



## BOOK REVIEW

### **Are We Listening? Making sense of classroom behaviour with pupils and parents**

Jackie Ravet

Trentham Books (2007). Pp. 164. Pbk. £16.99

Kevin Stelfox, [k.stelfox@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:k.stelfox@abdn.ac.uk)

University of Aberdeen, Scotland

DOI Number: <https://doi.org/10.26203/vt5c-6v80>

Copyright: © 2007 Stelfox

**To cite this book review:** Stelfox, K., (2007). Are We Listening? Making sense of classroom behaviour with pupils and parents. *Education in the North*, 15 p.78.



This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Non-commercial License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

---

*Are We Listening? Making sense of classroom behaviour with pupils and parents*

Jackie Ravet

Trentham Books (2007). Pp. 164. Pbk. £16.99

---

*Reviewer: Kevin Stelfox*

This book is an easy and enjoyable read that provides a good balance between research, theory and practice. It also provides illuminating examples set within a school context that will be familiar to the vast majority of teachers.

The book makes a timely contribution to the changing policy landscape which both schools and teachers have to navigate. This policy landscape clearly places the child at the centre and is articulated through, for example, policies of 'Assessment for Learning', an assessment for learning rather than of learning, and 'Getting it Right for Every Child', which places the child at the centre of decision-making. This landscape like the book emphasises the 'relational aspects' of working with young people.

The author sets out to reconceptualise 'disengagement' in terms of survival strategies that are played out on a daily basis by pupils and teachers in schools. Ravet attempts to locate behavioural issues within a constructionist paradigm which allows the voices of the players, i.e. pupils, parents and teachers, to contribute to our understanding and potential solutions to issues around disengagement and associated behavioural issues. She challenges the generally accepted model that the problem of disengagement is the fault of the young person.

The text describes and explores, in some detail, the dynamics between pupil and teacher, identifying the multiple realities that exist within the classroom and that these realities converge and collide in relation to disengagement. Ravet suggests that there should be a more collaborative approach taken to behavioural problems. However, she recognises that this, in itself, presents challenges to existing thinking in many schools about how teachers manage behaviour.

The author identifies the need for teachers to develop 'reflective practice' and become 'reflective practitioners'. Ravet offers examples of this process which provide a good starting point for teachers to explore their own perceptions and the perceptions of pupils and parents. I think Ravet rightly suggests that the benefits from this approach lead to joint learning, enhanced relationships, joint understanding, shared responsibility, a focus on feelings, and the potential to make changes in the behaviour of teachers, pupils and parents.

The book meets its stated objectives of exploring alternative ways of conceptualising pupil disengagement which are collaborative and take into account the perceptions of all the players. It recognises the complexity of this approach and suggests ways of thinking that do not offer simplistic solutions but a different way of working.

---