

## **School Branch Survey on Violence, Aggression & Disruptive Behaviour in Schools**

This is a collective, Branch-based, activity for the EIS "Stand Up for Quality Education" campaign. It complements the University of Edinburgh's "Abuse Directed at Teachers" survey that was issued in the summer of 2023. This survey seeks to help establish how much violence and aggression is experienced in schools, its nature and its impact. The survey also seeks to identify good practice to deal with such behaviour and will be a source of evidence in the ongoing Stand Up for Quality Education campaign.

It is important for Reps to engage with members to discuss and form a collective response to this Branch survey. This online survey should thus be completed electronically during or shortly after a specially convened Branch meeting (you may decide to have two meetings) to discuss it.

### **Violence, Aggression and Disruptive Behaviour in Schools**

The EIS definition of "violent and aggressive" behaviour is copied from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) definition of work-related violence:

'Any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work.'

This definition includes:

- verbal abuse or threats, including face-to-face, online and via telephone
- physical attacks

The EIS definition of "violence and aggression" covers pupil-on-pupil, pupil-on-teacher and parent/guardian-on-teacher behaviour. Our definition covers all incidents in which a person is "abused, threatened or assaulted" irrespective of the perpetrator's intent (i.e., impulsive or premeditated acts) or whether they are physical, verbal or online actions.

Whilst all 'violence and aggression' is unacceptable, the EIS recognises that many children and young people have complex issues to deal with, often beyond their control. Whilst we are wholly committed to upholding our members' health and safety at work, including the prevention and appropriate response to violent and aggressive behaviour of any kind, the EIS does not believe in demonising pupils who have exhibited violent, disruptive or aggressive behaviour. A key aim of this survey is to measure how different schools and local authorities deal with such incidents to identify and share good practice so that all pupils and teachers are well supported in the future.

\* Information about the Branch

School

Postcode

No of members

\* What sector does your Branch cover?

- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Special education
- Nursery education
- Primary and Secondary education

What Local Authority area are you based in?

Sample for branch discussion

## School Branch Survey on Violence, Aggression & Disruptive Behaviour in Schools

### Section 2: Violence and Aggression in Your School

"Violent and aggressive" behaviour includes, but is not limited to, the examples set out below.

- Verbal threats (e.g., physical, psychological or professional harm) towards a teacher
- Intimidatory, obscene or derogatory verbal comments towards a teacher
- Derogatory comments or "gossiping" about a teacher
- Intimidatory, threatening or derogatory emails, phone calls, SMS or letters to a teacher or about a teacher
- Intimidatory, threatening or derogatory content on social media about a teacher
- Physically intimidatory or aggressive behaviour, including obscene gestures, towards a teacher
- Physical violence (e.g., hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, hair-pulling, biting, pushing, pulling, tripping, object thrown at teacher etc).
- Theft or damage to teachers' personal property

Q1. How often are there Pupil-on-Teacher 'violent and aggressive' incidents at the school:

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Rarely
- Don't know

Q2. In general, have Pupil-on-Teacher 'violent and aggressive' incidents increased or decreased over the last four years?

- Increased significantly
- Increased slightly
- Neither increased nor decreased
- Decreased slightly
- Decreased significantly
- Don't know

Q3. What are the most common types of Pupil-on-Teacher 'violent and aggressive' incidents? (please tick the top 3)

- Verbal threats (e.g., physical, psychological or professional harm) towards a teacher
- Intimidatory, obscene or derogatory verbal comments towards a teacher
- Derogatory comments or "gossiping" about a teacher
- Intimidatory, threatening or derogatory emails, phone calls, SMS or letters to a teacher or about a teacher
- Intimidatory, threatening or derogatory content on social media about a teacher
- Physically intimidatory or aggressive behaviour, including obscene gestures, towards a teacher
- Physical violence, (e.g., hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, hair-pulling, biting, pushing, pulling, tripping, object thrown at teacher etc)
- Theft or damage to teachers' personal property

Other (please specify)

Q4. Some types of Pupil-on-Teacher 'violent and aggressive' incidents are driven by prejudice such as racism, sexism, misogyny, religious-based hostility, disablism, homophobia, transphobia, class/wealth prejudice, etc. Are such incidents more or less frequent over the last four years?

- Increased significantly
- Increased slightly
- Neither increased nor decreased
- Decreased slightly
- Decreased significantly
- Don't know

Q5. Where do most Pupil-on-Teacher 'violent and aggressive' incidents take place?

- In the classroom during teaching time
- In corridors
- In the wider school campus (e.g., the cafeteria/dining hall, the playground or sports fields)
- Other (please specify)

Q6. Are 'violent and aggressive' behaviours towards teachers most commonly shown by young people of one gender or another?

- Yes - more so by boys
- Yes - more so by girls
- Yes - more so by young people of a different gender identity
- No difference

Q7. Is everyone in your Branch aware of the school's "Policies and Procedures" for dealing with Pupil-on-Teacher 'violent and aggressive' incidents?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Q8. Does the Branch feel, in general, that teachers are supported after a Pupil-on-Teacher 'violent and aggressive' incident has been reported?

- Yes, always
- Sometimes
- No, never

Comments

Q9. Are there ways in which teachers could be better supported after reporting a Pupil-on-Teacher 'violent and aggressive' incident?

For example, are staff affected given dedicated time to recover from the incident? Is there effective sharing of information of risks to staff after an incident? Are pupil centred risk assessments used?

## School Branch Survey on Violence, Aggression & Disruptive Behaviour in Schools

### Section 2B: Pupil-on-Pupil 'Violent and Aggressive' Incidents

Q10. How often are there 'violent and aggressive' incidents between pupils at the school:

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Rarely
- Don't know

Q11. In general, have Pupil-on-Pupil "violent and aggressive" incidents become more or less frequent over the last four years?

- Increased significantly
- Increased slightly
- Neither increased nor decreased
- Decreased slightly
- Decreased significantly
- Don't know

Q12. What are the most common types of Pupil-on-Pupil 'violent and aggressive' incidents? (please tick the top 3)

- Verbal threats (e.g., physical or psychological or harm) towards another pupil
- Intimidatory, obscene or derogatory verbal comments towards another pupil
- Derogatory comments or "gossiping" about a pupil
- Intimidatory, threatening or derogatory emails, phone calls, SMS or direct messaging to a pupil
- Intimidatory, threatening or derogatory content on social media about another pupil
- Physically intimidatory or aggressive behaviour, including obscene gestures, towards another pupil
- Physical violence, (e.g., hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, hair-pulling, biting, pushing, pulling, tripping, object thrown at another pupil etc)
- Theft or damage to another pupil's personal property

Q13. Some types of Pupil-on-Pupil 'violent and aggressive' incidents are driven by prejudice such as racism, sexism, misogyny, religious-based hostility, disablism homophobia, transphobia, class/wealth prejudice, etc. Are such incidents more or less frequent over the last four years?

- Increased significantly
- Increased slightly
- Neither increased nor decreased
- Decreased slightly
- Decreased significantly
- Don't know



Q14. Does the Branch believe that boys are more likely to exhibit 'violent and aggressive' behaviour towards women teachers than men teachers:

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Comments

Q15. Where do most Pupil-on-Pupil 'violent and aggressive' incidents take place?

- In the classroom during teaching time
- In corridors
- In the wider school campus (e.g., the cafeteria/dining hall, the playground or sports fields)
- Outside of school premises (during lunch breaks, weekends, holidays etc.)
- Other (please specify)

Q16. Are 'violent and aggressive' behaviours towards pupils most commonly shown by young people of one gender or another?

- Yes - more so by boys
- Yes - more so by girls
- Yes - more so by young people of a different gender identity
- No difference

Q17. Is everyone in your Branch aware of the "Policies and Procedures" for dealing with Pupil-on-Pupil 'violent and aggressive' incidents?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Q18. How well supported are pupil "victims" after a reported 'violent and aggressive' incident?

Q19. How well supported and managed are pupils exhibiting 'violent and aggressive' behaviour after a reported incident?

Q20. How well supported are teachers after reporting a Pupil-on-Pupil "violent and aggressive" incident?

Sample for branch discussion

## School Branch Survey on Violence, Aggression & Disruptive Behaviour in Schools

### Section 2C: Parent-on-Teacher Aggressive Incidents

Anecdotally, there seems to be a concerning increase in aggressive behaviour from parents/carers of pupils towards teachers.

Q21. Which of the following behaviours from parents towards teachers has one or more teachers of the Branch experienced? (please select all that apply)

- Verbal threats to a teacher
- Intimidatory, obscene or derogatory verbal comments to a teacher
- Derogatory comments or "gossiping" about a teacher
- Physically intimidatory or aggressive behaviour, including obscene gestures towards a teacher
- Intimidatory, threatening or derogatory emails, phone calls, SMS or letters to a teacher
- Intimidatory, threatening or derogatory content on social media about a teacher
- Damage to personal property
- Physical violence
- Other (please specify)

Q22. Have teachers felt nervous or fearful of parents following an aggressive incident at any of the following places? (please select all that apply)

- School property, including leaving or entering and school playing fields/sports fixtures
- Online
- Local shops or school area
- At home
- Other (please specify)

Q23. How often (in general) have incidents of parental aggression towards teachers occurred:

- Weekly
- Monthly
- Termly
- Rarely
- Never

Q24. Are incidents of parental aggression towards teachers becoming more or less frequent:

- More frequent
- No change
- Less frequent

Q25. Are parents/carers of one gender or another more likely to display aggressive or violent behaviour towards teachers?

- Yes - more so by parents/carers of boys
- Yes - more so by parents/carers of girls
- Yes - more so by parents/carers of young people of a different gender identity
- No difference

Q26. Does the Branch feel, in general, that teachers are supported after they report an 'incidence of aggression' or even violence from parents/carers towards teachers?

Yes, always

Sometimes

No, never

Q27. Are there ways that teachers could be better supported after reporting a parent/guardian who was violent or aggressive?

Sample for branch discussion

## School Branch Survey on Violence, Aggression & Disruptive Behaviour in Schools

### Section 2D: ASN

Q28. Does the Branch believe, in general, that pupils' unmet ASN needs exacerbate violent, aggressive or disruptive behaviour from pupils?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Comments

Q29. Does the Branch believe, in general, that pupils' unmet ASN needs exacerbate aggressive or violent behaviour from parents/carers?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

## School Branch Survey on Violence, Aggression & Disruptive Behaviour in Schools

### Section 3: The Impact of “Violent and Aggressive” Behaviour

Q30. Does violent, aggressive or disruptive behaviour, including persistent low-level disruption, in your school have an effect on pupils' learning?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If "Yes" please indicate how you believe your pupils' learning is affected:  
(Tick all that apply)

- It disrupts the teaching and learning
- It disrupts certain types of work or pedagogies (e.g., independent learning or group work)
- Other pupils' behaviour is adversely affected
- It's difficult to maintain or regain pupils' attention or focus
- I have to keep certain pupils separated to try to avoid violent and aggressive incidents taking place in the classroom
- Other (please specify)

Q31. What impact does violent, disruptive or aggressive behaviour in your school, have on pupils' behaviour? (tick all that apply)

- Some pupils are less focussed on their work
- Some pupils are more agitated or more nervous in class
- Some pupils are more withdrawn in class
- Some pupils seem less happy in class
- Some pupils are more likely to be disruptive in class
- Some pupils are more likely to become angry or upset in class
- Other (please specify)

Q32. What impact does violent, aggressive or disruptive pupil behaviour have on your wellbeing? (Tick all that apply)

- Some teachers in our Branch are more stressed
- Some teachers in our Branch are afraid of certain pupils
- Some teachers are afraid of some parents/carers
- Some teachers reduce the time spent with some pupils
- Some teachers avoid certain parents/carers
- Some teachers in our Branch have been on sick leave after a 'violent and aggressive' incident
- Some teachers have sustained physical injuries
- Some teachers have increased anxiety or depression
- Other (please specify)



Q33. Have some members of the Branch considered leaving teaching as a result of violence and aggression that they have been subjected to or needed to deal with?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Comments

Q34. Does reporting 'violent and aggressive' incidents generate better outcomes?  
(Tick all that apply)

- Yes - for pupils
- Yes - for teachers
- No - for pupils
- No - for teachers
- Don't know

Comments

Sample for branch discussion

**School Branch Survey on Violence, Aggression & Disruptive  
Behaviour in Schools**  
Better Supporting to Reduce/ Eliminate “Violent and Aggressive”  
Behaviours

Q35. What has worked well to support pupils in dealing with "violent and aggressive" behaviour at your school?

Q36. What has worked well to support teachers in dealing with "violent and aggressive" behaviour at your school?

Sample for branch discussion

Q37. Which of the following suggested actions would best support pupils and teachers in dealing with 'violent and aggressive' behaviour? (tick the top 3)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increased support staff to support pupils with ASN | <input type="checkbox"/> Better 'violence and aggression' procedures at school/local authority level                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increased support staff in lessons for all pupils  | <input type="checkbox"/> Better sharing of information related to previous 'violent and aggressive' incidents                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increased teacher numbers                          | <input type="checkbox"/> More actions or support arising from reporting 'violent and aggressive' incidents                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smaller class sizes                                | <input type="checkbox"/> More long-term support for teachers who have been hurt or affected by 'violent and aggressive' incidents        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fewer weekly teaching hours                        | <input type="checkbox"/> More support for pupils who have been involved in a 'violent or aggressive' incidents                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More teaching resources                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Greater support from outside agencies in schools (e.g., social work, educational psychologists, the police etc) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More learning resources for ASN pupils             | <input type="checkbox"/> De-escalation training  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better access to Education Psychologists or CAMHS  | <input type="checkbox"/> Pupil centred risk assessments  |

38. Are there any other comments that the Branch would like to add?