Part One

CONTEXT AND TERMINOLOGIES
Throughout most of the professional lives of those contributing to this book it is doubtful whether there has been any time during which the issue of ‘emotional and behavioural difficulties’ (EBD) did not assume signal importance within their national education systems. It is equally doubtful whether few educational professionals, irrespective of ideological persuasion, location, training and current status, remain untroubled by the very term EBD, and the policies and practices that follow from such ‘categorization’. In some ways the term itself is a metaphor which aptly summarizes all of those doubts, prejudices, frustrations, inconsistencies and paradoxes that prevail within the wider field of provision known as special education, or in its broader application as ‘special educational needs’ (SEN) – a term itself which is under great scrutiny at present, representing as it does a potentially fixed and deficit view of human endeavour. Cronis and Ellis (2000) have amplified the special education parallel by reference to those five key issues facing professional educators in the coming decades: inclusion, the research/practice interface, a supply of appropriately trained personnel, individual rights and litigation and scientific advances. In each of these generic areas EBD is substantially highlighted as the student grouping or categorization likely to cause most soul-searching and debate. The reader of this volume will find that these themes, along with other more specific matters addresses by individual contributors, appear with regularity in the chapters we have selected.

In introducing a volume which attempts to offer a set of differential cultural, social and professional viewpoints of what has always been a controversial and
in many ways indeterminate grouping (CECB, 1987; Bower, 1982; McCall and Farrell, 1993), we are all too aware of some substantial pitfalls. Not least of these is that we might appear to be advocating a scarcely modified version of a position which validates, without condition or interrogation, the casual allocation of the term ‘EBD’ to student-behaviours which challenge (DfE, 1994). A potent interpretation of this ideology is that it is used to deflect discussion from seemingly intractable structural issues – resources, traditions, the exercise of professional power – not to mention the underpinning features within society and its institutions (including schools) which contribute (or not) to individual and system resiliency (Nettles et al., 2000). Again, this has been a feature of the EBD (and special education) debate across widely differing cultures and educational systems (see, for example, DES, 1989; Pink, 1982).

Our rationale in developing this book has to be precisely argued – especially so given the audiences, educational contexts and cultures within which it will be read. Moreover, there has always been, within the literature, a significant emphasis on EBD or related matters (Gullotta et al., 1998; Kauffman, 1993; Quay, 1994; Scotti et al., 1999) dealing in depth with the contexts, interventions and outcomes for school students ascertained as such. Often such volumes offer a highly polarized consideration of the field, in terms of its key strands. What we attempt to do, in this Handbook, is to provide a collection of chapters which delineate the differential performances that might comprise the term ‘EBD’, the breadth of professional activity that these prompt and sustain, and the tension, discrepancies and possibilities that emanate from them. In all these we scrutinize EBD primarily in its educational contexts, whilst recognizing that such considerations, in the manner of Bronfenbrenner (1979), have to be dealt with by reference to those systems, protocols and practices which constitute a broader macrosystem.

In assembling these chapters our thinking has been informed by a preoccupation with educational justice and empowerment. Thus, we believe that, of all school-age populations, that defined as ‘EBD’ – however artificially the term is constructed – has been most marginalized in terms of street-level empowerment. These are school students who are serially ‘done-to’ by professionals or critiqued at some distance by career-researchers and theoreticians. What we have sought to do, then, is to encourage individual contributors to bring together theory and practice in their chapters. The reflexivity of these is, we believe, crucial in defining a position beyond that of dispassionate bystander. Each of us has, at some time, been directly involved with the young people who constitute this book’s focus. Each of us retains at least some level of affiliation with these students, their teachers, parents/carers and other involved professionals. So what the reader will denote is something of an attempt to balance, both within and between, chapters with a view to defining a principled stance in which practice and theory are immutable. The underpinning commitment is to the empowerment of these school students, either directly or via the professionals and others who work with them.

A further principle which needs to be recognized in this preamble is that the nature of EBD as a field is such that, whether in practical or theoretical terms, it is
in essence inter- and intra-disciplinary. For editors of a volume such as this an acknowledgement of this is essential – but it is both an opportunity and a threat. Inter-professional interventions have been viewed by many as a defining characteristic of EBD provision. In part this is because the term itself is interpreted differentially according to one’s orientations and beliefs. But irrespective of an individual’s allegiance to a perceived causal factor and to a resulting (most) effective intervention, there remains amongst many practitioners and theoreticians a general sense that these exist as possible ‘answers’ to complex questions. That biological, social and psychological factors combine at every juncture in the aetiology of EBD and lends an interrogatory stance to the mind-set of many of the professionals involved in the field. Whilst highly specific positions – based on a range of evidences – are taken they are seldom exclusive, more frequently interdisciplinary. Our contributors have emerged from a variety of professional backgrounds, and the chapters in this Handbook seek to confirm the nature and efficacy of this working tradition – whilst retaining an essential focus on education.

A further preliminary is that, in recognizing the inherent complexity of the term ‘EBD’, and its preoccupation with a quest for integrated professional interventions, we must equally acknowledge that the spatial distribution of ‘cases’ of EBD is by no means uniform. In global terms, therefore, it is difficult to escape from the reality that EBD in its general sense has been the creation of essentially post-industrialized nation states. Though the impacts of political violence or re-structuring, of poverty and physical duress, and of cultural globalization can be variously implicated in the rising numbers of school students who are viewed as demonstrating ‘challenging’ or ‘at-risk’ behaviour in emerging nations in the developing world, this book largely focusses upon what have been referred to as ‘mature’ education systems (Daniels and Garner, 1999). It goes without saying that substantial attention to EBD (and its associated descriptors) has been emerging on an international level exemplified by an ever-increasing international literature; the cases of Cyprus (Angelides, 2000), Japan (Letendre and Shimizu, 1999), Finland (Jahnukainen, 2001), South Korea (Park, 1994) Greece (Gavrilidou et al., 1993) and Russia (Kolominskii and Zhiznevskii, 1992) are indicative of the global extent of this. It is not, however, the purpose of this Handbook fully to articulate a comparative stance, such is the extent of the discontinuities and paradoxes inherent in this complex field. A task of this nature would become even more problematic in the light of ample evidence that even amongst those countries which fit the crude descriptor of ‘post-industrial’, there are notable differences and discrepancies at almost every juncture of policy and provision in EBD. What we are seeking to achieve, rather, is some exemplification of broad principles which readers may, in turn, find resonances within their own educational traditions. As Ainscow (1998) has remarked, ‘… progress in the field will be more likely if the task is reformulated in order to pay attention to the uniqueness of contexts and encounters.’

Finally, by way of positioning statement for this volume, we should emphasize that the focus of these chapters is principally upon education-related matters arising from recognition and intervention in EBD. The focus, then, is mainly directed towards schools within compulsory educational provision in a range of national
settings. This is not to deny the importance of its (many) other parameters and manifestations, more to make this work even approaching a project that is ‘do-able’ within the restraints of a handbook of this size.

An amplification of the broad context against which EBD might be considered is further revealing of our own standpoint as co-editors of this international collection of papers. Whilst any mapping of such a diverse and complex territory will be, at best, partial, we offer, in the succeeding section of this opening chapter, four broad headings around which such a context might be considered. And even though even these are suggestive of tensions and omissions, they allow the reader to glimpse some of the conceptual and organizational difficulties, and a subtext of tension, in compiling a set of chapters on such a broad, disparate yet ultimately fascinating aspect of education. What will be readily apparent from these initial observations, and from their further examination in the constituent chapters of this volume, is that interpretations of EBD, its causes, impacts and interventions, are dramatically susceptible to professional stakeholdings, personal beliefs and societal expediency. Each of these variously come to influence the outcomes for all those involved. Again, in the constituent chapters in this Handbook, readers are invited to draw personal, institutional and country-specific inferences from the issues they incorporate.

As far as this introductory chapter is concerned then, we have chosen briefly to highlight just four of the issues which confront policy-makers and practitioners whose substantial preoccupation is with children and young people experiencing EBD. As with the substantive content of the Handbook, we use these themes as indicators of the contentious nature of much of this territory, and feel secure that readers will identify with them in terms of their own context and professional operations.

I TERMINOLOGY

It is the way of the world that its dominant political and socio-economic system(s) will exert an overriding influence on the policy and structure of educational provision irrespective of national orientation. At the outset, then, recognition needs to be given to the manner in which EBD is used as a quasi-official term in many countries. It is frequently adopted as an informal descriptor of student behaviour, and its level of use in this respect is often unquestioned by practitioners and policy-makers alike. And yet the term has no statutory basis in several countries – England provides a good example of this terminological paradox, as Thomas, elsewhere in this book, points out. In the United States, the last 10 years marked a continuation of a debate on the term and a struggle to arrive at a common understanding (Kavale et al., 1996).

It is notoriously difficult to arrive at a consensus of what particular behaviours delineate EBD (and the children and youth who wear the label), and how these appear often to be interchangeable with other (apparently) synonymous descriptors. Thus, it is commonplace to hear reference made to school students who are
‘disruptive’, ‘at risk’, ‘disaffected’, ‘excluded’, ‘alienated’, ‘challenging’, ‘exceptional’, ‘troublesome’ and so forth. Such are the vagaries of ‘descriptive categories of need’ in many countries that such terms are routinely used in the context of a single child or young person. That they infer a quasi-scientific legitimacy seems to reinforce, rather than discourage, their usage. Moreover, to be seen to be taking action on matters of educational attainment, under-performance and anti-social behaviour has come to be regarded as a prerequisite function of twenty-first century governments such appears to be the relationship between these and the wellbeing of the nation state. Commitment to those who are ‘different’ on account of their social or educational performances is brokered by establishing their ‘needs’ as part of, but apart from, mainstream society. Recognition that such needs are mainly met via resources (financial, human, environmental, emotional and so on) requires that each grouping of the needy is defined for operational purposes. As several of our own contributors suggest, this process is complex, highly contentious and liable to differential interpretation over time, in location and cultural context. One product of all of this is that the ‘professional vocabulary’ of EBD, notwithstanding its friability in the face of interrogation, becomes seen as a statutory part of the process, further defining these individuals as different.

2 HISTORY AND INCIDENCE

In the seventh edition of a popular reader on the US education system and its interrelationships with social processes, Levine and Havighurst noted that ‘One of the most serious problems confronting many schools in concentrated poverty neighborhoods is the tendency for violence in the community to affect teaching and learning conditions in the schools. Violent and other anti-social behavior of one sort or another is more prevalent there than in most other neighborhoods’ (1989: 281). They refer to this as a ‘growing problem’, although it is worth also noting that the theme has been a consistent one, making its appearance in each of the earlier editions of that volume, stretching back to 1957.

The extent of this growth in EBD categorization is worrying, but it should not be viewed as either remarkable or a new phenomenon. In England the 1916 conference of the National Special Schools Union was notable for a survey of juvenile crime given by Spurley Hey, then the Director of Education for Manchester. He professed to ‘… undeniable evidence of an increase in juvenile offences’ (Hey, 1917). Ninety-two per cent of all cases were committed by boys, regarded by Hey as ‘… dull children, varying in mental capacity from slight subnormality to actual mental deficiency’ (1917: 20). Moreover, Hay was able to show their concentration in disadvantaged parts of the city. Further, there was widespread recognition at the time of the overlap and interdependent relationship between these behaviours and problems presented by children in schools in these locations.

More contemporaneous data are revealing of the deeply embedded nature of ‘emotional and behavioural difficulties’ within and beyond systems of schooling.
Thus, in 2001, the US Department of Education reported that approximately 470,000 young people were in receipt of special education or other services under the category of ‘emotional disturbance’ (US Department of Education, 2001). These numbers are showing year-on-year increases, with the 2001 figure representing an increase of 2 per cent from the previous year, and 20 per cent on the figure obtaining in 1991.

It is difficult to even estimate either the level or rates of increase in EBD. This in part is a product of the dilemma in defining precisely what behaviours constitute the label. Moreover, most statistics on incidence fail to account for a proportion of school populations which, whilst not being ascertained as experiencing EBD, nevertheless may present several or many of the performance indicators used to proscribe the term. These, then, are issues that offer a rich source for critique and commentary and are matters which contributors to this volume will refer to with regularity.

3 LOCATION AND PROVISION

Behaviour’ is a matter of experience. ‘Bad’ or ‘challenging’ behaviours are defined by the parameters of the environments and conditions in which they take place. So, what boundaries, parameters and baselines of behaviour are set? How are such boundaries drawn? This volume, as we have stated, explores the nature of EBD from an educational context. This is not to say that the behaviours associated with the quasi-official educational term ‘EBD’ are not manifest in other social settings. Indeed, there are compelling overlaps and relationships at virtually every turn.

It is a straightforward task to present vignettes to illustrate these. In one break-time at a junior school in the centre of a dishevelled housing estate towards the east end of a northern English city, the headteacher is about to ‘deal’ with six children (aged between 8 and 10). They wait – accompanied – outside her room. Their playground behaviour was deemed ‘inappropriate’ for the third time this week. There has been swearing (now routinely part of the language heard in the school), a fight, theft of break-time snack money from the pocket of another pupil, spitting at a teacher on duty, and a teacher who reprimanded a pupil for hitting another was told by that 9-year-old to ‘chill and naff-the-shit-off’. This is routine. In fact, the head teacher is relieved that nothing unexpected has occurred and that the break-time for these children has passed without major event.

Two miles away, two pupils (both 9 years old) wait – unaccompanied – in shame and silent fear outside the staffroom. During break-time there was an argument over a test question. One pupil called the other a ‘cheating bastard’. Such language is never heard in the school. The teacher on duty is genuinely shocked and the boys find themselves outside the office – being here is almost penalty enough. The point here is that ‘challenging’ behaviour or ‘bad’ behaviour is a matter of definition, and such definitions are drawn by virtue of the environments in which those behaviours take place. As Angelides suggests:
the role which schools and teachers play in the development of behaviour problems is major and substantial. This perspective gives rise to the interest in schools as units, and teachers and pupils are members of those units, and not as individuals with separate unique characteristics. They are, of course, unique individuals but, at the same time, they operate as integral parts of the same institution, under the same culture, so their behaviour must be studied in relation to the specific organisational context. (2000: 57)

For the first school, 'behaviour' is a constant issue – always there, always a matter of degree and always a matter of individuals. The second school, however, has 'enjoyed' a positive discipline policy for seven years or so. Break-times which result in pupils waiting in penance for reprimand outside the head teachers' office are rare (and hence such experiences are 'shameful' when they occur). This school has 'turned around' its behavioural expectations of its pupils, sees behaviour and discipline as an issue of shared culture.

The code in this school includes words like respect, responsibility, courtesy. And the pupils have, in their various lessons, PSHE — Personal, Social and Health Education, for instance learned not only to recite the rhetoric of 'respect' or 'responsibility' or 'courtesy' or 'restraint' or 'self-control', but they have also begun to understand those words (in childlike versions of such definitions) and to live out those values as they understand them. These pupils can talk (in their 8, 9, 10-year-old ways) about what they mean by 'respect' for each other (not copying); for the school (not smashing the windows in the evening); for staff (not being abusive, getting on with their work they give you). They can talk about being responsible for their classroom (not spitting gum on the floor, putting equipment away); for their school (picking up rubbish); for their own work (doing homework when it is set and giving it in on time). 'Restraint' is a big one — how do we teach 'restraint'? The point here? Bad behaviours are defined in the contexts of other bad behaviours.

Whatever the merits of respective arguments regarding causation in cases of EBD, there is little doubt that schools in different spatial settings, with distinctly individual organizational features, do differ dramatically in the levels of 'problematic', EBD-type behaviour they experience. This is pivotal to the contested nature of the 'category', and is also germane to the debate surrounding the very use of such a contentious term. In fact, the accomplishments of Hargreaves et al. (1975) and Bronfenbrenner (1979) still seem to be essential to our attempt to come to some measure of understanding of what 'is' emotional and/or behavioural difficulty. Hargreaves et al. highlighted the perennially useful notion of 'behaviour in context', in which he argues that social actions are viewed as variously problematic or non-problematic according to person, place and timing. Those involved in professional work in this area will attest to the importance of these factors, whilst being equally convinced that they reveal a fundamental weakness in utilizing EBD within a categorical approach to policy and provision.

Meanwhile, in locating discussion of 'behaviour' within an environmental setting, defined as an ecosystem, Bronfenbrenner (1979) allowed us to glimpse the complex map of factors that impact on individuals within their immediate and extended environments. Both writers highlight the pervading dilemma in EBD:
it inhabits the territory of loose terminology whilst offering tantalizing glimpses of the risk and resilience ecology for EBD – why is it that some children and youth succumb to EBD-type behaviours and not others?

This is a commonplace motif for EBD, and runs across national and cultural boundaries. In England, for example, comparison of schools in similar social and economic catchments, with similar profile in student roll and performance, suggests a degree of variability in the success of schools in managing children who present challenges on account of their behaviours. Such discrepancies, it is suggested, are useful in highlighting the complex nature of EBD and can be seen as being played out across a diverse educational and cultural canvas.

4 POLITICIZATION AND PROFESSIONALIZATION

It is certainly the case that children and young people who are ascertained as experiencing ‘emotional and/or behavioural difficulties’ carry with them a burden that others identified as ‘learning disabled’ do not. We do not allocate ‘blame’ to those who have Down’s syndrome or cerebral palsy, and yet make major assumptions about those experiencing EBD. A scarcely disguised assumption, for example, is that these school students are manipulative, capable of controlling their actions and unwilling to comply with the work orientation of school.

This in part has fuelled periodic upturns of moral panic, in which established education systems (usually in first world post-industrial settings) are viewed as being under threat of melt-down, in the face of violence and other anti-social behaviour displayed by an increasing number of school students. Like much of what prevails relating to EBD, such a perception is largely a fiction, fuelled in part by non-educational imperatives; the quest for social order, economic stability and advancement, and the compliance of marginalized groups. We have been experiencing one such era, characterized in response terms by so-called ‘zero-tolerance’ approaches within education (and, as an interesting parallel, the penal systems) of many countries (Skiba, 2000).

Those involved professionally in education, working either directly or at a distance from EBD children and youth, are variously implicated in all of this. The linkage between stereotyping and the knowledge systems of (particularly) post-industrialized nations, mediated by professionals, allows for the isolation, then exclusion of individual groups of children or young people. Coulby and Jones summarize this process thus:

A headteacher desires that a troublesome, underperforming child be removed from mainstream school; an obliging psychologist discovers that the child has a low ‘IQ’; the child is sent to a segregated school for slow learners (various euphemistic designations). As part of this process the child is discovered to need specialist teaching away from the excitements of mainstream school. The provision that the system intends to impose is
legitimated as what the child needs. The fact that the children and young people subjected to these processes are almost exclusively working class ... and disproportionately black ... is hidden in the ameliorative, pseudo-scientific processes which conceal themselves in the discourse of meeting individual needs. (2001: 66)

The implication, then, is that those who are professionally involved in work with pupils experiencing EBD are involved, whether directly or tangentially, in their continued exclusion. This process is achieved, in most cases benignly, by the application of statutory or quasi-official procedures designed to induce ‘better behaviour’ and compliance. And yet, as with those serving custodial sentences where remediation is not a core element of provision, the continued professional allegiance to reactive discipline and to the machineries of control is likely to result in further disadvantage in the manner classically described by such writers as Hunt (1961) and Halsey (1972). Moreover, as is acknowledged by at least one of our contributors, this exclusionary process can also have a negative impact on teachers and other educational workers themselves by setting them apart from others working with populations who are viewed as more normative.

The global movement towards inclusive practices in education has been one of the defining features of legislation by governments during the last 15 years, and has come to preoccupy the thoughts of policy-makers and practitioners. International perspectives on this (Booth and Ainscow, 1998; Armstrong et al., 2000; Daniels and Garner, 1999), whilst illustrating its diverse contexts, practices and outcomes, has never really confronted the dilemma that the broad range of ‘challenging behaviours’ (including EBD) presents in moving towards a more inclusive system of educating. Indeed, there is justification in the argument that it is this group of school attendees who are most frequently cited whenever the efficacy of educational exclusion is being scrutinized (Feilor and Gibson, 1999). Moreover, the same period has seen an even sharper reorientation in education: in many countries, schools are viewed as small enterprises, subject to the wishes of ‘consumers’ and the dominant laws of the market-place.

THE STRUCTURE OF THIS HANDBOOK: METAPHORS IN THE MAKING

We have assembled a Handbook that, by its structure and content, foci and directions, and its omissions, discrepancies and paradoxes, stands as a metaphor for the field of ‘emotional and behavioural difficulties’ itself. As editors we at first struggled to secure a set of chapters which responded to a very specific frame of general reference, before even addressing the specificities of individual issues. As our plans developed, however, we came to recognize that any attempt to force a template or script on our contributors was in stark contrast to the multi-variate, multi-level performances, interpretations and interventions that characterize EBD.

Readers will note, therefore, that whilst our themes are diverse and eclectic, they reveal the particular standpoints and agency of their progenitors, such as the
complexity of EBD – even if its consideration is restricted solely to issues arising in educational contexts – that there will inevitably be readers who feel that our selection has been *ad hoc*, our coverage partial. In contrast, we would claim that the spread of chapters, and the individual issues and motifs addressed by their authors, represents an accessible, broad coverage account of EBD as it is experienced by children and young people, by teachers and other education-related professionals, and by those whose experiences and contexts allow for a more detached, academic gaze. Each of these orientations is valid in its own right, and is in keeping with the current policy approach to interventions based upon systemic theory.

We also acknowledge that some will find our decision to allow for considerable variation in style and length to infer that what is presented here is an hap hazard assemblage of research and polemic. Nevertheless, we hope that readers will find such interfaces challenging because, we believe, they reveal something more of the true nature of the field. This *Handbook* is an attempt to celebrate that diversity, and to maximize the benefits of the *frisson* secured by differences in personal belief or professional standpoint. This collection of chapters, therefore, seeks out a varied audience and an incrementally different engagement with their respective content. In doing so we seek to recognize further the complexities of EBD, both in terms of how it is experienced and how it is provided for.

We have encouraged each of our contributing authors to provide something beyond an indicative set of references in support of their work. Chapter references will therefore reveal further, in their breadth and extent, something of the true nature of EBD. There is now, in many countries, a significant body of literature regarding EBD issues. The nature of this material is as diverse as the topics it addresses. In that sense, therefore, references are more than simply a useful coda to the substance of individual chapters.

This is a *Handbook* that seeks to offer an international perspective on aspects of EBD. In keeping with the diversity of educational policy and practices that this implies, we have tried to further recognize cultural differences by retaining the nuances of language and terminology, as well as the stylistic distinctiveness, in the various chapters of this book. For instance, our contributors variously use the terms ‘children’, ‘pupils’, ‘students’ or ‘young people’ to describe those individuals and groups who are the focus of this book – although we recognize that these terms may mean very different things to different audiences. Similarly, we have allowed language to further define and provide context to individual contributions – an obvious example is in the dual use of ‘behaviour’ and ‘behavior’. Whilst some may find this an irritant, it is our belief that standardization in this respect does little to assist our conceptual understanding.

In terms of structure, this *Handbook* follows what is an acknowledged practice in special education pedagogy. Indeed, it must be argued that such an approach is germane to how teachers more generally choose to operate in order to provide an appropriate set of learning experiences in their classroom. The first section provides a context, the second a survey of significant causal factors; the third focuses on intervention. The final section points to some of the dilemmas which
remain in the field of EBD, and indicates potential for their resolution. Each of these constituent sections of the book are outlined in greater detail.

The first section of this Handbook addresses issues of global and historical context. Constituent chapters hereabout are especially useful as a means of informing the reader of the approach that we have adopted in our attempt at delineating the characteristics of EBD mapped across a range of educational settings. Margret Winzer maps the social and cultural contexts of EBD, showing how these impact on definition and provision in diverse locations. Moreover, her chapter introduces the notion of educational (and social) inclusion – an issue of dramatic impact whenever EBD is being considered. Ted Cole’s chapter deals with the history of EBD provision, using a sharp-focussed lens to point-up the manner in which versions of what constitutes ‘EBD’ change over time and according to the professional capital and traditional protocols existing in a given location. One of the most pervasive issues over time in EBD is the question of terminology. Indeed, as editors of this volume we have had to deal with the widespread recognition that EBD itself is an artificial ‘category’, in that it is socially constructed – therefore lending itself to manipulation or even abuse. So the next chapters tackle this pivotal issue. Gary Thomas begins the process by suggesting that lack of specificity has, for many systems, simply provided a convenient means by which those children and young people who are viewed as ‘troublesome’ could be dealt with. Yet this arbitrary approach has ultimately damaged the educational chances of many of those it was directed towards. Kenneth Kavale and his colleagues reinforce this expression of concern. In their chapter the paradoxes and discontinuities experienced in the US system of categorization are explored, and serve as an indicative overview of the terminological struggles experienced across many cultures and systems. Finally, in this opening section, Tony Bowers surveys the extent to which the emotional status of children and young people in schools is often marginalized. Understandably, teachers often seek to attend to obvious, acting-out performances, as they present a more immediate challenge. This frequently leaves the ‘E’ in ‘EBD’ to be perceived as a matter of peripheral importance.

The Handbook now turns to the underlying causes of EBD, the focus of its’ second section. Again, what is offered is an opportunity to glimpse the complexities hereabout, and to examine the linkages and overlaps between individual causal factors. But a consideration of these is crucial because an understanding of the role that they play in individual cases is securely linked to successful intervention. The opening chapter, by Paul Cooper, provides an opportunity to consider the nature of this relationship, as it can be applied to the biological bases of problematic behaviour. Recognition of the potential for development in this area is important, but also problematic, in the light of concerns about the apparently deterministic thinking which could follow in professional settings. So Michael Furlong and his colleagues, in the next chapter, offer a useful foil. They cover that territory which has been growing in recognition over the last 30 years – that the way that schools are organized and function do impact, in various ways, on the behaviour of its youngsters. Tim O’Brien and Dennis Guiney extend this
consideration of this aspect of causation by examining the way in which education is ‘delivered’ in contemporary cultural and social systems. In doing so they challenge the notion that ‘solutions’ based on a top-down, bureaucratically inclusive approach are an appropriate response to those whose behaviour is deemed to be challenging.

The section pursues this theme by next tackling the link between academic performance and behaviour. Here, Tom Nicholson recognizes that these two issues have traditionally been viewed as inseparable in the causal hierarchy. But he goes on to argue that this relationship is not pervasive and axiomatic; the key to change, he maintains, is in professional attention to both social learning and the more formal, taught curriculum. This theme is further articulated by Paul O’Mahoney, in a survey of the relationship between juvenile delinquency and EBD. Here, according to O’Mahoney, academic failure in school is a crucial factor and is implicated as a cause of the criminal career of many young people. Considerable exposure, in the last half century, has been given to the impact of the televiusal media on children’s behaviour. Tony Charlton and Charlie Panting provide a summary of recent debates in this area, and suggest that the ‘context’ within which children and young people view television is a mediating factor which has largely been overlooked. Finally, the problematic issue of the over-representation of certain racial or cultural groupings in the ‘category’ EBD is considered by Kristen McCabe and her team. This is a matter which is currently exercising the minds of governments and educational policy-makers on virtually a global scale: McCabe et al.’s research study is indicative both of the difficulties of researching this theme and of the potential sensibilities that can emerge from it.

At this point the content of the Handbook shifts towards a more prospective mode. Part Three therefore concerns itself with an indicative set of educational interventions for those who experience EBD. Again, the vast range of individual strategies currently being operationalized in schools and other educational settings can only be hinted at. But the chapters comprising this section provide opportunities for the reader to gauge the extent to which causation and intervention must be viewed as integral components of effective provision. John Visser’s opening chapter for this section draws on both his personal recollections of a career working, in various professional roles and either directly or indirectly, on issues relating to EBD. In much of this a defining theme is the individual orientation and actions of the teacher. Bill Rogers continues the theme by exploring some of the strategies which can be used in moving towards more effective resolution of what, to many, may seem intractable difficulties in the classroom.

There is, in both these chapters, a recognition that individual teachers function as just one part of a broader, organic system. The next two contributions to the Handbook, by Timothy Lewis and Lori Newcomer and by Bob and Kate Algozzine, consider ways in which a systemic causal interpretation of behaviour helps to promote a response which is rooted in the school as a whole. Such actions have, of course, become widespread in school systems in culturally distinct settings, an indication of their promise in offering realistic and sustainable interventions.
Much, too, has been written regarding the need to include the viewpoints and wishes of those who experience EBD. Indeed, it could be argued that advocacy issues are increasingly coming to be a defining feature of twenty-first century provision for EBD children and youth. Carl Smith and John Dwyfor Davies explore this, drawing on distinct and quite different cultural and educational traditions as they do so, whilst Barry Groom and Richard Rose offer a transnational analysis.

This third section closes with two chapters which provide glimpses of approaches to individual and school-based intervention with those experiencing EBD. In the first of these Helen McGrath illustrates the value of social skills training in this area, noting that such approaches offer potential for more long-term gains with regard to student behaviour. Paul Hamill examines the same issue in the context of a specific school-wide approach aimed at retaining EBD pupils in the mainstream.

The final section of this Handbook addresses a number of dilemmas and tensions which have been salient features of the EBD landscape for as long as we can remember. Like what has gone before in this book, we do not claim to provide an exhaustive mapping of these issues. Rather, we have identified some themes which have been highlighted consistently by earlier contributions to the Handbook. These, it would appear, remain as vital issues for consideration by all of those – teachers, advocates, policy-makers, researchers and scholars – who are professionally involved in the field of EBD. Egide Royer’s chapter provides a salutary reminder of a need to close the gap between theory and practice in EBD. Too often, it would seem, opportunities further to develop services for children and young people in this area are being prejudiced by a failure to make linkages between these two equally vital aspects of endeavour. The pitfalls present in researching EBD populations are considered by Ann Lewis, whose chapter provides a framework (or a timely reminder …) to anyone researching or enquiring in this field. Next, the section turns to consider one aspect of EBD – that of ‘attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder’ – which is indicative of the tensions in respect of categorization, ascertainment and ultimately provision in just one area of EBD. Thus, whilst Marjorie Montague and Marcelo Castro focus on ADHD, it could be argued that many other sub-groupings within the general term ‘EBD’ could be critiqued in the same way.

The final two chapters concern those issues of practice and perspective which sharpen the lens through which we ought to be viewing society’s responses to EBD. In the first instance, Christopher Blake asks whether we do enough to ensure that new teachers are equipped with the skills, and the intellectual underpinnings, to meet the challenge of students experiencing EBD. James Kauffman, on the other hand, directs his interrogation to professionals across all sections of educational provision, in asking whether rigid systems and practices and beliefs and conventions do little other than preserve a status quo, which is characterized by missed opportunity or studied indifference. Those involved in work in the field of EBD, he infers, need to adopt a more proactive mind-set in order not to replicate what has, for many experiencing EBD, been largely unrewarding or exclusionary policies and practice.
In conclusion, we hope that readers will be left with a sense of incompleteness and partiality as a result of this Handbook’s constituent chapters. As we have indicated, our intention in scoping the field of ‘emotional and behavioural difficulties’ has been underscored by a belief that there will be more that is omitted than included; for every position taken on definition, causality or intervention there will be many others. Numerous caveats have to be noted, irrespective of the fact that we have attempted to restrict our coverage to that which is located predominantly within educational contexts. And even in doing so we are aware that what we provide in this volume are a series of starting points for the continued scrutiny of an aspect of education which is defined in, and articulated by, cultures and settings on a global dimension.

REFERENCES


