

# Behaviour



## CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

- Children who display challenging behaviour don't usually do so 'just because they want to'. There's often a reason behind their behaviour or it might be their only way of telling you something's wrong. Therefore, it's essential that you understand the causes of challenging behaviour and know what strategies will help you deal with it.

## POTENTIAL CAUSES

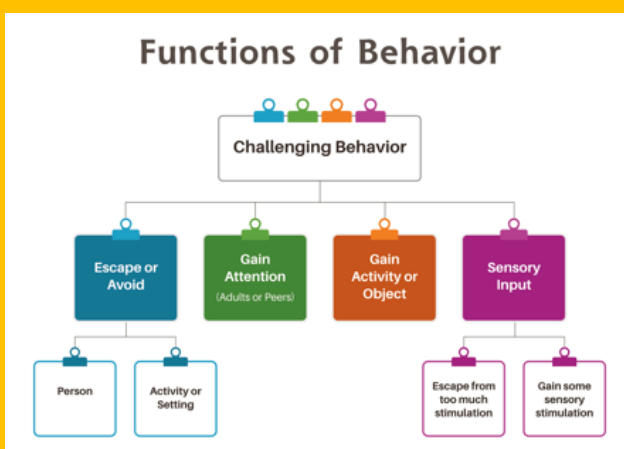
- **Social, emotional and mental health concerns:** the child may be unable to recognize, handle and express their feelings effectively. This is particularly common in conditions like ADHD, autism, and other learning difficulties.
- **Health:** If a child is experiencing pain or discomfort then they may display challenging behavior to express this, particularly if they have a problem communicating it.
- **Change:** For example, if they've moved school, their parents have separated, or someone close to them has passed away.
- **Learned behavior:** the child may have learnt that behaving in a particular way is how they get what they want, or may have been in an environment where everyone acted in the same way.
- **Boredom:** challenging behaviour may arise if the student feels bored in class and with their work.
- **Lack of routine:** not knowing what to expect or when can cause anxiety for children, which may present as challenging behaviour.

## STRATEGIES

- Have high expectations of behavior for **all** pupils.
- Ensure the rules are clear – make them visual symbols, pictures, keywords.
- Be consistent- make sure that all adults who work in the classroom enforce rules, sanctions and rewards in the same way.
- Distract rather than confront – use humour, have a physical break.
- Ensure the pupil understands what is expected of them and that it is appropriate.
- Use short, clear instructions and clear body language for reinforcement: overlong explanations and excessively complex reasoning are not appropriate.
- Distinguish the "can't do" from the "won't do".
- Encourage positive behaviour by developing good behaviour prompt pictures. For example, showing a photo of themselves or others tidying up nicely can be enough to encourage them to do so.
- Reinforce the desired behaviour immediately with visual, oral or tangible rewards.
- Ignore attention-seeking behaviour within reasonable limits: it is aimed to distract.
- Develop a range of strategies to deal with avoidance behaviours: some will work with some children but not with others e.g. make tidying up into a race
- Ensure that the TA is not the only adult having to deal with the behaviour. The class teacher has ultimate responsibility.
- Ensure the child is working with peers who are acting as good role models.
- Establish good liaison with parents and discuss behavioural strategies jointly.

### Things to consider:

What is the child trying to gain from this behaviour?



### TOP TIPS:

- Remember that all behaviour is communication
- Always start by asking yourself: what is the function of this behaviour?