



**THE PEDAGOGICAL ATTITUDE, DEALING  
AND MANAGING BEHAVIOR ISSUES IN THE  
MODERN SCHOOL: TRIBUTION TO THE TEACHER  
AND WRITER KOSTAS CHRISTAKIS**

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**Abstract:**

In the context of the tribute to the author and professor Kostas Christakis, we focus on his books "Behaviour Problems of Children and Adolescents" and "Behaviour Problems in School Age" in order to discuss issues regarding the pedagogical attitude, as well as the treatment and management of students' behaviour issues in modern schools. The aim of this project is to highlight long-standing pedagogical issues around the prevention, assessment and treatment of behavioural difficulties of students in the school environment. The conclusions highlight the theoretical and practical pedagogical approaches and actions of teachers in the modern, inclusive school (Christakis, G. K., 2023, 2006).

**Keywords:** students' behavioural difficulties, inclusive school

**1. Introduction**

According to Christakis, difficulties in pupils' behaviour at school can be addressed both by teachers and by special education staff, such as social workers and psychologists. People often use the term "behaviour" when they want to qualitatively define a person by describing their actions. However, the term behaviour has many dimensions in the modern inclusive school. As Christakis (2023, p. 35) states in the following quote:

*“ When we use the term “behaviour” today, we mean any event that can be observed and described, regardless of the qualitative load that this activity carries. Simple activities, such as the way the child eats, sits, walks, interacts with others, are behaviours”.*

In recent years there has been an alarming increase in complication of behavioural difficulties in children and adolescents, which - according to Christakis (2006, 2011, 2023)

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- are due, among other things, to economic, social, as well as environmental factors. In this context, Christakis (2023) states that primary and secondary school teachers need to be aware of the difficulties in the behaviour of their students. In the following quote, he states:

*“a. Identify children who are in a high-risk zone,  
b. Know the procedure to follow to prevent and address problems,  
c. Be able to approach, understand and accept children with behavioural problems and use appropriate psycho-educational techniques to deal with them”.*

Behaviour, as a result of the individual's interaction with his or her environment, may indeed be complex and/or appear unpredictable. However, behaviour is analysed on the basis of subjective and objective criteria and may be classified as normal by some and problematic by others. Christakis (2023, pp. 39-45) refers extensively and clearly to the criteria according to which the actions and behaviours of students in the school context are interpreted and evaluated. These are the attitudes and reference rules of society, the conditions under which behaviour occurs, as well as the prejudices and expectations of people in the child's environment. In addition, the frequency with which the disturbed-problematic behaviour occurs, as well as the intensity with which it occurs, are used as criteria for its assessment.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 The Education of Pupils with Behavioural Difficulties in Inclusive School**

Inclusive education is based on certain pedagogical and teaching principles (Christakis, 2013, pp. 127-172), which, as Christakis (2023, pp. 115-117) states, are in any case strictly observed for all students in their neighbourhood schools. These principles refer to the internal organisation and functioning of the classroom, the social and emotional atmosphere of the classroom, the number of students in the classroom, the constant supervision and the possibility of individualised support for each student with behavioural difficulties within the classroom, as well as in the schoolyard.

Christakis (2023, pp. 121-121) also refers to the pedagogical tool and curriculum model (Christakis, 2013, pp. 127-172), created by (Drossinou, Korea M. 2017, pp. 307-338, 2017, 2020, 2023) in the context of which targeted individual structured and didactically differentiated inclusive interventions of Special Education can be designed and implemented with emphasis on supporting students with behavioural difficulties. In addition, for the atmosphere of the classroom Christakis (2011, 2023, pp. 115-116) states in the following passage:

*“The atmosphere in the classroom should be warm and friendly. Students should live and work calmly... The work in the classroom should be planned so that it is conducive to the*

*continuous engagement of students. Prolonged relaxation and chaos are conducive to distraction and complete disorganisation of pupils with behavioural problems”.*

According to Christakis's ergography about active teaching methods, the pedagogical attitude of the teacher towards pupils with behavioural difficulties is also referred to. He is noted the way in which actions, activities, and individualized programs are implemented in the context of cooperation between teachers, special educational staff and parents. Nevertheless, also the way in which pupils perceive and experience their place in the group of their peers are issues of particular importance in the inclusive school. It is worth emphasizing at this point the absolute need for cooperation between all stakeholders in education in order to successfully address the heterogeneous behavioural difficulties of students in the school environment. As Christakis (2011, 2023, pp. 116-117) notes,

*“A good relationship between staff or parents greatly increases the likelihood of children developing educationally smoothly and improving their behaviour”.*

According to Gordon (in Christakis, 2023, p. 153), the best way for a teacher to be effective in his classroom is to form and maintain a good relationship with his students. Pedagogical attitudes and behaviours that affect the child's personality may, depending on the situation, have a negative or positive emotional connotation. For instance, phrases expressed in school with positive sentences (e.g. We missed you yesterday) or negative sentences (e.g. While you were away, the class was fine) have a positive or negative effect on the emotional atmosphere of the classroom, as well as the development of attitudes, moods and values.

## **2.2. The Teacher's Handling of Difficulties in Pupils' Behaviour**

The treatment of students' behavioural difficulties presupposes that the teacher in the modern, inclusive school is aware of the factors that cause these difficulties (Fragkouli, 2014). However, according to Christakis (2023, pp. 102-104), the question arises whether or not this knowledge would be helpful, given that some researchers (based on the behavioural approach that emphasizes the symptom) believe that it is preferable for the teacher not to know the general causal factors. According to Christakis's ergography, teachers can focus on the symptoms that are directly related to the child's particular situation and behaviour.

Furthermore, there is another opinion that the teacher should be aware of the factors that lead to the manifestation of behavioural difficulties. It is obvious that when the teacher, as Christakis (2023, p. 104), is aware of the factors:

*“Factors that cause undesirable behaviour, can better understand the child's manifestations and choose appropriate strategies for approaching and dealing with the child's problems”.*

Christakis (2023, p.104) clearly expresses his view on the enhancement of the role of teachers and refers to the need to formulate a new model of teacher, the multi-purpose (or self-sufficient) teacher, who will be able to analyse and deal with the difficulties in children's behaviour either alone - when the difficulties are mild - or with the cooperation and support of other specialists as appropriate. In particular, Christakis (2023, p. 106) states that the phenomena that lead children and young people to anti-social behaviour should be addressed as soon as possible with educational and social measures:

*“Most importantly, changes and adjustments are needed in curricula, textbooks and teaching strategies, in order to form a purely human-centred system of education...”*

### **2.3. Pedagogical Attitude at School and Pupils with Traumatic Experiences**

In modern schools, there are also students who suffer from the mocking attitude of classmates, experiencing bullying. In some cases, the child victim may exhibit passive behaviour, while in other cases, student victims resist, get involved in fights and react violently (Drossinou Korea, 2023). In addition, traumatic experiences at school may be created by boredom, strain and frustration from schoolwork, as well as the wrong-related behaviour of the teacher. The creation of feelings of failure, the authoritarian teaching style, the restriction of initiative, as well as collective punishments without discrimination are recorded in the psyche of the pupils as traumatic experiences of school. Also, as Christakis (2023, p. 98) notes, pedagogical practices that contribute to the creation of traumatic experiences in school can be considered the following:

*“Working for a long time with a student who has a problem. This tactic emphasizes the pupil’s problem and creates unpleasant feelings. Leveling tactics, i.e. not recognizing the additional abilities of some pupils”*.

When the difficulties are intense, if we attempt to deal with them all at once, we will fail and become frustrated both ourselves and the child or young person involved, as Christakis (2023, pp. 237-238) stresses, emphasising the need to prioritise the problems. Christakis (2023, pp. 239-240) supports the definition of a goal once the primary problem has been distinguished and selected. He refers to a long-term and instructional goal in order to formulate the desired behaviour that the child should achieve in a long or short period of time, such as a teaching hour. The assessment of behavioural difficulties is necessary in order to clarify whether to design a teaching programme or to try to address the difficulty with other targeted interventions. Christakis (2023, p. 241) refers to the "three P" and describes the process for designing an instructional program with the following steps:

*“Step 1. Preparation of the Programme (Preparation)  
Step 2. Planning of the Programme (Planning)  
Step 3. Programme implementation (Performing)”*.

However, Christakis (2023, pp. 255-257) suggests that in cases where there may be a relapse, teachers should:

- a) *“Not to get frustrated, but to continue to address the problems systematically,*
- b) *Consider that the possible recurrence of the problem is a “game condition”, which may also lead to the final resolution of the difficulties,*
- c) *Explain the situation to the students and help them prevent or deal with recurrences using the right strategies.*

Molnar & Lindquist (in Christakis, 2023) also suggest that in cases of recurrence of difficulties, teachers and parents should:

- a) *Wait, perhaps more time is needed,*
- b) *Observe and re-evaluate the results,*
- c) *Monitor the process of planning and implementing the programme,*
- d) *Repeat the interventions with better design and execution, and also*
- e) *Test and use other programs and techniques.”*

### **3. Conclusion**

According to the ergography of Christakis (2023, pp. 101-102), for the proper pedagogical treatment and management of student behaviour issues and bullying phenomena in the school environment, among other things, appropriate programs, strategies and teaching methods should be designed and implemented in the school, in the family and in the community.

These programs will be addressed to students from Kindergarten to high school. It is therefore proposed that appropriate educational material be created by the relevant bodies and that the corresponding actions and activities be included in the curricula.

In this context, the pedagogical considerations of Christakis (2023) underline the importance of an anthropocentric system of education, which will simultaneously seek the education and formation of both the 'human-knowledgeable' and the 'social human'. The modern school seeks new pedagogical attitudes regarding ways of prevention, assessment and pedagogical management of difficulties in pupils' behaviour in the school environment, aiming at the functional inclusion of students in the classroom. To this purpose, the systematic implementation of information and awareness programmes for parents and institutions dealing with children and adolescents would also help, aiming at the formation of a human being who will be able to distinguish right from wrong and imaginary from real, building around him a special mechanism of self-protection.

Therefore, we conclude that behavioural difficulties can have a negative impact on the personal, social and school life of students, often disrupting relationships in the school and family environment. However, with Christakis' writings as a key guide, a series of concepts, techniques, and methods have been conceptualized that support the development of a positive learning atmosphere, providing the space for building meaningful interpersonal relationships between pupils and teachers.

It became clear, according to the ergography Christakis texts, that dealing with students' behavioural difficulties is linked to the pedagogical attitudes of teachers. His pedagogical considerations share with others that successfully dealing with students' behavioural difficulties requires the creation of an environment that is suitable for learning and flexible, with the possibility of implementing group work and activities. In this pedagogical climate, teachers encourage the cultivation of cooperation skills in the classroom and ensure the provision of equal educational opportunities to all pupils.

In conclusion, Christakis notes that in the modern, inclusive school, a new pedagogical attitude is needed on the issues of prevention and treatment, as well as early and appropriate support for students with aggressive and/or dangerous behaviours towards others and/or themselves. These new views, as well as the basic guidelines - methods of pedagogical support for pupils with behavioural difficulties are summarised in *'a neighbourhood school for all, which should indeed be for all pupils'*.

### **Conflict of Interest Statement**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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