

Possible function of the behaviour – tick a working hypothesis	Notes / what this might mean for this child
☐ escape or avoidance of a task, noise, crowding or change	
☐ access to something: an object, an activity, adult support, connection or attention	
☐ a sensory need or sensory overload	
☐ communication: the child cannot yet ask, say or show “no”, or communicate “stop”	
☐ difficulty with transitions between activities	
☐ tiredness, hunger, pain, illness or another physical factor	
☐ other:	
What will we do next time?	Specific decision
What will we do earlier, before tension rises?	
What short message will we use?	
What support will we use? A picture, a gesture, a visual plan, a “break” card, a choice?	
What alternative communication or regulation skill will we teach?	
How will we acknowledge and reinforce the child’s attempt to communicate or use the agreed strategy?	
When will we check whether the strategy seems to be helping?	

A completed example

A – what came before?	B – what did the child do?	C – what happened next?
The child was building with blocks. Suddenly, an instruction was given to the whole group: “Tidy-up time.” There was no advance warning.	The child started shouting, threw a block and tried to leave the table.	The adult paused the tidy-up for this child, moved the other children away and offered the calm-down corner. The tidy-up was delayed for this child.
Possible hypotheses	What to try next time	
☐ difficulty with the sudden end of play ☐ no advance warning of the change ☐ a need to finish the activity ☐ no way to say “one more moment” or “break”	Give an advance warning: “Two more blocks, then we tidy up.” Use a “first-then” board. Offer a choice: “Will you tidy the blocks or the crayons?” Teach a “break” or “one more moment” card or gesture.	

What not to write – and what to write instead

We do not write	We write specifically
“The child was naughty.”	The child threw three blocks on the floor and shouted for about two minutes.
“The child was manipulating the adult.”	After the tidy-up instruction, the child started crying; after going to the calm-down corner, the crying stopped.
“The child is always disruptive.”	During carpet time, the child stood up five times and went over to the shelf with the toy cars.
“The child refuses to cooperate.”	The child pushed the worksheet away and covered their ears after the instruction was given.

Possible function of the behaviour – tick a working hypothesis	Notes / what this might mean for this child
☐ escape or avoidance of a task, noise, crowding or change	
☐ access to something: an object, an activity, adult support, connection or attention	
☐ a sensory need or sensory overload	
☐ communication: the child cannot yet ask, say or show “no”, or communicate “stop”	
☐ difficulty with transitions between activities	
☐ tiredness, hunger, pain, illness or another physical factor	
☐ other:	
What will we do next time?	Specific decision
What will we do earlier, before tension rises?	
What short message will we use?	
What support will we use? A picture, a gesture, a visual plan, a “break” card, a choice?	
What alternative communication or regulation skill will we teach?	
How will we acknowledge and reinforce the child’s attempt to communicate or use the agreed strategy?	
When will we check whether the strategy seems to be helping?	