8.2 What is Functional Behaviour?

Functional behavior is an approach to positively shifting students' behavior via an understanding of behaviour as communication. This approach is based on the premise that children misbehave when the expectations placed on them outstrip their ability to respond adaptively, and that effective approaches to improving children's behavior are often counter-intuitive.

Functional behavior uses data and analysis to identify the purpose or "why" of a student's behaviour through the lens of four functions:

- The **TANGIBLE** function: *To obtain an item or activity*
- The **ATTENTION/CONNECTION** function: *To get attention from others*
- The **ESCAPE** function: *To escape or avoid an unwanted situation*
- The **SENSORY** function: *To seek or gain stimuli or input*

Understanding the **function** of a student's behavior allows school teams to:

- Understand the setting events and triggers that cause the challenging behaviour
- Understand the need driving the behavior and meet that need in a more pro-social manner via the development of replacement behaviour
- Understand what skills the student needs to communicate their needs in a more socially adaptive manner
- Understand the key role of the adults in changing the student's behaviour

For more information, please see Inclusive Education Procedures:

- 8.1 What is Behaviour?

- 8.2 What is Functional Behaviour?

- 8.3 What is a Functional Behaviour Plan?

- 8.4 Functional Behaviour (FAIRS) Plan and ABC Templates

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