

NASUWT
The Teachers' Union

Behaviour in Schools

September 2023



Executive Summary

Violent and abusive pupil behaviour in schools is not a new concern. The NASUWT has been tracking this issue for many years, and it has frequently been reported as one of the top three problems blighting the working lives of NASUWT members.

Data gathered from the Union's Big Question Survey, alongside statistics taken from casework records, clearly show the extent of the problem. A commitment to explore the issue further through dedicated research, to truly understand what is happening across schools in the UK, led us where we now stand.

This report brings together the evidence gathered through the research, including the voices of our members. It looks at the type of behaviour being exhibited in our classrooms, and how pupils and teachers are affected by this. The data shows the frequency of incidents, and what schools do – or do not do – to support the education workforce.

We then set out our recommendations across the education system – starting with the actions we will take as a union. We will ensure that everything we do is underpinned with our pledge to stand with our members against unacceptable behaviour while they are simply trying to do their jobs.

We are also making clear the expectations we will place on schools, local authorities and governments to ensure that teachers can teach and pupils can learn in environments where disruption and violence is able to be minimised.

Table of contents

- 02 Executive Summary
- 03 Background – Why did we do this?
- 04 Methodology – What did we do?
- 04 Behaviour in schools – What did we find out?
- 13 What does this show?
- 15 What next? Recommendations and asks
- 16 About the NASUWT

Background - Why did we do this?

Concerns over the impact of violent and abusive pupil behaviour have been raised with the NASUWT by a significant and increasing proportion of members and activists. This appears to be a worrying trend, with a growing number of reports across different educational settings and geographical regions.

This is not a new issue. Teachers and leaders have always raised concerns about behaviour that undermines their efforts to create safe, calm and educationally conducive environments. However, particularly following the return to full-time, on-site learning after the restrictions on school attendance following the COVID-19 pandemic, many teachers and leaders reported encountering more frequent and more serious instances of pupil indiscipline.

A snapshot of the Union's annual state-of-the-profession survey – The Big Question – released in April 2023 showed that more than one in ten (13%) teachers have been physically assaulted by a pupil in the last year.

The NASUWT's Big Question Survey also showed that teachers have been subjected to: pushing/shoving (22%); threats of physical assault (19%); and verbal abuse (58%) by pupils during the last year.

The issue is further evidenced by NASUWT casework. In the period between 1 June 2022 and 1 June 2023, there have been a number of incidents reported to, and dealt with, by the Union.

During this time, nine cases were referred to the NASUWT that have become a legal matter arising from assault by a pupil. Additionally, 12 workplace ballots are in progress that cite pupil behaviour. This includes six that are specific refusal to teach ballots.

Additionally, 144 cases have been dealt with by member support advisors or caseworkers where members have sought advice and support about pupil behaviour. Over half of these – 75 to be exact – are specifically in relation to an assault on a member.

To explore this fully, the NASUWT publicly committed to undertaking a comprehensive UK-wide survey on behaviour in schools. The aim was to identify and develop an in-depth understanding of trends in pupil behaviour and behaviour management.

Ultimately, this robust research and data will underpin the Union's campaigning work, our response to the challenges being faced by members, and the expectations we will place on governments to address this.

Leading on behaviour issues:

An ongoing commitment to exploration of the issue, alongside wide-reaching support for teachers in the classroom in dealing with challenging behaviour, has ensured that the NASUWT has always been the Union at the forefront on this important aspect of a teacher's working life.

The NASUWT has a wide range of resources on behaviour and behaviour management, including a guide on developing a behaviour management policy. The Union has also published a position statement on pupil behaviour, which clearly sets out the NASUWT's stance on this aspect of a teacher's working life.

This collection of resources is regularly refreshed and updated to ensure they remain relevant and up-to-date.

Methodology - What did we do?

We conducted an online survey, which was completed by 6,586 members of the NASUWT. The survey was distributed via electronic communication methods.

Results from this data collection have been compiled to produce the following report.

As well as quantitative data, the survey offered opportunities for respondents to share lived experiences and opinions through free text options. These have been used throughout this report to share the voices of classroom teachers.

Behaviour in schools - What did we find out?

Types of behaviour

In the last 12 months, 37% of respondents have experienced physical abuse or violence from pupils in the last 12 months, while 90% report verbal abuse or violence from pupils.

Backchat and rudeness are the most common behaviours, reported by 97% of respondents. Being sworn at is cited by 81% of members.

With regard to physical violence, 14% of teachers have been hit or punched, 11% have been kicked and 39% have been shoved or barged. 6% have been spat at, while 2% have been headbutted.



Specific experiences include a teacher who was hit in the abdomen by a window pole. There are multiple reports of furniture, including chairs being thrown at teachers, including one incident where the member of staff was seven months pregnant at the time.

Another teacher was attacked with a scooter and kicked in the chest, resulting in unconsciousness.

There are multiple accounts from teachers who have been bitten, and had their hair pulled.

Backchat/rudeness	97.47%
Being sworn at	80.61%
Being verbally threatened	40.34%
Being shoved/barged	38.50%
Damage to other property	35.46%
Theft	17.61%
Being hit or punched	14.17%
Being kicked	11.03%
Online abuse	6.26%
Being spat at	5.90%
Homo/bi/transphobic abuse	5.31%
Racial abuse	4.22%
Sexual abuse	4.13%
Damage to clothing	4.02%
Being headbutted	2.09%
Online threats	1.43%

Other explicit incidents include a teacher being sprayed in the face with an aerosol, which triggered an asthma attack, and an individual with a severe perfume allergy (anaphylaxis) being deliberately sprayed by pupils on three occasions.

Age of pupils involved

The most likely age bracket to demonstrate physical or verbal abuse is 12 to 14, which was identified by 72% of participants. The 15-16 age bracket was the second most likely, selected by over half (60%).



Under 4	1.03%
4 to 7	11.66%
8 to 11	22.68%
12 to 14	71.75%
15 – 16	60.17%
17 – 18	5.20%
Over 18	0.74%

Frequency of physical violence

- 31% report incidents once a year, with 27% stating they occur once a term.
- 12% say once a month, 7% once a fortnight, 7% once a week, 11% several times per week, and 4% daily.
- 89% feel the number of pupils exhibiting violent and abusive behaviours has increased.

Frequency of verbal abuse

- 3% report verbal abuse as happening once a year, 15% once a term, and 16% once a month.
- 12% say once a fortnight, 17% once a week, 26% several times a week, and 11% daily.
- 93% say the number of pupils verbally abusing staff members has increased.

Impact

When asked about the impact the verbal or physical abuse experienced in the last 12 months had on teachers, the most common (82%) result was affecting the individual's morale and enthusiasm for their job.

63% experienced stress and nearly half (49%) experienced anxiety. 17% reported suffering with depression. 7% took time off work due to the mental health issues they suffered, with 9% taking time off work due to stress.

Nearly one in two (49%) said they felt less confident in working with pupils.

Attrition from the teaching profession is a worrying outcome. One in twenty (5%) of respondents have confirmed with their employer they will be leaving teaching, while 53% cite seriously considering leaving the profession.

This is reflected further in the commentary associated with this question. As well as leaving the profession, numerous respondents detail reducing their hours so they do not have to be at work as often, bringing forward retirement, or stepping down from senior leadership roles to alleviate the pressure they feel under.

I had to take time off work due to the physical injuries I suffered	1.95%
I had to take time off work due to the mental health issues I suffered	7.31%
I had to take time off work due to stress	9.19%
I felt less confident in working with pupils	48.83%
I experienced anxiety	48.64%
I experienced depression	17.08%
I experienced stress	62.70%
It affected my morale and enthusiasm for my job	81.86%
I changed jobs	5.88%
I have seriously considered leaving teaching	53.23%
I have confirmed with my employer that I am leaving teaching	4.59%
No impact	5.77%

Where respondents left specific commentary, these included:

“Implications for family relationships - taking work and distress home to my family.”

“[I] did not want to be the only adult in the classroom with the pupils, feared for my safety when in the classroom.”

“I have had physical shaking, being violently sick and cried with lack of sleep. I mask it at school, but it all come out for my family when I get home.”

“You worry about how to protect the other children when this happens.”

“I feel disempowered and ineffective.”

“I feel powerless and ineffective as a teacher.”

Other common themes included reports of teachers considering, or taking steps towards, moving to a different country to teach.

A number of respondents shared they were accessing counselling or therapy outside of work as a result of their experiences.

Worrying, a small number of respondents reported feeling suicidal.

Where teachers took time off work due to the verbal or physical abuse they had experienced in the last 12 months, 46% were off for less than a week. A fifth (21%) were off for 1-6 months, while 3% took more than six months off.

Less than a week	45.90%
1-2 weeks	18.07%
More than 2 weeks but less than a month	11.31%
1-6 months	21.29%
More than 6 months	3.44%

Reporting

More than half (55%) of respondents reported all of the incidents to their manager in their school or college. A quarter (27%) reported most incidents, while 15% only reported some. A minority, 3%, did not report any of the incidents.

I reported all of the incidents	55.27%
I reported most incidents	26.86%
I reported some, but not most, incidents	15.16%
I did not report any of the incidents	2.72%

When asked about the reason for not reporting incidents, the reason cited most often was that teachers did not think anything would be done about it (73%). Four in ten (44%) of respondents said the process for reporting behaviour incidents is too time consuming or bureaucratic, while a third (36%) were concerned their capability would be called into question.

Other concerns included teachers feeling they would be blamed – cited by 21%. 4% said they worried it would affect their pay progression.

I did not think anything would be done about it	72.93%
I thought I would be blamed	20.76%
The process for reporting behaviour incidents is too time consuming/bureaucratic	43.91%
I was concerned my capability would be called into question	36.18%
I was concerned it would affect my pay progression	3.56%

The question also offered the opportunity for respondents to cite other reasons other than those listed. There are notable trends, including:

- there are too many incidents to report; and
- the behaviour has become normalised so there is no reason to report it - teachers are made to feel they should accept it as part of their role.

Respondents were asked about the outcome when incidents were reported.

Of those incidents that were reported, the most common outcome was some incidents being dealt with appropriately, while others were not. This was identified by 34% of respondents. Three in ten felt some, but not sufficient, action was taken.

Just 15% said appropriate action was always taken, and the individual felt supported by their school or college.

7% said no action was taken by their school or college, while an additional one in ten (11%) were not informed of the outcome of the incident(s) after reporting.

Appropriate action was always taken, and I felt supported by my school/college	15.43%
Some, but not sufficient, action was taken	30.10%
While some incidents were dealt with appropriately, others were not	33.82%
I was not informed of the outcome of the incident(s) after reporting	11.02%
No action was taken by the school/college	6.82%
Other	2.81%

More details were provided by many respondents with regard to what happened after incidents were reported. They included:

“I was told to calm down and ignore bad behaviour and walk away from it.”

“The school is scared of too many suspensions and exclusions so won’t act how it should.”

“The principal blamed me - asked me why pupils felt they could do this in my classroom instead of addressing the behaviour of the pupils, even though all teachers in the school were struggling with behaviour due to the principal’s approach to ‘dealing’ with behaviour.”

“I was pushed over by a group of boys waiting outside the toilets for me - shown clearly on CCTV - but the headteacher said it was accidental.”

“I was told to build up my resilience.”

Online abuse/online threats

Respondents who had experienced online abuse or threats were asked if they had reported these incidents. Over half (52%) had not.

Of those who did report the incidents, 46% reported it to their school/employer, 7% to the social network, and 5% to the police.

Yes, to the school/my employer	45.64%
Yes, to the social network	7.15%
Yes, to the police	4.94%
No	52.47%

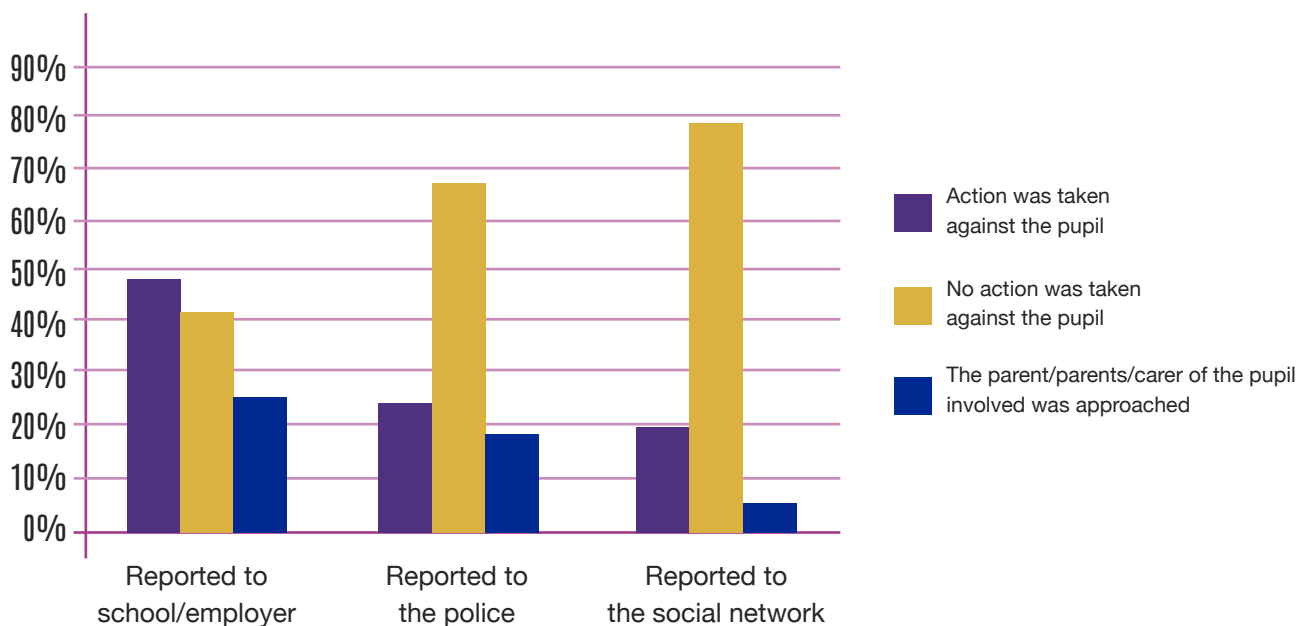
Respondents who did not report the online abuse or threats were asked for the reason behind this.

I did not think anything would be done about it	45.85%
I thought I would be blamed	11.79%
The process for reporting behaviour incidents is too time consuming/ bureaucratic	21.83%
I was concerned my capability would be called into question	13.97%
I was concerned it would affect my pay progression	4.80%

Action was most likely to be taken against the pupil when the online abuse or threats were reported to the school (49%).

The least common likelihood of action being taken against the pupil was when it was reported to the social network – no action was taken in 77% of incidents.

If you did report this, what was the outcome?



Less than a fifth (18%) of teachers felt that where action was taken against the pupil, it matched the seriousness of the incident of the online abuse/threats.

Behaviour management policies

Nearly all respondents (95%) stated that their school has a behaviour management policy. When asked if that policy is enforced:

- 8% said always
- 40% said usually
- 40% said sometimes
- 11% said rarely
- 1% said never

Where schools do have a behaviour management policy, respondents were asked to identify who that policy had been communicated to:

- 85% said staff
- 69% said students
- 62% said parents
- 16% said relevant trade unions
- 22% were unsure

When a pupil behaviour issue is referred to managers, only 5% of teachers feel they always receive feedback about the outcome and how the pupil has been dealt with. A fifth (20%) say they usually do.

The largest proportions – 36% and 32% – say they sometimes do, or rarely do, respectively. 6% say they never do.



Always	4.52%
Usually	20.42%
Sometimes	36.29%
Rarely	32.48%
Never	6.30%

There is a similar picture when asked if individuals feel they receive support in a timely manner when they have asked for help from managers to deal with a pupil behaviour issue.

The most reported answer is sometimes, standing at four in ten (43%). 27% say usually, while a fifth (20%) say rarely. Only 7% answered that they always receive support in a timely manner, while 3% say they never do.



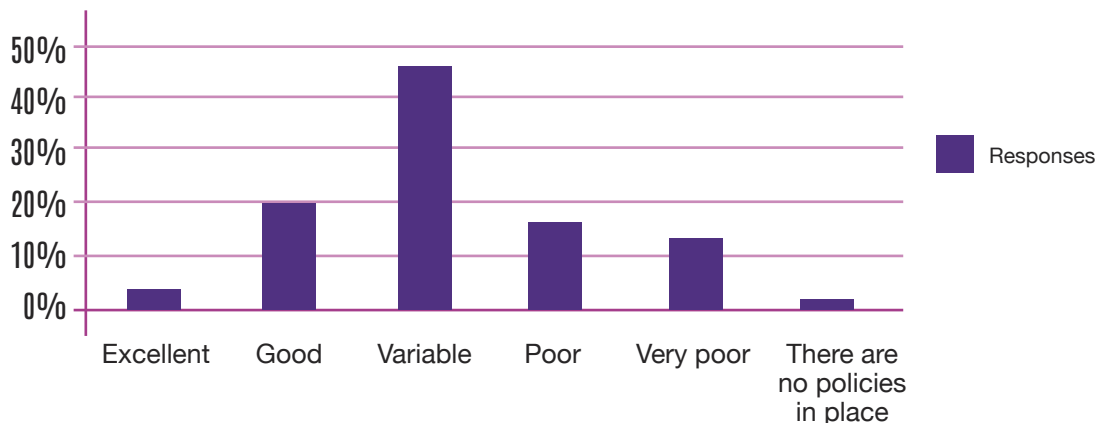
Always	6.72%
Usually	27.35%
Sometimes	43.19%
Rarely	20.08%
Never	2.66%

When asked to rate their school/college's policies and/or approaches to dealing with violence and abuse from pupils towards staff, the highest response is variable – which stands at 45%. A fifth (20%) say it is good.

Less than one in twenty rate their school or college's policies and approaches to dealing with violence and abuse from pupils toward staff as excellent.



How would you rate your school's/college's policies/approach to dealing with violence and abuse from pupils towards staff?



Police involvement

Less than one in ten (9%) of respondents said the police had been involved in any incidents they had experienced.

For those who answered the police had not been involved, more than three-quarters (81%) said the incidents have not been serious enough for police involvement.

Where incidents were deemed serious enough, 2% did not want the police involved and 4% said their school would not support police involvement. 1% of respondents were told by their school not to involve the police, even though the incidents were serious enough.

Just under two-thirds (60%) of those who did involve the police were satisfied with the response they received.

Parental involvement

Six in ten (60%) respondents said the parent/s of the pupil or pupils involved were contacted. 6% said they were not contacted, while a third (34%) were unsure.

Of those who knew the parents had been contacted, less than one in ten (7%) said the parents were entirely supportive of the individual and the school. 60% said the parents were supportive to an extent, while the remaining third (31%) said they did not feel the parents were supportive at all.

Current experiences

Respondents were asked to assess the current experience they have in their school or college.

Nearly half (45%) strongly agree or agree that they are made to feel to blame if they have an issue with poor pupil behaviour.

45% also said that the culture in their school/college is that poor pupil behaviour is part of the job and they should expect to receive abuse/violence from pupils.

A similar amount – 44% – do not feel supported by their school or college's approach to dealing with poor pupil behaviour.

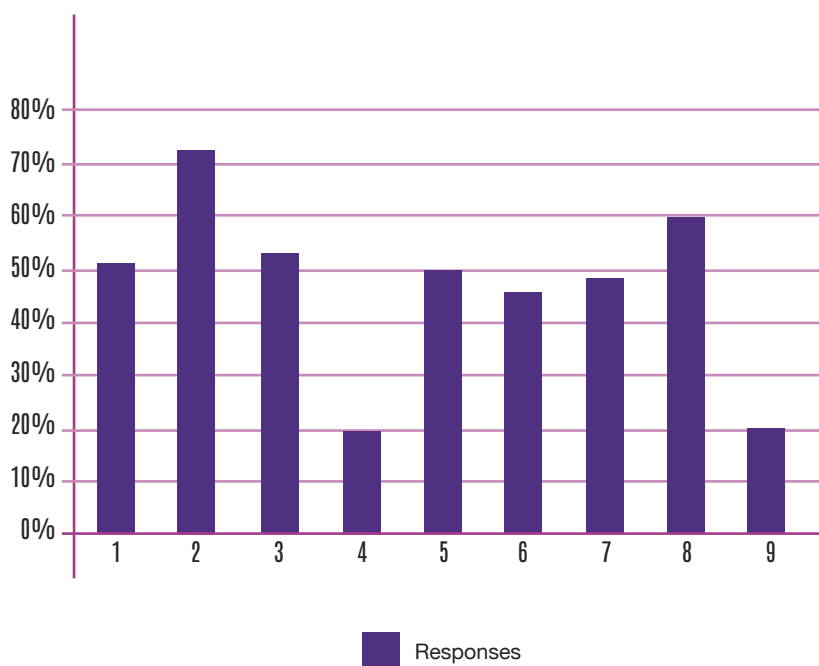
Less than a fifth (18%) of respondents feel their setting's approach to pupil behaviour management empowers them as a teacher or leader.

Almost three-quarters of respondents do not feel they have the resources, support and knowledge to meet the behavioural needs of all the pupils they teach.

When asked about the number of pupils respondents do not feel they receive adequate support to teach because of their behavioural needs, more than four in five (84%) feel this has increased in the last year.

Factors affecting pupil behaviour

If you feel pupil behaviour has deteriorated in your school, what do you believe are the driving factors behind this?



- 1 Poor mental health of pupils
- 2 Poor socialisation skills following COVID restrictions
- 3 Lack of proper policies and procedures to deter unacceptable behaviour
- 4 Lack of training for staff
- 5 Little or no access to specialist support
- 6 Lack of support from SMT for classroom teachers
- 7 Class sizes that are too big
- 8 Use of restorative behaviour programmes that are ineffective
- 9 Other (please specify)

Poor socialisation skills following COVID restrictions is the most commonly cited driving factor, identified by almost three-quarters (73%) of respondents. Use of restorative behaviour programmes that are ineffective is also thought to be a significant cause, with 60% of members raising this.

Around half of respondents identified lack of proper policies and procedures to deter unacceptable behaviour (53%), and poor mental health of pupils (51%).

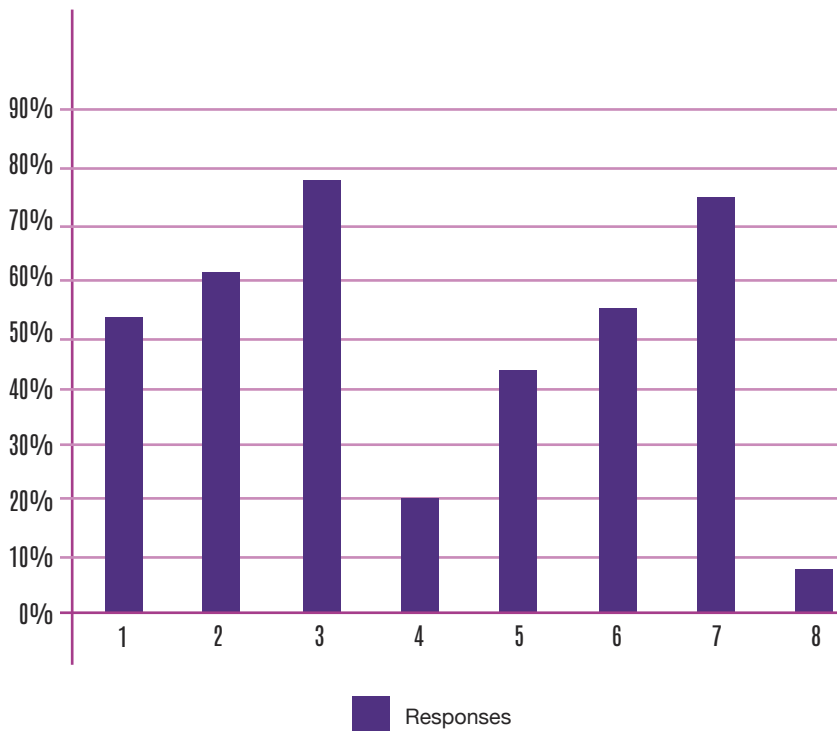
Where respondents specified other reasons, there were a number of repeated themes:

- a lack of understanding by pupils of their responsibilities, not just their rights;
- distraction and poor behaviour driven by vaping, including leaving lessons repeatedly and being affected by nicotine;
- the loss of experienced teachers as a result of the retention crisis across the profession;
- the introduction of 'no exclusion' policies*;

- being distracted by mobile phones and social media, and copying unacceptable behaviour seen on social media; and
- little or no TA or SEND support in the class.

**The notion of a 'no exclusion' policy is confusing, given this would be a principle schools would struggle to justify or adhere to. The NASUWT will explore this as to whether it is a specific policy being committed to by settings, or a miscommunication of a policy by schools to members of staff.*

What actions do you feel are needed to support you in meeting the behavioural needs of all the pupils you teach?



- 1 More in-class support from teaching assistants etc.
- 2 More external support – i.e. from child psychologists, CAMHS etc.
- 3 Pupils with behavioural issues being moved into specialist provision that better meets their needs
- 4 More training
- 5 A curriculum that better meets the needs of and engages all pupils
- 6 More support and assistance from school/college leaders/governors
- 7 More support and engagement from parents/carers
- 8 Other (please specify)

When asked what actions teachers and leaders feel are needed to support them in meeting the behavioural needs of all the pupils they teach, nearly eight in ten (78%) said pupils with behavioural issues being moved into specialist provision that better meets their needs.

More support and engagement from parents/carers was identified as the second action, cited by 74%. More external support and more support and assistance from school/college leaders and governors were both identified by more than half (60% and 55% respectively).

Other themes consistently identified in the commentary included:

- smaller class sizes;
- consistency in use of sanctions, and a whole-school approach to behaviour management;
- better pastoral care or mental health support for pupils; and
- better education/awareness for pupils on the risks of social media and its influence.

Restorative conversations

Over half (56%) of respondents indicated that their school or college uses a system of structured restorative conversations involving staff and pupils to address behaviour incidents.

Of those, only 11% feel it is an effective means of addressing behaviour incidents in schools. More than a third (36%) were not sure if it is, and over half – 53% – said it is not.

When asked for more detail, more than 2,000 participants provided further information as to why they feel this approach is not working. Some comments include:

“Restorative conversations have been ‘launched’, but little training and support has been put into place and there is not time allocated to this – we are expected to do them at break/lunch.”

“Pupils rarely acknowledge what they have done wrong, so the process is meaningless.”

“Multiple restorative conversations with the same pupil is futile.”

“As a standalone approach, it is viewed as weakness and we have no authority. Same students, same issues, with one approach – no consequences so it’s not reflective of real world.”

“Pupils find it a joke and have no intention of improving as they know there is no consequence.”

“There has been no training on how to conduct these conversations and students do not improve after.”

“It’s the only thing my school does. There are no sanctions or consequences for kids.”

Restorative conversations only work if both parties want to fix the working relationship. Too often students do not want to fix it and are allowed to continue behaving in the same manner with just a conversation as a consequence.”

“The restorative conversation approach always seems to end up with the pupil getting away with a cheap and meaningless apology and the teacher pressured to concede they are partially to blame.”

Additional practical support

When asked what additional practical support respondents felt would help to tackle the problem of behaviour that challenges, there are a number of common themes that can be identified throughout the commentary.

- Guaranteed access to behaviour-focused CPD and de-escalation training
- Trust being placed in a teacher’s professional judgement and the empowerment of teachers
- A zero-tolerance approach to violence towards staff and other pupils
- Better access to Alternative Provision (AP) and Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) places
- More mental health funding and access to a counsellor for pupils
- Ability to utilise ‘time-out’ rooms
- True commitment to a whole-school approach, including the involvement of parents
- Better support for families living in poverty
- Removal of the number of exclusions from an Ofsted inspection and judgement**

***The issue over Ofsted is particularly concerning, given the inspectorate have offered assurances that the number of exclusions is not directly linked to the judgement a school achieves. While Ofsted does look at the number of suspensions and exclusions, and will expect an explanation of the circumstances that led to these outcomes, there is not an ‘upper limit’ which would stop a school from achieving a positive report. The NASUWT is therefore unclear as to whether this is deliberate or unintentional miscommunication of this element of an Ofsted inspection.*

What does this show?

The experiences shared by teachers through this research clearly show there is an issue in our schools of physical and verbal abuse towards staff. More than a third of teachers and leaders have been subject to physical abuse or violence in the last 12 months, while almost all (90%) have experienced verbal abuse or violence.

An overwhelming majority of teachers and leaders feel the number of pupils exhibiting violent and abusive behaviours has increased in the last 12 months. The same is true for the number of pupils verbally abusing staff members.

The specific details shared with the NASUWT as part of this data collection paint a troubling picture of what some teachers and leaders are being exposed to, and the risks these pose to them.

Looking at the ages of the pupils involved, the largest proportion are in secondary school – with the most frequently identified age group being between 12 and 16 years old.

An overwhelming majority of teachers and leaders feel the number of pupils exhibiting violent and abusive behaviours has increased in the last 12 months. The same is true for the number of pupils verbally abusing staff members.

This cannot be ignored, and will undoubtedly have ramifications on teacher and pupil mental health and wellbeing, retention of teachers, and attractiveness of the profession. These effects are clearly shown throughout the data collected by the NASUWT, both in quantitative and qualitative measures.

Not least is the fact that eight in ten teachers say their morale and enthusiasm for their job is affected by the verbal or physical abuse they have experienced. Stress and anxiety are other common after-effects of being subjected to verbal or physical abuse.

The feeling of hopelessness, and resigned to the idea that nothing will ever change, is reflected throughout the commentary that teachers and leaders have shared.

Under-reporting is a worrying issue; with only just over half of teachers and leaders reporting all of the incidents they have experienced. With nearly three-quarters citing the reason behind this as they did not think anything would be done about it, this points to a system that is not working for those who teach our children.

This is furthered by the fact a fifth of teachers do not feel able to report all of the incidents they experience because of concern they will be blamed.

Less than two in ten teachers and leaders feel appropriate action is always taken by their setting. Two-thirds feel some, but not sufficient, action was taken, or while some incidents were dealt with appropriately, others were not.

Responses such as teachers being told to “calm down” or “build up their resilience” are clearly not sufficient in supporting individuals, or tackling the root problem.

This may play a role in nearly half of teachers not feeling supported by their school or college’s approach to dealing with poor pupil behaviour.

Four in ten teachers identified that the culture in their school/college is that poor pupil behaviour is part of the job and they should expect to receive abuse/violence from pupils.

There is a strong sense that teachers are made to feel to blame if they have an issue with poor pupil behaviour, which is cited by 45% of participants in the research.

More than four in five feel there has been increase in the last year in the number of pupils they do not feel they receive adequate support to teach because of their behavioural needs.

This links closely to the figure showing three-quarters of respondents do not feel they have the resources, support and knowledge to meet the behavioural needs of all the pupils they teach.

The factors that teachers and leaders believe are driving deterioration in pupil behaviour are wide reaching. Many teachers – seven in ten – feel poor socialisation following COVID restrictions is a key reason.

A number of other reasons were all cited by approximately half of participants. These include poor mental health of pupils; lack of proper policies and procedures to deter unacceptable behaviour; and little or no access to specialist support.

Class sizes that are too big are also identified as a driving factor by half of those involved in the study.

The Union has long been worried about the misapplication and misinterpretation of restorative behaviour programmes. Six in ten teachers and leaders echoed this, citing the use of restorative behaviour programmes that are ineffective.

The driving factors identified by teachers and leaders align with the action that individuals feels are needed to support them in meeting the behavioural needs of all the pupils they teach.

The most identified, by eight in ten respondents, is for pupils with behavioural issues to be moved into specialist provision that better meets their needs.

More external support (for example, from child psychologist and CAMHS) is cited by two-thirds of respondents, while more in-class support from teaching assistants is identified by more than 50%.

Overall, the detailed picture in schools shows that violent and abusive behaviour is clearly an issue, and one that is far too often being unaddressed. The research has uncovered a complicated picture, including the multifaceted reasons for the rise in unacceptable behaviour, through to lack of support when incidents do occur, and the deprofessionalisation of teachers driven by a blame culture.

With numerous strands driving and not deterring poor behaviour, a wide-reaching strategy and policy shift is needed to reduce incidents and restore calm to our schools, ultimately protecting our teachers and the children they educate.

What next? Recommendations and asks

Local actions – what will the NASUWT do?

Raise awareness of the issue

1. Ensure members know that they are not alone in facing this issue. The NASUWT will reinforce to members that we stand with them against unacceptable working conditions, including violent and abusive behaviour.
2. Use our communications channels to keep this issue in the public domain, with a view to securing widespread support for our actions.
3. Use the findings to put pressure on governments and administrations to support those in the profession with this growing problem, through direct engagement, consultation responses, working groups and lobbying activities.

Further exploration of key issues and development of advice and guidance

4. In response to the significant levels of concern over ineffective restorative behaviour approaches, the NASUWT will develop dedicated advice on this. We will set out a framework to support good practice in schools that do wish to explore restorative behaviour, or need to improve their existing processes.
5. The issue of vaping is growing in schools and is often linked to behaviour that challenges. The NASUWT will research this issue further and subsequently explore the support that members need to address this.
6. Continue to refresh and promote the Union's suite of behaviour management resources and look at ways to communicate these to members utilising different mediums.
7. Explore the concept of 'no exclusion' policies to build a picture of where and how these are being introduced.

Continue our commitment to existing campaigns

8. The link between behavioural issues and mental health concerns is well documented, and the findings of this report reaffirm this. The NASUWT will continue its partnership work with Citizens UK and BACP, championing the need for access

to school-based counsellors across all UK schools.

9. Continue to make the evidence-based case for smaller class sizes.

Work with stakeholders

10. Utilise the findings of the report to inform likeminded stakeholders, encouraging them to raise awareness of the issue and join calls for schools and governments to take action.
11. Continue to look for opportunities to work with organisations that promote the safe and responsible use of technology and social media for young people, such as the Safer Internet Centre.

Representations to Ofsted

12. Continue to press Ofsted to take responsibility for ensuring schools understand what considerations are made during inspection with regard to suspensions and exclusion. Elements of the Ofsted inspection should in no way contribute to schools artificially lowering their suspension and exclusion rates by not taking these actions – even when they are reasonable and the best course of action.

Regional actions – what do we want schools to do?

13. Work with NASUWT Reps to review existing behaviour management policies and ensure they are fit for purpose.
14. Ensure the consistent application of behaviour management policies, with the adoption of a whole-school approach.
15. Ensure parents are aware of the behaviour management policy, including the role that pupils and parents play in creating a positive school environment.
16. Carry out a review of restorative behaviour approaches, their appropriateness and the impact they are having on behaviour management and staff wellbeing.

National actions – what do we want governments to do?

Improving the picture in schools

17. Continue to address the issues of retention and recruitment. The findings of this NASUWT survey identify this as having a detrimental impact on behaviour, as skilled teachers are lost from profession. The NASUWT will hold governments to account on addressing this and ensure any proposed policies are adhered to.
18. Strengthen guidance on behaviour management to ensure ‘no exclusion’ policies are not legitimised across the education sector. There should be further clarification of when and when it is not appropriate to suspend or exclude a pupil.
19. Introduce mandatory time for teachers to access CPD – with a proportion of this being focused on behaviour – through nationally agreed training.
20. Development of specific guidance on large scale pupil disorder in schools, in partnership with the NASUWT. Not only will this offer important advice on what to do in these troubling situations, it will also demonstrate that governments and administrations are supportive of the profession and the challenges they face.
21. Build on the current behaviour hubs initiative with the principles of the dismantled Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships. Under these partnerships, every school has a responsibility to work with others to promote good behaviour across all schools in a local area and to recognise that the behaviour of all pupils in these areas was a shared responsibility of all schools. These partnerships work with other services for children, including the police and youth justice services, allowing expertise and experience to be shared across settings and resources pooled.

Wider societal commitments

22. Commit to ensuring every school across the UK has access to a school-based counsellor.
23. Given the link between behavioural issues and poverty, the Government should provide free school meals in England to all children from families receiving Universal Credit.
24. For the same reason, there is a need to reverse the decision to remove the £20 per week uplift to Universal Credit and tax credits.

About the NASUWT

The NASUWT – The Teachers’ Union – represents teachers and headteachers across the United Kingdom. We provide unrivalled protection, benefits and support for our members, from professional advice and legal support and free training.

By ‘putting teachers first’, the NASUWT works to enhance the status of the teaching profession to deliver real improvements to teachers’ working lives, seeking to ensure they are recognised and rewarded as highly skilled professionals with working conditions that enable them to focus on their core role of teaching.

For more information, visit www.nasuwt.org.uk



twitter.com/nasuwt.



www.facebook.com/nasuwt.



www.instagram.com/nasuwt.

