

# Behaviour in Scottish Schools 2009

# BEHAVIOUR IN SCOTTISH SCHOOLS 2009

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
	Acknowledgements	i
	List of Tables	ii
	Executive Summary	v
1	Introduction	1
2	Positive Behaviour in Primary Schools	7
3	Low-Level Indiscipline in Primary Schools	12
4	Serious Indiscipline/Violence in Primary Schools	18
5	Primary School Pupils' Perspectives	31
6	Behaviour Management Policies in Primary Schools	39
7	Positive Behaviour in Secondary Schools	46
8	Low Level Indiscipline in Secondary Schools	52
9	Serious Indiscipline/Violence in Secondary Schools	58
10	Secondary School Pupils' Perspectives	72
11	Behaviour Management Policies in Secondary Schools	81
12	Comparison of 2006 and 2009 Perceptions of Behaviour	90
13	Local Authority Policy and Approaches	102
14	Overview of Findings	112
	References	122



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on behalf of the research team  
November 2009.

## LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

	Page	
Table 1.1	Respondent groups and return rates	3
Table 1.2	School visits – summary of interview and focus group participants	5
Table 2.1	Primary teachers' views of positive behaviour around the school	8
Table 2.2	Primary headteachers' views of positive behaviour around the school	8
Table 2.3	Primary teachers' views of positive behaviour in classrooms	9
Table 2.4	Primary headteachers' views of positive behaviour in classrooms	10
Table 2.5	Primary support staff's views on positive behaviour in classrooms	11
Table 3.1	Primary teachers' views of low-level indiscipline around the school	13
Table 3.2	Primary headteachers' views of low-level indiscipline around the school	14
Table 3.3	Primary teachers' views of low level indiscipline in the classroom	15
Table 3.4	Primary support staff's views of low level indiscipline in the classroom	16
Table 4.1	Perceptions of the overall impact of serious indiscipline/pupil violence on the running of primary schools	18
Table 4.2	Primary teachers' views of serious indiscipline around the school	20
Table 4.3	Primary headteachers' views of serious indiscipline around the school	22
Table 4.4	Primary teachers' views of serious indiscipline in the classroom	23
Table 4.5	Primary headteachers' views of serious indiscipline in the classroom	25
Table 4.6	Primary support staff's views of serious indiscipline in the classroom	26
Table 4.7	Percentage of primary staff experiencing serious indiscipline/violence at least once in the last twelve months	27
Table 4.8	Who was notified about the most recent serious incident? Primary teachers' responses	28
Table 4.9	How was the incident followed up? Primary teachers' responses	28
Table 5.1	Primary pupils' views of positive behaviour in classrooms	32
Table 5.2	Examples of positive behaviour from primary pupil focus groups	32
Table 5.3	Primary pupils' views of school activities to promote positive behaviour	33
Table 5.4	Primary pupils' views of negative behaviour in lessons	34

Table 5.5	Primary pupils' views of negative behaviour around the school	35
Table 6.1	Primary teachers'/headteachers' views on positive behaviour strategies	40
Table 6.2	Members of the primary school community involved in developing strategies	43
Table 6.3	Time spent on behaviour management by primary headteachers and teachers in the last full teaching week	43
Table 6.4	Most and least frequently used behaviour management strategies in primary schools	45
Table 7.1	Secondary teachers' perceptions of positive behaviour around the school	47
Table 7.2	Secondary headteachers' perceptions of positive behaviour around the school	47
Table 7.3	Secondary teachers' perceptions of positive behaviour in classrooms	49
Table 7.4	Secondary headteachers' perceptions of positive behaviour in classrooms	50
Table 7.5	Secondary support staff's perceptions of positive behaviour in classrooms	51
Table 8.1	Secondary teachers' perceptions of low level indiscipline around the school	53
Table 8.2	Secondary headteachers' perceptions of low level indiscipline around the school	54
Table 8.3	Secondary teachers' perceptions of low level indiscipline in classrooms	55
Table 8.4	Secondary support staff's perceptions of low level indiscipline in classrooms	56
Table 9.1	Perceptions of the overall impact of serious indiscipline/pupil violence on the running of secondary schools	59
Table 9.2	Secondary teachers' perceptions of serious indiscipline around the school	60
Table 9.3	Secondary headteachers' perceptions of serious indiscipline around the school	61
Table 9.4	Secondary teachers' perceptions of serious indiscipline in the classroom	63
Table 9.5	Secondary headteachers' perceptions of serious indiscipline in the classroom	65
Table 9.6	Secondary support staff's perceptions of serious indiscipline in the classroom	67
Table 9.7	Percentage of secondary staff experiencing serious indiscipline/violence at least once in the last twelve months	68
Table 9.8	Who was notified about the most recent serious incident? Secondary teachers' responses	69
Table 9.9	How was the incident followed up? Secondary teachers' responses	69
Table 10.1	Positive behaviour in lessons: secondary pupils' views	73
Table 10.2	Examples of positive behaviour: Feedback from secondary pupil focus groups	73



Table 10.3	Secondary pupils' view of school activities to promote positive behaviour	74
Table 10.4	Secondary pupils' perceptions of negative behaviour in lessons	76
Table 10.5	Secondary pupils' views of behaviour around the school	77
Table 11.1	Policies and approaches on behaviour management in school in 2009	82
Table 11.2	Members of the secondary school community involved in developing strategies	85
Table 11.3	Time spent on behaviour management by secondary headteachers and teachers in the last full teaching week	86
Table 11.4	Most and least frequently used behaviour management strategies in secondary schools	88
Table 12.1	Number of comparisons between 2006 and 2009 for each question category and response group	91
Table 12.2	Secondary teachers' responses to "Pupils arriving with the correct equipment"	92
Table 12.3	Secondary teachers responses to "Talking out of turn"	93
Figure 1	Primary teachers' responses to "pupils keenly engaging with their tasks"	93
Figure 2	Primary support staff's response to "pupils arriving promptly for classes"	93
Figure 3	Primary support staff's response to "pupils contributing to class discussions"	94
Table 12.4	Direction and significance of changes between 2006 and 2009 for each respondent group for questions in the category "Positive behaviour in the classroom"	95
Table 12.5	Direction and significance of changes between 2006 and 2009 for each respondent group for questions in the category "Low level indiscipline in the classroom"	96
Table 12.6	Direction and significance of changes between 2006 and 2009 for each respondent group for questions in the category "Low level indiscipline around the school"	97
Table 12.7	Direction and significance of changes between 2006 and 2009 for each respondent group for questions in the category "Serious indiscipline in the classroom"	98
Table 12.8	Direction and significance of changes between 2006 and 2009 for each respondent group for questions in the category "Serious indiscipline around the school"	99
Table 12.9	Number of positively significant/non significant/negatively significant comparisons between 2006 and 2009 for each question category and respondent group	100
Table 14.1	Perceptions of the overall impact of serious indiscipline/pupil violence on primary and secondary schools	117
Table 14.2	Behaviour strategies in primary and secondary schools	119

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This summary follows the order of the chapters of the report. For the sake of brevity we summarise the findings from primary and secondary schools together.

### **Introduction**

1. The Scottish Government is committed to conducting three yearly national studies of behaviour in publicly funded schools. The aim is to provide a clear and robust picture of positive and negative behaviour in primary and secondary schools and of policy and practice in managing behaviour.
2. The current research provides a robust picture of perceptions and experiences of behaviour in publicly funded primary and secondary schools in 2009 and compares current findings to those in 2006.
3. The research involved surveys of teachers, headteachers and support staff in primary and secondary schools; interviews with representatives of all 32 local authorities and visits to a sample of 15 typical primary and secondary schools. The school visits complemented the survey findings and provided an opportunity to learn what pupils had to say about behaviour.

### **Positive behaviour around the school and in classrooms**

4. The vast majority of staff said that all or most pupils were generally well behaved around the school and in classrooms. The least positive group were secondary school support staff with 79% saying that all or most pupils were generally well behaved around the school and 57% saying that pupils were generally well behaved in all or most lessons.
5. The most frequently encountered positive behaviour around both primary and secondary schools was pupils always or on most occasions greeting staff pleasantly.
6. The least frequently encountered positive behaviour around both primary and secondary schools was pupils challenging each other's negative behaviour.
7. Primary and secondary headteachers tended to be more positive than teachers in their perceptions of positive behaviour around the school and in classrooms.
8. There are many examples of positive behaviour in classrooms. All staff surveyed were given the same list of positive behaviour and asked how frequently they encountered these during the last full teaching week.
9. More than 8 in 10 primary teachers and headteachers reported meeting all the behaviours in the list in all or most lessons. For example, 91% of primary teachers observed pupils keenly engaging with their tasks; 96% of primary headteachers saw pupils listening to staff respectfully.
10. Primary support staff, although generally positive, were less so than their colleagues. Just over 8 in 10 saw pupils arriving with the correct

equipment in all or most lessons but only around 1 in 4 saw pupils arriving promptly for most lessons.

11. Perceptions were less positive in secondary than in primary schools and there was more variation in secondary teachers' perceptions compared to their primary colleagues. More than 6 in 10 secondary teachers reported meeting all the behaviours in the list of positive behaviours in classrooms in all or most lessons. Over 8 in 10 secondary teachers saw pupils following instructions and listening to the teacher respectfully in all or most lessons.

### **Low level indiscipline around the school and in classrooms**

12. Describing behaviour as low level is not intended to underplay its effects on learning and teaching as this can be a constantly demanding aspect of their work for some teachers.
13. We provided a list of behaviours and asked staff how frequently they had encountered each behaviour in the last full teaching week around the school and in classrooms.
14. Around both primary and secondary schools, running in corridors was the most frequently observed behaviour. About a quarter of primary and secondary teachers and about 1 in 10 primary and secondary headteachers saw this several times a day.
15. A key difference between primary and secondary teachers in behaviours around the school was the much greater observance of leaving school without permission in secondary school. 6% of primary and 46% of secondary teachers noticed this at least once a week.
16. There was a corresponding difference in respect of mobile phone use against school policy around the school, with 71% of secondary teachers observing this at least once a week compared to 4% of primary teachers.
17. In the classroom the most frequently encountered behaviour by both primary and secondary teachers was the familiar irritant of talking out of turn. Only 4% of primary and 1% of secondary teachers said that they had not encountered this in the last week.
18. Using mobile phones/texting is the least frequently encountered low-level behaviour in classrooms with 98% of primary and 39% of secondary teachers saying that this had not been encountered at all in the last week. The difference between primary and secondary teachers is notable for this behaviour both around the school and in classroom.
19. Support staff identified a similar list of misbehaviour and tended to observe these in greater numbers than teachers.

### **Serious indiscipline around schools and in classrooms**

20. Primary and secondary staff<sup>1</sup> were given a list of behaviours and asked how frequently they had encountered these around the school and in classrooms in the last full teaching week. Headteachers were also

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<sup>1</sup> Support staff were asked only about behaviour in classrooms.

asked how frequently these behaviours had been encountered by them or referred on to them.

21. The data reveal the occurrence of specific behaviour; they do not tell us about the numbers of pupils involved or the number of incidents. We focus first on physical violence and aggression towards staff before turning to pupil-to-pupil physical violence and aggression.
22. Both primary and secondary teachers and headteachers reported very low, although still of course concerning, numbers of serious incidents of physical violence and aggression towards them both in relation to the last full teaching week and over the previous twelve months.
23. When asked to rate on a five point scale the overall impact of serious indiscipline/pupil violence on the running of the school, the majority of primary teachers (65%), primary headteachers (77%) and support staff (64%) rated this as not very serious – points 4 and 5 on the scale.
24. In secondary schools the picture was less positive using the same rating scale. A bare majority of secondary teachers (51%), and a minority of support staff (43%) rated this as not very serious – points 4 and 5 on the scale. However secondary headteachers were as positive as their counterparts in primary with 77% rating the impact of serious indiscipline/pupil violence on the running of the school as not very serious – points 4 and 5 on the scale

### ***Around the school***

25. Three out of 557 (<1%) primary and four out of 1,460 (<1%) secondary teachers reported experiencing physical violence towards them around the school at least once in the last full teaching week. Six primary out of 558 (<1%) and 39 out of 1460 secondary teachers (3%) reported physical aggression towards them around the school at least once in the last full teaching week.
26. Many more teachers and headteachers in both sectors report meeting pupil-to pupil physical violence and aggression around the school. For example, 1 in 4 primary and 1 in 5 secondary teachers encountered pupil-to-pupil physical violence around the school at least once last week. 38% of primary and 45% of secondary teachers say that they encountered pupil-to-pupil physical aggression.
27. Small numbers of primary headteachers, 16 out of 242 (7%), and secondary headteachers, 3 out of 245 (<1%) had experienced physical violence towards them or had this referred to them at least once during the previous week.
28. In contrast 33% of primary and 44% of secondary headteachers had either personally experienced or had referred to them pupil-to-pupil physical violence around the school at least once last week.

### ***In classrooms***

29. Very small numbers of primary and secondary teachers and support staff reported physical violence or aggression towards them. There was a high degree of congruence among teachers, headteachers and

- support staff in primary and secondary schools on the classroom behaviours most frequently encountered or referred to them.
30. Twelve out of 554 (2%) primary and four out of 1459 (<1%) secondary teachers reported physical violence towards them in their classrooms at least once in the last full teaching week. For physical aggression the equivalent figures were 15 out of 554 (3%) primary and 44 out of 1458 (3%) secondary teachers.
  31. For primary headteachers the classroom behaviour most frequently referred to them was pupil-to-pupil aggression with 57% saying that this had been referred to them at least once in the last week.
  32. For secondary headteachers the classroom behaviour most frequently referred to them was general verbal abuse toward staff, closely followed by pupil-to-pupil general verbal abuse. Around 2 in 3 secondary headteachers said that these behaviours had been referred to them at least once in the last week.
  33. Support staff in primary and secondary schools encountered physical violence or aggression in classrooms rarely. Some 19 out of 380 (5%) primary and five out of 654 (<1%) secondary encountered physical violence at least once in the last week.
  34. The equivalent figures for physical aggression are 25 out of 380 (7%) primary and 27 out of 651 (4%) secondary support staff reporting this at least once last week.
  35. The highest percentage of primary support staff experiencing serious indiscipline in the classroom related to pupil-to-pupil physical aggression, followed by pupil-to-pupil general verbal abuse. 56% and 47% of support staff reported encountering these behaviours respectively at least once last week.
  36. Around 2 in 3 secondary support staff identified pupil-to-pupil general verbal abuse as the most frequently encountered serious indiscipline in classrooms.
  37. When asked to list the types of behaviour which have the greatest negative impact on staff both primary and secondary headteachers tended to list lower levels of indiscipline such as cheeky or impertinent remarks and general rowdiness perhaps because of the greater frequency of these kinds of behaviour. They also highlighted verbal abuse among pupils, however.

### ***In the last twelve months***

38. In both primary and secondary schools, general verbal abuse was the serious indiscipline/violence most frequently experienced by staff at least once over the previous twelve months. When asked about the most recent incident, respondents reported that these were most frequently reported to senior colleagues and/or the headteacher. 26 out of 92 primary and 17 out of 524 secondary teachers reported that the most recent incident was physical violence. Out of these incidents, 2 in primary and 4 in secondary schools were referred to the police and this was the kind of incident most likely to be referred to them.

## **Pupils' perceptions of behaviour in schools and classrooms**

40. The data from pupils in primary and secondary schools provide a snapshot of opinion from a small sample in 15 schools. They are not representative of pupils in Scotland.
41. Primary and secondary pupils reported that most pupils behaved well usually around the school and in classrooms.
42. They enjoyed interesting lessons, extra curricular activities and primary pupils highly valued opportunities to choose activities.
43. They identified calling out in class or chatting as the most frequent low-level indiscipline in classrooms.
44. They saw schools as generally safe although the secondary sample had more mixed feelings about this than primary pupils.
45. Extreme forms of physical aggression and violence were seen as rare although there was concern about bullying in both sectors. They saw more physical violence and aggression amongst themselves than towards teachers.
46. There was praise for teachers who were fair, listened, had a sense of humour and used a variety of teaching methods.
47. Pupils in both sectors would have welcomed more opportunities to participate in decision-making about school matters.

## **Comparisons with 2006**

48. There were 276 questions for which direct comparisons on behaviour in 2006 and 2009 were possible.
49. Perceptions of secondary teachers have moved in a positive direction for 51 out of 58 behaviours on which comparisons were possible. There was no change in perceptions for six behaviours and a negative change for one – pupils withdrawing from active engagement in the classroom.
50. Perceptions of secondary headteachers, primary teachers and primary headteachers have also moved in a positive direction but for these groups there were greater numbers of questions for which no significant movement either positive or negative could be detected.
51. Perceptions of secondary headteachers have moved in a positive direction in 29 out of 45 behaviours for which comparisons were possible. There was no change for ten and a negative change in six. All the negative changes related to questions ending 'towards you or your staff' in 2009. In 2006 the questions focussed on only the headteachers' experiences. The comparisons are therefore not strictly accurate.
52. Perceptions of primary teachers have moved in a positive direction for 29 of the 58 behaviours for which comparisons were possible. There was no change on 28 behaviours and a negative change on one – pupils withdrawing from active engagement in the classroom.

53. Perceptions of primary headteachers have moved in a positive direction for 15 out of 45 behaviours for which comparisons were possible. There was no change in 25 and a negative change in five. All the negative changes related to questions ending 'towards you or your staff' in 2009. In 2006 the questions focussed on only the headteachers' experiences. The comparisons are therefore not strictly accurate.
54. Improvement in perceptions was least common among support staff in both sectors. Secondary support staff recorded a positive change for 11 out of the 35 behaviours for which comparison was possible. There was no change in 21 and a negative change in three.
55. Primary support staff reported a slightly larger number of negative than positive changes although they recorded no significant change for most items. Their perceptions had moved in a positive direction in three of the 35 behaviours for which comparison was possible. There was no change in 26 and a negative change in six.

### **Behaviour management approaches in primary and secondary schools**

56. All schools surveyed used a multi-pronged approach to promote positive behaviour and respond to negative behaviour. All strategies in the list provided in the survey were used in some schools.
57. The most frequently used strategies in primary schools were promoting a positive ethos through shared values, break time supervision and reward systems for pupils. These were also seen as the most helpful strategies.
58. Similar strategies were in frequent use in secondary schools, although anti-bullying policies and referral to more senior staff also featured prominently.
59. The majority of staff in both primary (83%) and secondary (68%) schools felt well supported by senior staff in dealing with behaviour management issues.
60. The majority of primary and secondary teachers surveyed had been actively involved in policy development, a view echoed by the headteachers who reported an open and consultative approach to policy development. For example, 99% of primary and secondary heads reported that they had involved teachers in developing behaviour management strategies.
61. There was a less positive picture from support staff with only 27% of support staff in secondary schools and 59% in primary schools agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement that they had been regularly involved in discussions about improving behaviour.
62. A very large majority of primary teachers (93%) and secondary teachers (87%) were confident or very confident in their abilities to promote positive behaviour. They were also confident or very confident in their abilities to respond to negative behaviour in their classrooms (89% and 85% respectively).
63. Perceptions of the effectiveness of training in behaviour management approaches used in school varied between primary and secondary teachers. Most primary teachers, 62%, agreed or strongly agreed that

they had had effective training. For secondary teachers the equivalent figure was 45%. Support staff in both sectors were less satisfied than teachers. Only 35% of primary and 21% in secondary agreed or strongly agreed that there was adequate training to deal with behavioural difficulties.

64. There is some evidence that newer approaches, specifically encouraged by the Scottish Government and local authorities, such as restorative practices, are being more widely used in 2009.

## **Local authority perspectives**

65. The foundation for behaviour policy was the development of a positive ethos and shared values in schools.
66. All authorities operated a form of staged intervention whereby increasing levels of support were made available to pupils with behavioural needs. A common theme was in locating responsibility for pupils within schools, supported by specialist help and support from local authority officers at varying levels of seniority.
67. Two categories of young people giving cause for concern were those on the autistic spectrum and some very young children in early years settings, often from troubled households, who were displaying disruptive behaviour.
68. Authorities have different levels of satisfaction with their current behaviour management policy, some feeling highly confident, others feeling that their policies were outdated and needing review and a large minority reporting that reviews were in progress.
69. Policy was typically developed through working groups involving members from different sectors and holding a range of perspectives. Some authorities described broadening the base of policy development by more active involvement of parent and community representatives and young people.
70. Policies are monitored and evaluated through the analysis of local statistics using Quality Improvement Officers and in some cases by independent research.
71. The Positive Behaviour Team was highly regarded as a source of information, advice and support.
72. Authorities took very seriously the need to provide relevant and effective training and a wide range is on offer.
73. All authorities reported procedures for handling serious indiscipline and violent incidents. A large minority of respondents were unsure about how statistics were used.
74. Policy priorities included the development of multi-agency working, and increasing input from Child and Adolescent Health Services in the context of concerns about numbers of young children growing up in very challenging circumstances.
75. The themes above were also evident in 2006 and there is sense of policies bedding down in some authorities.





# 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This chapter begins with a brief overview of the importance of behaviour in schools before outlining major policy developments in Scotland. It then describes the research design and methods adopted in the present study. It concludes by summarising the basis on which key research findings have been presented.

## Policy context

1.2 Behaviour in schools is an emotive topic and one of enduring political interest and sensitivity. This is partly explained by the fact that establishing standards of good behaviour in schools has two linked purposes. It is a means to an end – the successful learning of young people. Clearly, young people are less likely to learn in classrooms where disruptive behaviour takes place and teacher time is spent on maintaining discipline rather than on the formal curriculum. Good behaviour is also an end in itself, however – a key purpose of schooling being to socialise young people into accepted norms of behaviour. Reports of declining standards of behaviour in schools, violence and bullying in playgrounds and on school premises generally, can thus contribute to more general concerns about crime, public safety and sense of well-being. As might be expected, concern about standards of behaviour in schools is not new and is an international one (Brown and Munn 2008).

1.3 The research specification for the current project describes the current policy in Scotland as follows:

The Scottish Government is committed to creating peaceful and positive learning environments in schools and to working in partnerships ... to support local authorities and schools to introduce embedded approaches to promoting positive relationships and behaviour and to tackle indiscipline. (Scottish Government 2008).

Current policy is shaped by the focus on Curriculum for Excellence and Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC). Curriculum for Excellence aims to provide a broad and flexible curriculum to engage and meet the needs of all children and young people. This builds upon and consolidates previous policy from *Better Behaviour Better Learning*. Current policy is supported by the Positive Behaviour Team and advised by the Scottish Advisory Group on Behaviour in Schools. GIRFEC and Additional Support for Learning policies provide the framework for more co-ordinated planning and support for children and young people. A more comprehensive review of policy development in this area is outside the scope of this report. It should be noted, however, that current concern with behaviour can be traced to the Pack Report of 1977.<sup>2</sup>

## The research

1.4 The Scottish Government is committed to conducting regular 3 yearly national studies of behaviour in schools to provide a clear and robust picture

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<sup>2</sup> We have used current policy terminology except where quoting directly from interviews or focus groups. This includes using the phrase 'pupils with behavioural needs'.

of positive and negative behaviour in publicly funded schools and of current policy and practice in relation to managing behaviour. The 2009 research built on previous research in 2006 and had four main aims to:

- Provide clear and robust information on the nature and extent of positive and negative behaviour in Scottish publicly funded schools in 2009;
- Provide trend information on key questions about positive and negative behaviour compared to 2006;
- Describe the range of behaviour management approaches in use and to report on staff's perceptions of their effectiveness;
- Describe the training and support provided to staff and their confidence in managing behaviour.

1.5 Media reports of behaviour in schools typically emphasise bad behaviour of one kind or another rather than positive behaviour. It was of obvious importance therefore, to collect robust evidence of the nature and extent of all behaviour so that a clear and reliable picture could be established. Equally important was the collection of evidence about effective strategies to promote positive behaviour so that there is evidence about the strategies and approaches currently being used in schools.

1.6 Measuring behaviour is no easy task since what counts as disruptive behaviour is highly context dependent. Teachers vary in what they see as disruptive behaviour depending, for example, on the age, stage, ethnicity and gender of pupils, the nature of the lesson and the time of day or year and levels of confidence and support. (See e.g. Pack Report 1977 and Johnstone and Munn 1992.) Similarly, strategies for intervention will differ according to the pupils or class concerned, the type of behaviour encountered and its frequency, the attitudes of senior management and the general ethos of the school (e.g. Munn et. al 2000). It was therefore important to develop a research design and methods which asked about specific types of positive and negative behaviour which staff experienced and to be able to supplement these perceptions with data gathering which was sensitive to school contexts. The survey approach used built on that used by Gray and Sime for the Elton Committee (DES 1989). This was to ask questions about specific behaviour encountered in the classroom and around the school in a specific week.

## **Research questions**

1.7 The research questions for the study were developed from the aims above and from the research literature in this area. They are:

1. What do a range of stakeholders perceive and experience to be the nature and extent of positive and negative behaviour in publicly funded Scottish schools in 2009?
2. Are these perceptions significantly different from those in 2006?
3. What kinds of approaches are typically used to encourage positive behaviour and manage negative behaviour? Are staff aware of these and if so are they perceived as effective?

4. What kinds of training and support are provided to staff about managing behaviour? How effective are these in the opinion of participants?
5. How confident are teaching and support staff in promoting positive behaviour and in managing negative behaviour?
6. How are serious incidents followed up?

## Research design and methods

1.8 There were four main strands to the research design with different methods being used in each. The school visits encompassed two strands i) data collection from staff and ii) data collection from pupils.

### **Strand 1: Survey**

1.9 This involved a large-scale survey of teachers, headteachers and support staff in a representative sample of publicly funded primary and secondary schools across Scotland.<sup>3</sup> Table 1.1 summarises information on response rates.<sup>4</sup>

**TABLE 1.1: RESPONDENT GROUPS AND RETURN RATES**

Table 1.1 gives, for each respondent group, the numbers of survey forms sent out and received back in 2006 and 2009 along with the return rates. The last column gives the 2009 standard error as a percentage of the 2006 standard error (SE).

Respondent group	2006		2009		2009		09 S.E./ 06 S.E.
	forms sent out	forms back	return rate	forms sent out	forms back	return rate	
Secondary Teachers	1,008	550	54.6%	3,382	1,468	43.4%	61%
Secondary Headteachers	250	169	67.6%	377	246	65.3%	83%
Secondary Support Staff	500	314	62.8%	1,305	678	52.0%	68%
Primary Teachers	1,032	530	51.4%	1,288	560	43.5%	97%
Primary Headteachers	330	215	65.2%	430	244	56.7%	94%
Primary Support Staff	330	187	56.7%	863	391	45.3%	71%

1.10 The 2009 survey offers improved precision compared to the 2006 survey due to the larger sample size in 2009. Even though the response rate was lower for all groups the number of survey forms returned was higher. For example, the response rate from secondary teachers was 43% in 2009 compared to 55% in 2006. However there were 1468 responses from this group in 2009 compared to 550 in 2006.

1.11 The standard errors are dependent on the achieved samples (i.e. the number that responded rather than the response rates) and, despite the lower response rates, achieved samples were still larger than in 2006 for all six groups. In the case of the Primary Teachers, the increase was very small and

<sup>3</sup> The surveys and details of sample construction are available in a technical annex available online.

<sup>4</sup> Numbers responding to each question vary and these are reported in subsequent chapters.

the standard error fell by only three per cent. The largest increase was for the Secondary Teachers where the standard error was reduced by over a third. As an example of the effect of this in practice, if 33% of Secondary Teachers in the sample expressed a given opinion, the standard error for the estimate of this proportion in the population would be 1.2 in 2009, down from 2.0 in 2006.

1.12 Testing for the effects of non-response from schools revealed that there is no evidence that the achieved level introduced a significant degree of bias into the results of the 2009 survey<sup>5</sup>. We are unable to test for the effects of non-response from individuals in schools (i.e. whether those who do not respond hold the same views as those who do). Nevertheless, we are confident that the 2009 survey results provide a statistically robust picture of the perceptions of the six groups of respondents in terms of positive and negative behaviour in schools.

1.13 A final point to bear in mind is that the surveys provide us with information about the kind of behaviour experienced and the frequency of dealing with it. They do not tell us about the number of pupils behaving in particular ways or about the number of individual incidents. This is particularly important when we come to chapters on low level and serious indiscipline in primary and secondary schools.

1.14 Although one pupil misbehaving is one too many, it would be mistaken to assume that the frequency of the occurrence of a behaviour is the same as the number of pupils displaying that behaviour.

### ***Strands 2 and 3: school visits***

1.15 A *second strand* of the research consisted of visits to 7 typical primary and 8 typical secondary schools. The purpose of the visits was to contextualise the survey findings and to explore issues that did not lend themselves to investigation via the surveys. These included for example, the details of the approaches to behaviour management adopted in the schools.

1.16 The schools were selected on the basis of recent reports and scores from HMle as typical. They were chosen to achieve a balance in terms of urban/rural location, denominational/non-denominational status and proportion of roll entitled to free school meals. Permission to approach them was sought from the local authority and then discussions took place with the headteacher. One primary school was unable to take part at a late stage because of the illness of the headteacher.

1.17 Within each school a number of different data collection activities took place. These were:

- Interviews with the headteacher and other senior staff;
- Two focus groups of staff including probationer teachers and chartered teachers where possible;

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<sup>5</sup> See the online technical annex for further detail on non-response.

- One focus group of support staff – those actively involved in helping children in classrooms.

1.18 *Strand three* of the research undertaken at the same time as school visits involved data collection from pupils. This comprised:

- Surveys of pupils in P5 and P7 and S1 and S3 (one class per year);
- Focus groups of pupils from the above years exploring in more detail their perceptions of positive and negative behaviour in the school.

1.19 All interviews and focus groups with staff and pupils were tape-recorded and extensive notes were taken. The research team worked in pairs to facilitate the focus groups and administered the questionnaires directly to pupils in their classes, clarifying questions as appropriate. Pupil numbers in the survey are reported in more detail in the chapters discussing pupils' views. A total of 250 primary pupils and 316 secondary pupils completed the surveys. Table 1.2 below provides a summary of the numbers of staff and pupils involved in the interviews and focus groups.

#### ***Strand 4: local authority interviews***

1.20 *The fourth strand* of the research involved telephone interviews with local authority representatives, selected by Directors of Education or equivalent to be well placed to discuss the local authority's approach to behaviour management. The representatives received a copy of the interview schedule in advance to enable them to prepare for the interview and collect appropriate documentation. All interviews were tape-recorded and the researchers also took extensive notes.

**TABLE 1.2 SCHOOL VISITS: SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS**

	Headteacher interviews	Deputy Head Teacher interviews	Teachers' Focus groups	Support Staff Focus groups	Pupils Focus groups	Totals
Secondary Schools = 8	7	9	100	29	52xS1 52xS3	249
Primary Schools = 7	7	4	42	23	42xP5 24xP7 4xP6	152
Totals	14	13	142	52	174	401

1.21 The qualitative data were analysed by summarising key themes from each school visit. The researchers visiting particular schools wrote a jointly agreed report based on these themes. Pairs of researchers varied across the 15 schools so that different people were involved in writing each report. These were aide memoirs backed by extensive notes and tape recordings where details could be checked as need be.

1.22 The local authority interviews were likewise analysed to identify key themes and to identify similarities and differences. These were shared amongst the team to check for accuracy.

## **A robust picture**

1.23 The surveys of teachers, headteachers and support staff provide a robust statistical picture of perceptions of behaviour around the school and in classrooms. Comparisons with 2006 data have been carefully undertaken and we show in chapter 12 how statistically significant the main differences are. The picture provided by the survey data is complemented by the school visits and pupil data. These data should be regarded as illustrative of key findings from the survey. The picture provided by the local authorities reveals patterns of perceptions which suggest some commonality of view.

## 2 POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

### Introduction

2.1 Primary schools actively promote positive behaviour as well as having systems in place to deal with negative behaviour. How were strategies promoting positive behaviour reflected in perceptions of positive behaviour around the school and in the classroom? We report data from the surveys of primary teachers, headteachers and support staff supplemented by interviews and focus groups undertaken in the visits to seven primary schools. We begin by considering data about positive behaviour around the school before moving to data concerning classrooms. In general we highlight the most and least frequently encountered behaviours in commenting on the tables. We conclude the chapter by highlighting key comparisons with the 2006 data.

### A positive picture

2.2 Before beginning the detailed reporting of the survey data in this and subsequent chapters it is important to provide an overview of perceptions of behaviour of pupils from survey respondents. The picture is overwhelmingly positive.

2.3 We asked headteachers, teachers, and support staff, '*Thinking about the all the behaviour you encounter around the school, how many pupils do you find generally well behaved?*' An impressive 100% of primary headteachers, 97% of teachers and 96% of support staff indicated that all or most of the pupils they encountered around the school were generally well behaved.

2.4 We also asked about behaviour in classrooms. Just over 99% of headteachers<sup>6</sup> said that all or most of the school roll were generally well behaved during lessons,<sup>7</sup> and 93% of teachers and 89% of support staff said that pupils were generally well behaved in all or most lessons.

### Positive behaviour around the school

2.5 The survey asked teachers and headteachers about how often they encountered particular types of pupil behaviour during the last full teaching week.<sup>8</sup>

2.6 Table 2.1 shows that the positive behaviour encountered most frequently on all or most occasions by teachers, 91%, was that pupils greet them pleasantly (H), a view shared by 97% of headteachers. (See table 2.2).

2.7 The behaviour least frequently encountered by teachers and headteachers was pupils challenging others' negative behaviour (I). Some 18% of teachers encountered this seldom or never as did 10% of headteachers.

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<sup>6</sup> Most primary headteachers had class contact time.

<sup>7</sup> Most primary headteachers had class contact time.

<sup>8</sup> Support staff were not asked these questions.



**TABLE 2.1 PRIMARY TEACHERS' VIEWS OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR AROUND THE SCHOOL**

**Q16. We have listed below some examples of different types of positive pupil behaviour which teachers have told us they encounter during the course of their duties AROUND THE SCHOOL. Taking your experience over the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently you encountered each type of behaviour.**  
(Please circle one number in each row)

		Always	On most occasions	Sometimes	Seldom	Never	
		%	%	%	%	%	N
A	Pupils actively helping their peers	*9	75	16	1	**-	556
B	Pupils taking turns	7	76	16	1	-	556
C	Pupils making positive use of school facilities during breaks (e.g. the library, sports facilities)	13	48	26	8	5	520
D	Pupils engaged in playing games and sports together	18	65	16	1	-	551
E	Pupils queuing in an orderly manner	12	62	24	2	-	556
F	Pupils respecting toilet/break/ cloakroom areas	9	62	24	4	1	555
G	Pupils using litter bins	13	70	16	2	-	556
H	Pupils greeting staff pleasantly	30	61	8	1	-	556
I	Pupils challenging others' negative behaviour	3	24	55	16	2	546
J	Pupils interacting supportively with each other	8	73	18	1	-	555

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

**Table 2.2 PRIMARY HEADTEACHERS' VIEWS OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR AROUND THE SCHOOL**

**Q16. We have listed below some examples of different types of positive pupil behaviour which teachers have told us they encounter during the course of their duties AROUND THE SCHOOL. Taking your experience over the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently you encountered each type of behaviour.**  
(Please circle one number in each row)

		Always	On most occasions	Sometimes	Seldom	Never	
		%	%	%	%	%	N
A	Pupils actively helping their peers	*10	84	6	**-	-	244
B	Pupils taking turns	12	84	5	-	-	244
C	Pupils making positive use of school facilities during breaks (e.g. the library, sports facilities)	17	63	16	2	1	232
D	Pupils engaged in playing games and sports together	21	70	10	-	-	243
E	Pupils queuing in an orderly manner	18	72	10	-	-	243
F	Pupils respecting toilet/break/cloakroom areas	17	75	8	-	-	243
G	Pupils using litter bins	18	75	7	-	-	244
H	Pupils greeting staff pleasantly	40	57	3	-	-	244
I	Pupils challenging others' negative behaviour	2	26	61	10	-	243
J	Pupils interacting supportively with each other	10	81	9	-	-	244

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

2.8 The way in which behaviour is dealt with is highly context specific. Supportive behaviour is noticed more frequently as shown by items, A, B and D for example. Chapter 6 on behaviour management policy shows that schools had systems in place to challenge the negative behaviour of others and encourage pupils actively to support to each other. Perhaps this helps to explain the view of 91% of headteachers and of 81% of teachers that they always or on most occasions see pupils interactively supporting each other (J). It is probably easier to support others than to challenge negative behaviour.

2.9 The school visits supported this general picture. We were given the opportunity to tour the schools, visiting the library; general classrooms, staffrooms and pupil support bases and often shared a meal with pupils in the dining room. We got the impression of a lively and purposeful environment and observed pupils and staff walking around the school greeting each other in a polite and friendly way. The schools were generally clean and tidy. The general view was typified by the comment from focus groups in one primary school that behaviour was: *good and manageable*. (PS5)

### Positive behaviour in classrooms

2.10 The survey asked teachers, headteachers and support staff about how often they encountered particular types of pupil behaviour in classrooms during the last full teaching week.

**TABLE 2.3 PRIMARY TEACHERS' VIEWS OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR IN CLASSROOMS**

**Q12.** We have listed below some examples of different types of positive pupil behaviour which teachers experience during the course of their CLASSROOM TEACHING. Over the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently you experienced each type of pupil behaviour. (Please circle one number in each row)

		All lessons	Most lessons	Some lessons	Few lessons	No lessons	
		%	%	%	%	%	N
A	Pupils arriving with the correct equipment	*15	70	11	4	1	547
B	Pupils following instructions	14	73	13	1	**-	553
C	Pupils settling down quickly	18	65	15	3	-	551
D	Pupils contributing to class discussions	42	49	9	-	-	551
E	Pupils listening to others' views respectfully	19	61	17	3	-	552
F	Pupils listening to the teacher respectfully	29	61	9	1	-	553
G	Pupils keenly engaging with their tasks	18	73	8	1	-	552
H	Pupils politely seeking teacher help (e.g. putting hand up)	30	55	13	2	-	550
I	Attentive, interested pupils	21	67	11	2	-	553
J	Pupils arriving promptly for classes	35	56	9	1	-	544
K	Lessons that are calm, relaxed and enjoyable	20	65	15	2	-	548
L	Pupils interacting supportively with each other	16	64	19	1	-	552
M	Pupils enthusiastically participating in classroom activities	25	64	10	1	-	554

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

2.11 The overwhelmingly general picture of positive behaviour in classrooms mentioned above is reinforced by particular examples of positive behaviour. Table 2.3 above shows that 91% of teachers saw pupils contributing actively to class discussions (D) on all or most occasions. The least frequently noticed behaviours, pupils listening to others views respectfully (E) and pupils interacting supportively with each other (L), were reported by about 1 in 5 teachers to occur in all lessons. The very small percentages in the few or no lessons columns reinforces the generally positive picture of life in classrooms.

2.12 Primary teachers' overall positive view of pupils' behaviour in classrooms is confirmed by the headteachers in table 2.4. Heads are even more positive than teachers about classroom behaviour, with 90% or more reporting that they met all the behaviours listed in most lessons in the last week. The most frequently noticed behaviour was pupils following instructions (B) in all or most

lessons, reported by 97% of headteachers. The blank percentages in the “few” or “no lessons” columns reinforces the generally positive picture of life in classrooms.

**TABLE 2.4 PRIMARY HEADTEACHERS' VIEWS OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR IN CLASSROOMS**

**Q17.** We have listed below some examples of different types of positive pupil behaviour which teachers experience during the course of their CLASSROOM TEACHING. Over the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate, from your perspective, how often each type of behaviour was exhibited. (Please circle one number in each row)

		All lessons	Most lessons	Some lessons	Few lessons	No lessons	
		%	%	%	%	%	N
A	Pupils arriving with the correct equipment	*10	85	4	1	**-	238
B	Pupils following instructions	12	85	3	-	-	239
C	Pupils settling down quickly	18	74	8	1	-	239
D	Pupils contributing to class discussions	34	61	4	-	-	239
E	Pupils listening to others' views respectfully	23	70	7	-	-	240
F	Pupils listening to staff respectfully	27	69	4	-	-	240
G	Pupils keenly engaging with their tasks	14	77	9	-	-	240
H	Pupils politely seeking staff help (e.g. putting hand up)	26	69	5	-	-	240
I	Attentive, interested pupils	17	78	6	-	-	240
J	Pupils arriving promptly for classes	32	65	3	-	-	240
K	Lessons that are calm, relaxed and enjoyable	20	72	8	-	-	240
L	Pupils interacting supportively with each other	15	76	10	-	-	240
M	Pupils enthusiastically participating in classroom activities	15	76	9	-	-	240

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

2.13 Support staff were asked the same questions about positive behaviour in the classroom. Although the majority saw pupils as well behaved in all or most lessons, some of their responses, as can be seen in table 2.5, are less positive than those of teachers and headteachers. 83% saw pupils arriving with the correct equipment (A) in all or most lessons. However, over three quarters reported pupils arriving promptly for classes (J) in some, few or no lessons and over 1 in 3 saw pupils settling quickly (C) in some, few or no classes. Support staff may observe more behaviour unnoticed by busy teachers. Support staff also indicated that they are less likely to participate in staff development on behaviour. It may be then that they do not always share teachers' view about behaviour.

**TABLE 2.5 PRIMARY SUPPORT STAFF'S VIEWS ON POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR IN CLASSROOMS**

**Q8.** We have listed below some examples of different types of positive pupil behaviour which teachers experience during the course of their **CLASSROOM TEACHING**. Over the **LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK**, please indicate how frequently you experienced each type of pupil behaviour. (Please circle one number in each row)

		All lessons	Most lessons	Some lessons	Few lessons	No lessons	
		%	%	%	%	%	<b>N</b>
A	Pupils arriving with the correct equipment	*11	72	13	4	**-	386
B	Pupils following instructions	8	67	24	1	-	383
C	Pupils settling down quickly	8	58	30	4	-	387
D	Pupils contributing to class discussions	23	59	17	1	-	385
E	Pupils listening to others' views respectfully	11	53	32	4	-	388
F	Pupils listening to the teacher respectfully	15	64	19	1	-	386
G	Pupils keenly engaging with their tasks	10	65	24	1	-	388
H	Pupils politely seeking teacher help (e.g. putting hand up)	14	57	24	4	-	388
I	Attentive, interested pupils	10	64	25	2	-	388
J	Pupils arriving promptly for classes	0	24	62	13	1	381
K	Lessons that are calm, relaxed and enjoyable	16	56	26	2	-	387
L	Pupils interacting supportively with each other	12	60	27	1	-	387
M	Pupils enthusiastically participating in classroom activities	19	62	19	1	-	388

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

## Comparisons with 2006

2.14 Comparisons were made with 2006 on key questions showing where there were significant positive or negative changes in the frequencies with which behaviours were reported. Chapter 12 considers comparisons in detail. The key findings at **classroom level**<sup>9</sup> are:

- There was no significant change in primary head teachers views between the two surveys;
- There is a positive change in perceptions of primary teachers on five out of 11 behaviours for which comparison is possible. For example they show a more positive view of attentive pupils, keenly engaging with their tasks, listening to each other/their teachers and of a relaxed classroom;
- There was no significant change in perceptions of primary support staff for 9 of the 11 behaviours where comparison was possible. In two aspects of classroom behaviour, following instructions and contributing to class discussion perceptions were more negative in 2009 than in 2006.

2.15 Overall there was little change in the views of primary school staff. Where views have changed the picture is much more reflective of positive than of negative change from 2006 to 2009.

<sup>9</sup> Technical reasons mean that we cannot compare changes in responses around the school.

### 3 LOW-LEVEL INDISCIPLINE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

#### Introduction

3.1 Previous surveys have contrasted perceptions of the frequency of so called 'low-level' indiscipline in schools and classrooms, such as talking out of turn and work avoidance, with more serious aggressive and violent behaviour. We continue with this approach. We begin by reporting perceptions of this low-level indiscipline around the school and in the classroom before turning to more serious behaviour in the next chapter. We should make clear, however, that describing indiscipline as low-level is not intended to underplay its effects on learning and teaching. Indeed, teachers in previous surveys have talked about the wearing effect of the 'drip, drip' of low-level misbehaviour in their classrooms (Johnstone and Munn 1992). What did they have to say about this in 2009? We begin by reporting survey data from teachers, headteachers and support staff, supplemented by data from the seven primary schools we visited. In general we highlight the most and least frequently encountered behaviours in commenting on the tables.

3.2 It is important to note that the surveys provide us with information about the kind of *behaviour* experienced and the *frequency* of dealing with it. They do not tell us about the *number of pupils* behaving in particular ways or the number of individual incidents. This is very important when we look at both low-level and serious indiscipline. Although one pupil misbehaving is one too many, it would be mistaken to assume that the frequency of the occurrence of a behaviour is the same as the number of pupils displaying that behaviour. So a teacher perceiving talking out of turn several times a day, for example, could be reporting one pupil talking out of turn several times, or several pupils talking out of turn once.

#### Low-level indiscipline around the school

3.3 We provided teachers and headteachers<sup>10</sup> with a list of behaviours and asked them about how frequently they had encountered these around the school in the last full week. Tables 3.1 and 3.2 provide a mixed picture. We can see that in Table 3.1 the behaviour encountered most frequently by teachers was pupils running in corridors (A) twice a day or more frequently. More than one in three teachers experienced this. The least frequently encountered behaviour was leaving school without permission (G) with 94% of teachers saying that they had not encountered this at all in the last week.

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<sup>10</sup> Support staff were not asked these questions.

TABLE 3.1 PRIMARY TEACHERS' VIEWS OF LOW-LEVEL INDISCIPLINE AROUND THE SCHOOL

Q17. We have listed below some examples of different types of pupil behaviour which teachers have told us they have encountered during the course of their duties AROUND THE SCHOOL. Taking your experience during the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently you have encountered each type of pupil behaviour. (Please circle one number in each row)

		Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	
<b>Low Level Indiscipline</b>		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	<b>N</b>
A	Running in the corridor	*24	12	10	14	12	13	16	558
B	Unruliness while waiting (e.g. to enter classrooms, for lunch)	11	7	12	11	15	17	27	553
C	Showing lack of concern for others	8	6	8	13	13	24	30	550
D	Persistently infringing school rules	7	6	6	12	10	20	39	549
E	Cheeky or impertinent remarks or responses	5	3	5	8	11	20	47	556
F	Loitering in 'prohibited' areas	3	3	3	7	9	12	62	556
G	Leaving school premises without permission	**-	-	1	-	1	4	94	558
H	General rowdiness, horseplay, or mucking about	8	4	4	13	14	21	37	554
I	Use of mobile phones/ texting against school policies	-	-	-	-	1	3	96	558
<b>Disengagement</b>									
J	Pupils deliberately excluding others	2	2	4	5	12	26	50	555
K	Pupils withdrawing from interaction with peers	1	2	3	6	11	25	53	555

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

3.4 Primary headteachers also represent a fairly positive picture of behaviour around the school as Table 3.2 shows. 17% had seen running in the corridors (A) twice a day or more, the most frequently encountered behaviour. At the other end of the scale, 95% had not encountered at all in the last week pupils using mobile phones/texting against school policies (I).

3.5 Primary headteachers tended to be more positive in their reporting of behaviour around the school than teachers. They tended to encounter low-level indiscipline less frequently. Eight out of the eleven types of low-level indiscipline were reported less frequently by headteachers than teachers. Of the three behaviours reported more frequently by teachers, the percentages differences with headteachers were slight.

3.6 A typical view from the schools visited was that often if things went wrong it was in the playground. Such behaviour tended to be: *very, very low level...playing too rough...tends to be the boys, ...We have a friendship stop in the playground and there's always a P7 at the doors to pick up if someone's not happy.*(PS4)

**TABLE 3.2 PRIMARY HEADTEACHERS' VIEWS OF LOW-LEVEL INDISCIPLINE AROUND THE SCHOOL**

**Q23. We have listed below some examples of different types of pupil behaviour which teachers have told us they have encountered during the course of their duties AROUND THE SCHOOL. Taking your experience during the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently each type of behaviour has either been referred on to you, or been encountered directly by you. (Please circle one number in each row)**

		Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	
<b>Low Level Indiscipline</b>		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	<b>N</b>
A	Running in the corridor	*10	7	8	14	13	17	31	241
B	Unruliness while waiting (e.g. to enter classrooms, for lunch)	2	5	5	9	12	18	51	241
C	Showing lack of concern for others	2	2	3	11	20	24	38	239
D	Persistently infringing school rules	4	2	3	10	7	25	47	242
E	Cheeky or impertinent remarks or responses	3	2	3	10	12	27	44	243
F	Loitering in 'prohibited' areas	1	2	2	3	6	8	78	243
G	Leaving school premises without permission	**-	-	-	-	2	5	93	244
H	General rowdiness, horseplay, or mucking about	2	2	2	13	13	23	47	240
I	Use of mobile phones/ texting against school policies	-	-	-	-	1	3	95	244
<b>Disengagement</b>									
J	Pupils deliberately excluding others	-	-	1	5	8	26	60	242
K	Pupils withdrawing from interaction with peers	-	-	3	4	7	28	59	243

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

### **Low-level indiscipline in the classroom**

3.7 We now turn to low-level indiscipline in the classroom. We focus on the views of classroom teachers and support staff as those most directly able to report on this<sup>11</sup>.

3.8 In Table 3.3 we can see that, as with previous surveys, 'talking out of turn' (A) is the behaviour encountered by teachers most frequently. Some 63% met this twice a day or more and only 4% of teachers said that they had not encountered talking out of turn in their last teaching week. The least frequently encountered behaviour was use of mobile phones/texting (K) with 98% of teachers saying that they had not encountered this behaviour at all in the last week.

<sup>11</sup> Headteachers were not asked these questions.

**TABLE 3.3 PRIMARY TEACHERS' VIEWS OF LOW-LEVEL INDISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM**

Q13. We have listed below some examples of different types of pupil behaviour which teachers have told us they have to manage during the course of their CLASSROOM TEACHING (you will be asked about pupil behaviour around the school in a separate question). Please read the types of pupil behaviour and definitions carefully. Taking ALL the lessons you have taught during the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently you had to deal with each type of pupil behaviour. (Please circle one number in each row)

		Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	
<b>Low Level Indiscipline</b>		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	<b>N</b>
A	Talking out of turn (e.g. by making remarks, calling out, distracting others by chattering)	*51	12	6	15	6	6	4	556
B	Making unnecessary (non-verbal) noise (e.g. by scraping chairs, banging objects)	26	13	10	10	8	11	22.3	552
C	Hindering other pupils (e.g. by distracting them from work, interfering with materials)	29	14	10	12	11	11	15	555
D	Getting out of their seat without permission	24	11	9	8	8	10	31	547
E	Not being punctual (e.g. being late to lessons)	4	3	14	11	12	14	42	547
F	Persistently infringing class rules (e.g. pupil behaviour, safety)	12	8	7	9	8	15	40	552
G	Eating/chewing in class	1	1	2	2	1.3	10	84	553
H	Work avoidance (e.g. delaying start to work set)	16	6	9	15	15	14	26	548
I	Cheeky or impertinent remarks or responses	7	5	5	7	9	17	51	551
J	General rowdiness, horseplay or mucking about	8	6	5	9	9	20	44	552
K	Use of mobile phones/texting	**	-	-	-	-	1	98	553
<b>Disengagement</b>									
L	Pupils withdrawing from interaction with others/you	6	4	5	8	9	17	51	552

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*:- indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

3.9 In considering the perceptions of support staff, it is important to remember that support staff work with pupils in different ways and do not necessarily see the same range of classes as teachers. To illustrate the range and variety of ways in which support staff work we asked, 'Who do you provide classroom support to this school year?' We asked them to report all the different ways – not just the main way in which they provided support.

- 48% provided support to a few classes;
- 39% provided support to few pupils;
- 38% provided support to one individual pupil
- 34% provided support to any class as required;
- 22% provided support in a classroom where there were pupils with behavioural needs;
- 18% provided support to one particular class.
- 7% provided support in a support base, with pupils who have behavioural needs.

3.10 Table 3.4 below shows that support staff were also fairly positive in their perceptions of classroom behaviour although not as positive as teachers. Talking out of turn (A) was again the most frequently reported kind of misbehaviour, with 62% reporting this twice a day or more. Only 4% said that



they had not encountered talking out of turn at all in the last week. The behaviour least likely to be encountered by support staff was pupils' use of mobile phones/texting (K) with 97% saying that they had not met this behaviour in the last week.

3.11 In one or two focus groups support staff were critical of teachers' responses to misbehaviour, for example indicating that: *Sometimes something has to be done* (PS7), meaning that sometimes a sanction could be used when the teacher uses an alternative approach. This may mean, of course, that there is a miscommunication or lack of discussion between support staff and teachers about the timing and use of sanctions in relation to particular individuals.

**TABLE 3.4 PRIMARY SUPPORT STAFF'S VIEWS OF LOW-LEVEL INDISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM**

**Q9.** We have listed below some examples of different types of pupil behaviour which staff have told us they have to manage during the course of their CLASSROOM TEACHING. Please read the types of pupil behaviour and definitions carefully. Taking ALL the lessons you have assisted in during the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently you had to deal with each type of pupil behaviour. (Please circle one number in each row)

		Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	N
A	Talking out of turn (e.g. by making remarks, calling out, distracting others by chattering)	*52	10	9	12	7	7	4	382
B	Making unnecessary (non-verbal) noise (e.g. by scraping chairs, banging objects)	39	10	9	9	5	11	17	383
C	Hindering other pupils (e.g. by distracting them from work, interfering with materials)	34	12	12	10	7	11	14	381
D	Getting out of their seat without permission	36	9	10	9	7	8	20	380
E	Not being punctual (e.g. being late to lessons)	8	6	14	7	8	14	43	370
F	Persistently infringing class rules (e.g. pupil behaviour, safety)	18	7	8	11	8	12	36	376
G	Eating/chewing in class	3	2	3	1	2	6	84	377
H	Work avoidance (e.g. delaying start to work set)	18	8	10	12	10	18	24	381
I	Cheeky or impertinent remarks or responses	19	4	7	9	9	18	34	381
J	General rowdiness, horseplay or mucking about	18	6	9	10	10	19	28	382
K	Use of mobile phones/texting	**-	-	1	-	1	2	97	378
<b>Disengagement</b>									
L	Pupils withdrawing from interaction with others/you	9	2	7	6	8	17	50	375

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

## Comparison with 2006

3.12 Comparisons were made with 2006 on key questions showing where there were significant positive or negative changes in the frequency with which behaviours were reported. A more detailed and comprehensive overview can be found in Chapter 12. It should be noted that in the primary sector, the number of instances of low level indiscipline recorded in 2006 was

so low for some questions (e.g. use of mobile phones) that a significant downward change would have been difficult to achieve.

3.13 The main findings for low-level indiscipline ***around the school*** are that:

- Teachers showed more positive views in 2009 on seven of the nine questions about behaviour. There was no significant change in perceptions of two behaviours, running in the corridor and use of mobile phones;
- Headteachers were more positive for four of the nine behaviours in 2009, pupils' lack of concern for others, unruliness while waiting, being in prohibited areas and general rowdiness;
- For none of the comparisons was there a significantly negative change in perception.

3.14 The main findings for low-level indiscipline ***in the classroom*** are:

- There was a positive change in perceptions of primary teachers in 2009 for two out of the 12 behaviours on which comparison was possible, eating in class and pupils avoiding work;
- There was a negative change in perceptions of primary teachers in 2009 for one behaviour, pupils withdrawing from interaction with others;
- Primary support staff recorded no statistically significant changes in perceptions for 8 out of the 12 behaviours on which comparison was possible;
- There was a negative change in perception of support staff for four behaviours, including talking out of turn and lack of punctuality.
- Primary support staff recorded no positive changes in perceptions.

3.15 One interesting feature of the findings is the unanimity shown in respect of "Pupils withdrawing from interaction with others / you" (L) for which both primary teachers and support staff recorded a significant negative change in perception. However it is important to remember that a significant change can be shown in teachers' views, even if numbers reporting a type of behaviour are relatively small. It can be seen from the 2009 data above, that 'pupils withdrawing from interaction' is not encountered as a major issue in primary schools as only 11% of support staff and 10% of teachers saw this twice or more a day.

## 4 SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE/VIOLENCE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

### Introduction

4.1 In this chapter we look at staff perceptions of serious indiscipline and violence in schools and classrooms. We draw mainly on the data from the surveys of teachers, headteachers and support staff. The staff in the focus groups reported only very few examples of serious incidents. Headteachers and deputies spoke about dealing with aggressive behaviour but stressed that serious indiscipline happens very infrequently.

4.2 This chapter is in five main sections:

- Reports of the overall impact of serious indiscipline/pupil violence on schools;
- Perceptions of serious indiscipline/violence around the school in the last full teaching week;
- Perceptions of serious indiscipline/violence in the classroom in the last full teaching week;
- Perceptions of serious indiscipline/violence and how it was reported and followed up over the last twelve months;
- Comparisons with 2006 findings.

In general we highlight physical violence and physical aggression towards staff and amongst pupils in commenting on the tables.

### Perceptions of the overall impact of serious indiscipline/pupil violence on primary schools

4.3 We asked headteachers, teachers and support staff to rate the impact of serious indiscipline/pupil violence on the running of the school on a five-point scale between “very serious” and “not at all serious”.<sup>12</sup> We can see from Table 4.1 below that a majority of all groups see the impact as not serious (point 4) or not at all serious (point 5). However, significant minorities of all groups see the impact as very serious (point 1) or serious (point 2).

**TABLE 4.1: PERCEPTIONS OF THE OVERALL IMPACT OF SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE/PUPIL VIOLENCE ON PRIMARY SCHOOLS. How serious is the impact which serious indiscipline/pupil violence has on the running of the school?**

Category of staff	Very serious 1	2	3	4	Not at all serious 5	
	%	%	%	%	%	N
Primary Teachers	*7	10	18	25	40	539
Primary Headteachers	7	6	9	27	50	232
Primary Support Staff	9	9	18	18	46	363

\*percentages rounded to the nearest whole number and may not sum to 100

4.4 We have seen elsewhere in this report that primary headteachers tend to be the most positive group in their perceptions of positive behaviour and

<sup>12</sup> We did not provide descriptions for points 2-4 on the scale and so respondents may have interpreted these in different ways.

indeed their views remain the most positive on this issue of the three staff groups surveyed. Over three quarters perceive the impact of serious indiscipline/pupil violence to be either not serious or not at all serious. However, more than 1 in 10 perceive the impact of serious indiscipline/pupil violence on their schools to be very serious or serious.

### **Serious indiscipline/violence around the school**

4.5 Primary teachers report a low, although still of course concerning, number of serious incidents. Table 4.2 below gives more detail of problems observed around the school.

4.6 We asked teachers about whether they had encountered any of the behaviours listed, in the last full teaching week. Most percentages have been rounded up and so do not show when there have been a very small numbers reported. For example, two teachers reported racist abuse towards themselves (Q), and no teachers reported sexist abuse towards themselves (R) on any occasion in the last week.

4.7 While any instance of violent or aggressive behaviour is serious, Table 4.2 below shows that such behaviour is a rare occurrence in the daily and weekly experience of most teachers in terms of relations between them and their pupils. For the sake of clarity, and because the percentages in tables have been rounded to the nearest whole number, we wish to report the actual number of teachers responding to the two most serious types of violent or aggressive behaviour towards them.

4.8 For item Y, physical violence, the numbers are as follows. Out of 557 teachers:

- Two (<1%) reported physical violence towards themselves several times a day;
- One (<1%) reported physical violence towards themselves once last week;
- 554 (>99%) reported no physical violence towards themselves in the last week.

4.9 There was a similar picture in regard to item X, physical aggression. Out of 558 teachers

- Two (<1%) reported physical aggression towards them several times daily;
- One (<1%) reported physical aggression towards them twice last week;
- Three (<1%) reported physical aggression towards them once last week;
- 552 (99%) reported no physical aggression towards themselves in the last week.

4.10 There is some evidence of pupil-to-pupil physical violence (V). Out of 556 teachers

- 20 (4%) say that they saw pupils being physically violent towards other pupils once a day or more frequently;

- A further 112 (20%) saw pupil physical violence between one and four times last week;
- 424 (76%) did not observe this at all in the previous week.

4.11 There is a similar picture in terms of pupil-to-pupil aggression (U). Out of 556 teachers:

- 29 (5%) say that they saw pupils being physically aggressive to their peers once a day or more frequently;
- A further 186 (33%) saw this between one and four times last week;
- 341 (61%) did not observe this at all in the previous week.

4.12 In one school focus group, staff indicated that the occasional violent incident in their school was either in the playground and/or it involved specific pupils with identified ongoing difficulties.

**TABLE 4.2 PRIMARY TEACHERS' VIEWS OF SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE AROUND THE SCHOOL**

**Q17. We have listed below some examples of different types of pupil behaviour which teachers have told us they have encountered during the course of their duties AROUND THE SCHOOL. Taking your experience during the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently you have encountered each type of pupil behaviour.**

*(Please circle one number in each row)*

		Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	
	<b>Disengagement</b>	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	<b>N</b>
J	Pupils deliberately excluding others	*2	2	4	5	12	26	50	555
K	Pupils withdrawing from interaction with peers	1	2	3	6	11	25	53	555
L	Pupils truanting	**	-	-	1	-	3	96	551
	<b>Serious indiscipline/violence</b>								
M	Physical destructiveness (e.g. breaking objects, damaging furniture and fabric)	1	-	-	1	2	10	86	557
N	Racist abuse towards other pupils	-	-	-	-	-	3	97	556
O	Sexist abuse or harassment of other pupils	-	-	-	-	1	3	96	557
P	General verbal abuse towards other pupils (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	2	1	2	7	8	20	61	555
Q	Racist abuse towards you	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	555
R	Sexist abuse or harassment towards you	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	555
S	General verbal abuse towards you (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	-	-	-	-	-	3	96	557
T	Pupils under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	553
U	Physical aggression towards other pupils (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	2	1	2	6	8	19	61	556
V	Physical violence towards other pupils (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	2	1	1	3	6	12	76	556
W	Using mobile phones abusively (e.g. videoing "happy slapping")	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	557
X	Physical aggression towards you (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	-	-	-	-	-	1	99	558
Y	Physical violence towards you (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	557

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*:-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

4.13 The picture presented by the primary school headteachers is quite similar to that presented by the teachers. However the question asked headteachers *both* about their direct personal experience of behaviour *and* whether any of the behaviours had been referred to them in the last week. This is likely to account for the higher percentages of reported physical aggression and violence shown in Table 4.3.

4.14 Serious violence towards staff or personally experienced by headteachers is infrequent. Pupil-to-pupil indiscipline is perceived more frequently. Sexist (R) and racist abuse (Q) *to you or your staff* is almost never observed. Extremely small numbers report physical violence (Y) and physical aggression (X) towards them or their staff. Again, for the sake of clarity, the numbers of headteachers encountering these behaviours are presented here for each of these items.

4.15 For reports of physical violence towards staff (Y) out of 242 headteachers:

- None reported physical violence towards them or their staff several times daily;
- 16 (7%) reported physical violence towards them or their staff between one and four times last week;
- 226 (93%) reported that they had not observed physical violence towards them or their staff at all last week.

4.16 In terms of physical aggression towards staff (X) out of 243 headteachers:

- None experienced physical aggression towards them or their staff on a daily basis;
- 18 (7%) had experienced physical aggression towards them or their staff between one and four times last week;
- 225 (93%) had not experienced physical aggression towards them or their staff at all in the week.

4.17 There is some evidence of pupil-to-pupil physical violence (V). Out of 243 headteachers:

- Six (2%) say that they saw or had referred to them, pupils being physically violent towards other pupils once a day or more frequently;
- A further 74 (30%) saw or had referred to them pupil-to-pupil physical violence between one and four times last week;
- 163 (67%) did not observe this at all in the previous week.

4.18 There is a similar picture in terms of pupil-to-pupil aggression (U). Out of 241 headteachers:

- 13 (5%) say that they saw or had referred to them pupils being physically aggressive to their peers once a day or more frequently;
- A further 112 (47%) saw this or had it referred to them between one and four times last week;
- 116 (48%) did not observe this at all in the previous week.

4.19 When asked to list up to three types of behaviour that had the greatest negative impact on the staff the tendency was for headteachers to list lower level indiscipline such as:

- cheeky or impertinent remarks;
- general verbal abuse among pupils;
- showing lack of concern for others;

25 headteachers listed physical aggression towards other pupils although none put that down first in their list.

4.20 Although serious incidents occur from time to time, more frequently among pupils than between staff and pupils, it seems to be still the comparatively low level indiscipline around the school that headteachers see to have had the most negative impact on staff.

**TABLE 4.3 PRIMARY HEAD TEACHERS' VIEWS OF SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE AROUND THE SCHOOL**

**Q23. We have listed below some examples of different types of pupil behaviour which teachers have told us they have encountered during the course of their duties AROUND THE SCHOOL. Taking your experience during the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently each type of behaviour has either been referred on to you, or been encountered directly by you. (Please circle one number in each row)**

		Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	
	<b>Disengagement</b>	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	<b>N</b>
J	Pupils deliberately excluding others	*-	-	**1	5	8	26	60	242
K	Pupils withdrawing from interaction with peers	-	-	3	4	7	28	58	243
L	Pupils truanting	-	-	1	1	-	2	96	240
	<b>Serious indiscipline/violence</b>								
M	Physical destructiveness (e.g. breaking objects, damaging furniture and fabric)	-	-	-	1	2	9	87	242
N	Racist abuse towards other pupils	-	-	-	-	-	5	96	242
O	Sexist abuse or harassment of other pupils	-	-	-	-	-	4	96	244
P	General verbal abuse towards other pupils (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	1	3	1	9	11	23	52	244
Q	Racist abuse towards you or your staff	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	243
R	Sexist abuse or harassment towards you or your staff	-	-	-	-	-	-	99	244
S	General verbal abuse towards you or your staff (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	-	1	1	3	5	14	77	244
T	Pupils under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	242
U	Physical aggression towards other pupils (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	1	-	3	10	12	25	48	241
V	Physical violence towards other pupils (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	1	1	-	5	9	16	67	243
W	Using mobile phones abusively (e.g. videoing "happy slapping")	-	-	-	-	-	1	99	243
X	Physical aggression towards you or your staff (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	-	-	-	1	1	5	93	243
Y	Physical violence towards you or your staff (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	-	-	-	1	1	4	93	242

\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero, \*\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100,

## Serious indiscipline/violence in classrooms

4.21 Table 4.4 below gives an indication of generally peaceful classrooms. Teachers' perceptions of serious indiscipline in the classroom are very similar to those around the school. Pupils' classroom behaviour does not typically involve physical aggression or violence. For the sake of clarity, and because the percentages in tables have been rounded to the nearest whole number, we wish again to report the number of teachers responding to the two most serious types of violent (Z) or aggressive behaviour (Y) towards them.

**TABLE 4.4 PRIMARY TEACHERS' VIEWS OF SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM**

Q13. We have listed below some examples of different types of pupil behaviour which teachers have told us they have to manage during the course of their CLASSROOM TEACHING Please read the types of pupil behaviour and definitions carefully. Taking ALL the lessons you have taught during the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently you had to deal with each type of pupil behaviour. (Please circle one number in each row)

		Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	
<b>Serious indiscipline/violence</b>		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	<b>N</b>
N	Physical destructiveness (e.g. breaking objects, damaging furniture and fabric)	*1	**-	-	1	2	6	89	556
O	Racist abuse towards other pupils	-	-	-	-	-	3	96	552
P	Sexist abuse or harassment of other pupils	-	-	-	-	-	4	94	555
Q	General verbal abuse towards other pupils (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	3	3	1	6	6	18	63	552
R	Racist abuse towards you	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	552
S	Sexist abuse or harassment towards you	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	552
T	General verbal abuse towards you (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	1	-	-	1	1	3	93	556
U	Pupils under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	551
V	Physical aggression towards other pupils (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	3	2	2	6	7	19	61	554
W	Physical violence towards other pupils (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	2	1	1	3	4	11	78	554
X	Using mobile phones abusively (e.g. videoing "happy slapping")	-	-	-	-	-	1	100	554
Y	Physical aggression towards you (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	-	-	-	-	1	2	97	554
Z	Physical violence towards you (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	-	-	-	-	1	1	98	554

\*percentages rounded to the nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*'-.' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

4.22 In the case of physical violence (Z) out of 554 teachers:

- Three (<1%) teachers reported experiencing physical violence once a day or more often;
- A further nine teachers (2%) reported experiencing physical violence between one and four times last week;
- 542 teachers (98%) had not experienced physical violence at all in the last week.



4.23 In the case of physical aggression towards them (Y) out of 554 teachers:

- Three (<1%) reported experiencing physical aggression once a day or more often;
- A further twelve (2%) reported experiencing physical aggression between one and four times last week;
- 539 (97%) had not experienced physical aggression.

4.24 When serious indiscipline does occur in classrooms it is more likely to involve pupil-to-pupil relations. There is some evidence of terms of pupil-to-pupil physical violence (W). Out of 554 teachers:

- 20 (4%) of teachers say that they saw pupils being physically violent towards other pupils once a day or more frequently;
- A further 103 (18%) saw pupil physical violence between one and four times last week;
- 431 (78%) did not observe this at all in the previous week.

4.25 There is a similar picture in terms of pupil-to-pupil aggression (V). Out of 554 teachers:

- 40 (7%) say that they saw pupils being physically aggressive to their peers once a day or more frequently;
- A further 179 (32%) saw this between one and four times last week;
- 335 (61%) did not observe this at all in the previous week.

4.26 Headteachers were asked how frequently the behaviours listed had been reported to them in the last week. Table 4.5 indicates their view that serious indiscipline in the classroom towards teachers is infrequent, but that it is more frequent in pupil-to-pupil relations. Again it is worth remembering that the data tell us nothing about the numbers of pupils involved in the behaviours listed and that the overwhelming majority of teachers and headteachers see their pupils as well behaved.

4.27 Once again it can be seen from the table below that the overwhelming majority of headteachers report no instances of serious physical violence (Z) towards staff being communicated to them in the last week. Out of 244 headteachers:

- One reported this being referred once a day in the last week;
- A further 16 headteachers (7%) reported this being referred between one and four times a week;
- 227 headteachers (93%) reported that they had had no referrals for this behaviour in the last week.

4.28 Referrals for physical aggression towards staff (Y) presented a similar picture. Out of 242 headteachers:

- One (<1%) reported this being referred once a day in the last week;
- A further 21 headteachers (9%) reported this being referred between one and four times last week ;
- 220 headteachers (91%) reported that they had had no referrals for this behaviour in the last week.

**TABLE 4.5 PRIMARY HEADTEACHERS' VIEWS OF SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM**

**Q20.** We have listed below some examples of serious indiscipline / violence which teachers sometimes have to deal with during the course of their CLASSROOM TEACHING. Please indicate how frequently each behaviour has been referred on to you from a CLASSROOM setting, over the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK. Please note that you will be asked about similar behaviour around the school (i.e. outwith the classroom) in question 23 and your experience of serious indiscipline / violence towards you over the last twelve months in question 25.

		Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	N
N	Physical destructiveness (e.g. breaking objects, damaging furniture and fabric)	*-	-	-	**1	4	10	85	243
O	Racist abuse towards other pupils	-	-	-	-	-	7	92	244
P	Sexist abuse or harassment of other pupils	-	-	-	1	1	5	94	244
Q	General verbal abuse towards other pupils (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	-	1	-	13	15	27	45	239
R	Racist abuse towards staff	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	243
S	Sexist abuse or harassment towards staff	-	-	-	-	-	2	98	244
T	General verbal abuse towards you (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	-	1	-	3	6	15	74	240
U	Pupils under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	244
V	Physical aggression towards other pupils (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	2	-	1	11	18	24	43	242
W	Physical violence towards other pupils (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	-	-	1	5	10	15	69	242
X	Using mobile phones abusively (e.g. videoing "happy slapping")	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	244
Y	Physical aggression towards staff (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	-	-	-	1	2	6	91	242
Z	Physical violence towards staff (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	-	-	-	-	2	5	93	244

\*- indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero, \*\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100,

4.29 Turning to the perceptions of support staff, a very small number reported physical violence (Z) or aggression (Y) towards themselves in the last week. Out of 380 support staff:

- Five, (1%) reported experiencing physical violence once a day or more frequently;
- 14 others (4%) experienced physical violence between one and four times last week;
- The very large majority, 361, (95%) had not experienced any physical violence in the last week.

4.30 There is a similar picture in terms of physical aggression (Y) towards them. Out of 380 support staff:

- Seven (2%) experienced this at least once a day;
- A further 18 (5%) experienced this between one and four times last week;
- 355 staff (93%) had not experienced any aggression in the last week.

4.31 As with their colleagues in schools, support staff indicate that pupil-to-

pupil relations are the most frequently encountered examples of serious indiscipline in the classroom.

4.32 In terms of pupil-to pupil physical violence (W) out of 381 support staff:

- 46 (12%) had encountered this behaviour once a day or more often;
- A further 93 (24%) had encountered this behaviour between one and four times last week;
- 242 (64%) had not encountered this behaviour at all in the last week.

4.33 For pupil-to pupil physical aggression (V) out of 381 support staff:

- 69 (18%) met this once a day or more often;
- A further 146 (39%) met this between one and four times last week;
- 166 (44%) did not encounter this behaviour at all in the last week.

**TABLE 4.6 PRIMARY SUPPORT STAFF'S VIEWS OF SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM**

**Q9. Taking ALL the lessons you have assisted in during the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently you had to deal with each type of pupil behaviour. (Please circle one number in each row)**

		Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	N
N	Physical destructiveness (e.g. breaking objects, damaging furniture and fabric)	*1	1	2	2	3	8	83	380
O	Racist abuse towards other pupils	**	-	-	1	1	5	93	378
P	Sexist abuse or harassment of other pupils	-	-	-	1	2	3	92	379
Q	General verbal abuse towards other pupils (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	7	2	3	8	8	18	53	379
R	Racist abuse towards you	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	378
S	Sexist abuse or harassment towards you	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	379
T	General verbal abuse towards you (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	3	1	3	2	2	7	82	382
U	Pupils under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	372
V	Physical aggression towards other pupils (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	9	3	6	8	10	21	44	381
W	Physical violence towards other pupils (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	6	2	4	5	5	14	64	381
X	Using mobile phones abusively (e.g. videoing "happy slapping")	-	-	-	-	-	1	99	380
Y	Physical aggression towards you (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	1	1	1	1	1	3	93	380
Z	Physical violence towards you (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	1	-	1	-	1	3	95	380

\*percentages rounded to the nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*'-1' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero.

4.34 On school visits many teaching and support staff mentioned either pupils' difficult family backgrounds, or their additional support needs, in relation to incidents of more serious misbehaviour. One teacher said that *It is the children who behave or not. It is nothing to do with the school.* However in most cases staff saw both background and school practice as influential on behaviour. When primary teaching staff were asked about the proportion of

pupils with identified social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in a difficult class they taught, 78% said none or a few, but 14% said up to a quarter and 7% said over a quarter.

### Serious indiscipline/violence in the last twelve months

4.35 The data reported so far have focused on perceptions of serious indiscipline and pupil physical violence in the last full teaching week. We also wanted to know about staff experiences over the last twelve months in respect of particular behaviours. Table 4.7 gives details of staff who had experienced these behaviours at least once in the last twelve months.

**TABLE 4.7 PERCENTAGE OF PRIMARY STAFF EXPERIENCING SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE/VIOLENCE AT LEAST ONCE IN THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS**

		Primary headteachers	Primary teachers	Primary support staff
		N=243	N=559	N=389
		%	%	%
R	Racist abuse towards you	*-	-	-
S	Sexist abuse or harassment towards you	-	-	-
T	General verbal abuse towards you (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	23	14	16
Y	Physical aggression towards you (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	14	8	14
Z	Physical violence towards you (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	10	7	9

\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

4.36 Very small numbers had experienced racist or sexist abuse at least once during the last 12 months, one out of 243 headteachers had experienced racist abuse and three had experienced sexist abuse. Similar numbers applied to teachers and support staff. It is noteworthy that general verbal abuse (T) was the behaviour most frequently experienced by all groups at least once in the last twelve months.

4.37 Teachers and headteachers who had experienced at least one serious incident were asked to think about the most recent incident and to indicate all those who were notified about it. Verbal abuse towards them was most commonly reported as the most recent serious incident by primary teachers. Of the 92 primary teachers who responded to the question asking them to think about the most recent serious incident, 48 identified verbal abuse towards them.

4.38 Table 4.8 gives details of who was notified about the most recent serious incident. The overwhelming majority of incidents of verbal abuse were referred to senior colleagues (28 out of 48 incidents) and/or to the headteacher (35 out of 48 incidents). Six were referred to the local authority and none to the police. It is noteworthy that 2 out of the 26 incidents of physical violence were referred to the police and that this was the only kind of incident referred to them.

**TABLE 4.8 WHO WAS NOTIFIED ABOUT THE MOST RECENT SERIOUS INCIDENT? Please circle all which apply (PRIMARY TEACHERS' RESPONSES)**

Incident type	Senior Colleague	Head Teacher	Local Authority	Police	Health & Safety Exec	Other	*N
Racist abuse towards you	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sexist abuse or harassment towards you	1	1	1	-	-	-	1
Verbal abuse towards you (i.e. threatening remarks)	28	35	6	-	-	5	48
Physical aggression towards you (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	10	13	8	-	2	3	17
Physical violence towards you (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	10	19	12	2	-	3	26

\*N indicates the total number of most recent incidents, where information on notification was provided. Teachers could select all groups notified. Where they selected more than one option, figures will not sum to the total number of incidents.

4.39 Primary teachers were also asked how the most recent serious incident was followed up. They were given a list of options and asked to choose all that applied. Table 4.9 gives details. The overwhelming majority of most recent incidents of verbal abuse involved teachers being given feedback on how pupils had been dealt with and/or a restorative meeting and/or an informal meeting. It is noteworthy that in 8 out of 48 cases, verbal abuse was not followed up at all. We can also see that this occurred in 3 out of 26 cases for reports of physical violence. We have no information about why incidents were not followed up.

**TABLE 4.9 HOW WAS THE MOST RECENT SERIOUS INCIDENT FOLLOWED UP? PRIMARY TEACHERS' RESPONSES**

Incident type	Feedback on how incident dealt with	Restorative meeting / discussion	Informal meeting / contact with colleagues	Formal meeting within the school	Protected time to recover / speak immediately / debrief	Meeting offered with local authority personnel	Counselling support / confidential helpline	Not at all	*N
Racist abuse towards you	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sexist abuse or harassment towards you	1	1	1	1	-	1	-	-	1
Verbal abuse towards you (i.e. threatening remarks)	30	22	21	8	1	2	-	8	48
Physical aggression towards you (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	12	7	7	4	1	-	-	-	17
Physical violence towards you (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	18	10	11	5	3	2	1	3	26

\*N indicates the total number of most recent incidents, where information on follow-up was provided. Teachers could select more than one type of follow-up. Where they selected more than one option, figures will not sum to the total number of most recent incidents.

4.40 For primary headteachers, verbal abuse toward them was also most commonly reported as the most recent serious incident, reported by 34 of the 65 who had a most recent incident to report. Half of these incidents were reported to the local authority and four to the police. Of the 15 most recent

incidents of physical violence towards primary headteachers, 14 were reported to the local authority and two to the police.

4.41 Almost all headteachers indicated that incidents were followed up and indicated how pupils had been dealt with and/or that there had been a restorative meeting and/or a formal meeting. Two out of 15 headteachers indicated that they had received counselling support or used a confidential helpline as a follow up to physical aggression towards them. In two out of 15 cases headteachers reported that physical aggression had not been followed up. In one out of 15 cases physical violence had not been followed up.

### **Comparison with 2006**

4.42 Comparisons were made with 2006 on key questions showing where there were significant positive or negative changes in the frequency with which behaviours were reported. A more detailed and comprehensive overview can be found in Chapter 12. For the head teachers, we must remember that the five questions ending “towards you / your staff” were amended in 2009 and cannot be compared directly to the 2006 versions. Also direct comparison was not possible for the new questions on pupils under the influence of illegal drugs and using mobile phones abusively.

4.43 The key features of our comparative analysis for serious indiscipline **around the school** are:

- Primary teachers were more positive in 2009 in perceptions of ten of the fourteen behaviours for which comparison was possible, including physical aggression towards staff. There were no changes in a negative direction;
- Primary headteachers’ perceptions moved in a positive direction in 2009 on five out of 14 behaviours - pupils excluding others, withdrawing from interaction with or verbally abusing their peers and physical aggression and violence between pupils. There were two changes in a negative direction, general verbal abuse to you or your staff and physical aggression towards you and your staff. There was no significant change in the remaining seven behaviours for which comparison was possible.

4.44 In the **classroom**:

- Primary teachers were more positive in 2009 for five behaviours out of the 12 for which comparison was possible. These positive changes included, general verbal abuse to both staff and pupils, and physical aggression and violence towards pupils. There were no changes in a negative direction;
- Headteachers were more negative in 2009 than in 2006, on three of the 11 behaviours on which comparisons were possible. These were, general verbal abuse to you or your staff and on physical violence and physical aggression towards you or your staff. All three of the significantly negative changes occurred for questions where the focus had been widened, by adding *your staff*, compromising comparison between 2006 and 2009. There was one positive change in perception

in relation to physical violence between pupils. There was no change in seven behaviours.

- Support staff were more positive in 2009 in three of the 12 behaviours on which comparisons were possible. These were truancy, general verbal abuse towards other pupils and sexist abuse. In all other types of serious indiscipline in the classroom there was no statistically significant change.

## **5 PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS' PERSPECTIVES**

### **Introduction**

5.1 This chapter discusses the primary pupil findings from the questionnaire data, in addition to qualitative data collected from children on research visits to 7 primary schools. It is based on 250 children completing pupil questionnaires and 76 pupils taking part in focus group discussions. In terms of gender balance of this sample (336 children), slightly more boys filled in the questionnaire as compared to girls and an even spread of girls and boys participated in focus groups. The research team administered the survey in class time and helped pupils who had difficulty understanding the questions to complete them. The survey findings are reports of a sample of pupils' views and should not be taken as representative either of the schools in the sample or of pupils in Scotland. The data provide a snapshot of views and are informative in their own right.

5.2 The Chapter begins by reporting views on positive behaviour around the school and in classrooms, and on activities to promote positive behaviour. It then reports perceptions of low level indiscipline around the school and in classrooms before moving to perceptions of serious indiscipline. The chapter continues by focussing on pupils' general feelings about primary school and their views on fairness. It concludes with pupils' accounts of opportunities for participation in school decision-making.

### **Positive behaviour around the school**

5.3 In the survey, pupils were asked to comment on how often in general they felt they were well behaved at school. 81% said they were 'usually' or 'always' well behaved while only 3% said they were 'not very often' well behaved. We also asked pupils to say how many pupils they thought were generally well behaved around the school and school grounds. About 74% stated that all or 'most' pupils were well behaved. This was notably higher than secondary pupils.

### **Positive behaviour in the classroom**

5.4 We asked pupils to indicate in how many of their lessons were pupils well behaved. 65% of children reported that in the last week pupils were well behaved in all or most of their lessons while 4% said that children were well behaved in no lessons. Pupils were also asked to comment on particular examples of positive behaviour, as can be seen in table 5.1 below. The three main behaviours that most pupils report as taking place in all or most lessons are:

- Pupils who are interested and participate in classroom activities (I) - 81%;
- Pupils listening to teacher with respect (E) – 79%;
- Pupils supporting each other (K) – 75%;



5.5 Pupils are overwhelmingly positive in their identification of particular classroom behaviours. The most negative response is from 16% who say that pupils settle down quickly (C) in few or no lessons.

TABLE 5.1 PRIMARY PUPILS' VIEWS OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR IN CLASSROOMS

Q5. Last week, did you see pupils do any of the following in your lessons? Say how often you saw these things by ticking one box in each row.

		All lessons	Most lessons	Some lessons	Few lessons	No lessons	Don't know	N
		%	%	%	%	%	%	
A	Pupils arriving with the correct equipment	*26	46	17	2	1	8	249
B	Pupils following instructions	19	50	28	3	**-	-	248
C	Pupils settling down quickly	20	36	26	14	2	2	248
D	Pupils listening to each other with respect	31	40	19	6	1	2	243
E	Pupils listening to the teacher with respect	35	44	17	3	1	1	246
F	Pupils listening to adults in the class with respect	43	36	16	4	-	2	244
G	Pupils getting on with their work	32	44	19	4	-	1	246
H	Pupils politely seeking teacher help (e.g. putting hand up)	39	38	15	6	-	2	247
I	Pupils who are interested and take part in classroom activities	38	43	14	2	-	3	249
J	Lessons that are calm, relaxed and enjoyable	31	29	30	7	1	2	246
K	Pupils supporting each other	40	35	15	6	2	2	247

\* percentages rounded to the nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

5.6 Focus group data provided further examples of positive behaviour (an example of typical focus group responses is given below). For example, appropriate listening skills were rated highly by younger children, especially in terms of listening to teacher instructions. On occasions this was articulated as 'not talking', an issue which featured consistently in children's accounts of positive and negative behaviour (e.g. either knowing the circumstances where it is unacceptable to talk or talking at inappropriate moments). Behaving in a socially inclusive way was also identified as very important. This was described succinctly by one pupil: *Letting people join in.* (PS4)

Table 5.2 EXAMPLES OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR: FEEDBACK FROM PRIMARY PUPIL FOCUS GROUPS

P7	P5
<p><b>Good behaviour is...</b>  listening not talking  sitting up straight  getting involved  working together when meant to  helping people find something they have lost  working quietly not talking  not talking out loud</p>	<p><b>Good behaviour is...</b>  letting people join in  being gentle and speaking  no fighting  letting people have the playtime equally  being kind to other people  playing kindly  kind  smiles  happy  friendly talking  gentle  helpful</p>

5.7 Moreover, pro-social skills - dimensions of emotional literacy and responsible citizenship - such as taking into account other people's feelings,

behaving in a considerate manner and being polite featured consistently in children’s accounts of good behaviour: *Being gentle, being honest, saying please and thank you, being kind.* (PS6)

5.8 The survey also asked about school activities to promote positive behaviour, as can be seen from the table below.

**Table 5.3 PRIMARY PUPILS’ VIEWS OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR**

**Q10.** Below is a list of things that some schools use to help pupils to behave well and to stop bad behaviour. Please tick **ONE** box in each row to show whether your school uses any of these. Tick “Yes” if it is used in your school some or all of the time and “No” if it is never used. If you don’t know just tick the “Don’t Know” box.

		Yes	No	Don’t know	
		%	%	%	N
A	Talking about behaviour as part of your school’s rules or values, e.g. at assemblies	*83	5	12	247
B	Lessons about how you feel, get on with others and behave	68	15	18	247
C	Rules, expectations and support against bullying	86	6	8	249
D	Buddies/playground pals	83	13	4	248
E	Peer mediation	54	24	23	250
F	Staff on duty at playtime/breaktime	96	2	2	246
G	Circle time	76	17	6	249
H	Talking things through, sorting problems and finding solutions	82	7	11	248
I	Golden time/rewards	96	2	2	247
J	Punishment exercises	56	34	11	247
K	Detention	27	64	9	246
L	Being sent to see a senior teacher or headteacher	92	5	4	248
M	Support from other staff or guidance teachers	77	9	14	247
N	Time out	73	16	11	247
O	Another class or base where pupils can go to get extra help or support	59	21	21	248
P	Other staff who help out in class; teacher assistants	89	5	6	248
Q	Meetings with your parents/carers and other staff who can help	80	6	14	248
R	Interesting range of subjects and classes, and choices	71	12	18	246
S	Pupils involved in developing ideas and activities in the school (e.g. pupil council)	95	1	4	249
T	Exclusion/suspension	41	24	35	247

\* percentages rounded to the nearest whole number and may not sum to 100

5.9 The most frequently identified and activities to promote positive behaviour by pupils (and most highly rated by pupils in focus groups) related to reward systems, pupil participation and adult supervision of children. Interestingly, this provides a marked contrast with secondary pupil data which was found to emphasise punishment and sanctions. The three most common activities identified by primary aged children were:

- Golden time and rewards (I) – 96%;
- Pupils involved in developing ideas and activities in the school (S) – 95%;
- Staff on duty at playtime (F) – 96%.

5.10 The interventions rated by pupils as effective in they survey showed that a combination of strategies was used in schools. These included most notably golden time and rewards (I), time out (N), and to a lesser extent punishment exercises (J) and being sent to the head teacher (L).

## Low-level indiscipline around the school

5.11 Pupils were asked in the survey to indicate how often in general they were involved in trouble at school and the majority (67%) said that they 'never' or 'not very often' got into trouble at school. A very small minority of children (0.4%) reported that they always got into trouble at school.

5.12 In focus groups children identified a range of fairly low-level negative behaviours as taking place around the school. Examples included, *name calling, running away, bad words and bullies and hurting people's feelings*.<sup>13</sup>

## Low-Level indiscipline in the classroom

5.13 Pupils were provided with a list of negative behaviours and were asked to indicate in how many lessons they witnessed such behaviour. See Table 5.4. Similar to pupils in secondary schools, children calling out in class or chatting (A) was the most frequently observed behaviour in all or most lessons (36%). Truancy (I) and pupils using mobile phones (G) were reported to be very rare in the classroom and the least likely behaviour to be seen in all or most lessons (2% for both).

Table 5.4 PRIMARY PUPILS' VIEWS OF NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR IN LESSONS

Q6. **Last week**, did you see pupils do any of the following in your lessons? Say how often you saw these things by ticking one box in each row.

		All lessons	Most lessons	Some lessons	Few lessons	No lessons	Don't know	
		%	%	%	%	%	%	N
A	Pupils calling out in class or chatting	*8	28	35	20	6	3	249
B	Pupils being late for lessons	1	6	15	20	49	10	246
C	Pupils breaking class rules by behaving badly	1	13	30	28	22	6	240
D	Pupils deliberately avoiding work (e.g. asking to go to the toilet often)	5	11	24	24	26	11	243
E	Pupils being cheeky to staff	2	6	13	28	39	12	248
F	Pupils being generally rowdy or mucking about	2	10	27	31	24	7	245
G	Pupils using mobile phones/texting in class	1	1	2	6	81	8	246
H	Pupils not letting other pupils join in with them	**	5	14	28	41	11	247
I	Pupils missing certain lessons (truancy)	1	1	6	11	59	23	248

\* percentages rounded to the nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*:- indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

5.14 In focus group discussions primary pupils cited a range of negative behaviours. Most negative behaviour related to what could be considered fairly low level behaviours such as *talking, shouting out, talking when teacher is, being silly with computers, kicking bags under table*. (PS6) These also included verbal aggression and name calling which was consistently mentioned across focus groups.

<sup>13</sup> The survey did not ask about low level indiscipline around the school

## Serious indiscipline around the school and in the classroom

5.15 Pupils were provided with a list of serious negative behaviour and were asked how frequently they had seen pupils behaving in these ways. The responses pooled lessons and break times but we can see in Table 5.5 a general pattern of response about serious indiscipline.

5.16 The serious negative behaviour most frequently encountered in all or most lessons/breaks was pupils punching, kicking, physically hurting other pupils (G) with 1 in 10 pupils seeing this in all or most lessons/breaks. The least frequently encountered behaviour was pupils punching, kicking, physically hurting teachers (K) seen by no pupils in all or most lessons/breaks and not seen at all by 82%.

5.17 Overall, instances of serious indiscipline around the school and in class were relatively low. However it is noteworthy that pupil-to-pupil behaviours, D, E and G, were more common.

TABLE 5.5 PRIMARY PUPILS' VIEWS OF NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR AROUND THE SCHOOL

Q9. Last week, did you see pupils do any of these things AROUND THE WHOLE SCHOOL AND IN SCHOOL GROUNDS? Say how often you saw these things by ticking one box in each row. If you are not sure what the question means, or if you do not know the answer, please tick "Don't Know".

		All lessons/breaks	Most lessons/breaks	Some lessons/breaks	Few lessons/breaks	None	Don't know	
		%	%	%	%	%	%	N
A	Pupils breaking objects and damaging furniture	*1	2	6	11	65	15	248
B	Pupils saying racist things to other pupils	2	3	4	17	60	16	247
C	Pupils saying sexist things to other pupils based on whether they are a boy or a girl	1	5	10	19	48	17	247
D	Pupils saying rude or aggressive things to other pupils	2	8	18	33	28	11	246
E	Pupils pushing or being aggressive to other pupils	1	8	21	34	27	10	244
F	Pupils using alcohol or drugs	**-	-	2	-	90	8	247
G	Pupils punching, kicking, physically hurting other pupils	2	8	15	33	34	9	248
H	Pupils saying rude or aggressive things to teachers	-	2	8	18	58	15	248
I	Using mobile phones abusively (e.g. videoing "happy slapping")	1	2	1	5	76	16	245
J	Pupils pushing or being threatening to teachers	-	1	6	4	77	13	248
K	Pupils punching, kicking, physically hurting teachers	-	-	2	7	82	9	247

\* percentages rounded to the nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*'- indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

5.18 Interpersonal aggression was occasionally mentioned in focus groups. Fighting was the main example of this and children appeared to have considerable awareness of the emotional impact of bullying. The following provide some key examples of what children regarded as negative behaviour: *Bad words and bullies, Hurting people's feelings, Fighting and physical contact.* (PS3)

## **Pupil wellbeing**

5.19 Very few primary aged children raised fears about safety in focus group discussions and some children spontaneously raised the fact that they felt safe in school. When this topic was touched on, younger primary aged children were more likely to mention that they did not like the *jaggies* (certain plants) or *the mud and the bark* in outside play areas.

5.20 Unsurprisingly, salient relationships included those with peers, as well good relations with teachers and support staff. Overall, schools were regarded as friendly and welcoming places by pupils, and they were positive about the appeal of the curriculum and the enjoyment of lessons. School facilities, including the quality of playground facilities were regarded positively too. Some younger children identified particular areas of the playground where they especially liked to spend time. The following child illustrates how school ethos and extra curricula activities were important characteristics of their school: *I think the best thing in our school is the friendly pupils and staff, the school also organizes activities outside of school such as football tournaments and quizzes.* (PS7)

5.21 Many children regarded a positive environment as vital: *A happy place to be* (PS4) and *My school is happy, kind and pretty big.* (PS3). In focus groups positive and supportive bonds with peers were reported to be particularly important for children as was having constructive relationships with their teachers. Having *very nice teachers* (PS1) who were approachable appeared to be very important to children. As one pupil succinctly put it: *You get help if you need it.* (PS6)

5.22 Significantly, pupil concerns about bullying did not appear to feature to the same extent as in the secondary school pupils, although, on occasions specific bullies were named by individual children as being intimidating and causing them difficulties in school. The following provides a highly unusual response: *My school is bad because there are bullies and lying bullies.* (PS3) Dissatisfaction with school premises such as playgrounds, classrooms and dining halls being too small and overcrowded was raised in pupil focus groups and pushing in when lining up was raised by a number of children. A particular issue found in both primary and secondary schools was the cleanliness of toilets and the fact that they were 'smelly' and unpleasant places to be in school: *The toilets are an unpleasant place to be because they smell and are untidy.* (PS7)

## **Evaluations of fair and unfair teacher interventions**

5.23 As previously mentioned, pupils within focus groups indicated that they valued teachers who dealt with disputes and misbehaviour fairly and equitably. Children also appreciated teachers who had honed listening skills and took into account all sides of the story. Both rewarding good behaviour and praise were considered particularly important by children. The following statements provide examples of what primary-aged children perceived to be

even-handed behaviour in teachers: *When they reward good people, Treat all the same, Separating students who aren't doing their work.* (PS1)

5.24 Alternatively, teachers who shouted and made hasty assessments of situations were regarded as unfair teacher interventions. Interestingly, certain types of teacher practices and management of the classroom were thought to contribute to disruptive behaviour in class. In the following quote a child suggests that children should work in small teams rather than: *Work with one person.....or people behave terribly.* (PS1)

### **Pupil accounts of opportunities for decision-making in school**

5.25 In focus groups children were asked about opportunities for decision making in school. The link between pupil participation in school life and positive school ethos has been highlighted in a number of Scottish policy initiatives. A main finding from focus groups was that pupil councils were identified as the main opportunity for pupil participation in decision making in primary schools. However, while pupil councils seemed to be appreciated by pupils, some cynicism was apparent in terms of the impact of the councils on the decision making process in schools. Pupils offered examples of being consulted about an issue (e.g. colour of school uniform) but not being adequately informed about the outcome of the decision and why the final decision had been made. There were other instances of pupils stating that their school had a pupil council but it did not meet on a regular basis.

5.26 Similarly, peer mediation (over 50% of pupils indicated that peer mediation was used in their school) was raised as a service on offer but did not appear to be supported consistently by staff. Other formal, school-wide opportunities for pupil participation mentioned in focus groups included specialist committees including eco and transport committees. In one school a Junior Road Safety Board was also mentioned. Circle time was another popular mechanism by many children. Special suggestion boxes were also regularly mentioned and were variously labelled as: *complaint, worry, ideas, problem and golden letter boxes.*

5.27 In terms of suggestions for improving pupil participation children had particularly thoughtful suggestions regarding enhancing pupil participation in their school. For example, one primary 5 pupil suggested having a pupil ambassador who liaises with teachers and pupils, acting as an important mediator between pupil and teachers. Another pupil suggested that how teachers listened and the social context of being listened to was of crucial importance: *Take more time to actually listen. Ask us in comfortable situations not in front of other people.* (PS2)

5.28 Generally however, the indication from the focus group data was that while a number of mechanisms were in place they did not operate as efficiently and smoothly as they could due to ineffective communication between pupils and teachers. Some children felt there was a lack of consistency due to the fact that irregular pupil council meetings took place in their school.

## Summary

5.29 Findings from the pupils demonstrate the salience of fostering a positive and supportive school ethos. Pupil data also shows that a wide range of approaches to promote positive behaviour are currently in operation in primary schools. However, some approaches appear to more embedded and more widely applied than others. For example golden time and rewards were cited by the vast majority of pupils (96% of pupils reported that these were used in their school). By comparison peer mediation was said to be used to a lesser extent (54%).

- Children emphasised the salience of positive and caring relations in school;
- Enjoyable lessons, extra curricular activities were regarded as very important by pupils;
- Pupils reported that the majority of children were for the most part well behaved in class and around the school;
- Extreme forms of aggression and very poor behaviour were reported to be rare events in primary schools with the most common being pupil-to-pupil aggression;
- The significance of listening skills was a key theme in pupils' accounts of good and bad behaviour.

### 5.30 Other findings were

- Teachers who listened carefully and made informed and fair judgements were highly rated by children;
- Teachers who made hasty decisions about disputes were perceived as unfair by pupils;
- While pupils gave a variety of examples of opportunities for participation in primary schools there was a general perception that mechanisms for participation could be more effective and be followed through more rigorously by teachers;
- Some pupils had very imaginative and insightful suggestions for improving consultation in school.

## 6 BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICIES IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

### Introduction

6.1 This chapter reports the findings on policies and approaches to behaviour management from the survey of teachers and headteachers.<sup>14</sup> It provides an overview of these, how frequently they were used and perceptions of the most helpful approaches. It then reports perceptions of the support available in delivering these approaches, including training and staff confidence in using them. The chapter goes on to describe the importance ascribed to working in partnership with parents and other agencies and relates the time spent on these and other behaviour management activities. It concludes with a brief comparison of the 2006 findings in terms of approaches to behaviour management before providing a summary. The survey findings are supplemented with illustrative data from school visits, interviews and focus groups in the seven primary schools visited as part of the study.

### Approaches used, frequency and helpfulness

6.2 Primary headteachers and teachers were given a list of approaches used to encourage positive behaviour and manage negative behaviour. They were asked about how frequently these were used and asked to identify the three most helpful approaches. Table 6.1 provides an overview.

6.3 It shows the wide range of approaches used with every approach being mentioned by some headteachers and teachers. Table 6.1 shows the emphasis being given to positive and supportive strategies. This applies both to whole school approaches designed to create a positive environment for all children and to interventions targeted at particular children with behavioural needs.

6.4 The three approaches cited by most teachers and headteachers in the 'frequently' column were the promotion of a positive whole school ethos and values (A), break time supervision (E), and reward systems for pupils (K). It is interesting that both headteachers and teachers identified the same three most frequently used strategies as their perceptions about other aspects of behaviour sometimes differ.

6.5 The three strategies that were least frequently used<sup>15</sup> were local authority off site provision (S), campus based police officers<sup>16</sup>/community police partnerships (X), and broad curriculum options (Z). Again both primary headteachers and teachers identified the same least frequently used strategies for the most part. Headteachers in addition identified pupil/behaviour support base in school/campus (Q).

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<sup>14</sup> Support staff were not asked these questions.

<sup>15</sup> 'Least frequently' is based upon the 'never' used category.

<sup>16</sup> There are around 50 campus based police officers in Scotland. They are based in secondary schools but may work with some primary schools in their cluster area. They are deployed for a range of purposes, not necessarily including behaviour management.



**TABLE 6.1 PRIMARY TEACHERS'/HEADTEACHERS' VIEWS ON POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR STRATEGIES**

Below is a list of approaches that some schools and classroom teachers use to encourage positive behaviour and manage negative behaviour. Please indicate whether any of the approaches are currently used within your school.  
(Please circle one number in each row)

		Primary Teachers					Primary Headteachers				
		Frequently	S'times	Rarely	Never	N	Frequently	S'times	Rarely	Never	N
		%	%	%	%	N	%	%	%	%	N
A	Promotion of positive behaviour through whole school ethos and values	*89	10	1	**-	558	98	3	-	-	242
B	Curriculum programmes in social and emotional skills and wellbeing	71	26	2	1	556	80	18	1	1	242
C	Anti bullying policy	77	20	2	1	552	64	30	5	1	241
D	Buddying / peer mentoring	60	30	6	4	550	54	35	7	3	241
E	Break-time supervision	92	6	1	1	556	91	7	-	1	242
F	Circle time	71	25	3	1	557	72	24	2	2	239
G	Restorative practices	32	42	13	14	512	27	43	17	12	226
H	Solution oriented approaches	30	41	13	16	502	29	43	16	12	229
I	The Motivated School	24	27	13	36	456	17	25	14	45	211
J	Learning stances (e.g. SELF)	11	22	18	50	433	6	10	16	69	204
K	Reward systems for pupils	89	9	1	1	551	86	11	2	1	238
L	Punishment exercises	15	28	33	25	537	8	31	33	28	231
M	Detention	18	26	17	39	528	10	32	22	37	232
N	Referral to SMT / HT	39	48	11	2	551	31	52	15	3	239
O	Time out	32	49	13	7	539	23	56	13	8	235
P	Targeted small group work e.g. anger management	15	32	28	25	538	14	48	26	12	234
Q	Pupil / behaviour support base in school / campus	11	15	12	62	522	6	8	7	80	226
R	Nurture groups / nurture principles	15	16	14	55	505	15	17	9	59	226
S	Local authority off site provision (SEBN)	4	10	20	65	491	2	6	14	78	222
T	Home-school link officers / work with families	14	28	23	36	523	10	29	18	43	231
U	Classroom / learning assistants	66	25	6	4	546	60	30	7	3	237
V	Behaviour / pupil support team / co-ordinator	18	22	23	38	510	15	26	16	43	229
W	Staged assessment and intervention model, (e.g. school and multi-agency joint assessment and planning teams)	22	32	23	23	514	26	35	15	24	235
X	Campus based police officers or community police partnerships	4	16	15	66	521	2	12	14	72	231
Y	Transition partnerships and activities	33	36	12	20	505	28	44	15	13	230
Z	Broad curriculum options: vocational opportunities; personal and social development programmes (ASDAN awards, XL, Duke of Edinburgh); HE/FE college placements	7	11	11	71	459	6	14	9	71	218
1	In-service events / input / training on behaviour	19	54	20	7	534	10	67	17	6	226
2	Pupils actively involved in developing ideas and activities in the school (e.g. pupil council)	77	19	2	2	544	75	23	2	-	240
3	Exclusion	3	16	53	28	538	1	17	49	34	233

\* percentages rounded to nearest whole number and so totals may not sum to 100, \*\*:- indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

6.6 Some detailed descriptions of particular strategies were gained from school visits. Promoting positive behaviour was linked in all 7 schools visited with the development of a strong whole school ethos and a shared code of

values. These were often embodied in school rules which stressed the positive, for example 'We are gentle', 'We are kind and helpful', 'We listen.' These rules were usually visible in the classrooms and corridors of the schools. Keeping to the rules was often associated with praise and reward systems. Most teachers, senior staff and heads interviewed felt that the reward systems they had in place were effective. In one school a reward is a place at a special healthy eating table, set with a tablecloth and napkins, and a special menu; another involves trips out of school to educational destinations, such as a zoo.

### **Support in using strategies**

6.7 Support in promoting positive behaviour and in dealing with negative behaviour is available in a number of ways. This includes the provision of classroom and learning assistants, specialist staff, support from colleagues and professional development and training. We report on each of these.

6.8 Table 6.1 shows classroom and learning assistants were clearly a key part of behaviour management approaches as were break-time supervisors. Support was also available from specialist staff and from home-school link workers. School visits revealed how very highly valued these staff were. For example, *Support staff are a hugely positive element* (PS1).

6.9 A variety of specialist staff were used in schools either to support positive behaviour or to help pupils with behavioural needs. The range of staff being used *frequently or sometimes* included:

- Staff in pupil support bases – mentioned by 26% of teachers and 14% of headteachers;
- Behaviour co-ordinator - mentioned by 40% of teachers and 41% of headteachers;
- Home-school link workers – mentioned by 42% of teachers and 39% of headteachers.

6.10 Primary teachers were also asked about the overall level of support offered to them in their school. The overwhelming majority, (83%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, 'I am confident that senior staff will help me if I experience behaviour management difficulties.'

6.11 Primary support staff also reflected teachers' positive views about being supported in managing behaviour with 86% feeling well supported. This was also reflected in focus groups although a minority said that they were not always as respected by staff or pupils as teachers were.

6.12 The survey data on support was exemplified in the schools visited. Headteachers and senior staff were praised for their support both in helping pupils with behavioural needs and in being available to discuss strategies. For example, *The HT is excellent. You just have to mention anyone and she is right in there talking to them* (PS6).

6.13 Informal support from colleagues was also valued. This was particularly mentioned in a small school where challenges encountered by staff and ways of tackling them were discussed informally in the staffroom and the staff group offered suggestions and support (PS3).

### **Training and Confidence**

6.14 The survey asked primary teachers whether they felt they had had effective training in behaviour management approaches used in their schools, how often they had been involved in training and how confident they felt in their ability to promote positive behaviour and to respond to indiscipline in their classroom.

6.15 In terms of training, 77% of primary headteachers said that their school had been involved in training/events relevant to promoting positive behaviour and/or managing indiscipline. According to headteachers, over half (56%) of the training had been provided by the local authority; about a fifth (21%) from independent providers; 10% reported training from the Scottish Government Positive Behaviour Team and about 18% from a range of other providers. 64% of heads indicated that they had received support from their local authority in the last three years to try new initiatives for promoting positive behaviour. For just under half (44%) this took the form of training, for 29% it involved advice and consultancy, for 18% there was additional funding or staff support and for 12% strategic or policy support.<sup>17</sup>

6.16 Almost 2 in 3 (62%) primary teachers strongly agreed or agreed that they had had effective training in behaviour management approaches used in their schools. Around 4 in 10 primary teachers had been involved in whole school planning in relation to discipline more than twice in the last three years. About the same number (37%) had also participated more than twice in the last three years in some kind of staff development activity or training in relation to discipline or positive behaviour.

6.17 This was less so for support staff. About 35% of support staff strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that there was adequate training for classroom assistants to deal with behaviour difficulties; 40% strongly disagreed or disagreed with this statement.

6.18 Teachers were also confident or very confident in their abilities to promote positive behaviour in their classrooms (93%), and in responding to indiscipline in their classrooms (89%).

6.19 Heads surveyed indicated that many members of the school community had been actively involved in developing strategies in relation to discipline and positive behaviour. The main groups indicated by headteachers are shown in table 6.2

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<sup>17</sup> Headteachers could identify more than one kind of support so totals do not sum to 100%.

**TABLE 6.2 MEMBERS OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL COMMUNITY INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING STRATEGIES**

Members of school community involved in developing strategies	Headteachers % (N=242)
Teachers	99
Pupils	93
Lunchtime/playground assistants	82
Learning assistants	77
Parents	75
Educational psychologists	61
Caretakers/janitors	40
Home-school link staff	26
School meal staff	26
Social workers	20
Campus police	9
Youth workers	6

### Time spent on behaviour management

6.20 As table 6.3 shows most headteachers spent between one and three hours in their last full teaching week on specific activities to promote a positive school ethos and behaviour. About 1 in 4 spent the same time dealing with referrals. The majority of teachers spent under an hour or between one and three hours promoting positive behaviour.

**TABLE 6.3 TIME SPENT ON BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT BY PRIMARY HEADTEACHERS AND TEACHERS IN THE LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK**

	Primary teachers					Primary Head teachers				
	No time spent	Under an hour	An hour to three hours	More than three hours		No time spent	Under an hour	An hour to three hours	More than three hours	
	%	%	%	%	N	%	%	%	%	N
Specific activities in your school to promote positive school ethos and behaviour	*5	49	40	7	547	3	28	59	10	239
Dealing with indiscipline referrals	66	26	7	2	533	24	42	25	10	238
Working with other partners or members of the school community	73	19	7	1	550	33	38	26	3	241
Giving or receiving informal support to/from colleagues in relation to indiscipline and positive behaviour	26	60	13	2	551	16	53	28	2	243
Planning or providing behaviour support to individual pupils	29	48	18	5	554	18	43	35	4	242
Talking to parents about behaviour (exclude parents' evenings)	57	38	5	0	551	26	44	28	2	243
Dealing with the same pupils who present challenging behaviour pupils	19	51	23	8	554	19	43	29	9	244

\* percentages rounded to the nearest whole number and may not sum to 100

6.21 The heads and senior staff in schools visited seemed happy in general about the volume of referrals from class teachers. *Teachers deal with the behaviour in a majority of cases... they are supportive staff.*

6.22 The large majority of heads in the survey felt that parents were supportive both generally and in terms of behaviour and discipline issues. 74% of heads surveyed had spent some time talking with parents about their child's behaviour in the last week. In contrast 44% of primary teachers had done so. This was also a feature in the schools visited where many staff emphasised the importance of regular informal contact with pupils' families.

6.23 Partnership working was an important aspect of promoting positive behaviour and in meeting the needs of pupils with behavioural difficulties. 26% of primary headteachers had spent 1-3 hours in the previous week working with other partners or members of the school community; 3% had spent more than 3 hours. However 33% had spent no time and 38% had spent less than an hour engaged in this.

### **Comparisons with 2006**

6.24 It is not possible to compare exactly the approaches used to encourage positive behaviour and to manage negative behaviour in 2006 and 2009. This is because a slightly different list of approaches was used in the two surveys. In addition the frequency of use categories were different.

6.25 The most frequently used strategies in 2006 and 2009 are very similar although different language is sometimes used in the two surveys to describe strategies. Those identified by 90% of primary headteachers as being used in 2006 and by primary headteachers as being used frequently or sometimes in 2009 are:

- Anti-bullying policies;
- Buddying/peer mentoring;
- Break time supervision;
- Reward systems for pupils;
- Involving pupils in developing ideas and activities in the school.

6.26 Some specific whole school approaches were not separately itemised in 2006 but included in one question asking about the use of '*whole school initiatives such as Restorative Practices, Motivated School or Solution-Oriented School.*' They were separately itemised in 2009. It seems likely that the use of some these strategies had increased in 2009. We can infer this by inspecting the percentages in the not used column for 2009. In 2006, 46% of primary teachers and 50% of primary headteachers said none of these strategies was used in their schools. In 2009 by contrast, the percentages not using these approaches had fallen markedly in some cases. For example, *Restorative Practices (G)* were never used by just 14% of teachers and 12% of headteachers. *Solution oriented approaches (H)* were never used by 16% of teachers and 12% of headteachers.

## Summary

6.27 The survey data indicates that in primary schools there is wide agreement among primary teachers and headteachers about the key approaches to promoting positive behaviour and dealing with negative behaviour. Table 6.4 lists the most and least frequently used approaches.

**TABLE 6.4 MOST AND LEAST FREQUENTLY USED BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

<b>Most frequently used strategies</b>	<b>Least frequently used strategies</b>
the promotion of a positive behaviour through whole school ethos and values;	Local authority off site provision;
break time supervision;	campus based police officers/community police partnerships;
reward systems for pupils;	broad curriculum options.
	Pupil/behaviour support base in school

6.28 These frequently used strategies are also seen as the most helpful by both headteachers and teachers.

6.29 Other key findings are:

- Support in promoting positive behaviour and in dealing with negative behaviour is available in a number of ways. This includes the provision of classroom and learning assistants, specialist support staff, support from colleagues and professional development and training classroom and learning assistants. These were all highly valued. Support staff were the least satisfied group in terms of the adequacy of training;
- There is reported involvement of a wide range of staff in policy development, some involvement of parents and substantial involvement of pupils;
- The vast majority of teachers and support staff are confident in their behaviour management skills and in the support of senior management in terms of dealing with disruptive behaviour;
- Comparisons with 2006 are difficult but more headteachers and teachers in 2009 seem to be using newer approaches to behaviour management that had been promoted by the Scottish government and local authorities. These include restorative practices and solution oriented approaches.

## 7 POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

7.1 Schools actively promote positive behaviour as well as having systems in place to deal with misbehaviour. How were these strategies for promoting positive behaviour reflected in perceptions of positive behaviour in the classroom and around the school? We report data from the surveys of secondary teachers, secondary headteachers and support staff supplemented by interviews and focus groups of staff undertaken in the visits to eight secondary schools. We begin by considering data about positive behaviour around the school before moving to data concerning classrooms. In general we highlight the most and least frequently encountered behaviours in commenting on the tables. We conclude the chapter by highlighting key comparisons with the 2006 data.

### A positive picture

7.2 Before beginning the detailed reporting of the survey data in this and subsequent chapters it is important to provide an overview of perceptions of the behaviour of pupils from survey respondents. The picture is overwhelmingly positive.

7.3 We asked teachers, *'Thinking about the all the behaviour you encounter around the school, how many pupils do you find generally well behaved?'* Some 93% indicated that all or most of the pupils they encountered around the school were generally well behaved. The same questions produced a very positive response from headteachers and support staff. Some 99% of headteachers and 79% of support staff replied that all or most pupils were generally well behaved around the school.

7.4 We also asked, *'In how many lessons that you teach on a regular basis do you find pupils generally well behaved?'* 86% of teachers said that pupils were generally well behaved in all or most of their lessons. Some 83% of headteachers said that all or most of the school roll were generally well behaved during lessons. Support staff were less positive about behaviour in classrooms with 57% finding pupils generally well behaved in all or most lessons. We might speculate that support staff do not see the same broad generality of classroom behaviour as teachers and headteachers due to their work with specific classes where there are pupils with behavioural needs.

### Positive behaviour around the school

7.5 The survey questions asked teachers and headteachers about how often they encountered particular types of pupil behaviour around the school during the last full teaching week.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Support staff were not asked these questions.

**TABLE 7.1 SECONDARY TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR AROUND THE SCHOOL**

**Q16. We have listed below some examples of different types of positive pupil behaviour which teachers have told us they encounter during the course of their duties AROUND THE SCHOOL. Taking your experience over the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently you encountered each type of behaviour.**  
(Please circle one number in each row)

		Always	On most occasions	Sometimes	Seldom	Never	
		%	%	%	%	%	<b>N</b>
A	Pupils actively helping their peers	*3	45	44	7	1	1448
B	Pupils taking turns	3	49	38	7	3	1418
C	Pupils making positive use of school facilities during breaks (e.g. the library, sports facilities)	11	39	39	8	3	1432
D	Pupils engaged in playing games and sports together	11	36	37	12	5	1413
E	Pupils queuing in an orderly manner	8	50	31	9	2	1447
F	Pupils respecting toilet/break/cloakroom areas	5	49	33	11	2	1424
G	Pupils using litter bins	1	33	46	18	2	1450
H	Pupils greeting staff pleasantly	15	55	25	4	-	1454
I	Pupils challenging others' negative behaviour	0	6	35	41	18	1439
J	Pupils interacting supportively with each other	3	44	45	7	1	1450

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100

7.6 The positive behaviour most frequently encountered in all or most lessons by most teachers, 70%, was that pupils greet them pleasantly (H) on all or most occasions, a view shared by 89% of headteachers. The behaviour encountered on all or most occasions by most headteachers, 94%, was pupils queuing in an orderly manner (E) on all or most occasions.

7.7 The behaviour least encountered by teachers and headteachers was pupils challenging others' negative behaviour (I). Some 59% of teachers encountered this seldom or never as did 40% of headteachers.

**TABLE 7.2 SECONDARY HEADTEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR AROUND THE SCHOOL**

**Q16. We have listed below some examples of different types of positive pupil behaviour which teachers have told us they encounter during the course of their duties AROUND THE SCHOOL. Taking your experience over the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently you encountered each type of behaviour.**  
(Please circle one number in each row)

		Always	On most occasions	Sometimes	Seldom	Never	
		%	%	%	%	%	<b>N</b>
A	Pupils actively helping their peers	*7	59	34	**-	-	244
B	Pupils taking turns	8	66	25	-	-	243
C	Pupils making positive use of school facilities during breaks (e.g. the library, sports facilities)	24	54	22	-	-	245
D	Pupils engaged in playing games and sports together	21	43	34	3	-	244
E	Pupils queuing in an orderly manner	26	68	6	-	-	245
F	Pupils respecting toilet/break/cloakroom areas	15	69	16	-	-	245
G	Pupils using litter bins	4	59	35	2	-	245
H	Pupils greeting staff pleasantly	20	69	11	-	-	244
I	Pupils challenging others' negative behaviour	2	12	47	37	3	244
J	Pupils interacting supportively with each other	6	64	29	-	-	245

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

7.8 The way in which misbehaviour is dealt with is highly context specific. Chapter 11 on behaviour management policy shows that 90% of headteachers and teachers reported having buddy schemes and peer mentoring of various kinds in operation and these were designed to encourage a sense of pupil responsibility. So there were systems in place to encourage pupils actively supporting each other. Perhaps this helps to explain



the view of 70% of headteachers and of 47% of teachers that they frequently see pupils supporting each other. It is probably easier to support others than to challenge negative behaviour.

7.9 Tables 7.1 and 7.2 also suggest that perceptions of positive behaviour in the secondary school are more likely where adults are likely to be present. For example, perceptions of pupils using school facilities such as the library, sporting facilities or computing are positive. The same trend is evident in the item about queuing, as it is normal to have adult supervision in the dining hall.

7.10 The school visits supported this general picture. We were given the opportunity to tour the schools, visiting the library; general classrooms, staffrooms and pupil support bases and often shared a meal with pupils in the dining room. We got the impression of a lively and purposeful environment and observed pupils and staff walking around the school greeting each other in a polite and friendly way. The schools were generally clean and tidy. The general perceptions of staff was that the schools had generally well behaved pupils with some staff saying that they felt lucky to be teaching in such a good school. For example staff in school 5 said: *This is a good school. ...overall behaviour is better than average. ... 99% of pupils are well behaved and there is a good atmosphere. Pupils are respectful towards staff.* (SS5)

### **Positive behaviour in classrooms**

7.11 The survey questions asked teachers, headteachers and support staff about how often they encountered particular types of pupil behaviour in classrooms during the last full teaching week.

7.12 Table 7.3 below reveals that the vast majority of teachers perceived their pupils behaving positively for all or most lessons. It is striking that the “few lessons” and “no lessons” columns contain such small percentages of teachers’ negative experiences, giving an impression of generally positive behaviour in secondary classrooms.

**TABLE 7.3 SECONDARY TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR IN CLASSROOMS**

**Q12. We have listed below some examples of different types of positive pupil behaviour which teachers experience during the course of their CLASSROOM TEACHING. Over the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently you experienced each type of pupil behaviour. (Please circle one number in each row)**

		All lessons	Most lessons	Some lessons	Few lessons	No lessons	
		%	%	%	%	%	N
A	Pupils arriving with the correct equipment	*3	60	23	12	2	1456
B	Pupils following instructions	12	72	14	3	**-	1452
C	Pupils settling down quickly	12	62	21	5	-	1458
D	Pupils contributing to class discussions	28	49	20	3	-	1453
E	Pupils listening to others' views respectfully	11	51	32	6	-	1457
F	Pupils listening to the teacher respectfully	18	63	17	2	-	1454
G	Pupils keenly engaging with their tasks	8	63	25	4	-	1460
H	Pupils politely seeking teacher help (e.g. putting hand up)	18	54	23	5	-	1459
I	Attentive, interested pupils	9	59	29	3	-	1458
J	Pupils arriving promptly for classes	12	67	18	3	-	1457
K	Lessons that are calm, relaxed and enjoyable	14	60	22	4	-	1456
L	Pupils interacting supportively with each other	10	52	33	6	-	1457
M	Pupils enthusiastically participating in classroom activities	10	58	28	4	-	1459

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

7.13 The positive view from teachers is seen even more strikingly in the data from headteachers. All behaviours are encountered on all or most occasions by more than 4 in 5 headteachers. Headteachers, of course, are removed from day to day teaching<sup>19</sup>. Yet, given the referral and monitoring systems discussed in Chapter 11 below, and that most are involved in some class contact, they are likely to be aware of the general pattern of behaviour in classrooms. Moreover, those headteachers who believed it important to be seen in and around classrooms and corridors will have had an impression of classroom behaviour.

<sup>19</sup> Around 60% of headteachers had some class contact time. Most had between two and five hours.

**TABLE 7.4 SECONDARY HEADTEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR IN CLASSROOMS**

**Q17. We have listed below some examples of different types of positive pupil behaviour which teachers experience during the course of their CLASSROOM TEACHING. Over the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate, from your perspective, how often each type of behaviour was exhibited. (Please circle one number in each row)**

		All lessons	Most lessons	Some lessons	Few lessons	No lessons	
		%	%	%	%	%	N
A	Pupils arriving with the correct equipment	*4	87	8	1	**-	239
B	Pupils following instructions	8	90	3	-	-	239
C	Pupils settling down quickly	7	87	5	-	-	239
D	Pupils contributing to class discussions	20	69	12	-	-	238
E	Pupils listening to others' views respectfully	9	80	11	-	-	239
F	Pupils listening to the teacher respectfully	13	83	5	-	-	237
G	Pupils keenly engaging with their tasks	5	81	13	-	-	239
H	Pupils politely seeking staff help (e.g. putting hand up)	12	79	9	-	-	239
I	Attentive, interested pupils	8	79	13	-	-	238
J	Pupils arriving promptly for classes	5	85	10	-	-	237
K	Lessons that are calm, relaxed and enjoyable	8	86	6	-	-	239
L	Pupils interacting supportively with each other	7	75	18	-	-	239
M	Pupils enthusiastically participating in classroom activities	8	73	19	-	-	239

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

7.14 Focus group perceptions in the schools visited were overwhelmingly positive about classroom behaviour. One of the very few negative comments was from a teacher in School 1 who mentioned that she was unable to relax in her teaching as she would wish. She was always ready for indiscipline to occur. A more typical response was that if pupils played up in classrooms it was generally because the curriculum was inappropriate. *Learning issues can turn into behaviour issues because of lack of support. (SS8)*

7.15 The views of support staff tended to be less positive than those of either teachers or headteachers as table 7.5 shows. The positive behaviour most frequently encountered in all or most lessons by support staff, 56%, was pupils arriving promptly for classes (J). Pupils arriving with correct equipment (A) was encountered in few or no lessons by over 1 in 4 support staff.

7.16 The more generally negative picture presented by support staff may be due to the number and nature of the classes they see in action. Their role means that they will be deployed to classes where extra support for individual pupils is required. Teachers, on the other hand, will teach a broad spectrum of classes.

TABLE 7.5 SECONDARY SUPPORT STAFF'S PERCEPTIONS OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR IN CLASSROOMS

Q8. We have listed below some examples of different types of positive pupil behaviour which teachers experience during the course of their CLASSROOM TEACHING. Over the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently you experienced each type of pupil behaviour. (Please circle one number in each row)

		All lessons	Most lessons	Some lessons	Few lessons	No lessons	
		%	%	%	%	%	N
A	Pupils arriving with the correct equipment	*1	37	36	23	3	665
B	Pupils following instructions	1	46	42	11	**-	658
C	Pupils settling down quickly	1	40	41	17	1	664
D	Pupils contributing to class discussions	7	48	37	7	-	659
E	Pupils listening to others' views respectfully	1	30	50	17	2	658
F	Pupils listening to the teacher respectfully	2	40	44	13	1	664
G	Pupils keenly engaging with their tasks	1	32	51	14	1	664
H	Pupils politely seeking staff help (e.g. putting hand up)	3	35	45	16	2	665
I	Attentive, interested pupils	2	29	55	14	-	662
J	Pupils arriving promptly for classes	3	53	33	9	1	662
K	Lessons that are calm, relaxed and enjoyable	2	32	45	18	3	663
L	Pupils interacting supportively with each other	2	30	51	16	1	663
M	Pupils enthusiastically participating in classroom activities	3	34	48	14	1	666

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

## Comparisons with 2006

7.17 Comparisons were made with 2006 on key questions showing where there were significant positive or negative changes in the frequency with which behaviours were reported. Chapter 12 reports comparisons in more detail. The key findings at *classroom level*<sup>20</sup> are:

- There is a positive change in perceptions of secondary teachers for all eleven behaviours on which direct comparison is possible. The findings are statistically significant and extremely unlikely to be due to sampling variation or to chance;
- Headteachers were also more positive for eight of the eleven behaviours on which direct comparison was possible, with no significant change in the other three behaviours;
- There is a positive change in perceptions of support staff in two behaviours, pupils politely seeking help and lessons being calm and enjoyable with no statistically significant changes for the remaining nine behaviours.

<sup>20</sup> Technical reasons mean that we cannot compare changes in responses around the school.

## 8 LOW-LEVEL INDISCIPLINE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

8.1 Previous surveys have contrasted perceptions of the frequency of so called 'low-level' indiscipline in schools and classrooms, such as talking out of turn and work avoidance, with more serious aggressive and violent behaviour. We continue with this approach. We begin by reporting perceptions of this low-level indiscipline around the school and in the classroom before turning to more serious behaviour in the next chapter. We should make clear, however, that describing indiscipline as low-level is not intended to underplay its effects on learning and teaching. Indeed, teachers in previous surveys have talked about the wearing effect of the 'drip, drip' of low-level misbehaviour in their classrooms. What did they have to say about this in 2009? We begin by reporting survey data from teachers, headteachers and support staff, supplemented by data from the eight schools we visited. In general we highlight the most and least frequently encountered behaviours in commenting on the tables.

8.2 It is important to note that the surveys provide us with information about the kind of *behaviour* experienced and the *frequency* of dealing with it. They do not tell us about the *number of pupils* behaving in particular ways or the *number of individual incidents*. This is very important when we look at both low-level and serious indiscipline. Although one pupil misbehaving is one too many, it would be mistaken to assume that the frequency of the occurrence of a behaviour is the same as the number of pupils displaying that behaviour. So a teacher perceiving talking out of turn several times a day, for example, could be reporting one pupil talking out of turn several times, or several pupils talking out of turn once.

### Low-level indiscipline around the school

8.3 We provided teachers and headteachers<sup>21</sup> with a list of behaviours and asked them about how frequently they had encountered these around the school in the last full week. Tables 8.1 and 8.2 provide a mixed picture. As Table 8.1 shows the behaviour most frequently encountered by teachers twice a day or more was pupils running in corridors (A). More than one in three teachers experienced this. The least frequently encountered behaviour was leaving school without permission (G) with over half the teachers saying that they had not encountered this at all in the last week.

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<sup>21</sup> Support staff were not asked these questions.

**TABLE 8.1 SECONDARY TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF LOW LEVEL INDISCIPLINE AROUND THE SCHOOL**

**Q17. We have listed below some examples of different types of pupil behaviour which teachers have told us they have encountered during the course of their duties AROUND THE SCHOOL. Taking your experience during the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently you have encountered each type of pupil behaviour.**  
(Please circle one number in each row)

		Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	
<b>Low Level Indiscipline</b>		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	<b>N</b>
A	Running in the corridor	*24	12	14	11	11	15	14	1462
B	Unruliness while waiting (e.g. to enter classrooms, for lunch)	19	11	13	12	14	17	14	1459
C	Showing lack of concern for others	15	11	12	13	13	17	19	1447
D	Persistently infringing school rules	20	10	12	15	12	11	21	1454
E	Cheeky or impertinent remarks or responses	14	10	13	12	14	19	20	1457
F	Loitering in 'prohibited' areas	20	9	11	10	12	12	26	1453
G	Leaving school premises without permission	8	3	6	6	8	15	54	1424
H	General rowdiness, horseplay, or mucking about	21	8	11	16	16	16	13	1450
I	Use of mobile phones/ texting against school policies	22	7	7	9	11	15	29	1447
<b>Disengagement</b>									
J	Pupils deliberately excluding others	*3	4	7	5	8	19	55	1428
K	Pupils withdrawing from interaction with peers	3	4	8	5	11	23	46	1429

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100

8.4 Turning to secondary headteacher responses (Table 8.4) we can see that, as in Chapter 7, they report a more positive picture than teachers. The most frequently encountered behaviour twice a day or more is pupils running in corridors (A) with 17% reporting this. Looking at the least frequently encountered behaviour, almost half the headteachers said that that they had not encountered unruliness while waiting (B) at all in the last week.

8.5 The differences between headteachers and teachers in the “not at all” column is worth noting. The only item where headteachers are less positive than teachers is pupils leaving school without permission (G), with 38% of headteachers and 54% of teachers reporting that they did not encounter this at all in the last teaching week. This difference can probably be explained by this behaviour being more likely to be reported to headteachers than to teachers. Furthermore headteachers would be likely to have a more active involvement in dealing with this particular behaviour than with the others.

8.6 We can speculate that the difference in perspective between teachers and headteachers might lie in different roles and responsibilities. For example, teachers are more likely to be aware of unruliness while waiting at class changeover times as they usher one class out and another in. If teachers in large schools stay in their departmental bases at breaks and lunchtimes, they may have more opportunities to notice pupils being where they should not, whereas headteachers may be in the dining hall or employed elsewhere.

8.7 There were no substantive comments on low-level indiscipline around the school from focus groups. The general tenor of their remarks in commenting on whole school issues was to emphasize the positive as reported in the previous chapter.

**TABLE 8.2 SECONDARY HEADTEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF LOW LEVEL INDISCIPLINE AROUND THE SCHOOL**

**Q23. We have listed below some examples of different types of pupil behaviour which teachers have told us they have encountered during the course of their duties AROUND THE SCHOOL. Taking your experience during the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently each type of behaviour has either been referred on to you, or been encountered directly by you. (Please circle one number in each row)**

		Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	N
<b>A</b>	Running in the corridor	*8	9	10	13	14	18	28	244
<b>B</b>	Unruliness while waiting (e.g. to enter classrooms, for lunch)	3	2	5	11	11	21	47	245
<b>C</b>	Showing lack of concern for others	2	3	5	8	19	29	34	245
<b>D</b>	Persistently infringing school rules	6	6	7	10	19	23	30	244
<b>E</b>	Cheeky or impertinent remarks or responses	3	8	3	12	18	31	25	244
<b>F</b>	Loitering in 'prohibited' areas	5	6	6	11	13	17	42	245
<b>G</b>	Leaving school premises without permission	4	3	5	8	15	27	38	245
<b>H</b>	General rowdiness, horseplay, or mucking about	6	8	8	19	19	21	19	243
<b>I</b>	Use of mobile phones/ texting against school policies	5	4	5	7	15	22	42	245
	<b>Disengagement</b>								
<b>J</b>	Pupils deliberately excluding others	*2	1	1	3	5	23	64	244
<b>K</b>	Pupils withdrawing from interaction with peers	2	**_	1	3	7	25	62	244

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

### Low-level indiscipline in the classroom

8.8 We now turn to low-level indiscipline in the classroom. We focus on the views of classroom teachers and support staff as those most directly able to report on this.<sup>22</sup> Chapter 11 describes how most of this kind of behaviour was dealt with either directly by classroom teachers or by principal teachers.

8.9 We can see that, as with previous surveys, 'talking out of turn' (A) is the behaviour encountered by most teachers most frequently. Only 1% of teachers said that they had not encountered talking out of turn in their last teaching week. The least frequently encountered behaviour was use of mobile phones/texting (K) with 39% of teachers saying that they had not encountered this behaviour at all in the last week.

8.10 In the focus groups, it was generally accepted that coping with low-level misbehaviour was part of the job and that young people were more confident and assertive nowadays.

<sup>22</sup> Headteachers were not asked these questions.

**TABLE 8.3 SECONDARY TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF LOW LEVEL INDISCIPLINE IN CLASSROOMS**

**Q13. We have listed below some examples of different types of pupil behaviour which teachers have told us they have to manage during the course of their CLASSROOM TEACHING. Please read the types of pupil behaviour and definitions carefully. (Please circle one number in each row)**

		Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	
<b>Low Level Indiscipline</b>		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	<b>N</b>
A	Talking out of turn (e.g. by making remarks, calling out, distracting others by chattering)	*53	13	7	13	8	5	1	1460
B	Making unnecessary (non-verbal) noise (e.g. by scraping chairs, banging objects)	25	14	11	10	9	10	22	1455
C	Hindering other pupils (e.g. by distracting them from work, interfering with materials)	28	14	13	13	12	11	10	1454
D	Getting out of their seat without permission	15	11	10	11	11	13	30	1434
E	Not being punctual (e.g. being late to lessons)	15	14	14	17	17	13	10	1449
F	Persistently infringing class rules (e.g. pupil behaviour, safety)	13	11	11	11	10	17	28	1442
G	Eating/chewing in class	34	10	8	13	11	10	13	1447
H	Work avoidance (e.g. delaying start to work set)	23	15	13	13	15	12	9	1452
I	Cheeky or impertinent remarks or responses	13	10	10	12	12	19	24	1449
J	General rowdiness, horseplay or mucking about	10	10	10	11	13	19	27	1455
K	Use of mobile phones/texting	11	7	6	7	12	19	39	1459
<b>Disengagement</b>									
L	Pupils withdrawing from interaction with others/you	6	5	8	10	13	23	37	1448

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100

8.11 In considering the perceptions of support staff, it is important to remember that support staff work with pupils in different ways and do not necessarily see the same range of classes as teachers. For example, in secondary schools support staff may work in a support base with a few pupils as well as supporting individual pupils in mainstream classes. To illustrate the range and variety of ways in which support staff work we asked, 'Who do you provide classroom support to this school year?' We asked them to report all the different ways – not just the main way in which they provided support.

- 60% provided support to any class as required;
- 53% provided support in a classroom where there were pupils with behavioural needs;
- 53% provided support to few pupils;
- 49% provided support to one individual pupil
- 41% provided support to a few classes;
- 34% provided support in a support base, with pupils who have behavioural needs;
- 12% provided support to one particular class.

8.12 Table 8.4 shows that support staff had very similar perceptions to those of teachers. Like teachers, talking out of turn, (A), was highlighted as the most frequently encountered behaviour. 75% of support staff saw this twice a day



or more and only 2% reported not seeing it at all in their last full teaching week. The behaviour reported least frequently by support staff was pupils withdrawing from interaction (L).

8.13 These support staff perceptions were echoed in the visits to schools. Focus groups reported that there was a consensus about dealing with low-level indiscipline and that their school had an effective framework for dealing with it. *We have a good amount of low-level indiscipline but [there is nothing major at all]. ...talking ... but also when pupils come from primary they think they can just get out of their seats to get things and it takes a term or two for them to settle down.* (SS6)

8.14 Support staff identified inconsistency among teachers as a problem and this was raised as an issue too in describing behaviour management policy. *A lot of ill-behaved pupils know where they can misbehave – a lot of misbehaved pupils are quite clever. ...There is boredom. Classes are aimed too low. We don't try to break the chain. Failure to attend detention is a reason for detention!* (SS8)

**TABLE 8.4 SECONDARY SUPPORT STAFF'S PERCEPTIONS OF LOW-LEVEL INDISCIPLINE IN CLASSROOMS**  
**Q9. Taking ALL the lessons you have assisted in during the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently you had to deal with each type of pupil behaviour. (Please circle one number in each row)**

		Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	N
<b>A</b>	Talking out of turn (e.g. by making remarks, calling out, distracting others by chattering)	*66	9	5	12	4	2	2	657
<b>B</b>	Making unnecessary (non-verbal) noise (e.g. by scraping chairs, banging objects)	50	12	10	13	4	5	5	655
<b>C</b>	Hindering other pupils (e.g. by distracting them from work, interfering with materials)	48	16	10	10	6	5	5	648
<b>D</b>	Getting out of their seat without permission	35	14	12	13	5	7	14	653
<b>E</b>	Not being punctual (e.g. being late to lessons)	27	16	16	13	8	9	10	650
<b>F</b>	Persistently infringing class rules (e.g. pupil behaviour, safety)	30	15	11	11	9	10	15	646
<b>G</b>	Eating/chewing in class	50	10	10	9	6	6	10	652
<b>H</b>	Work avoidance (e.g. delaying start to work set)	40	16	10	14	7	6	6	651
<b>I</b>	Cheeky or impertinent remarks or responses	42	14	9	14	6	7	7	654
<b>J</b>	General rowdiness, horseplay or mucking about	36	16	10	14	9	8	8	649
<b>K</b>	Use of mobile phones/texting	22	11	8	9	9	13	27	650
<b>Disengagement</b>									
<b>L</b>	Pupils withdrawing from interaction with others/you	12	9	13	9	10	16	32	639

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100

8.15 As reported in Chapter 11 almost all of the teaching and support staff we spoke to were confident in dealing with misbehaviour and they recognised this as an inevitable if unwelcome part of the job.

## Comparisons with 2006

8.16 Comparisons were made with 2006 on key questions showing where there were significant positive or negative changes in the frequency with which behaviours were reported. A more detailed and comprehensive overview can be found in Chapter 12.

8.17 The main finding for low-level indiscipline **around the school** is that:

- Both secondary teachers and headteachers were more positive in their perceptions of low-level indiscipline around the school than in 2006. This applies to all nine behaviours where comparisons were possible. All these changes were highly statistically significant.

8.18 In the **classroom** the main findings are:

- Secondary teachers were more positive in 2009 in seven of the 12 behaviours for which comparison in low-level indiscipline in the classroom is possible. The most statistically significant changes were in persistently infringing class rules, eating in class, cheeky or impertinent remarks and general rowdiness. Perhaps the attempts to involve young people in decision-making about classroom rules, rewards and sanctions are bearing fruit. Young people may have a greater sense of 'ownership' of rules and so could be more likely to stick to them;
- There was no change in secondary teachers' perceptions for four of the 12 behaviours;
- There was a statistically significant change in a negative direction in one behaviour from secondary teachers, pupils withdrawing from interaction with others. It may be that teachers are more aware of this behaviour or it may reflect reports of increasing mental health problems, including depression among young people in general<sup>23</sup>;
- For support staff there was no significant difference for nine of the 12 behaviours for which comparisons were possible;
- For three questions there was a significant negative change in perception from support staff in 2009. These were pupils not being punctual; use of mobile phones; and pupils withdrawing from interaction with others.

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<sup>23</sup> See for example <http://www.youngminds.org.uk/> where research from the office of national statistics reports one in 10 children and young people in Great Britain experiencing serious mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety.

## 9 SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE/VIOLENCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

### Introduction

9.1 In this chapter we focus on perceptions of serious indiscipline and violence around secondary schools and in classrooms. We use mainly the data from the surveys of teachers, headteachers and support staff. The teaching and support staff in the focus groups had little or nothing to say about serious indiscipline as it was largely outside their experience. Headteachers and senior staff from time to time spoke about handling aggression, sometimes from parents rather than pupils, but in general stressed that serious indiscipline is infrequent.

9.2 This chapter is in five main sections:

- Reports of the overall impact of serious indiscipline/pupil violence on schools;
- Perceptions of serious indiscipline/violence around the school in the last full teaching week;
- Perceptions of serious indiscipline/violence in the classroom in the last full teaching week;
- Perceptions of serious indiscipline/violence and how it was reported and followed up over the last twelve months;
- Comparisons with 2006 findings.

In general we highlight physical violence and physical aggression towards staff and amongst pupils in commenting on the tables.

### **Perceptions of the overall impact of serious indiscipline/pupil violence in secondary schools**

9.3 We asked headteachers, teachers and support staff to rate the impact of serious indiscipline/pupil violence on the running of the school using a five-point scale from “very serious” to “not at all serious”.<sup>24</sup> We can see from Table 9.1 below that many respondents in all groups see the impact as not serious (point 4) or not at all serious (point 5). However, significant minorities of all groups see the impact as very serious (point 1) or serious (point 2).

9.4 Interestingly secondary headteachers are more positive than either teachers or support staff on questions about impact. About 77% perceive the impact of serious indiscipline as not serious or not all serious compared to 51% of teachers and 43% of support staff. However around 1 in 4 teachers and support staff see impact as very serious or serious compared to around 1 in 20 headteachers.

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<sup>24</sup> We did not provide descriptions for points 2-4 on the scale and so respondents may have interpreted these in different ways.

**TABLE 9.1 PERCEPTIONS OF THE OVERALL IMPACT OF SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE/PUPIL VIOLENCE ON SECONDARY SCHOOLS. How serious is the impact which serious indiscipline/pupil violence has on the running of the school?**

Category of staff	Very serious 1	2	3	4	Not at all serious 5	
	%	%	%	%	%	N
Secondary Teachers	*8	16	25	30	21	1,427
Secondary Headteachers	1	5	16	45	32	237
Secondary Support Staff	9	15	33	24	19	633

\*percentages rounded to the nearest whole number and may not sum to 100

## Serious indiscipline/violence around the school

9.5 Secondary teachers report a low, although still of course concerning, number of serious incidents. Table 9.2 below gives more detail of behaviours observed around the school. We asked teachers about whether they had encountered any of the behaviours listed, in the last full teaching week. Most percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number and so do not show when there have been a very small numbers (less than 1%) reported. For example, six teachers out of 1,459 (<1%) reported racist abuse towards themselves (Q), and 21 out of 1,456 (1%) reported sexist abuse (R) on any occasion in the last week.

9.6 While any instance of violent or aggressive behaviour is very serious, the table below shows that such behaviour is a rare occurrence in the daily and weekly experience of most teachers in terms of relations between them and their pupils.

9.7 For the sake of clarity and because percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, we wish to report the number of teachers responding to the two most serious types of violent or aggressive behaviour towards them, X and Y in table 9.2. For physical violence (Y) the numbers are as follows. Out of 1,460 teachers:

- None reported physical violence towards them once or more a day;
- One (<1%) reported physical violence towards them 3 or 4 times last week;
- One (<1%) reported physical violence towards them twice last week;
- Two (<1%) reported physical violence towards them once last week.

9.8 It was a similar picture in regard to physical aggression (X). Out of 1,460 teachers:

- None reported encountering physical aggression towards themselves several times a day;
- One (<1%) each reported encountering physical aggression once and twice a day;
- None reported encountering physical aggression 3 or 4 times last week;
- Five (<1%) reported physical aggression towards them twice last week;

- 33 (2%) reported physical aggression towards them once last week.

9.9 While any incident of serious incident of indiscipline or violence is stressful for the teachers concerned, it is noteworthy that *1456 out of 1460 teachers (>99%) reported no physical violence towards them and 1420 (97%) teachers reported no physical aggression towards them.*

**TABLE 9.2 SECONDARY TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE AROUND THE SCHOOL**

**Q17. We have listed below some examples of different types of pupil behaviour which teachers have told us they have encountered during the course of their duties AROUND THE SCHOOL Taking your experience during the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently you have encountered each type of pupil behaviour. (Please circle one number in each row)**

		Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	N
L	Pupils truanting	*6	3	5	10	12	21	42	1416
<b>Serious indiscipline/violence</b>									
M	Physical destructiveness (e.g. breaking objects, damaging furniture and fabric)	1	1	2	2	6	16	74	1460
N	Racist abuse towards other pupils	**	-	1	-	-	5	93	1457
O	Sexist abuse or harassment of other pupils	-	-	1	1	2	7	88	1456
P	General verbal abuse towards other pupils (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	5	3	4	10	13	21	45	1457
Q	Racist abuse towards you	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	1459
R	Sexist abuse or harassment towards you	-	-	-	-	-	1	99	1456
S	General verbal abuse towards you (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	1	1	1	2	4	11	82	1454
T	Pupils under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol	-	-	-	-	1	4	94	1442
U	Physical aggression towards other pupils (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	2	2	3	5	10	23	55	1457
V	Physical violence towards other pupils (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	-	1	1	1	4	13	80	1459
W	Using mobile phones abusively (e.g. videoing "happy slapping")	-	-	-	-	1	2	96	1453
X	Physical aggression towards you (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	-	-	-	-	-	2	97	1460
Y	Physical violence towards you (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	1460

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*'- ' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

9.10 There is some evidence in terms of pupil-to-pupil violence (V). Out of 1459 teachers:

- 27 (2%) say that they saw pupils being physically violent towards other pupils once a day or more frequently;
- A further 260 (18%) saw pupil physical violence between one and four times last week;
- 1172 (80%) did not observe this at all in the previous week.

9.11 There is a similar picture in terms of pupil-to-pupil aggression (U) around the school. Here we can see that out of 1,457 teachers:

- 99 (7%) say that they saw pupils being physically aggressive to their peers once a day or more frequently;
- A further 556 (38%) saw this between one and four times last week;
- 802 (55%) did not observe this at all in the previous week.

9.12 We asked headteachers about an almost identical series of behaviours except that we wanted to know *both* about their direct experience *and* behaviours reported to them. The object was to gain a general perspective of behaviour around the school. Table 9.3 below provides details.

**TABLE 9.3 SECONDARY HEADTEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE AROUND THE SCHOOL**

**Q23.** We have listed below some examples of different types of pupil behaviour which teachers have told us they have encountered during the course of their duties **AROUND THE SCHOOL**. Taking your experience during the **LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK**, please indicate how frequently each type of behaviour has either been referred on to you, or been encountered directly by you. (Please circle one number in each row)

		Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	N
L	Pupils truanting	*6	3	6	16	21	23	25	244
<b>Serious indiscipline/violence</b>									
M	Physical destructiveness (e.g. breaking objects, damaging furniture and fabric)	**	-	-	-	1	21	77	244
N	Racist abuse towards other pupils	-	-	-	-	-	6	94	244
O	Sexist abuse or harassment of other pupils	-	-	-	-	1	5	93	245
P	General verbal abuse towards other pupils (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	2	2	1	8	23	29	35	244
Q	Racist abuse towards you or your staff	-	-	-	-	-	1	98	245
R	Sexist abuse or harassment towards you or your staff	-	-	-	-	1	5	95	243
S	General verbal abuse towards you or your staff (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	-	-	1	7	13	29	50	245
T	Pupils under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol	-	-	-	-	-	8	92	244
U	Physical aggression towards other pupils (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	-	-	1	6	20	33	39	242
V	Physical violence towards other pupils (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	-	-	-	2	12	30	56	242
W	Using mobile phones abusively (e.g. videoing "happy slapping")	-	-	-	-	1	6	92	245
X	Physical aggression towards you or your staff (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	-	-	-	-	1	8	91	245
Y	Physical violence towards you (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	-	-	-	-	-	1	99	245

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

9.13 The picture presented by the headteachers is very similar to that presented by the teachers. Serious violence towards them or their staff is rare, although pupil-to-pupil relations are more concerning. Sexist (R) and racist abuse (Q) to

*you or your staff* is rarely experienced. The slightly higher percentages evident weekly probably reflects the picture across the school not just the personal experience of the headteacher. Very small numbers report the most serious behaviour towards staff, physical violence (Y) and physical aggression (X). Again, for the sake of clarity as percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, numbers are presented for each of these items.

9.14 For reports of physical violence (Y) out of 245 headteachers:

- None experienced physical violence towards them or their staff once or more a day;
- Three (1%) experienced physical violence towards them or their staff once last week (no headteachers reported this more than once);
- 242 (99%) reported that they had not experienced physical violence towards them or their staff at all last week.

9.15 In terms of physical aggression (X) out of 245 headteachers:

- None experienced physical aggression towards them or their staff once or more a day;
- Three (1%) had experienced physical aggression towards them or their staff twice last week;
- 19 other headteachers (8%) had experienced physical aggression towards them or their staff once last week;
- 223 headteachers (91%) had not experienced physical aggression towards them or their staff at all last week.

9.16 There is some evidence in terms of pupil-to-pupil physical violence (V). Out of 242 headteachers:

- One (<1%) reported that s/he saw or had referred to him/her pupils being physically violent towards other pupils once or more a day;
- 106 (44%) saw or had referred to them pupil-to-pupil physical violence between one and four times last week;
- 135 (56%) did not observe this at all in the previous week.

9.17 There is a similar picture in terms of pupil-to-pupil aggression (U). Out of 242 headteachers:

- Four (2%) say that they saw or had referred to them pupils being physically aggressive to their peers once or more a day;
- A further 144 (59%) saw this or had it referred to them between once and three or four times last week;
- 94 (39%) did not observe this at all in the previous week.

9.18 When asked to list up to three types of behaviour which had the greatest negative impact on the staff, the tendency was for headteachers to list lower level indiscipline such as general rowdiness, horse play, cheeky or impertinent remarks or persistently infringing school rules. However 43 listed general verbal abuse among pupils, a more serious type of indiscipline.

9.19 The picture therefore is complex and nuanced. Although serious incidents occur from time to time, more frequently among pupils than between

teachers and pupils, it seems to be the comparatively low-level misbehaviour around the school that headteachers perceive as most wearisome and troubling for teachers, perhaps because of the comparative frequency of this type of behaviour.

## Serious indiscipline/violence in classrooms

9.20 Classroom behaviour is key to successful learning and so the picture presented by teachers and support staff working with young people of all ages and stages was an important part of the overall picture of behaviour in Scottish schools. Secondary teachers were presented with a list of behaviours and asked to report on the frequency with which they had encountered them in the last full teaching week. Table 9.4 below presents the perceptions of classroom teachers.

**TABLE 9.4 SECONDARY TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM**

**Q13. We have listed below some examples of different types of pupil behaviour which teachers have told us they have to manage during the course of their CLASSROOM TEACHING (Please read the types of pupil behaviour and definitions carefully. (Please circle one number in each row))**

		Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	
	<b>Disengagement</b>	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	<b>N</b>
M	Pupils missing lessons (e.g. truancy)	*3	3	5	9	13	23	43	1432
	<b>Serious indiscipline/violence</b>								
N	Physical destructiveness (e.g. breaking objects, damaging furniture and fabric)	**-	1	1	1	3	10	83	1458
O	Racist abuse towards other pupils	-	-	-	-	1	4	94	1458
P	Sexist abuse or harassment of other pupils	-	-	1	1	2	9	87	1457
Q	General verbal abuse towards other pupils (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	3	3	3	7	11	25	48	1454
R	Racist abuse towards you	-	-	-	-	-	-	99	1456
S	Sexist abuse or harassment towards you	-	-	-	-	-	2	97	1449
T	General verbal abuse towards you (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	1	-	1	2	5	15	77	1460
U	Pupils under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol	-	-	-	-	1	3	95	1442
V	Physical aggression towards other pupils (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	1	1	2	2	8	19	67	1456
W	Physical violence towards other pupils (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	-	-	1	1	2	8	88	1461
X	Using mobile phones abusively (e.g. videoing "happy slapping")	-	-	-	-	-	2	97	1452
Y	Physical aggression towards you (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	-	-	-	-	-	3	97	1458
Z	Physical violence towards you (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	1459

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100; \*\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

9.21 Teachers' perceptions of serious indiscipline in the classroom are very similar to those around the school. Pupils' behaviour towards their teachers does not typically involve physical aggression or violence. Very few teachers



had experienced racist abuse towards them (R), two out of 1,456 (<1%) experiencing it daily and eight out of 1456 (<1%) weekly. The picture of sexist abuse (S) was higher. Three teachers out of 1,449 (<1%) experienced this daily and 34 (2%) at least once a week. On the other hand, almost one in four teachers experienced general verbal abuse (T) with varying degrees of frequency, mostly once or twice a week.

9.22 For the sake of clarity, and because the percentages in tables have been rounded to the nearest whole number, we wish again to report the actual number of teachers responding to the two most serious types of violent (Z) or aggressive behaviour (Y) towards them in their classrooms. Out of 1,459 teachers:

- One (<1%) reported experiencing physical violence several times a day<sup>25</sup>;
- Three (<1%) reported experiencing physical violence once a week;
- 1,455 (>99%) had not experienced physical violence towards them in their classrooms at all in the last week.

9.23 In the case of physical aggression towards them (Y) out of 1,458 teachers:

- Two (<1%) reported experiencing physical aggression once a day or more often;
- A further 42 (3%) reported experiencing physical aggression between one and four times last week;
- 1,414 (97%) had not experienced physical aggression towards them in their classrooms at all in the last week.

9.24 When serious indiscipline does occur in classrooms it is more likely to involve pupil-to-pupil relations. There is some evidence of pupil-to-pupil physical violence (W). Out of 1,461 teachers:

- Fifteen (1%) say that they saw pupils being physically violent towards other pupils once a day;
- A further 159 (11%) saw pupil physical violence between one and four times a week;
- 1,287 (88%) did not observe this at all in the previous week.

9.25 There is a similar picture in terms of pupil-to-pupil aggression (V). Out of 1456 teachers:

- 56 (4%) say that they saw pupils being physically aggressive to their peers in their classrooms once a day or more frequently;
- A further 426 (29%) saw this between one and four times last week;
- 974 (67%) did not observe this at all in the previous week.

9.26 There were few comments about serious indiscipline in the classroom in the focus groups. However, a teacher in one school talked about seeing a fight and being able to put a stop to it because her training had given her confidence about how to intervene.

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<sup>25</sup> On inspecting the record for this teacher, it became clear that s/he worked in a support base for pupils with additional special needs in a secondary school.

*There was a fight [involving] two boys in a fourth year class. My mentor said it was like stags in a rutting season. Because I had been working with and talking to the behaviour support team, I thought, I can deal with this, I can do this. I talked [to them] very calmly, didn't shout at all, and they actually did stop. (SS 4).*

9.27 We will see in chapter 11 on behaviour management strategies that behaviour support teams were an important part of most schools' approaches and the above example gives a flavour of how an effective use of behaviour support staff can empower teachers and give them confidence to deal with conflict in the classroom.

9.28 Headteachers were asked about how frequently serious indiscipline or violence was referred to them from the classroom. See Table 9.5. Their personal experience of serious indiscipline and violence is reported in paragraph 9.35.

**TABLE 9.5 SECONDARY HEADTEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM**  
**Q20. We have listed below some examples of serious indiscipline / violence which teachers sometimes have to deal with during the course of their CLASSROOM TEACHING. Please indicate how frequently each behaviour has been referred on to you from a CLASSROOM setting, over the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK.**

		Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	
	<b>Serious indiscipline/violence</b>	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	<b>N</b>
N	Physical destructiveness (e.g. breaking objects, damaging furniture and fabric)	*-	-	**1	-	4	11	84	244
O	Racist abuse towards other pupils	-	-	-	-	-	11	89	245
P	Sexist abuse or harassment of other pupils	-	-	-	-	2	7	92	243
Q	General verbal abuse towards other pupils (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	-	-	2	12	18	32	35	241
R	Racist abuse towards staff	-	-	-	-	-	2	98	244
S	Sexist abuse or harassment towards staff	-	-	-	-	1	6	93	245
T	General verbal abuse towards staff (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	-	-	2	9	18	36	34	245
U	Pupils under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol	-	-	-	-	1	5	94	244
V	Physical aggression towards other pupils (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	-	-	-	10	19	26	44	242
W	Physical violence towards other pupils (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	-	-	-	4	10	21	65	242
X	Using mobile phones abusively (e.g. videoing "happy slapping")	-	-	-	-	1	8	91	245
Y	Physical aggression towards staff (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	-	-	-	-	1	11	88	244
Z	Physical violence towards staff (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	-	-	-	-	-	1	99	245

\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero, \*\*percentages rounded to the nearest whole number and may not sum to 100

9.29 Table 9.5 indicates headteachers' views that serious indiscipline in the classroom towards teachers is infrequent, but that it is more frequent in pupil-

to-pupil relations. Again it is worth remembering that the data tell us nothing about the numbers of pupils involved in the behaviours listed and that the overwhelming majority of teachers and headteachers see their pupils as well behaved. Looking in detail at the data out of 245 headteachers:

- None reported physical violence towards staff in classrooms being referred to them one or more times a day;
- Three (1%) reported this being referred once a week;
- 242 (99%) reported that they had had no referrals for this behaviour in the last week.

9.30 Referrals for physical aggression towards staff (Y) presented a similar picture. Out of 244 headteachers:

- None reported physical aggression towards staff in classrooms being referred to them one or more a day;
- 30 (12%) reported this being referred between one and four times last week;
- 214 headteachers (88%) reported that they had had no referrals for this behaviour in the last week.

9.31 Table 9.6 reports how support staff perceive serious indiscipline in the classroom. We should remember that these staff are neither teachers nor specialist behaviour support teaching staff. They are employed to work alongside teachers to support pupils' learning and behaviour.

**TABLE 9.6 SECONDARY SUPPORT STAFF'S PERCEPTIONS OF SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM**

**Q9. Taking ALL the lessons you have assisted in during the LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK, please indicate how frequently you had to deal with each type of pupil behaviour. (Please circle one number in each row)**

		Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	
	<b>Disengagement</b>	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	<b>N</b>
M	Pupils missing lessons (e.g. truancy)	*11	5	8	9	11	15	41	625
	<b>Serious indiscipline/violence</b>								
N	Physical destructiveness (e.g. breaking objects, damaging furniture and fabric)	3	2	3	2	2	10	78	651
O	Racist abuse towards other pupils	1	**	1	2	2	8	86	649
P	Sexist abuse or harassment of other pupils	2	1	2	4	3	12	77	651
Q	General verbal abuse towards other pupils (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	13	6	5	12	10	21	34	649
R	Racist abuse towards you	-	-	-	-	-	1	98	651
S	Sexist abuse or harassment towards you	-	-	-	-	1	3	95	650
T	General verbal abuse towards you (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	2	1	2	3	5	15	73	654
U	Pupils under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol	-	-	-	-	-	5	94	638
V	Physical aggression towards other pupils (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	7	2	3	6	11	25	45	653
W	Physical violence towards other pupils (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	3	1	3	3	4	13	73	651
X	Using mobile phones abusively (e.g. videoing "happy slapping")	1	-	-	1	2	3	93	648
Y	Physical aggression towards you (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	-	-	-	-	1	2	96	651
Z	Physical violence towards staff (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	-	-	-	-	-	1	99	654

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

9.32 A very small number of support staff, reported physical violence (Z) or aggression (Y) towards themselves in the last week. Out of 654 support staff:

- One person (<1%) reported experiencing physical violence several times a day;
- A further four (1%) experienced physical violence between one and four times last week;
- The very large majority, 649, (99%) had not experienced any physical violence towards them in classrooms in the last week.

9.33 There is a similar picture in terms of physical aggression (Y) towards them. Out of 651 support staff:

- Three (<1%) experienced this at least once a day;
- A further 24 staff (4%) experienced this between one and four times last week;
- 624 staff (96%) had not experienced any aggression in the last week.

9.34 As with their colleagues in schools, support staff indicate that pupil-to-pupil relations are the most frequently encountered examples of serious

indiscipline in the classroom. In terms of pupil-to pupil physical violence (W) out of 651 support staff:

- 45 (7%) had encountered this behaviour once a day or more often;
- A further 132 (20%) had encountered between one and four times last week;
- 474 (73%) had not encountered this behaviour at all in the last week.

9.35 For pupil-to-pupil physical aggression (V) out of 653 support staff :

- 81 (12%) met this once a day or more often;
- A further 277 (42%) met this between one and four times last week;
- 295 (45%) had not encountered this behaviour at all in the last week.

9.36 On school visits many teaching and support staff mentioned either pupils' difficult family backgrounds, or their additional support needs, in relation to incidents of more serious misbehaviour. When secondary teaching staff were asked about the proportion of pupils with identified social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in a difficult class they taught, 59% said none or a few, but 24% said up to a quarter and 17% said over a quarter.

### Serious indiscipline/violence in the last twelve months

9.37 The data reported so far have focused on perceptions of serious indiscipline and pupil violence in the last full teaching week. We also wanted to know about staff experiences over the last twelve months in respect of particular behaviours. Table 9.7 gives details of staff who had experienced each of these behaviours at least once in the last twelve months.

TABLE 9.7 PERCENTAGE OF SECONDARY STAFF EXPERIENCING SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE / VIOLENCE AT LEAST ONCE IN THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS

		Secondary headteachers	Secondary teachers	Secondary support staff
		N=246	N=1,462	N=678
		%	%	%
R	Racist abuse towards you	*	1	1
S	Sexist abuse or harassment towards you	-	5	4
T	General verbal abuse towards you (e.g. offensive, insulting or threatening remarks)	31	32	19
Y	Physical aggression towards you (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	10	15	8
Z	Physical violence towards you (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	1	2	4

\*- indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

9.38 As can be seen, the percentages in any group experiencing racist (R) or sexist abuse (S) at least once during the last twelve months were very small. No headteacher had experienced racist abuse and one sexist abuse, for instance. Three head teachers had experienced physical violence over the previous twelve months. It is noteworthy that general verbal abuse (T) was the serious indiscipline/violence most frequently experienced by all groups at least once in the last twelve months.

9.39 Teachers and headteachers who had experienced at least one incident were asked to think about the most recent incident and to indicate all those

who were notified about it. Table 9.8 provides details. Verbal abuse towards them was most commonly reported as the most recent serious incident by secondary teachers. Of the 524 secondary teachers who responded to the question asking them to think about the most recent serious incident, 371 identified verbal abuse towards them. The overwhelming majority of incidents of verbal abuse were referred to senior colleagues (311 out of 371 incidents) and/or the headteacher (110 out of 371 incidents). 29 were referred to the local authority and 7 to the police. It is noteworthy that 4 out of 17 incidents of physical violence were reported to the police and that this, the most serious type of indiscipline, was the kind of incident most likely to be referred to them.

**TABLE 9.8 WHO WAS NOTIFIED ABOUT THE MOST RECENT SERIOUS INCIDENT? Please select all that apply. (SECONDARY TEACHERS' RESPONSES)**

Incident type	Senior Colleague	Head Teacher	Local Authority	Police	Health & Safety Exec	Other	*N
Racist abuse towards you	5	1	1	-	-	2	9
Sexist abuse or harassment towards you	33	13	3	1	-	6	41
Verbal abuse towards you (i.e. threatening remarks)	311	110	29	7	1	33	371
Physical aggression towards you (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	72	38	12	8	2	9	86
Physical violence towards you (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	14	10	7	4	1	1	17

\*N indicates the total number of most recent incidents, where information on notification was provided. Teachers could select all groups notified. Where they selected more than one option, figures will not sum to the total number of incidents.

**TABLE 9.9 HOW WAS THE MOST RECENT SERIOUS INCIDENT FOLLOWED UP? SECONDARY TEACHERS' RESPONSES**

Incident type	Feedback on how incident dealt with	Restorative meeting / discussion	Informal meeting / contact with colleagues	Formal meeting within the school	Protected time to recover / speak immediately / debrief	Meeting offered with local authority personnel	Counselling support / confidential helpline	Not at all	*N
Racist abuse towards you	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	6	9
Sexist abuse or harassment towards you	27	5	9	3	-	1	-	7	41
Verbal abuse towards you (i.e. threatening remarks)	285	57	71	36	5	2	1	45	371
Physical aggression towards you (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)	67	14	23	7	4	-	-	14	86
Physical violence towards you (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)	13	2	5	1	1	-	-	4	17

\*N indicates the total number of most recent incidents, where information on follow-up was provided. Teachers could select more than one type of follow-up. Where they selected more than one option, figures will not sum to the total number of most recent incidents.

9.40 Secondary teachers were also asked how the most recent serious incident was followed up. They were given a list of options and asked to choose all that applied. Table 9.9 gives details. The overwhelming majority of most recent incidents of verbal abuse involved teachers being given feedback on how pupils had been dealt with and/or a restorative meeting and/or an informal meeting. It is noteworthy that 45 out of 371 cases of verbal abuse against teachers were not followed up at all. It is also striking that 4 out of 17 violent incidents were reported as not having been followed up. There is no further information about this.

9.41 Table 9.9 also shows that counselling was hardly ever used as a follow up. The highest proportion of incidents which were not followed up at all (although low in terms of absolute numbers at 6) were those concerned with racist abuse.

9.42 For secondary headteachers, verbal abuse towards them was also most commonly reported as the most recent serious incident. Out of the 81 who had a most recent incident to report, 68 reported that it was verbal abuse. Out of these 68 incidents, 37 were reported to the local authority and 22 to the police. The one incident of physical violence towards a secondary headteacher which was recorded was referred both to the local authority and to the police.

9.43 Almost all headteachers indicated that incidents were followed up and indicated how pupils had been dealt with and/or that there had been a restorative meeting and/or a formal meeting. Two out of 68 headteachers indicated that they had received counselling support or used a confidential helpline as a follow up to verbal abuse. The sole report of physical violence towards a secondary headteacher had been followed up in four different ways.

### **Comparisons with 2006**

9.44 Comparisons were made with 2006 on key questions showing where there were significant positive or negative changes in the frequency with which behaviours were reported. A more detailed and comprehensive overview can be found in chapter 12. The key features of our analysis for serious indiscipline ***around the school*** are:

- Secondary teachers were more positive in 2009 than in 2006 recording statistically significant changes for all fourteen of the behaviours for which direct comparisons were possible;
- Secondary headteachers recorded statistically significant positive changes for seven of the fourteen behaviours. These included general verbal abuse towards other pupils, physical aggression towards other pupils and physical violence towards other pupils;
- There is a negative change in perception from 2006 amongst secondary headteachers for three behaviours, sexist abuse to staff, general verbal abuse to staff and physical aggression towards staff. As explained in Chapter 12, a possible reason for this change is that the 2009 question asked for headteachers' experiences regarding staff whereas the 2006 questions focussed only on their direct personal

experience.

9.45 In terms of comparisons with serious indiscipline in the **classroom**:

- Secondary teachers were more positive in 2009 than in 2006 recording more positive perceptions for ten of the twelve behaviours for which direct comparisons were possible. There was no significant change for the remaining two behaviours, sexist and racist abuse towards teachers;
- There was a positive change in perceptions of secondary headteachers in 2009 in five out of eleven behaviours for which comparisons are possible, including physical aggression and physical violence towards other pupils;
- There was a negative change in perceptions of secondary headteachers in 2009 for three behaviours referred towards them or their staff. These were sexist abuse, general verbal abuse towards staff and physical aggression towards staff;
- There was a positive change in the perceptions of secondary support staff in 2009 for nine of the twelve behaviours for which comparisons are possible and non-significant changes for the remaining three.

9.46 In general then as with the other chapters reporting behaviour in secondary schools, secondary teachers, headteachers and support staff are more positive than in 2006, with secondary teachers being most positive of all.



## **10 SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS' PERSPECTIVES**

### **Introduction**

10.1 This chapter discusses findings from survey data gathered from pupils in 8 secondary schools and from 16 pupil focus groups in the same 8 schools. A total of 316 pupils (157 boys and 159 girls) completed the survey.<sup>26</sup> One S1 and one S3 class were chosen at random by each school to participate in the survey. Pupils in the focus groups were also selected by senior school staff who were asked to ensure a range of pupils and a broad range of views were included. Some 104 pupils, with an even spread of girls and boys, took part. Key topics focused on how they perceived their school, their views about what constituted 'good' and 'bad' behaviour, as well as opportunities for participation in school.

10.2 The chapter begins by reporting views on positive behaviour around the school and in classrooms, and on activities to promote positive behaviour. It then reports perceptions of low-level indiscipline around the school and in classrooms before moving to perceptions of serious indiscipline. The chapter continues by focussing on pupils' general feelings about secondary school and their views on fairness. It concludes with pupils' accounts of opportunities for participation in school decision-making.

### **Positive behaviour around the school**

10.3 In the survey, pupils were asked to comment on how often in general they felt they individually were well behaved at school. 80% said they were 'usually' or 'always' well behaved and only 4% said they were 'not very often' well behaved. We then asked pupils to say how many pupils they thought were generally well behaved around the school and school grounds. About half felt that all or 'most' pupils were well behaved. This was lower than in primary schools.

### **Positive behaviour in the classroom**

10.4 We asked pupils to indicate in how many of their lessons were pupils well behaved. Just over half (54%) said that pupils were well behaved in all or most lessons. 2% said that pupils were well behaved in no lessons. Pupils were also asked to comment on particular examples of positive behaviour, as can be seen in table 10.1 below. The three behaviours, which most pupils identify as happening in all or most lessons, are:

- Pupils who are interested and take part in classroom activities (I) – 59%;
- Pupils listening to adults in the class with respect (F) – 57%;
- Pupils getting on with their work (G) – 53%.

It is noteworthy that 1 in 20 pupils report that no lessons are calm, relaxed and enjoyable.

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<sup>26</sup> Findings are not representative of Scottish pupils in general.

**TABLE 10.1 POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR IN LESSONS: SECONDARY PUPILS' VIEWS**

Q5 Last week, did you see pupils do any of the following in your lessons? Say how often you saw these things by ticking one box in each row.

		All lessons	Most lessons	Some lessons	Few lessons	No lessons	Don't know	
		%	%	%	%	%	%	N
A	Pupils arriving with the correct equipment	*3	40	34	20	1	2	316
B	Pupils following instructions	4	50	37	8	**-	1	313
C	Pupils settling down quickly	3	28	43	24	2	1	313
D	Pupils listening to each other with respect	8	33	36	19	1	3	315
E	Pupils listening to the teacher with respect	8	43	30	16	1	3	316
F	Pupils listening to adults in the class with respect	14	43	28	9	1	5	313
G	Pupils getting on with their work	11	42	40	6	-	1	313
H	Pupils politely seeking teacher help (e.g. putting hand up)	14	37	28	18	2	1	315
I	Pupils who are interested and take part in classroom activities	18	41	27	10	2	2	315
J	Lessons that are calm, relaxed and enjoyable	5	28	41	21	5	1	314
K	Pupils supporting each other	13	32	31	17	3	6	316

\* percentages rounded to the nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*'- indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

10.5 Mirroring findings from the survey, pupils in the focus groups identified a wide range of instances of positive behaviour. Pupils' own examples of good behaviour were mostly associated with responding to a specific direction or rule in school, such as *'having your mouth empty'* (SS3), *'not shouting out'* (SS1) or *'hands up to speak'* (SS2). However, many were also associated with what might be seen as good citizenship, such as *'sharing'* (SS2), *'good manners'* (SS4) or *'being kind'* (SS5). An example of typical feedback from one school is given below.

**TABLE 10.2 EXAMPLES OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR: FEEDBACK FROM SECONDARY PUPIL FOCUS GROUPS (Secondary School 6)**

S3 pupils	S1 pupils
<b>Good behaviour is...</b>	<b>Good behaviour is...</b>
Not talking Going to the library Being bright Helping with things Participating in classes and activities Being kind Being nice Not being cheeky to your teachers Respecting elders Respecting other pupils People wearing proper uniform Being able to sit in a class without disrupting it Being nice in corridors at lunch and break etc Holding doors open for people Not littering Being well mannered Not randomly laughing in class	Hard working and improvement Good answers Follow all rules Listen/good listening Getting high marks in tests Improvement in work Not calling out Encouraging class members to behave and work hard

10.6 Pupil focus group discussion generally elicited comments about the schools being caring, safe and supportive. One group said, *'I think X is good*

*because it cares for its pupils... you feel valued... there are good teachers'* (SS3). S1 pupils were particularly enthusiastic about the range of lunchtime and after school activities and many were involved in one or more of these activities. They also appreciated the greater range of subjects than in primary school and the greater freedom to make choices, for example, about leaving the school grounds at lunchtime. It is perhaps not unexpected that, for most pupils, their favourite part of school revolved around social interactions with friends and the presence of a good number of social areas.

10.7 Pupils' comments in the focus groups about teachers were often positive. They liked teachers who were friendly, who listened, did not jump to conclusions and were consistently fair. A sense of humour was seen as helpful to good teacher-pupil relations and for building trust. Most pupils surveyed (77%) agreed with the statement 'I know I can ask a teacher for help when I don't understand'. There was concern by some about lessons seen as boring, although others identified subjects which were lively and engaging. It was often suggested by pupils that learning could and should be fun. One group of pupils talked about a regular Thursday activity in a German class, '*They weren't just games, you were learning but it was fun*' (SS4).

10.8 The survey also asked about school activities to promote positive behaviour, as can be seen from table 10.3.

**TABLE 10.3 SECONDARY PUPIL'S VIEWS OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR**  
**Q10.** Below is a list of things that some schools use to help pupils to behave well and to stop bad behaviour. Please tick **ONE** box in each row to show whether your school uses any of these. Tick "Yes" if it is used in your school some or all of the time and "No" if it is never used. If you don't know just tick the "Don't Know" box.

		Yes	No	Don't Know	
		%	%	%	N
A	Talking about behaviour as part of your school's rules or values, e.g. at assemblies	*87	7	6	314
B	Lessons about how you feel, get on with others and behave	46	33	22	313
C	Rules, expectations and support against bullying	85	8	7	313
D	Buddies/playground pals	37	46	16	313
E	Peer mediation	19	35	46	313
F	Staff on duty at playtime/breaktime	55	27	18	314
G	Circle time	6	85	9	314
H	Talking things through, sorting problems and finding solutions	62	20	17	313
I	Golden time/rewards	27	60	13	314
J	Punishment exercises	92	5	3	315
K	Detention	92	6	2	315
L	Being sent to see a senior teacher or headteacher	92	4	4	315
M	Support from other staff or guidance teachers	84	6	10	315
N	Time out	31	52	17	315
O	Another class or base where pupils can go to get extra help or support	81	8	11	314
P	Other staff who help out in class; teacher assistants	78	13	9	312
Q	Meetings with your parents/carers and other staff who can help	66	18	17	315
R	Interesting range of subjects and classes and choices	68	19	13	313
S	Pupils involved in developing ideas and activities in the school (e.g. pupil council)	74	11	15	315
T	Exclusion/suspension	89	4	6	315

\* percentages rounded to the nearest whole number and may not sum to 100

10.9 The most frequently identified activities to promote positive behaviour were those relating to punishments or sanctions. Most common punishments included punishment exercises (J), detention (K) and being sent to see a senior teacher or the headteacher (L) (although the latter may also operate as a support to pupils). It is interesting that these activities are noted by more pupils than those which might be construed more positively such as talking about behaviour as part of your school's rules (A) or rules, expectations or support against bullying (C).

10.10 The survey also asked for views on the effectiveness of interventions to help pupils behave well. Pupils reported that the following worked best: exclusion, being sent to a senior teacher or the headteacher, rewards, detention and punishment exercises.

10.11 The impact of punishment was also a concern explored by some pupils in the focus groups. Some suggested that an ineffective punishment was likely to make a pupil more determined to behave badly with that particular teacher. Some pupils suggested new and more punitive punishments than were already in place such as *'make them wear a dunce's hat'* or *'tie them to a chair'* (SS4). It was also felt by some that punishment had no tangible impact other than on pupils who were already well behaved.

10.12 In the survey, 60% of pupils indicated that their school did not use rewards. In the focus group discussions, there was strong support for rewards as a way to encourage more positive behaviour and stop negative behaviour; *'Include rewards not just punishments'* (SS6), *'You don't get noticed if you are well behaved'* (SS7) or *'You have to try really really hard to get rewards if you're a good pupil'* (SS3).

10.13 While we cannot draw statistical comparisons between the views of teachers, headteachers and pupils, it is worth pointing out the common theme about reward systems. The vast majority of teachers and headteachers reported that their schools had rewards systems in operation. However, the focus groups and interviews with senior staff highlighted problems of consistency of operation of these systems, particularly in large schools. They also highlighted the fact that well behaved pupils could all too easily be overlooked in these systems. The 60% of pupils who said that reward systems were not in operation are perhaps echoing these views. They were not being rewarded and so did not know that reward systems were in place.

### **Low-level indiscipline around the school**

10.14 In the survey, pupils were asked to comment on how often in general they were involved in trouble at school. 7 in 10 (70%) reported that they 'never' or not very often got into trouble. Just over 1% stated that they 'always' got into trouble.

10.15 Pupils in focus groups were able to offer numerous examples of negative behaviour. As with the positive behaviour, this suggests that they encounter such behaviour in their day-to-day life in school and that they are

aware of what counts as positive and negative behaviour. They commented on *'fighting and pushing in the queues when you are buying something at interval'* (SS2), *'people telling on each other for stupid things'* (SS8), *'having your phone out'* (SS7) and *'throwing sweets in corridor'* (SS2). As with the positive behaviour, pupils in each school seemed to have fairly similar experiences. Again reflecting the survey findings, the pupil focus groups revealed that much negative behaviour was relatively minor, although cumulatively it might impact strongly on pupil and teacher experience.

### Low-level indiscipline in the classroom

10.16 Pupils were provided with a list of behaviours and asked in how many lessons they saw these. We can see that pupils calling out in class or chatting (A) is the most frequently observed behaviour with almost 3 in 4 pupils (70%) seeing this in all or most lessons. This accords with data from secondary teachers and support staff. The behaviour least likely to be observed in all or most lessons is truancy (I).

TABLE 10.4 SECONDARY PUPILS' PERCEPTIONS OF NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR IN LESSONS

Q6. Last week, did you see pupils do any of the following in your lessons? Say how often you saw these things by ticking one box in each row.

		All lessons	Most lessons	Some lessons	Few lessons	No lessons	Don't know	
		%	%	%	%	%	%	N
A	Pupils calling out in class or chatting	*24	46	20	10	**	1	315
B	Pupils being late for lessons	6	25	36	29	3	2	315
C	Pupils breaking class rules by behaving badly	6	19	41	29	3	3	313
D	Pupils deliberately avoiding work (e.g. asking to go to the toilet often)	5	18	29	28	14	6	316
E	Pupils being cheeky to staff	3	15	32	37	9	4	313
F	Pupils being generally rowdy or mucking about	4	21	43	25	4	3	316
G	Pupils using mobile phones/texting in class	12	21	22	20	17	8	316
H	Pupils not letting other pupils join in with them	2	8	20	31	30	10	314
I	Pupils missing certain lessons (truancy)	2	6	16	23	28	25	311

\* percentages rounded to the nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\* '-' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

### Serious indiscipline/violence around the school and in the classroom

10.17 Pupils were provided with a list of behaviour and were asked how frequently they had seen pupils behaving in these ways. The responses pooled lessons and break times but we can see a general pattern of response about serious indiscipline.

10.18 The behaviour most frequently encountered in all or most lessons/breaks was pupils saying rude or aggressive things to each other (D) with more than 1 in 5 pupils (23%) seeing this. The least frequently encountered behaviour was pupils punching, kicking, physically hurting teachers (K) seen by 1% of pupils in all or most lessons/breaks and not seen at all by 83%.

10.19 In terms of physical aggression (J), 17% reported any instance of pupils pushing or threatening teachers. The rates of pupil-pupil negative behaviour were higher, as might be expected. This echoes the data from staff in secondary schools.

TABLE 10.5 SECONDARY PUPILS' VIEWS ON BEHAVIOUR AROUND THE SCHOOL

Q9. **Last week**, did you see pupils do any of these things AROUND THE WHOLE SCHOOL AND IN SCHOOL GROUNDS? Say how often you saw these things by ticking one box in each row. If you are not sure what the question means, or if you do not know the answer, please tick "Don't Know".

		All lessons/ breaks	Most lessons/ breaks	Some lessons/ breaks	Few lessons/ breaks	None	Don't know	
		%	%	%	%	%	%	N
A	Pupils breaking objects and damaging furniture	*3	2	12	32	35	17	316
B	Pupils saying racist things to other pupils	1	4	9	18	55	13	314
C	Pupils saying sexist things to other pupils based on whether they are a boy or a girl	4	5	13	24	39	16	313
D	Pupils saying rude or aggressive things to other pupils	6	17	32	31	9	6	316
E	Pupils pushing or being aggressive to other pupils	5	16	29	31	12	7	314
F	Pupils using alcohol or drugs	4	5	5	13	52	20	314
G	Pupils punching, kicking, physically hurting other pupils	2	9	17	32	25	15	315
H	Pupils saying rude or aggressive things to teachers	1	6	17	29	33	14	314
I	Using mobile phones abusively (e.g. videoing "happy slapping")	4	4	6	16	48	24	315
J	Pupils pushing or being threatening to teachers	1	1	3	12	65	19	315
K	Pupils punching, kicking, physically hurting teachers	1	**-	1	2	83	14	314

\* percentages rounded to the nearest whole number and may not sum to 100, \*\*'- indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

## Pupil wellbeing

10.20 The survey also asked pupils for their general feelings about secondary school. In comparison with findings from the primary school survey, however, there were lower levels of satisfaction overall. 54% of pupils reported that they were always or 'usually' happy coming to school and 10% stated that they were 'not very often' happy about coming to school. Within the focus groups, there were also some shared concerns about school. These often centred on concerns about safety and peer relations '*I don't like shouting and swearing*', (SS4) and bullying and teacher attitudes to bullying, '*I don't like bullying and teachers who don't do anything about it*' (SS5).

10.21 Again, the S1 pupils had some different concerns from the older pupils. They spontaneously raised issues regarding the difficulty of adjusting to secondary school. In one school, pupils talked about drug use (cannabis) and selling around the school (SS6). Many pupils felt strongly about dirty toilets or untidy school grounds. Where the school was in a new or refurbished building, pupils remarked on this, '*It's a new building with good facilities, clean and colourful*' (SS7).

10.22 50% of pupils surveyed reported that there were lessons in their school focusing on personal and social relations. About the same percentage noted that there were staff on duty at break time, though there was no strong recognition of the difference this might make to pupil safety or social relations. One group felt that there was a need for *'more lessons about how we feel/behave'*. Perhaps recalling positive primary school experience, they added, *'Buddies, playground pals would be a good idea as it would stop trouble at breaks and lunchtimes'* (SS1). The idea of support from pupil mentors was also mentioned in another school (SS5).

10.23 Within the survey, there were questions about different kinds of support and whether they were available in each school. As can be seen from Table 10.3 above, about 2 out of 3 pupils (62%) reported that their school offered opportunities to talk through issues and find solutions, though concerningly, 20% of pupils did not feel that their school provided this.

10.24 It is also interesting that when asked if they found their school work interesting, 38% said always or usually and 17% said not very often or never.

### **Evaluations of fair and unfair teacher interventions**

10.25 Pupils were not asked directly about fairness in the survey. However, as this is an issue that has frequently arisen in previous research, pupils were asked to explore it in the focus groups. Discussion revealed strong feelings about perceptions of fair and unfair teacher interventions. Pupils outlined the perceived unfairness of teachers and being talked down to. Typical comments included, *'Some teachers don't let you explain', 'jump to conclusions'* (SS1), *'you don't get a chance to say anything, 'not allowed to question'* (SS2), *'teachers treat you like you are 5 year olds'* (SS5). A very common comment in each school was that teachers do not listen to pupils carefully enough. Another frequent comment about unfairness was a dislike of teachers shouting.

10.26 There were sometimes varying views about boys' and girls' behaviour and some concerns about inequitable treatment by staff on basis of gender, *'When a boy hits a girl that's abuse but if a girl hits a boy that's not so serious'* (SS4)... One pupil was supported by others when she suggested that *'some girls fight more than some boys'* (SS8). This view was echoed elsewhere although a boy added, *'but boys are more violent'* (SS1). Another boy in this school felt that *'boys get treated more harshly. Girls can make up sob stories'* (SS1)

10.27 Some pupils noted favouritism by some teachers as being a key concern. There was recognition of the subjectivity of the behaviour management process, and that, for example, whether someone would be excluded would depend on which child it was and which member of staff. A comment was also made in one school (SS1) about the impact of reputation on classes as well as individual pupils, so that, for example, a class could come to be known as a 'bad class'. Some pupils mentioned resenting a teacher who had unfairly punished them but at the same time being unwilling

to 'clipe' on friends or other pupils who were the real perpetrators. Dealing with this dilemma was seen as difficult.

10.28 Unproductive punishments such as writing out a passage several times or *'turning up for detention and there's no one there'* or finding *'a teacher is there but you can do what you want'* (SS4) were reported. In one group a key distinction was made between *'a carry on'* and *'a real fight'* and a feeling that teachers did not understand this important difference. One boy repeatedly raised this issue saying that teachers should be sensitive to the differences and intentions behind these behaviours (SS3).

10.29 There were sometimes questions about what constituted poor behaviour. The predominant feeling here was about the unfairness of adults: teachers overreacting or giving punishment for another person's poor behaviour or, for example, being punished for once forgetting homework. One group also raised an interesting issue about fairness when it was suggested that, *'some people don't know what they've done'* (SS1). In another school one pupil suggested, *'Instead of having punishment ask why they did it'* (SS3).

### **Pupil accounts of opportunities for participation in decision-making in school**

10.30 There was one question in the survey which asked directly about pupil participation in decision-making in school. 74% reported that there were opportunities for pupil involvement, for example, via a pupil council, in their school. In addition to this, there were other questions which touched on this general area; 62% of pupils said that there were opportunities in school to develop personal decision-making through *'talking things through, sorting problems and findings solutions'*. However, circle time was reported to be uncommon in these schools, a finding echoed by teachers and headteachers, and many pupils did not know whether there was peer mediation in their school.

10.31 These findings were supplemented by information gathered within the pupil focus groups. Pupils identified a number of different mechanisms set up to increase their participation in decision-making. These included committees, discussions, questionnaires, prefects who passed on views to senior management and eco clubs as well as pupil councils. Two school focus groups noted that the Guidance Department had asked for their views, for example about bullying, through a survey. In one school, it was suggested that there was a need for the headteacher to come out and talk to pupils more. There was a general sense that views of older pupils in S5 and S6 were taken much more seriously than those of younger pupils.

10.32 A number of comments were made in different schools about pupil council meetings. It was suggested that they were tokenistic and involved too great a time commitment from pupils and that this led to non-involvement. It was also suggested that pupil views weren't heard and that pupil councils did not really represent pupil views. One school noted that although pupils had a



chance to vote for a representative, teachers could veto pupil selections. It was also noted in one school that although they did have class representatives for pupil council meetings, they '*never really have them*' (SS1). This may suggest that the feedback from meetings is not seen as a priority and that communication in general about decisions taken is not always shared. The only report from pupils of an outcome from pupil council meetings was that one council had recently been successful in getting soap in the pupils' toilets.

10.33 A range of suggestions for increasing pupil participation in decision-making included:

- A suggestion box so that issues could be raised anonymously;
- Opportunities through assemblies;
- Ask questions/Listen to pupils;
- Emails to the Senior Management Team;
- More meetings;
- More questionnaires;
- Circle time.

10.34 Most pupils said that consultation happened but that it '*never really changes things*' (SS1) and a number of pupils felt that they felt they had had more of a say in primary school. Overall, there was little evidence of active pupil engagement in school decision-making and most pupils felt that they did not have a voice in the school.

## **Summary**

10.35 The main findings from the pupil survey and the focus group interviews with pupils in these eight secondary schools present an interesting picture of their views and experiences. They provide a snapshot, however and cannot be claimed as representative of the views of all pupils in schools in Scotland.

- Most pupils are well behaved but they have mixed views about feeling safe in and around school;
- Pupils were more aware of punishments and sanctions than more positive approaches to behaviour management;
- Negative behaviour was typically of a low-level nature, but seemed from the focus groups to involve a large number of pupils;
- In contrast with primary pupils, they are less happy in school, and have more concerns about bullying and social relations in general;
- Some pupils felt that boys' behaviour and girls' behaviour was treated differently by staff;
- Pupils had strong feelings about fair and unfair teacher interventions. There was praise for teachers who listened, were fair, had a sense of humour and who provided variety in their teaching methods. However, they talked about the impact of lack of trust by teachers and frustration with staff who 'jumped to conclusions';
- When asked about opportunities to participate in school decision-making, there was a high level of scepticism about mechanisms for participation and numerous suggestions about how to improve this.

## **11 BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICIES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

### **Introduction**

11.1 This chapter reports the findings on policies and approaches to behaviour management from the survey of teachers and headteachers.<sup>27</sup> It provides an overview of these, how frequently they were used and perceptions of the most helpful approaches. It then reports perceptions of the support available in delivering these approaches, including training and staff confidence in using them. The chapter goes on to describe the importance ascribed to working in partnership with parents and other agencies and relates the time spent on these activities. It concludes with a brief comparison of the 2006 findings in terms of approaches to behaviour management before providing a summary. The survey findings are supplemented with illustrative data from school visits, interviews and focus groups in the eight secondary schools visited as part of the study.

### **Approaches used, frequency and helpfulness**

11.2 Secondary headteachers and teachers were given a list of approaches used to encourage positive behaviour and manage negative behaviour. They were asked about how frequently these were used and asked to identify the three most helpful strategies. Table 11.1 provides an overview. It shows the wide range of approaches used with every approach being mentioned by some headteachers and teachers. The impression from Table 11.1 is the emphasis being given to the positive and supportive, both in terms of whole school approaches designed to create a positive environment for all young people and in terms of interventions targeted at particular young people with behavioural needs. However, the percentages of headteachers and teachers citing punishment exercises (L) and detention (M) as approaches used frequently or sometimes, suggests a more carrot and stick approach to behaviour management than was evident in primary schools. See Chapter 6.

11.3 The three most frequently<sup>28</sup> used approaches reported by teachers were the promotion of positive behaviour through a whole school ethos and values (A), referral to senior staff/headteacher (N) and break time supervision (E). Headteachers also identified a whole school ethos and values, and break time supervision as being in most frequent use but saw an anti-bullying policy (C) being used more frequently than teachers. It is interesting that both headteachers and teachers identified the same two most frequently used strategies as their perceptions about other aspects of behaviour sometimes differ.

11.4 The three strategies teachers identified as being never used were circle time (F); learning stances (J); and third equal, nurture groups (R) and local authority off site provision (S). For headteachers, the least frequently used

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<sup>27</sup> Support staff were not asked these questions.

<sup>28</sup> Using percentages from the frequently column.

strategies were learning stances (J), the motivated school (I) and local authority off site provision (S). Again both secondary headteachers and teachers identified the same two least frequently used strategies.

**TABLE 11.1 POLICIES AND APPROACHES ON BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOL IN 2009**

Below is a list of approaches that some schools and classroom teachers use to encourage positive behaviour and manage negative behaviour. Please indicate whether any of the approaches are currently used within your school.

(Please circle one number in each row)

		Secondary Teachers					Secondary Head Teachers				
		Frequently	S'times	Rarely	Never	N	Frequently	S'time s	Rarely	Never	N
		%	%	%	%	N	%	%	%	%	N
A	Promotion of positive behaviour through whole school ethos and values	*63	30	6	1	1454	90	10	**-	-	240
B	Curriculum programmes in social and emotional skills and wellbeing	40	42	13	5	1401	60	37	3	-	237
C	Anti bullying policy	59	33	7	1	1435	73	23	4	-	239
D	Buddying / peer mentoring	51	36	10	3	1440	61	33	5	-	240
E	Break-time supervision	61	22	12	5	1440	90	7	2	1	240
F	Circle time	3	15	22	60	1290	7	19	26	49	233
G	Restorative practices	16	41	24	19	1318	24	51	17	8	238
H	Solution oriented approaches	17	40	21	22	1267	26	53	14	8	236
I	The Motivated School	10	22	18	50	1168	5	21	18	57	229
J	Learning stances (e.g. SELF)	5	19	20	56	1129	3	12	16	68	221
K	Reward systems for pupils	53	36	8	4	1421	65	27	5	3	241
L	Punishment exercises	60	25	7	8	1445	44	35	11	11	238
M	Detention	57	32	6	4	1445	44	43	10	3	239
N	Referral to SMT / HT	65	32	3	-	1455	58	38	5	-	239
O	Time out	33	41	16	11	1414	31	50	16	3	235
P	Targeted small group work e.g. anger management	23	47	21	9	1398	28	58	13	1	238
Q	Pupil / behaviour support base in school / campus	54	28	7	11	1422	46	28	10	16	239
R	Nurture groups / nurture principles	9	21	20	50	1219	9	23	18	50	232
S	Local authority off site provision (SEBN)	9	24	34	34	1256	6	21	34	39	237
T	Home-school link officers / work with families	26	37	24	13	1318	35	31	19	16	238
U	Classroom / learning assistants	54	36	7	2	1431	55	32	8	5	237
V	Behaviour / pupil support team / co-ordinator	47	34	11	8	1390	60	23	5	12	238
W	Staged assessment and intervention model, (e.g. school and multi-agency joint assessment and planning teams)	35	38	16	12	1304	53	34	9	5	238
X	Campus based police officers or community police partnerships	19	18	15	49	1370	21	19	15	45	238
Y	Transition partnerships and activities	26	34	19	22	1243	41	38	16	6	237
Z	Broad curriculum options: vocational opportunities; personal and social development programmes (ASDAN awards, XL, Duke of Edinburgh); HE/FE college placements	47	39	11	3	1398	65	31	3	1	239
1	In-service events / input / training on behaviour	22	47	24	7	1398	23	66	12	-	235
2	Pupils actively involved in developing ideas and activities in the school (e.g. pupil council)	45	41	12	2	1423	50	45	5	-	242
3	Exclusion	29	48	21	2	1437	22	52	25	2	240

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and so totals may not sum to 100, \*\*'- ' indicates where % is zero or rounds to zero

11.5 When asked to identify which from the list were the three most helpful strategies, both secondary teachers and headteachers identified promoting positive behaviour through whole school ethos and values (A), and reward systems for pupils (K). Teachers identified referrals (N) in their top three. Headteachers, in contrast, identified broad curriculum options (Z).

11.6 Some detailed descriptions of particular strategies were gained from school visits. Promoting positive behaviour was linked in all 8 schools visited with the development of a strong whole school ethos and a shared code of values. Headteachers, deputies and staff in all eight secondary schools echoed the importance of a positive school ethos based on shared values and expectations underpinning particular behaviour management approaches. The following excerpt from interviews is typical.

*The foundation of our approach is a common code of conduct which highlights treating one another with respect and allowing learning to take place. ...The staff deal sensitively and well with pupils and are a very caring staff. (SS1)*

11.7 It was common to see rules, codes of conduct and the like on display in classrooms and in the main public areas of schools. These had often been developed in consultation with pupils and were refreshed with the new first years via assemblies or through personal and social education classes. All schools visited operated systems of recognising positive behaviour, awarding points and certificates to pupils. All also identified a problem of consistency in rewarding points, particularly problematic in large schools and drew attention to the invisibility of 'the average pupil(s)' who attended well, did their work and yet did not get any recognition. This was raised by pupils too. See chapter 10.

11.8 The schools visited operated additional strategies to those mentioned in the survey. The most commonly identified was a pupil support system to promote positive behaviour. These were based both on year groups where a senior member of staff oversaw behavioural issues and a house system which promoted vertical integration of pupils from different year groups. In some schools guidance staff were allocated to particular houses, which helped them gain an overview of issues affecting families.

### **Support in using strategies**

11.9 Support in promoting positive behaviour and in dealing with negative behaviour is available in a number of ways. This includes the provision of classroom and learning assistants, specialist staff, support from colleagues and professional development and training. We report on each of these.

11.10 Table 11.1 shows classroom and learning assistants (U) were clearly a key part of behaviour management approaches as were break-time supervisors (E). Support was also available from specialist staff and from home-school link workers. School visits revealed how very highly valued these staff were.

11.11 A variety of specialist staff was used in schools either to support positive behaviour or to help pupils with behavioural needs. The range of staff being used *frequently or sometimes* included:

- Staff in pupil support bases – mentioned by 82% of teachers and 74% of headteachers;
- Behaviour co-ordinator - mentioned by 81% of teachers and 83% of headteachers;
- Home-school link workers – mentioned by 63% of teachers and 66% of headteachers.

11.12 Less frequently in evidence were campus based police officers, or community police partnerships.<sup>29</sup> Some 37% of teachers and 40% of headteachers mentioned this relatively recent innovation. Campus based police officers were in evidence in two of the eight schools visited. They were directly involved in behaviour management and were regarded as a huge asset. The staff in one school said it was a great pity that their cop had had to be withdrawn for financial reasons, as he had been a real help with a gang culture and resolving conflicts in the local community which had been brought into the school.

11.13 Teachers were also asked about the overall level of support offered to them in their school. The overwhelming majority, (68%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, 'I am confident that senior staff will help me if I experience behaviour management difficulties.' All schools visited operated systems whereby a senior member of staff could be contacted urgently by a class teacher if need be. A typical comment was: *We feel very supported by [SMT] ... It is a supportive system for staff and pupils.* (SS 2)

11.14 Support Staff also reflected the positive views about being supported in managing behaviour with 74% agreeing or strongly agreeing that they were well supported. This was also reflected in focus groups although a minority said that they were not always as respected by staff or pupils as teachers were.

11.15 Informal support from colleagues was also valued in the schools visited. Support was provided in a variety of ways, including team teaching, removing particularly troublesome pupils from class and review and discussion of lessons with teachers. Some schools operated a system of classroom observation to help identify factors in the classroom environment that were contributing to disruptive behaviour.

## **Training and confidence**

11.16 Fewer secondary than primary teachers indicated taking part in effective training, involvement in whole school development planning and in staff development activity related to discipline or positive behaviour. 45% of

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<sup>29</sup> There are around 50 campus based police officers in Scotland. They are based in secondary schools but may work with some primary schools in their cluster area. They are deployed for a range of purposes, not necessarily including behaviour management.

secondary teachers strongly agreed or agreed that they had had effective training in behaviour management approaches used in their schools. Fewer than 1 in 3 (29%) of secondary teachers had been involved in whole school planning in relation to discipline more than twice in the last three years. A similar number (28%) had participated more than twice in the last three years in some kind of staff development activity or training in relation to discipline or positive behaviour. 54% had participated once or twice in some kind of staff development and training with 18% never having participated.

11.17 This was even less so for support staff. About 1 in 4 (21%) support staff strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that there was adequate training for classroom assistants to deal with behaviour difficulties; 60% strongly disagreed or disagreed with this statement.

11.18 Data from headteachers revealed that about 53% of the training had been provided by the local authority; 34% from independent providers; 12% had had training from the Scottish Government Positive Behaviour Team and 34% from other providers. 64% of heads indicated that they had received support from their local authority in the last 3 years to try new initiatives for promoting positive behaviour. The support took various forms. Some 38% of secondary headteachers said they had received additional funding or staff support; 33% had had training from the local authority; 30% had had advice and consultancy; and 21% had had strategic or policy support.<sup>30</sup>

11.19 Teachers were confident or very confident in their abilities to promote positive behaviour in their classrooms (87%) and in responding to indiscipline in their classrooms (85%).

11.20 Headteachers indicated that many members of the school community had been actively involved in developing strategies in relation to discipline and positive behaviour. The main groups indicated by percentages of headteachers were:

**TABLE 11.2 MEMBERS OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL COMMUNITY INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING STRATEGIES**

Members of school community involved in developing strategies	Headteachers % (N=242)
Teachers	99
Pupils	87
Parents	69
Educational psychologists	64
Home-school link staff	57
Learning assistants	56
Social workers	36
Campus police	38
Youth workers	33
Caretakers/janitors	30
Lunchtime/playground assistants	18
School meal staff	12

11.21 The picture presented by the support staff survey on this issue was rather at variance from that in the headteacher survey. Whereas 56% of

<sup>30</sup> Headteachers could identify more than one kind of support so totals do not sum to 100%.

headteachers reported involving learning assistants in policy development, a similar percentage of support staff (54%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed that that they were regularly involved in discussions about improving behaviour in the school. 27% of support staff reported that they were regularly involved. This mixed picture was echoed by the school visits. In some schools support staff reported being consulted and feeling valued. In two schools, however, support staff felt that their views were not taken into account and that there was no mechanism for doing so. *We are at the bottom of the pile. Nobody consults us about anything.* (SS5)

### Time spent on behaviour management

11.22 As table 11.3 shows, 62% of headteachers spent an hour or more in their last full teaching week on specific activities to promote positive behaviour and dealing with indiscipline referrals from staff. The majority of teachers spent either no time or under an hour promoting positive behaviour.

TABLE 11.3 TIME SPENT ON BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT BY SECONDARY HEADTEACHERS AND TEACHERS IN THE LAST FULL TEACHING WEEK

	Secondary teachers					Secondary Head teachers				
	No time spent	Under an hour	An hour to three hours	More than three hours	N	No time spent	Under an hour	An hour to three hours	More than three hours	N
	%	%	%	%	N	%	%	%	%	N
Specific activities in your school to promote positive school ethos and behaviour	33	41	21	6	1443	4	33	45	17	242
Dealing with indiscipline referrals	47	27	17	8	1410	8	43	35	13	240
Working with other partners or members of the school community	70	16	10	5	1439	24	28	39	8	246
Giving or receiving informal support to/from colleagues in relation to indiscipline and positive behaviour	13	56	25	6	1446	6	51	35	9	245
Planning or providing behaviour support to individual pupils	31	46	17	6	1431	23	43	27	6	244
Talking to parents about behaviour (exclude parents' evenings)	75	14	8	3	1443	18	42	32	7	244
Dealing with the same pupils who present challenging behaviour pupils	11	51	29	10	1450	14	46	33	8	246

\*percentages rounded to nearest whole number and so totals may not sum to 100

11.23 Within schools visited, the same approach to encouraging teachers to accept responsibility for behaviour in their classrooms was a common theme. All schools had referral systems whereby continual or serious misbehaviour was referred to successively more senior members of staff. One secondary school visited described how the collection and analysis of referral statistics had been illuminating.

*It became clear that two or three departments were being heavy handed and when they saw similar sized departments with fewer punishment exercises [being issued] they had to look to their own departmental policy (SS5)*

11.24 The large majority of secondary headteachers felt that parents were supportive both generally and in terms of behaviour and discipline issues. This was also a feature in the schools visited where many staff emphasised the importance of regular contact with pupils' families. In one school visited a parent automatically received a text message if a pupil got to the first rung of formal punishment being recorded on the system and the headteacher reported a 50% drop in referrals as a result of this.

11.25 81% of headteachers surveyed had spent some time talking with parents about their child's behaviour in the last week. The picture was very different for secondary teachers. 75% indicated that they had spent *no* time talking to parents about pupils' behaviour in the last week; 14% had spent less than an hour doing this and 11% had spent longer.

11.26 Partnership working was an important aspect of promoting positive behaviour and in meeting the needs of pupils with behavioural difficulties. 39% of secondary headteachers had spent 1-3 hours in the previous week working with partners or other members of the school community; 8% had spent more than 3 hours. However 24% had spent no time and 28% had spent less than an hour engaged in this.

### **Comparisons with 2006**

11.27 It is not possible to compare exactly the approaches used to encourage positive behaviour and to manage negative behaviour in 2006 and 2009. This is because a slightly different list of approaches was used in the two surveys. In addition the frequency of use categories were different.

11.28 The most frequently used strategies in 2006 and 2009 are very similar although different language is sometimes used in the two surveys to describe strategies. Those identified by 90% of secondary headteachers as being used in 2006 and by secondary headteachers as being used frequently or sometimes in 2009 are:

- Curriculum programmes in social and emotional well being;
- Broad curriculum options;
- Anti-bullying policies;
- Buddying/peer mentoring;
- Break time supervision;
- Reward systems for pupils;
- Involving pupils in developing ideas and activities in the school.



11.29 Some specific whole school approaches were not separately itemised in 2006 but included in one question asking about the use of ‘whole school initiatives such as Restorative Practices, Motivated School or Solution-Oriented School.’ They were separately itemised in 2009. It seems likely that the use of some of these strategies had increased in 2009. We can infer this by inspecting the percentages in the not used column for 2009. In 2006, 29% of secondary teachers and 54% of secondary headteachers said none of these strategies was used in their schools. In 2009 by contrast, the percentages not using these approaches had fallen markedly in some cases. For example, *Restorative Practices (G)* were never used by 19% of teachers and 8% of headteachers while *Solution oriented approaches (H)* were never used by 2% of teachers and 8% of headteachers.

11.30 Finally it is worth noting that behaviour co-ordinators seem to be used more frequently in 2009 than in 2006. Around one in three secondary headteachers in 2006 said that they never used behaviour co-ordinators, compared to around 1 in 8 (12%) in 2009.

## Summary

11.31 The 2009 survey data indicates that in secondary schools there is wide agreement about the key approaches to promoting positive behaviour and dealing with negative behaviour. The most frequently identified strategies from teachers and headteachers are:

**TABLE 11.4 MOST AND LEAST FREQUENTLY USED BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

Most frequently used strategies	Least frequently used strategies
The promotion of a positive behaviour through whole school ethos and values	Circle time
Break time supervision	Learning stances
Anti-bullying policies	Nurture groups
Referral of pupils to more senior staff	Local authority off site provision

11.32 These frequently used strategies are also seen as the most helpful by both headteachers and teachers.

11.33 Other key findings are:

- Support in promoting positive behaviour and in dealing with negative behaviour is available in a number of ways. These include the provision of classroom and learning assistants, specialist support staff, support from colleagues and professional development and training. These were all highly valued;
- Support staff was the least satisfied group in terms of adequacy of training;
- There is reported involvement of a wide range of staff in policy development, some involvement of parents and substantial

involvement of pupils. Perceptions about involvement vary, with support staff in particular reporting lack of involvement in policy development;

- The vast majority of teachers and support staff are confident in their behaviour management skills and in the support of senior management in terms of dealing with disruptive behaviour;
- Comparisons with 2006 are difficult but more headteachers and teachers seem to be using several approaches that had been promoted by the Scottish Government. These include Restorative Practices, and Solution Oriented approaches.

## 12 COMPARISON OF 2006 AND 2009 PERCEPTIONS OF BEHAVIOUR

### Introduction

12.1 The surveys asked questions about a wide range of behaviours. Of particular interest to many stakeholders in education is the frequency of specific types of positive and negative pupil behaviour and whether these are changing over time. In this chapter we look at differences in perceived frequencies between 2006 and 2009.

12.2 The way in which the comparisons are undertaken must be technically rigorous and accurate. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the method used and to set out the results of applying it to the data collected in 2006 and 2009.

### Organisation of questions

12.3 The six question categories used in this chapter, and the numbers of questions in each category in each year, are given below. To facilitate reference in the tables contained in this chapter, each category has a shorthand notation given in brackets.

Positive behaviour in the classroom (C+)	11 questions in 2006, 13 in 2009
Positive behaviour around the school (S+)	9 questions in 2006, 10 in 2009
Low level indiscipline in the classroom (C-)	12 questions in 2006, 12 in 2009
Low level indiscipline around the school (S-)	9 questions in 2006, 9 in 2009
Serious indiscipline in the classroom (C--)	12 questions in 2006, 14 in 2009
Serious indiscipline around the school (S--)	14 questions in 2006, 16 in 2009

12.4 As can be seen, a few new questions were added in 2009 and of course for these, comparisons with 2006 are not possible, though response frequencies for 2009 have been calculated.

### Management of response scales

12.5 Comparisons between 2006 and 2009 were complicated by changes made to the survey form. Since all comparisons must be on a like-with-like basis, it was necessary to “unpick” each of the changes so that the two data sets were in identical formats before the comparisons could be made.

12.6 For “Positive behaviour in the classroom”, the same scale was used in both 2006 and 2009. It is given in table 2.3 for example. No “unpicking” was therefore necessary.

12.7 For “Positive behaviour around the school”, the scales used in 2006 and 2009 were so different as to make year-on-year comparisons impossible. Response frequencies for both 2006 and 2009 are given in the complete tables which will be made available online as part of the reporting process but no inferences can be made about changes over time.

12.8 For the other four categories (“Low-level indiscipline in the classroom”, “Low-level indiscipline around the school”, “Serious indiscipline/violence in the classroom” and “Serious indiscipline/violence around the school”), the scales used were:

2006	2009
Several times daily	Several times a day
	Twice a day
Once a day	Once a day
3 or 4 times a week	3 or 4 times last week
Once or twice a week	Twice last week
	Once last week
Not at all	Not at all last week

12.9 For the application of significance tests for changes between 2006 and 2009, the introduction of two new points to the scale in 2009 required some recoding before comparisons could be made. “Twice last week” and “Once last week” were pooled into “Once or twice a week”; “Twice a day” and “Several times a day” were pooled into “Several times daily”. This second pooling assumes that if “Twice a day” had not been available, everyone selecting it would have chosen “Several times a day” instead. In fact it is possible that a small number may have opted for “Once a day”. It is unlikely that there were many such cases and to the extent that they did introduce error, it was to inflate slightly the perceived levels of indiscipline in 2009 relative to 2006. Any improvements over time therefore occurred despite this bias and not because of it.

## Reporting of results

12.10 The six staff groups used elsewhere in this report (i.e. teacher, head teacher and support staff in secondary and primary schools) were used again for reporting purposes along with the six question categories. Table 12.1 gives the number of questions (and hence the number of comparisons) in each category for each group. Some of the cells have zero entries (-) showing that no comparisons were possible for that combination. For “Positive behaviour around the school”, this was because of changes in the response scale, while the other cases occurred because certain categories of questions were not put to all the response groups. Support staff, for example, were asked about behaviour in the classroom but not around the school.

	Secondary Teachers (ST)	Primary Teachers (PT)	Secondary Heads (SH)	Primary Heads (PH)	Secondary Support (SS)	Primary Support (PS)	Total
C+	11	11	11	11	11	11	66
S+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
C-	12	12	-	-	12	12	48
S-	9	9	9	9	-	-	36
C--	12	12	11	11	12	12	70
S--	14	14	14	14	-	-	56
Total	58	58	45	45	35	35	276

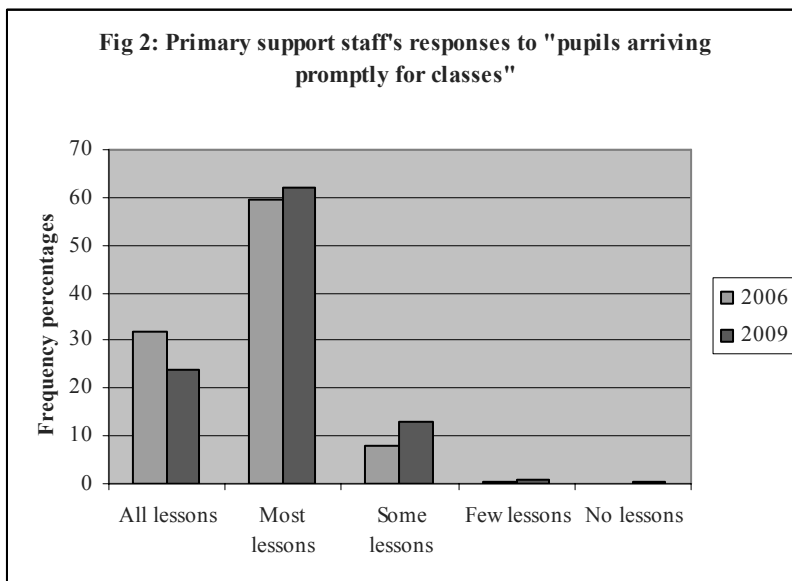
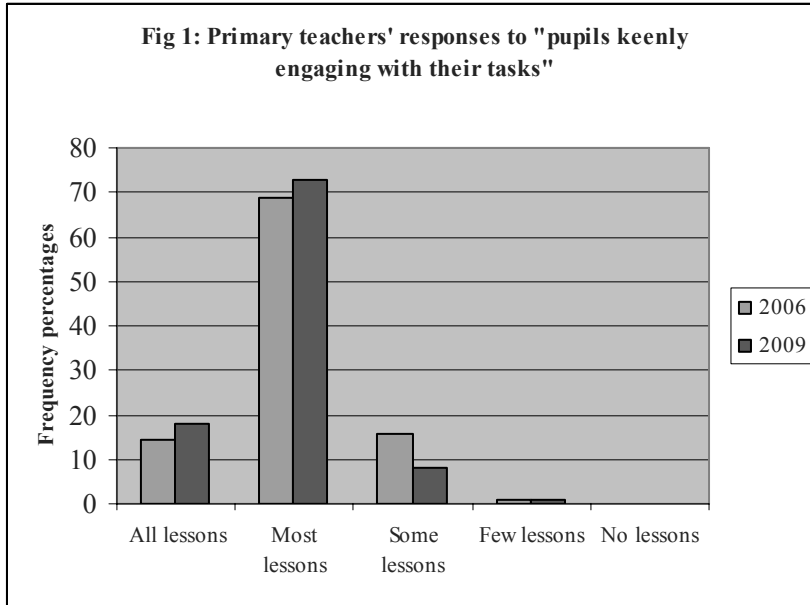
12.11 Tables 12.2 and 12.3 show two examples of the results of single comparisons. The first is taken from “Positive behaviour in the classroom”, where the same response scale was used in both years, and the second from “Low-level indiscipline in the classroom”, where different scales were used. In both cases, the entries in the body of the table give the percentages of teachers in each year who selected each point on the response scale. These percentages sum to 100 plus or minus rounding error. The last two columns give the sample sizes on which the percentages are based and the direction and significance of the difference between the years. The data were treated as being ordinal in nature (i.e. the points on the scale are in a sequence of increasing or decreasing levels of frequency of occurrence of behaviour) and the test used was Mann-Whitney *U*. This was applied to each of the 276 comparisons individually to assess the direction of the change, “positive” denoting a move towards better levels of discipline and “negative” towards worse levels. It also calculates the probability that a change as large as, or larger than, that observed could have occurred as a result of sampling variation (i.e. could have occurred even if there had been no real underlying change in levels of perceived indiscipline in the population of teachers as a whole). If this number is less than 0.05, the difference is said to be significant at the 5% level. If it is less than 0.01 and 0.001, the difference is said to be significant at the 1% and 0.1% levels respectively. If the number is greater than 0.05, the result is said to be not statistically significant. In the examples given in tables 12.2 and 12.3 therefore, the frequency of pupils arriving with the correct equipment has improved and to an extent which cannot be ascribed to sampling variation. The frequency of talking out of turn however has deteriorated, but to an extent which is well within the range of sampling variation (i.e. not significant). A change as large as this would occur on average on two occasions out of every three even if no change in the views of all teachers had in fact occurred.

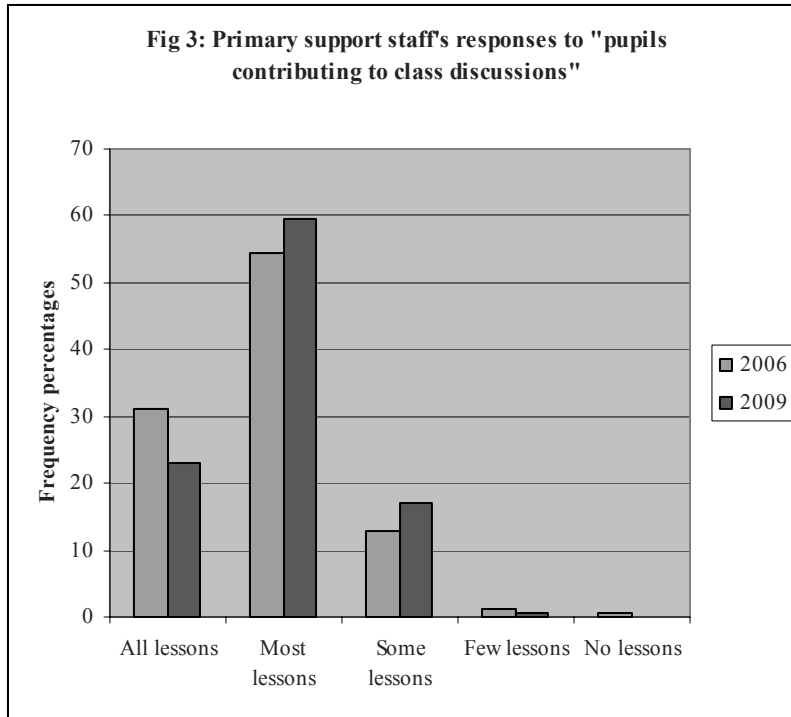
TABLE 12.2: SECONDARY TEACHERS' RESPONSES TO "PUPILS ARRIVING WITH THE CORRECT EQUIPMENT"							
	All lessons	Most lessons	Some lessons	Few lessons	No lessons	N	Change
2006	3	50	27	17	3	548	Positive
2009	3	60	23	12	2	1456	0.000

TABLE 12.3: SECONDARY TEACHERS' RESPONSES TO "TALKING OUT OF TURN"									
	Several times daily		Once a day	3 or 4 times a week	Once or twice a week		Not at all	N	Change
2006	64		11	11	13		1	547	Negative
	Several times a day	Twice a day	Once a day	3 or 4 times last week	Twice last week	Once last week	Not at all last week	N	
2009	53	13	7	13	8	5	1	1460	0.665

12.12 To give an impression of what changes of these sizes mean in practice, figs 1, 2 and 3 depict comparisons where the level of significance is close to the boundaries given above. Fig 1 shows the responses of primary teachers to the question “pupils keenly engaging with their tasks”. Here there was a positive change from 2006 to 2009 where the significance level was close to the 0.1% level. Fig 2 shows the responses of primary support staff to the

question “pupils arriving promptly for classes”. Here there was a negative change from 2006 to 2009 where the significance level was close to the 1% level. Fig 3 shows the responses of primary support staff to the question “pupils contributing to class discussions”. Here there was a negative change from 2006 to 2009 where the significance level was close to the 5% level.





12.13 In order to make the reporting of the results of the tests manageable, the following code was devised:

- +++ Change was in the positive direction and significant at the 0.1% level
- ++ Change was in the positive direction and significant at the 1% level
- + Change was in the positive direction and significant at the 5% level
- <blank> Change was not statistically significant
- Change was in the negative direction and significant at the 5% level
- Change was in the negative direction and significant at the 1% level
- Change was in the negative direction and significant at the 0.1% level

12.14 Using this code, tables 12.4 to 12.8 summarise the results for five of the six question categories (no comparisons were possible for "Positive behaviour around the school", hence its absence from these sections). In each case the summary table is followed by a commentary. For questions where no comparison is possible between 2006 and 2009, the appropriate cells are shaded in dark grey.

### ***Positive behaviour in the classroom***

12.15 The summary table for this category is given in table 12.4. The last two rows contain questions not asked in 2006 and for which no comparisons are therefore possible. Comparing the columns in this table, it is immediately apparent that the most positive comparisons came from the secondary teachers. For all eleven questions for which comparisons are possible, this group recorded a positive change of a size which was highly significant. The next most positive group were the secondary head teachers who recorded significant positive changes for eight of the eleven questions. Otherwise, the picture is more muted. Secondary support staff recorded positive changes for only two questions and primary teachers for five. Primary head teachers

recorded no significant changes at all in either direction while primary support staff felt that where there had been changes (only two questions), they had been in the negative direction. A possible explanation for this is that support staff are now used in a more “targeted” way than in 2006 in that they are deployed in classes which have higher levels of challenging behaviour, rather than as general classroom assistants used where the need arises. To the extent that this is true, the observed shift in perceptions of indiscipline may reflect changes over the last three years in the ways in which support staff are deployed in schools rather than actual levels of indiscipline.

<b>TABLE 12.4: DIRECTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CHANGES BETWEEN 2006 AND 2009 FOR EACH RESPONDENT GROUP FOR QUESTIONS IN THE CATEGORY “POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR IN THE CLASSROOM”</b>	ST	SH	SS	PT	PH	PS
Pupils arriving with the correct equipment	+++	++				
Pupils following instructions	+++					--
Pupils settling down quickly	+++	+				
Pupils contributing to class discussions	+++	++				-
Pupils listening to others’ views respectfully	+++	++		+		
Pupils listening to the teacher respectfully	+++			+		
Pupils keenly engaging with their tasks	+++	+		+++		
Pupils politely seeking teacher help	+++	++	+++			
Attentive, interested pupils	+++			++		
Pupils arriving promptly for classes	+++	+				
Lessons that are calm, relaxed and enjoyable	+++	++	+	+		
Pupils interacting supportively with each other						
Pupils enthusiastically participating in classroom activities						

12.16 Overall, it can be said that secondary staff were more positive than primary in recording changes in levels of discipline (though not necessarily in the recording actual levels themselves: for this, the frequencies should be consulted); that teachers are more upbeat than head teachers in both sectors; and that support staff are less positive than teachers, again in both sectors. Overall however the picture is much more reflective of positive than of negative change from 2006 to 2009.

***Low-level indiscipline in the classroom***

12.17 The summary table for these questions is given in Table 12.5. These questions were not asked of head teachers in either sector and so the entries in these two columns are shaded in dark grey.



TABLE 12.5: DIRECTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CHANGES BETWEEN 2006 AND 2009 FOR EACH RESPONDENT GROUP FOR QUESTIONS IN THE CATEGORY “LOW LEVEL INDISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM”	ST	SH	SS	PT	PH	PS
Talking out of turn						-
Making unnecessary noise	+					
Hindering other pupils						-
Getting out of their seat without permission	+					
Not being punctual			--			--
Persistently infringing class rules	+++					
Eating / chewing in class	+++			++		
Work avoidance				+++		
Cheeky or impertinent remarks or responses	+++					
General rowdiness, horseplay or mucking about	+++					
Use of mobile phones / texting	++		--			
Pupils withdrawing from interaction with others / you	---		---	---		-

12.18 The most positive perceptions of changes again come from the secondary teachers, who record a significant positive change for seven of the twelve questions and a negative change on one. The other three groups do not offer a clear picture. The primary teachers recorded positive changes on two items and a negative change on one while secondary and primary support recorded no positive changes at all against three and four negative ones respectively. The point made above about changes in the patterns of deployment of support staff should be noted again here. One interesting feature of Table 12.5 is the unanimity shown in respect of “Pupils withdrawing from interaction with others / you” for which all four groups recorded a significant negative change. It is not clear whether this is due to a genuine increase in this type of behaviour in the class or to a change in the extent to which teachers are aware of it and hence to the likelihood of their classifying passive behaviour as withdrawal. Overall, the position regarding “Low level indiscipline in the classroom” is not so clear cut as that for “Positive behaviour in the classroom” but with the exception of the “Withdrawal” question, changes were more likely to be positive than negative where they occurred.

### ***Low-level indiscipline around the school***

12.19 The summary table for this category is Table 12.6. Questions about behaviour around the school were not asked of support staff so the entries in these columns are shaded in dark grey.

<b>TABLE 12.6: DIRECTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CHANGES BETWEEN 2006 AND 2009 FOR EACH RESPONDENT GROUP FOR QUESTIONS IN THE CATEGORY "LOW LEVEL INDISCIPLINE AROUND THE SCHOOL"</b>	ST	SH	SS	PT	PH	PS
Running in the corridor	++	++				
Unruliness while waiting	+++	+++		+++	+	
Showing lack of concern for others	+++	+++		+++	++	
Persistently infringing school rules	+++	+++		+++		
Cheeky or impertinent remarks or responses	+++	+++		+++		
Loitering in "prohibited" areas	+++	+++		+++	+++	
Leaving school premises without permission	+++	+++		+++		
General rowdiness, horseplay or mucking about	+++	++		+++	++	
Using mobile phones / texting against school policies	+++	+++				

12.20 Overall, the picture here is the most positive seen so far. Both secondary teachers and secondary head teachers recorded improvements over time for all nine of the items in this category. All eighteen of these changes were significant at the 1% level at least and mostly at the 0.1% level. The position in the primary sector was not so thoroughly positive but even here, the teachers showed significant positive movement on seven of the nine questions and the head teachers on four of the nine. For none of the comparisons was there a significant negative change. It should perhaps be noted that in the primary sector, the number of instances of low level indiscipline recorded in 2006 was so low for some questions that significant improvement would have been difficult to achieve. In the case of "Using mobile phones / texting against school policies" for example, the percentage of teachers who recorded that this happened at all last week fell by 1.8 from 6.1 to 4.3. While this represents a fall of nearly one third, it was from such a low starting point that the absolute size of the change was not enough to trigger statistical significance.

### ***Serious indiscipline/violence in the classroom***

12.21 The summary table is Table 12.7. Two questions are new to 2009 and so have no comparisons and the question about truancy was not asked of head teachers in 2009.

12.22 The picture given by this table is varied, though some of the variation can be attributed to changes in the wording of questions. The secondary teachers were once again positive about the changes, recording significant improvements for ten of the twelve questions in this category. One of the non-significant changes was "Racist abuse towards you" where the proportion of teachers recording any instance fell from 1.5% to 0.8%. From such a small base, a significant improvement would have been difficult to achieve short of a complete eradication. The primary teachers were also positive, though not

quite so much so as their secondary counterparts, recording positive changes on five questions with no negative ones.

TABLE 12.7: DIRECTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CHANGES BETWEEN 2006 AND 2009 FOR EACH RESPONDENT GROUP FOR QUESTIONS IN THE CATEGORY "SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM". THE LIGHT GREY SHADED CELLS DENOTE COMPARISONS OF QUESTIONABLE VALIDITY (SEE TEXT)	ST	SH	SS	PT	PH	PS
Truancy	+++			+++		+
Physical destructiveness	+++	+++	+++			
Racist abuse towards other pupils	+++		+			
Sexist abuse or harassment of other pupils	+++	+	++			
General verbal abuse towards other pupils	+++	+++	+++	+++		+++
Racist abuse towards you (or your staff)						
Sexist abuse or harassment towards you (or your staff)		---	+++			++
General verbal abuse towards you (or your staff)	+++	---	+++	+++	---	
Pupils under the influence of illegal drugs / alcohol						
Physical aggression towards other pupils	+++	+++	+++	+++		
Physical violence towards other pupils	+++	+++	+++	+++	++	
Using mobile phones abusively						
Physical aggression towards you (or your staff)	+++	---	++		-	
Physical violence towards you (or your staff)	++				-	

12.23 The head teachers in the two sectors showed a mixture of positive and negative changes. Closer examination of the table however shows that all three of the significantly negative changes in each sector occurred for questions where the stem ended "towards you / staff". In all, there were five such questions and hence ten comparisons in the two sectors, of which six were significantly negative and four were not significant. The explanation for this lies at least in part in a small but significant change in the wording of these questions. In 2006, the stem ended "towards you" but in 2009, this was changed to "towards staff" for the questions about behaviour in the classroom and to "towards you or your staff" for questions about behaviour around the school. This change, while small linguistically, represents a significant widening of the behaviour being surveyed and compromises comparison between 2006 and 2009. This change refers only to the head teacher questionnaire and only those five questions. The ten cells affected in table 12.7 are shaded in light grey: perhaps it is not a coincidence that all the negative shifts recorded occurred in these cells. Otherwise, the secondary head teachers recorded five positive changes and the primary head teachers one. Even support staff were able to record moves in a positive direction with secondary support staff showing significantly positive changes for nine of the twelve questions and primary support staff for three questions.

### ***Serious indiscipline/violence around the school***

12.24 This is the largest of the categories with 14 questions common to 2006 and 2009. Its summary table is Table 12.8. As for “Serious indiscipline in the classroom”, there were two new questions and this category of questions was not asked of support staff so these entries in the table are in dark grey.

TABLE 12.8: DIRECTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CHANGES BETWEEN 2006 AND 2009 FOR EACH RESPONDENT GROUP FOR QUESTIONS IN THE CATEGORY “SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE AROUND THE SCHOOL”. THE LIGHT GREY SHADED CELLS DENOTE COMPARISONS OF QUESTIONABLE VALIDITY (SEE TEXT)	ST	SH	SS	PT	PH	PS
Pupils deliberately excluding others	+++	+++		+++	+++	
Pupils withdrawing from interaction with peers	+++	+++		+++	+	
Pupils truanting	+++	+		+++		
Physical destructiveness	+++	+++		+		
Racist abuse towards other pupils	+++					
Sexist abuse or harassment of other pupils	+++					
General verbal abuse towards other pupils	+++	+++		+++	+++	
Racist abuse towards you (or your staff)	++					
Sexist abuse or harassment towards you (or your staff)	++	--		+		
General verbal abuse towards you (or your staff)	+++	---		+++	--	
Pupils under the influence of illegal drugs / alcohol						
Physical aggression towards other pupils	+++	+++		+++	++	
Physical violence towards other pupils	+++	+++		+++	++	
Using mobile phones abusively						
Physical aggression towards you (or your staff)	++	---		++	-	
Physical violence towards you (or your staff)	+++					

12.25 This table has much in common with the previous one. The secondary teachers are again uniformly positive, recording significant positive changes for all fourteen of the questions which appeared in both 2006 and 2009. The primary teachers are also upbeat with positive changes for ten of the fourteen questions and no negative changes. For the head teachers, we must remember again that the five questions ending “towards you / your staff” were amended in 2009 and cannot be compared directly to the 2006 versions. Again the cells in question are shaded in light grey. Of the ten comparisons across the two sectors for questions of this type, five were significantly negative and five were not significant. Of the other nine questions, the secondary head teachers moved in a positive direction on seven and the primary head teachers on five. No negative changes were recorded.

### ***A summary of summaries***

12.26 It is now falls to attempt to encapsulate the foregoing figures in a single table. It is possible to do this by counting, for each combination of respondent group and question category, how many of the comparisons were significantly positive (at the 5% level or above), not significant, or significantly negative. The result is in Table 12.9. The entry in each cell of the table is in the format P/X/N giving the number of positive, non-significant and negative comparisons respectively, taken directly from Tables 12.4 to 12.8.

12.27 The marginal totals of Table 12.9 confirm the picture given above. The largest proportion of positive changes came from the secondary teachers followed by the primary teachers and the secondary heads teachers. The primary head teachers and secondary support staff were less positive though still returning more positive than negative changes. All eleven of the negative changes recorded for the head teachers in both sectors came from the “light grey box” comparisons in Tables 12.7 and 12.8 which were of questionable validity. The primary support staff were least positive about how discipline was moving, reporting three positive changes and six negative out of 35 comparisons.

<b>TABLE 12.9: NUMBER OF POSITIVELY SIGNIFICANT / NON SIGNIFICANT / NEGATIVELY SIGNIFICANT COMPARISONS BETWEEN 2006 AND 2009 FOR EACH QUESTION CATEGORY AND RESPONDENT GROUP</b>							
	ST	PT	SH	PH	SS	PS	Total
C+	11/0/0	5/6/0	8/3/0	5/6/0	2/9/0	0/9/2	31/33/2
S+							
C-	7/4/1	2/9/1			0/9/3	0/8/4	9/30/9
S-	9/0/0	7/2/0	9/0/0	4/5/0			29/7/0
C--	10/2/0	5/7/0	5/3/3	1/7/3	9/3/0	3/9/0	33/31/6
S--	14/0/0	10/4/0	7/4/3	5/7/2			36/15/5
Total	51/6/1	29/28/1	29/10/6	15/25/5	11/21/3	3/26/6	138/116/22

12.28 As regards categories, that containing the largest proportion of positive changes was “Low level indiscipline around the school” with 29 positive and seven non-significant changes out of 36 comparisons. The next most positive was “Serious indiscipline around the school” with twice as many positive as non-significant changes followed by “Positive behaviour in the classroom” and “Serious indiscipline in the classroom”, both of which had approximately equal numbers of positive and non-significant changes and few negative ones. All eleven of the negative changes for the “Serious indiscipline in the classroom” and “Serious indiscipline around the school” came from the questionable “blue box” comparisons in the head teacher columns. The least positive category was “Low level indiscipline in the classroom” where positive and negative changes were equally balanced and fewer in number than the non-significant ones. All of the negative changes in this category came from the “withdrawal” question and from support staff. All of the 22 negative changes in the survey

as a whole came from the “withdrawal” question, from support staff or from the “light grey box” comparisons for the head teachers.

## **Conclusion**

12.29 Given the coverage of school discipline in the media over the last three years, the overall impression given by these figures is surprisingly positive. Within the six respondent groups used here, the one which was most positive about changes between 2006 and 2009 were the secondary teachers who were significantly more positive in 2009 for 51 of the 58 questions for which comparison was possible. They recorded a significant move in the negative direction for only one question, on withdrawal behaviour in the classroom. Secondary head teachers, primary teachers and primary head teachers also recorded more positive than negative moves but for these groups there were greater number of questions for which no significant movement could be detected. The support staff in both sectors were the least positive in terms of reporting improvements over time. Primary support staff in fact reported a slightly larger number of negative than positive changes (the only respondent group to do so), though they recorded no significant change for most of the questions.

12.30 Perhaps it is worth emphasising that where negative changes were observed, they had (with one exception) alternative explanations in terms of changes in the wording of questions or of changes in the deployment of staff rather than changes in pupil behaviour. The one exception was the question on pupil withdrawal in the classroom and there is a case for further research to elucidate the nature and extent of this change.

12.31 It is impossible to give categorical reasons for the positive picture reported. A cynical interpretation would be that teacher expectations of standards of behaviour have fallen and that we are not in fact seeing positive moves. On the other hand, the investment at all levels, national, local and school on developing whole school positive approaches, the development of a wide range of targeted strategies to support pupils with behaviour needs and the work of the Positive Behaviour Team to disseminate information and advice and to offer support are plausible explanations for the relatively positive picture presented here. This is not to suggest that there is room for complacency. Teachers will be all too well aware that promoting positive behaviour is something that has to be worked at every day and not taken for granted. What works one day for one class or one pupil will not necessarily work for another. Behaviour is never off the agenda but we can say that the survey results show us to be travelling slowly in the right direction.

## 13 LOCAL AUTHORITY POLICY AND APPROACHES

### Introduction

13.1 Telephone interviews were conducted with representatives from the 32 local authorities identified by Directors of Education as being the most relevant person to talk to about behaviour management policy in their authority. There was a range of responsibilities represented, for example, principal psychologist, inclusion manager, behaviour support manager and head of education service.

13.2 This chapter begins by summarising responses<sup>31</sup> to six main interview topics. These are:

- Policies on behaviour management;
- Policy development, communication and monitoring;
- Training;
- Other support for schools;
- Effectiveness;
- Reporting and follow up of serious violence and indiscipline.

Our use of numbers is indicative of themes and issues emerging and should not be seen as carrying the same precision as the survey data from schools. Those interviewed fulfilled different role and responsibilities, had been in post for different amounts of time and were engaged in a semi-structured interview. They were not asked precisely the same set of questions in the same order.

### Local authority policy on behaviour management

13.3 All local authorities had policies on behaviour management in schools, which set out the roles and responsibilities of schools on the one hand, and the local authority on the other. All stressed the importance of promoting positive behaviour and described specific strategies for dealing with negative behaviour.

13.4 The extent to which behaviour management policy was seen as separate from other policies differed among authorities. There were those for whom learning and teaching and behaviour policies were fully integrated [21<sup>32</sup>, 22, 30, 20, 12] with behaviour management seen as part of a broader policy. Where behaviour policy was located within a broader local policy context this was most commonly identified as an 'Inclusion' policy such as '*Every Child is Included*', or a 'Learning and Teaching' policy such as '*Co-operative Learning*' or '*Supporting Children Supporting Effective Learning*', or some other overarching policy, such as '*Creating Confident Schools*'. In other cases there were stand-alone behaviour management policies. In a few cases the respondent was unable to say whether the Learning and Teaching policy

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<sup>31</sup> In the discussion we have used phrases such as 'a few' and 'more than half'; the numerical bands to which these all refer are as follows: 1 - 4 'a few'; 5 - 9 'some'; 10 - 16 'a large minority'; 17 - 19 'more than half'; 20 - 26 'many'; 27 - 32 'almost all'.

<sup>32</sup> Numbers refer to interview number.

mentioned behaviour and vice versa [17]. This may have been because they were recently in post.

13.5 Although the content of these policies differed in detail, a common starting point was the emphasis on relationships in schools and classrooms rather than on the specifics of behaviour management. A typical comment was, *'It's about improving ethos and relationships not about managing behaviour'* [24]. Another respondent talked about *'relationships management not behaviour management'* [31]. There was no evidence in any of the interviews of calls for a return to forms of intervention that derive from more punitive traditions, although there were a few comments that part of the challenge for the local authorities is to win over teaching staff to this view, *'the tendency of some people is to punish'* [6].

13.6 The policies also differed in terms of how prescriptive they were. A few authorities had expectations that particular approaches would be adopted in all schools and in these cases the approach prescribed was either solution-oriented or restorative. Some others offered their schools a 'pick and mix' approach: *'We have a policy of [restorative practice] RP but also using Cool in School, [framework for intervention] FFI, staged intervention and we don't find any of these mutually inconsistent.'* [29]. The majority of respondents expressed no concern with the number of different initiatives available to choose from. Indeed some saw this as a distinct advantage. However there were at least two dissenting voices [1, 31]: *'our worry here is that we have too many initiatives; we haven't found the one to turn the tide yet.'* [31]. The one thing which seemed to unite almost all the authorities was the extent to which *Better Behaviour Better Learning* was still viewed as a seminal document which continued to inform policy and practice: *'BBBL drives what we do'* [9].

13.7 Interviewees were asked which other policies they felt were most relevant to policy on behaviour. Their responses fell into four categories. First, many talked about national policy that could be described as 'multi-disciplinary' such as Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), Looked After and Accommodated Children and Young People, Child Protection Policy and Integrated Schools. Second, almost all respondents in those authorities in which behaviour policy was not fully integrated mentioned policies addressing learning and teaching such as Curriculum for Excellence, Assessment is for Learning, Active Learning and Flexible Learning Packages. Third, policy relating to Additional Support Needs (ASN) was also mentioned by more than half, both in terms of national legislation and of policy within the authority relating to supporting pupils with ASN. Finally, some respondents referred to other policy documents in related areas such as anti-bullying, safe use of ICT, serious violence and indiscipline.

13.8 Almost all respondents said that they did not consider mobile phone use to be a major issue, but a few mentioned 'cyber bullying' and the use of social networking sites. One respondent gave an example of a 'happy slapping' incident and a teacher's image being posted on BEBO with pornographic comments [20]. Almost all have a policy on mobile phone use either as part of



their 'safe use of ICT' guidance, in a specific circular, or in their anti-bullying policy.

### **Policy development, communication and monitoring**

13.9 Almost all policy development was described as involving working groups followed by a period of consultation, followed by ratification. In most cases there were joint working groups across sectors involving headteachers and local authority officers. In some cases there was participation in the working groups by one or more of the following: psychological services, unions, police, health, social work, and parent group representatives. Some respondents reported that the way in which policy development happens was changing, in that it was becoming more consultative with a wider group of people, including increasing involvement of parents and pupils.

13.10 Documents from central agencies such as Learning and Teaching Scotland and HMIE were seen as the starting point for most policy development. More than half of the respondents mentioned the Positive Behaviour Team (PBT) as having some peripheral input into their policy development process. In most cases this was in terms of providing access to national resources or sharing information of good practice from elsewhere. One authority had asked the PBT to undertake some audit work of current practice:

*Policy is developing at the moment – the strategy is to identify good practice, we're using data from in house research staff and speaking to front line staff – working with PBT on an audit of all schools and attempting to link to other relevant policies - IEP, anti-bullying, trying to get the overlaps right. [17]*

13.11 This commitment to research informed policy development was also evident in three other local authorities in which researchers had been commissioned to undertake a review of practice and, in one case, morale in schools. A few respondents mentioned the influence of key individuals who had a strong commitment to particular approaches. In one case this was a senior member of staff who had a background as a practitioner in multi-agency settings, while in the three others it was senior staff who had 'bought in' to solution focused approaches or restorative approaches after attending training provided by commercial providers.

13.12 Interviewees were asked about how developments in policy were communicated to school staff. Overall there was confidence that the policy message was being communicated well. A range of dissemination methods was described. The most commonly mentioned methods were: cascading down from headteachers' meetings, paper copies being sent to schools, the use of the intranet, via visits of Quality Improvement Officers (QIO) to schools, and through continuous professional development (CPD). One person identified their policy as a '*live working document*' [30] and when asked how that was achieved said that '*it is constantly referred to in discussions between school staff, headteachers, QIOs and others*' [30]. One respondent mentioned

the use of GLOW [5]. Only one had a negative view and said that *'policy isn't really communicated, it has drifted'* [25].

### **Training and other support for schools**

13.13 All local authorities saw provision of training opportunities for staff as an important responsibility. The four key themes to emerge from the questions on staff training in decreasing frequency of mention were: the value attached to the input from the Positive Behaviour Team (PBT); the use of training packages which include restraint or 'safe handling'; limitations of CPD; and, finally, the difference in opinion between those who use 'gurus' and those who prefer 'in house' training.

13.14 Many of the respondents spoke very highly of the support that they received from the PBT, particularly in relation to the delivery of training on particular approaches. *'[PBT] provides training monitored by feedback sessions and evaluation questionnaires. [10]'; 'It helps us tap in to a national resource.'* [13]. For some others, using the PBT to deliver training was described as cost-effective, as were moves to more local delivery of training. A minority of authorities were less enthusiastic about the training on offer from the PBT and were critical of specific sessions.

13.15 Three different forms of crisis intervention training were mentioned by a large minority of respondents: Therapeutic Crisis Intervention; Crisis, Aggression, Limitation and Management; and training provided by the Crisis Prevention Institute. These training courses, which have been commonplace in the special sector for some time, are now being made available to all staff in all schools across these authorities. There appears to be some tension here between reports of generally very good and improving behaviour with very few violent or serious incidents, and specialist training which includes restraint. Given that the use of such training in mainstream is in its very early stages it will be interesting to see whether having staff trained in these techniques correlates with a reduction or an increase in incidents of restraint. Whilst the de-escalation training would imply a reduction, anecdotal evidence from the special sector suggests that 'knowing how to' restrain a pupil makes staff more likely to do so.

13.16 Although financial constraints were mentioned by a large minority this was balanced by a sense from many that the training provision that they could offer staff was comprehensive. The PBT was viewed as key in enabling authorities to deliver significant amounts of training at little expense. A few authorities have adopted a strategy of sending a few key staff (e.g. Principal Teachers of Behaviour Support) to externally provided training with the expectation that they will in turn deliver the same training to other staff. *'We train the PTs Behaviour Support and expect them to deliver that to all staff as well as the 'gurus' do. [3] 'Participation in training brings with it a responsibility to cascade. [6]*

13.17 In general, interviewees described there being a lot of CPD available, both for teaching and support staff, through a variety of methods and from a

range of trainers. They reported an increasing emphasis on the use of 'in house' provision. Indeed, one authority respondent commented *'I've been to every training there is'* [22]. However there were a few dissenting voices. One respondent noted that while there was CPD available for staff on approaches to managing behaviour, these courses often failed to get any uptake: *'staff development in behaviour management is not taken up'* [1] another said, *'Things have moved on a bit, you can't keep the spotlight on behaviour forever, now we're on to ACE [Curriculum for Excellence]...the world changes.'*[18]. These comments tie in more closely with the findings from other parts of this study, that indiscipline is less of a priority than it has been previously. However, it runs counter to the data from some authorities indicating an increased uptake of training packages in crisis prevention and intervention. It may be that this reflects significant differences across authorities, but again the survey data suggests that this is unlikely. Others who were less convinced of the value of CPD did not necessarily see training on specific approaches as being the thing which would *'turn the tide'* [31] in schools.

13.18 The final theme to emerge is included here not because it was something which many respondents commented on, but because those who did comment seemed to have very strong views about it. There appears to be a real division between those authorities that see buying in training from 'gurus' as the best way of providing CPD for staff and those who see this approach as misguided. One person observed that, *'One day bought in gurus can cost thousands and it's not that useful, we need something longer term – cascading good practice.'* [17]. For another, although the authority would pay for the 'big name', they did expect to see real return of their investment: *'We buy in big names but we want to see impact, in terms of savings in schools, change in ethos, reduction in referrals.'* [21]

### **Other support for schools**

13.19 All authorities operated a form of staged intervention whereby increasing levels of support were made available to pupils with behavioural needs. The systems varied in terms of specific details but a common theme was in locating responsibility for pupils with schools, supported by specialist help from local authority officers at varying levels of seniority. The emphasis was on building capacity at local level to support pupils rather than referring them on. A previous attitude of *'out of sight out of mind'* [31, 22] was described as now being replaced by a sense of schools' ownership of pupils:

*We want school to manage their own problems as much as possible, headteachers are now more aware that they have to take ownership.*  
[29]

Some people also spoke of the importance of the devolution of decision-making to local multi-agency teams. One said *'We need to find local solutions to local problems'* [6].

13.20 It is important to make clear that authorities were not trying to absolve themselves of responsibility for pupils with behavioural needs. Rather there was a strong belief across interviews that the best way of helping these pupils

was to work with their teachers and headteachers who were supporting pupils on a daily basis. There was clear recognition that teaching staff needed specialist help and support. Many authorities were operating or intending to operate devolved services so that specialist support was organised on an area basis rather than centrally. The location of responsibility with schools was matched by an emphasis on the importance of all teachers taking responsibility for behaviour: *We are building capacity among staff so that the focus is on building a supportive climate for young people in general.* [23]

13.21 However, the reasons for supporting local solutions seemed to differ slightly across authorities. In two cases the 'spend to save' principle was mentioned [25, 18], the idea being that investing in local services would ultimately save money as costs of out of authority (OOA) placements were cut. However one authority, which has reduced the number of OOA placements, reported that *'the money has not followed this'* [31]. For other, more rural, authorities the issue seemed to be more one of retaining young people close to their home communities. A few others said that such placements were almost always on the basis of social care (rather than educational) needs, and that as a matter of principle young people ought not to be in residential schools on this basis [3, 25, 8].

13.22 A few respondents talked about having a lot of resources in place and being able to respond to individual pupils in need. One authority mentioned the use of a small team of school counsellors who could be called on. The move to criteria based staged intervention was also seen as having the advantage that: *now referral to resources is criteria led and moving away from subjective judgements.* [19]

### **Monitoring and effectiveness**

13.23 Turning to the monitoring of policy, the Quality Improvement Officers (QIOs) are reported to have a key role here in almost all authorities. Whilst all mentioned the collection of data on exclusion and attendance, and some on numbers of referrals (many using information management systems such as SEEMIS<sup>33</sup>) a widely held view is that the visits of QIOs to schools were the most significant sources of information. In addition to these regular visits some local authorities also follow a timetable of internal review procedures. Schools are identified which may soon be subject to external review and a 'dry run' from the authority helps identify any areas for development. One respondent [12] called for more rigorous monitoring and evaluation by the local authority.

13.24 There were differences in the level of knowledge about what happened to the quantitative data once it had been collected, but this may well be a reflection of the different job responsibilities of the people we interviewed. More than half mentioned a specific local authority officer with a remit for gathering and monitoring this data. Only one was able to say how the system operated in terms of what criteria were used to identify significant trends and

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<sup>33</sup> Scottish Executive Electronic Management Information System.

how these might be brought to the attention of QIOs and/or schools. This one authority was developing its multi-agency working and was piloting a system where an 'intelligence search' would be conducted in other databases for any pupils who triggered systems in terms of attendance or exclusions.

13.25 In relation to the perceived effectiveness of the policy, many respondents chose to talk about the effectiveness of particular approaches to promoting positive behaviour whereas others talked more generally about the overall policy. In terms of specific approaches, those most frequently mentioned as successful were Nurture Groups and solution oriented approaches. In more general terms there were reports of policy being good and getting better. *'We're getting there'* was a typical response [19, 26].

13.26 Amongst those interviewed there were different perceptions of the local policy operating in their authority from highly confident [3, 7, 14, 27] to *'outdated'* [25] or *'needing review'* [4, 8], with a large minority reporting that review was *'in progress'* [e.g. 1, 10, 11, 16].

### **Serious indiscipline/violence**

13.27 Almost all respondents were able to give details on their authority policy on reporting serious and violent incidents, although a large minority did not say what then happened as a result of the reporting. In one case it was noted that: *'There has been criticism that 'nothing happens' – feeling in schools that LA doesn't always respond is deskilling.'* [23]. However in other cases there were clear procedures in place. These included:

- Automatic exclusion with the number of days the pupil was excluded being related to the specific offence. For example one interviewee said, *'If it is serious there will be automatic exclusion, request for removal from roll [register] and police involvement'* [17]. While another said, *'We would use the maximum term of exclusion'* [18].
- Support offered to staff directly involved from line management;
- Staff counselling services;
- A system of support put in place for the young person;
- Health and Safety procedures enacted pending the young person's return.

13.28 These procedures echo those mentioned by teachers and headteachers in Chapters 4 and 9 where they report their experiences of the follow up to serious incidents.

### **General themes from interviews**

13.29 A striking feature of these interviews was the extent to which experiences and opinions appear to be shared across many of the respondents on a wide number of issues. In this section these general themes are discussed. They can be summarised as follows:

- A multi-agency approach to working;
- Most pupils are well behaved;

- Pupils on the autistic spectrum challenging resources;
- Increasing levels of violent behaviour in nursery and early years settings.

13.30 The extent to which **a multi-agency approach to working** has become the norm is evident from its mention in almost all interviews and across answers to almost all questions. When asked about policies relevant to behaviour in schools GIRFEC was mentioned by more than half respondents, along with policies relating to Looked after and Accommodated Children, and Child Protection. Wider local authority support for young people was most often described in multi-agency terms, although interestingly only one respondent talked of any CPD or other training being delivered on a multi-agency basis. Despite the support for multi-agency working and the sense that things were improving, some felt that there is still some way to go in terms of developing practice on the ground. For example one respondent talked about the need for one department to have overall responsibility, reporting that there continues to be duplication of management hierarchies leading to substantial bureaucracy [6].

13.31 In terms of reported trends in behaviour, again there were a number of common themes that can be drawn out. The first is that, in line with the data from the survey and school visits, **most pupils were seen as well behaved**. This came up as strong theme in almost all the interviews. A small minority of pupils gave cause for concern. Some comments were made relating to different pictures across different sectors, for example: *'In the primary sector behaviour is very good but it is more variable and challenging in secondary sector.'* [7].

13.32 Two other patterns are identifiable: some respondents (i.e. 5-9) make references to **pupils on the autistic spectrum challenging resources** in mainstream schools: *'Our exclusion rate is phenomenally low, but we do still have problems with some kids, especially those on the autistic spectrum.'* [3]. Second, a similar number of interviewees highlight a particular concern with **increasing levels of violent behaviour in nursery and early years settings**. One respondent attributes this to poor socialisation at home: *'The trend is towards very young children with challenging behaviour in the nursery/P1. This is mainly linked to social deprivation, children coming in without socialisation.'* [3]. The need for prompt intervention in early years settings has also been identified in the Steer Report (2009).

### **Other comments and calls for change**

13.33 This section focuses on the comments made by respondents when they were asked what changes they would like to see. Although in most cases each of these things was only mentioned by one or two people, the comments made often resonated with themes identified more broadly from responses to earlier questions. However, something which was mentioned by more than half was the importance of central government continuing to fund the PBT. Details of other calls for change are as follows, given in rough order of how many different respondents mentioned them. It should be noted that while

interviewees were asked to suggest changes at all levels of policy (school, authority and nationally), most opted to discuss issues which might best be addressed at national level.

- There was an expression of a strong commitment to multi-agency working from almost all respondents but the feeling that there is still more which needs to be done in terms of providing clear legislation. There is a perception from two respondents that at present Education carries more than its fair share of responsibility and if that is to continue then funding needs to follow this.
- A few respondents called for an increase in input from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), linking back to earlier themes about the perceived increase in the number of children growing up in very challenging circumstances.
- The importance of Social Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) being seen as an ASN was re-emphasised by a few respondents. In one authority it was reported that there were different funding arrangements for pupils identified as having SEBD compared to other Additional Support Needs. This meant that pupils with SEBD were seen as in a different category from pupils with other kinds of ASN.
- Changes to initial teacher education were suggested by a few respondents, to provide more '*switched on*' teachers [8], one person argued that training in supporting pupils with ASN should be core to any initial training [32], both linking to another comment that '*inclusion is still resented by many teachers*' [9].
- While one respondent said simply that they were keen to know what will be in the new guidance on exclusion, another commented that she would like to see national guidance on exclusion reduced to 5 days maximum.
- There were calls, as might be anticipated, for additional funding, and/or for changes in how funding was allocated. Interestingly given that it was authority staff who were being interviewed, all those who made comments about funding were calling for a return to more centralised funding. When asked how additional funding would be spent, the answer most often given was on additional staff: behaviour support assistants, family support workers, or CAMHS. The final comment in relation to funding was an implication that the resistance to spending money on young people who challenge the system has not gone away: *I don't like to think that the disaffected kids are the poor relations, especially in secondary schools* [30].

## **Key Comparisons with 2006**

13.34 In 2006 respondents found it difficult to separate dealing with indiscipline from promoting positive behaviour. This theme is present in 2009 too, evident in the importance afforded to establishing positive relationships as a general whole school strategy. This strategy was enacted through praise and reward systems and learning, teaching and assessment approaches building on pupils' knowledge and skills. This general approach was complemented by targeted support for young people in need and by the affirmation that a multi-agency approach was the best way of tackling the complex problems they often faced. There is a sense through the interviews of this overall strategy bedding down.

13.35 In the 2006 round of interviews with local authority representatives they emphasised four main factors contributing to effective discipline. These were:

- Effective support and communication between local authorities and schools;
- Integrated and multi-agency working;
- Clear and relevant policies;
- Provision of professional development and training.

13.36 These themes continued in 2009. There were no significant other differences between 2006 and 2009 in local authority responses.



## 14 OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

### Introduction

14.1 This chapter provides an overview of the main findings from the research. It begins by summarising findings on positive and negative behaviour around schools and in classrooms in 2009 and highlights key comparisons with 2006. This summary includes data collected from a small number of pupils in seven primary and eight secondary schools.<sup>34</sup>

14.2 It then summarises the findings on behaviour policies used in schools before moving to behaviour policies in local authorities. It describes common themes in behaviour management policy and practice bringing together data from schools and local authorities.

### Positive behaviour around schools and in classrooms

14.3 We asked staff, *'Thinking about the behaviour you encounter around the school, how many pupils do you find generally well behaved?'* Over 90% of primary and secondary teachers, headteachers and primary school support staff surveyed said that all or most of their pupils were generally well behaved around the school. A lower number of secondary school support staff, 79% shared this view.

#### ***Around the school***

14.4 Examples of positive behaviour encountered around the school by over 80% of primary teachers were pupils always or on most occasions taking turns, playing games together and greeting staff pleasantly.

14.5 In secondary schools fewer teachers than in primary saw the same range of behaviour. The two behaviours identified by most teachers always or on most occasions were pupils greeting them pleasantly, mentioned by 70% of teachers, and queuing in an orderly manner, observed by 58%. A typical comment from teachers in the schools visited was, *99% of pupils are well behaved and there is a good atmosphere. Pupils are respectful towards staff.*

#### ***Classrooms***

14.6 There was a similarly positive view of behaviour in classrooms from most staff. In answer to the question, *'In how many of the lessons that you teach on a regular basis do you find pupils generally well behaved?'*

- 93% of primary teachers said all or most lessons;
- 86% of secondary teachers said all or most lessons.

14.7 The difference in responses between primary and secondary teachers was much more marked for support staff working in these sectors:

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<sup>34</sup> These data cannot be regarded as representative of all pupils in schools in Scotland.

- 89% of primary support staff said all or most lessons;
- 57% of secondary support staff said all or most lessons;

Although the majority of support staff in secondary schools saw pupils in the lessons they worked in as generally well behaved, they are much less positive than their counterparts in primary schools. We can speculate that this may be because support staff in secondary schools tend to work in targeted classes where their additional help is required. The large number of secondary support staff who see positive behaviour around the school supports this explanation.

14.8 Primary (99%) and secondary (83%) headteachers had the most positive view of life in classrooms with almost all in both sectors reporting all or most of the school roll as generally well behaved during lessons.

### ***Pupils' views***

14.9 Most pupils in primary and secondary schools reported that behaviour was usually good around the school, in keeping with findings from teachers, headteachers and support staff. They were positive too about behaviour in classrooms. For example, 81% of the primary pupils and 59% of secondary pupils surveyed said that they saw pupils who are interested and take part in classroom activities in all or most lessons.

### **Low-level indiscipline around the school and in classrooms**

14.10 Describing behaviour as low-level is not intended to underplay its effects on learning and teaching. Indeed, teachers in previous surveys have talked about the wearing effect of the 'drip, drip' of low-level negative behaviour in their classrooms. The survey data suggests that it is this kind of negative behaviour that teachers, headteachers and support staff continue to experience most frequently.

### ***Around the school***

14.11 We provided a list of behaviours and asked staff how frequently they had encountered each behaviour in the last full teaching week. The low-level behaviour encountered by most teachers<sup>35</sup> around both primary and secondary schools was pupils running in corridors. More than one in three primary and secondary teachers experienced this twice a day or more. The least frequently encountered behaviour was leaving school without permission with 94% of primary teachers and over half the secondary teachers saying that they had not encountered this at all in the last week.

14.12 Primary and secondary headteachers reported a positive picture of behaviour around the school and tended to be more positive than teachers. The most frequently encountered behaviour was running in the corridors twice a day or more, reported by 17% of both primary and secondary headteachers.

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<sup>35</sup> Support staff were not asked these questions.

At the other end of the scale, 95% of primary headteachers had not encountered at all in the last week pupils using mobile phones/texting against school policies. For secondary headteachers the least frequently encountered behaviour was unruliness while waiting, with just under half the headteachers saying that they had not experienced this behaviour in the last full teaching week.

### ***Classrooms***

14.13 In classrooms, talking out of turn was the most frequently reported behaviour in the last full teaching week by both primary and secondary teachers.<sup>36</sup> Some 63% of primary teachers met this twice a day or more and only 4% of primary teachers said that they had not encountered talking out of turn in their last teaching week. A similar number of secondary teachers, 66%, reported this twice a day or more. Only 1% of secondary teachers said that they had not encountered talking out of turn in their last teaching week. The least frequently encountered behaviour was use of mobile phones/texting with 98% of primary teachers and 39% of secondary teachers saying that they had not encountered this behaviour at all in the last week.

14.14 Talking out of turn was also the most frequently reported behaviour by support staff, with 62% in primary schools and 75% in secondary schools reporting this twice a day or more. Only 4% of primary and 2% of secondary school support staff said that they had not encountered talking out of turn at all in the last week. The behaviour least likely to be encountered by support staff in primary schools was pupils' use of mobile phones/texting with 97% saying that they had not met this behaviour in the last week. The behaviour reported least frequently by secondary support staff was pupils withdrawing from interaction with each other. Some 32% had not experienced this behaviour in the last week.

14.15 Staff in the schools visited also highlighted that low-level negative behaviour was more frequently encountered than serious indiscipline. Most low-level indiscipline in classrooms was dealt with directly by the teacher with support and advice available from colleagues.

### ***Pupils' views***

14.16 Pupils did not comment specifically about low-level indiscipline around the school. In classrooms the most frequently noticed behaviour was calling out in class or chatting. 36% of primary and 70% of secondary pupils saw this in all or most lessons last week. Primary pupils identified truancy as the least frequently encountered behaviour with 59% saying that they did not see pupils truanting in the last week. For secondary pupils, the least frequently observed behaviour was pupils not letting other pupils join in with them. Some 30% had not observed this in any lessons.

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<sup>36</sup> Headteachers were not asked these questions.

## **Serious indiscipline/violence around the school and in classrooms**

14.17 Primary and secondary teachers and headteachers<sup>37</sup> were given a list of behaviours and asked how frequently they had encountered these around the school and, in the case of headteachers, how frequently such behaviour had been referred to them in the last full teaching week.

### ***Around the school***

14.18 Serious indiscipline around the school towards teachers/headteachers was rare in the daily and weekly experience of most (typically 1% or fewer).<sup>38</sup> For example, one out of 559 primary (<1%) and six out of 1,462 secondary teachers (<1%) reported experience of racist abuse towards them once or more often in the last full teaching week. No primary but 21 out of 1,435 secondary teachers (1%) reported experience of sexist abuse once or more often in the last full teaching week.

14.19 Three out of 557 (<1%) primary and four out of 1,460 secondary teachers (<1%) reported experiencing physical violence towards them around the school once or more often in the last full teaching week. Six out of 558 (1%) primary and 39 out of 1,460 secondary teachers (3%) reported experiencing physical aggression once or more often in the last full teaching week.

14.20 There is a different pattern of perception and experience in regard to pupil-to-pupil physical violence and aggression. 1 in 4 primary and 1 in 5 secondary teachers encountered physical violence towards other pupils around the school once or more often in the last full teaching week. 38% of primary and 45% of secondary teachers say that they saw one or more pupils being physically aggressive to their peers once or more often in the last full teaching week. The data as a whole suggest that pupil-to-pupil relations are the main locus of serious indiscipline around the school.

14.21 The picture presented by the 244 primary and 246 secondary headteachers is very similar to that presented by the teachers. Serious violence towards staff is rare, although pupil-to-pupil relations are more concerning.

14.22 No primary and four out of 245 secondary headteachers (2%) had either personally experienced or had referred to them racist abuse of staff in the last full teaching week. Three out of 244 primary (1%) and 13 out of 243 secondary headteachers (5%) either personally experienced or had referred to them sexist abuse of staff in the last full teaching week.

14.23 Some 16 out of 242 primary (7%) and three out of 245 secondary headteachers (1%) had either personally experienced or had referred to them physical violence towards staff at least once in the last full teaching week.

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<sup>37</sup> Support staff were not asked this question.

<sup>38</sup> We report numbers rather than percentages for the sake of transparency.

Similarly, 18 out of 243 primary (7%) and 22 out of 245 secondary headteachers (9%) had either personally experienced or had referred to them physical aggression towards staff at least once in the last full teaching week.

14.24 On the other hand 52% of primary and 60% of secondary heads had either personally experienced or had referred to them physical aggression towards other pupils at least once in the last full teaching week. General verbal abuse towards other pupils was reported by 48% of primary and 65% of headteachers on the same basis.

### ***Classrooms***

14.25 There was a high degree of congruence amongst teachers, headteachers and support staff in primary and secondary schools on the classroom behaviours most frequently encountered in terms of serious indiscipline. Physical violence and physical aggression towards staff were rare. Pupil-to-pupil physical violence and aggression and general verbal abuse were more frequently encountered.

14.26 Two out of 552 primary teachers (<1%) reported racist and sexist abuse towards them at least once in the last full teaching week. In secondary, 11 out of 1,456 teachers (<1%) reported racist abuse and 37 (3%) reported sexist abuse towards them once or more often in the last full teaching week.

14.27 Twelve out of 554 primary (2%) and four out of 1,459 secondary teachers (<1%) reported physical violence towards them once or more often in the last full teaching week. For physical aggression the equivalent figures were 15 primary (3%) and 44 secondary teachers (3%).

14.28 In terms of pupil-to-pupil behaviour in the classroom, general verbal abuse towards other pupils and physical aggression towards other pupils were reported most frequently by both primary and secondary teachers. Around 2 in 5 primary teachers encountered these behaviours at least once in the last full teaching week. For secondary teachers just under half had encountered pupil-to-pupil general verbal abuse and 1 in 3 had encountered physical aggression towards other pupils.

14.29 For primary headteachers the classroom behaviour most frequently referred to them was pupil-to-pupil physical aggression with over half (57%) saying that this had been referred to them at least once last week. For secondary headteachers the classroom behaviour most frequently referred to them was general verbal abuse towards other pupils. Almost 2 in 3 headteachers (65%) reported this as happening at least once last week.

14.30 The 388 support staff in primary and 678 support staff in secondary schools revealed a similar picture of a very low incidence of serious indiscipline towards them, but reported higher incidences of serious indiscipline among pupils.

14.31 For example no primary support staff had experienced sexist abuse in

the last full teaching week and one had experienced racist abuse. In secondary schools the equivalent figures were that 31 support staff (5%) had experienced sexist abuse and 10 out of 651 (2%) had experienced racist abuse.

14.32 In terms of physical violence towards them, 19 primary (5%) and five out of 654 secondary support staff (<1%) had encountered this once or more often in the last full teaching week. For physical aggression the figures were 25 out of 380 primary (6%) and 27 out of 651 secondary support staff (4%) who had encountered this once or more often in the last full teaching week.

14.33 As with teachers, the two most frequently encountered pupil-to-pupil behaviours by primary and secondary support staff were physical aggression, seen by over half (56%) of primary and secondary support staff (55%) once or more often in the last week; and general verbal abuse towards others pupils seen by just over half the primary and 2 in 3 of secondary support staff.

***The impact of serious indiscipline/pupil violence on the running of the school***

14.34 When asked to rate on a five-point scale, ‘How serious is the impact which serious indiscipline/pupil violence has on the running of the school?’ over 3 in 4 primary and secondary headteachers chose ‘not very serious’ or ‘not serious at all’, points 4 and 5 in Table 14.1 below. Primary and secondary headteachers were the most positive followed by primary teachers, primary support staff, secondary teachers and secondary support staff.

14.35 Secondary school teachers and support staff gave the least positive view. A bare majority of secondary teachers (51%), and a minority of secondary school support staff (43%) rated this as not very serious – points 4 and 5 on the scale.

**TABLE 14.1 PERCEPTIONS OF THE OVERALL IMPACT OF SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE/PUPIL VIOLENCE ON PRIMARY & SECONDARY SCHOOLS: How serious is the impact which serious indiscipline/pupil violence has on the running of the school?**

Category of staff	Very serious 1	2	3	4	Not at all serious 5	
	%	%	%	%	%	N
Primary Teachers	*7	10	18	25	40	539
Primary Headteachers	7	6	9	27	50	232
Primary Support Staff	9	9	18	18	46	363
Secondary Teachers	8	16	25	30	21	1,427
Secondary Headteachers	1	5	16	45	32	237
Secondary Support Staff	9	15	33	24	19	633

\* percentages rounded to the nearest whole number and may not sum to 100

### ***In the last twelve months***

14.36. In both primary and secondary schools, general verbal abuse was the serious indiscipline/violence most frequently experienced by staff at least once over the previous twelve months. When asked about the most recent incident, respondents reported that these were most frequently reported to senior colleagues and/or the headteacher. 26 out of 92 primary and 17 out of 524 secondary teachers reported that the most recent incident was physical violence. Out of these incidents, 2 in primary and 4 in secondary schools were referred to the police and this was the kind of incident most likely to be referred to them.

### ***Pupils' views***

14.37 Pupils saw serious indiscipline around the school and in the classroom infrequently. For example, 7% of primary and 4% of secondary school pupils reported that they had seen pupils pushing or threatening teachers in some lessons/breaks or more often. A smaller percentage, 2%, of both primary and secondary pupils had seen instances of pupils punching, kicking or physically hurting teachers in some lessons/breaks or more often.

14.38 Pupils saw more violence and aggression amongst themselves than towards staff. 30% of primary and about half the secondary pupils had seen pupils pushing or being aggressive to other pupils in some lessons/breaks or more often. They also saw pupils punching, kicking or physically hurting other pupils. 1 in 4 primary and a similar number of secondary pupils (28%) saw this in some lessons/breaks or more often. Some 28% of primary and 55% of secondary pupils reported that they had seen pupils saying rude or aggressive things to other pupils, in some lessons/breaks or more often.

### **Comparisons with 2006**

14.39 Overwhelmingly teachers, headteachers in both primary and secondary schools and support staff in primary schools in 2009 continue to see pupils to be generally well behaved around the school and in the classroom. Secondary school support staff are less emphatic than other staff about positive behaviour in classrooms. This was also a finding in 2006. In general staff in primary schools tend to be more positive than staff in secondary schools in both 2009 and 2006.

14.40 The type of negative behaviour encountered most frequently around the school in 2006 and 2009 was running in corridors. Talking out of turn continues to be the most frequently encountered low-level behaviour in classrooms by all groups of staff.

14.41 Serious indiscipline around the school and in classrooms towards staff remains rare, but, of course, is significant for those involved. The very rare incidents of physical violence towards staff that were reported around the school and in the classroom occurred more frequently in primary than in

secondary schools. This was also the case in 2006.

14.42 A detailed comparison of perceptions of behaviour in 2009 and 2006 was carried out on 276 questions. Results are reported at the end of each chapter on positive and negative behaviour in primary and secondary schools and in chapter 12. They show that there was a positive change in perceptions of behaviour in 2009 in most groups.

14.43 The largest proportion of positive changes in perceptions came from secondary teachers, followed by primary teachers and secondary headteachers. Primary headteachers and secondary support staff were less positive although they reported more positive than negative changes overall. The primary support staff were least positive about discipline and reported a positive change in three behaviours and a negative change in six out of 35 comparisons.

14.44 The relatively high frequency of low-level indiscipline in classrooms such as talking out of turn remains a consistent theme in surveys since at least 2004.

### **School behaviour management policies**

14.45 Primary and secondary schools use a multi-pronged approach to managing behaviour.

14.46 Table 14.2 below shows strategies identified by both teachers and headteachers as used most and least frequently to promote positive behaviour and respond to negative behaviour. These strategies are also seen as the most helpful by both headteachers and teachers.

**TABLE 14.2 BEHAVIOUR STRATEGIES IN PRIMARY & SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

<b>School category</b>	<b>Most frequently identified strategies</b>	<b>Least frequently identified strategies</b>
Primary Schools	The promotion of a positive behaviour through whole school ethos and values	Local authority off site provision
	Break time supervision	Campus based police officers/ community police partnerships
	Reward systems for pupils	Broad curriculum options
Secondary Schools		Pupil/behaviour support base in school
	The promotion of a positive behaviour through whole school ethos and values	Circle time
	Break time supervision	Learning stances
	Anti-bullying policies	Nurture groups
	Referral of pupils to more senior staff	Local authority off site provision
		The motivated school

14.47 Secondary teachers and headteachers identified a similar but not identical range of strategies used in secondary schools. They also saw these as the most helpful.

14.48 Comparisons with 2006 strategies are difficult but more headteachers and teachers in 2009 seem to be using several approaches that had been



promoted by the Scottish Government and local authorities. These include Restorative Practices and Solution Oriented approaches.<sup>39</sup>

14.49 Support in promoting positive behaviour and in dealing with negative behaviour is available in a number of ways in both primary and secondary schools. This includes the provision of classroom and learning assistants, specialist support staff, support from colleagues and professional development and training. These were all highly valued. Support staff was the group least satisfied with the adequacy of training on offer.

14.50 In the view of headteachers, policy is developed in both sectors by involving a wide range of staff. There is some involvement of parents and substantial involvement of pupils. Perceptions about involvement vary, with support staff in secondary schools in particular reporting lack of involvement in policy development.

14.51 The vast majority of teachers are confident in their behaviour management skills and in the support of senior management in terms of dealing with disruptive behaviour.

### **Local authority policy**

14.52 Like schools, local authorities used a multi-pronged approach to promote positive behaviour and to respond to negative behaviour. The most common approach to promoting positive behaviour was one which emphasised mutual respect between teachers and pupils, developed and sustained through a positive school ethos. There were various targeted approaches to respond to negative behaviour.

14.53 The extent to which behaviour management policy is seen as separate from other policies differs among authorities. At one extreme were authorities for whom learning, teaching and behaviour policies are integrated and at the other it was not clear how behaviour policy related to learning and teaching and vice versa.

14.54 *Better Behaviour, Better Learning* is still seen as the foundation for policy. Other key relevant policies were Curriculum for Excellence, Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), Additional Support Needs (ASN) and related multi-agency developments such as Child Protection.

14.55 Policy development involves working groups, consultation and ratification. A wide range of people are typically involved in major developments, including headteachers, police, health professionals, and social and psychological services in addition to local authority officers. Good communication between schools and local authorities was seen as vital and most authorities reported that they had good communication systems.

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<sup>39</sup> Information about these approaches is available at <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/positivebehaviour/resources/index.asp>

14.56 All authorities used Quality Improvement Officers (QIO) or similar categories of staff to monitor the effectiveness of policy and these were seen to be important sources of information about what was happening in schools. They also collected a range of statistical information to help monitor effectiveness. Authorities also had a timetable of internal reviews to provide in-depth information about schools.

14.57 Local authorities were a key provider of training on behaviour management and many spoke highly of the support they received from the Positive Behaviour Team (PBT) in relation to training on particular approaches.

14.58 There are policies on reporting serious and violent incidents. In some authorities there were clear procedures in response to such incidents. These included automatic exclusion, support offered to staff in various ways and health and safety procedures enacted pending an excluded pupil's return to school.

14.59 Three common themes are evident in local authority and school policies on behaviour management.

- Schools and local authorities are always vigilant about behaviour management. They do not see radically new policy development in this area as a priority, feeling that they have a good range of support and interventions currently available. *Better Behaviour Better Learning* remains the foundation for new work;
- The promotion of a positive ethos built on mutual respect between staff and pupils and among pupils is seen as the bedrock of managing behaviour. The overwhelming majority of young people are seen as well behaved;
- Behaviour management on a day-to-day basis is best handled by schools and within schools by teachers in classrooms. Local authorities provide a strategic framework, help and advice and access to specialist resources.

14.60 There were no major differences between 2006 and 2009 in local authority perspectives beyond, as might be expected, reference to Curriculum for Excellence.

14.61 The general picture gleaned from all data sources is that most pupils are seen as being well behaved; low-level, negative behaviour is encountered by staff more frequently than serious or violent behaviour towards them. Pupil-to-pupil relations are more concerning, however. There is a shared perception among teachers and between teachers and local authorities about the range of behaviour management strategies to be employed. Although support staff in both primary and secondary schools are less positive than either teachers or headteachers, comparisons in staff perceptions overall between 2006 and 2009 show a positive trend.

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