

We must also realise that each individual child is unique and therefore possess a different array of talents and abilities and whilst a certain child may struggle at mathematics they may be the best at other subjects such as drama. This is true of the class that I was taking this year on placement and it made me realise that differentiation needs to be catered for over all aspects of the curriculum. This is a constant challenge for teachers and they need to try their best to be as creative as possible, as being creative can help to create a positive situation where the student can learn and the teacher can teach to their potential.

In relation to behaviour management, it is an area that needs to be addressed when it comes to creating a positive classroom ethos. Di Giulio identified two approaches to behaviour management, the get-tough approach and the laissez-faire approach. The get-tough approach attempts to subdue students with threats, rules and punishments and it is a method that relies heavily on punishment and other external controls. Often this approach will keep the students on task momentarily for fear of punishment but is not a long-term solution to achieving good behaviour. On the other hand the laissez-faire classroom approach provides students with no structure or guidance by giving the children their own freedom. On my school experience I had the opportunity to visit and help in many different primary classes and I was able to see the variety of behaviour management strategies from different teachers. The teacher that I was shadowing adopted more of a get-tough approach but this was because some children of the class were easily distracted so it worked best to keep the children on task. My own approach to behaviour management was also more of a get-tough approach, although this was following the example set by the class teacher so is not completely representative of my own style of teaching.

According to Di Giulio there are four dimensions to creating a positive classroom and therefore classroom ethos, the spiritual, physical, instructional and managerial dimensions. The spiritual dimension relates to caring within the class both from the teacher and from the pupils to each other. Caring is described as *'a key quality that directly influences student success and student achievement'* (Di Giulio 2004) and are described as *'essential elements to classrooms'*. In our own classrooms we can relate easily to this dimension as it is the prime reason we pursue a career in teaching young children, because we care for their development and want to provide the best education possible by caring for their individual needs. This involves building on and creating positive relationships with each student and treating them as individuals. Teachers in Northern Ireland are quite lucky in my opinion as the Revised Curriculum for Northern Ireland deals with this spiritual dimension really well through subjects like PDMU and in the Catholic sector religion and the Alive-O programme. The purpose of PDMU in our curriculum is highlighted below

*'to provide opportunity for specific attention to be given to emotional development, health and safety, relationships and the development of moral thinking, values and action'* (CCEA 2007)