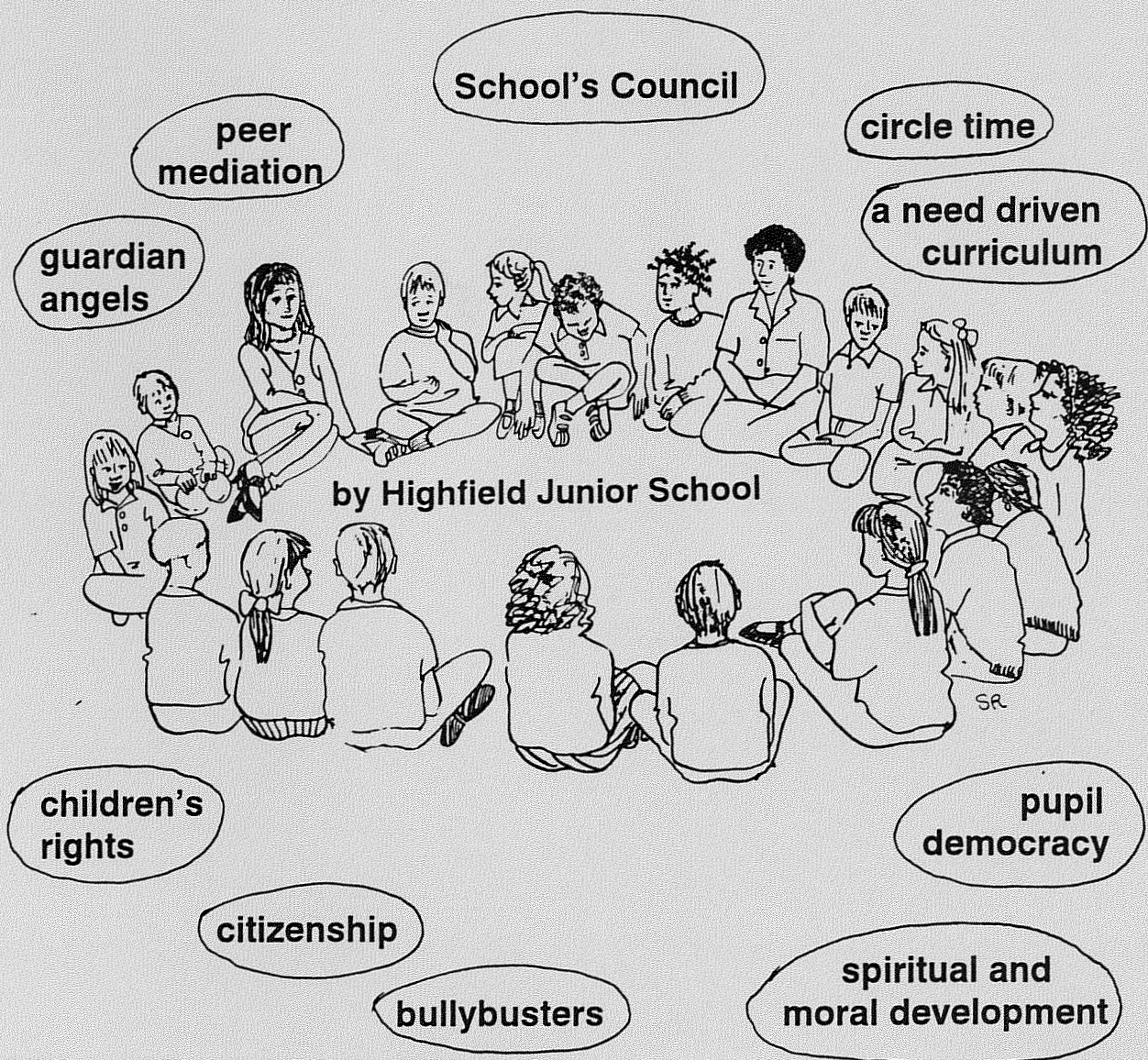


# Changing our school: promoting positive behaviour



# **Changing our school: promoting positive behaviour**

**by Highfield Junior School  
Plymouth**

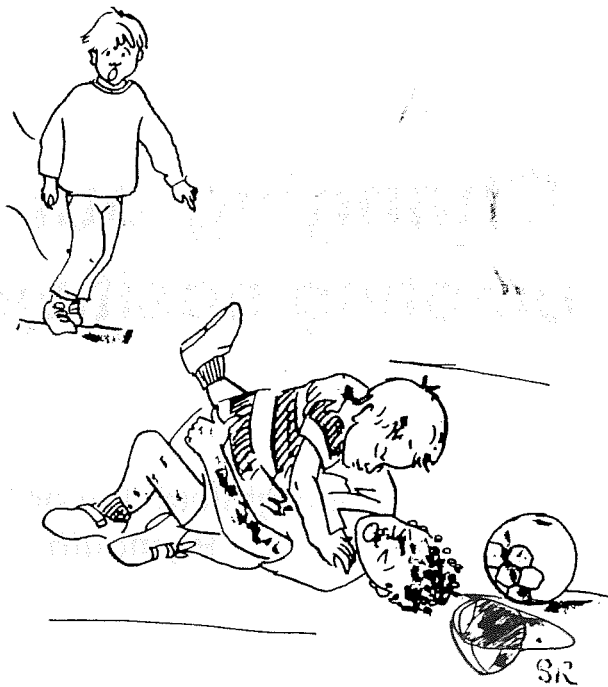
**Head teacher: Lorna Farrington**

**Editor: Priscilla Alderson**

**Illustrations by  
Kirsty Bickford  
Maja Jenkins  
Kurt Jukes  
Antony Mitchell  
Samantha Read  
Anthony Unsworth**

**Sponsor: The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation**





Changing our school  
by Highfield Junior School

ISBN 0 85473 509 7

© 1997 Highfield Junior School

Published by Highfield Junior School  
and the Institute of Education, University of London

Printed by Budget Print and Design Group  
Ivybridge, Devon

Price: £6.00, for post and packing add £2.00  
from Highfield School  
(cheques to Highfield School)  
Torrige Way  
Efford  
Plymouth  
Devon PL3 6JQ  
email 2632@911-2632.DEVON-CC.GOV.UK  
FAX 01752 773187

and from The Education Bookshop, Institute of Education  
(cheques to The Education Bookshop)  
20 Bedford Way  
London WC1H 0AL

**Start small and think big**

The ideas in this book are not like a bunch of flowers, which you can put into your school fully grown, like sticking flowers into a vase. The ideas are more like seeds, which need time to take root.

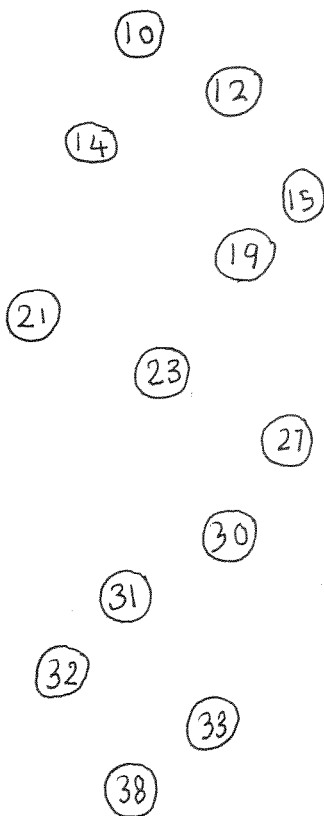
Seeds have to be cared for while they slowly grow. Each seed grows in a different way, it depends where it is sown. Each school will have different ways of using these ideas and adding to them.

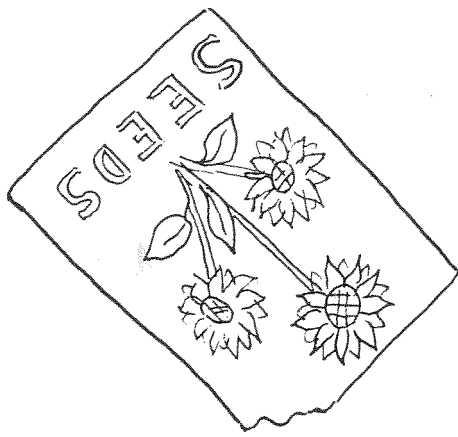


**Steven:** When you try new things, sometimes they go wrong at first. So you have to keep on trying to make them work.

## Contents

5	Foreword
7	How we all began
8	Making a garden
	- building a safe boundary wall
9	- landscaping our garden
	Working together through circle time
	1. Feeling good
	2. Rules and democracy
	3. Rules and conventions
	4. Sorting out problems
	5. Changing behaviour
	6. Talking with parents
	7. A tool box for circle time
	8. The School's Council as a whole school circle time
	Guardian angels
	Bully busters
	House captains
	Mediation
	Induction weeks: "the children help to run the school"





(39)	Choosing new teachers
(41)	The active school
(43)	Views of the school staff and other adults
(46)	OFSTED report
(49)	The circle of seeds
	Appendix: School Policy Papers
(52)	1 Ways of using circle time
(54)	2 Behaviour policy statement
(71)	3 Spiritual and moral development of pupils
(73)	4 Curriculum statement
(76)	References and resources
(79)	How this book came to be written

## Foreword

Forewords for important books are a heavy responsibility and it is my sincere hope that I will do justice in this foreword to the many contributors from our school.

Indeed, justice has been a key theme for me personally as I have chaired the Governing body of Highfield Junior School through these recent years of development and change.

A key element in all issues of justice is that of listening. Sometimes it is simply being there to listen. Sometimes it has to be about labouring hard to create an environment or platform so that people can be heard.

As you read this book you will encounter many instances where the voices of those who are frequently not heard are heard and moreover valued. You will become aware of the huge efforts which have gone into transforming a community.

The success of the initiatives and innovations which have been implemented is based essentially on a "whole school policy". It is acknowledged that everyone who comes into the school has a contribution to make to the life of the school community. Great efforts are made to offer all concerned an ownership of the system in which we work and a "say" in what goes on.

There is no magic in any of the changes you will read about in the following pages. We are not proclaiming a new or refurbished "ism" of any description. We are simply taking each other seriously, listening very carefully and recognising our mutual strengths and weaknesses.

The Governors of the school have had the privilege of serving Highfield Juniors and equally the schools has been directed and managed by a group of volunteers who have risked a ride on one of the "roller coasters of life". The energy, enthusiasm and leadership skills of our Head teacher, Lorna Farrington, and her very gifted staff have been pivotal in providing the daily sustenance to all these changes.



This book records an exhilarating story which breaks apart what is so often a debilitating "us and them" and leads us to the recognition that in life there really is only "us". And it is "we" who can make the running and shape the future. This is a story of reclaimed esteem and self confidence and of the struggles to enable appropriate forms of leadership to emerge for this school situation.

Many aspects of school life are here discussed openly and honestly, and equally you will have little difficulty in identifying the underlying frustrations too!

We as Governors have never lost sight of the fact that the school is set within a wider community with its own agenda of hopes and fears and patterns of addressing important issues. We have continued in the steps of those who have gone before in ensuring that we are a school wherein teachers have the right to teach and children have the right to learn.

This is a story of a school whose life has been one of considerable change. It is the story of a process which is worthy of inclusion in any training programme where people are gathered to explore their full potential to be mature and responsible citizens.

**Revd Ian Lovett**  
**Chair of School Governors**

## How we all began

Once there was a school with lots of problems.  
There were fights and rows.  
Some people broke things, they messed about in class,  
and did not listen to the teachers.

School was not always a happy place to be.  
Sometimes we did not feel safe.  
This book is about how we changed our school.  
Everyone had to help, not just the few people at the top.  
We could only succeed by working together.



Some schools try to change by using only the teachers' ideas. But that misses out on most of the energy and ideas in the school. It can lead to teachers trying to force their plans on to the pupils, and pupils trying to stop them.

Instead, we looked at ways for the staff and pupils and parents to work together, and we have told this story for the staff and pupils in other schools to read and use together.



## Making a garden

### Building a safe boundary wall

*The Head teacher said:* The first thing we had to do was to gain control, to create boundaries within which we could teach and the children could learn. So we started using assertive discipline.<sup>1</sup>

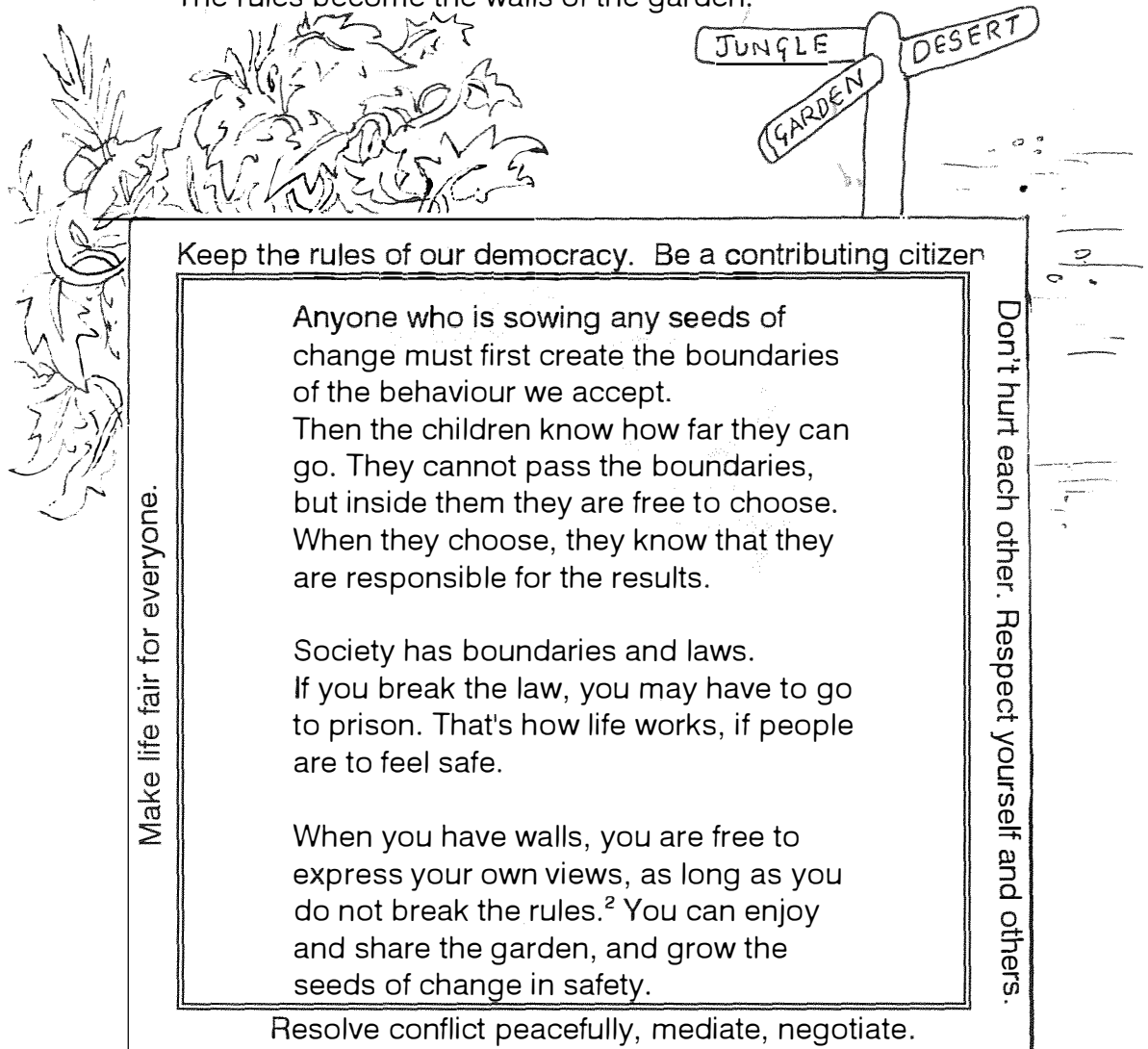
*Danny:* If you do something wrong, like break a rule, you get a warning. If you do it again, your name is put on the board. If you do it a third time, a cross is put next to your name, and you get 10 minutes detention at lunch time. You do something else wrong and you get another cross and 20 minutes detention at lunch time. One more time, and you get white carded. This means your teacher writes what you've done wrong on your behaviour card, and you have to take it to Mrs Farrington. She tells you off and she writes your name in the Thin Ice Book, 'cos you're skating on thin ice.

*Julie:* Yes, and if you start doing better then that's all right and everyone is pleased and tries to help you, and you get house points. But if you carry on breaking rules then you have to go through the crosses and detentions again. And if you have to see Mrs Farrington again, she is very cross and puts your name in the Thin Ice Book again. You have a detention at every play time, and you have to write a letter to your parents telling them why you've behaved badly.

*Michael:* If you break another rule you have to see Mrs Farrington again, you get a yellow card. That's a final warning and your parents are called in. But after ten days, if you've not done anything wrong, they take the yellow card out of your folder, and you get a certificate of success.

*Head teacher:* The new code of discipline worked almost at once. We could feel the difference in the school. The children said, "We like this. We like knowing where we stand. We like life to be fair. We like being able to get on with our work. We like to feel safe."

The discipline in the school is like making a garden ready for the seeds of change, instead of trying to sow them in a desert or a jungle. The rules become the walls of the garden.



Keep the rules of our democracy. Be a contributing citizen

Anyone who is sowing any seeds of change must first create the boundaries of the behaviour we accept. Then the children know how far they can go. They cannot pass the boundaries, but inside them they are free to choose. When they choose, they know that they are responsible for the results.

Society has boundaries and laws. If you break the law, you may have to go to prison. That's how life works, if people are to feel safe.

When you have walls, you are free to express your own views, as long as you do not break the rules.<sup>2</sup> You can enjoy and share the garden, and grow the seeds of change in safety.

Resolve conflict peacefully, mediate, negotiate.

Make life fair for everyone.

Don't hurt each other. Respect yourself and others.

### Landscaping our garden

*Head teacher:* As soon as the school changed, the children said, "We like this. But we'll always cause problems because we don't like adults ordering us to do things."

So we said, "Why don't we make our school into a democracy, with the pupils as citizens who share in making the decisions? Why can't we plan our garden as a joint teacher and pupil project, so that the children can take initiatives and help to make the plans?"

We needed a forum for making decisions. We were already using circle time in each class. This seemed the ideal way for making plans for the whole school.

## Working together through circle time

### 1. Feeling good - self-esteem



*Michelle:* At circle time we all sit in a circle on the floor. We start by saying the rules to remind ourselves.

Only talk one at a time.

Be kind and don't say anything that will hurt somebody.

Listen carefully.

Talk clearly so everyone can hear you.

*Jenny:* Sometimes we pass something round and you can only talk when you are holding it, to make sure we only talk one at a time. Or we roll a ball across the circle to the next person who is going to talk. Then we go round the circle and we all say something in turn, like "My favourite ice cream is -," or "A new thing I tried this week was to -." You can say "pass" if you want to.

*Sally:* We play games in circle time. I like the one where you pass round a squeeze. We all hold hands and you squeeze the hand of the person on your left, then they squeeze the next person, and so on round the circle.

*Darren:* I like the game where someone goes out of the room and we choose someone in our class who we are going to talk about. We call the other person back in and they have to guess who we are talking about. And I like it when we play "Simon says" or when we go round and all tell a story.

*Ravi:* I think circle time is good because we all get to know each other better. Like today, Robert talked about his cat's new kittens. And if you've done something good, like when I swam four lengths, you can tell the class and everyone is pleased.

*Gavin:* I think circle time is a good idea because people can find out things about people that you didn't know before. You could start liking someone that you hated before. I like circle time because it's quiet, and people are friendly and they do not shout at you. My best game is detectives.

*Ryan:* We talk about our personal goals. I was challenged to set a good example and it helped me to keep out of trouble.

*Simon:* I had to look at my work to check it over. I'm trying to take more time over my work. It looks much better now.

*Classroom assistant:* I think if they're happy at school and can share their feelings with their class friends, they won't feel worried and lonely. That's not going to play on their minds, and they're going to concentrate on their work more.

**Three main groups** affect how boys and girls feel and how they behave:

- \* their family
- \* their teachers and, by far the biggest group,
- \* their class.<sup>3</sup>

Some people easily make lots of friends, but others feel lonely and worry that no one likes them. It can then be much harder for them to learn and to work well. They are likely to mess about and annoy or hurt other people. Circle time can help everyone to know and to like everyone else in the class more, and to want to help each other.<sup>4</sup>

*Head teacher:* Everyone learns that what they have to say is valid, valuable and valued by the others in the class or group - even if their wish is simply to say "pass". Children were learning that they had the right to have a say - but not the right to be right.

## Working together through circle time

### 2. Rules and democracy

*Head teacher:* So circle time suddenly became a forum for making decisions, where the children decide and negotiate their own rules - democracy in the classroom. This is the reason, I think, for our success, that it works at the group level of the class.

*Corrine:* We made our class rules so we don't hurt each other.

*Aaron:* We have the rules so we don't be naughty.

*Rebecca:* The rules are to stop fights and to stop people mouthing each other off.



*Class teacher:* I was surprised that when we gave the children the chance to make rules for their class, they wanted the same kinds of rules that the teachers wanted. But it was different. Instead of me having to try to force them to keep the rules, now on the whole they wanted to keep them, and to help each other to keep them. After all, they were their rules, not mine!

*Neil:* We had lots of arguments about which rules we would have. Someone would say, "That one's silly," or "That one comes under another rule". And we end up going through the rules we have agreed and voting for our favourite rules, about six of them.

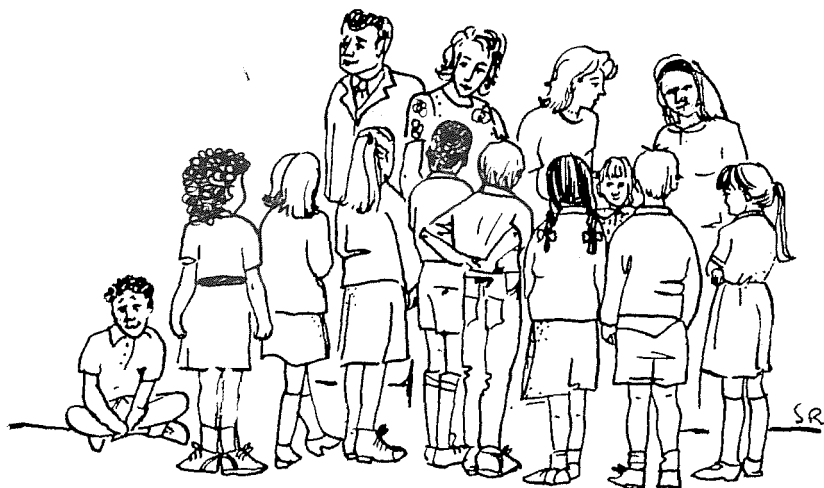
*Amy:* We talked a lot about rules, and in the end we chose these ones for the playground.

- Keep hands and feet to yourself
- Follow adult instructions without argument
- No teasing
- No spitting
- No bulldog or stingray

*Head teacher:* The experts say you must have positive rules. We talked about swearing, and the children kept saying, "We want to have 'No swearing'." I kept saying, "Can't we make it sound positive? Like 'Talk nicely'?" They'd reply, "But that doesn't say what you mean. It has to be 'No swearing'." We tried to encourage positive words, but they insisted it wouldn't have the same effect.

*Nicholas:* We've agreed one main rule for the whole school:  
Show care and respect for yourself, your friends,  
your teachers and helpers, your belongings,  
your school and your family at all times.

*Class teacher:* Every year now, the children mainly choose the same rules because we know they work. Each class can add other rules if they wish.





## Working together through circle time

### 3. Rules and conventions

*Head teacher:* We aim to concentrate during circle time in Year 3 on self-esteem and self expression, in Year 4 on caring for each other, in Year 5 on supporting others in their choice of behaviour, and in Year 6 on living in a democracy. By the time they leave, we hope most of our pupils will have internalised basic rules, and will know that society does not always write down the rules for you to follow. "Drop no litter" may be on litter bins, but you cannot expect the reminder "Do no swear at the shopkeeper" on the shop door!

*Alison:* We talked about rules and conventions. A rule is a convention when it is sort of inside you, and you would keep it anyway. We talked in circle time about which rules we would have this year and we voted on them, and then we wrote a letter about what we decided.

*Top floor, Highfield Jr School*

*Dear Mrs Farrington,*

*We have decided as a class to do away with the class rules: No swearing, Don't shout out.*

*Instead we have made them conventions, we've also made no eating a convention after quite a long debate. We're having a month's trial on doing away with Ask before leaving class and Keep hands and feet to yourself.*

*Which leaves us with one rule which we thought covers everything. These are our results after a democratic vote.*

<u>RULE</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>H</u>
<u>Follow all adult instructions</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>Ask before leaving class</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>No eating</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>No swearing</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Keep hands and feet to yourself</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Don't shout out</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>6</u>

*Yours faithfully*

*James W and Year 6*

*P.S. E = Easy and H = Hard rules to follow last year*

*Tony:* A rule is a convention if you've made it your own, and then we don't need to make a rule about that because it's inside us.

## Working together through circle time

### 4. Sorting out problems

*Robert:* Circle time is about fights and problems and that. We tell the School's Council all about it. We talk about needs first, like stuff in the play ground we can play with, and money for the swimming pool.

*Greg:* Then we talk about our arguments and problems and we sort them out. We talk about bad things that happened, calling names, fighting, someone annoying us, scabbing food and trying to get our lunch. If a name is brought up and they say, "It's not me, it's someone else," we ask them for the truth. We ask if anyone saw what happened, and we talk about what needs to be done, to solve the problem. If the bullying carries on, we call in mediation\*<sup>1</sup> to sort it all out.

#### Resolving rows

In Year 5 there was a row about pogs (small discs which many people collected) being lent or stolen. When the circle time had talked about this, the teacher asked the two boys who were arguing about the pogs to go outside the class with Susan who would be the mediator. After a while they came back into the class all smiling and said it had been settled.

One circle time with Year 3 began with the class reps reporting the minutes of the School's Council meeting.\*<sup>2</sup>

*Paula:* The cooks will also be selling biscuits in aid of the swimming pool. They'll be 8p each.

*Ian:* The swear words we can use in the play ground this term are fiddlestick, fudge, crunchie and sugar.

*Teacher:* Thank you for that report. Shall we start our circle time today with a game? But first let's remind ourselves of our circle time rules. Paula?

*Paula:* Speak loudly and clearly to the centre of the circle.

[Other children say the rules too.]

*Teacher:* What game shall we start with?

*Trevor:* Pass the squeeze please.

---

\*1. For mediation see page 33

\*2. For School's Council see page 27

[The class plays two games.]

*Teacher:* Right, I'd like to send someone a "nice note". Paula, would you like to choose someone?

*Paula:* Kirsty.

[Kirsty leaves the room. The children all say "things they really like about Kirsty". The teacher writes them down and then Kirsty is called back into the room.]

*Teacher:* Would you like to read this out Kirsty?

*Kirsty:* [Takes the paper and joins in the circle.]

Kirsty is kind. Kirsty tells funny stories. Kirsty helps me with my work. Kirsty is pretty. Lots of love and kisses from Year 3.

*Teacher:* What do you think about that Kirsty? Everyone wanted to say how much you helped them. What will you do with your nice note?

*Kirsty:* Put it in my record of achievement.

*Teacher:* That's a good idea. Well done Kirsty. Now, can anyone think of any more nice things we could have written?

[The class offers more ideas.]

Yes, they're lovely... but haven't we had a bit of a problem with Kirsty's behaviour this week?

*Suzie:* She's been shouting out and bossing Becky and Sarah around.

*Teacher:* Yes, we've all noticed. Becky, Sarah, would you like to say anything?

*Becky:* Yes, she gets really angry and shouts at us when we're in the playground, if we don't do as she says.

*Sarah:* She tries to stop me playing with Becky and bosses me around.

*Teacher:* Have you anything you'd like to say about this Kirsty?

*Kirsty:* No ... Anyway they go off together.

*Kevin:* I think she's frightened she'll be on her own if Becky goes off.

*Cassie:* I think she gets jealous 'cos she wants Becky to herself.

*Kirsty:* I just get angry because Becky was my friend first.

*Teacher:* Has anyone any ideas how we can make life better for Kirsty?

*Cassie:* Well sometimes Becky and Sarah tease her and go off together 'cos they know it winds her up. They should stop it.

*Suzie:* I'd play with Kirsty if she was on her own, she could always join with us.

*Teacher:* What do you think Kirsty?

*Kirsty:* I'd like someone who would go and talk with Becky and Sarah for me, if they go off. That way, I wouldn't lose my temper and they'd probably come back quicker.

*Becky:* We don't mean it all the time, but sometimes we get fed up of you bossing us both around and making us do what you want.

*Teacher:* Would a guardian angel help?<sup>\*3</sup> Who thinks they can mediate for Kirsty if the problem comes up again?

*Suzie:* I could, I'd like to do it.

*Teacher:* Shall we try that for a couple of weeks and see if the situation improves? If not, we'll discuss it again and try something else. Okay Kirsty?

*Girls:* Yes.

*Kirsty:* Yes, can Suzie and I report back to next circle time?

*Teacher:* Of course. Any other problems you'd like to bring up?

*Kevin:* I've been bullied by David and John and Mike in Year 5.

*Teacher:* Can you tell us what happened?

[Kevin describes how the boys took his sweets.]

*Teacher:* That's horrible. You must feel very sad. Has anyone any ideas how we should deal with this?

*Kurt:* Give Kevin a guardian angel.

*Suzie:* Talk to the boys.

*Teacher:* What would you like Kevin?

*Kevin:* See the boys.

[David, John and Mike are sent for and they join in the circle.]

*Teacher:* Thank you for coming to our circle time, but I'm afraid we have a complaint about your behaviour. Kevin, is there anything you'd like to say?

*Kevin:* You're stealing my crisps in the playground.

*Teacher:* Kevin's very unhappy at the moment because he feels he's being bullied and we're worried about him. Would anyone else like to say anything?

*Paula:* Mike asks me for crisps sometimes.

*Kurt:* They make a little gang and go up to children. We don't really like it.

*Teacher:* Anything you'd like to say about this behaviour, boys?

*John:* Well, they call us names.

*Teacher:* Does this mean that you have been using nasty behaviour and demanding crisps?

*John:* Sometimes.

*Suzie:* It's everyday.

---

\*3 For guardian angels see page 30

*Teacher:* Well, this class isn't prepared to accept this behaviour any more. We know that you are responsible children really. How would you like to sort this out?

*Mike:* Well, we won't do it anymore.

*Teacher:* How do you feel about that, Kevin?

*Kevin:* I think I need a guardian angel to keep an eye on me.

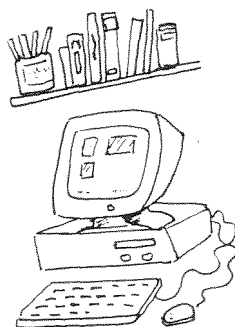
*Teacher:* Who should your guardian angel report back to?

*Kevin:* This circle time, and year 5 circle time. We need to tell their class that they're trying not to be bullies and asking for tuck.

*Teacher:* Who do you think should be your guardian angel?

*John:* Someone from Year 5 or year 6 I think.

*Teacher:* John, Mike and David, perhaps you could take Kevin to choose a guardian angel and come back and tell me, It'll also give you the chance to put things right with Kevin and make a fresh start. I think he'd like to hear from you that he's going to be safe in the playground from now on. We'll all be looking for good choices of behaviour. Do you give your word that things will be better from now on? Please tell the class.... Thank you for your help. Now what else do we need to discuss? What about John's remark that some children are name-calling? How do you feel about that?



*Class teacher:* When I say to teachers at other schools that quite often we have the person who's being a problem sit in our circle, and the children tell them how they feel, some other teachers are horrified. But I know we do it in such a supportive way, you tell the child you like them but not the behaviour they have chosen, what they do. In some other schools, they seem to be afraid to hand over the problem for the children to deal with. It's as if they want to wrap children in cotton wool, and never let them put another child on the spot and say "Look, we're not happy with your behaviour. What are we going to do about it together?" Other teachers might tell a story, and say, "What would happen if...? Let's pretend that ....., but it's not real." We're more direct and tackle it as a team. It's much easier for 30 children to watch out for problems than for one teacher.

## Working together through circle time

### 5. Changing behaviour

*Classroom assistant:* Circle time is very good to get the children to tell you how they feel. When I was at school, if you were bullied or you were bothered about something, you just used to keep it inside, which obviously is no good. It made you upset and you'd think, "Oh no, is it going to be like this for the rest of the term?" You feel unhappy. And then it creates problems with your parents because you don't want to go to school.

Now, the children feel so at ease they can talk about their problems. The problems get solved, we hope, and then the child's happy. Circle time helps, because sometimes these things are going on and we don't know anything about it until it comes up in a circle time.

*Class teacher:* If you want someone to change, it's no good just saying, "Don't fight," or "Don't tease". You may have to show them other ways to behave, and other words to use. It is also vital to separate the person from the behaviour, such as when we helped Peter to change.

"We don't like her behaviour"



Don't drag it around with you!

*Jaya:* We had a circle time about Peter's bullying. First we went round the circle and everyone said something that they liked about Peter - "he makes funny jokes," "he's got nice blue eyes," "he's good at football".

Then we all said what we did not like about his behaviour and how it made us sad and upset. Then we talked about how he could change. Everyone in the class said we would help him to change. We were all responsible, and when he improved we were all rewarded for helping him to be better.



*Class teacher:* We ask all the children to imagine that they can have two bags. They can drag around a heavy bag of bad behaviours, or carry a light parcel of good ones. And they can choose which bag they use. When they choose from the light one, we can all feel warm and happy and safe. If they choose from the wrong heavy bag, we all feel unsafe and unhappy. We'd like to tell them that we like them, "You're a great kid, we'd rather you put that behaviour back in the heavy bag and make a happy choice instead. Don't drag that heavy bag round when you can share the light happy parcel with everyone."

Change it!



"We want you in our group"  
We'll help you get rid of bad behaviour

Share it!

*separating the person from the behaviour  
you can choose whether to drag round the heavy  
bad behaviour bag  
or else go around with the good behaviour parcel*

*Karl:* It's about being responsible for what we choose. We have to decide about being good or bad. If I get my name on the board I have made a bad choice. Getting a house point means that everyone liked my choice of behaviour.

## Working together through circle time

### 6. Talking with parents

*Head teacher:* Five years ago I spent most of my time dealing with behaviour problems. If someone kept being sent to me, in the end I would write to the parents. For example:

*Dear Parents,*

*We hope that you might be able to help us. We are beginning to look more carefully at certain incidents which have been brought to our attention, which would seem to indicate that \_\_\_\_\_ has been using bullying behaviour towards another child in the school.*

*As you know we have a very clear Bully Buster Policy\*<sup>4</sup> which is known to all children. We enclose a copy so that you can also understand our school procedures. Perhaps at this point it may be an advantage just to go through this format with your child as a gentle reminder.*

*We hope that you will be able to talk quietly to \_\_\_\_\_ about his/her relationships in the school and remind him/her about the need to show respect and care for the feelings of others. We will do the same and try to discover any problems that \_\_\_\_\_ may be experiencing in developing positive relationships and friendships.*

*We would be pleased to discuss \_\_\_\_\_'s behaviour with you at any time. However, we hope that this gentle reminder from both home and school will be sufficient to prevent any problems arising for \_\_\_\_\_ in the future.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Head teacher:* Sometimes, the letters had to use an even stronger tone. But one day, a class told me that they had talked about Peter's behaviour, and they wanted to invite his parents to their circle time. So they wrote this letter:

<sup>4</sup>\* For Bully Busters see pages 31 and 67-70.

*Dear Mum and Dad,*

*Our class have been discussing Peter's behaviour during circle time. We are very worried about Peter. We would like to help him to stop bullying other people. We thought you might like to help us decide on the best ways to make life better for Peter and for us in school.*

*We are having a class circle time on Thursday at 2 o'clock to try and find some ways we can help Peter to improve his behaviour. We hope that you will let us know if you are able to join us.*

*Yours faithfully*

*Class 5*

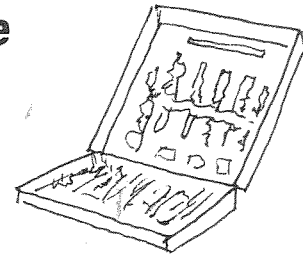
*Head teacher:* Since then, lots of parents have come to circle time to talk about their child's problems with the whole class. I think only one father has ever refused. The parents work out with the class how they can help their child to change, through help and rewards at home. The parents are invited back, and rewarded by the class when their child's behaviour improves. Now I spend much less of my time dealing with behaviour problems, the children can sort them out positively and fairly for themselves.

*Lindsey:* I wasn't doing well and I kept getting into trouble. In the end my dad came to school and he made an agreement with my class. He would give the class the video of *The Lion King*, it's 90 minutes long, if I can earn 90 minutes of good behaviour. So if I do something helpful or some good work, anyone can reward me. They can give me however many minutes they think what I did is worth. I've already earned 15 minutes. Yes, it really helps me to work hard at behaving better. My dad's a lot more pleased with me too.

*Class teacher:* Children can give each other house points too, and that hands ownership over to them. We talk a lot about how we can use house points fairly, and not too often, so that they are effective. The children can feel that they're rewarding their friends when they get a house point. We can also have whole class house points when they all do something well which they usually have problems with. And we give whole class rewards like collecting "minutes" towards buying a video they've chosen. It makes them positive and they'll say to each other, "Come on, we want this, you know you can do it, and we'll help you!"

## Working together through circle time

### 7. A tool box for circle time



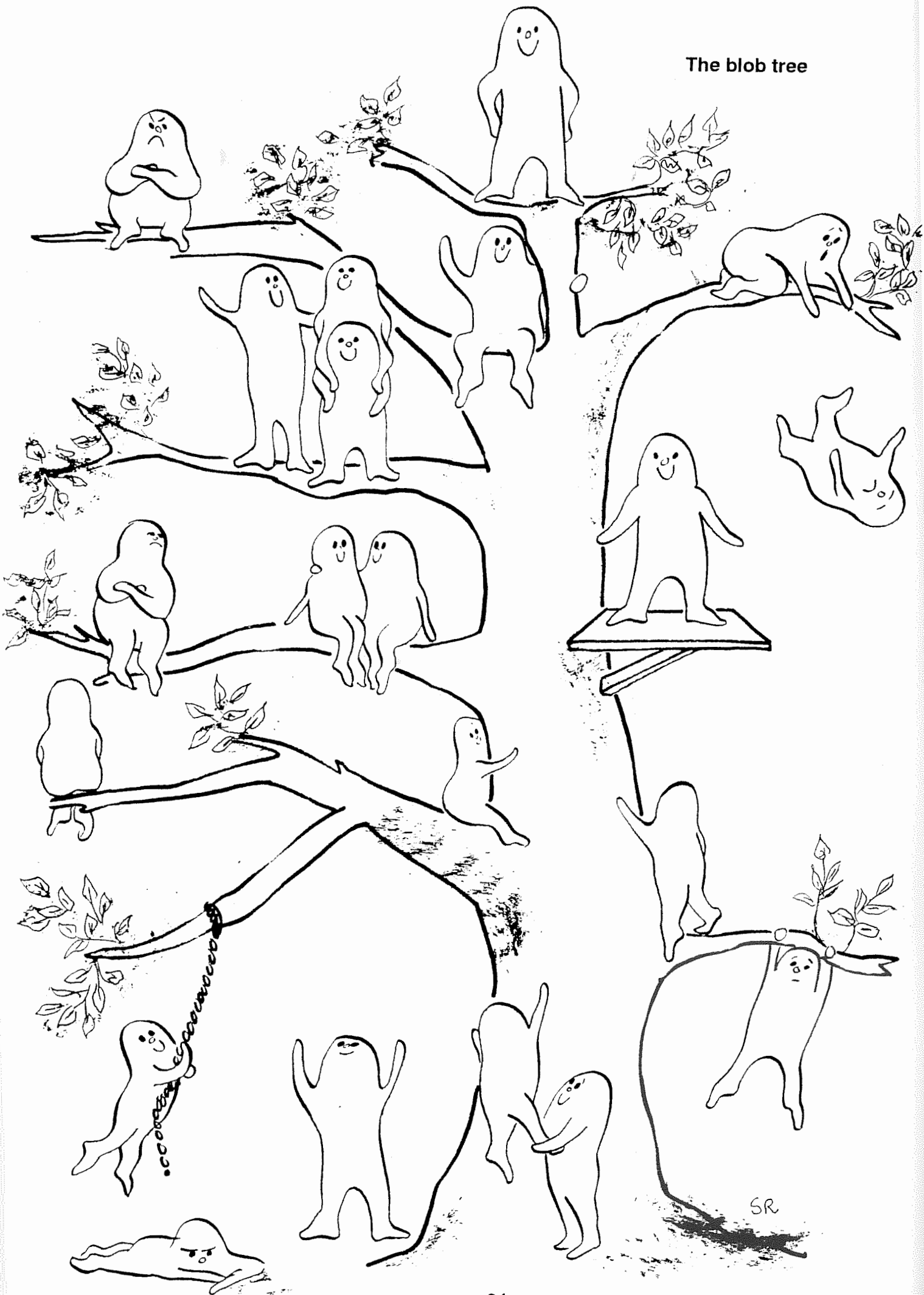
#### Talking about feelings

*Head teacher:* At circle time we talk about feelings. We found that we needed to be more aware of our own feelings and of other people's reactions. We needed more words to talk about these. Some children would shrug and often say "pass" at circle time, if they could not find words to describe how they felt. To help them to take a greater part in circle time we worked on a toolbox of words and skills.

Here are some of the things we work on.

- \* We use the blob tree to talk about how people feel. Which one do you think I am? Which one do I think I am? Which one do I think you are? Where are you now? Where would you like to be?
- \* We collect lots of pictures from magazines and spread them all on a table. Everyone picks out pictures that express parts of them. Some choose sad pictures with gloomy colours. Others choose things like a yacht because they'd like to go sailing round the world. Some choose smiling faces.
- \* We ask the class to guess who chose which pictures, then to talk about words for all the feelings that come up.
- \* We put lots of pictures on the wall, and say: "I can see a feeling and it's in that picture." Then the children come up in turn, and point to another picture, and say, "I think the feeling you saw is (fun/anger) and it's in this picture too. Each person has a turn until someone gets the right answer. We have put up lots of pictures for a feelings board in a corridor to use at wet break times. First they have to guess which picture it is, and then name the feeling.
- \* Pictures, colours and poems can be made into a display about a feeling, such as sadness or happiness.
- \* Everyone draws a feeling face on a paper plate.
- \* We collect books about feelings - joy, shame, excitement, feeling anxious, shy, afraid, or proud, or brave....<sup>5</sup> Each feeling can have its own list of words we link to it.

The blob tree



\* Someone will act a feeling and the others have to guess which one it is. Drama, mime, dance and music sessions can express a range of feelings. These can grow into stories and poems.

\* With some stories we talk about how each person felt.

\* Circle time games can be about "I felt happy when ...", "I felt excited when ..."

## Listening and relating

*Head teacher:* Children would come to me after a fight. One would say, "He hit me first," and the other would say, "No, she hit me first". We found that what had happened was that one child had gone too near to the other, who felt this was an attack and had hit back, so that they both really thought the other had started it. Sometimes someone would go up to a group and give the nearest person a thump to say "I'm here". They meant to be friendly and wanted to join the group. But instead, the thump might start a fight.

So we did a lot of work on social skills: on friendly ways to join a group, and to open or close a conversation, on role models, and body language and anger management.

Here are some of the social circle time "tools" we used.

\* In circle time, practise listening, by looking at the eyes of the person who is talking, wait until they've finished, and be able to say back to them what you heard them say.

\* People need to have a bubble of space around them. Some want more space than others, be careful about going inside their bubble. What can you do if someone comes inside your own space bubble?

\* Practise ways of telling people not to annoy you, or hurt you, without having a fight. Think of positive ways to say things. For example, instead of "I'm stuck," you could say, "I've done this and now I need....."

\* Learn broken record - quietly go on saying, for example, "Please give my rubber back," until the other person does as you ask. If they still don't take any notice, you give them a mean look to show you mean business and try again.

\* How many ways can you think of for joining a group, saying hello, starting to talk to someone, and saying goodbye?



\* Play circle time games about knowing your own body, about being tense or relaxed. Look in a mirror and make a face for each feeling. Sometimes, when people are angry, they don't realise how angry they look, and why other people react crossly to them.

\* Ask everyone to say what they think could help them to feel more safe during circle time.

Words and pictures, miming and games, stories and acting can all help each class to be more skilful in:

- sharing their ideas and feelings
- guessing how each other feels
- listening and talking together
- resolving conflicts
- making relationships
- feeling hopeful and confident
- sharing personal space
- choosing, deciding and living with their choices
- relaxing and managing stress
- coping with success and failure
- getting other people to cooperate
- being assertive and not aggressive.

Maja Jane Jenkins



*Class teacher:* Teachers help children to be honest if they are too. I say to the class, please tell me when I make a mistake. Be ready to question things, and to say if you think something is not fair, so that we can sort it out.

## Working together through circle time

### 8. The School's Council as a whole school circle time

*Head teacher:* And then the children said, "Well, we can talk to parents and we've got our classroom problems sorted out. But we still have problems on a whole school basis, and it's not always easy for people to come from other classes to our circle time. Other people in the school must be having problems with these children, such as the bigger ones who bully the smaller ones. We need a forum to discuss them."

So our School's Council was born, simply as an extension of class circle time. It is a whole school circle time, a decision making forum.

*Alaina:* School's Council meets about every two weeks. And before that, every class has a special circle time. The class decide what they want to report to the council, and what problems they can deal with themselves, and which ones they need the School's Council to know about. The two council reps write down what the class decides, and then at the council meeting they report these things. After the council meeting they report to their class what was decided, and they pass on to them any questions for the next meeting.

*Denise:* We have a good way of voting at circle time, like for Council reps. We all put our heads down and shut out eyes. Then the teacher says the name of each candidate and we put up our hand for the two we want. At the end, the teacher tells us the names of the winning boy and girl.

*Class teacher:* Some classes choose their reps, and have the same two reps for a term or a year. Some choose one different new rep each time, and they shadow the one picked before them. I do that and go down the list, so that everyone in the class has a turn.

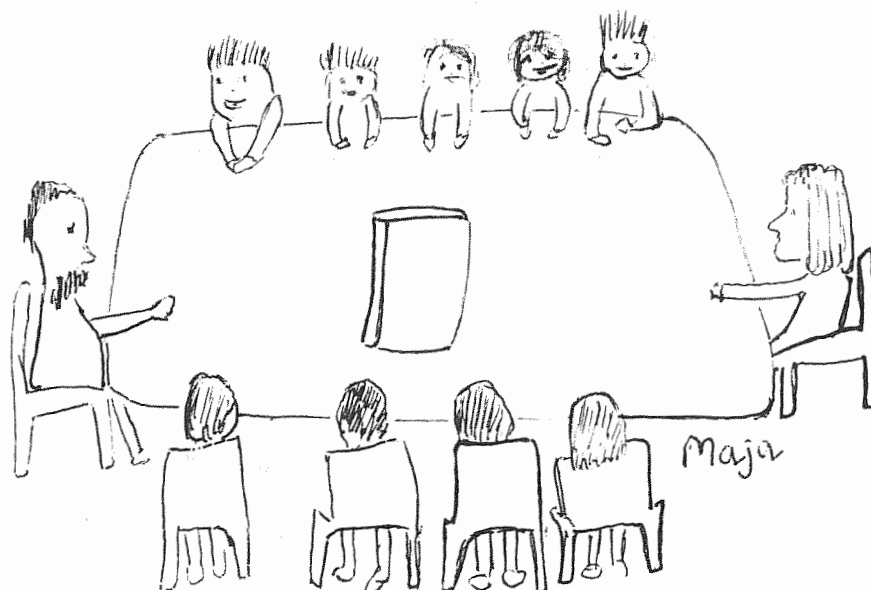
The best circle times are when I say hardly anything. I'll sit back and they start by doing the agenda. They say what they want to do, and someone writes it down ending with AOB. The Council reps make notes to take to the next Council meeting.

## The agenda - meeting plan

*Mandy:* At School's Council we always start by talking about the *Successes* - anything good someone has done, or anything nice that has happened. Then we talk about *Needs*. Then about anything that's a *Problem*. And lastly about *Freedoms and Responsibilities*. If we want a new freedom, we have to talk about what responsibilities we will have or what we will give up so that we can have that freedom.

## Successes

*Steven:* At the last School's Council we talked about how the school clubs are good, and how year 6 are letting some of the younger ones join in and play football with them.



## Needs

*Sharon:* We all thought it would be really good if we could have a school swimming pool. We could have it in the basement. We had a look at the school budget and all the money that has to go on staff and equipment and other things. There wasn't much for a swimming pool! So we decided to start fund raising. Saving up for the swimming pool means that although we often think of other things we would like to have, we usually decide that the money we could spend on them must go to the pool instead. We're fundraising by having some discos. We're deciding how to run them, and how much to charge for the entry and things like that.

*Ann:* The School's Council has its own budget. We think the playtimes could be better and we've decided to spend a bit of money on buying things to play with in the playground - besides football!

*Tim:* We decided we've got to remind everyone about the playground rules. No violence. No swearing. Don't drop litter. Follow Meal Time Supervisors' instructions without argument. We're going to ask every class if we need any other rules. Then we

voted on which swear word we can use in the playground this term. It's "Crunchie!"

*Alan:* We've also got to remind everyone about their password. We all have passwords which our mum and dad or our aunties know. If they ever ask someone to come into school and tell us that they want to take us somewhere, we can ask that person what the password is. Then we know if the message really did come from our home or not.

## **Problems**

*Jeremy:* At School's Council we talked about some people in one class who are causing a lot of problems for everyone else in that class, and stopping them from working. We don't like this, and we were talking about what to do about it.

*Nicola:* One boy will not stop teasing another boy a lot. We decided that two people would do mediation and then report to Mrs Farrington.

One council meeting talked about pogs. Pogs were getting lost and fought over. Class circle times were worried about the problems of pogs and asked the council to decide if they should be banned. Knowing how strongly people felt, some for keeping pogs, others for banning them, the Council decided to ask every class to vote on whether pogs should be banned. They also talked about ways they might make play times more fun, so that pogs would not matter so much.

## **Freedoms and responsibilities**

*Jessica:* We said we wanted to eat our lunch outside. We had to agree the extra responsibilities with the meal time supervisors. Like, no one will run across the tables. No one will eat standing up. We must clear up any litter. We must follow meal time supervisors' instructions. We can have lunch outside if we want to, and I like that very much.

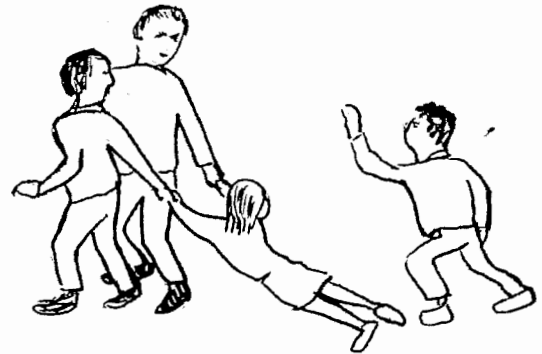
If we break our responsibility agreement, our freedom stops. School's Council decides how many days sanction we must have before we can eat outside again.

*David:* We decided we wanted to play war games. Mrs Farrington wasn't keen on this. She said she wanted to have peace not war! But we talked about it, and in the end we agreed that we could play war games as long as we kept the responsibilities. No one was to get hurt. We mustn't interfere with anyone else's games. And no one was to run out of the school grounds. It was all right for three days but then Sean got scared and he ran off home at lunch time. So we decided that we would have to stop playing war

games for two days as a sanction, and then we could start again. We went and told Mrs Farrington and she agreed.

*Head teacher:* They can decide on any freedom really if it is agreed by the School's Council. It has to go through a trial period. All the children talk freely at the meetings. Sometimes we meet formally. Sometimes we meet in my room round a coffee table, and I sit on the floor to help them to feel more equal.

*Jessica:* If things aren't fair, we have the right to say so.



## Guardian angels

*Head teacher:* Guardian angels came from the idea that you can fly to somebody's rescue and guard them. It was a way of taking circle time outside into the playground and having peer support. It meant that someone would be there to support you.

A child who is trying to change their behaviour might choose up to three guardian angels to fly into situations which that child can't handle. I'd say everyone in the school has been a guardian angel at some time. They report on any progress to the class, and the class rewards the guardian angels.

*Alan:* Guardian angels are there to help you. They might be your friend or someone else. You can have two or three guardian angels. If you are being bullied they fly to rescue you and help to mediate your problem. If you are trying to improve your behaviour they are around to help you.

*Head teacher:* This means that the first time you talk to an adult about a problem you also talk about a solution which you've decided with your guardian angel. You'd say, "I have a problem and so-and-so helped me overcome it." So now the teacher can say, "Oh well done. You've worked together to overcome the problem and you can have a house point." It also means the class can be rewarded for getting someone's behaviour improved through the guardian angels.

## Bully busters

*Head teacher:* A few years ago, when we first started to change the school, we had to deal with bullying. We worked with the children about what bullying means. Is it pulling hair? Is it shouting at someone?

We tried to avoid "fuzzies", vague terms like "being good". We aimed to use specifics like "I will not kick", "I won't fight with my brother". That meant we could praise children when they achieved their aim, instead of when they were vaguely "being good". We banned the word "good" for a time, because the children said, "You keep praising the bad ones for being good, when other people are better", and it was true. So no one was called "good" unless they were better than average.

We all made a difference between tackling the child and tackling the item of behaviour which the child was using which we didn't like. We had "bully busters" like ghost busters, with a bully box for people to post in slips if they had been bullied. They could sign it, only if they wanted to, and they could put the name or the class of that child who had bullied them. Each class had a different coloured form, so we knew where the slip had come from even if we didn't know the child.

These were taken round to each class and at circle time the class discussed whether the accusation was fair or not. Could it possibly have happened? If the class thought it might have happened they would all keep an eye out. If they thought it was unfair, they would also watch out for who might have accused them or misunderstood their behaviour. So the child wasn't immediately labelled "bully".

Yet soon the children said we didn't really have bullies, just some people who chose the wrong behaviour, and this could be dealt with in circle time. So the bully box is still there, and we discuss regularly in School's Council if we need to use it again, but it hasn't been used for years. The circle time forum works so well, and parents can quickly be involved. At first we had to have the bully busters stage, to set the boundaries and to show everyone we meant what we said.

*Alison:* I don't think there's been anything in the bully box for about two years. There's much less bullying. The house captains deal with it, and most weeks they don't need to tell a teacher because nothing much needs sorting out. Sometimes new people are afraid to tell someone if they're being bullied, but they soon learn that they can.



## House captains

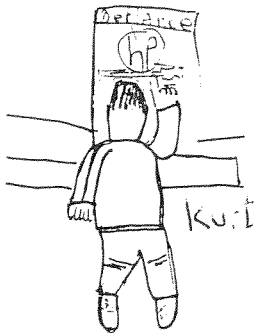
CAPTAIN



*Head teacher:* The children said, "We need years 6 and 5 working with years 4 and 3, and helping each other." So we began to have house captains.

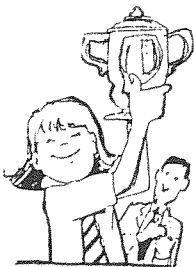
*Tony:* We choose the house captains a boy and a girl for each of the four houses. They are in year 6. They each write a speech about what they will do for us, then we vote for them.

### Election speech by a house captain candidate



*Vote for me and I'll make sure you can have more discos.  
I will look after you, like if you fall over. I will take you inside  
and put a plaster over where you are bleeding.  
I will deal with any bullies. I will sort out any problems.  
If you have no one to play with, I'll play with you.  
If you need any help with reading or spellings  
I'll gladly help you.  
If you have any problems just come to me.*

*Denise:* The ones who want to be house captains make speeches at a house meeting during lunch time. And after we've heard the speeches we put a slip of paper with the name of the one we like best in the ballot box.

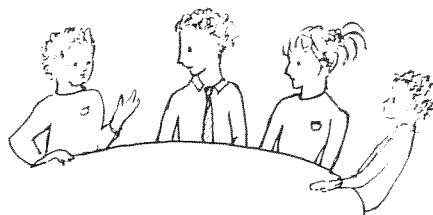


*Head teacher:* Some of the house captains were chosen as guardian angels. They had been chosen by all the children in the school for their qualities of leadership, and understanding, and listening skills and for their concern about other people and their problems.

They were doing a grand job as guardian angels, and they were developing ways of doing it. They set up their clinics every lunch time, to support all the children who were having problems. They were giving advice and using counselling techniques. We realised that they needed training, so that everyone was doing the same thing. We had to adopt ways of resolving conflict fairly and peacefully, without giving ill-informed advice, and without making conflict worse. And the way forward was towards mediation.

*Clare:* It is quite hard being a house captain if everyone asks you for help. And sometimes they say you're not doing it right.

*Anna:* Last year it was too hard for the house captains. They were the eight mediators and they were so busy, always being called on. We needed more mediators, mainly in the play ground. This year lots more of us are going to train to be mediators.



## Mediation<sup>6</sup>

*Joe:* Some experts came into the school to do training. We liked that, it was fun and we played lots of games. Mediation is when you have a row, you go to someone to sort it out, and they listen to both sides.

*Lee:* Mediation - you can sort out problems better. If you quarrel you try to sort it out yourself first. If not, you tell the house captains. If they can't help you go to circle time with both the people who have quarrelled and they ask why you are doing that and what you can do to stop. If it starts again, you go to a teacher or to School's Council.

*Class teacher:* The mediation trainers came in for a few days. The eight house captains practised with them and videoed themselves. Then they went off and ran the mediation for about 8 months. The staff were also trained, but they were rarely brought in, though if a problem wasn't resolved it would go to circle time.

Whether you're 5 or 50 the process is the same. All the children could be trained, because it's skills for your adult life, and they all know what mediation is about.

One of the youngest girls in the school is a brilliant mediator. Sometimes the kids in her class have a problem, and say, "Can we have a mediation?" I don't know what goes on, but they always come back smiling. She's been trained by the house captains.

*Head teacher:* The training was good but some of the skills were rather hard to understand and apply. Some children understood them better than others. So instead, I do the training now, and start with the process. I simply tell them, "This is what you do, and this is how you do it." We also learn the skills through the year, not in one dose.



In the training session, when asked what the rules are, the eight boys and girls replied:

- No swearing
- Don't get in a temper - that's a convention in our class
- Don't fight
- One person talks at a time
- No name calling, or accusing or blaming
- No threats or saying nasty things about each other
- Don't interrupt
- Keep calm
- Keep this all private - don't tell your teachers or even your mum unless it is so serious we need some other help
- Tell the truth.

A boy who had been expelled from three other schools added the last point.

The Head teacher said that if they thought it was very serious and someone might get hurt they must tell her. At the beginning of all mediations they must say, "We'll keep your secret, unless it is too serious and we have to tell Mrs Farrington."

Carla and Adam had a row, Ryan and Maja were mediators. They all sat down, with Ryan and Maja in the middle.

First Ryan went through the rules, and checked that Carla and Adam agreed to keep them and wanted to solve the conflict. Ryan thanked them for coming to talk.

Maja turned to Carla and said, "What happened?" When Carla had told her side, Maja told it back to her, to check that she had got it right.

Then Ryan asked Adam, "What happened?" and when Adam had finished Ryan checked back what he had said.

Then Maja asked them both in turn, "How do you feel?" and "How do you think the other person feels?" and they talked about their feelings.

Next Ryan said, "Why did you fall out, do you think?" After they had talked about that, Maja asked, "And what are you going to do about it?"

Ryan asked Carla and Adam to say all the ways they could think of for solving the row, how they could be friends again, and how they could avoid having the same row again.

Then Ryan said, "Thank you for all your ideas. This is what you have said you will do ... Do you both agree?" "Yes," said Carla. "Well," said Adam, "I suppose we could try it."

"Good and thank you for talking honestly," said Ryan and Maja. "Let's meet next week to see if it works."

The next week had been better but there were still some problems. Ryan and Maja asked them in turn, "How did you get on?" and "What might work better instead?"

## The rules for mediation

Mediation is about listening,  
asking questions,  
and getting people to think of new ways  
to sort out their own conflicts,  
and to decide what they are going to do.

It is not about giving advice, or taking sides,  
or blaming people, or forcing them to agree.

Mediation means staying in the middle.  
It is about making life fair,  
and being a good listener.

*Class teacher:* The lunch time supervisors liked the mediation and asked for more help. Conflict happens most often in the play ground. The eight mediators said that two of them would be on duty every day. They held their clinics in the deputy head's office, and then they began to be mobile mediators around the playground - para-mediators, almost like para-medics. They were really stretched. So they began to train volunteers in each class. One class has 12 mediators. I know they are effective because the teachers have to deal with much less conflict.

*Terri:* People often disagree and that can be a good thing. What matters is how you work out your differences.

*Lee:* One mediation I did that went well was with two boys who was really hurting each other. And after we sorted them out they became best of friends, and it lasted.

*Samira:* You have to be careful in mediation, if it is something very serious, like someone might get really hurt, to know when to go to a teacher about a problem.

And sometimes the people carry on being very angry and shouting and interrupting. You have to wait for them to calm down before you can go on. It can be hard not to get angry with them!

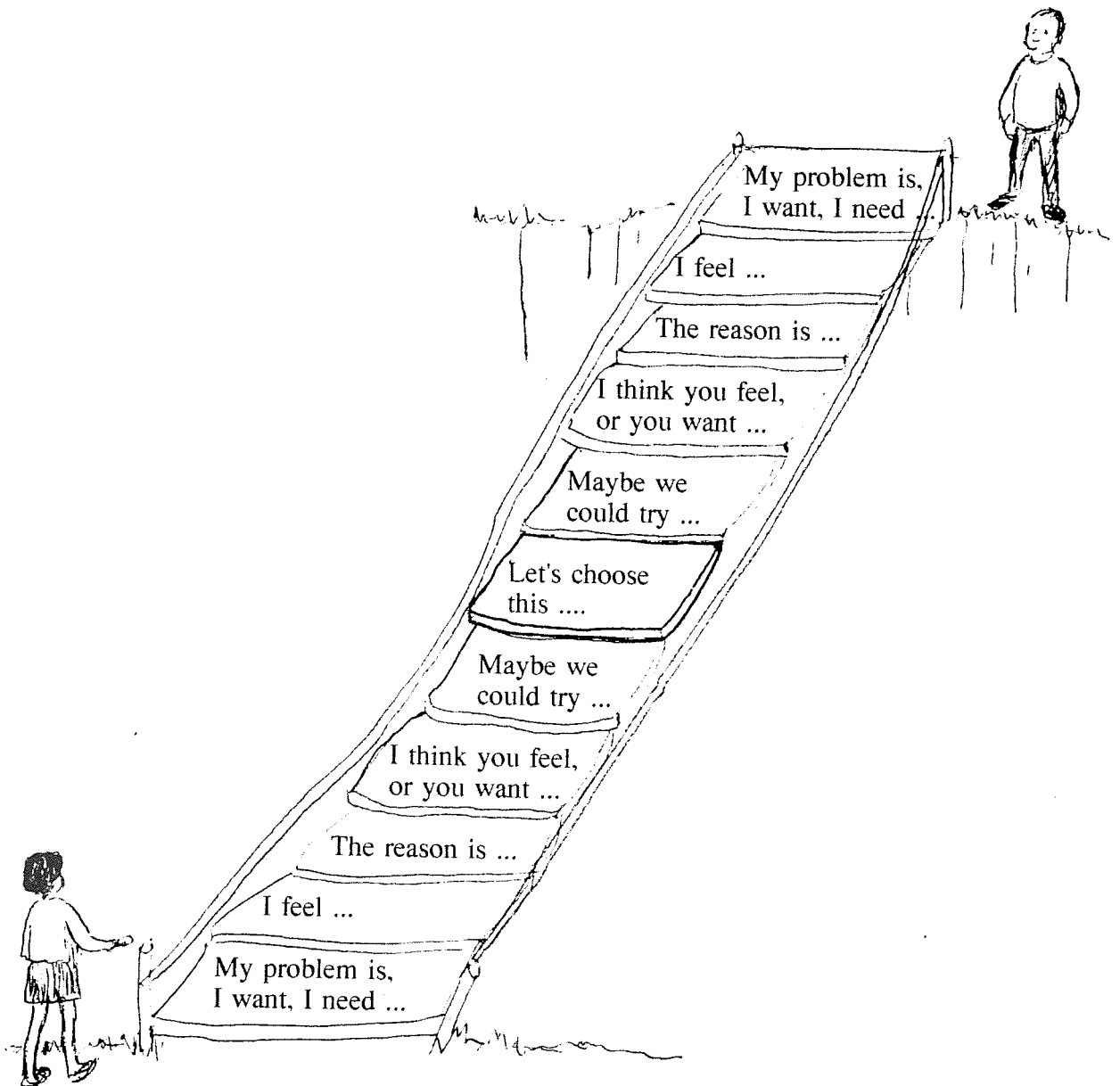
*Ian:* You shouldn't have your friend as a mediator because then it is harder to be fair. Even if you are fair, the other person might think it isn't fair. Sometimes the worst part is trying to stay calm and keep the talking quiet and polite!

*Jasmin:* One good thing is that if you do mediation and it doesn't work you can take it to your class circle time and sort it out there. And if that doesn't work then you could go to School's Council.

*Simon:* I've mediated between a boy and a meal time supervisor. It worked quite well, and they both said they thought it was fair.

*Dwayne:* Mediation is helping people but you're not supposed to give them the answers. They're supposed to think them up for themselves. If they can't agree you ask them for their suggestions. Then you ask if they can accept one of the suggestions.

### The mediation bridge



## Induction weeks

"the children help to run the school"\*<sup>5</sup>



Kirsty Anne Bickford

*Helen:* We made a list of all the jobs and put that on the board. Then we had two days to think about which ones we would apply for. We had to write letters of application, like with a real job, and we had to write a job description, so that we know what we're doing, the main and the minor duties and responsibilities.

*Tim:* We have to write job descriptions about what we think we need to do and how we will carry it out. The jobs are teachers' assistants, lunch time assistants, mediators, librarians, first aid, litter busters, monitors for the paper bank and the stock cupboard, and the PE and music cupboards to keep things safe. Some people do assembly, they set out and clear up the hall. And some of us look after the new ones and help to teach them reading and maths and to sort out their quarrels.

*Kirsty:* All of us in year 6 have jobs, and we wear badges to show our jobs. I'm a library monitor and a mediator. In the library all the books have a colour and there are five colours. We put the books back on their shelves, sorting them by the colour. We clear up any rubbish and we make it all tidy.

*Jean:* The eight house captains go round the classes to collect the house points each week. When you get a house point you write your name and the name of the adult who gave it to you on the list. House captains can give out 10 to 15 points each week if they see something really good going on. Our school mascot wears the winning house colour each week. We worked out how

---

\*<sup>5</sup> For more on induction weeks see school policy papers, page 60.

we could keep records of these. We do assembly every Friday. We plan it on our own, and we do games and quizzes. We sort out problems and help the teachers, and we have house captain meetings each week. Everyone has to set a good example, but especially the house captains. My mum's proud of me.

*Kevin:* House captains take responsibility for the rules and for the school behaving as it should. Sometimes it gets a bit out of hand, and the dinner ladies help us. Like if people throw food on the floor, they have to clear it up, and if they do it again they have to go home for their dinner.

*Class teacher:* I think we made a mistake of putting far too much on a few of the year 6 children. We're changing this year, with the jobs which they all share. The induction weeks have been a big chance to settle in the children, establish their work, what they want and our class aims. They listen to my needs as a teacher. I listen to their needs, and we sort things out. Circle times have been brilliant for that. We had circle time before, but we didn't take problems further than a class basis, so it didn't help much. Now, we use circle time for problem solving on a school basis.



## Choosing new teachers

*Head teacher:* The School's Council were talking about the need for new staff and one boy said, "Can we be involved? We need to know who is joining our team" We made enquiries and found that there was no rule to stop pupils from being involved in staff selection procedures. The children took this very seriously, they were polite, and asked very sensible questions. A great deal of preparation was put in by the teachers and pupils.

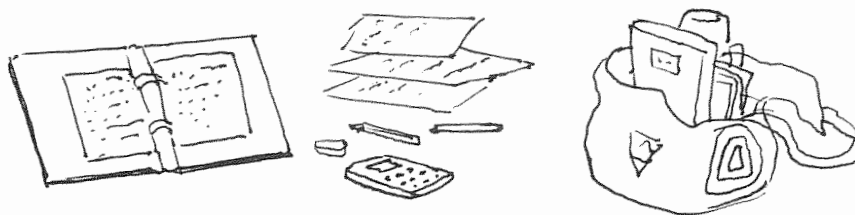
*Ian:* We're involved in interviews for all the new teachers. First we talk in circle time about the sort of questions we need to ask, and what sort of answers would be good for the school. Each class



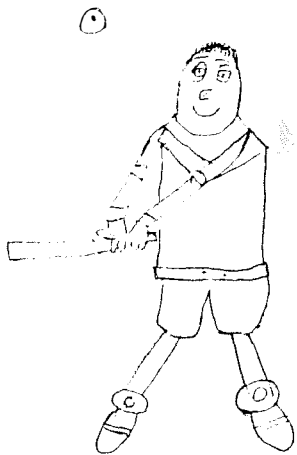
chooses the best person to ask their questions. Last time, there were two of us from each class, eight altogether and one teacher was with us but didn't say anything. We each asked one question and five people were interviewed. My question was "What kinds of extra curricular activities could you offer to the school?" We counted up the stars we gave them, and the one we thought would be best for the school got five.

*Head teacher:* The children did their interviews first and then we interviewed the applicants. We always take account of the children's views. We listen simply to what they think each applicant can contribute to school life. We decide first and then we read out the children's decisions. The children's and the adults' interview panel have always chosen the same person, except for last time when we thought two people were the best. They were all very good candidates, but the children said they wanted music and some sport, and we were influenced by their decision.

*New class teacher:* The interview with the children was the best bit of the day and it made me want to come to work here. It told me a lot about the school and about their expectations. They asked, "If a child walks out of the classroom what would you do?" to see if I'd picked up on the rules. They said, "We'd want you to see if the child was all right." All their questions were relevant. The interview took about 15 to 20 minutes and they had obviously planned the order of questions carefully. For me, that was the interview. The one with the adults was more an informal chat. I was told that the children's views were taken very seriously in making the decision.



*Head teacher:* If the children's and the adults' panel ever disagreed, I think as a governing body we would have to rethink our choice very carefully to take account of their views. All the candidates are advised of the children's role in selection of candidates, and they have all been very positive. I didn't like the idea of setting children up in judgement over adults. The aim is for the children to identify what qualities and talents each person can bring to the school. But when the children talk, it becomes clear who they prefer. They always look for someone who is firm and fair.



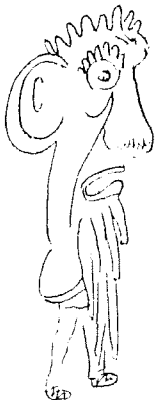
Martyn  
Richards

## The active school

Circle times work well when all the school does things together. Then we can use circle times to plan events and to talk about the times we have enjoyed.

*Head teacher:* We can say to the children, "Oh, you're really doing well." But unless children feel, "I can do this," they have low self esteem. They have to be able to know that they can do things. That is partly why we do lots of extra activities, such as canoeing, river crossing, Ten Tors, camping, as well as all the curriculum subjects so that they really achieve.

### Some of the things our school did this year



School residential trips:  
to Tintagel with games by the sea,  
barbecue supper and a disco;  
to an outdoor activity centre in France;  
to an exchange school in Yorkshire;  
to a residential centre on Dartmoor.

The younger children have sleep-overs, when we bring in sleeping bags and stay at school overnight and have breakfast together next day.

Clubs for skateboarding, football, frisbee, science, French, environment, canoeing and orienteering.

Year 6 learnt to ski.

We set up a junk band.

Sharing in the multi-cultural city carnival, with volunteers helping pupils to make elaborate costumes and huge masks for the procession. Ideas are taken from other carnivals around the world. Rehearsals and then an outing into the city to sing when the Lord Mayor unveiled the new peace tree.

Work with the police on a life skills day.

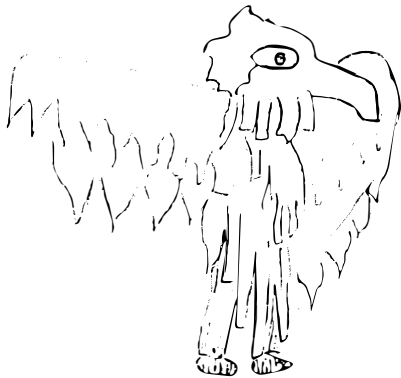
Work with industry on an oil terminal project.

Making a calendar with British Aerospace.

School summer fair and family disco.

A non-school uniform, dazzle day, when everyone is asked to come in very bright clothes with prizes for the brightest, to help to raise funds.

Year 6 pupils go to help other classes



Costumes for the  
carnival

Local old people come in for the luncheon club everyday.  
We have painted a big mural in the playground.  
We have students on work placements.  
We won the 1996 Education Extra Distinction Award.

The school governors often call in - to meet the new teachers, play the piano for the choir, check the next meeting's agenda, or plan an outing. Some of them help to repair the school building, and one governor is in charge of our water system. We found that we could get enough rain water from our school roof to run a swimming pool and now we use this water which goes through an ionizing tank to run our sewage system.



### **Investors in people**

We have many visitors - parents, voluntary helpers, the parish priest, business people, a cadet corps and people from the newspapers and television who publish reports about our school.

We value everyone in our school team. Our school has won the prestigious Investors in People award for our team approach to management and the personal and professional development of each individual. Everyone keeps a record of their successes, and we regularly review all progress as a team. Here is one person explaining what this meant to her.

*School cleaner:* I come here as a cleaner eight years ago. Then I went on to helping at the school, my own youngsters went to this school. Then I became a meal time supervisor. Then I went on to the governing board. We started Friends of Highfield and I chair that. We often attend the School's Council. And I'm general dogsbody, when the secretary's not here I sit in for her. It used to be "them and us". The cleaning staff had to knock at the staff room door, but now we sit in here with all the other staff. Now, it's quite a family concern. We all have our portraits by the front door.

The Staff Development Policies apply to everyone in the school: "Great store is set by the professionalism, expertise and knowledge that exists amongst the school staff. It is imperative that these qualities are used to the full as a shared experience by all staff. We endeavour to build the framework of all school development upon a team approach where all 'gremlins', ideas and successes are shared openly, a whole school concern and responsibility... We must always be open, receptive and ready to learn from the innovation, initiative, enthusiasm and fresh ideas that young teachers may bring, quietly adjusting and adding them to our professional repertoire whilst channelling them to meet pupils' and students' needs."

## **Views of the staff and other adults about Highfield Junior School**

*Class teacher:* What are the benefits for us? Much less stress. Much more time for positive things, instead of picking over problems. The school feels and looks a good place to work in. We haven't needed to have any exclusions for two years. You can enjoy teaching more.

*Head teacher:* I used to spend almost all my time dealing with behaviour problems. But now I spend very little of my time doing that, the children do it. Some teachers assume that these changes take up too much time to try, but think of all the time you save when you reduce all the behaviour problems.

*Class teacher:* There's no doubt that discipline in the school has changed. We used to try to create a team but it never actually happened. Then the present Head teacher came and took some of the ideas we were trying, and added some of her own, and moved them forward. Some things were hard at first, and we had to get used to working much more closely together. But there have been great benefits. We know each other, and support and rely on each other a lot better. Everyone is involved in making decisions and knows what's going on.

The main achievement is that we involve the children, and they feel they "own" the decisions and what is going on. There used to be awful problems with children destroying displays and other people's work. Now they value things, and they don't seem to need to be as aggressive. They like being involved.

Their decisions are on a higher plane. We started with little decisions, but now they're looking at things long term. And they look towards each other, they don't rush around trying to annoy you, there's very little of that now. It's come on gradually. You suddenly realise that something is much better, when you look back to what it used to be like.

Before, the adults, not the children, used to confront the bullies. Much more is now done by the children and less by the adults. It's made our jobs easier because we don't have to deal with some of the discipline problems that we used to. And that's freed us. It's taken quite a long time, but the school definitely feels calmer.

*Classroom assistant:* The School's Council and the peer mediation are really good, and they both tie in together. The children can bring their problems up there, and they get the children to think, and to be responsible for each other.

*School secretary:* As school secretary, I was often approached by the children with their problems. But now they take their problems

straight to the School's Council reps. Of course I type up the minutes from the meetings so you could say what I lost on the roundabouts I gained on the swings.

*School caretaker:* I've been at this school for many years. There used to be so much graffiti and mess to clear up, broken windows and furniture. It is all so different now, it's a pleasure to work here.



*Lunch time supervisor:* There's been a great change here. I think the School's Council makes the youngsters more mature, better people. We rely on them a lot. There are monitors and lunch time helpers. We used to have to have eyes everywhere, there's only three of us, but now we have all this help. There's much less fighting. We've got these warnings now, a verbal, two crosses then a note home to their mum. I'm learning to do mediation now. I tended to shout a bit, but I find it easier to talk to the children now and, yes, it helps that they all know about mediation.

All class 6 are assistants now, they've all got a responsibility with their little badges. They run the school, as far as I'm concerned. If we've got a problem we go to the Council. And if they can't sort it out we go to Mrs Farrington. We've started up a football team again. We used to have a meal time supervisor who only did football. Now she's left, and I don't know anything about football but the lads have taken it on their selves and so we've got no problem - well football does rather take over the playground. But we've sussed it out, and we're getting there, slowly.

*Class teacher:* Some people reading this book might think, "Oh well that school is probably in a very well off area, but our kids could never do anything like that." But our school is on an estate in Plymouth. Over half of our kids have special needs and free school meals. If we can do it, any school can, special schools too.

*School cleaner and school governor:* With the School's Council it's affected us a lot because it's made life much easier. As a cleaner, there's a great difference. Now, it's a privilege to clean the school. Before, it was messy, it was terrible - broken windows, litter, an awful lot of graffiti. But now you've got the School's Council here and if anyone's causing any problems and they see it, they report it.

Now, there's discipline in a different way. We've put Highfield on the map. Instead of people taking their youngsters away, they want to get into the school. I think the teachers are doing a terrific job on the budget we've got. We had some lovely teachers before, but it was all different. I believe the change is because of the School's Council and the mediation. If we've got a problem we go to the School's Council.

When the idea of the School's Council first came up we were a bit wary. But as it's come on, each year has got better. I feel if you don't try it you don't know. I think I've changed. Yes I'm more ready to give children a say.

*LEA appointed school governor* The school's achieving so much with difficult children that we have had children with problems referred here. Basically the school is treating children as more adult, as citizens, giving them responsibility, and helping them to find the answers that can benefit everyone. The OFSTED report was remarkable (see page 46). I think all the governors are very keen, the Head isn't dictatorial and we all have our say at the meetings. You get all shades of opinion, though we tend to agree on most things. I wouldn't stand for it if I was told what to do. I come to meetings about every three weeks.

*Social worker:* I am helping a girl who has been expelled from three schools to settle into this one. The ambience here is wonderful. They've just included her from the start. I'm sure she will stay and do well here.

*Class teacher:* As a junior teacher, if I was in a school that did not use these ideas, I'd start with my own class. I'd also talk to the head and the other staff, suggest a visit to a school like this one, and try to get them interested.

If I were a Head teacher, I'd start in the way we did here, setting boundaries with assertive discipline and getting the children on task. I'd want to persuade teachers that this is the best way, and get them to find this out for themselves. I would work through staff meetings. You can't impose these ways. But once most of the staff here have experienced the benefits of a whole school approach, everyone would have to join in then.

## What does OFSTED say about our approach to behaviour management?

### Inspection Findings

Highfield Junior is a school with many strengths and a number of good features. It serves its pupils well, in particular, the very positive manner the teachers and staff support the pupils by giving them strategies to manage their behaviour and promote the pupils' moral and social development and their personal welfare most successfully. This is a priority for the school and has a positive effect on the standards achieved by a significant number of pupils.

### Headlines

\* The leadership and commitment of the Head teacher and governing body is a strength of the school.

\* The pupils' behaviour is good: the pupils are given strategies to manage their behaviour. Good use is made of mediation and counselling. The pupils' attendance is satisfactory.

\* The pupils' social and moral development, and their personal welfare, is most successfully supported. Their cultural and spiritual development is well promoted.

\* The provision of outdoor and adventurous activities make an exceptionally positive contribution to the pupils' education.

\* Relationships at all levels are excellent.

\* Almost half the pupils in the school are identified as having learning and other difficulties; these pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress.

\* The quality of education provided is sound overall and adds greatly to the pupils' experiences and attainment. Most of the pupils achieve standards that are satisfactory and sometimes good for their abilities. However, some achieve standards which are lower than the national average for their ages in mathematics, science and some aspects of English.

\* Standards of information technology, design and technology, music, physical education and art are average for the pupils' ages and occasionally high in relations to their abilities.

\* The extensive range of extra-curricular activities offered is a feature of the school.

\* Appropriate use is made of time not devoted to the statutory basic curriculum to support speaking and listening, personal,

social and health education and physical education.

## **English**

\* Many of the pupils are competent and confident speakers and listeners. They are attentive, listen to instructions and respond well. Many can explain ideas clearly and logically and are encouraged to use specialist vocabulary. The school's use of "circle time" and the "School's Council" makes a most positive contribution to the pupils' listening and speaking skills.

## **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

\* The pupils' social and moral development and support for their welfare and guidance is exceptionally good. Their spiritual and cultural development is well supported. The behaviour of the pupils is good and they are taught to manage their personal behaviour and deal with that of others, through a thoughtful and supportive process of mediation and counselling.

\* Many opportunities are provided through curricular and extra curricular activities to enhance the pupils' spiritual development. The pupils are encouraged to see themselves as part of a world society and to reflect on their part within that society. They are given opportunities to look at the natural world and to respect what they see.

\* Moral and social development are given high priority in the school aims and are a feature of the school. There is successful use of "circle time" and mediation, in which the pupils and staff are able to discuss relevant issues. The adults provide very positive role models. The pupils learn to be tolerant and supportive of one another, to be cooperative, to understand right from wrong and to exercise self-discipline. The pupils' moral and social development is exceptionally good and is a strength of the school.

\* The pupils' cultural development is addressed successfully through many areas of the curriculum. The pupils are encouraged to develop an awareness of, and knowledge about, both their own culture and that of others. They are prepared for life in a multicultural society. Overall their cultural development is good.

## **Behaviour and discipline**

\* The behaviour of pupils in the school is good, and this has a positive effect on the standards of achievement, the quality and range of learning and the overall quality of life in school. The school has developed an extensive range of strategies for improving the pupils' behaviour and these arrangements are an outstanding feature of the school.

\* There are good policies, drawn up by staff and governors, providing clear guidance on discipline and anti-bullying arrangements. Any incidents of bullying are dealt with appropriately and sensibly. There is detailed and effective guidance on the use of



mediation processes, the house-point system, and the use of "circle time" and the use of rewards and sanctions. Teaching and support staff are consistent in the implementation of the procedures and excellent relationships exist through the school. The arrangements are effective and the pupils understand and are part of the behaviour management process. Parents are aware of the procedures. The school functions as an orderly community.

### **Pupils' welfare and guidance**

\* The school places a high priority on providing a safe and secure environment. Carefully documented policies, supported by the governors, are effectively promoted to provide for the welfare and guidance of the pupils. This is enhanced by excellent relationships at all levels between staff and pupils. Pupils are encouraged to cooperate with one another and this is actively promoted through "circle time", the "School's Council" and a mediation process. Pupils play a full part and make significant contributions to these initiatives.

\* The quality of pastoral care is high. The good relationships enable pupils to benefit positively from opportunities to take responsibility within the school community. Problems are discussed and pupils are confident in seeking resolutions themselves.

\* The teachers provide an excellent range of extra-curricular activities that include French, art and games clubs. These activities broaden the curriculum and have a significant impact on standards within the school. The pupils take work home, including reading books, project work and work to complete. They have opportunities to participate in a wide range of outdoor activities, including canoeing, abseiling, river crossings and the "Ten Tors" expedition. They take part in field trips and carefully planned residential visits and these experiences are an outstanding feature of the school, contributing greatly to its quality and the achievements of its pupils.

\* The school aims to promote good relationships with the parents of all the pupils within the school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to regular reviews of their child's progress. They are encouraged to become partners with the school in the education of their child. The success of such initiatives is limited by the response of some of the parents. Pupils are encouraged to help to set targets for their future learning.

\* Overall, the school is well managed and the governing body and Head teacher provide positive leadership. The school is successful in meeting its declared aim of supporting pupils' social and moral development and helping them to develop an appropriate set of values, including respect and consideration for others.

## What the school should now do

### Key issues the school needs to address

\* CONTINUE the positive approach to behaviour management and the promotion of the pupils' social and moral development and their welfare.



## The circle of seeds

### Who are the experts?

*Class teacher:* I'm not sure that calling in outside experts does much good. You already have scores of experts in the school - the children. They know what's going wrong and lots of ways of making things better. The children help us to run our school. They work with us and not against us. That happens when the staff know that the children want to learn and succeed. They have plenty of good ideas. They always have a huge impact on their school - for better or worse. You often find that the worst bullies turn out to be the best leaders.

For just a very few children, all these ways don't work. They would be excluded if there were at other schools. But we think exclusion wouldn't help that child to learn to solve their problems.

When a few children keep behaving badly, they only get away with it because the rest of the class let them. This is partly because the "bad" ones refuse to accept some things which the "good" ones also think are wrong or unfair. Excluding the worst ones is not the answer, a few more will take their place.

You can only really change the difficult children if you work in three ways:

- help them to learn how to change their behaviour;
- listen to the class and work with them to make changes which they choose;
- and work with the whole school using their ideas on how to make the school a fairer, safer, easier place for everyone to work in.<sup>7</sup>

**The whole pattern** *Class teacher:* All the things we do link together. You could have one without the others but it wouldn't be as strong. You need **assertive discipline** because 5 years ago we could hardly teach the children, when we couldn't get them to sit next to someone without thumping them. It's the idea that teachers have **rights** to teach and children have **rights** to learn and to be safe. In that framework the children work with the teacher to set the **rules** and boundaries and guidelines. The children decide them so that they can own them. The **warnings**, like white cards, give them a chance to correct their behaviour and to know how far they can go. The house points system gives us lots of chances to praise and reward the children. The negotiated **rewards** have to balance the accepted **sanctions**, like 10 or 20 minutes off lunchtime, or 10 minutes towards a class video.

The **house captains** are the elected leaders in their house. They have a lot of **responsibility** in running the school. The candidates write election speeches. One teacher is there for crowd control, but at the **voting** they all behave very calmly and sensibly. It's as if they have been doing this for years. People under-estimate children so much. Now, more children are learning to help to manage the school, and **induction weeks** are very useful for sorting out the jobs, the rules and the classroom organisation for the year.

Lots of schools have **circle time** on its own, mainly for games or **self-esteem** or **team building** and **listening skills**. Some use it for **changing behaviour** like bullying. We do this by letting the children confront someone who's been identified as bullying. We make sure they know that we like the person but don't like the behaviour. Everyone shares in helping people to change. We ask **parents** to help too. We teach children to be assertive. If they have a problem, we say, "Can you sort this out for yourself?" If not, go to the house captains, try mediation. If that doesn't work, try circle time and **guardian angels**. If there's still a problem go to **School's Council**, and last of all ask a teacher. We show them how to talk, and not fight, over conflict through **mediation**.

We also use circle time, in the classes and in School's Council, for **making decisions**. Any issues brought up by a class or at the house captains meetings for the School's Council are talked about seriously at Council meetings, and then reported back to the classes. It's like a channel up the school and then back down again. The children can feel it is worth talking in circle time when this can lead to action and change. They know they are able to do something about their problems and to celebrate their success.

The School's Council and house captains and the house points system all build on each other, so that they are all much better and more effective. All of them are so important, though in different

ways. Without circle time, School's Council wouldn't be owned by the children as much as it is now. Having everything together is the real backbone, the ethos of this school. Circle time keeps everything ticking over.

## **Using circle time for:**

**making decisions**

**mediation**

**discipline**

**School's  
Council**

**rights**

**guardian  
angels**

**rules**

**involving  
parents**

**warnings**

**changing  
behaviour**

**rewards**

**sanctions**

**responsibilities**

**house captains**

**team building**

**self esteem**

**voting**

**induction weeks**

*Head teacher:* We aim to help the children to gain skills, to help them in their personal lives and as citizens, to survive in society and to contribute to it positively. We want them to understand the democratic process, to feel that their voice counts when they vote, and to accept decisions made by the winning votes. Our school has changed through listening to the children, picking up their ideas and seeing where they take us.

*Class teacher:* In five years we've changed so much. There's never a point where we think, that's finished. We're a very forward thinking, and constantly changing group of people.

## School policy papers

*These policy papers are given as examples of the planning that is needed to support the policies described earlier. Some of the school's policies had already changed before this book was written. Frequent reviews, and changes to fit changing practices in the school are vital. These papers are therefore given as examples, and not as final statements.*

### Appendix 1 **Ways of using circle time** (see also page 62)

You can use the Circle Time technique to help children discover more about themselves - their strengths, feelings, preferences, weaknesses - as well as discovering more about their classmates. During circle time, the children gather in a circle and concentrate their thoughts and activities on one specific idea or concept. Children seem to look forward to circle time, since it is generally a happy occasion when they have a chance to build up each other's self esteem.

To ensure good circle times, establish and explain the following ground rules to the children.

**Rule 1** Remain seated in the place you choose.

Sitting in a circle is preferable, since it's informal and helps the children feel more comfortable about speaking in front of the group. Once they have chosen their places, have the children sprinkle a little pretend glue on the floor to remind them not to move around during the discussion.

**Rule 2** Make only nice, friendly, true comments.

**Rule 3** Talk only when it's your turn. Use a pass-around prop to remind the group whose turn it is to speak.

#### **Here are some topics to talk about**

- \* I'm happiest when .....
- \* I feel so mad inside when ....
- \* I wish I could ....
- \* Two of my favourite things are .....
- \* I'd really like it if .....
- \* I like to be with .....
- \* The best thing about school is .....
- \* If I were a teacher, I'd .....
- \* Sometimes I feel ....
- \* The best things about home is ....
- \* I like to be with people who .....
- \* Sometimes I get scared when .....

- \* I hate it when .....
- \* I'm really good at .....
- \* It's hard for me when .....
- \* I like to .....
- \* Something I once did all by myself was .....
- \* I like to think about .....
- \* I love .....
- \* I wish grown ups would .....
- \* It's easy for me to .....
- \* I wish it were easier for me to ....
- \* I like to hear people tell me .....
- \* My favourite part of the day is .....
- \* I was really sorry for .....
- \* I felt really proud the time I .....
- \* Something I'd like to learn about is .....
- \* I wish I could change .....
- \* The best thing that could happen to me would be .....
- \* I don't like it when people .....
- \* My best friend .....
- \* Right now I feel .....
- \* I'm happy that .....
- \* I wish my parents knew .....
- \* Someday I hope .....
- \* I'm best when .....
- \* I would like to .....
- \* My favourite sport is .....
- \* A funny thing that happened to me once was .....
- \* A part of me that I like is .....
- \* When I'm big, I .....
- \* My favourite colour is ....., because .....
- \* If I had a magic carpet I'd .....
- \* School makes me feel .....
- \* Friends make me feel .....
- \* When I talk in front of the class, I feel .....
- \* During reading, I feel .....
- \* During playtime I feel .....
- \* When I share I feel .....
- \* When I'm with my family I feel .....
- \* When I'm in the dark I feel .....
- \* When my friend is ill I feel .....
- \* When no one plays with me I feel .....



## Appendix 2 Behaviour policy statement

This whole school approach to behaviour management aims to ensure that every teacher (including a new or supply teacher) and every child is fully aware of acceptable standards of behaviour, positive rewards, possible sanctions for contravening the established code, and possible strategies for supporting those who may need help to achieve the standards set.

We aim to concentrate on making a distinct difference between the child and their behaviour. We want them to see that an item of bad behaviour is something that they have control over, can pick up and throw away. Our message must always be:

**"We like you - but we don't like that behaviour".**

**"We want you - but we don't want that behaviour".**

**"We want you in our group - we'll help you get rid of the behaviour".**

In 1991, we initiated a programme of behaviour management using the "Assertive Discipline" approach devised in the USA by Lee Canter.<sup>1</sup> The offshoots of this approach lie at the heart of today's classroom ground rules and individual pupil control strategies, but we have moved from what could have been identified as "teacher power" to "pupil empowerment" through negotiation, mediation and sharing in the management of the ethos of the whole school.

We have not moved from our original belief that:

**All children have a right to learn without disruption and aggression**

and that:

**All teachers have the right to teach without disruption and aggression.**

All teachers and support staff believe that it is very important to have high expectations of children in their standards of behaviour, and that the whole school team can continue to encourage a positive, polite pattern of behaviour throughout the school day in each child by:

- a) the provision of an interesting, relevant, challenging and varied curriculum
- b) by praising and rewarding children for good attitudes to behaviour and work (e.g. caring, sharing, co-operating, being patient, self-disciplined and polite)
- c) by creating a visually stimulating classroom and school

- environment
- d) by an understanding of and commitment to the management and organisation of the whole school day as a whole school approach with clearly defined discussed and accepted routines and parameters for behaviour
  - e) by setting a high example ourselves as teachers, staff, parents and governors in the way we care, share and co-operate with one another.

However since 1991 we have learned and experienced that:

Children want to feel safe and secure within the framework of an ordered, shared and understood society.

Children can identify the boundaries between acceptable and non-acceptable behaviour.

Children are sympathetic to the needs and feelings of their peers.

Children want to help their peers.

Children can identify personal goals for themselves and areas of positive change for others.

Children can offer positive support to their peers.

Children can negotiate change.

Children can share problems.

Children can act as mediators during aggression.

Children want to live in a happy, ordered environment.

Children thrive on praise and acknowledgement from their peers.

Children want to know exactly where they stand.

Children enjoy democratic debate.

Children want life to be fair.

Children want their rights to be acknowledged.

Children want to succeed.

Children like tackling and solving problems.

Children want to be loved for themselves.

Children want to respect and trust adults.

Children want the respect, trust and love of their peers.

Children know what sort of a society they want to live in.

Children want strong caring leadership from trusted adults, particularly teachers.

Children want to identify with positive role models.

Children like their friends to know them.

Children like sensible, fair rules.

Children like belonging to the school community.

It is these considerations which must generate any development of a Whole School Behaviour Management Policy. Imposing ideals based



upon teacher assumptions and apparently plucked from thin air, negating the vast contribution that our children are able to make do not ensure a healthy, safe, optimum, shared, democratic school society.

Our ethos and behaviour management structures must be firmly established in the roots and values of democracy and citizenship, with the child as an equal, active partner and viewed as a parent and citizen of tomorrow.

**The aims of our basic framework for Behaviour Management are therefore:**

- a) To establish a baseline of acceptable behaviour through negotiation between teacher/pupil and pupil/pupil supported by strategies which ensure that a whole school code of behaviour is aimed for and owned by all.
- b) To establish a whole school framework, which can be used to manage and organise change in the behaviour of a small number of children who persist in infringing our basic teacher and pupil rights by presenting problematic, attention-seeking, bullying, anti-social outbursts of behaviour in the classroom or playground.
- c) To establish a caring multi-support network to address the needs of the small number of individual children who demonstrate sudden outbursts of erratic, often aggressive behaviour brought about by the onset of out of school anxieties, problems or upheavals, which they are unable to face or cope with alone.
- d) To establish alternative formalised procedures which could be adopted if our whole school support approach does not fulfil or match the need of an individual child.

We must look to four areas of concern in order to fulfil these criteria.

- 1) Management of behaviour in the classroom as a shared teacher/class experience.
- 2) Management of behaviour as a whole school shared responsibility.
- 3) Management of behaviour through a school negotiated and agreed formal Behaviour Management Plan.
- 4) Management of behaviour under the guidance of a network of out-of-school support agencies.

**Management of Behaviour through a school negotiated individual Behaviour Management Plan.**

Occasionally our Framework fails to fully address a child's needs. Negotiation must then take place between the child, parents, class teacher and Head Teacher to set up an individual behaviour programme

with clearly identified long and short term aims for behaviour improvement. These aims should be supported by the child's peers in class.

If none of the above measures and procedures are rewarded by a more positive behaviour response from an individual child, then advice will be sought from outside agencies and formal referral procedures may be instigated. Detailed information of those procedures may be found in Devon Guidelines "Formal Assessment Procedures".

## **1. The Highfields approach to classroom management of behaviour**

All behaviour management strategies arrived at to date and outlined in this document have been achieved by pupil/teacher consultations and negotiation.

### **Basic classroom code of behaviour**

Each class has negotiated and established a set of numbered classroom rules. These are subject to discussion and re-evaluation at the beginning of each term, when rules, which are no longer needed by an individual class, may be deferred or even abolished. Most classes initially adopt a personalised version of the following code:

- 1 - Keep hands and feet to yourselves.
- 2 - Don't shout out.
- 3 - Follow all adult instructions without argument.
- 4 - No swearing.
- 5 - Always ask permission before leaving the classroom.

### **Methods of arriving at these rules**

During Induction Week at the beginning of the school year, circle time opinions lead to general class discussion and rule identification for the class. Class ideas and points of view are then taken to the School's Council. The School's Council representatives meet with the Head teacher and discuss the rules to be adopted by each class. Although all classes do not have to have exactly the same rules, an attempt is made to formalise the rule order and wording wherever possible so that we can have a framework for a whole school approach. The class rules may be subjected to renegotiation and revision which should then be reported back to the School's Council.

### **Methods of acknowledging and openly identifying these rules**

- a) Class discussion about rules and understanding sanction format.
- b) Rules to be displayed on classroom walls.

- c) Children write personal copies of rules.
- d) All children to write to their parents explaining the rules.
- e) Newsletter outlining policy/rules.
- f) Parents meeting to outline policy/rules.
- g) Follow-up letter specifying sanctions/rewards and progress.
- h) Parents' workshop if required.
- i) Assembly and Newsletter reminders.
- j) Availability of "Behaviour Management at Work" to parents, supply teachers, visitors, etc.

**Sanctions format to be applied by teacher  
if any rule within classroom code is not adhered to.**

If any rule is broken, the following order of sanctions will always apply:

- 1st break of rule - verbal warning
- 2nd break of rule - name on board
- 3rd break of rule - cross after name = 10 minutes detention at lunch time
- 4th break of rule - 2nd cross after name = 20 minutes detention at lunch time
- 5th break of rule - "white carded" i.e. sent to Head teacher with their white card accompanied by another child. This is to be found a small box file on the teacher's desk and the rule broken is listed dated and described.



The child will be given a stern warning and his/her name entered in our "Thin Ice Book" and Disruptive Behaviour Register. A child may then either return to class or may be excluded from the classroom to work with the Head teacher completing class tasks.

- (6) If the child continues to break class rules, the above format applies until the child reaches the Head teacher for the second time.
- (7) The child's name will once again be recorded in the "Thin Ice Book" and Disruptive Behaviour Register. He/she will be given an extremely stern reprimand and a detention during school time (i.e. loss of playtime(s) or after lunch time). The pupil will write a letter to parents explaining his/her poor standard of behaviour and the reasons for the detention. This will be accompanied by a formal letter from the Head teacher.
- (8) The problem will also be addressed during circle time by the other class members.
- (9) Any further breaking of any classroom rule during each half term period will result in the child being sent to the Head teacher for a Yellow Card in his/her file. The Yellow card acts as a final warning

- to the child.
- (10) Parent Interview. A letter will be sent to the parent from the Head teacher to inform them of the Yellow Card and to invite them to come to school in order to discuss the child's behaviour and ways that home and school can work together to ensure a positive improvement in standards, e.g. contract behaviour chart, etc.
  - (11) If a child with a Yellow Card breaks a rule within a 10 day school period, he/she is sent to the Head teacher. He/she must then write a letter home explaining his/her present behaviour. A letter is also sent from the Head/Class teacher asking to see the parents to discuss the unacceptable pattern and standard of behaviour and the sanction which must now be given. This is likely to be some form of exclusion from school for an agreed period. However, it is hoped that parents will share in Circle Time negotiation with members of their child's class to establish a more positive programme of structured support before this eventually should be considered necessary.

**NB:** If a child does not break any rules within the 10 school days after "Yellow Carding", then he/she is sent to the Head teacher in order to remove the Yellow Card from his/her folder. A certificate will be sent to the parents informing them of their child's success. The child will be publicly applauded and regularly commended for continued good behaviour. It is hoped that parents will return to share in the praise both offered and received during circle time.

The whole school approach to class behaviour management ensures that every teacher (including a new or supply teacher) and every child is fully aware of acceptable standards of behaviour, positive rewards and possible sanctions for contravening the established code.

## **2. The Highfields approach to whole school behaviour Whole School Support Framework**

- 1) Children are surrounded by the daily reminders of caring, sharing, tolerance and mediation through the general ethos and management of the school.
- 2) There is an induction period at the beginning of each academic year when expectations of behaviour and self management within a whole school/class context are established, parameters established and rules negotiated.
- 3) Children and staff work together through circle time, School's Council and the house point system to identify areas of need and success. Together they take equal responsibility for sharing, identifying and upholding acceptable standards and tackling problems. Everyone should feel cared about and aim to care for

- everyone's well being.
- 4) A guardian angel approach is available to promote support for negotiation and mediation.
  - 5) Reminders, rewards, incentives and updates are shared regularly.
  - 6) Circle time is used by children and staff as the backbone of behaviour management.
  - 7) Bully busters is a whole school open and shared concern.
  - 8) Parents are invited to share in the negotiation, and decision making.

### **A. Induction**

This is a vital part of our whole school/behaviour management approach when classes should be able to establish a rapport of group ownership, support and care.

These weeks are to be allocated solely to establishing parameters and expectations of behaviour within a whole school context and ensuring a full understanding/empathy between class and teacher, lessening any need for control other than that imposed by self and the group.

All decisions should be negotiated with the children through circle time and a democratic approach once the outline school parameters have been clearly established. It is anticipated that the time required for the induction will vary from class to class. However as an outline guide.

- Term 1 up to 2 weeks (or staggered for Year 3)
- Term 2 up to 1 week to recap and renegotiate
- Term 3 2 days renegotiation

However do not hesitate to take all the time you need. This may seem a huge allocation of time in an already stretched curriculum timetable, but at Highfields we firmly believe that setting this firm foundation of ownership, pride and self responsibility strengthens the children's will, capacity and tenacity to learn, to produce acceptable patterns of behaviour and to share practical group activities which lead to positive outcomes.

We anticipate that the need for such a strong focus will lessen as our behaviour management philosophy becomes the accepted and established foundation stone of all school life and learning.

### **Whole School Induction**

This forms a major part of our whole school approach to behaviour management and takes high priority at the beginning of each school year

(up to 2 weeks) with reinforcement, review and hopefully development during the first week of the Spring and Summer terms.

These are specific periods for deciding upon class rules, discussing school standards and approaches, and identifying good practice and positive developments as a whole school approach. They also serve to promote the bond of understanding between teacher and child and encourage group responsibility and care in class.

### **Issues to be addressed**

Charter of rights to teach and learn free from disruption and aggression

Classroom organisation/management

Care, safety and security of possessions/utensil storage

Equipment use, access and replacement

Use of "good paper" and playtime scrap

Class rules/rewards/sanctions

Co-operation groups

Circle time rules - election of representatives/monitors

House teams - house point system

Role of School's Council

Lining up - lunch time

- for assembly (leading in and out)

- from the playground

- for P.E.

- outside classroom - how to wait

How to cope with a supply teacher!

Movement around School - no running

P.E. safety/rules/kit/changing

Toilets

Use of computer/library

Resonation rules and standards (pen/pencil?, handwriting style, unacceptable standards, type of book, date? lines? margin etc.)

Criteria for marking, self recording, personal goals, assessment, evidence

School uniform - pride in school building

Staff room access

Lunch boxes

Lunch time behaviour - wet lunch times

Use of art room/ home base/ D.T. tool use and safety

Class plan for environment - use of rota

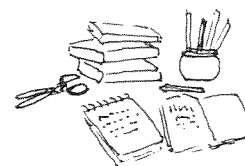
Washing rota

Litter

Display

Labelling

Children's possessions, objects allowed in school, where to keep money etc.



Playground behaviour - football, bin exclusion zone  
Fire drill and response  
Equality of opportunity  
Extra curricular activities.

All work should be sent home in the form of poster, letter, information leaflet, poem, etc. to parents so that they can share in learning about the school and its ethos.

## **B. Circle Time**

Circle time has become the backbone of our whole school approach to the management of self and behaviour. It is a crucial tool in the development of self esteem, teamwork, social responsibility, problem solving and positive behaviour throughout the school. It is used on a regular, but not timetabled, basis in each class, so as to maintain the interest and novelty element. Sessions may be short or long depending upon the needs of the class. Circle time is used particularly in the following ways.

- \* To build up a group rapport and self esteem in the individual.
- \* To identify as a class, the needs and strengths of all members and offer class solutions, care support and strategies to the individual or a group when a problem arises e.g. bullying.
- \* To raise concerns, problems, complaints, freedoms and responsibilities to be dealt with by the school council.
- \* To solve disputes through group discussion.
- \* To accelerate a whole school approach to all policy development - e.g. behaviour management/school rules.
- \* To encourage children to take direct responsibility for and play an active role in the management and organisation of the school.
- \* As a support and source of information for the teacher upon which to base future individual and class development.
- \* For fun! And simply for every child to have the chance to speak up and speak out.

We are pleased to report that we can see the "Official circle time" gradually percolating into the children's handling of day to day situations as they adopt an unofficial circle time approach to all personal problem solving and decision making.

### **Once the ground rules have been established circle time used:**

As a technique:

to help children discover more about themselves

to build self esteem  
to discuss and adopt class rules  
for the class to support and modify a child's behaviour within an atmosphere of care, attention and concern  
to prioritise classroom/school needs  
to involve every child in the further development of the whole school  
to identify and act upon class concerns and whole school issues.

As a tool:

for building team/group/class liaison, trust and cohesion  
to solve disputes/problems  
for changing and inventing personal, group and curriculum initiatives  
for developing confident personal decision making.

Circle time is an integral element of our P.S.E. policy years 3 - 6.

as a management tool  
as an anti-bullying weapon  
as a method of comfortable induction to school rules and consistent standards of behaviour  
as a way of raising concerns through a personal -> class -> whole school -> staff -> management through School's Council approach  
as a forum for innovation and ideas  
as a vehicle for expressing and venting of genuine feelings and concerns  
as an aid to the teacher when assessing a child's social/emotional and behaviour needs and level of understanding  
as a vehicle to promote speaking and listening skills and support all areas.

**In these ways circle time can give each child:**

- \* The space to offer a personal statement or opinion which is listened to and valued by the group.
- \* A valued, valid and valuable role as policy initiator, contributor and developer.
- \* A sense of responsibility for and ownership of the school and what happens in it.
- \* A model of behavioural good practice for life.
- \* Group ownership of a problem, and an awareness of the need for negotiation in decision making.
- \* Recognition that others may have a point of view which can still be



valid whilst differing from their own.

- \* And most important of all an increase in self esteem and the confidence to handle positively the demands and problems of daily life.

Circle time foci are developed and extended as the child progresses from Year 3 to Year 6. Although it always exists as the tool for class negotiation, awareness raising and problem solving, it is important too, to identify a progression and development for the child.

### **Therefore:-**

In Year 3, the focus is upon raising the self esteem of the child by encouraging a shared oral contribution which is seen as valuable, valid and valued by the group.

In Year 4, the focus is on the identification of the strengths of the individual and raising personal aspirations and goals and sharing them with the group.

Year 5 build upon Circle Time as a tool for negotiation, with recognition, acceptance and consideration for the rights and beliefs of others.

Year 6 look toward democratic rights and their future as individuals and as a participating, contributing, caring member of a group.

Circle time which attempts to identify and address the problems faced by a class member must be considered within an atmosphere of care and support. If the class feel that the child's parent(s) should be involved in their circle time, then this should be discussed and followed through. It is hoped that as many parents as possible will wish to share in and contribute to circle time discussions about their child's behaviour.

Children are also encouraged to solve all problems in or out of school/class using a mini-circle time approach, using guardian angels, teachers, class reps, house captains or simply their initiative to organise them.

### **C. School's Council**

Circle time is an ideal tool for addressing both class and whole school issues, but it is obvious that in order to work as a whole school team we need a forum where all issues can be raised as whole school concerns. This was the reason behind the introduction of the School's Council.

The School's Council acts as a Forum for all issues raised during class circle times under the headings of:

- \* Successes Where all successes (children, adult, building, behaviour etc.) are identified and rewarded
- \* Failures/Problems "Hiccoughs" in the system to be resolved
- \* Needs/Ideas Any outstanding omissions and suggestions to be addressed
- \* Freedoms/Responsibilities Any request for change must be matched by a list of responsibilities which must be met for that change to be acceptable.

Behaviour problems of individual children are identified and support group strategies decided upon. Up to two representatives and an observer from each class are invited, and the meeting is open to meal time supervisors, any member of staff available or with a particular concern, and the Head teacher. Parents are invited to certain open meetings throughout the year.

The School's Council approach where pupils take a direct democratic responsibility for the school ethos and management lies at the very heart of the philosophy of behaviour/class and whole school management at Highfields and should therefore be accorded high status and priority.

#### **D. House points**

The House System was initially set up to reflect the need for children to belong to a different group structure with a wider age range than their class.

- 1) Four Houses have been chosen to represent Plymouth's naval traditions and given different colours.
- 2) Each child is assigned to a house with as even a distribution as possible per class.
- 3) A democratic election (with polling booths, manifestos, voting slips etc.) is held during the 3rd week of September to elect house captains and vice-captains from Year 6. These are awarded their badge of office at a special post-election assembly and it is their job to organise and run the house system with support from the Head teacher and a named member of staff.
- 4) House points may be awarded by all adults in school (up to a total of approx. 20 per week per adult). They may also be awarded by house captains, by school's council and as a class decision during circle time by the class to individuals.

- 5) House points are awarded for:
 

Caring	Being helpful
Improving	Good Work
Not Bullying	Good behaviour (can also be awarded by School's Council)
Achievement	"I did it"
Assembly Bonus	Politeness, telling the truth.
- 6) Any child reaching 30 house points receives a special badge from their house captain.
- 7) House points are collected each week by the house captains and results given out during Friday. The coloured bib of the winning house is worn by Sidney, our school mascot, for one week. A shield is awarded at the end of the term to the house with the most house points.
- 8) "House points of view" surgeries are held once per week in private by the house captains. Children may then bring any problems they feel have not been addressed, needs which have not been met, ideas activities, successes etc. to the attention of their Year 6 house captains for discussion during the house captains meeting on a Friday or during the follow-up house captains/Head teacher meeting.

In this way, we have another cross-year contribution to the management of the school and way that the individual child's voice will be heard.

### **E. Parental Involvement**

It is hoped that parents will become involved in our Circle Time Identification of problem/need/support strategies:

- 1) Identification by children (guided by teacher) of the need to involve the parent(s) of a child who is seen as adopting persistent "bullying" or problematic behaviour during circle time or School's Council.
- 2) Parent(s) invited by letter from children and/or communication with teacher/Head teacher to join in a circle time (see page .)
- 3) Parent participation in circle time to decide on home/school action plan/strategies.
- 4) Parent participation in follow-up review.

Parents are also invited to bring into school for circle time discussions, problems which they are facing as a result from a child's deviant behaviour at home.

A mediation help-line has also been set up for any parents who are experiencing difficulties with relationships with other parents because of an out of school argument, quarrel or difference of opinion. This is also a sort of circle time for adults, but with trained councillors who act as negotiators and mediators. We cannot help children to change their aggressive behaviour towards another child if their parents are in disagreement and discord out of school.

## **F. Guardian angel**

Both prevention and support are also offered through a **guardian angel** system organised by Year 6 where "victims" or children fearful of any confrontation or aggression can be assigned guardian angel to be called upon for help and guidance when dealing with a confrontational situation. **The role of the guardian angel is one of mediator.** The mediator may be from the same classes, or can identified older child. Once again the guardian angel's role is reviewed regularly during circle time.

## **Bully busters**

The children know that it is wrong to label someone as a bully, but it is right to help a child who is making antisocial choices of behaviour. However, we decided to include in this book the starting point of our bully buster programme of five years ago.

It has been agreed by the school council that there should be only one whole school rule:

"Show care and respect for yourself, your friends, your teachers and helpers, your school, your belongings and your family at all times."

The underlying message in this rule is that bullying will therefore not be tolerated in any form.

We believe that all children have the rights to play without fear of violence or intimidation from others.

We have adopted an ongoing personal/social development programme as an integral part of our school curriculum. This means that all children are encouraged towards healthy growth as honest citizens, showing respect and care towards others.

Unfortunately, these is often a small number of children who may persist in infringing these rights by presenting aggressive, intimidating, bullying behaviour in the playground.

We see bullying behaviour as

- displays of aggressive behaviour towards other children
- verbal abuse and threats directed at other children
- any menacing actions which cause fear, upset or worry in the hearts and minds of other children.

We have established a clear system of whole school and prevention strategies within a policy which encourages the immediate identification of any "bullying" behaviour. We have a clear format of more official sanctions that could be applied should our team support strategies prove inadequate and fail to help an individual child adjust his antagonistic social behaviour. (An assertive discipline programme is linked to our bully buster framework and may be used on a daily basis by all staff - supply, support, teaching, student, etc. as a clearly established, universally understood and accepted method of class/individual behaviour management.)

We therefore anticipate that these measures will prove sufficient to deter bullying behaviour or address it whenever necessary through open and available, supported channels of communication.

However we acknowledge that there may be a small number of children whose needs and anti-social behaviour may not be met in the long term through our whole school support programme.

We therefore have a clear format of sanctions that could be applied should our team support strategies prove inadequate and fail to help an individual child adjust his antagonistic social behaviour.

### **Alternative procedure of bully identification available to children.**

#### **Bully box/folder system**

All children have access to bully slips in the classroom to report (anonymously if wished) any bully or menacing behaviour. These can be posted in the class bully box at any time. The class bully box/folder is opened for class discussion during circle time once a week (usually Friday). On Monday each class will then be sent the slips showing those children in their class who have been named and discussed as showing bullying behaviour towards other children. The class will discuss these problems and decide on ways to help, support and change the behaviour of any aggressive individuals in their class.

A list of all children who have been identified by both classes as using a "bully approach" towards others will be brought to the School's Council

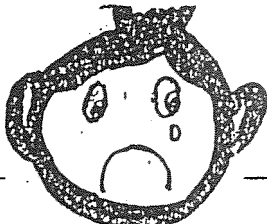
meeting and the attention of the Head teacher so that the behaviour of these children can be monitored. The abolition of bully folders is at present being considered by School's Council after all classes have stated they do not see there is any further need for their existence.

### Additional Interventions

(1) The assistant Head teacher and/or Head teacher will take "quiet, off the record" intervention action where necessary (e.g. quiet word with individual children, reminders, play observation, apologies, identify personal "squabbles" etc.).

(2) Where a child's bullying behaviour persists and is brought to the attention of the staff and School's Council as a persistent problem no longer acceptable to children, having been addressed through class circle time and school's council strategies the Head teacher will contact the parent with a view to following our format of sanctions hopefully with full parental involvement and support.

I am unhappy because
_____ bullied me at
playtime/ lunchtime/ after school
_____



At this point **all** incidents reported as bullying behaviour should be reported to Head teacher and logged.

### Alternative sanction format for bullying behaviour

**Only to be applied if all school team efforts are to no avail.**

1. General school and bully box identification and investigation.
2. Parents' help invited where queries occur.
3. All incidents reported to Head teacher are logged.
4. Parents informed of child's bullying behaviour.
5. Assembly where pupils who continue to bully will be presented and named and taken to put Red Card into his/her personal file.
6. The pupil will be excluded from joining the rest of the children in

- the playground during playtimes and lunch times for 5 school days. Instead the pupil will play in a smaller, grassed outdoor recreation area, either alone or with other children identified as having bullying behaviour. They will be supervised by a duty teacher or M.T.As. During wet lunch times the hall will be used as a segregation area but no movement around hall will be allowed.
7. After 5 days the child will be allowed to return to the playground during playtimes and lunch times with all other children.
  8. If another incident of bullying occurs, then the child must return to the recreation area for a further 5 days. Parents are informed by letter and asked to attend school for interview.
  9. Interview with parents, during which they will be informed that should there be any further incidence of bullying by their child, then he/she will be excluded during lunch time for an initial period of one week. Parents would be asked to collect their child at 12.30 (12.40 p.m. in the case of a Free Meals child) and return them to school at 1.30 p.m.
  10. Should there be any continued reported bullying after a period of lunch time exclusion, then parents would once again be contacted with a view to deciding upon further home/school initiatives and additional sanctions (e.g. parental responsibility for child during playtimes).
  11. In extreme cases of persistent bullying, suspension from school for a predetermined period with support from outside agencies will be considered.
  12. If a child does not participate in any bullying behaviour in the playground during the 10 days following "Red Carding" or during the 10 days following an exclusion period, he/she will then remove the "Red Card" from his/her file. A certificate is sent to parents informing them of their child's achievement. The child will be particularly noticed and rewarded for his positive developments in relationships through the following weeks/terms/year.
  13. Records are always kept of incidents of bullying.

**These official procedures have not had to be applied for the past two years.**

### **Bullying behaviour immediately after school**

If a child is found to be bullying another child after school, then further sanction will be decided upon. Parents would be informed that the offender would leave after other children. This would mean a short detention period, 3.10- 3.20 p.m.

Teachers can also minimise behaviour disruption by a variety of prevention strategies and good classroom management. These issues must continue to be tackled through stated discussions and constant evaluation of whole school practice.

Whilst we have a firm policy for whole school behaviour management and strategies clearly identified, there is no doubt that the system will only work if you are committed to making it work AND if you and your children work together to nurture these roots of citizenship and democracy. Remember always that the aim of education at Highfields Junior School is to nurture honest, informed and honourable citizens.

**Four pages of the School's Behaviour Policy Statement form the Parents' information: behaviour policy statement.**

**The policy documents printed here also inform other school policy statements such as the one on equal opportunity policy and on the curriculum**

The behaviour policies at Highfields fit the wider aims of the school.

The vision statement of the Highfields Junior School curriculum is to further the healthy, informed, honest development of all children as honourable citizens of their community, nation and the world, with an ability to identify the importance, validity and individuality of the contribution they can make at every stage of their lives.

However, this aim can only be achieved through the day to day encouragement of:

- 1 lively, enquiring minds, the ability to questions, and to argue rationally and to think for themselves;
- 2 feelings of wonder, imagination and humour;
- 3 the ability to work independently and with others, to enjoy and build on success with an appreciation of human achievement through endeavour;
- 4 a sense of self respect, self confidence and self reliance with
- 5 a sensitivity to the needs of others and a respect for their religious and spiritual values;
- 6 knowledge, skills and practical abilities they will need throughout their lives, at work and play, in a fast moving world;
- 7 promotion of excellence.



### **Appendix 3 Policy statement on the spiritual and moral development of pupils**

The aim of Highfields Junior School is to encourage the development of pupils as honest, informed and honourable citizens. It therefore promotes healthy spiritual and moral development:

- \* through its curriculum
- \* its ethos of care and respect for others
- \* its firm, fair, negotiated ground rules for behaviour
- \* its democratic shared approach to school management
- \* its shared vision of raising standards of self esteem, self awareness and achievement
- \* and its sensitivity to both the long term and sporadic need of the individual.

#### **Moral development in an educational context**

At Highfields Junior School we strive to make moral development a two-way home/school experience. At school there is an insistence that pupils behave in an acceptable fashion towards staff and towards each other. Rules about these matters with sanctions to ensure that they are observed are arrived at through democratic pupil/teacher negotiation. Aggression against others is not tolerated. Mediation is offered as an alternative. These rules provide an early opportunity for pupils to become aware of and accept that an effective and just society is based on the assumption that certain rules are acceptable to a wide range of individuals. Pupils learn the consequences for themselves and others of infringing the rules of the community. They learn that they can support others when following a rule proves difficult for them. We aim for pupils to move towards an understanding of why rules are important, and therefore to act upon them from conviction, rather than simply from fear of getting into trouble. Pupils also learn the more difficult lessons: that rules are interpreted differently by different people, that sometimes allowances are made for people who break rules and sometimes not, but these decisions are arrived at through open, shared, reasoned discussion, where pupils understand the need for sensitivity to deal with either the long term or sporadic need of any individual.

We hope our children will leave us able to:

- \* distinguish between right and wrong;
- \* articulate their own attitudes and values;
- \* take responsibility for their own actions;
- \* recognise the moral dimension to situations;
- \* understand the long and short term consequences of their actions

- for themselves and others;
- \* develop for themselves a set of socially acceptable values and principles, and set guidelines to govern their own behaviour;
- \* recognise that their values and attitudes may have to change over time;
- \* behave consistently in accordance with their principles.

### **Spiritual development**

We see spiritual development as part of the search for meaning and purpose in life through the development of personal beliefs, openness to inspiration from the natural world, mystery or human achievement, an inner "aura" of being at peace with oneself, and the identification of values by which to live through challenge and emotions both positive and negative.

We hope our children will be able to:

- \* Be aware of their senses and sensitivities.
- \* Be curious, imaginative and expressive in thought, word and deed.
- \* Recognise that not all questions have immediate answers that can be solved by others.
- \* Recognise that everyone is an individual with independent thoughts, choices and rights.
- \* Develop relationships with adults and peers and understand that community can only exist where individuality and freedom are accepted.
- \* Understand that people can challenge and explore the beliefs and values of others without aggressions.
- \* Be aware of the need for silence and reflection.
- \* Have cultivated a desire to seek aesthetic challenge.

These ideals will be made available and achievable for all pupils through the structure and framework of a relevant challenging curriculum, the ethos of the school and a shared vision for whole school development rooted in the ideal of the rights of the citizen in a changing world.

We recognise that the teaching of RE (using an identified framework which intermeshes knowledge with the child's freedom to match and develop their own beliefs and values), together with the content of collective worship experiences, will always support and enhance the spiritual moral development of pupils. However we see these aspects as "integral" rather than "fundamental" to the encouragement of a child's growing awareness of spiritual and moral dilemmas and decisions, by reaching a questioning openness and establishing personal stand points.

## Appendix 4 Curriculum statement

Our pupils will soon have the opportunity to take their place as voting citizens in a democratic society. It is very important that the education they receive during these formative years should prepare them for the rights, responsibilities, duties and obligations which accompany the role of citizens in our rapidly changing world.

The aim of education at Highfields Junior School is therefore:

- 1 to nurture the development of our pupils as honest, informed, healthy and honourable citizens of the future
- 2 the development of a strong personal moral code
- 3 a reasonable set of attitudes, values and beliefs
- 4 a recognition and understanding of mediation and negotiation as a means of conflict resolution
- 5 an understanding of the world and their place in it
- 6 a respect for democracy
- 7 a respect for the values and the beliefs of others and
- 8 a recognition of the importance and value of each child's personal contribution to world wide social and ecological harmony
- 9 promotion of personal and academic achievement.



We can further these aims through the provision of a happy, caring and structured learning environment within an atmosphere of security and stability.

The crest of our school (page 74) shows a world map as a symbol of the time when Plymouth hero Drake extended the world's horizons through his bravery and seamanship and loyalty to his nation. The crest now has an additional message - that the pupils of Highfields Junior School are now extending their own horizons as they prepare themselves for the responsibilities of citizenship in a local, national, international and world-wide context.

The curriculum is the means by which our aims are pursued. Our curriculum provision aims to build on personal experience and encourage pupils to see citizenship as something which extends beyond their immediate experience and relationships. Individuals have obligations to and relationships with national, European and world-wide communities. Citizens moving into the 21st century will acquire an appreciation of the significance of the economic, social and political changes taking place in Europe and the world, together with the need for international cooperation.

The 1988 Education Reform Act requires that a school must have a balanced and broadly based curriculum which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of the pupils at the school and of society and
- prepares such pupils for the opportunities, responsibility and experiences of adult life.

We feel that we are fulfilling these requirements through careful consideration of our curriculum structure.

### **Curriculum structure**

Children are already onlookers or participants everyday in certain "worlds" and will continue to explore, extend, succeed, fail, create in, interact in and intermesh these "worlds" throughout their life.

- 1 The family world where needs are those of basic survival, i.e. food, home/shelter, warmth.
- 2 The social world i.e. the environment in which a child must learn to share and contribute.
- 3 The outside world i.e. the awareness of the societies, culture and environments of others, travel and communication.

- 4 The world of work i.e. the recognition of a need to contribute towards human achievement through endeavour, trade and industry.
- 5 The world of leisure i.e. the need for time to be allocated to relaxation and pastimes.
- 6 A healthy world i.e. the recognition of the importance of health and safety within a global context.
- 7 The world is your oyster i.e. awareness that there is opportunity and choice in life and that personal frontiers can be extended.

We need therefore to build upon the personal experiences of each child in these "world" areas in order to transfer an awareness and understanding of their world to the world and their future role in it, as an honest, honourable, informed citizen with a certain control over their destiny by exercising choice.

The curriculum is the vehicle by which our aims are pursued. Therefore we must consider carefully the impact that curriculum content, ethos and activities can make upon these areas of the child's development as a future contributing member of society.

The child progresses through life from a self-centred role as:

- Me
- Member of the Family
- Citizen of Efford
- Citizen of Plymouth
- Citizen of Devon
- Citizen of Great Britain
- Citizen of Europe
- Citizen of the World
- Citizen of Planet Earth
- Citizen of the Future



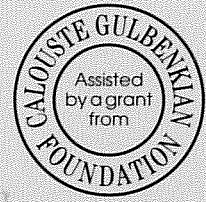
Planning of all learning experiences should therefore initially be generated through consideration of the input needed to enhance each child's knowledge and personal "world" development, through the national curriculum programme of study. We aim for our curriculum to reflect life and the part children can play, not a distant or unreal focus.





# Changing our school

by Highfield Junior School  
Plymouth



*As soon as the school changed, with clearly defined boundaries for behaviour, and the rules were being kept, the children said, "We like this. We like knowing where we stand. We like life to be fair, but - we don't like adults ordering us about and making decisions for us. Please let us have our say."*

*How could we move forward, socially and academically, as a whole school team?*

*Our main achievement is that the children are involved. They feel they "own" the decisions.*

*Their voices are listened to and acted upon. They know that life in school will only be as good as they can make it.*

**Many schools now have circle time, mediation and a School's Council. Highfield School is unusual in how it links these with other methods, to make them all more effective.**

**This book tells the story of how we have changed our school over the past five years. It has not been easy, but it has been very worthwhile.**

**We hope that our story will be useful to staff and pupils in other schools, as well as to school governors and parents, education authority staff, people involved with courses for teachers and people who assess schools.**



## How this book came to be written

Like many other schools, Highfield has developed very good ideas, but no one in the school has much time to write reports about their new work which could help other schools. The Head teacher, Lorna Farrington, and some of the pupils spoke at conferences about the school.

Priscilla Alderson PhD, who works in the Social Science Research Unit at the Institute of Education, heard one of these talks. She was completing a project funded by the Gatsby Trust about special schools for disturbed pupils,<sup>8</sup> and was very interested to learn of a mainstream school which was able to prevent exclusions and to develop effective new ways of responding to behaviour problems.

She arranged with the school to be a writer-in-residence in July 1995 at the end of the school year, and in September during the induction weeks. The book is based on the accounts of the staff and pupils at the school, telling their story in their own words.



## References and resources

1. Canter, L. & Canter, M. (1976/1993) (revised edition). Assertive discipline: step-by-step guidelines for effective classroom management. For details of books and courses contact: Behaviour Management Ltd., The Old Rectory, Iron Acton, Bristol BS17 1UQ. Tel 01454 228962, Fax 01454 228981.

2. United Nations. (1989). Convention on the Rights of the Child. Geneva UN. For further information contact Children's Rights Office, 235 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2H 8EL.

Fountain, S. 1995 Education for development: a teacher's resource for global learning. London: Hodder & Stoughton/UNICEF

3. McNamara, S. & Moreton, G.  
(1993). Teaching special needs: classroom strategies and activities;  
(1995). Changing behaviour: teaching children with emotional and behavioural difficulties in primary and secondary classrooms. London: David Fulton.

4. Mosley, J. (1993). Turn your school round: a circle time approach to the development of self esteem and positive behaviour in the primary staff room, classroom and playground. Wisbech: Learning Development Aids.

### 5. Books about feelings

Liu, G. (1994). How do you feel? London: Evans Brothers Early Words Series.

Saunders, P. Myers, S. (1994). What do you know about - relationships? London:

Aladdin Books Series. Amos, J. (1990). Lonely, Sad, Afraid Bath: Cherry Tree Press Series

### 6. Mediation and conflict resolution contacts:

Hilary Stacey 14 Ruchmore Street Leamington Spa CV31 1JA.

Jessons Mediation Project, Jessons C of E Primary School, School Street, Dudley, West Midlands on their mediation and conflict resolution work.

Newham Conflict and Change, 2a Streatfield Avenue, East Ham, London E6 2LA.

Mediation UK, 82a Gloucester Road, Bishopston, Bristol, BS7 8BN. Tel 01272 241234 Fax 01272 441387.

Signal Point, Station Road, Swindon, Wilts. Tel 01793 514596, for a pack of youth action initiatives, talk through trouble, mediation and facilitating.



Southwark Mediation Centre, Cambridge House, 131 Camberwell Road, London SE5 0HF.

Turning the Tide, Quaker Peace and Service, Friends House, 173-177 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ. Tel 0171 387 3601 fax 0171 388 1977, email qps1@gn.apc.org.

Books, packs, newsletters

Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. (1995). Children and Violence: checklist for working towards a non-violent society. Report of the Commission on Children and Violence, from Turnaround Distribution Ltd., 27 Horsell Road, London N5 1XL, £12.50 inc p+p. Free summary from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 98 Portland Place, London WC1N 4ET.

Education in Human Rights newsletter. Centre for Global Education, College of Ripon & York St John, Lord Mayor's Walk, York YO3 7EX.

Fine, N. & Macbeth, F. (1992). Playing with fire: training for the creative use of conflict. £14.95; - (1991) Fireworks - creative approaches to conflict: materials to use with young people. Both from Youth Work Press. Tel 0171 272 5630.

Fisher, R. & Ury W 1992 Getting to say yes: negotiating an agreement without giving in. Century Business, £5.99.

Gilmore, J. & Dymond, P. (undated). The cooperative classroom: a behaviour resource pack for primary schools. LINKS Educational Publications, The Dingle, Pontesbury Hill, Pontesbury, Shropshire, SY5 OYN. Tel 01743 790 029, £20.50 inc p+p.

Johnson, D. & Johnson, R. 1995 Teaching students to be peacemakers. Interaction Book Company, Minnesota, USA. Tel. 612 831 9500. ISBN 0 0939603 22 5

Kingston Friends Workshop Group. (1989) Ways and means: practical exercises for children for peaceful problem solving. Tel 0181 547 1197, £9.00 inc p+p.

Mashedier, M. (1996) Let's cooperate. Oxford: Oxfam Print Unit.

Nicholas, F. (undated). Coping with conflict: a resource book for the middle school years. Wisbech: Learning development Aids

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. (1988). Winners All: cooperative games for all ages. London: Pax Christi, 9 Henry Road, London N4 2LH. Tel 0181 800 4612.

Prudential Youth Action Initiative. Working with people to create safer communities. Free pack from Crime Concern, Signal Point, Station Road, Swindon Wilts SN1 1FE.

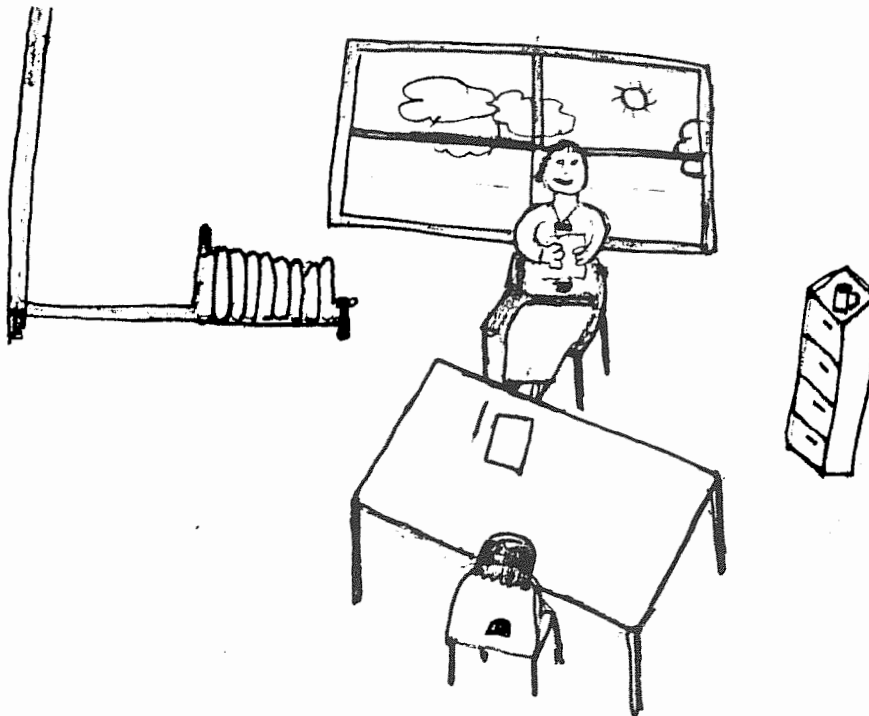
## 7. Bullying and disturbed behaviour

Blatchford, P. & Sharp, S. (1994). Breaktime and the school. London: Routledge.

Cooper, P. Smith, C. & Upton, G. (1993). Emotional behaviour difficulties: theory to practice. London: Routledge. Galloway, D. & Goodwin, C. (1987). The education of disturbing children: pupils with learning and adjustment problems. Harlow: Longman.

Tattum, D. (1993). Understanding and managing bullying. London: Heinemann.

8. Alderson, P. & Goodey, C. (in press) Enabling education: disabled pupils' views about schools.



Antony  
M.