

## **How does Class Dojo affect pupil behaviour in BGE classes?**

**Catriona MacDonald**

**Group 1C**

### ***Rationale***

One of the most challenging areas of my first year of teaching has been dealing with disruptive behaviour during lessons. In particular, I have found difficulties engaging certain children at the beginning of lessons during teaching time. Parsonson (2012) highlights the negative impact disruptive behaviour has on children's learning. Classroom dynamics change, with the focus of attention shifting from the teacher and the learning to the disruptive behaviour. I have found that although most children may be engaged at the beginning of the lesson, they soon lose interest as the flow of the lesson is constantly interrupted. Parsonson (2012) and Smith (2014) both suggest that in order to overcome behavioural problems, and the negative effect this has on learning, teachers should devise strategies specifically to deal with inappropriate behaviour. One such strategy is the use of the Class Dojo as a means of rewarding children for displaying positive behaviour. Class Dojo is a fun and motivating way to encourage good behaviour. Each child in the class is assigned (or can choose) a 'monster' to represent them. Both positive and negative points can be customized to suit the needs of the class.

### ***Aims***

The aim of this classroom based practitioner enquiry was to determine the effect that introducing the Class Dojo had on pupil behaviour in a Primary 2 class.

### ***Methodology***

This practitioner enquiry was carried out one day per week during Taught Writing lessons, over a four week period in a Primary 2 class of 21 children. A small proportion of the sample group consisted of children with Additional Support Needs (ASN).

The focus of the enquiry was to identify the difference between the number of interruptions during a lesson, before and after, the Class Dojo was introduced as a method of rewarding positive behaviour. During the first two weeks, before the Class Dojo was introduced, a record was kept of the number of times the lesson had to be stopped due to pupil behaviour. Examples of this type of negative behaviour included, talking to others whilst the teacher was speaking, interrupting the teacher, shouting out answers and annoying other children in the class. The number of interruptions from each lesson were recorded using tally marks.

At the beginning of the third week the Class Dojo was introduced as a reward for positive behaviour and as a means of encouraging those who were misbehaving to change their

behaviour. The rules regarding this system were explained clearly to children to ensure they all understood what was required of them to gain Dojo points. Examples of different types of positive behaviour were outlined to children. Some of these included, raising hands to answer questions instead of shouting out, sitting nicely with legs in a basket and listening to the teacher. After introducing the Class Dojo, children were rewarded for positive behaviour during lessons. During weeks 3 and 4, the number of interruptions during each lesson were recorded using tally marks.

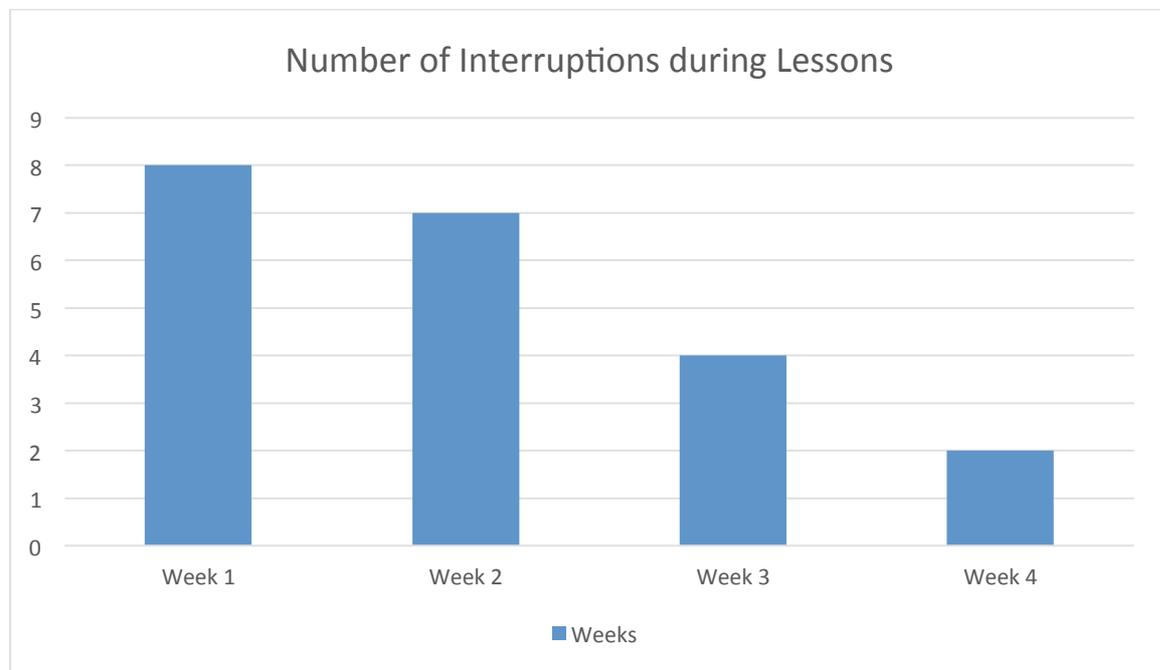
Evidence was gathered through:

- Observing children's behaviour during Taught Writing lessons
- Rewarding positive behaviour with Dojo points
- Evaluating the impact of rewarding positive behaviour with Dojo points
- Evaluating the impact of using the Class Dojo on the overall behaviour of the class

At the end of the investigation period, 6 children were randomly selected to take part in a small focus group. This provided valuable feedback into how children regarded the Class Dojo as a means of impacting behaviour within the classroom. It also provided children with a voice in terms of how they felt Class Dojo communication benefited them.

### ***Findings***

The graph below shows the number of times a lesson had to be stopped to speak to children about their behaviour, before Class Dojo was introduced to the class (Weeks 1 and 2) and then after the introduction of Class Dojo (Weeks 3 and 4).



The graph above clearly shows that after introducing the Class Dojo to children, there was a reduction in the number of interruptions during lessons. It is clear that the impact of the Dojo has been a positive one.

As a result of introducing the Class Dojo as a means of improving pupil behaviour, the children were much more engaged and willing to learn. They were all interested in gaining points to win a reward and this incentive had a very positive impact on their behaviour.

Children were asked their opinions in relation to the impact of using the Class Dojo on behaviour. Their responses suggested that children view Class Dojo as a positive strategy for dealing with disruptive behaviour.

Children's comments on the effectiveness of the Class Dojo:

- "I like the Dojo because it makes me want to behave and get points."
- "I want to get points so I have to try and be good every day."
- "When I listen to the teacher it makes her happy and she gives me points as a prize."
- "I try not to talk when the teacher talks because I don't want to lose any points."

### ***Conclusions***

During the short enquiry period, the results show an overall improvement in pupil behaviour, with a reduction in disruptive behaviour.

This enquiry suggests that rewarding positive behaviour can help bring about positive change to children's behavioural choices. Rewarding positive behaviour reinforces and encourages children to repeat the same behaviour. The children in the class whose behaviour was very disruptive during weeks 1 and 2, learned to demonstrate the behaviour for which they received positive feedback and avoided behaviour that generated no rewards.

### ***Implications for Future Practice***

As a result of the success of this enquiry, I plan to continue to implement the Class Dojo as a means of rewarding positive behaviour in order to improve the overall behaviour of the class. I would, however, regularly change the rewards for the highest number of Dojo points in order to keep children interested and engaged.

### ***Bibliography***

Parsonson, B.S. (2012). Evidence-based Classroom Behaviour Management Strategies. *Kairaranga*, 13, 16-23.

Smith, D.K. (2014). Teacher Styles of Classroom Management. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 71, 277-282.

