pupil7: I don't know, maybe someone like a helper or a teacher or something.
270 I: And when you say teacher, do you mean somebody like a class
271 teacher, or somebody outside of the class.
272 Pupil7: Somebody outside the class because the teacher has the rest of the class
273 to be getting on with.
274 I: Alright, and can you think of anybody who could help outside of the
275 class?
276 Pupil 5: A counsellor.
277 I: A counsellor if you had a counsellor so you would have to bring in a
278 counsellor. Anyone else?
279 Pupil 8: The Principal, the boy's Principal couldhelp the children that
280 misbehave an awful lot.
281 I: Ok, and how could they help do you think?
282 Pupil 6: Tell them like that they can't keep doing it or they'll get in serious
283 trouble when they are older.
284 I: So you mean have a chat with them.
285 Pupil 6: Yea.

1 **Q5 (What is needed most according to Principals, Teachers and Pupils**

2 **I:** Results from the questionnaires in Phase 1 showed that
3 **Principals** said what was needed most in school was
4 Consistency among teachers, and Behaviour Training for teachers.
5 **Teachers** said what was needed most in school was:
6 Consistency among teachers. However,
7 **Pupils** said the most important thing was:
8 **Respect.** What do you think of these comments and what are your
9 thoughts?

10 **Pr1:** Well, I would agree with all three. **Respect** as the pupils say is
11 important. Teachers have to respect the pupils and sometimes teachers
12 have to earn respect. They can't just control the class just because they
13 are the teacher. They earn children's respect and they earn children's
14 respect by giving the children respect. So the children are correct in
15 saying that.

16 The teachers are correct in saying **Consistency** among teachers.
17 Teachers' hate getting a class from a teacher who has been completely
18 different in their behaviour difficulties and how they treat them in their
19 classroom management difficulties. Of course, we are not all the same.
20 We are all different with our own idiosyncrasies but there has to be a
21 school consistency, among rules and such and for that to happen, the
22 Principal I suppose there has to be a bit of training for teachers. So all
23 three are correct.

24 **Pr2**

25 **Pr:** Well, I think the **behaviour training** would be higher for me. I
26 would find that we have probably a lot of consistency in that we have a
27 code of discipline and indisciplines are recorded and then as they
28 accumulate, we get a look at why, to try and find an underlying reason
29 for indiscipline. I think that behaviour training, our understanding
30 would be very important. Consistency always works of course for the
31 less significant indisciplines. Consistency would work well there but
32 what I am talking about is persistent misbehaviour and problems.

33 **I:** OK

34 **I:** Pupils said what was important to them was respect. Would you agree
35 with that?

36 **Pr:** I would, yea. It's very important that all people involved in the
37 Education system have respect, for the children themselves, for their
38 families, for their parents, and a teacher not respecting a pupil, or their
39 family would have serious consequences. Now respect goes the other
40 way as well. A family must have respect for the Educational system,
41 for the school, and the management system in the school, respect for
42 the policies of the school, first and foremost. I mean people will get
43 into difficulties but at the same time people ought to have respect for
44 the policies of the school and try and work around the issues, through
45 the policy systems.

46 **I:** Yes. You mentioned there the Code of Discipline. Would you like to
47 tell me more about that?

48 **Pr:** Well, I suppose every school will have a Code of Discipline. It's a
49 matter of laying down a set of expectations, a set of positive behaviour

50 initiatives to drive on positive behaviour. At the same time, there are
51 going to be times when there are children misbehaving , there has to be
52 some set of sanctions, some protections for maybe other people. Then
53 again, you might have more serious issues like bullying in school and a
54 school would have an anti-bullying policy, to approach complaints of
55 bullying, a recording system first of all, some way of intervening and
56 the reasons for bullying.

57 I: The Code of Discipline - would parents get it when they first come to
58 the school?

59 Pr: They would get it. It would be published. In our case, it is published
60 on the school's website. Most parents would have access to the
61 Internet.

62 **Pr3**

63 Pr: Well, my experiences would be that, yea, consistency is vital and I
64 would have noted, you know, where we have changes in staff, maybe,
65 for whatever reasons, you know, unless the system is brought to the
66 attention of the new teacher and absolutely gone through with her or
67 him, that it can go awry, and once the inconsistency....., the plan
68 becomes less and less effective and all you need is for one class not to
69 be on board, I think that it is absolutely essential that everybody is on
70 board and because they're on board and have agreed the set of rules,
71 that the rules are then kept so you have more cooperation from parents,
72 from teachers.

73 I would agree with that about the respect and I think that's the reason
74 why children need to be part of the setting up of the system. They
75 need to....you know,.....in as so far as is possible, they need to be part
76 of the agreement about what rule,rules are important in a school
77 and why we have them, you know that there are rules everywhere, you
78 know as part of a society, we have to keep a certain number of rules for
79 our safety and for that of others. I think if they're brought on board,
80 when a rule is broken, they're more inclined to cooperate with a
81 sanction that's put in place, ah....and inclined to feel pride when
82 they're rewarded because they have been part of the process and the
83 setting up.

84 I; So you're saying that they are going to buy more into it because they
85 have been part of

86 Pr: Absolutely, and I would find as well with parents,we have set up
87 a programme here and we called the parents in and talked to them
88 about it andeven though there were some teething problems
89 about people signing up to it, once people signed up to it and realised
90 well, this is what's in place, you know,I will know if my child
91 has a sanction, the reason for it, how it came about, so they tend to buy
92 into it more.

93 **Pr4**

94 Pr: Oh, I definitely agree with that, absolutely, consistency among
95 teachers. Behaviour training - I suppose that's no harm either, for
96 newly qualified teachers, that they would be given some training and
97 the implementation of a school policy, whether it would involve role
98 play or a course where they would have to physically act out the policy

99 as opposed to a policy that up on the shelf. If they were engaged in a
100 workshop that would allow them to demonstrate the effects of policy.

101 I: And do you feel that there is a need for behaviour training for teachers
102 who have been teaching for years, you know like, in-service for those
103 teachers?

104 Pr: Well, if I observe our setting here, we're a relatively young staff. Now
105 one of our teachers have 30 years' experience, teaching in an all-boys
106 school so I don't fear for him, that behaviour training would be an
107 issue and in fact, he'd be the one who would be able to give the
108 behaviour training if you get my meaning. He's just perfected the art of
109 establishing respect in his class. It's definitely a parallel, he is
110 respecting them and equally he is getting respect.

111 I: But is he getting respect because he is male?

112 Pr: I feel he is.

113 I: Gender come in to it.

114 Pr: Yes, it does.

115 I: And as you were saying, 30 years' experience as well.

116 Pr: Yes, the experience as well. Well, as principal now, I would threaten
117 if this continues, you will have to spend lunchtime in the male
118 teacher's room and there is a fear there.

119 I: It's funny that you should say that but as part of my project here, I've
120 gone to two all-male schools, all boys schools and in both cases, the
121 principal was female and there was only one male teacher in the school
122 and both said the same thing - that children are sent to the male teacher
123 in the school for their behaviour.

124 Pr: And I don't see it as a shortfall but there is just something there. I
125 remember when I was young as well, my mother used to say to myself
126 and my sisters 'well, I'll tell your father'. Well there was a fear there,
127 you know, he was the male, it's a gender thing and I don't know if we
128 should try and fight it all that much, it's just the way things are. It
129 really is.

130 I: Yes, ok

131 Pr: Sorry, on that point as well, I do feel that in a primary school, I think
132 that it is imperative, I mean it is not always the case and it can't be
133 always the case either but that children would have the experience of
134 being taught by a male and a female and its the profession does not
135 lend itself to as much males as females...

136 I: Because they are not coming in to the profession....

137 PR: No, they're not and it's unfortunate and I know that my own uncle had
138 three boys in primary school at one time and he was quite put out by
139 the fact that they would go through all their primary years with no male
140 teacher.

141 I: Why aren't the men coming in to primary education in your opinion.
142 What is stopping them?

143 Pr: I don't know and there's people that I know, who would be very very
144 well suited to it as well. Am....whether it is a misconstrued notion as
145 well that it is only for women only...

146 I: Because the pupils are younger, is it, because there are more men in
147 second level schools.

148 I: Yes, and mind you, I know people as well who teach in a primary
149 school, one male who has taken juniors all the way up to 6th
150 class....am....whether it should be part of the training or experience
151 that in training, that a teacher would be given the opportunity to just
152 select .one -the junior end or the senior end and perfect the art of
153 teaching at that end....am....it might be a feeling that they just couldn't
154 cope with maybe snotty noses or a wet pants at a particular level.

155 I: I trained in England and that's what we did. We were given the choice
156 of training for infants, primary or secondary level.

157 Pr: Yes, and I know that the male teacher in this school has senior classes
158 for the most part of his teaching career and that's just his niche.

159 I: He takes the older ones.

160 Pr: Yes. Not that it's a no go area either. I'm sure there would be
161 negotiation if somebody wished to step up as well. But in our own
162 setting, I think the boys are best served with a male for 5th and 6th class
163 before they head off.

164 I: Ok, and consistency you said was important there.

165 Pr: Absolutely.

166 I: The most important thing according to pupils was respect.

167 Pr: Yes, the fact that they wouldn't feel it. I'm thinking of my own case
168 here , as Principal or even as class teacher, that you're so busy that you
169 might not have the time, you know, you are trying to present the
170 curriculum and you are trying to meet all of the different criteria,
171 IEP's, special needs, everything, school completion, home/school,
172 NEWB, there are different things on our plate so I wonder if children
173 kind of feel 'oh, she's not listening' although I did have a little boy in
174 today with a picture of his dog and I got very excited because he had
175 talked about these dogs for the last few days and all of a sudden they
176 were there in a photograph form so I feel he got something out of that.
177 I think, as teachers, there's something that we should be aware of - the
178 background that children are coming from as well. I think there is a lot
179 of cross talking, where, somebody used the phrase recently of barking
180 at the child. One word of barking or two words 'get that', close that',
181 open this, sit down, and there's no real conversation and children do
182 like to share their stories and an opportunity should be provided for
183 them too.

184 **Teachers Focus-Group**

185 T6: I think all 3 are correct.

186 T2: I think particularly the last one, pupils said respect because it works
187 both ways, if you don't give the pupils respect, they are not going to
188 give you respect and if you are constantly picking at one pupil the
189 whole time, you're not going to win them over

190 T6: If you are consistent and fair, they will respect you.

191 T1: I think even the adults working in a school need to respect one another.
192 I think respect has to permeate the whole school system. All people
193 working in the school, from the caretaker to the Principal, there should
194 be respect shown to everyone

195 T6: Certainly reminding them that this is a civilised society, and what
196 makes it civilised and so on, because a lot of them are coming from a

197 dysfunctional, uncivilised background, that's my experience of it. I
198 think they appreciate that, the fact that it's civilised and it's ordered.

199 **Pupils' Focus-Group 1**

200 **P1:** I think respect is well needed because if you wanted
201 consistency and Behaviour....like you said.....

202 **I:** **Behaviour Training.**

203 **P1:** Behaviour Training. Now, that would be very good for the teachers
204 because not all of them know how to handle pupils that are so bold and
205 unwell mannered basically.

206 **I:** So what do they need then. What do the Principals and the teachers
207 need if they don't know how to handle pupils?

208 **P1:** They need behaviour teaching.

209 **I:** Behaviour Training?

210 **P1:** yea, Behaviour teaching, a course, from experienced people.

211 **I:** Very good.

212 **P3:** I definitely agree with the fact that it should be consistent, like all the
213 teachers having the same rules because if one teacher tells a child off
214 for doing something wrong and another teacher doesn't, the child will
215 get very confused and won't know which is right and which is wrong
216 and it start going on for a lot longer then.

217 **I:** So you are saying consistency is important.

218 **P3:** Yea.

219 **P4:** I agree with behaviour training. There should be, like a course during
220 the summer for teachers who don't know how to handle behaviour.

221 **I:** OK, that's good.

222 **P4:** I agree with the consistency but I think you need to be tougher on older
223 classes because if you're not tough and if it's an equal amount of how
224 you am... am...practice the rules, then, I think, as you get older, you
225 need to practice them a lot more than when you are in other classes.

226 **I:** OK

227 **Pupil 5:** I think, like from the time you start in Junior Infants and the school
228 opened and the school rules didn't change every year , they would be
229 consistent and you didn't have to learn them every year, it would be
230 confusing every year and changing.

231 **I:** So it's better to have consistent rules, from beginning school in Junior
232 Infants to when you leave school in 6th class.

233 **Pupil5:** Yea.

234 **I:** Now what do you think about what the pupils said, that the number 1
235 need was respect? Can we talk about that?

236 **P3:** Everyone has to have respect for everyone or the school will go totally
237 backwards because everyone will be running around screaming and if
238 you don't have respect for your classmates and especially your
239 teachers, you are not going to learn anything or get educated.

240 **I:** So respect you think is very important.

241 **P3:** Yea.

242 **I:** Anyone would like to add anything to that?

243 **P7:** I think respect is important because if a teacher likes one student better
244 than the other, the good student might do something wrong and not get
245 in trouble and the bad student might do something wrong and get
246 suspended or something.

247 I: So you think respect is about treating everyone the same. That's a
 248 good idea.

249 Pupil 4: I agree because especially if am.. if they do the exact same thing and
 250 one gets in trouble, that's completely out of order, they should both get
 251 in trouble.

252 P2: I agree as well because if one person , the teacher's favourite done
 253 something bad and got in trouble and the bad student could get in
 254 trouble and be expelled. That teacher's favourite, who got in bad
 255 trouble could actually keep on causing trouble and keep on getting
 256 away with it scot-free. They deserve punishment.

257 I: OK, and do you feel that you are respected at the moment and do you
 258 think that teachers' are respected at the moment. Tell me whether you
 259 feel respected and whether you think teachers are respected.

260 P3: I think everyone is respected but I think that people who have
 261 behaviour problems don't really respect the teacher and the pupils.

262 I: OK, anyone like to add anything to that?

263 P3: That's the one rule that all the teachers definitely enforce with all the
 264 children, to have respect and because it's consistent, it is actually
 265 working. The parents have respect for the teachers, teachers have
 266 respect for the pupils and pupils for the teachers and the school is
 267 going well because everyone is respecting each other.

268 P7: Yea, but respect is important in school. Most people have very good
 269 respect in school but when pupils go home , they don't respect anyone,
 270 it's just when they go to school sometimes.

271 I: OK.

272 P4: Respect is very important because if we are like sheep, because if one
 273 person disrespects someone behind their back, and they all follow, well
 274 that would lead them down a very bad path.

Pupils' Focus-Group 2

276 P3: The older teachers in the school are more consistent than the younger
 277 teachers. The younger teachers lets us away with nearly anything and
 278 the older ones just let their presence be known.

279 I: ok, so do you agree that all teachers should be consistent?

280 P3: Yes.

281 P1: Just say, if....our teacher does this sometimes. If we got in trouble,
 282 for throwing stuff across the classroom and another day, she throws
 283 something across the classroom, likeit should be fair.

284 I: Ok, so the first time, would they get in trouble?

285 P!: Yea, they'd probably be put over to the black line for throwing
 286 something and then, she'd probably throw something over as well, the
 287 teacher like. She might laugh if someone was being cheeky and then
 288 she might get someone in trouble for doing the same thing.

289 I: Ok, so in other words, you need consistency and it's not happening at
 290 the moment.

291 P1: Yea, need more fairness.

292 P2: Just about the last question, you should be...like, there should be
 293 someone to help you with behaviour, to go off somewhere, because
 294 some teachers, when you are like misbehaving in the classroom, they
 295 bring you outside the classroom and they start shouting at you, in the

296 hall, and that kind of disturbs the other classrooms from working and
297 kind of puts you off.

298 **Pupils in unison:** Yea, ha ha.

299 **P1:** If someone was in trouble, our teacher would bring you outside the
300 door and start roaring and shouting at you, but that does not make any
301 difference because it only disturbs the class.

302 **I:** so it doesn't help the person who has got into trouble, by getting cross
303 with them.

304 **P1:** Yea, our teacher never wants to be wrong for some reason. I
305 remember one time I heard her saying something and then when she
306 took us outside the door, she said that she said something else.

307 **I:** So your teacher doesn't want to... what did you say...wrong?

308 **P1:** Yea, she never wants to be wrong, she always wants to be right.

309 **P5:** And like _____ said, the other teachers, say like you went out to the
310 yard, the older teachers might put you in the Yard Book that we have.
311 But the younger teachers might say, oh, look, I'll put you in if you do it
312 again but if you went outside again, they still wouldn't put you in, and
313 they'd say the same thing

314 **I:** Alright.

315 **P6:** I think all the teachers should have the same method of instructions,
316 like you get in bigger trouble if you don't obey the rules.

317 **I:** So you're saying you need consistency in the school.

318 **I:** And what about the other thing that Principals said, they need
319 Behaviour training for teachers, what do you think of that?

320 **P1:** That would be a good idea because like, you have someone
321 misbehaving and disturbing the class, the teacher might not know what
322 to do to them.

323 **I:** Ok, if they got help to know how to manage.

324 **Pupils together:** Yea.

325 **P1:** Yea, if they got help instead of shouting at them at the door.....black
326 line.

327 **I:** Say that again?

328 **P1:** Putting people on the black line and shouting at them outside the door
329 doesn't make a difference.

330 **P3:** They're going to do that again.

331 **I:** It's not going to help the pupil or the class.

332 **P1:** If you put them out at PE or something ...

333 **P4:** Yea, something that they enjoy doing.

334 **I:** So you think that they should be stopped doing that, something they
335 enjoy doing?

336 **P1:** Yea.

337 **P4:** Some teachers like...am.....I forgot what I was going to say.

338 **I:** We were talking about PE, stopping pupils doing things that they like
339 to do.

340 **P4:** I forget....

341 **I:** Not to worry, it will come back to you.

342 **I:** Teachers said what was needed most in school was consistency, in
343 other word, they were agreeing with Principals. Now, pupils said what
344 was needed most in school was respect, what do you think about that?

345 P1: Yea, the teacher roars at us and we get in really big trouble if we even
346 go near to roaring at her. She roars at us from like a metre away.
347 Pupils in unison: Yea, ha, ha.
348 P 1: We can hear her clearly if she can talk normal and if we are higher than
349 our voice, she starts saying loads of stuff and sends us to the
350 Principal's office. One time she said to me and my friend we were
351 only taking the P I S S.
352 I: We are talking about respect. So are you saying then that....
353 P1: That like,.....if we are not allowed say something to her , she shouldn't
354 be allowed say stuff to us. Sometimes she gives out to us for arguing
355 with her but she argues back at us.
356 I: So you think that there should be the same rules for everybody.
357 Pupils together: Yea.
358 I: And respect, come back to respect, what are you saying about respect?
359 P1 So if we give her respect, she should give us respect.
360 I: Ok, that's fair enough.
361 P 4: I remember what I was going to say. Some teachers are good for like,
362 teaching Maths and Irish but they are not very good at teaching
363 children how to behave, so maybe they should go on a course to help
364 them.

1 **Q6** (Usefulness to a Whole-School Behaviour Support Programme)

2 I When asked if there was a need for a Whole-School Behaviour Support
3 Programme in their school (supporting management, teachers and
4 pupils on behaviour, managed by a Leadership Team in each school
5 who decide on rules, emphasis is on the positive with rewards &
6 consequences), most principals and teachers said yes. What are your
7 views on the **usefulness** of such a programme?

8 **Pr1:** Well, the latest document from the Department of Education is good
9 on that, support and behaviour policies. It is positive and the whole
10 school should discuss that, a whole-staff. Maybe there should be a
11 Leadership Team. Maybe the principal should be part of that
12 Leadership Team, or the deputy principal, maybe lead it. Every school
13 should look at behaviour policies and behaviour support.

14 I: And do you think that there should be one programme, one programme
15 that would go all the way from Infants up to 6th class.

16 **Pr1:** Yes, we would have a programme in place and it would be all the way
17 up to 6th. But of course, you don't implement some parts of it in the
18 younger classes because it mightn't be relevant but it's there in case
19 it's relevant.

20 I: Like you mean, you have rules for the whole school.

21 **Pr1:** We have rules for the whole school, the same rules, the same policy,
22 you know like a child gets sent to the principal, what happens, at what
23 stage you would involve the parents. We would have a set programme
24 in place. It wouldn't be just for senior classes, it would be for the
25 whole school. So every teacher, no matter what class they are in, what
26 class they are teaching, they know they have this support behind them,
27 if certain steps have to be taken. But of course with the younger
28 children and of course with the older children they don't have to be
29 taken but they're there in case. So in other words, for example, before
30 a parent is ever called in, there's a stage before that stage where they
31 get a letter home. Those stages are carefully followed that the letter
32 comes first, letting the parent know that we are having a problem with
33 behaviour. Then another letter goes home after that that continues,
34 saying would you come in and talk to the teacher. The next stage is
35 would you come in and talk to the principal. So there are definite
36 stages and that's for the whole school.

37 **Pr2** It would be absolutely vital, yea, a whole-school approach, you
38 mentioned already consistency but a whole-school approach to
39 behaviour would be vital that every teacher who comes across an issue
40 will deal with it similar to the other teacher, we'll say. Some would
41 just ignore it and some would get over heated about it. I mean if you
42 have a situation where some teachers are getting overheated about a
43 particular issue and others just turning a blind eye to it, that would be
44 the worst scenario. There is no chance there for the perpetrator or the
45 misbehaving child to understand what is going on because one time it
46 is interpreted as ok, another time it is interpreted as horrific so there
47 has to be a whole-school approach which is based on a consistent, on-
48 going and you know similar treatment of everybody.

49

50 **Pr3** I think it is essential to have a whole school programme and as I was
51 saying before, you know, once you have all the interested parties in the
52 school on board, you have much more chance of the programme
53 working. Am.....yes, the leadership team would be very interesting
54 and I think it's important that there would be a team there to take it on
55 board and that we'd all be there to support teachers because even if
56 they're doing it in their classroom, we have to have a team to monitor
57 it, review it and make sure that it's consistent throughout the school.
58 Now I would have taken that on board myself but I would find the
59 need there, for another person to liaise with, who might be working
60 more closely on the ground floor at times, and to monitor and
61 review,.....teachers as a group.....I think there's a need there to spend
62 more time on it and it would become part ofalmost like the
63 curriculum.....that it would become part of school life.

64 **Pr4** I definitely would find a usefulness for that. It would create awareness
65 among staff of emerging issues, unacceptable behaviour that would be
66 filtering through, that may not have been an issue the previous year.
67 Such a management support role would allow for EBD to be identified
68 and would devise a plan or even discuss how to address them. So it
69 doesn't mean that you would be working all the time and we wouldn't
70 be a case of well, we're not concerned with this anymore.
71 I suppose our numbers come into this here. We are a small school, with
72 87 on roll. Let me think of the effectiveness of such a
73 programme....Yes, even if it was a chart and the people involved
74 would update and follow through on the number for example being
75 referred to the office or put by the wall or told to stay inside for safety
76 reasons at break time - no harm in that at all. I would definitely
77 encourage parental involvement as well.

78 **Teachers' Focus-Group**

79 T4: Well, a whole-school programme would work better, it would be
80 consistent. We have nothing like this. Individual teachers are on their
81 own.

82 T2: Our school is similar. From the principal's point of view, he says we
83 don't have behaviour problems.

84 T3: From the consistency point of view, I think the leadership has to come
85 from the principal, from the top, you know.....

86 T5: I suppose if the school is larger, you have to evolve into systems
87 whereas if the school is smaller,.....

88 T4: I know but you still need something before you can evolve into
89 something.

90 T6: That's right.

91 T2: If you look at negative issues, I think there's a big need for the quality
92 side of things, you know the code of behaviour and that. You know,
93 we never have get together time, we never have whole-school
94 assemblies or consistency. You always feel that you are on your own,
95 and that's because they have no systems, you know the whole-school
96 behaviour thing.

97 T1: I think the whole-school behaviour programme is essential and I think
98 it does evolve as the school gets bigger. We don't have the physical

99 resources to bring the whole school together because we are all in
100 prefabs all over the place but what we do, we haven't set out the
101 pastoral care for next year, but what we do now is say, the person
102 responsible for 4th class once a month will bring three fourth classes
103 together. Another system we have is the teacher on yard duty, each
104 yard bag has a yard book in it so the yard book is in the bag and there
105 are 10 yard behaviours which can be entered in the yard book. Let's
106 say a child is in the toilets without permission, that is entered in the
107 yard book. Once a month, it is a teacher's responsibility to go through
108 the yard book and pick out the children that have appeared in it more
109 than 3 times. Their names are entered into a Red Book. If their names
110 are in the Red Book more than 3 times, their parents are called in for
111 their behaviour. So it's like a tracking system for behaviour because
112 the school is kind of big. The thing we notice about it is, we could
113 actually now foretell who's going to be in that next year because the
114 children that we know have behaviour difficulties, the children that
115 have difficulties following rules, because it's the same children who
116 come in again and again and again. We think that those children need
117 something extra. They need a differentiated behaviour plan and that's
118 causing a lot of difficulties among staff because you know, myself, I
119 ask are we doing them any favours for differentiating behaviours
120 because if they go out in the street, it won't be differentiated.

121 I: But I think the whole idea of a whole school plan is that it wouldn't be
122 differentiated. I think that is a disadvantage of the plan. I think that if
123 the rule is there, children will see if you are consistent with it.

124 T1: Say, you have special needs children throughout your school, say you
125 have a Down's Syndrome child with an IQ a Moderate handicap, and
126 she does something to you.....

127 T6: Well, she wouldn't actually do something to you for obvious reasons.

128 T1: Yea, but for the exact same reasons, you have a child who creates
129 mayhem at home, you know, he may not be able to behave
130 appropriately in the yard. If somebody thumped him, he'd thump them
131 back straight away or if somebody does, something, he'll thump..... I
132 think you have to make room for the special needs child.

133 T6: I suppose there's always room for discretion.

134 T1: I think you have to make room for discretion.

135 I: What happened Mary in your school when you had the whole-school
136 behaviour support plan, did you differentiate for special needs
137 children?

138 T2: I don't think we did. I think we set up the special support group and
139 they were the children, you know who were.....We had a good few
140 children who were in care and you know, one of the boys in my class,
141 he was in care and his elder brother was in care and they were wild.
142 The other brother disclosed that he was abused by his dad. I don't
143 know whether it was because of.....and when things happened, you
144 did deal with things as sensitively as you could.

145 **Pupils Focus-Group 1**

146 **Q6** (Usefulness of a School Programme on Behaviour)

147 I: Principals and teachers thought it was a good idea to have a school
148 programme on behaviour for the whole school. All classes would have

149 the same rules. Rules would be taught and practiced and pupils would
150 be rewarded for keeping the rules and penalised for breaking the rules.
151 **How** do you think this would be useful and **why** do you think it would
152 be useful?

153 **P1** It would be good because everyone would have the same rules and
154 pupils wouldn't have to learn new ones, like when they are going into
155 different classes.

156 **P3:** It would be good to have rewards and people would keep the rules
157 because they are getting rewards.

158 **P4:** It would be good to have penalties for breaking the rules because
159 everyone would know if you break the rule, you get a penalty.

160 **Pupils Focus-Group 2**

161 P2(g): I think it would be really good to have the same rules. They'd all like
162 have to keep to them and the teacher would have their way of keeping
163 their rules as well so no class would be different so everybody would
164 be the same and act the same.

165 I: Yes. So it would be a good idea.

166 P2: Yea.

167 P3: I think it would be hard if all the classes had the same rules, if 6th class
168 and Junior Infants had the same rules. Junior Infants might break them
169 and be punished, they don't know.

170 I: You think there shouldn't be the same rules for all?

171 P3: Well, Infants up to 1st class could be the same rules, then maybe 2nd
172 class to 6th class, there could be the same rules - like they have more
173 sense.

174 I: Yes, or maybe you could have less rules for infants?

175 P3: Yea.

176 P1: Say if a person is misbehaving, they could have a reward say every
177 Friday and that would probably get them into a routine.

178 I: So they would miss out the reward on a Friday if they didn't behave,
179 that might help them to behave?

180 P3: Yea.

1 **Q7** (Comments made about Behaviour Support)

2 **I:** On the topic of Behaviour Support, a Principal wrote:
3 *“In my experience, any case of serious misbehaviour was directly*
4 *related to poor parenting skills. Such a pupil places massive stress on*
5 *a school’s resources. Smaller classes and one-to-one withdrawal are*
6 *the only solutions”.*

7 What is your view on this statement?

8 **Pr1:** Well, it’s not always related to poor parenting skills. Behaviour might
9 be directly related to maybe a trauma in the family, it might be the
10 parents’ split up, it could be a child being born. There could be a
11 number of reasons why a child misbehaves so I wouldn’t say it could
12 be directly related to poor parenting skills. Sometimes, it could be
13 poor teaching skills as well.

14 **I:** Ha ha, OK

15 **Pr:** So such a pupil, ya, ya, when a child seriously misbehaves, whether it
16 is because of poor management skills in the classroom or because of
17 difficulties to the child’s experiences in his life. Of course this places
18 stress on the class and on the teacher. Even if it’s a small class, I’d
19 say it still places stress on them but the one-to-one withdrawal I
20 mentioned earlier, the Support Teacher is helpful in serious cases.

21 **Pr2** I wouldn’t agree it is poor parenting skills although it may look like
22 that initially. Am.....I would be aware that some of our major
23 misbehaviours and indisciplines in our school would come from
24 families that have fantastic parenting skills but something breaks down
25 in the system for them. Essentially the system breaks down, it can
26 occur through illness, through marriage break-ups or things like that.
27 There are always an underlying reason for what might be termed their
28 poor parenting. Just pure poor parenting skills I don’t think is an
29 excuse for , or a reason for most of them. There’s a reason for the poor
30 parenting if you want to step back again.

31 **Pr3** Yes, I think a lot of serious misbehaviour is directly related to poor
32 parenting skills and I think in our society, there is an opt out for
33 parents, out of their parenting skills. I think we do not expect enough
34 from parents, that they have brought this child into the world, they owe
35 it their full support, up to..... as far was they are capable and I think
36 there needs to be a lot more work done there between parents with
37 parents around parents who have weak parenting skills because I think
38 it does place a lot of stress on schools. You have people coming in
39 who just do not have the key components of how to be part of a group
40 of people andthey need to learn, you know.....the rules of
41 functioning within a society, am.....for the benefit of all...and for their
42 own benefit as well. I think children come to school and they just have
43 never been parented properly and for that reason, they’re lashing out at
44 everybody. I’m not sure what appropriate responses are and.....yes, I
45 do think it places huge responsibility on a school or huge stress. Yes,
46 smaller classes...definitely, absolutely and as we all know, in a class of
47 20, you could have 20 different programmes running at any one time,
48 indeed in a class of 10, and I think where you have one child who is
49 particularly in need, it’s very difficult in classes of 30 plus to
50 actually.....respond to the needs of that child.

51 **I** Mmand would you say that serious misbehaviour is always
52 directly related to poor parenting skills because I think that is what this
53 principal is saying that it's always down to parents.

54 **Pr:** Mm.....yes, I think...serious misbehaviour. Now, I'm not talking
55 about the once off thing that happens but I am talking about the sort
56 of....continuencyI would say is directly related to poor parenting
57 skills and I think a lot of the time the parents just don't have the skills
58 and the extended family is not a feature of society anymore so children
59 who might have their needs met by maybe an older member of the
60 household could....if there was a problem around parenting, that
61 support isn't there for them anymore.

62 **I:** And can the school do anything about helping those parents then?
63 **Pr:** Again, I think if there was a whole programme in place, I think going
64 hand in hand with...the delivery of the curriculum. Now, I'm not
65 saying giving equal time but I think...given an identity, this is how
66 behaviour is expected.....in the country, in the borough, in the town,
67 in the county, this is how we manage behaviour, this is....if you go to
68 school, you can expect that this will be part of your schooling
69 and.....I think it has been quite haphazard in that, you know....you
70 went to school and I suppose a lot of behaviour was controlled up till
71 now and I suppose as a society.... we were a very controlled society
72 whether through religion orpolitics or however and now we have
73 moved away from that and....but I think that something needs to be put
74 in place because it doesn't happen....you know...normally that every
75 single child is going to come in, sit down beautifully and behave
76 so.....gone are the days when you can stand at the top of the class and
77crack the whip.....so there needs to be a system in there that
78 would guide schools, guide teachers and support them in incidences
79 where there is serious misbehaviour and where it can be traced or is,
80 obviously because of poor parenting skills.

81 **Pr4** well, I suppose realistically and what I have observed here, we
82 definitely suffer the consequences of unsettled backgrounds,
83 disorganised homes etc. and in a lot of cases, parents find it difficult to
84 cope, am...so they're suffering at their end as well. There's definitely
85 truth in the statement about the massive stress placed on the school
86 resources as a result am...and quite recently we had an inspector here
87 carrying out an assessment for a teacher's diploma, and one child was
88 actually requested by the inspector to leave the room based on his EBD
89 - emotional and behaviour disorder which the inspector would not have
90 known about and it might have served her well if she had a profile of
91 the class with just a little indication of the children in the room with for
92 instance 'this is the explanation for this child's behaviour, this is the
93 explanation for that child's behaviour. I feel it would have equipped
94 her well, I mean to move him out, fair enough, I understand that the
95 inspector did want the teacher to shine, I suppose it was her day to
96 perform, and she worked extremely hard for her diploma but the reality
97 is - she can't move him out on a day that he's having a little episode.
98 Now we made arrangements and the child has a special needs assistant
99 and I happened to be on an administrative day so we could cater for
100 him but.....massive stress, it's just one of those things that you are

101 trying to cater for all the time. So definitely the influence of the home
102 background does have a negative impact on the school.

103 I Mmand the serious misbehaviour, is it always related to poor
104 parenting skills?

105 Pr: Well, there is always the chance that the child may have a disorder so
106 the parent cannot take responsibility for that so I wouldn't say always.

107 **Teachers' Focus-Group**

108 T4: I don't know whether I would agree with it – that it's all to do with
109 poor parenting skills. It's a bit extreme I think.

110 T6: Maybe inconsistency between parents could be an issue.

111 T1: Some children whose parents have wonderful parenting skills have
112 behaviour issues driven by ADHD or what's going on in the class or
113 other emotional issues.

114 T2: Some children get a lot of attention at home and come to school and
115 can't cope. Sometimes younger children get more attention at home
116 and play up but don't play up in school.

117 T6: I notice now that we are coming out of a time of plenty, children
118 benefited because they got a lot of the gadgetry and a lot of the
119 gadgetry took away from the conversation. I think that children are
120 reflecting now a lesser quality of parenting. I find that 6th class, they
121 have quietened down and it's infants that you dread to meet in the
122 yard.

123 T1: I have noticed that, I have noticed a huge change, I suppose the way
124 parents put their children's wishes central to everything, you know
125 children's rights, parents think that everyone should be looking at these
126 wonderful children, aren't they fantastic. We're meeting our junior
127 infant parents today and one of the things that I will be saying to them,
128 you know there are times that they will just have to do what they are
129 told without any questions, get them used to that at home because that
130 is what will happen here. Other things like, parents find it very hard to
131 accept that their child isn't the top of the class. It just goes across all
132 sorts of boundaries, you know, even people who are professionals
133 themselves say 'how come he didn't get first and they are blaming the
134 teacher and they're blaming somebody else.

135 T2: Yea, I'm coming from a time when you wouldn't say boo to a teacher
136 and now it's a case of the parents saying 'the teacher is wrong, and not
137 the parents are wrong.

138 T5: That's a big thing, you give out to a child now and you kind of think,
139 what's her parent going to say, am I going to have her tomorrow
140 morning?

141 T4; Yea, sure.

142 T2: Yea, in my time, if I went home to my parents and said the teacher
143 gave out to me, they would say 'well, you must have deserved it'.

144 T4: You get a sense from senior pupils, they go home and say what has
145 gone on in school and parents say 'oh, don't mind her'.

146 Teachers together: Yea.

147 T1: I think that it's imperative that we keep parents informed of the
148 discipline practices in the school. They seem to accept that they have
149 to obey the rules in secondary schools but in primary schools, they are
150 more protected by the parents.

151 Teachers together: yea.

152 **Pupils' Focus-Group 1**

153 **Q7** (Comments made about Behaviour Support)

154 **I:** A **Principal** in another school thought that when pupils misbehave, it
155 is because their parents did not teach them how to behave well. **Why**
156 do you think pupils misbehave sometimes and **what** is the best way
157 they can be helped? So **why** do you think they misbehave?

158 Pupil 1: From a young age maybe, behaviour not being corrected at home
159 and it just leads on to school and it just gets worse and worse as they
160 go on.

161 P3: Maybe the child is not getting enough attention and because he is not
162 getting attention, he's looking for it and when he doesn't get attention,
163 he's starting to get bad mannered and no respect for anybody, because
164 he's not getting attention from anyone.

165 P2: If a child misbehaves and he kind of does something really bad, he or
166 she does something really bad, it's probably fun to be talked about at a
167 break and he might think it's cool and she might think it's cool and
168 might go and do it again so that's probably why they are misbehaving
169 because they think it's cool.

170 **I:** OK

171 P5: Maybe at home, he gets a certain amount of attention and when he
172 doesn't get it in school, he acts out to try and achieve it.

173 **I:** So what is the best way they can be helped then, a pupil who
174 misbehaves?

175 *Silence*

176 **I:** The Principal thinks that it is because of their parents are not teaching
177 them how to behave so what is the best way to help them?

178 P5: Maybe if their parents encourage it more at home and the Principal get
179 somebody in to talk to them , to understand them.

180 P1: Maybe if the Principal lets the parents of that child know, bring them
181 into school and let them see how they are acting in school and the
182 parent could say that he's actually not getting this from home, he must
183 be getting it from some pupil here and that's probably the reason and
184 the Principal couldn't be blaming the home and have to say sorry to the
185 father or the mother.

186 P4: I think the Principal should do like a survey, put a camera in and if that
187 child consistently misbehaves, show it to the parents and ask them
188 where is he getting this, is he getting it at home or is he picking it up
189 from school.

190 **Pupils' Focus-Group 2**

191 Pupil 4: I think maybe if they rang their parents and told them they were
192 misbehaving, and got their parent to punish them, then I think they
193 wouldn't misbehave that often.

194 **I:** Ok, so help from the parents.

195 P5: If it was the parents that left them get away with it, they should fix it
196 and then send them back to school.

197 I: Alright.
198 P2: I think they should tell the parents as well because the parents probably
199 have more control over them and they might be like...much stricter
200 and they'd know what to say to them whereas the teachers don't know
201 them that well and don't really know what they're like, so I think tell
202 the parents.
203 I: So parents are Number 1.
204 P1: Like if you shout at one child, they might get upset whereas the parents
205 won't shout at them, they'll just talk to them and they'll know how
206 they are going to react to it.

1 **Q8**

2 I: And a teacher made the following comment on Behaviour Support:
3 *“There is a need for whole-school behaviour support as the only*
4 *support now is for juniors, and senior pupils who go to learning*
5 *support. This leaves senior teachers isolated, stressed/overwhelmed”.*
6 Can you comment?

7 **Pr1:** I don't really understand that comment. In our school, I think there
8 would be support for Junior classes, Middle classes and Senior classes.

9 I: On behaviour?

10 Pr: Yea.

11 I: So in your school, senior teachers shouldn't feel stressed.

12 Pr: No, sometimes because the child is older and maybe less easy to bully
13 by the teacher and they are now becoming young adolescents earlier,
14 teachers in Senior classes sometimes find behaviour difficult but it's
15 just because a child is growing into a young adult, not because there is
16 not support there, so you have to be more skilled in dealing with them.

17 I: Ha, ha, so it's back to the teacher.

18 Pr: Yea, yea and the teacher getting support from the whole school.

19 **Pr2** I don't fully understand how they mean for Junior school. I would
20 have thought that Codes of Discipline are structured more to deal with
21 children in the middle school and Senior School than in Junior school
22 because we don't apply our codes of discipline really to Infant classes
23 first day because the children wouldn't have ability to understand their
24 behaviour or to deal with it themselves. So discipline is through the
25 parents in all cases whereas in middle classes and senior classes, it is
26 through the child, individually and sometimes in groups but no, I
27 wouldn't agree. I find that the focus, the main focus is around 3rd or 4th
28 class. It used to be 5th and 6th class years ago but most of the problems
29 seem to arise around 3rd, 4th classes and by the time they have got into
30 5th class, they have settled down and they seem to have matured and
31 they seem to just fit into a system, learning to deal with the calls of
32 daily life, becoming acclimatised to school. I mean senior classes are
33 not too difficult anymore as regards discipline whereas 3rd, 4th classes
34 are....

35 **Pr3** Yes, I would have looked at a lot of whole-school behaviour
36 programmes and what I find is that there are some fabulous ideas for
37 junior pupils but they are never the areas where there's a problem. I
38 find generally it's easy enough to manage or set up a programme.
39 where the greatest need I think is at senior level and there isn't enough
40 support there for teachers and even where you do put a programme in
41 place , like the programme that we've put in place at the moment,
42 there are still a lot of areas where it doesn't actually address the age of
43 the pupil. Now, it works beautifully at the junior level, no problem
44 whatever, senior level would be much more difficult. What I have
45 noticed is where we have started from the very beginning with the
46 programme, in the infant classes, those children are currently in 2nd
47 class, and they actually....now I would need to review it by the time
48 they reach the senior level, but there has actually.....been a positive
49 effect of the programme but I'd still be very interested to see...you
50 know, by the time they reach....

51 I; ...yea, how it pans out (laugh)

52 Pr: Yea (laugh)...that will be the proof of the pudding.....

53 **Pr4** Yes, I can understand that, I suppose there is a focus on children who

54 need support for learning but the ones who are in need of additional

55 support for behaviour don't get the attention, so there is a shortfall fall

56 there, so you can see that it is a serious issue, yea, because it leaves

57 those children unsupported. If there was a Whole-School programme

58 in the school, she would feel supported.

59 **Teachers' Focus-Group**

60 T1: Throughout our whole school, we would have a social group, or

61 children with diagnosed special needs and we would have what you

62 would call a social group where they go and play games on social skills

63 and sometimes we would put who have diagnosed behaviour problems

64 but not special needs in with them, once or twice a week and it is a nice

65 thing. It could be gardening.....

66 T5: Is that all classes?

67 T1: Well, it would be 4-6 children together depending on each year. We

68 use that programme 'Talk About' programme which teachers social

69 skills and find it absolutely excellent. It's a social skills education

70 package for developing self-esteem. We teach that in that group and

71 we find that it has really really paid off, it teaches them social skills.

72 Another one is the SALT programme.

73 T5: Oh yea. We've just bought that. I tried it out the other day. It gives a

74 scenario. The situation blows up. Then you get the added SALT

75 which is stop, ask, listen and talk. And then you tell the story again and

76 they can see the different. It's really good. I liked it.

77 T6: It's to resolve conflict.

78 T1: We use Circle Time throughout the school too.

79 T4: Again Circle Time, doesn't it have to work its way up?

80 T1: Yea.

81 T4: I find in 6th class, to start, it is very difficult.

82 T1: It's difficult, yea, but it does work, and I think we used it,

83 exceptionally well with 4th class girls, we had a problem with 4th class

84 girls, you know, the bitchiness of 4th class girls, people being bullied

85 by people being left out, and by their appearance and their clothes and

86 their hair. We did it, I'm not saying we sorted it all out but it certainly

87 brought it into the open where it was you know.....

88 T4: Yea, I used it in the younger classes but.....

89 T1: Yea, it does need to be developed, yea.

90 T4: I find they can't even listen to each other and they can't respect

91 someone else's opinion. But I have to agree with what the teacher said

92 in this statement. I myself feel overwhelmed sometimes being in the

93 senior end of the school and having no support. The problem in our

94 school is that nobody wants to come in to 6th class. I know you are

95 saying a lot of the behaviour is at the junior end of the school.

96 Everybody in our school dreads the senior end..... 6th class because

97 of the behaviours and younger teachers don't want to go in there.

98 Every year for the last 5 years we had a different person going in.

99 T1: In ours, it's totally different.

100 T4: Really?

- 101 T1: Yea, with 6th class.
- 102 T6: Well, in a neighbouring school to me now, where the parents are in the
103 majority middle-class well-to-do parents and it was very difficult to get
104 anybody to take on 6th class.
- 105 T4: And a lot of the time those parents cause problems.
- 106 T1: Anyone who takes 6th class, they have great respect. I think, once you
107 hit 6th class, you have huge responsibility. You help.... kind of run the
108 school. You do the bell in the morning, 6th class helps run the school.
109 They help out in the junior yard. They're given huge responsibility
110 and at the end of it We have just come back from a trip from
111 Holland. We just took 63 children to Holland two weeks ago and we
112 didn't have one issue of behaviour the whole time. Included in that
113 were some with fierce behaviour....one girl had fierce behaviour
114 problems.....that trip is going on for the last 15 years, they know that
115 that's their reward if they behave maturely and responsibly you know.
116 But it takes a huge amount of responsibility but the Principal takes that
117 on as his responsibility.
- 118 T4: We go to the Burren for our three days and like that, it's the carrot but
119 we did leave 3 people behind this because of serious behaviour and a
120 member of staff did get hurt in the incident but it was a battle with the
121 Principal to leave these children behind and a lot of the response is
122 'Are you really going to get anywhere with them, why are you wasting
123 all your energy. You know, I find all of that frustrating.
- 124 T1: I would too, yea.
- 125 T4: And then, the younger teacher that might be next door is getting no
126 support and you go and say 'now look, now is the time we need
127 support up here, you know, it's critical at this moment in time, it's
128 just.....not addressed.
- 129 T1: Yea.

130 **Pupils' Focus -Group 1**

- 131 **Q8** A teacher wrote about the need for a school programme on behaviour
132 because she says that *right now, help on behaviour is only given by the*
133 *learning support teacher to infants and to those who already go to*
134 *learning support for English/Maths. No help is given to older pupils*
135 *who have problems with behaviour. The teacher feels that a school*
136 *programme on behaviour would help her. What do you think?*
- 137 Pu3: I agree with the teacher. Maybe the child... the teacher is not giving
138 him much attention and like, the Learning Support teacher won't take
139 him. I think they should get help or have a programme.
- 140 I: So you think a programme would be helpful.
- 141 P3: Yea, as they said there, it's only the Learning Support teachers are
142 trying to deal with behaviour but it's not really their job. Like if you
143 are there as well trying to teach children who are falling behind. They
144 are still trying to teach children so they should have one specific
145 person in to deal with behaviour alone and not Maths and English and
146 the whole lot.

147 P2: I think they should get in a special person and ask them what is going
148 on at home, in case they are being abused and in school in case they
149 are being bullied.

150 I: OK

151 P4: I think some teachers have like, a favourite. But if the person that is
152 misbehaving is not the favourite and he or she is not getting attention
153 and the favourite is. So that would make the behaviour worse and
154 worse.

155 **Pupils' Focus-Group 2**

156 P1: I think it would be a good idea, because if someone was misbehaving,
157 the teacher would know what to do with them.

158 I: If there was a proper programme in school?

159 P1: Yea.

160 P1: Well, this wasn't really a programme but we used to have like a tree, a
161 tree in our class, and like if you did something good, you got a golden
162 leaf and you could put the leaf on the tree and everybody used to be
163 really happy, like when we were in Junior and like senior infants,
164 when they got a gold leaf, they were really happy.

165 I: ah, isn't that nice.

166 P3: Like a reward for doing something good and if you behaved properly,
167 you used to get a reward and they should still do that, if not a golden
168 leaf.

169 I: So you used to get that in the Infant classes, is it?

170 Pupils together: Yea.

171 I: But it stopped when?

172 P3: I think a couple of years ago. I don't know.....

173 I: Maybe it stops after a certain class.

174 Pupils together: No, all classes.

175 P1: No, it just stopped completely.

176 Pupils together: Yea.

177 I: Because it's the class teacher stopped it, is it?

178 Pupils together: Yea.

179 I: Maybe different classes still have it?

180 Pupils together: No,

181 P3: No, I don't think so.

182 I: You don't think anyone has it.

183 P1:

184 I: So you are saying people behave better when you are rewarded.

185 Pupils: Yea.

186 P1: Behaviour training for the older classes because 1st class might talk out
187 of turn and sixth class might do something serious like fight or start
188 cursing, different stuff, and 1st class, like they don't know what they
189 are doing whereas 6th class do.

190 I: So say that in another way, just to make sure I understand you.

191 P1: Behaviour support for older classes because they do more serious stuff
192 and maybe if they got behaviour support, they wouldn't do more
193 serious stuff. 1st class, they don't really need it that much.

194 I: So you feel that support is more needed for the older children than for
195 the younger children.

196 P1: Yes.

197 P6: I think that every week or every two weeks, if a teacher comes in and
198 tells them about behaviour, support and that, what could happen if they
199 carried on like this, where it would end up.

200 I: Like a formal talk on behaviour, from, is it the Principal or the teacher?

201 P6: Well, if they got someone proper in school who knew about behaviour,
202 someone experienced.

203 I: Someone who knew about behaviour, someone to come in and give a
204 talk every so often.

205 P6: Yea.

206 P1: Something more serious than the Red Book. That's just a book that
207 they write your name in.

208 I: Who uses the Red Book?

209 Pupils together:the Principal.

210 P1: If you get in trouble, you get in the Red Book, if you did something
211 serious. They put your name in it.

212 P2: It's supposed to be really bad if you get your name written in three
213 times.

214 I: OK

215 P4: I think some teachers have like, a favourite. But if the person that is
216 misbehaving is not the favourite and he or she is not getting attention
217 and the favourite is. So that would make the behaviour worse and
218 worse.

1 Q9

A pupil made the following comment on Behaviour Support:

2 "Our school should have a special teacher on behaviour".

3 Can you comment on that?

4 Pr1:

Well, certainly, the resources wouldn't be there for that nowadays. As I said there are special teachers in some schools, in _____, I know there are two support teachers on behaviour in that particular school. If we were offered a teacher, a special teacher on behaviour, we would use it elsewhere because the teacher would be idle most of the day. (laugh), I would think. I know years ago, they used to have special teachers for travellers and then they withdrew that. And they are now withdrawing some special teachers and I would say in our school there is no need for them but I would say in certain schools there would be need for them. In most schools, there isn't need for special teachers on behaviour.

15 I;

I suppose this begs the question then, should Behaviour Support be part of the Brief of Learning Support/Resource teachers and if so, how would you prioritise between pupils who need academic support and pupils who need behaviour support? Alternatively, should there be a separate post?

20 Pr:

No, I wouldn't say it should be the job of the Learning support teacher or Resource Teacher to deal with misbehaviour because they're there to...., they could be seen then as a teacher, as a person who children who misbehaves get sent to. It's usually children to need academic support in literacy or numeracy or language is getting support and they shouldn't be seen in a negative way that are sent to, for behaviour problems. They would also need training if they were used, that special training, because they are not trained to do that. So I would say at the moment, the way to do it, if you had serious difficulty, yes, have a special support teacher if the State can afford it. If you haven't that, that the Principal and support staff as a team should help the classroom teacher to deal with behaviour and the parents, involving the parents, not having another layer, another teacher to do that.

33 I:

OK, so you can't see the point of the child going out to the Learning Support/Resource teacher for behaviour?

35 Pr:

I can if it's for listening, because to listen, because you know in a classroom, if it's delicate or if it's taking up too much time, that for some reason the child isn't forthcoming and we know that there is a problem and we can't get to the bottom of it and you don't want the whole class to hear about it, or else the child won't say it in front of the class. And if there is another member of staff, whether it is the Resource teacher, or the Principal or someone else that they trust and that they'll talk to and we find out how we can help that child. We might send the child for Counselling because we are not really trained to do it. Yes, there is a need for a child to get support that way but I wouldn't have a post designed for that. It would depend on the school.

46 Pr2

I think it is a fantastic idea if there is somebody highly skilled in issues around backgrounds to misbehaviours and indisciplines to guide both the pupils and the staff and support them because there are times when, if you were to work on behaviour modification plans, it does take some time to set them up, making sure that they are checked as you go along

50

51 and interpreting what has happened. So if there was somebody skilled
52 and trained in that, a feature of school life, it would be very important,
53 some of the help that goes into special education. It would be a
54 fantastic idea. It would be a new resource required in a school and
55 would also require quite a bit of training not given to people at any
56 level inside the school . Boards of management don't get that training,
57 Principals don't and classroom teachers don't. Special Ed. teachers
58 may get a bit of it in certain circumstances but not enough.

59 Pr3 I think there should be a separate post or certainly a post of
60 responsibility there where people have time and funds to manage a
61 behaviour support programme and I think it needs to be much more
62 formal and again, much more maybe national, or maybe at more local
63 level, that an agreed.....but actually I think at National level, we need
64 to look at behaviour and I think we need to start with children and I do
65 think that it would be money well spent to have a post in a school
66 where behaviour is managed through that post because what happens I
67 think through the learning support and special needs teachers, I mean
68 they have all the academic, that is a huge job, they also tailor the
69 existing programme within the school as far as behaviour is concerned
70 so I'm not sure that there is space there to give them an extra post but I
71 do think there should be a post, now whether it would be shared within
72 maybe a group of schools or whatever, but I do think, absolutely there
73 needs to be a post there.

74 I: Mm...and do you think that behaviour teacher.....him or her, do you
75 think they should go for training for that or it is something that, like,
76 they were Learning Support and that they just take on a new mantle?

77 Pr: No, I think there is a huge need within the country to look at types of
78 behaviour programmes.....ah....that have worked maybe, in other
79 countries..... or....and I am not saying that we are not perfectly
80 capable of coming up with our ownresearch..... and the types of
81 programmes that have been used in other countries and maybe tailor a
82 programme for our own country because I do think, especially at the
83 moment because I think the country is in transition and we've gone
84 from that huge control to now.....much less control and people are left
85 in a vacuum and I think you know, people need guidelines, as you
86 know...this is what's expected, this is how you behave if you're on the
87 street at 12 o'clock at night, this is how you behave when you go to
88 school and you are in a group where people are learning so I see a huge
89 need there and I would say training would be essential, research is
90 essential...ah....to look at how these programmes have worked or
91 what part or what components of these programmes have worked.

92 Pr4 Yes, in some instances, I can see that that definitely would be of
93 benefit to the children. 'Right, this is the person that I have to talk to
94 with regard to my behaviour'. But you would hope that it would not
95 always be in a negative way either. You would hope that it would be
96 counteracted in as much in a positive way, for example, 'You know, I
97 want you to talk to Mr. McGrath, I've been telling you about your
98 good work, I'm the class teacher so off you go now, go to Mr.
99 McGrath and talk to him'. I don't know about Learning Support or
100 Resource but I know from my experience here, I would not put that

101 extra responsibility on a stressed resource person. Well, that's here. In
102 a bigger school it could be a different case. I feel that Learning
103 Support and Resource have a place to play but it shouldn't be their
104 total responsibility. So I suppose that I am heading down the line of
105 saying that it should be a separate post. The behaviour, a child's
106 behaviour, I feel that teacher's would need training, they would benefit
107 from that. I mean there's your continuity again, I suppose if it's a
108 recognised post, there's a particular role, it's a particular job
109 description and I suppose for the whole school to know what this
110 person is about, it definitely would require training.

Teachers' Focus-Group

112 T5: I think a lot of children who go to Resource have a good relationship
113 with that teacher because they go in small groups. If something
114 happened then in my class, I might say to the /Resource teacher, listen,
115 would you ever come down and have a word because ...it's another
116 person talking to them.

117 T1: I think the academic end and behaviour go together.

118 Teachers together: Yea.

119 T6: I would rather they accepted that everybody is responsible for
120 behaviour management. (Teacher 6 addressed teacher 1): What you
121 said about collating all those entries into a book..

122 T1: That's a post of responsibility. But that person doesn't have to deal
123 with the issues, just collate....The other thing I think about where
124 learning support/resource....you know where a child with behaviour
125 problems..... you always have an antecedent....you kind of know the
126 things that trigger it and if you see it beginning.....we did that crisis
127 management for a particular traveller child we had. The Board of
128 Management paid for 3 teachers to train in it and it was where you
129 watch out for the triggers and if you see him beginning toand it
130 might mean that you have to differentiate behaviours so for instance if
131 you were in the yard and he had a bags of crisps and he wasn't
132 allowed, the teacher walked up and said 'you know Paddy, you are not
133 allowed those' and he said 'so what, and what are you going to do
134 about it, he'd say like that so that triggers, if you kept going with him,
135 he would lash out. So all the teachers were instructed then that when
136 he did that, you just had to turn around and say 'would you go and get
137 Mrs. Dunne in the staff-room and then our role was to go out and say
138 'Paddy, I need you to come with me, I want you to do something' and
139 then you removed him from the playground until he calmed down and
140 then you dealt with the behaviour issue so that you didn't allow it
141 because it had turned in once or twice into a situation where he threw
142 chairs and hit somebody and hurt somebody. That was what that
143 Therapeutic Crisis was called. Now the first phase of that was: talking
144 the children down. Now the next bit was manual handling, which is
145 used in centres and places like that. We didn't do that part of it but it
146 was really really good training. It was very expensive but the Board of
147 Management paid for it. We did it at a summer course one year.

148 T6: Manual Handling – are you talking about physical restraint?

149 T1: Physical restraint, manual handling the next bit was. At the minute, we
150 have a little boy in junior infants, and when he flips like that, we

151 physically have to pick him up because he picks up all the lunchboxes
152 and throws them. And it's how to do that safely without injuring
153 yourself or others. And also we have asked the parents to sign that
154 when he behaves like that, that they are ok with us lifting him or
155 removing him from the room or when he starts trying to run home that
156 we physically try and take him away from the door. That was our
157 Board of Management advice, that people would train in this, the same
158 as first aid and that the parents sign up to you doing it.

159 T2: I had a similar situation with the boy I was talking about before, the
160 one in care, and we were told if he start, if the trigger starts to bubble,
161 then you either try and you know, calm him down before you deal with
162 the problem and sometimes it might end with him saying 'F--- off you
163 bitch' and you say 'right kids, up, we're going' and you leave the room
164 and make somebody aware that you left him there.....you wouldn't go
165 too far but you would make sure that the children weren't exposed to
166 him going.....absolutely ballistic. So you would leave him there to
167 cool down and then somebody would come and collect him and then
168 we could go back to the class.

169 T1: You see all of that means that there has to be a kind of organised
170 support and that's what we miss in Irish schools in that there is nobody
171 free to lead that support. Now, I'm a resource teacher and I try and
172 leave myself free, as well as the Principal, with a little time for that sort
173 of thing, and if someone..... a teacher, sends up a child saying, the
174 teacher really needs you', I know that I have to go straight away
175 because that child is kicking off, and before he has a chance to impact
176 on other children. I think that is what we really need, is that somebody
177 with that little bit of free time and I think that's where resource or
178 support teachers are needed. You just have to get somebody in and
179 just.....remove the other children. We had a child who had to go to a
180 special school. She had, on the day that the school psychologist,
181 no....the psychiatrist came to do the school visit on her, she was sitting
182 at the table and she obviously realised, she pushed the table so hard
183 that she knocked three children back, I jumped up to catch children
184 falling and I caught my toe in the flip chart holder and knocked it down
185 on top of the psychiatrist.

186 Laughter

187 T1: The child jumped up on the window sill and got out the window.
188 So....her behaviour was so extreme, the children who were with her
189 are now going into 6th class and they still talk about her, and the
190 parents would say that if they meet her in the street that they are still
191 traumatised by her.

192 T6: That's what is coming in now, children with very extreme behaviour.

193 T1: Yea, very extreme behaviour.

194 T6: I'm not exactly sure but I suppose it's a collapse in society.

195 T1: The other thing that we have come across, only recently and again it is
196 in a very mixed community is: 6th class children who would be using
197 substances. I had that when I taught in Coolock. It was the start of the
198 drugs thing and 6th class children had alcohol or glue and I notice that
199 again happening.

200 I: How do they stand out in the class? How do you know?

201 T1: Well, they would be very very tired, very very edgy, you
202 know.....and they also get a sore mouth from doing the glue, they get
203 scabs around their mouth.

204 **Pupils' Focus-Group 1**

205 P3: I think there should be a special behaviour teacher because a Learning
206 Support teacher only teaches English or Maths and all the stuff that
207 children are stuck on and a proper teacher just teaches. They should
208 have a person who comes in and talks to them and helps them.

209 I: On behaviour?

210 P3: Yea.

211 P1: I think we need a different person to come in and help with behaviour
212 because Learning Support teachers only help them on Maths and
213 English when they are falling behind and they're not qualified to help
214 them with their behaviour or if they're angry or something.

215 I: Right. So you think it's about qualifications, it would be better if they
216 were qualified on behaviour?

217 P1: Yea.

218 **Pupils' Focus-Group 2**

219 P3: Yea, a special teacher on behaviour because there could be an
220 improvement over a couple of weeks on their behaviour in school.

221 I: You think if they were supported, they would be better behaved?

222 Pu3 Yea, they might have a special little room and the teacher would send
223 him up.

224 P1: It only takes one teacher to go on a behaviour course and they know
225 about behaviour. Like if you did do something wrong and you were
226 misbehaving, the teacher could go to the other teacher and say 'What
227 do I do?' and they should get advice from that teacher.

Q10 (Gender)

I: Research tells us that boys tend to cause more behaviour problems than girls, and town schools tend to have more behaviour problems than country schools.

What do you think or what are your experiences?

Pr1: Well, it is a generalisation but there's some truth in it. But I think boys and girls shouldn't be in separate schools. For a start, I think they should be together. I think when boys are on their own in a school, an all-boys school, the behaviour is worse than an all-girls school.

I: what about mixed?

Pr: In mixed schools, I think the boys behave just as good as the girls. Maybe in a different way, they misbehave than the girls misbehave, but both can misbehave.

I: and do you think that boys are helped by the girls?

Pr: And girls by the boys. But yes, why do the boys misbehave? They tend to ...the more physical element comes out when they are herded into a school, (*laugh*) a single sex school. And I think it's unnatural. It's unnatural for the girls as well but maybe they misbehave in a quieter way. But certainly, the boys, it's more obvious, when they're herded together in single sex schools.

I: And town schools then have more behaviour schools than country schools? Would you have found that in your time?

Pr: I would have found that, yea, but again, you can get problems everywhere but maybe they're more dense in a town school. Yea, often in a town school, they might come from a particular estate that has social problems or anti-social behaviour in a particular estate or something like that whereas in the countryside, very often there aren't those estates and you don't get this mass anti-social behaviour. that you get in towns.

Pr2 Well, We are a mixed school and we call ourselves rural but we are half rural and half urban at this stage. Am...Boys cause one kind of, a set of problems that are very open and very easy to spot whereas girls cause another range of problems that are a lot more hidden and a lot more discreet. We are very aware of problems that go on in 3rd and 4th class around girls, like leaving each other out and would cause as much problems as the issues around boys behaviour. Even if you were to itemise a list, there would be more boys involved in misbehaviours but very often they're misbehaviours that are quite correctible and rather straight forward. We find that the girls issues, they can be very deep seated and take quite a bit of work and a bit of understanding and very hard to unroot and very difficult on parents as well, the girls issues, because this thing of people being left out and people being isolated and people being blamed for certain things. You get some very very deep rooted issues and very very upsetting for parents. So I'm sure that research shows that boys have more indiscipline problems than girls. I would think that from where we stand, that the girls problems take us quite more time to sort out and often take up to 18 months to sort out rather than some of the boys issues, they can be sorted out in a shorter period, maybe 2 or 3 weeks.

The second part of the question.....

I: The town schools and country schools.....

51 Pr: I think that perception is there but I would have thought that rural
52 schools in the past were smaller and there would be other factors
53 besides, just, I would say on a percentage basis that behaviour is the
54 same across the urban/rural divide .

55 I: Yes,

56 Pr: I don't have any problem with it anyway. But around the gender issue,
57 I think a lot of the research previously was too straight forward.
58 People ticked off boxes about...somebody hit somebody and what girls
59 and boys did, whereas more modern research, they get a background to
60 some of the things and very often, girls would go quiet and the issues
61 won't manifest and it doesn't come to the eye of the teachers so it
62 doesn't seem like a problem when in actual fact it is a huge problem to
63 a particular family and to a particular child I think.

64 I: So you think that boys misbehaviour is more open.

65 Pr: It's more open and more manifest and in your face whereas the girls
66 thing, you have to be watching out for the girls misbehaviour. They're
67 inclined not to tell because quite a lot of it comes from people that
68 would be perceived as their friends or their in-group, whereas a lot of
69 the boys things are from out-groups and it is a lot easier for staff and
70 that to see.

71 I: It's more visual.

72 Pr: It's very much a visual straight up frontal thing.

73 Pr3 I agree (laugh)...for the reason that I think that we are looking at two
74 different types of people as in every classroom, you haveyou
75 know..... girls do tend to be that bit more nurturing, do tend to have
76 the sort of components you know, associated with girls. Boys tend to
77 chance their arm a bit more and I know that is not a good way about
78 saying it but they do tend to push the boundaries a bit more. Now girls
79 I know misbehave as well but it's sort of more controlled, it might be
80 equally hurtful- boys doam...tend to lash out but I do think that
81 some of the more serious problems generally happen among the boys
82 and I would find that within the school.

83 Am.....The town schools, yes, I do think that there is something there
84 and I think mainly becauseagain, the loss of the extended
85 family.....more where people have moved into a locality because of
86 work, it tends to be the parents and the children together. Maybe in the
87 country, people tend to maybe build houses close to grandparents and
88 then you do get that extended family support. But also I think the
89 children in the country have more free time or sorry, more space, they
90 tend to be more active soI would always find the busier children
91 are, the less behaviour problems there are so around that, I would say,
92 yes, that is a feature and I would say, during my teaching career,
93 definitely there is more of a challenge around behaviour that are totally
94 male, that have males up to 6th class. I do think there might be more of
95 a challenge for those schools.

96 I: Mm..... and here, you have a mixed school here, haven't you?

97 Pr: I have a mixed school.

98 I: And about the boys behaviour, do you mean that it is more visual,
99 more open than girls misbehaviour?

100 Pr: Yes, it can be more destructive I suppose.....for whatever reason.....
101 but then I would also say, hand on heart that girls can get involved in
102 more verbal misbehaviour, with boys, it's more physical

103 I: But something that struck me that I hadn't intended asking, is do you
104 think that the gender of the teacher makes a difference. It's just that in
105 my past teaching career, in one school we used to have boys and girls
106 in the infant school and then the boys left to go to a boys school after 3
107 years. Gradually we lost all the boys and one parent remarked that we
108 weren't 'boy friendly'. I wondered was it because we were all female
109 teachers. What do you think of that?

110 Pr: Yes, I do think there is something in that but I do think it's about the
111 quality of the teaching as well and the training of the teachers which is
112 another area, that needs to be looked at around behaviour because it is
113 a challenge that will come up for teachers. They tend to come out
114 academically trained beautifully, but around behaviour management, I
115 would find that there is a need there, especially younger teachers, I
116 think, there is a lot of learning.....a huge learning curve there around
117 behaviour management and I do think there is a gender issue in that I
118 suppose male....you know, they do need.....there is something they
119 get from males that we females don't provide and vice versa. And I
120 think where you have a school, mixed gender I think it is essential to
121 have some males on the staff.

122 I: Yes....

123 Pr:because there is a male psyche that we need to acknowledge and I
124 think where you have families where children appear.....especially in
125 Ireland and I suppose it is an international thing, where families have
126 broken up, the male tends to be the one who leaves the family setting
127 and I do think the children then miss that male....that focus in their
128 lives and in school, there may be no male person either. I do think
129 there is a component there that can affect them.

130 I: Yea, when I was teaching I used to be in an all-girls school and then
131 the numbers dropped and I went to teach in an all-boys school and the
132 boys had totally different interests that I had. I was interested in all
133 girlie things. I found that I had to learn so much, I had to learn about
134 cars, bikes, boats, engines, airplanes.....it was a real learning curve for
135 me. Have you found that at all?

136 Pr: Yes, and there are some games that boys are naturally drawn to
137 and you do need toto be respected by them because you know to
138 actually teach them, you do need to earn a certain amount of respect
139 rather than demand it I think. And I think you know the sort of respect
140 that you getyou know from understanding them and where they're
141 at is a healthier type than the one you might demand.

142 Pr4 I would agree with the statement that there is a difference with regard
143 to behaviour issues between town and country. Having attended a
144 school in the country myself and then having done teaching practice in
145 an urban setting, I definitely would see a difference. There's more
146 instances of behaviour issues than when I was in Primary school
147 between the country and town. I think you could put it down to street
148 wise. In a town, there is so much going on, they're interacting
149 constantly, the children in an estate, they're grown up more in some

150 levels and I suppose in the country, they're more protected or isolated.
151 I lived up a country avenue with my sisters and that's where we played
152 all summer long and there wasn't the same interaction with the outside
153 world and I suppose when we did go to school, we knew what we had
154 to do. The difference is that the children are quieter in the country I
155 would say, quieter in themselves, calm, not as hectic, I suppose more
156 engaging with the school process as a whole. I know that that's a very
157 general statement but yes, definitely more engaging. The town
158 children present different challenges, am.....the teacher is presented
159 with different or more topics to cope with. It may be something that is
160 said outside that a child has heard, maybe from an older boy sitting on
161 a wall. It could be as simple as that, they come in with more, I suppose
162 more adult information, the teacher has to address that while delivering
163 the curriculum and you also have the issue with regard to parents, some
164 parents may have heard of these instances, it definitely presents more
165 challenges, different challenges.

166 I: And do you agree that boys cause more behaviour problems than girls?
167 Pr: Yes, I agree with that. There's no question about that. I was taking to
168 a girl in ----- during the week who is doing some research and she
169 said its 60/40 percentages, as regards boys presenting with learning
170 difficulties, behavioural issues, it just seems to be that kind of a divide
171 and she taught in a special needs school.

172 My query over that is from listening to three male teachers over the
173 years who have taught in an all-male school, and from one male in
174 particular, who have drawn up a list on how many of our past pupils
175 would have gone down the line of jail, drugs, suicide, all of these
176 things, there is a higher incidence of the males compared to the girls in
177 a disadvantaged area and then as regards resources, they are divided
178 out equally, for an all-boys school in a DEIS setting and an all-girls
179 school in a DEIS setting. When you have that 60/40 divide, there
180 definitely are more instances of behavioural issues. We have absent
181 fathers here and we are trying to cope with children who, I won't say
182 depressed but definitely sad because their fathers are not around. Not
183 necessarily army fathers, the army have support for that, you know for
184 spouses who have partners abroad. I'm talking of children who have
185 never known their father and maybe regard some particular man as
186 their father and then discover that it's not actually their father. Then
187 you have other siblings who aren't biological siblings of the same
188 parents and that in my experience does cause serious issues for
189 children as regards self-esteem and confidence and being comfortable
190 in themselves so we have started 'Rainbows', it's a little group set up
191 for loss and separation. Am...we have targeted at least 20 boys and I
192 have made phone calls to the mothers in question and said 'you know,
193 I feel that this is something that Johnny would definitely benefit from,
194 I've observed him in the class and definitely there's an issue when
195 family comes up and he's definitely negatively affected by it'. In my
196 own experience, I have a friend whose boyfriend, at 30 years of age
197 had not addressed the fact that his father had left him and the
198 relationship finished. It all stemmed from the fact that he hadn't
199 addressed that absent father issue at that age and now it all comes back.

200 They were planning a family and he was worried that he wouldn't be
201 able to carry out his fatherly duties and his father didn't either.
202 Definitely there's a serious need here and as Principal and looking at
203 the resources and we are all so conscious that resources are tighter -
204 thin on the ground now. That divide between girls and boys I think has
205 to be recognised. There should be more support in a DEIS boys school
206 than a DEIS girls school because of the 60/40 divide. And I'm
207 basically quoting my past Principal when he said 'just look at the
208 graveyard and the prisons, they have come from here, those boys have
209 come through this school and they have died and we are actually going
210 to organise a plaque, just in their honour now. These boys had fallen
211 in with the drugs crowd and ended up, you know, as a mule and
212 carrying drugs for somebody or took their own life. You know, I
213 haven't got the exact figure or a number.

214 I: What age would they be?

215 Pr: Very few beyond 30. A few would have been accidents but very few.
216 They would be in their 20's.

217 I: Where would they have gone on to from here. I mean this is a boys
218 school to 12 years.

219 Pr: Yes, school completion, the boys would have gone to the Post Primary
220 up the hill here. I can't say all but some. It's a mixed school. Some
221 would have gone to Kildare, some go to ----- but the majority
222 would have gone to the Post Primary up the hill.

223 I: Would the majority of pupils here be from the -----?

224 Pr: Yes, the majority would be but some are coming in. It was interesting
225 recently, I was asked, as principal, and we are organising our budget
226 for next year for school completion, to draw up an estimated figure of
227 need, of children at risk. I spoke with our longest serving member of
228 staff, the male teacher because he would be aware of the background,
229 and I said, 'you know, this child is damaged, do you feel that he will
230 follow in his father's footsteps and his two older brothers going into
231 the army?' and he said 'yes, from my experience, that would be
232 predicable, where he would go. And then there are twins in my class
233 and he said 'no, not one in that family went beyond 2nd, 3rd year so they
234 won't either. So we're looking at it now and I have a lot of concerns. I
235 heard a statistic, I can't quote the exact figures but last night I had a
236 conversation with a friend of mine with regard to this. It's 600,000
237 predicted unemployed in the next 10 years and that would bring serious
238 social and economic issues to families and as a result, schools and
239 services are under pressure to cater for all of these people who don't
240 have jobs and opportunities so I think there is a desperate need to cater
241 for the boys now. And I don't know if we look at the teenage girls, the
242 18 year-old who may have had an early pregnancy, a young mother but
243 there's great supports there. There is a welfare system and there's a
244 district nurse and I've observed some of the mothers coming here,
245 young mothers coming in here with their boys,they're coping.
246 Obviously there are some who don't cope, I mean, don't get me wrong,
247 but I suppose it'sam.....it's responsibility, it's a way of life for
248 them to get up and get their children fed and there's order in their day,
249 they have a purpose. But for a father who may have just become

250 involved with this girl for a short time and he leaves and then, this
251 child comes along and the father feels 'Oh my God, I do have
252 responsibility over there and I can't address it for whatever reason. I
253 can't provide, does that mean that I'm going to be the same as my
254 father was'. There's a cycle there, a disturbing cycle. And I spoke to
255 somebody recently about the fact that the issues now at home, I mean
256 even 10 years ago, a broken family did have a father and a mother, I
257 mean ok, this week it's me, next week it's your father. And there's
258 other issues in the house where there's a father, as I said before who is
259 not the biological father and there are extra siblings coming in. I mean,
260 there's a child in my class who really doesn't know where he belongs.
261 We've a child in this school who left at Christmas time to go and live
262 with his father and his new family as in two younger siblings, having
263 left his mother and another sibling who is from a different father, so
264 this child is really in the middle on his own. So he left, he left this
265 school, he left a class of 6 boys, he left his comfort zone. He wanted to
266 live with his father so the mother had to let him go to live with his
267 father for 3 or 4 months but couldn't fit in there. There was an
268 established family unit. There was a mother and a father and two
269 siblings and he was coming along and acting out. So he came back.
270 And I spoke to the previous Principal and I said the child is back and
271 he said he had to go and find out for himself what it was like. I mean
272 it's emotional, it's upsetting. He had to go and find out what it was like
273 to live with his father. His father was working long hours so he spent
274 the day with this other woman, who wasn't his mother. It's
275 .disturbing, so now he lives with his mum and two other siblings. Now
276 there's a new baby in the family and the new baby is a boy and that
277 seems to have focused his attention. He's the older brother now with
278 this child and he's excelling here now and I think it was nice for him
279 to come back to a group of 6 boys who missed him, who genuinely
280 wanted him back and who never asked 'where did you go? Why are
281 you here?'. There was a general acceptance when he came in, sat
282 down in his uniform. I knew he'd come back and I was delighted for
283 him but you worry about him in 10 years-time. You worry about him
284 in years to come when he sees a father attending the graduation of a
285 sibling or a half-sibling. It's sad, I mean even in a separated
286 environment, men should have a contact, you know, a responsibility.
287 Men should be presented with the long term effects of not being on call
288 for a child. And it's always been the case that the mother is left. It's
289 accepted as the case but ...am...you would definitely need heightened
290 awareness. I forget now but I'm going off on a tangent here but it's a
291 gender issue. That is a gender issue and there's no point in fighting
292 that. I mean I read recently in the paper that we are 25 years
293 addressing disadvantage, you wonder about the effects of all this.

294 I: Are you saying that they still haven't got it right?

295 Pr: I think the schools have done all that they can in catering for the needs
296 but you have to go back to the roots - to where the needs started from.
297 I mean the School Completion Programme is excellent because it is
298 targeting them now and even today, there's a group gone from the Post
299 Primary school and there's a girl, it just so happens that the

300 Coordinator for the 7 schools locally - Joe - I think it's taking in
301 Kildare, 1 school in ----- and schools in the ----- Camp, and
302 this is her cluster of schools. She organising the After
303 School Club and she's putting the project workers in there, organising
304 the funding and getting the coach to come in, and she's getting
305 someone to do the cookery, that's going to be on a Tuesday. She's
306 involved in the school, say family fun week in the ----- with the
307 Family Resource Centre. She's constantly consulting the teachers and
308 Principal with regard to project workers and the next child at risk, the
309 next child that has missed days, she says 'let's put him into this lot'
310 and it's great then because I've noticed even with one child, who's
311 working very successfully with the project worker, it's working out
312 very successfully. At first he wasn't very interested at the beginning
313 and we had to overcome that. He came from a very very disorganised
314 background but I met the mum recently and it was very nice to be able
315 to say to her 'well, we will keep this in place and thanks for signing the
316 form because that means that he is getting his half hour per day'. It
317 was nice to be able to relay that information. His teacher is very happy
318 that ...am...he's made this progress. Then of course, we have the
319 whole school. We have the Community Liaison Project as well. A
320 teacher, based in this school is in the role of Coordinator of 3 schools
321 in the ----- . So she meets with parents and one of the overall
322 aims of the role is she is not going home with a negative story about
323 attendance but is going home with something positive but I feel that
324 needs to be addressed also. I feel from that my observations after 6
325 months is that the 2 groups, the School Completion and the Project
326 workers in here, and they are facilitating the child. I think from my
327 observations the home/school project workers see themselves very
328 much involved with the parents but we are talking about the same
329 family and this is where the issues arise because now I'm thinking
330 well, Julie, do you want to maybe talk to the project worker and the
331 teacher and see how well he is doing and actually go home with that
332 information. That's the ideal and that should happen as opposed to the
333 home/school deciding 'well, I only support the parents'. That divide
334 cannot be there when it's the one family, information has to cross,
335 liaising is essential.

336 I: You mentioned the Coordinator, is she a teacher?

337 Pr: No, she is not a teacher. She has 15 project workers in different
338 schools and she coordinates everything, including funding. We have a
339 child here with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD) and last
340 year, she organised 3 play therapy sessions for him. The idea was that
341 the mum would come in and observe the play sessions between the
342 child and therapist but mum failed to come in each time. We cut the
343 counselling then because other children could avail of this. Now the
344 child is definitely in need but for maximum effect, mum needed to be
345 involved. Again we had a child here who didn't meet the criteria for
346 Reading Recovery because he didn't have the basics of reading but the
347 Coordinator insisted that he be kept on. Reading Recovery is an
348 excellent programme but you have to meet the criteria age wise and
349 ability wise. Recently one of the children here came successfully

350 through the 20 week programme and he read at his First Communion
351 Mass, and last year, he wouldn't have been able to do that. Now we
352 have Maths Recovery coming on board. One of our teachers has
353 volunteered to do the training. This will mean 1st class targeted every
354 single day with a structured maths programme because our results
355 show that Maths, as much as literacy, needs attention. But this teacher
356 has a split Senior Infants and 1st class, I have 2nd class but I have to
357 facilitate the teacher by taking 12 Senior Infants when she is trying to
358 do the programmes with 1st class. I have to do this because it's a waste
359 of resources, money and time, if it is not rolled out effectively.

360 **Teachers' Focus-Group**

361 T6: I suppose boys tend to have a lot of energy that I suppose that you can
362 channel into games and if you did channel it into games, it would
363 certainly work. But that's what they need, I think, they need lots of
364 activities

365 T2: I also think that it works well, you know with reading and things and if
366 you want them reading, they think aw. but with comics.....they are
367 still reading at the end of the day and you ask 'well, what would you
368 like to read about, I find that that engages them at an academic level.
369 Behaviour wise, girls can be boisterous as well. Boys are very honest
370 with you. They say exactly what the problem is whereas girls can be
371 nasty.

372 T3: If you correct girls, they look daggers at you.

373 T1: I think boys tend.....their behaviour is expressed more, and it's more,
374 kind of in a physical way, whereas girls can have very very significant
375 behaviour difficulties and it's kind of very introverted behaviour and it
376 can be very kind of....damaging.....bitching, and it can be a difficult
377 buddying issue in girls....

378 Teachers together: Yea....

379 T1: And they can do a lot of harm with it and it kind of goes unnoticed.

380 I: And what about town and country schools? Is there a difference?

381 T6: There was a time when there was I suppose, but I don't think it is as
382 marked anymore.

383 T2: I'd say that is mainly to do with the TV, media and that. I was just
384 saying the other day, it's ridiculous, I'm not a parent at all but you get
385 7 and 8 year olds watching games that are only allowed for 18 year
386 olds. They are so violent and they've got prostitution things in them. I
387 can't understand what parents would allow their children to do that,
388 just to have an easy life. I think it has a lot to do with behaviour issues
389 because they think that is fact. They're aware of so much more.

390 T1: Our school would have traditionally been a country school and over the
391 last, say, 8-9 years, it has grown up into a commuter belt so I think that
392 you would get the odd country school, still far out the country who had
393 kind of a native population where you would still get the same families
394 coming through time and time again. We had that as one element of
395 our school but there's a much bigger mix to it now. So I think that has
396 changed – the dynamic around behaviour. But I'm sure there are still
397 country schools where the school is just part of the community and the
398 behaviour issues there would be different. Ours was like that and
399 parents would come in to you and say 'you know,they wouldn't

400 be interested in the academic, they would say as long as his behaviour
401 is good. I'd say there are still schools like that – where the school is
402 part of the local community only.

403 **Pupils' Focus-Group 1**

404 P3: It really depends on the child. It's not necessarily always the boys. It
405 could be a boy or a girl at first and then the next child could follow on,
406 carrying on, that could lead to a boy and a girl causing misbehaviour.

407 P4: On the part where the town schools and the country schools. In the
408 town schools, there's more criminals and

409 I: And you think that might make a difference?

410 P4: Yea.

411 I: In general though. Although, of course, a boy or a girl can cause
412 problems, would you say, in general, that boys can cause more
413 behaviour problems than girls or would you say that girls cause more
414 behaviour problems than boys?

415 Children in Unison: Boys.

416 P3: Definitely boys.

417 I: And is that your experience here in this school?

418 Children in Unison: Yea.

419 P1 Boys talk non-stop. And the girls, well, the girls are quiet even though
420 some of them is laughing. They don't get in trouble.

421 P3 Most boys in the class talk about a football match, just gone on over the
422 week-end and all the boys say which player is better than the other and
423 they argue over football players.

424 P1 Yea, they have a debate across the classroom and to do your work is
425 very very hard.

426 P5: After playing soccer, they start giving out to another person.

427 I: So this might happen in the classroom, is it?

428 P5: Yea.

429 P6 I think it's mostly boys, because girls keep to themselves and are quiet.

430 I: And the boys make fun, is that what you are saying?

431 P6: No, they just want attention.

432 I: OK

433 P3 Boys tend to act out because they need to prove themselves. Girls don't
434 need to, they don't need to do a certain thing. Lads, they're
435 more.....competitive. they take everything seriously.

436 I: Who takes everything seriously?

437 P1 A couple of people in the school, like there will be a certain child nearly
438 every day and if they do something wrong, they say, ah, sorry, but if he
439 misses, some will give out.

440 I: Are you talking about boys?

441 P1: Yea, boys, they take everything seriously and if someone says something
442 hurtful, they can attack back. And if you say something back, they can
443 bate (beat) you up for it.

444 I; OK

445 P4: Boys are probably aggressive, what they see on TV, what they see on the
446 streets and that.

447 I: So they look at what they see on TV and act that out.

448 P4: Yea.

449 I: The town and country schools, you were saying that because there are

450 more criminals in towns that there are more problems in schools, is that
451 what you were saying earlier?

452 P4: Yea, what's going on in the streets or what is going on in TV.
453 I: On TV.

454 P4: Yea, you never see anything bad going on in the country. They may
455 think that's the way they have to act.

456 P1: If a pupil moved from a town school, to a country school, they could
457 end up spreading bad behaviour or they could calm down. They could
458 go either way. they could calm down with the rest of the school or
459 they could raise behaviour.

460 I: That's something I hadn't thought about. Good.

461 I: Now would anything like to say anything else about behaviour or
462 behaviour support, anything that we left out?

463 P3: Just that respect and consistency is definitely needed in school.

464 **Pupils' Focus-Group 2**

465 P1: I agree about the town and country schools because there is more bad
466 stuff happening in estates and everything, people throwing stones at
467 windows and everything and then the children come and do that to the
468 school.

469 I: Ok, and what about the boys causing more behaviour problems than
470 girls?

471 P4 (b): I'm not just saying this but like girls in our class cause more behaviour
472 problems than boys.

473 P1 Yea, they are always messing around, like laughin and sniggering
474 behind the teacher's back.

475 P4: Another teacher always says 'ah the girls' are grand' but sure they are
476 always laughin and sniggering when the teacher is not looking and
477 always whispering to each other so it's not just the boys.

478 P1 In our class, boys are probably..... more misbehaved and say a boy
479 does something wrong, well, if say a girl did something wrong, the
480 teacher would hardly notice, teacher would hardly give out to them or
481 take any notice of it.

482 I: Would she see them doing it?

483 P1 Yea, and she wouldn't take any notice.

484 P3 Yea, that always happens and it's not fair on the boys.

485 P1 Say if we threw paper, we would get roared at, and say if they (girl's)
486 threw paper, they would be asked to pick it up. That does happen.

487 P2 I think it's like a stereotype, it's not always that boys are more
488 misbehaved because we have about 21 boys in our class and we only
489 have 11 girls so the boys are going to get noticed more than the girls.

490 I: Because they are 2/3rds of the class.

491 P1 I think like if there's some child that never misbehaves and they do
492 something wrong, the teacher says 'ah, that's ok because you're
493 normally good' and then they might do it again and the teacher says '
494 oh, it's grand because you're normally good'. Then they may get into
495 a habit so they should punish them, like they might get into the habit of
496 doing things.

497 I: So we are coming back to consistency again, the teacher should be
498 consistent in what she does.

499 Pupils: Yea.

500 P1: there was a rule brought in this year in the school that make-up is
501 banned but some girls wear make-up and the teacher notices but
502 nothing is said to them and let's say the boy was wearing combats and
503 he wore them in, he'd get into trouble.
504 P1: One of my friends got in trouble and he's in trouble on and off, and a
505 teacher or two asks him when he's going to be off yard again, taking
506 the mick out of him.
507 I: And off yard means he's not allowed play in the yard, is it?
508 Pupils: Yea.
509 P2: And like, he used be bold, the teachers still tease him over it.
510 P5: they still think he's like that and he's trying to change.
511 I: ah.
512 Silence
513 I: Anyone like to add anything more to that?
514 P1: Like the language of our teacher is sometimes pretty disgraceful, like
515 she says 'taking the mick' and 'the piss' and I was saying it to my mam
516 and my mam was saying it to the other parents that like her language
517 was disgraceful and nothing was done about it really.
518 .
519 I: Thank you very much for helping and giving up your time, it is much
520 appreciated

