

Diagnosis of Pupil Personality

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Topic of the Chapter

In the classroom the teacher not only encounters up to 30 different children but has to deal with very different personalities, all of which are marked by their individual pattern. The term pupil personality means in this sense not only the individual as such but also the interaction between scholastic factors and development of personality which occurs mainly in adolescence. In this sense, school takes on the role of a sphere of socialization and in addition, the behaviour of the teacher can influence a child's development. In order to encourage this development of personality in the best possible way, it is advisable to be able to recognize some of these characteristic pupil personalities to be found in almost every class. It will become evident that it is often not possible to differentiate exactly between them. Nonetheless it is important as a teacher to become aware of some typical pupil personalities in order to be able to diagnose them correctly and as a result to be able in extreme cases to interpret a potential cry for help. Here it must be emphasized once more that in a class as well as those types of pupils that attract attention, there will always be a large number of "normal" pupils, who pass through school on the whole without problems or conflicts with authority. In this paper we will mainly consider the examples of the classic types of pupils that attract attention, who are frequently the cause of a certain disruption of lessons and therefore require some basic knowledge and special attention on the part of the teacher.

1.1.1. Attention deficit disorder / Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADD/ADHD)

Objective:

Attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder is classed as a psychological disorder. It occurs mainly in children and adolescents and is characterized by inattention, impulsiveness and hyperactivity.

Current research sees the development of such a disorder as a result of neurobiological change in brain function probably in the region of the frontal lobe. Genetic factors play a considerable role here. The conditions in which a child grows up have a substantial influence on the degree of severity and the development of attention disorder. There are two variations of attention deficit disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder: first the mainly inattentive type, characterized by a very short attention span, and secondly the hyperactive, impulsive type, who attracts attention as a result of undue restlessness and running around. The first type of children are characteristically quieter and withdrawn. They find it hard to

listen, rarely complete tasks and are easily distracted. In contrast, the second type of children draw attention to themselves more quickly as a result of their behaviour. They appear “driven” and for example often leave their seat during lessons, they talk a lot, disrupt lessons and find it difficult to obey rules.

“To be able to assume that it is a case of attention deficit disorder / attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, the above symptoms must have been exhibited before the age of seven, have been present for at least six months and cause serious problems in the family, at school or with other children.”¹. In addition to the above-mentioned identifiable characteristics, other problems of hyperactive children can be identified. Learning difficulties can arise as a result of the child’s restless, inattentive behaviour in class; teachers and other classmates see the child as disruptive and so these children can easily become outsiders.

It is not wise to be hasty in identifying attention deficit disorder in a child simply because he or she is particularly restless or not able to listen. It is generally estimated that between about 3 – 5% of all primary school children have attention deficit disorder / attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Parents often tend to think when their child appears hyperactive that this is a gifted child. However, this conclusion should not be drawn. In fact, these children are normally of average intelligence and the behaviour is symptomatic of an attention disorder. Gifted children at times display signs of boredom and are very restless but this restlessness is within normal parameters and is not on its own a sign of a disorder.

Aspects of Implementation / Core Methods

Teachers should be aware of attention deficit disorder in order to know how to deal with an affected pupil in their class. Appropriate intervention can have a positive influence on the development of the disorder and reduce problems of behaviour (disruption etc).

TIPs for Teachers following Diagnosis of ADD/ADHD Pupils:

- Keep a close eye on the class in order to be aware promptly of disruption by the hyperactive child
- Seat the child at a desk with a quiet classmate so that disruptive behaviour does not lead to children winding each other up
- Praise the child clearly for appropriate good behaviour
- If disruption occurs, disregard it if possible since verbal sanctions could reinforce disruptive behaviour
- To prevent potential disruptive situations, lessons should include a variety of activities, i.e. include short physical activities to provide some relief for the child

¹ Wittmann,A., Holling, H.: Hochbegabtenberatung in der Praxis. S.208

Time Required

All the above TIPs can be implemented at short notice and require no further training.

Material

No special material is required, possibly a small amount of equipment for the physical activity units. However, no objects that could distract the hyperactive child.

Other Advice

Be patient with yourself.

Reference: Wittmann,A., Holling, H.: Hochbegabtenberatung in der Praxis. S.208

1.1.2. The Outsider

Objective

Outsiders at school are normally those children who are ignored by other classmates or are even rejected by them. We can differentiate the “passive” outsider, whose presence is only occasionally registered by classmates and the “active” outsider, who is thrust into the role of the black sheep in the class. These pupils are often defined in comparison with others as being prone to emotional disorders. They are characterized by anxious, regressive behaviour, are prone to aggression and frequently experience failure at school leading to repeating of a year.

In the case of a possible outsider it needs to be established whether this is a case of a loner, who has little contact with others and withdraws into his own small world. In these cases these schizoid young people are in danger of losing touch with reality and living in a illusory world in which, like autistic children, they have a special field where they are above-average achievers. However, they show no interest in other fields. This kind of contact disorder found in outsiders may also be based on negative experiences in the past that cause the child to resign and lead to further withdrawal. This subjective suffering on the part of the pupil is very difficult to recognize from the outside.

The position of the isolated child can inhibit the development of behaviour that would permit integration in the group. Being excluded from the interaction in the class has the effect of making it difficult for children affected in this way to learn successful role behaviour so that they find it hard to make friends. These children lack social confirmation of their self-image. The existence of social outsiders means not only that there are a number of children that are unhappy and obliged to endure a constant feeling of personal inferiority but also the fact that a disposition to latent discrimination exists in school classes.

Aspects of Implementation / Core Methods

Teachers should be able to recognize potential outsiders in the learner group and cautiously investigate the causes. It is important not to expose the child to ridicule but rather to try either to talk to him or her quietly or to mobilize the class itself to accept this pupil back into their midst.

TIPs for Teachers after Diagnosis of an Outsider

- Seek contact with the isolated pupil to encourage him to approach the group and to help him to achieve a better sense of self-esteem
- Try to mobilize the group to make an independent effort to integrate the outsider
- Use working in twos in lessons whereby the outsider works on a task with a suitable partner in the class and so intensifies social contact to his fellows
- If the role of the outsider is too strongly established, try to speak to the parents to find out what the child's interests are and then encourage him to begin recreational activities that encourage contact with others (joining a sports club, taking part in school clubs)

Time Required

Take the time to understand the outsider and to mobilize the class to try to integrate him.

Material

- normally none -

Other Advice

Be patient. Depending on the learner group, successful integration into the class takes time.

1.1.3. Class Clown

Objective

A pupil is termed class clown when he draws attention to himself or herself by funny behaviour to make the other pupils laugh. For teachers it is often difficult to assess this child's academic progress. Classes react quite differently to a classmate who behaves like this. On the one hand this child may be admired for his courage in performing some jokes, on the other hand he may also be rejected and forced into the position of an outsider. A child that behaves in this way usually suffers from feelings of inferiority and lack of self esteem. By

drawing attention to himself, he tries to make contacts and so garner acceptance. The causes underlying such behaviour are very varied. This child may be finding schoolwork too difficult and is therefore not able to get attention from classmates and teachers through academic achievement. He seeks to compensate for this with clownish behaviour. However, it may be exactly the opposite, that the child is finding schoolwork too easy because he understands more quickly than the rest of the class. So he tries to find something to do by behaving like a clown. Such behaviours are, however, not necessarily a result of academic ability. Indeed psychological factors can also play an immense part in the pupil's life. The child may feel neglected when for example he is required to begin with a phase of individual work in the classroom during which he cannot be sure of having the teacher's attention. And so he tries to ensure attention in some other way such as disruptive behaviour. Or the class clown may try to avoid a task by attention-seeking behaviour such as pulling faces.

Aspects of Implementation / Core Methods

Particularly in a case in which the pupil's behaviour suggests complex problems it is advisable to analyse the causes exactly. Therefore the teacher should speak to the pupil himself and then with his parents to discover the reasons for his behaviour. In addition, it may be advisable to include other counselling such as the school counsellor before involving the school psychologist or an educational psychologist.

TIPs for Teachers after Diagnosis of Class Clown

- Try to react with a sense of humour to the disruption and never expose the pupil to ridicule
- Always react cautiously to the child's direct disruptive behaviour since by behaving in this way the pupil is trying to attract and hold your attention
- Praise the pupil for his achievements. This helps to increase his self-esteem so that disruption is not necessary
- Use working in groups to help him to feel a sense of achievement in the process of learning. This may help to overcome learning deficits as the pupils can teach each other
- If the behaviour appears to be a result of schoolwork being too difficult for the pupil, you should arrange for the pupil to have extra tuition in that subject
- Depending on the age of the disruptive child it may be advisable to talk to him after the lesson to discover the reasons for the disruptive behaviour

Time required

Only lesson preparation and provision of material for working in groups.

Material

- normally none -

Other Advice

Do not take too much notice of a class clown.

1.1.4. Most Popular Pupil (Star)**Objective**

The most popular pupil is normally one that has a large number of communication partners in the class or group. He is liked by many group members and is shown social approval. These pupils have a particular ability to fit in with their group and adults they deal with. The most popular child is particularly outgoing and able to respond to other people. This often leads to these children developing a strong sense of confidence in their abilities so that they reach a higher degree of academic achievement. However, this social position can put the most popular pupil under considerable pressure because his high self esteem can only be maintained with the approval of classmates. The central rank in the class means he often receives more information and so increases his social competence in the group. One result of this is that he is able to initiate interaction and so to consolidate his position. This can mean that his classmates expect him to exercise social controls and to interpret group norms in certain situations. The most popular pupil may then have difficulties with his position if he tries too hard to delineate from others in order to maintain his central position in the social network of the class. A decrease in the number of the star's contacts and therefore automatic isolation in the group can occur if he concentrates on a small number of pupils to maintain his position.

Aspects of Implementation / Core Methods

To achieve a healthy class climate the social position of the most popular pupil can be used to integrate other pupils into the class.

TIPs for Teachers after Diagnosis of Most Popular Pupil

- Do not reinforce the star's position
- Ensure that this pupil does not exploit his position
- Should this happen, make the pupil clearly aware of his inappropriate behaviour

Time Required

All the above TIPs can be implemented at short notice and require no further training.

Material

- normally none -

Other Advice

Do not encourage the most popular pupil in this position.

1.1.5. Dyslexia**Objective**

The World Health Organization (WHO) added dyslexia to its catalogue of disease and related health problems in 1991 and describes dyslexia there in the chapter “Specific Developmental Disorders of Scholastic Skills”. Prof. Dr. A. Warnke puts forward the following definition: “Dyslexia is a specific and serious impairment of the learning of reading and spelling caused by particular features of brain function. This partial disorder occurs in all written languages, is genetically predisposed and not the result of inadequate education, impairment of intelligence or other physical, neurological or psychological illnesses². The classification of the WHO adds further that reading problems are frequently accompanied by spelling difficulties, which persist into adolescence. Whereas reading ability improves somewhat with advancing age, those affected display greater deficits in the field of spelling. Psychologists warn, however, against equating dyslexia with problems in reading and spelling. As the WHO already states, dyslexia is a partial disorder of the brain, which may also express itself in problems with reading and spelling and for which only limited improvement will be achieved by practice sequences. In the case of problems purely with reading and spelling a learning block can be reduced by regular practice.

Aspects of Implementation / Core Methods

In order to support pupils’ learning process it is advisable to be aware of their individual learning behaviour so that the first signs of a learning disorder in individual pupils can be dealt with as soon as possible. As signs of dyslexia only become visible when children start school, teachers should be trained to be aware of this partial disorder so that early diagnosis can assist these children in learning.

² A. Warnke: Legasthenie. Leitfaden für die Praxis. p.24

The first signs of dyslexia usually become obvious in three areas of learning – with problems in reading, spelling and arithmetic. Problems with reading ability are first seen when the pupil finds reading arduous. He confuses letters and so tires soon of reading so that he develops a dislike of reading aloud.

Further, these children display particularities when writing, reflected for example in incorrect written representation of sounds. As well, an inability to distinguish between sounds that sound similar and incorrect spelling are characteristic. In arithmetic these children are liable to guess rather than to calculate. In addition, dyslexics confuse the order of numbers or write numbers back to front.

Moreover, there are some striking divergences in the behaviour of dyslexic children: it is particularly noticeable that their attention span in reading, writing or arithmetic is shorter while the children can concentrate better and longer in their preferred subjects. This leads to the dyslexic pupil disrupting or withdrawing from active participation in lessons. This can lead to extreme withdrawal and a great reduction in self esteem. Alternatively, a dyslexic pupil may also compensate for his lack of confidence by acting the class clown.

TIPs for Teachers with Dyslexic Pupils

- Children with learning disorders need to feel that they are encountered with patience and understanding
- Emphasize the child's strengths and praise even small achievements
- As the attention span of dyslexic children is often very short, do not put pressure with time on them but rather help them to order their thoughts
- Do not criticise them for being inattentive for a while but allow short breaks or liven up the breaks with short sequences of physical activity in order to reactivate their attention
- Seat the child close to you so that you can observe disruptions quickly
- Be aware that dyslexic children learn more slowly than non-dyslexic children
- Plan for more time for learning sequences
- To counteract difficulties with written work test these children orally

Time Required

The TIPs can be implemented at short notice, however, enough time should be allowed for single learning sequences.

Materials

- normally none -

Other Advice

Have sympathy for the child's situation.

1.1.6. The Nerd

Objective

A pupil called a nerd by his classmates is usually characterized by very good grades in almost all subjects. There is one such pupil in nearly every class. It may seem surprising that this behaviour is considered divergent. Some teachers are happy to have a pupil of this type in their class, they can be sure that one person will be engaging actively in their lessons. However, such academic achievement on the part of a pupil is usually regarded by his classmates as divergent behaviour and tends to be considered negative. The integration of the nerd into the class community depends entirely on how the pupil handles his own achievements. If he boasts to his classmates about his above-average achievements, he distances himself from them even more and so he makes himself unpopular with them. A nerd need not necessarily be isolated from the class community if there is a good climate in the class. For example by helping those who are not so good to overcome their deficits in learning, pupils with good grades may be very popular with their classmates. It is, however, surprising that pupils that stand out with particular achievements in only one subject (such as Sport) are mostly admired by their classmates while those with a wide spectrum of knowledge tend to be disliked.

Aspects of Implementation / Core Methods

A pupil with good general knowledge or with special abilities in the class can be a great asset for his classmates particularly if this pupil is prepared to share his knowledge with the others.

TIPs for Teachers on dealing with a Nerd

- Make good use of the strengths of the nerd by asking him to help weaker pupils in the class
- See to it that the pupil does not become too nerdy
- In such a case talk to the pupil on his own and make him aware of the situation

Time Required

All the above TIPs can be implemented at short notice and require no further training.

Materials

- normally none -

Other Advice

Be careful in lessons not to concentrate exclusively on what the nerd has to offer.

1.1.7. The Gifted Pupil

Objective

A pupil that is not encouraged to learn according to his individual ability tends to switch off during lessons and cease to participate in classroom activity. When a pupil is not being challenged intellectually, this may be an indication of a child's special ability (giftedness) that has not been discovered up till now. Lack of intellectual challenge becomes apparent in the classroom through certain behaviours such as the above-mentioned switching off during lessons leading to passive participation. The problem with this behaviour is that the pupil fails to acquire important learning and working techniques which will not be available to him later in his school career and so may lead to failure in education. In addition, lack of challenge may manifest itself in various disruptive activities by the pupil, which in the worst case distract the whole class from the lesson. In this situation the teacher is especially required to exert discipline. The opposite to this is the conformist pupil who conceals his ability and does not show what he can achieve. This behaviour is frequently found in girls, who submit to the social pressure in the class and do not wish to be denounced as "nerds". The easiest to recognize is the fourth and last type of pupil. He demonstrates his ability and does not take any notice of what the other pupils think. As a result, depending on the composition of the class, he runs the risk of social isolation in the class.

Aspects of Implementation / Core Methods

A gifted pupil has, compared to children of his age, considerable cognitive abilities, which, however, do not necessarily always become apparent in the classroom. For this reason recognition and the appropriate assessment of the pupil's potential for achievement is an important responsibility of the teacher.

Some signs that point to a pupil's potential giftedness are firstly in the fields of learning and thinking considerable and very detailed knowledge in single areas, an unusually large vocabulary for a child of that age, the ability to understand cause-and-effect relations and also the ability to observe closely. In connection with these children's interests and attitude to working, it is noticeable that they are often quite perfectionist so that they set themselves relatively high targets and are very self-critical in judging these. Gifted children often endeavour to complete their work fully, routine tasks bore them and they display great

interest in adult topics such as religion, philosophy and politics. In their social conduct these children are often characterized by a great sense of responsibility, in addition they are very capable of empathy. They tend to be individualistic and often make friends with people of the same ability rather than of the same age.

The table presented in illustration 1 demonstrates clearly the discrepancy between the learning and working behaviour of gifted pupils and what is offered in the classroom. These contradictions illustrate very clearly that recognition of each and every pupil's potential for achievement is important in order to offer him effective support. As schools are not able to do justice fully to all points this list provides a link to special support measures that can be arranged for these children.

Attributes and Abilities of Gifted Children	Features of Normal School Lessons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preference for productive knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encouragement of reproductive knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ability to grasp quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • multiple repetition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • varied and deep interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited number of subjects and depth of study
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • great amount of knowledge in advance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge allocated according to year of class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high level of creativity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expectation of conformity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preference for open, understandable ways to find solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • study of concrete subject matter

Illustration.1: Selected attributes and abilities of the gifted and features of normal school lessons in comparison (vgl. Wittmann, Holling)

TIPs for Teachers to Support Gifted Pupils

- There are a number of support measures to help the gifted child to develop his potential and so arrive at a healthy mental and physical development.
- In this area there are two main approaches to support:
- Acceleration: finishing school in a shorter time (increase in learning speed), which can be achieved by starting school earlier or skipping years.
- Enrichment: the child is offered more subject matter, which then complements, extends and consolidates the lessons offered. The child is not placed in a higher class so as not to remove him from his social framework.
- Enrichment can be carried out in two ways.

- Through internal differentiation: support is provided within the class unit in such a way that the child's individual level of learning and ability is taken into account.
- External differentiation by contrast is based on support outside of the school with other partners such as university projects, school clubs, competitions for schoolchildren and exchange programmes.
- In the meantime combinations of these two approaches to support have been developed.
- An illustration of how varied these support measures have become is presented in Table 1 in the appendix to this paper.

Time Required

All the above-mentioned TIPs can be implemented at short notice and require no further training.

Materials

- normally none -

Other Advice

Gather as much information as possible about support measures and institutions available in your area.

1.1.8. The Underachiever

Objective

Underachievers are children that are considered to be "intelligent" and "clever" but are not able to activate their potential ability appropriately at school and as a result achieve below-average results. This phenomenon of underachievement first becomes apparent at secondary school level. Therefore it is important for the teacher to interpret the first symptoms that appear correctly.

The first distinguishing signs of possible underachievement usually become apparent in three different areas: academic achievement, personality and the social level.

In the case of academic achievement it can be observed that these children have strong cognitive abilities when they do not withhold these. Despite their potential for achievement these children's results tend to be poor. However, they are not so poor as to lead to the child having to repeat a school year. Underachievers display considerable deficits in their learning

and working behaviour. They lack important work techniques for effective learning processes.

Generally these children are characterized by a strong lack of interest in school activities. This is reflected in their low motivation and the way they avoid exertion. At the personal level such children display very poor emotional stability. They are quick to feel that they are being attacked and cannot cope well with criticism. Underachievers often lack confidence in themselves and their achievements. In the social domain these children often have problems with their relationships with their classmates, teachers and sometimes also parents. As a result they are prone to become loners and withdraw more and more. Problems in the social domain are usually closely linked to underachievers' low self esteem. They do not believe they are capable of much and so are easily convinced that others (classmates, teachers) think the same. Furthermore, an underachiever may withdraw from participation in the class and in lessons so that he runs the risk of becoming isolated socially. The opposite type of behaviour occurs when the child disobeys classroom rules and disrupts lessons and his classmates. This violation of boundaries is displayed not only at school but often also at home so that parents and teachers characterize the child as rebellious.

Underachievement is not necessarily linked to all the above-mentioned distinguishing signs but there is usually an accumulation of symptoms. An underachieving pupil is often also absent from school because of psychosomatic disorders.

Aspects of Implementation / Core Methods

Here a list of the factors will be compiled that with appropriate support and development of the child can prevent underachievement. If parents do not come to terms with their child's particular aptitudes, or even attempt to change him, the child may simply feel misunderstood. The term aptitude is often misunderstood by parents as it does not release them from their responsibilities in caring for and supporting their child but requires their continuing input. A child's special intellectual development does not mean a higher level of emotional development so that the child may feel that the parents expect too much from him. Lack of challenge at school and children's feeling that they need to conform may also lead to underachievement. They frequently feel that the teacher is not taking enough notice of them and offering enough support and are easily bored when the subject matter that they have already understood is repeated again so that they attempt to occupy themselves with other activities that disrupt the lesson. A child may have difficulty in coping with critical events in his life such as parents' divorce or the loss of a person to whom he has had a close relationship. If he does not receive enough support, his self esteem can suffer, which often also affects his ability to make academic progress. Social pressure too frequently leads to young girls concealing their true potential for achievement and conforming to the peer group.

(“It’s not cool to put your hand up”) so as to be accepted by them. For teachers this behaviour often makes it difficult to assess the child’s true abilities correctly. In addition, these children often lack necessary learning and working techniques for effective learning processes so that their results threaten to become worse as the school year proceeds.

TIPs for Teachers after Diagnosis of an Underachiever

- The most effective help for potential underachievers is support on the emotional level. “The aim of this help is to assist the children to develop more self esteem, to be more confident and to learn to work in a way that is appropriate for their abilities”³
- Try to remedy the existing deficits in the child’s learning and working behaviour so that his learning process can proceed better
- Invite specialists into the classroom that are able to deal with children’s shortcomings in structuring and coordinating their work
- Encourage motivation with extra rewards and differentiation of homework
- Make a point of maintaining good cooperation with the parents
- Talk to the parents about their child’s difficulties and development and explain that the parents are expected to support their child’s academic progress at home and to check the child’s homework
- In the case of serious problems you should advise the parents to seek professional assistance in the form of individual therapy that can deal with the child’s special needs

Time Required

All the above TIPs can be implemented at short notice and require no further training. However, you should invest adequate time in teaching these pupils the learning techniques they lack.

Materials

- normally none -

Other Advice

Try to listen to the child, praise him for his achievements and try to maintain a good relationship with the parents.

1.1.9. Autism-Spectrum-Disorders (Autism und Asperger’s Syndrome)

³ Wittmann, Holling: Hochbegabtenberatung in der Praxis. p.124

Objective

Autism has been defined since 1994 by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV) of the American Psychiatric Association as “profound development disorder of marked impairment of communication and social interaction and markedly restricted, repetitive and stereotype patterns of behaviour, interests and activity”⁴. Autism is therefore understood as a neurological development disorder that affects parts of the central nervous system and impairs the way in which verbal and non-verbal information is processed. People in whom autism has been diagnosed have as a result difficulty in understanding their environment. For this reason autism is understood as a life-long impairment for which there is as yet no cure. Despite this, children and adults with autism make great progress in their development and show improvement in a large number of skills. “There are considerable differences in cognitive skills within the autism group, ranging from very well-functioning individuals with normal or high intelligence to those with a serious mental handicap”⁵.

Current research distinguishes early childhood autism and Asperger’s syndrome. Early childhood autism appears before the age of three; the child displays marked shortcomings in social behaviour, communication and in repetitive behaviour whereas Asperger’s syndrome usually manifests itself after the age of three and becomes apparent in markedly different social behaviour and the child’s restricted interests.

Asperger’s syndrome will be dealt with somewhat more specifically here since this appears later and is often not recognized until the child starts school. Children with Asperger’s syndrome display normal language development at first, only later do the first deficits in language use appear. According to the definition people with Asperger’s have a normal to high intelligence quotient (IQ) so that they are able to have a normal education, although they struggle with various learning problems. As a result of their unusual style of learning and their interests they are often seen as eccentric and are teased by their classmates. They have difficulty in participating actively in lessons and grasping them completely. Social playground rules are difficult for them to understand so they are not able to integrate fully.

Aspects of Implementation / Core Methods

Many children and adults with characteristics of Asperger’s syndrome are not identified or they are diagnosed as ADD/ADHD patients. This error demonstrates how important early diagnosis of this development disorder is for those concerned. For successful integration parents and teachers need to work closely together so as to complement each other as well as possible. During therapy a plan is often set up which takes into consideration the specific needs, strengths and shortcomings and the resources of the family.

⁴ Dodd: Autismus. Was Betreuer und Eltern wissen müssen. p.1

⁵ Dodd: Autismus. Was Betreuer und Eltern wissen müssen. p.7

TIPs for Teachers after Diagnosis of Asperger's Syndrome in Pupils

- Use these children's strongly visual style of learning which helps them to work in structured and constant conditions
- Include these children's good memory for facts in lessons and use their ability to think in a logical and structured way and learn by heart
- Tailor your lesson programme especially to the individual needs of these children so that they can be supported effectively
- Train the children's social abilities

Time Requirement

All the above TIPs can be implemented at short notice and require no further training.

Materials

- normally none -

Other Advice

Be patient when working with these children but endeavour to include the child in the social group.

1.1.10. Borderline Disorder / Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD)

Objective

Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) is classed under the category of emotionally instable (personality) disorders. Since 1975 following the development of operationalized criteria by Gunderson and Singer it has been listed in DSM-IV and is characterized there as "A profound pattern of instability in interpersonal relationships, self-image, moods and also distinct impulsivity. Onset occurs during young adulthood or adolescence and manifests itself in various facets of life"⁶. At least five of the following criteria must be identified to be able to assume the presence of Borderline Personality Disorder.

1. Frantic attempts to avoid real or imagined abandonment.
2. A pattern of instable but intense interpersonal relationships, characterized by alternation between extremes of idealization and devaluation.
3. Identity disorder: marked and persistent instability of self-image and sense of self.
4. Impulsivity in at least two potentially self-damaging areas (spending, sexuality, substance abuse, reckless driving, binge eating).

⁶ Bohus, M.: Borderline-Störung. Fortschritte der Psychotherapie. p. 5

5. Recurrent suicidal behaviour, indication or threat of suicide or selfharming.
6. Affective instability due to a marked reactivity of mood.
7. Chronic feelings of emptiness.
8. Inappropriate, intense anger or difficulty controlling anger or irritation.
9. Transient, stress-related paranoid ideation or severe dissociative symptoms.

Particularly in the school environment children suffering from BPD may attract attention in class due to their disturbed affective regulation. This makes itself apparent especially in a low stimulus threshold that may lead to a child “flipping out”. Furthermore, during periods of extreme stress the person affected is unable to differentiate emotions so that aversive states of tension may develop, which are then compensated for by dysfunctional patterns of behaviour such as self-mutilation. Although self-mutilation is frequently seen as a classic indication of BPD, it must again be emphasized here that it may be symptomatic but may however also possibly be a sign of other psychosomatic disorders. BSP is a relatively complex personality disorder, which can only be diagnosed by qualified psychologists. Children and young people with BSP exhibit a profound feeling of insecurity about their own identity and integrity and a very negative self-image. It is very noticeable that these children feel that they are different from everybody else, isolated and cut off from the world and reality. They experience great difficulty with psychosocial integration into the class and find it hard to build up interpersonal relationships because regulation of proximity and distance is tremendously difficult for them. A further noticeable pattern of behaviour of BPD patients is their high-risk behaviour, which appears for example in fast driving and balancing on tall buildings / school grounds.

Aspects of Implementation / Core Methods

Some of the symptoms considered signs of BPD can also apply to quite normal adolescents such as a certain insecurity concerning their own identity or a critical attitude towards their own self-image. It is advisable to compare the behaviour of the child that is attracting your attention with that of the others and to keep it in proportion.

TIPs for Teachers after Diagnosis of Pupils with BPD:

- Talk to the parents to find out whether certain behaviours that have attracted your attention are also exhibited out of school
- If this is the case, advise them to begin out-patient therapy (individual therapy followed by skills training in a group) with a psychologist
- Make a special effort to integrate the child into the class by using group and partner work so that the child can slowly learn to accept proximity
- Do not press the child to do things that are unpleasant for him and put him under stress (giving a talk to the whole class)

- Aim to pick up on the BPD child's interests and abilities to help him to feel successful
- During sports activities you can practise the kinds of sports that create a level of trust (smaller games and climbing training)

Time Required

All the above TIPs can be implemented at short notice and require no further training.

Materials

- normally none-

Other Advice

Try to develop a level of trust with the child and encourage him with his own achievements.

1.1.11. The Quiet Pupil

Objective

A school class is composed of different characters. As well as the pupils that are very actively involved in classroom activities there are always the somewhat quieter ones. These children's reticence can have very different causes, such as the fact that some pupils are by nature quieter while others from time to time find difficulty in concentration or motivation, have reduced language faculty or submit to class pressure with the attitude that it is most "uncool" to play an active part in lessons. Reticence in lessons may however also result from a child's being bored in lessons, under-challenged because he has already grasped what is being taught and, unlike the gifted child, does not always want to show this. Further, a child's reticence at certain times may be connected with personal or family problems, which are particularly stressful for young children.

Aspects of Implementation / Core Methods

Especially in large classes there is the danger that quiet children are easily overlooked or lost in the crowd because they "do not cause any trouble". They do not attract attention to themselves in any negative way and they are sometimes seated next to disruptive children in order to calm the group down. The fact that these children often suffer is barely noticed. However, it is just these children that should be given the possibility to have time and space for themselves. They are mostly inactive in those subjects in which good oral participation is important. They see themselves as passive during lessons and often disadvantaged when it comes to grades. Even good written work may often not make up for their deficits in active participation.

TIPs for Teachers for Dealing with Quiet Pupils

- Use group or partner work to offer the quiet pupil the possibility to play a part in a small group
- Encourage the pupil to express his opinion and praise him for that
- Use humour to get through to the pupil by emphasizing that you would like to hear from other pupils occasionally
- Use teaching methods for which the whole group has to speak out loud (chanting rules all together etc). This can help a quiet pupil to be less fearful of speaking in class.
- If you have the impression that a pupil that otherwise took an active part has suddenly become very quiet in lessons, speak to him in a quiet moment or else to his parents on a parents' evening to find out what the reason might be.

Time Required

All the above TIPs can be implemented at short notice and require no further training.

Materials

- normally none –

Other Advice

Try to give all the pupils in the class your attention.

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Table 1: Support Measures for Gifted Pupils with Examples of Implementation

Acceleration (Speeded-up Learning)	Enrichment (Extended Learning)	Combinations (Acceleration/Enrichment)
Starting school early (laid down in education laws of the federal states)	Individualization (individualized learning at Max-Brauer-Schule Hamburg)	Acceleration of whole classes („express train classes“/ sprinter classes at Humboldt-Gymnasium in Berlin-Tegel)
Skipping a school year (individuals and groups)	School clubs und courses (Kolumbus-Kids project for support of gifted children at Uni Bielefeld)	Classes with different age groups (year 1 to 3 together at Eichendorffschule Bielefeld)
Acceleration in some subjects (revolving door model at Geschwister-Scholl-Gymnasium Lüdenscheid)	Federal and state schools competitions Maths/Science: Mathematics, Biology, Physics, Chemistry Olympics, Young Researchers Competition, Kangaroo Competition, Bio-logical Languages: Federal Competition for Foreign Languages, Latin/Greek Competition, Russian Olympics Literature/Drama/Art: Young Writers Competition, Reading Aloud Competition, Fairy Tale Competition, School Drama Weeks, Literature Competition OWL, art competitions Music: Young Musicians Competition, master classes in music, wind instrument classes Humanities: Young Debaters Competition, Political Education Competition, History Competition under the patronage of the Federal President, philosophy competitions	Special schools for the gifted (Schule des christlichen Jugenddorfwerks Deutschlands in Braunschweig)
	Student academies German Student Academy, Junior Academy NRW, IT Academy, scholarships for at the German Museum, MINT-Camp, Summer Academy Münster	
	University (University for 16-year-olds and older at Uni Bielefeld, Kolumbus-Kids, Children's University)	
	Pupil Projects Pupils Help Pupils, EULE, Teutolab, Agenda 21- Schule in NRW, student businesses	

	<p>Additional qualifications in various fields languages: master classes for languages, bilingual lessons, learning further languages such as Chinese, Greek, Ancient Greek, Japanese, Italian etc. Language certificates: DEL, DELE, DALF, Cambridge, TOEFL, TRKI, LCCI, APIEL, Qualification in Hebrew Science: SINUS, MINT, SAM-OWL, master classes in science, European Computer Passport</p>	
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