

P. A. T. Book Review

The Handbook of Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Edited by Morag Hunter-Carsch, Yonca Tiknaz, Paul Cooper and Rosemary Sage (Continuum International Publishing Group, London, 2006) ISBN 0-8264-8894-3 (paperback). Pp. 350 + xiv.

This Handbook, written by a wide variety of experts, comprises 37 chapters arranged in three Parts: "Exploring the Issues", "Practical Responses", and "The Way Forward". It uses the concept of "the individual with SEBD", the acronym standing for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. This seems unsound for a start, because the same child rarely has all three.

Another acronym used is CPD, though you will not find this in the index. It stands for continuing professional development. The book explores what it calls "the dynamics of effective CPD" (page 291). This is aimed at deepening teachers' empathetic understanding, which involves

- quality thinking and reflection;
- working, playing, and living together;
- promoting self-esteem and self-worth; and
- learning to make wise choices in all we do.

The first chapter by Paul Cooper says SEBD are most obvious when they appear in the form of disruptive behaviour in schools, but emotional difficulties may lead to the opposite: severely withdrawn behaviour. SEBD are on average present among from 3 to 6 children in a class of around 30. For every girl with SEBD there will be on average three boys.

Four powerful approaches to understanding are identified by Cooper. These are the social approach, the psychological approach, the biopsychosocial approach pioneered by Uta Frith, and the influence of culture and society.

School teachers are nowadays expected to be all things to all children. This book can help in one troublesome area, bearing on the all-important goal of the orderly classroom.

Francis Bennion, Chairman Emeritus

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