Guide to Functional Behaviour Assessment for Schools

Queensland Government

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What is Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA)?

Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA) is a process for collecting information to help determine why problem behaviour occurs and to serve as a basis for the development of an individual behaviour support plan (IBSP). Research[1] has shown that interventions developed from an FBA are more likely to be effective in reducing rates of problem behaviour.

FBA aims to:

Define behaviour in specific, observable and measurable terms

Determine what aspects of the environment or situation contribute towards the behaviour

Identify the consequences which maintain the behaviour

What is the purpose of this guide?

This guide has been developed as a reference for school teams; it does not take the place of FBA training. Schools can use this guide as a checklist to ensure that all steps in the FBA process are followed, or as an introduction to what is involved in conducting a school-based FBA. Schools can also access the online FBA tool to work through a simple FBA process.

What is included in the guide?

This guide provides an overview of terminology and the steps in the FBA process. Templates are provided in appendices.

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1 Ervin, R.A., Radford, P.M., Bertsch, K., Piper, A.L., Ehrhardt, K.E., & Poling, A. (2001). A descriptive analysis and critique of the empirical literature on school-based functional assessment. *School Psychology Review*. 30, 193–210.

McIntosh, K., Brown, J. A., & Borgmeier, C. J. (2008). Validity of Functional Behaviour Assessment within a Response to Intervention framework: Evidence, recommended practice, and future directions. *Assessment for Effective Intervention, 34*(1), 6–14.

Walker, V. L., Chung, Y. C., & Bonnet, L. K. (2018). Function-based intervention in inclusive school settings: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Positive Behaviour Interventions, 20*(4), 203–216

Terminology

Term	Definition	Example
Antecedent	An antecedent is an event that elicits or triggers the problem behaviour.	Teacher says 'Take out your maths book'.
Alternative behaviour	The alternative behaviour is what we want the student to do instead of the problem behaviour. The alternative behaviour must fulfil the same function as the problem behaviour and be easy for the student to do.	Kali is taught to ask for a motor break instead of walking around the room.
Behaviour	The behaviour is the specific, observable and measurable problem behaviour.	Kali wanders around the classroom touching other students' belongings during work time.
Consequence	A consequence is an event or response that happens immediately after the problem behaviour and which maintains or reinforces a problem behaviour.	Other students giggle when Bobby calls out.
Function	The function of a behaviour is the purpose of the behaviour. When we think functionally, we ask *why* the behaviour occurs.	Kali walks around the room to *avoid* the maths work; Bobby calls out to *access* peer attention.
Hypothesis	The hypothesis is our best guess as to why the problem behaviour is occurring. The summary statement forms the basis for the hypothesis.	We hypothesise that Kali walks around the room to avoid doing the maths work.
Reinforcement	Reinforcement is any action or event that increases the likelihood of the behaviour being repeated. Reinforcement can be *positive* (something is presented as a result of the behaviour) or *negative* (something undesirable is taken away as a result of the behaviour).	The student is given a preferred activity (*positive reinforcement*); the student is sent out of the classroom (*negative reinforcement*).
Setting event	Setting events are situations which either intensify or increase the likelihood of the problem behaviour.	Kali has had an argument with a sibling that morning; the parent has run out of medication for Bobby.
Summary statement	A summary statement succinctly describes the relationship between observed events and the problem behaviour.	When Kali has had an argument with her brother before school (*setting event*) and the teacher presents a maths task that she thinks is too hard (*antecedent*), she will get up and wander around the classroom touching peers' belongings (*behaviour*) for several minutes before the teacher asks her to return to her seat (*consequence*) because she can avoid doing the maths activity (*function*).

Overview of the FBA process

The major steps in FBA are:

1. Identify and prioritise problem behaviour(s).
2. Collect baseline data.
3. Review records to determine impacting factors and previous interventions.
4. Interview parents, teachers, student and other relevant stakeholders.
5. Conduct direct observation(s) of the student.
6. Summarise information and develop a hypothesis.

Using the FBA:

1. Select interventions and develop the IBSP.
2. Implement the IBSP.
3. Continue monitoring and data collection.
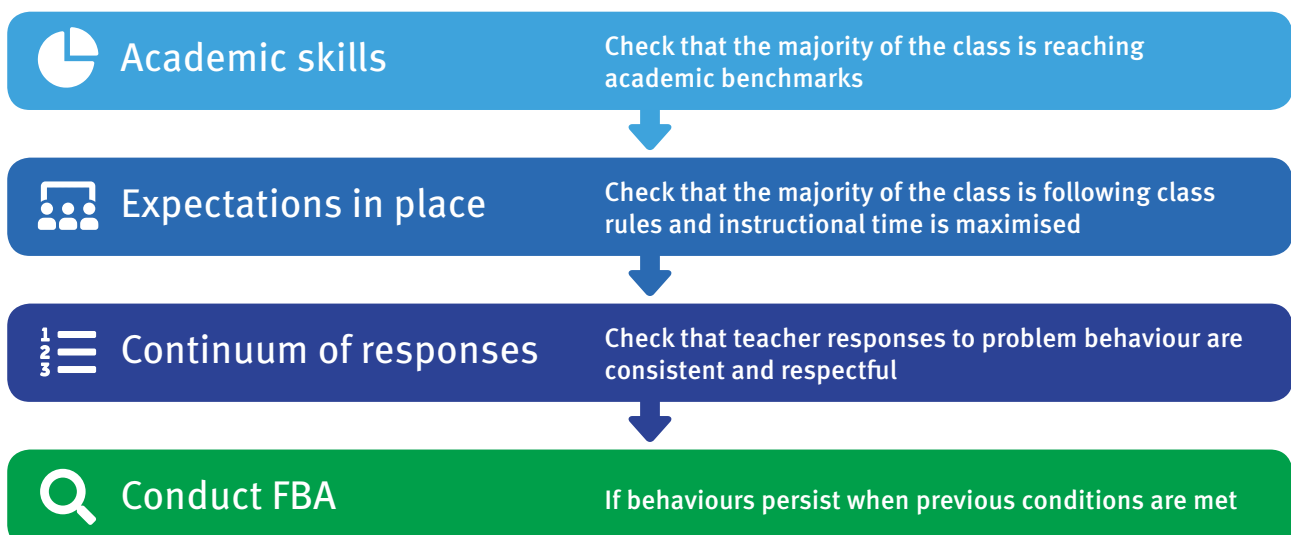4. Make adjustments to the IBSP, as needed.

Who can conduct an FBA?

No specialist qualifications are required to conduct an FBA in schools. Most FBAs can be conducted by a school-based team, guided by a behaviour specialist or a team member trained in conducting FBAs.

Is an FBA needed?

Before investing time in conducting an FBA it is important to check that universal and classroom support is in place. When multiple students are experiencing academic or behavioural difficulties, schools should first focus on putting supports in place across the whole school and entire class. It may also be necessary to examine teacher-student interactions to ensure that the classroom environment is generally positive and that effective instruction and proactive classroom management are in place. The following flowchart provides an overview of the conditions that should be in place before conducting an FBA.

When to conduct an FBA

| Academic skills	Check that the majority of the class is reaching academic benchmarks
Expectations in place	Check that the majority of the class is following class rules and instructional time is maximised
Continuum of responses	Check that teacher responses to problem behaviour are consistent and respectful
Conduct FBA	If behaviours persist when previous conditions are met

Functions of behaviour

All behaviour serves a *function*, or purpose. The function can be either to **access** something or to **avoid** something (see diagram below). When students use a behaviour repeatedly, they are using the behaviour to access or avoid something in the immediate environment.
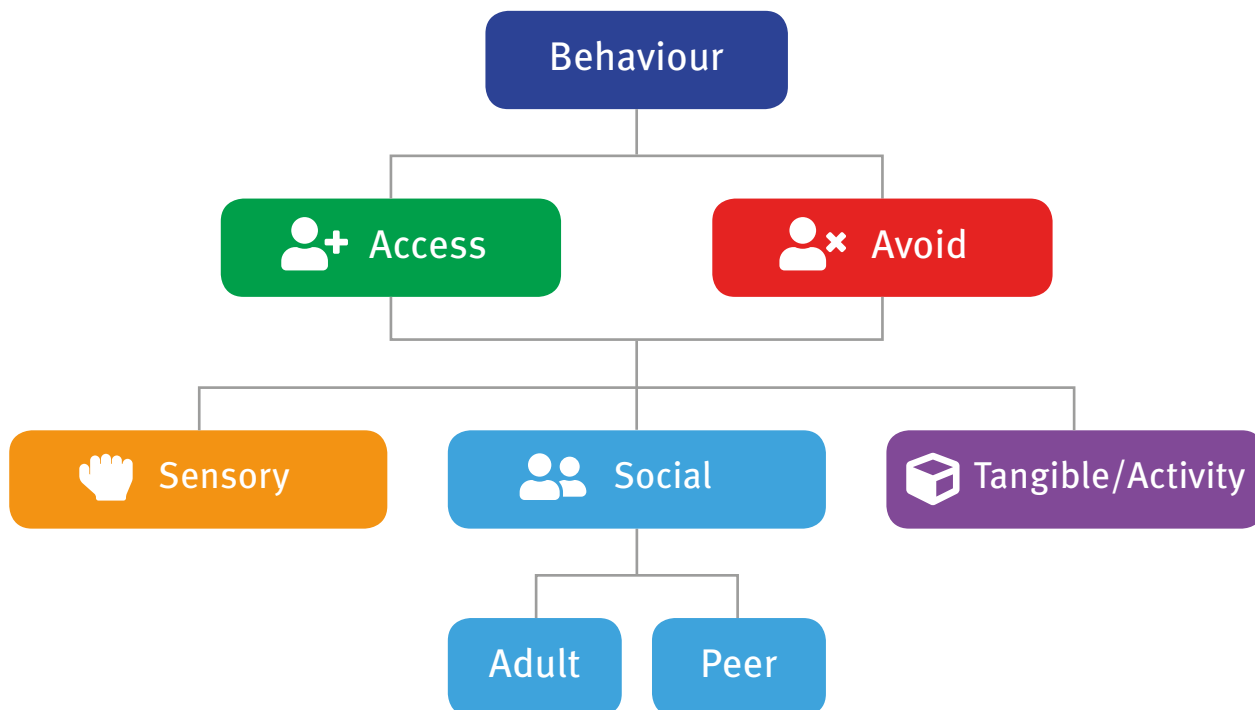
Common functions

In schools there are usually some common functions for student behaviour. However, it is important to remember that sometimes a behaviour can fulfil more than one function for a student, depending on the context.

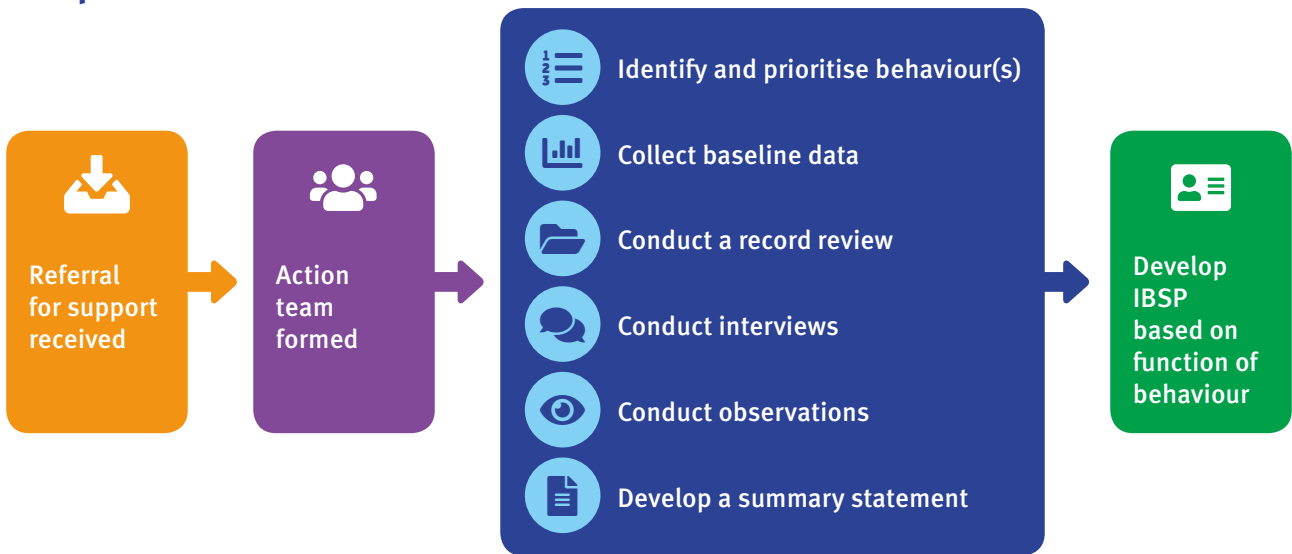| Common 'access' functions	Common 'avoid' functions
To get a toy or tangible	To escape from an activity
To gain access to an activity	To avoid a demand
To get attention from an adult	To get away from peers
To get attention from peers	To avoid an unpleasant sensation
To get sensory stimulation	To avoid an adult

Determining the function of behaviour

A hypothesis about the function of a behaviour is arrived at only after seeing repeated *patterns* of behaviour. Patterns are identified through collecting and summarising data about the problem behaviour. Information needs to be collected on the *setting events* and *antecedents* that precede the behaviour, and the *consequences* that reliably follow the problem behaviour. The student support team needs to collect sufficient information to be confident that the hypothesised function is accurate. Read the example below and have a go at hypothesising the function of Ziggy's behaviour.

Antecedent	Behaviour	Consequence
information collected from records/interview/observation	Ziggy backchats when given an instruction and argues when directed to a set task in core subject areas.	*information collected from records/interview/observation*
Teacher directs class to write a short answer in their notebooks.	"This sucks."	Teacher waits and scans.
Teacher quietly asks Ziggy to start work.	"I have a sore hand. Why do you always give us so much writing?"	Teacher moves away.
Teacher asks students to read out their responses.	Mutters "She better not ask me."	Teacher ignores comment.
Teacher asks Ziggy how she is going with the next task.	"I don't know what to do. You never help me."	Teacher stays and helps Ziggy get started.
Teacher asks, "How are you going?"	"Stop checking on me. I'm doing the work!"	Teacher moves away.

In the example provided we can see that on 4 out of 5 occasions Ziggy's backchatting behaviour resulted in her being left alone by the teacher. We can therefore hypothesise that the function of the behaviour is to *avoid*. However, we might need to collect further information in order to establish if Ziggy wants to avoid the task or the teacher. Based on some of the comments that Ziggy makes in the example, it may be more likely that she is trying to avoid attention from the teacher. We could test this hypothesis by checking if Ziggy displays the same behaviour with other adults, or by seeing if she completes the task when provided with help.

Steps in FBA

Referral for support received → Action team formed → Identify and prioritise behaviour(s) · Collect baseline data · Conduct a record review · Conduct interviews · Conduct observations · Develop a summary statement → Develop IBSP based on function of behaviour

1. Identify and prioritise problem behaviour(s)

The first step in conducting an FBA is to establish and prioritise the behaviour of concern. Only one behaviour should be selected. A decision on which behaviour to focus on first should be based on the following considerations:

- Are there any safety concerns?
- Which behaviour is impacting most on the student's learning and wellbeing?
- Which behaviour is impacting most on others (students, staff, parents)?
- How frequently does the behaviour occur?
- What is the short term likelihood of success?

> **Template**
>
> The Problem Behaviour Inventory can be used to establish and prioritise the problem behaviour (see Appendix 1).

Once the behaviour has been selected, the next step is to ensure that it is defined in specific *observable* and *measurable* terms. This means that the behaviour should be able to be counted or timed. Could someone who does not know the student immediately recognise the behaviour? It is important to leave no room for a subjective opinion; there should be no doubt about what the behaviour looks and sounds like. Consider these examples:

Specific, observable and measurable	Too general
✔ Blurts out answers during whole class questioning	✘ Talkative
✔ Hits others with a fist or open hand	✘ Aggressive
✔ Says 'no' when asked to do something	✘ Non-compliant
✔ Stares into space during work time	✘ Spaced out
✔ Argues with the teacher when asked to clean up	✘ Oppositional

2. Collect baseline data

It is important to know the frequency, duration or intensity of the problem behaviour before interventions are put into place. Select a simple method of data collection, suitable for the behaviour. For example, a simple frequency count could be used for behaviours that occur several times daily. For behaviours which occur less often, such as fighting, existing behaviour records might be sufficient. Sometimes the duration of the behaviour might be more important than the frequency — for example, how long does a student remain off task or lie on the floor? For some behaviours, such as self-injury or screaming, it is important to measure the intensity. This can be done by use of a simple 5 point scale. Be sure to collect baseline data over a period of 1 or more weeks, depending on the frequency of the behaviour. For behaviours that are unsafe or may cause injury, complete a risk assessment to help identify the level of risk and actions to be undertaken.

3. Review records to determine impacting factors and previous interventions

A record review should be conducted to collect information about the student's academic and behavioural history. Examples of records typically included in a record review are:

- Academic report cards
- Standardised test results
- Literacy and numeracy assessments
- Attendance
- Lateness
- Behaviour referrals
- Suspensions
- Classroom minors
- Individual Curriculum, Behaviour or Education Plans
- Agency referrals

The Guidance Officer and parent may also be able to provide additional information about student health and wellbeing, but remember that some information is confidential and not able to be shared.

4. Interview parents, teachers, student and other relevant stakeholders

At minimum the teacher and a parent should be interviewed to collect information that may be useful in identifying the function of the behaviour and selecting intervention strategies. However, it is often useful to interview other adults, such as teacher aides or administrators, who have regular contact with the student. A guided interview with the student can also provide valuable insights.

The interview should aim to collect information about the following:

Context

Context describes the activities or routines where the problem behaviour is more likely to occur. Think about *where* the behaviour happens, *who* is present and the *activity* that is taking place. For example – in whole class *literacy lessons* during *independent reading* time; in the *playground* with peers during *unstructured playtime*; on *assembly* with the class when *listening to speakers*.

Antecedents

Antecedents happen immediately before the behaviour and are sometimes called triggers. Some antecedents are easy to identify, while others may be more subtle. Common antecedents to problem behaviour include: difficult tasks, interaction or lack of interaction with a peer or adult, transitions, availability of tasks or activities. Identifying antecedents provides information that can help prevent the problem behaviour from occurring, but remember that the presence or absence of an antecedent may not always result in a specific behaviour.

Consequences

Consequences are the events that happen immediately following a behaviour. An important point to remember is that in FBA the term 'consequence' refers to what happens immediately after the behaviour. Consequences can be perceived as positive or negative by the student concerned. For example, being reprimanded by the teacher may be perceived positively by a student who craves adult connection. When a consequence increases or maintains a behaviour, this is called *reinforcement*. Examples of consequences that may be reinforcing for students include: removal of a task or demand, presentation of an activity or preferred task, adult or peer responses, removal of adult or peer attention.

Setting events

A setting event is a situation or experience affecting the individual which either makes the problem behaviour more likely, or increases its intensity. Examples of setting events include the effects of medications, hunger, lack of sleep, conflict, exposure to trauma or previous failure. Often setting events happen outside of school or the classroom. Understanding possible setting events can help school teams plan for potentially difficult times.

Templates

There are a number of interview templates which can be used to collect information. A member of the action team who has a good rapport with the person to be interviewed should conduct the interview. Appendix 2 contains some suggested interview templates. Training and practice in using these templates is recommended.

- Functional Assessment Interview Tool (FAIT)
- Family Interview Form
- Student Interview Form
- Functional Assessment Checklist for Teachers and Staff (FACTS)[2]

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2   Designed to be used alone, or in conjunction with the ABC Recording Form.

5. Conduct direct observation(s) of the student

Direct observations should be conducted when the record review and interviews are not sufficient to determine the antecedents and consequences of the behaviour, or when the team is not confident that the function for the behaviour has been identified. Observations are not always needed in order to complete a summary statement.

When planning observations it is important to schedule them as efficiently as possible. Select a time to observe when the behaviour is most likely to occur. For low frequency behaviours it may be advisable for a person who is usually with the student to be trained in how to record the required information.

Plan for the observation by letting the teacher know when you will be observing and for how long. It is important that the teacher does not announce that someone will be coming to observe. As an observer, try to sit in a place where you can get a good view of the student and the surrounding environment, but try not to make it obvious that you are taking notes on a particular student. You may want to tell the class when you arrive that you are visiting classrooms today. If students ask what you are doing give a matter-of-fact response such as "I'm here to see what this class is working on."

Having another adult present may affect the dynamics of the classroom. It is not unusual for problem behaviour to 'disappear' or ramp up. This can be countered by visiting the class briefly on a few occasions to get the class used to your presence.

Use a standard observation form during the observation. Select a form that is the best match for the problem behaviour. For example, an ABC Form may be best for behaviours that occur less frequently or last for several minutes. A simple event tally or scatter plot may be useful to record higher frequency behaviours. The ABC Recording Form has been developed to use as a follow-up to the FACTS and to capture a broad range of information that will be useful in developing a summary statement. Whichever tool is used, it is important that the observer has been taught how to complete it accurately and has had the opportunity to practise. It can be very helpful for novice observers to conduct an observation with a more experienced person and then compare notes.

Typically, observations take between 15 and 30 minutes. Observe until you have seen at least 5 occurrences of the problem behaviour. For less frequent behaviours it may be necessary to conduct separate observations over several days, or even weeks. It may be more efficient in such cases to ask the teacher to complete an ABC Form as soon as possible after an incident.

Templates

Appendix 3 contains the following observation templates:

- Event Tally Form
- Scatter Plot Form
- ABC Form
- ABC Recording Form

6. Develop a summary statement

Information from the record review, interviews and observations (if conducted) is used to formulate a summary statement. The summary statement draws together the collected information, identifying patterns between setting events, antecedents, the problem behaviour and maintaining consequences. This summary leads to the formulation of a hypothesis about the function of the behaviour.

Remember that the function is the reason behind the student's behaviour. The function should explain what it is that the student is trying to *access* or *avoid* as a result of the behaviour.

Be aware that it is possible for a behaviour to serve more than one function. For example, a student might walk around the classroom to avoid a task during independent work times. The same student might walk around the class to get peer attention during unstructured time. In such cases, two summary statements should be developed.

Template text

The following template can be used to write the summary statement:

> During (activity or routine) when (antecedent) student (insert name) will (problem behaviour) because (consequence). Therefore the function of the behaviour is to (access or avoid).
> The behaviour is more likely to occur when (setting event).

Example

During independent writing when an extended writing task is provided Taylor will put her head on the desk because the teacher aide will offer help. Therefore the function of the behaviour is to access adult attention. The behaviour is more likely to occur when Taylor has not slept well the night before.

7. Select interventions and develop the IBSP

Completion of the FBA is not an end in itself. The next and most important step is for the team to select interventions which align with the function of the behaviour. The goal is to make the problem behaviour irrelevant, inefficient or ineffective. See the *Guide to Individual Behaviour Support Planning* for more information.

Appendix 1: Identifying the behaviour

Problem Behaviour Inventory

(Adapted from LaVigna and Willis)

Person completing form:

Name:	
Relationship to student:	☐ teacher/staff member ☐ parent/caregiver ☐ other

Behaviours of concern

Please prioritise all behaviours of concern and indicate how frequently they occur. Leave blank if unknown/not a concern.

Behaviours of concern	Priority			Frequency		
	Low	Medium	High	Daily	Weekly	Monthly
Cries						
Shouts angrily						
Temper outbursts						
Throws self of floor, chairs						
Yells and screams						
Throws objects						
Breaks things intentionally						
Breaks windows						
Turns over furniture						
Hits adults						
Hits children						
Bites						
Kicks						
Pinches						
Scratches						
Hurts others						
Swears						
Strikes with weapons						
Fights with others						
Spits at others						
Runs away						
Pouts and sulks						
Withdraws						
Attempts to hurt self						
Bangs head						
Bites self						
Hits self with fists						
Scratches self						
Throws body against objects						

Date completed:

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Problem Behaviour Inventory

Behaviours of concern	Priority			Frequency		
	Low	Medium	High	Daily	Weekly	Monthly
Cuts off circulation						
Teases others						
Threatens others						
Social media misuse						
Wanders room to room						
Opens and closes doors						
Opens cupboards and drawers						
Gets into other's belongings						
Wanders away, runs off						
Opens and closes refrigerator						
Climbs and jumps on furniture						
Runs around the house						
Easily distracted						
Doesn't finish activities						
Acts without thinking						
Steals from others						
Steals food						
Sets fires						
Plays with matches or lighters						
Plays/touches stove						
Says "no"						
Disobeys						
Starts but does not finish						
Does opposite of what is told						
Does not respond to direction						
Cheats						
Counts things over and over						
Excessive hand washing						
Repeatedly brings up same subject						
Says things that are strange						
Talks about hurting others						
Talks to self						
Converses with imaginary others						
Reports hearing and seeing things						
Reports peculiar body sensations						

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Problem Behaviour Inventory

Appendix 2: Indirect data collection forms

Functional Assessment Interview Tool (FAIT)

Lohrmann (2003)

Name:	
Date:	

The purpose of this tool is to help team members organise their thoughts prior to attending the team meeting. Please complete each section to the best of your knowledge. It is often helpful to look over the contents of the tool and then observe the student for a couple of days to see if particular events begin to stand out.

1. What are the student's strengths, preferences and interests?

Strengths	
Preferences	
Interests	

2. What are the problem behaviours of concern?
Describe the behaviours in terms of what the behaviour looks like and sounds like.

Problem behaviour	What it looks/sounds like	Intensity
		☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low
		☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low
		☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low
		☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

Date completed:

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Functional Assessment Interview Tool (FAIT)

3. What events tend to precede occurrences of problem behaviour?
Check all that apply

Curricular/ instructional events	Environment events	Interpersonal/ affective events	Personal/ choice events
☐ Difficult or new task ☐ Written work required ☐ Teacher directing a group lesson ☐ Lacks prior knowledge/basic skills ☐ Group or partner work ☐ Independent work ☐ Student perceives work as irrelevant ☐ Lecture: note taking required ☐ Lecture: listening only ☐ Test/quiz ☐ Hands on activity ☐ Non-preferred material or content ☐ Directions given ☐ Multi-step task or direction ☐ Could not locate materials ☐ Expected to initiate independently ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Other: _____	☐ Transition at beginning or ending of class ☐ Transition between activities ☐ Very structured activity or setting ☐ Unstructured activity or setting ☐ Change in schedule or routine ☐ Desired activity interrupted ☐ Denied access to a desired activity ☐ Excessive visual or auditory stimuli ☐ Morning ☐ Afternoon ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Other: _____	☐ No one interacting with student. Teacher's attention directed elsewhere ☐ Received adult or peer criticism ☐ Peers picking on student ☐ Recent conflict with adult or peer ☐ Recent history of negative interactions ☐ Emotionally stimulating situation (either positive or negative) ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Other: _____	☐ Demand made of student ☐ Limited opportunities to make choices or decisions ☐ Appeared disorganised ☐ Teacher expectation to manage time or task ☐ Directive comments made toward student ☐ Student unaware of what was expected next ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Other: _____

4. How do adults and peers respond when problem behaviour occurs?
Check all that apply

☐ No adult or peer response (i.e., no eye contact, verbalisations, gestures)
☐ Sent out of the room
☐ Did not complete task or demand required
☐ Sent to office
☐ Sent to another area
☐ Teacher redirected
☐ Teacher reprimanded
☐ Provided with assistance to complete assignment or task
☐ Peers laughed or encouraged
☐ Peers scolded or jeered
☐ Peers responded angrily
☐ Other: _____
☐ Other: _____
☐ Other: _____
☐ Other: _____

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Functional Assessment Interview Tool (FAIT)

5. What types of outcomes are present as a result of the problem behaviour?

Check all that apply

☐ Did not complete work or demand required
☐ Delayed completion of task or demand required
☐ Suspended from school
☐ Provided access to a desired event or activity
☐ Received a discipline referral
☐ Lost points or privileges
☐ Parent imposed consequences
☐ Other: _____
☐ Other: _____
☐ Other: _____
☐ Other: _____

6. Why do you think student engages in the problem behaviour?

Check all that apply

Is student engaging in the problem behaviour to get out of something (avoid)?	Is student engaging in the problem behaviour to get something (access)?
☐ Escape work tasks or demands	☐ Gain access to adult attention
☐ Escape situations that are perceived unpleasant or non-preferred	☐ Gain access to peer attention
☐ Escape situations where student does not know what to do	☐ Gain access to desirable tangible object or food
☐ Escape situations where student is not motivated to participate	☐ Gain access to preferred events or situations
☐ Escape situations where student lacks the skills to respond appropriately	☐ Gain access to sensory stimulation
☐ Other: _____	☐ Other: _____
☐ Other: _____	☐ Other: _____
☐ Other: _____	☐ Other: _____
☐ Other: _____	☐ Other: _____

7. At this point in time, what are your top priorities for intervention planning?

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Functional Assessment Interview Tool (FAIT)

Student Interview Form

(adapted from Kern, Dunlap, Clarke & Childs, 1993)

Student name:	
Date:	
Interviewer:	

Part 1

Question	Always	Sometimes	Never
In general, is your work too hard for you?			
In general, is your work too easy for you?			
When you ask for help, do you get it?			
Is class or activity time too long?			
Is class or activity time too short?			
Do you work better when your teacher is with you?			
Do you work better with a classmate?			
Do you work better when you are alone?			
Do you think people notice when you do a good job?			
Do you like to get rewards when you do good work?			
Do you think you would do better if you received more rewards?			
In school, do you do things or learn about things that interest you?			
Are there things in the classroom that distract you?			

Part 2

1. When do you think you have the fewest problems in school?

2. When do you think you have the most problems in school?

Date completed:

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Student Interview Form

3. Why do you have problems during these times?

4. Is there something your teachers could do so that you have fewer problems?

5. What are your favourite activities at school?

6. What would you like to earn for good work or good behaviour?

7. If you had the chance, what activities would you like to do that you don't have the opportunity to do now?

8. What are your favourite subjects/activities? What do you like about them?

9. What subjects/activities don't you like? What don't you like about them?

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Student Interview Form

Family Interview Form

(adapted from O'Neill, Horner, Albin, Storey & Sprague, 1990)

The following interview should be conducted with the student's family. The interview is designed to gather data from the family about the behaviour identified as a problem at school, and about their concerns related to behaviour outside of school.

Someone who has good established rapport with the family should conduct this interview.

This instrument should be used as a guide only. Questions that are not relevant to a particular student should be skipped.

Additional questions may be added.

NOTE: Replace Student[1] with young person's name before printing this form

Student name:			
Age:		DOB:	
Interviewer:		Date of interview:	
Respondent(s):		Relationship to young person:	

What is your understanding of the behaviours that are a problem for Student[1] at school?

Have you been concerned about these or other behaviours? (If there is more than one problem behaviour, list the behaviours in the order of their significance to the **family.** Make sure that the behaviour is defined in a way that can be **observed and measured**).

1.
2.
3.
4.

(Remember that the highest priority for the family may not be the same behaviour identified by the school. It is important to help the family with the behavioural concern that is most significant to them. The information related to the problem behaviours at home may help the team understand the behaviours that are a problem at school even if they are different behaviours).

Interview questions	Responses
When did the problem behaviour (#1 on the list) begin?	
How did you respond when the problem behaviour first started?	
What do you think causes or motivates the problem behaviour?	

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Family Interview Form

Interview questions	Responses
When is the behaviour most likely to occur?	
How often does this behaviour occur?	
Are there times when this behaviour rarely or never occurs?	
Are there times when this behaviour almost always occurs?	
Does this behaviour occur more often during certain times of the day?	
Is this behaviour affected by how many people are around Student[1]?	
Does this behaviour only occur when Student[1] is with certain people?	
Does this behaviour occur only during certain types of activities?	
Could this behaviour be related to something Student[1] has difficulty doing or to skills he/she hasn't learned?	
What is something Student[1] likes so much it could be a reward?	
Is Student[1] taking any medications that might affect their behaviour?	
Could the behaviour be related to being thirsty, hungry or tired?	
Could this behaviour be the result of any form of discomfort such as headaches, stomach-aches, blurred vision, ear infections etc.?	
Could this behaviour be caused by allergies?	
When the problem behaviour occurs, are there any other behaviours that are likely to occur with it?	
Are there any observable events (outside of school) that signal that the problem behaviour is about to occur?	
What usually happens after the problem behaviour?	
Is there anything else that we haven't already talked about, that you would like the school to know about Student[1] or Student[1]'s behaviour?	

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Family Interview Form

Functional Assessment Checklist for Teachers and Staff (FACTS)

(adapted from March, Horner, Lewis-Palmer, Brown, Crone & Todd, 1999)

Important: Provide a copy of this form to the interviewee and record answers on your form. Not to be completed independently.

Part A

Student name:	Class:	Date:
Interviewee:	Interviewer:	

1. Student strengths – identify at least 3 strengths/contributions

Academic	
Social/recreational	
Other	

2. Routines analysis: Where, when and with whom problem behaviours more likely

Problem behaviour *List behaviours of concern*	Routine *Describe the activity/context*	Day/am/pm *Enter day/time of routine*	Likelihood of behaviour *Rate from low to high*	Current intervention for problem behaviour *List support/interventions in place*
			Low □1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □6 High	
			Low □1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □6 High	
			Low □1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □6 High	
			Low □1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □6 High a	
			Low □1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □6 High	

3. Prioritise the top 2 routines (rated 5 or 6). Complete FACTS B for each routine.

Top 2 routines	Routine (activity and context)	Problem behaviour
Routine #1		
Routine #2		

4. Rank order the top priority behaviours occurring in the targeted routine above.

□ Bullying/teasing	□ Physical aggression	□ Disruption	□ Stealing
□ Lack of participation	□ Verbal aggression	□ Refusal	□ Vandalism
□ Self-injury	□ Bad language	□ Work not done	□ Other

Behaviour #1 label	Observable/measurable description

What is the frequency of behaviour #1 in the targeted routine (e.g. x/day)?	
What is the duration of behaviour #1 in the target routine (seconds/minutes)?	
Is behaviour an immediate risk to safety or wellbeing of self/others?	□ Yes □ No

If yes, refer to student support team and complete a behaviour risk assessment and safety plan.

FACTS Part B should be completed for each routine of concern. If there are multiple problem behaviours, or behaviours occur across multiple routines, a more comprehensive Functional Behaviour Assessment, or wraparound support might be needed. Discuss with your student support team.

Date completed:

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Functional Assessment Checklist for Teachers and Staff (FACTS)

Functional Assessment Checklist for Teachers and Staff (FACTS) Part B

1. Select ONE of the prioritised routines from the FACTS Part A. Copy the routine and the description of the behaviour from Part A into the boxes below.

Routine/activities/context (when, where, what, who)	Observable and measurable description of behaviour

2. Antecedent identification: Ask the staff member to rank order the top 2 triggers for the behaviour. Read environmental features a – m and select #1 and #2. Next ask the corresponding follow up questions.

Environmental features (select top 2)	Follow up questions
☐ **a.** task too hard ☐ **b.** task too easy ☐ **c.** bored with task ☐ **d.** task too long ☐ **e.** physical demand ☐ **f.** correction/reprimand ☐ **g.** class instruction ☐ **h.** small group work ☐ **i.** independent work ☐ **j.** unstructured time ☐ **k.** transitions ☐ **l.** with peers ☐ **m.** no attention	**a/b/c/d/e** selected – describe the task in more detail **f** selected – describe purpose and delivery of correction **g/h/i/j/k** selected – describe setting/activity/content in more detail **l** selected – name the peers **m** selected – describe the situation

3. Consequence identification: Ask the staff member to rank order the strongest 2 pay offs for the behaviour in the selected routine. Read functions **a** – **k** and select #1 and #2. Next ask the corresponding follow up questions.

Function (select top 2)	Follow up questions
☐ **a.** get adult attention ☐ **b.** get peer attention ☐ **c.** get preferred activity ☐ **d.** get objects/money ☐ **e.** get sensation ☐ **f.** get other _____ ☐ **g.** avoid undesired activity ☐ **h.** avoid sensation ☐ **i.** avoid adult attention ☐ **j.** avoid peer attention ☐ **k.** avoid other _____	**a/b** selected – whose attention is obtained? What kind of attention? How provided? **c/d/e/f** selected – what specific items/activities/sensations are obtained? **g/h** selected – describe specific items/activities/sensations avoided. Supply detail about tasks e.g., extended writing Can student perform the task independently? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown **i/j** selected – who is avoided? Why?

4. Setting event identification: Ask the staff member to rank order any events that happen outside of the immediate routine that predictably make the problem behaviour worse or more likely.

☐ hunger	☐ home conflict	☐ school conflict	☐ missed medication	☐ illness
☐ lack of sleep	☐ routine change	☐ homework not done	☐ failure in previous class/lesson	☐ other _____

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Functional Assessment Checklist for Teachers and Staff (FACTS)

Summary of Behaviour

1. Use the information from the Functional Assessment Checklist for Teachers and Staff (FACTS) Part B to complete the summary of behaviour. Write the top-ranked responses in the corresponding boxes below.

2. Read out the summary of behaviour. Ask the interviewee to give a confidence rating for the accuracy of the summary statement.

Antecedent/trigger	Problem behaviour	Function
Setting events		

How likely is it that this summary of behaviour accurately explains the occurrence of the problem behaviour?

☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 6
Not sure					100% sure

Date completed:

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Summary of Behaviour

Appendix 3: Direct data collection forms

Event Tally Form

Student name:	
Date from/to:	
Behaviour:	
Observer:	

Make a tally mark each time the problem behaviour occurs in each time period. Time period selected will depend on behaviour and student timetable (e.g. 15 minutes, 30 minutes, 1 hour).

Time period *e.g., 9 – 9.15am*	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Total incidents					

Date completed:

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Event Tally Form

Scatter Plot Form

Student name:	
Date from/to:	
Behaviour:	
Observer:	

Write down all regular activities/timetabled lessons that the student has each week in the first column.

Mark a cross (X) in the corresponding day column each time the problem behaviour occurs in each activity. Leave blank if behaviour does not occur.

Tally totals after at least a week of data collection to identify patterns in the occurrence of the problem behaviour.

Activity/lesson	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F	Total

Date completed:

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Scatter Plot Form

ABC Form

Instructions: When the identified problem behaviour occurs (column B), record what happened immediately BEFORE (column A) and AFTER (column C).

Student name:	
Observation date:	
Observer:	
Time(s):	
Activity:	

A BEFORE	B Identified problem behaviour	C AFTER

Date completed:

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ABC Form

ABC Recording Form

(R. Van Norman, 2008. Modified by S. Loman, 2009)

Note: Use this form as a follow-up to the FACTS interview.

Student:	
Date:	
Setting:	
Observer:	

Transfer information from FACTS		Activity/Task Write the identified routine from the FACTS B	Antecedent Write the identified antecedent from the FACTS B	Behaviour Write the identified behaviour from the FACTS B	Consequence Write the identified consequence from the FACTS B
#	Time	**2.** Write the task or activity that is happening (tick after observation)	**3.** Write what happened just before the behaviour (tick after observation)	**1.** Write what the student does	**4.** Write what happened as a result of the behaviour (tick after observation)
1		☐ Large group instruction ☐ Small group work ☐ Independent work ☐ Unstructured time Details:	☐ Given instruction ☐ Correction ☐ Alone (no attention/activity) ☐ With peers ☐ Doing activity ☐ Activity removed ☐ Transition Other/notes:		☐ Adult attention given ☐ Peer attention given ☐ Activity or item provided ☐ Got sensation ☐ Avoided adult attention ☐ Avoided peer attention ☐ Avoided task/activity ☐ Avoided sensation Other/notes:
2		☐ Large group instruction ☐ Small group work ☐ Independent work ☐ Unstructured time Details:	☐ Given instruction ☐ Correction ☐ Alone (no attention/activity) ☐ With peers ☐ Doing activity ☐ Activity removed ☐ Transition Other/notes:		☐ Adult attention given ☐ Peer attention given ☐ Activity or item provided ☐ Got sensation ☐ Avoided adult attention ☐ Avoided peer attention ☐ Avoided task/activity ☐ Avoided sensation Other/notes:

Date completed:

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ABC Recording Form

#	Time	2. Write the task or activity that is happening (tick after observation)	3. Write what happened just before the behaviour (tick after observation)	1. Write what the student does	4. Write what happened as a result of the behaviour (tick after observation)
3		☐ Large group instruction ☐ Small group work ☐ Independent work ☐ Unstructured time Details:	☐ Given instruction ☐ Correction ☐ Alone (no attention/activity) ☐ With peers ☐ Doing activity ☐ Activity removed ☐ Transition Other/notes:		☐ Adult attention given ☐ Peer attention given ☐ Activity or item provided ☐ Got sensation ☐ Avoided adult attention ☐ Avoided peer attention ☐ Avoided task/activity ☐ Avoided sensation Other/notes:
4		☐ Large group instruction ☐ Small group work ☐ Independent work ☐ Unstructured time Details:	☐ Given instruction ☐ Correction ☐ Alone (no attention/activity) ☐ With peers ☐ Doing activity ☐ Activity removed ☐ Transition Other/notes:		☐ Adult attention given ☐ Peer attention given ☐ Activity or item provided ☐ Got sensation ☐ Avoided adult attention ☐ Avoided peer attention ☐ Avoided task/activity ☐ Avoided sensation Other/notes:
5		☐ Large group instruction ☐ Small group work ☐ Independent work ☐ Unstructured time Details:	☐ Given instruction ☐ Correction ☐ Alone (no attention/activity) ☐ With peers ☐ Doing activity ☐ Activity removed ☐ Transition Other/notes:		☐ Adult attention given ☐ Peer attention given ☐ Activity or item provided ☐ Got sensation ☐ Avoided adult attention ☐ Avoided peer attention ☐ Avoided task/activity ☐ Avoided sensation Other/notes:
6		☐ Large group instruction ☐ Small group work ☐ Independent work ☐ Unstructured time Details:	☐ Given instruction ☐ Correction ☐ Alone (no attention/activity) ☐ With peers ☐ Doing activity ☐ Activity removed ☐ Transition Other/notes:		☐ Adult attention given ☐ Peer attention given ☐ Activity or item provided ☐ Got sensation ☐ Avoided adult attention ☐ Avoided peer attention ☐ Avoided task/activity ☐ Avoided sensation Other/notes:

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ABC Recording Form

#	Time	2. Write the task or activity that is happening (tick after observation)	3. Write what happened just before the behaviour (tick after observation)	1. Write what the student does	4. Write what happened as a result of the behaviour (tick after observation)
7		☐ Large group instruction ☐ Small group work ☐ Independent work ☐ Unstructured time Details:	☐ Given instruction ☐ Correction ☐ Alone (no attention/activity) ☐ With peers ☐ Doing activity ☐ Activity removed ☐ Transition Other/notes:		☐ Adult attention given ☐ Peer attention given ☐ Activity or item provided ☐ Got sensation ☐ Avoided adult attention ☐ Avoided peer attention ☐ Avoided task/activity ☐ Avoided sensation Other/notes:
8		☐ Large group instruction ☐ Small group work ☐ Independent work ☐ Unstructured time Details:	☐ Given instruction ☐ Correction ☐ Alone (no attention/activity) ☐ With peers ☐ Doing activity ☐ Activity removed ☐ Transition Other/notes:		☐ Adult attention given ☐ Peer attention given ☐ Activity or item provided ☐ Got sensation ☐ Avoided adult attention ☐ Avoided peer attention ☐ Avoided task/activity ☐ Avoided sensation Other/notes:

Summary statement based on observation

Complete the statements to form a summary statement

Routine	Antecedent	Behaviour	Consequence
During:	When:	Student will:	Because:

Therefore the function is: to access/to avoid

How likely is it that this summary of behaviour accurately explains the occurrence of the problem behaviour?

☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 6

Not sure   100% sure

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ABC Recording Form