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# Behaviour in Scottish Schools 2012

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# **BEHAVIOUR IN SCOTTISH SCHOOLS 2012**

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## **Table of Contents**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	I
1 INTRODUCTION AND METHODS	1
2 POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR	7
3 LOW-LEVEL DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR	14
4 SERIOUS DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR/VIOLENCE	21
5 FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE EXPERIENCES OF BEHAVIOUR	30
6 BEHAVIOUR POLICY AND PRACTICE	35
7 CASE STUDY TOPICS	50
8 LOCAL AUTHORITY POLICY AND APPROACHES	64

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Introduction and methodology

This national study is the latest in the series of Behaviour in Scottish Schools research projects and builds on previous research carried out in 2009<sup>1</sup> and 2006<sup>2</sup>. It was commissioned by the Scottish Government Education Analytical Services, on behalf of the Learning Directorate Support and Wellbeing Unit. The overall aim of the research was to provide a clear and robust picture of behaviour in publicly funded mainstream schools and of current policy and practice in relation to managing behaviour.

There were three strands to the research:

- quantitative surveys of heads, teachers and support staff (4,898 staff in total took part)
- qualitative depth interviews with local authority representatives (one representative from 31 of the 32 local authorities)
- qualitative research with pupils, heads, teachers and support staff in 12 case study schools.

## What type of pupil behaviours do school staff encounter?

The survey asked primary and secondary staff about how well behaved pupils were in general and also about how often they had experienced a range of specific **positive, low-level disruptive and seriously disruptive/violent** behaviours, both in the classroom and around the school, in the last full teaching week.

### *Overall behaviour*

Overall, both primary and secondary staff were very positive about pupils' behaviour. They felt that most pupils were well behaved all or most of the time, and only a very small minority of pupils were quite disruptive.

### *Positive behaviour*

The vast majority of primary staff said that they encountered positive behaviour 'all' or 'most' of the time:

- 99% of primary heads said that all or most of their school roll were well behaved. 93% of primary teachers and 90% of primary support staff stated that pupils were generally well behaved in all or most of their lessons.

The majority of secondary staff were also positive about pupil behaviour:

- 99% of secondary heads reported that all or most pupils were generally well behaved in the classroom. 88% of secondary teachers and 61% of secondary support staff reported that pupils were generally well behaved in all or most of their lessons.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/11/20101438/0>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/09/28125634/0>

Of specific behaviours in the classroom, teachers were most likely to encounter 'pupils contributing to class discussions' and least likely to see 'pupils settling down quickly. Whereas around the school, teachers were most likely to encounter 'pupils greeting staff pleasantly' and least likely to see 'pupils challenging others' negative behaviour'.

### ***Low-level disruptive behaviour***

Low-level disruptive behaviours were much more common than serious disruptive behaviours or violence - and were felt to have more of a day-to-day impact on the learning environment.

The most common type of low-level disruptive behaviour in the classroom was 'talking out of turn'. This was experienced at least twice a day by between a third (66%) and three quarters (78%) of staff in both primary and secondary schools. Only 3% of teachers had not encountered this behaviour in the last week.

Around the school, the most common types of low-level disruptive behaviour were 'running in the corridor' (seen by nearly a third of teachers at least twice a day) and - in secondary schools only - 'using mobile phones against school policies' (seen by 42% of secondary teachers and 12% head teachers at least twice a day).

From a list of both low-level and serious disruptive behaviours, teachers and support staff were most likely to say that low-level behaviours had the greatest negative impact on their teaching experience in the previous week.

Teaching staff voiced concern about the impact disruptive behaviour has on class learning time, particularly with regard to pupils who are focused on their work being overlooked because the teacher or classroom assistant's time is diverted to the pupils causing the problem. Support staff thought this was particularly difficult for pupils who already find it difficult to concentrate in class and rely on additional support.

### ***Serious disruptive behaviour/violence***

Overall, serious disruptive or violent behaviour was much less common than low-level disruptive behaviour. When it occurred, it was more often directed at other pupils than at staff.

For example, only 7 out of 876 primary (1%) and 1 out of 2022 secondary teachers (<1%) had experienced physical violence towards themselves in the classroom in the previous week. The most common form of serious disruptive behaviour directed at staff members was 'general verbal abuse'. In primary, this was experienced by 4% of teachers and 16% of support staff, and in secondary by 20% of teachers and 27% of support staff, in the classroom in the last full teaching week.

In contrast, pupil to pupil physical violence and aggression and general verbal abuse were frequently encountered in the classroom and around the school by both primary and secondary staff. For example, around a third (34%) of primary teachers and just under half (47%) of support staff had encountered general verbal abuse towards other pupils in the classroom in the last week. Similar proportions (33% and 53%,

respectively) had encountered physical aggression towards other pupils. In secondary, the figures for pupil to pupil verbal abuse were even higher (47% of teachers and 64% of support staff had encountered this in the classroom in the last week). However, there was slightly less pupil to pupil physical aggression in secondary (encountered by 27% of teachers and 47% of support staff in the classroom in the last week).

### **How has behaviour changed since previous surveys?**

Where there have been changes since the previous surveys in 2006 and 2009, the trends are almost all in a positive direction.

One of the main exceptions is in relation to mobile phone use which has increased considerably in secondary schools since 2009. However, while staff in case study schools thought that the use of mobile phones was a frequent and distracting influence in classrooms, they felt it was no more annoying or disruptive than many other low-level disruptive behaviours.

#### ***Key trends in positive behaviour***

Staff assessments of overall levels of good behaviour have consistently been very high over the survey series and they have remained so. Where there have been changes, they have generally been in a positive direction, both in respect of overall behaviour and specific positive behaviours. The only exception to this was for primary support staff who saw decreases in four of the eleven positive behaviours

#### ***Key trends in low-level disruptive behaviour***

Overall, the proportion of both primary and secondary teachers encountering low-level disruptive behaviour in the classroom has decreased since 2006.

There are, however, two exceptions to this – secondary teachers indicate that the use of mobile phones in the classroom has risen and primary teachers believe that talking out of turn has increased.

The picture for support staff is less positive. There has been an increase in the proportion of both primary and secondary support staff encountering a number of low-level disruptive behaviours in the classroom between 2006 and 2012<sup>3</sup>.

Low-level disruptive behaviour *around the school* has decreased substantially between 2006 and 2012 in both the primary and the secondary sector. This is with the exception of the use of mobile phones against school policies, which heads indicate has increased since 2009.

#### ***Key trends in serious disruptive behaviour/violence***

Serious disruptive behaviour in the classroom has, on the whole, decreased since 2006. However, among both secondary teachers and support staff there has been

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<sup>3</sup> Primary support staff indicated an increase in five of the eleven behaviours and secondary support staff indicated an increase in three of the eleven behaviours.

an increase in the proportion encountering pupils using mobile phones abusively between 2009 and 2012.

There has also been an increase in secondary heads' personal experience of physical violence in the last 12 months: 3% (8 of 257) of secondary heads had experienced this in 2012, compared with 1% (3 of 246) in 2009. While an increase in physical violence towards secondary heads is a very serious matter, and should be monitored, it must be borne in mind that the absolute number of incidents is very small and is therefore subject to fluctuation when comparing two time periods. Physical violence is one out of six types of serious disruptive behaviour examined. For the other five, there was no evidence of change between 2009 and 2012 among secondary heads. Therefore, the change seen in the level of physical violence towards secondary heads does not appear to reflect a wider trend.

### **What approaches to promoting positive behaviour have been used?**

Teachers are generally confident in their ability to promote positive behaviour and respond to indiscipline.

Staff in case study schools and local authority representatives generally felt that approaches to promote positive behaviour had improved over time.

A wide range of approaches are used to encourage positive behaviour and staff talked of the value of having a range of different approaches on which to draw.

There is a continued move away from more punitive methods (e.g. punishment exercises) to more positive approaches (e.g. restorative practices) and heads, teachers and local authority representatives all emphasised the importance of good relationships between staff and pupils.

The 'promotion of positive behaviour through whole school ethos and values' was, to a great extent, seen by staff as the most helpful approach and staff were far more inclined to refer to 'relationships', rather than 'behaviour management' or 'indiscipline' when talking about the ways in which they deal with negative behaviour.

Heads, in particular, talked about the importance of building good relationships between staff and pupils and for staff to be out and about during breaks, interacting with pupils and intervening in disputes or squabbles before they have the chance to escalate. In the absence of good relationships between staff and pupils, there was recognition that behaviour policies would be far more difficult to implement and less likely to be effective.

Staff in case study schools and local authority representatives felt there was more recognition of the potential underlying reasons for challenging behaviour and that pupils' needs should be looked at holistically and in the context of their home and family life.



### **Which aspects of behaviour are still challenging?**

Staff in case study schools and local authority representatives expressed concern about the small, but felt to be increasing, number of children entering primary school with complex difficulties, including nurture and attachment issues.

In both the primary and secondary sectors, there was concern about a perceived increase in the incidence of severe mental health issues, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and autistic spectrum disorders. Staff found the behaviour of these pupils to be particularly challenging.

# 1 INTRODUCTION AND METHODS

## Introduction and policy background

- 1.1 This national study is the latest in a series of three-yearly Behaviour in Scottish Schools research projects and builds on previous research carried out in 2009<sup>4</sup> and 2006<sup>5</sup>. It was commissioned by the Scottish Government Education Analytical Services Division, on behalf of the Learning Directorate Support and Wellbeing Unit, and it explores behaviour in publicly funded mainstream schools as well as current policy and practice with regard to managing the behaviour of children and young people.
- 1.2 There are three key overarching Government policy priorities which impact on behaviour in schools by promoting the development of positive relationships and an inclusive ethos throughout learning environments. These are: the Early Years Framework; Curriculum for Excellence; and Getting it right for Every Child.
- 1.3 *The Early Years Framework* seeks to maximise positive opportunities for all children to get the best start in life that will provide a strong platform for the future. It also seeks to address the needs of those children whose lives, opportunities and ambitions are constrained by poverty, poor health, poor attainment and unemployment.
- 1.4 *Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)* is the curriculum for Scottish schools and is the totality of experiences which are planned for children and young people through their education. The starting point for learning is a positive ethos and climate of mutual respect and trust based upon shared values across whole school communities. All learners will benefit from varied approaches to learning and opportunities to access learning in different contexts, through a range of provision delivered within the classroom, the school and beyond.
- 1.5 *Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)* is a national programme that aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people. It seeks to do this by providing a framework for all services and agencies working with children and families to deliver a co-ordinated approach which is appropriate, proportionate and timely.

## Aims and objectives

- 1.6 The overall aim of the research was to provide a clear and robust picture of behaviour in publicly funded mainstream schools and of current policy and practice in relation to managing behaviour.
- 1.7 More specifically, the research was to provide:

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/11/20101438/0>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/09/28125634/0>

- clear and robust information on the nature and extent of positive and negative behaviour (including low-level indiscipline and serious indiscipline/violence) in publicly funded mainstream schools in Scotland in 2012
- trend information, where possible, identifying changes since the previous surveys in 2009 and 2006
- an assessment of the range of behaviour management approaches that are used in schools and staff perceptions of which approaches are most effective in promoting positive behaviour and preventing/responding to indiscipline
- an assessment of the confidence of staff in promoting positive behaviour and managing behaviour and the support and opportunities which they have, to engage in effective professional learning in relation to this
- an exploration of the impact of the implementation of *CfE* on behaviour in schools and, in particular, whether/how the *CfE* focus on Health and Wellbeing is being used to promote positive relationships and behaviour.

## **Methodology**

1.8 There were three strands to the research:

- quantitative surveys of heads, teachers and support staff
- qualitative depth interviews with local authority representatives
- qualitative research with pupils, heads, teachers and support staff in twelve case study schools.

### ***Quantitative surveys of heads, teachers and support staff***

- 1.9 The questionnaires were largely based on those used in the 2009 survey (which, in turn, were largely based on the questionnaires used in the 2006 survey). A small pilot was conducted in early January 2012 with 6 members of staff in a primary school and 6 members of staff in a secondary school. Following the pilot, minor amendments were made to questionnaires. The final versions used for each category of staff are attached at Annex 1.
- 1.10 The sampling approach is detailed in Annex 2. In summary, a stratified random sampling approach was used to select schools and then, within schools, staff were selected at random based on their surname.
- 1.11 The sample sizes and response rates are shown below. The response rates substantially increased from 2009. This is likely to be due to: the efforts of local contacts (e.g. Positive Behaviour Team link officers) who encouraged participation from schools in their areas; the telephone calls to heads to encourage and secure participation; and the use of key contacts within schools.
- 1.12 Fieldwork was conducted February - March 2012. Instructions sent to schools for the administration of the questionnaire are attached at Annex 3.
- 1.13 The profile of respondents was compared with the known profile of all staff (using Scottish Government data on size of school, levels of free school meal registration, age, sex, whether full-time/part-time and whether permanent/temporary). The profiles were very similar which indicates that the

achieved sample was representative of all staff - at least in terms of those variables. The data were weighted to take account of the slight differences. Full details are contained in Annex 4.

**Table 1.1: Staff response rates**

<b>Staff category</b>	<b>2009 selected sample</b>	<b>2009 achieved sample</b>	<b>2009 response rate</b>	<b>2012 selected sample</b>	<b>2012 achieved sample</b>	<b>2012 achieved response rate</b>
Primary Head	430	244	57%	430	315	73%
Primary Teacher	1288	560	43%	1276	881	69%
Primary Support	863	391	45%	877	603	69%
Secondary Head	377	246	65%	368 <sup>6</sup>	257	70%
Secondary Teacher	3382	1468	43%	3382	2054	61%
Secondary Support	1305	678	52%	1305	788	60%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7645</b>	<b>3587</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>7638</b>	<b>4898</b>	<b>64%</b>

### ***Qualitative depth interviews with local authority representatives***

- 1.14 At the outset of the project, the Directors of Education for each of the 32 local authorities were sent a letter informing them of the aims and objectives of the research. They were also asked to recommend a suitable member of staff within their local authority to participate in an interview, in order to provide an overview of local authority policy and practice in managing behaviour in their schools. The project team then made contact with the nominated local authority representatives by telephone to arrange a suitable time for the interview to take place.
- 1.15 Interviews were conducted with representatives from 31 of the 32 local authorities<sup>7</sup>. One interview was conducted face-to-face<sup>8</sup> and 30 were conducted by telephone. Interviewees included Positive Behaviour Team link officers, Educational Psychologists, Behaviour Support Managers, Heads of Service, Additional Support for Learning Managers, Education Officers, Inclusion Officers and Quality Improvement Officers.
- 1.16 The topic guide for the interview was sent to each interviewee in advance of the interview, to give them the opportunity to think about the questions and

<sup>6</sup> In order to maximise the sample of secondary heads, all heads were invited to participate (including those whose school had not been sampled).

<sup>7</sup> The representative from one local authority agreed, in principle, to be interviewed but was unable to arrange a time within the fieldwork period.

<sup>8</sup> At the particular request of the representative.

allow them time to discuss the relevant issues with colleagues in advance of the interview (attached at Annex 5).

- 1.17 Fieldwork was conducted February – March 2012. With the permission of participants, the interviews were recorded and detailed notes were made by the member of the research team conducting the interviews.

### **Case studies in schools**

- 1.18 Full details of the methodology for the case studies are contained at the beginning of Chapter 7. In summary, five primary schools and seven secondary schools from ten different local authority areas were selected for participation. In each school, semi-structured interviews were conducted individually with the head and another member of the senior management team (SMT) and focus groups were conducted with pupils (one with younger pupils and one with older pupils), teachers and support staff. Fieldwork was carried out 21 May – 18 June 2012.

### **A note on interpreting the report**

#### **Measuring levels of behaviours**

- 1.19 It is important to note that the survey element of the research measures levels of behaviours based on a sample of staff and their assessment of how often behaviours were exhibited in their personal experience over the last full teaching week/12 months<sup>9</sup>. The measures are not based on formally recorded or reported incidents.
- 1.20 The following specific behaviours were asked about in the survey:

#### **Positive behaviour**

<b>In the classroom</b>	<b>Around the school</b>
Arriving with the correct equipment	Greeting staff pleasantly
Following instructions	Playing games and sport
Settling down quickly	Queuing in an orderly manner
Contributing to class discussions	Using litter bins
Listening to others' views respectfully	Respecting school areas
Listening to staff respectfully	Positive use of facilities
Keenly engaging with tasks	Helping their peers
Politely seeking staff help (e.g. putting hand up)	Taking turns
Attentive, interested pupils	Interacting supportively
Arriving promptly for classes	Challenging negative behaviour
Calm, relaxed and enjoyable lessons	
Interacting supportively with each other	
Enthusiastically participating in classroom activities	

<sup>9</sup> This is done in different ways e.g. the proportion of pupils exhibiting a behaviour, the proportion of lessons in which a behaviour is exhibited and the frequency with which a behaviour was encountered

## Low-level disruptive behaviour

In the classroom	Around the school
Talking out of turn	Running in the corridor
Making unnecessary (non-verbal) noise	Unruliness while waiting
Hindering other pupils	Showing lack of concern for others
Getting out of seat without permission	Persistently infringing school rules
Not being punctual	Cheeky or impertinent remarks or responses
Persistently infringing class rules	Loitering in prohibited areas
Eating/chewing in class	Leaving school premises without permission
Work avoidance	Rowdiness, horseplay or mucking about
Cheeky or impertinent remarks or responses	Use of mobile phones against school policies
Rowdiness, horseplay or mucking about	
Use of mobile phone	
Use of headphones/iPod, MP3 player	
Withdrawing from interaction	
Missing lessons	

## Serious disruptive behaviour/violence

In the classroom	Around the school
Physical destructiveness	Physical destructiveness
Racist abuse towards other pupils	Racist abuse towards other pupils
Sexist abuse towards other pupils	Sexist abuse towards other pupils
General verbal abuse towards other pupils	General verbal abuse towards other pupils
Racist abuse towards you/your staff	Racist abuse towards you/your staff
Sexist abuse towards you/your staff	Sexist abuse towards you/your staff
General verbal abuse towards you/your staff	General verbal abuse towards you/your staff
Pupils under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol	Pupils under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol
Physical aggression towards other pupils	Physical aggression towards other pupils
Physical violence towards other pupils	Physical violence towards other pupils
Using mobile phones abusively	Using mobile phones abusively
Physical aggression towards you	Physical aggression towards you
Physical violence towards you	Physical violence towards you

## Differences between staff groups

- 1.21 The report details the findings from three categories of staff (heads, teachers and support staff) in the two sectors (primary and secondary). Overall, the results from heads tend to be more positive than the results from teachers (e.g. they experience more good behaviour and less low-level disruptive behaviour), and the results from teachers are more positive than the results from support staff.
- 1.22 There are a number of possible reasons for this. Different staff groups have different perspectives on behaviour in the school - although that is not to say that the perspective of any one group is more 'true' than any other. Heads probably have a broader overview of behaviour in their school but will have to deal with more serious cases of disruptive behaviour than low-level disruptive behaviour. Dealing with serious disruptive behaviour more frequently may mean that heads have a higher threshold for the types of behaviour they consider disruptive. On the other hand, teachers have a class level focus and have to deal with low-level disruptive behaviour more often. Support staff often work with the most challenging individuals or small groups within the whole class.

- 1.23 In terms of serious disruptive behaviour, there was a different pattern. Heads encountered this type of behaviour more often than teachers. Heads were asked not only about their personal experience of serious disruptive behaviour but also about behaviour that had been referred on to them. For this reason we would expect them to have encountered more than teachers who were asked to think of their own experience only. However, support staff were also more likely to encounter serious disruptive behaviour than teachers and were asked only about their own experience. The most likely reason for this is that they have more one-to-one contact with challenging pupils.
- 1.24 Throughout the report, we present the results for each category of staff but we do not comment on the differences between them each time: this would have become extremely repetitive and placed an undue emphasis on the differences rather than actual results and the trends over time. When interpreting the results, readers should bear in mind the overall pattern.

### ***Differences between primary and secondary schools***

- 1.25 Overall, the results from staff in the primary sector tend to be more positive than the results from the secondary sector (e.g. primary staff experience more positive behaviour and less disruptive behaviour).
- 1.26 This is likely to be due to the age of the pupils (in terms of their actual behaviour and what behaviour is expected from children of different ages) and also the structure of primary and secondary school teaching.
- 1.27 Again, we have not commented on the differences in the results between primary and secondary sectors each time. When interpreting the results, readers should bear in mind the overall pattern.

### ***Analysing trend data***

- 1.28 In order to ensure that the any comparisons made between 2006, 2009 and 2012 were robust, we used the Mann Whitney *U* test to determine whether any changes observed were real or were likely to have occurred as a result of sampling variation. If an increase or decrease is reported, this means that the change is statistically significant at the 5% level.

## 2 POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

### SUMMARY

- Overall, all staff groups were very positive about the level of good behaviour both in the classroom and around the school.
- Staff working in the primary sector were more likely than those in the secondary sector to encounter positive behaviour.
- On the whole, views of specific positive behaviours have either improved or stayed the same since 2006. The only exception to this was primary support staff who reported decreases in 4 out of the 11 positive behaviours in the classroom.

### Introduction

2.1 This chapter outlines staff perceptions of positive behaviour in the classroom and around the school. The chapter is split into two sections – one with the primary sector results and the other with the secondary sector results. In each section, we begin with a general overview of positive behaviour in lessons followed by discussion of specific types of positive behaviour encountered. Then we cover positive behaviour around the school, and finally trends.

### Positive behaviour in the primary classroom

2.2 Overall, primary staff were very positive about the standards of behaviour in the classroom. The vast majority said that they encountered positive behaviour ‘all<sup>10</sup>’ or ‘most’ of the time. Ninety-nine per cent of primary heads said that all or most of their school roll were well behaved, while 93% of primary teachers and 90% of support staff stated that pupils were generally well behaved in all or most of their lessons<sup>11</sup> (Table 19<sup>12</sup>).

2.3 Figure 2.1 shows the percentage experiencing specific positive behaviours in all or most lessons. Among primary heads, the most commonly encountered positive behaviours in the classroom were ‘pupils contributing to class discussions’ and ‘pupils following instructions’. Primary teachers were also most likely to see ‘pupils contributing to class discussions’. Primary support staff were most likely to see ‘pupils arriving promptly for classes’. Primary heads were least likely to encounter ‘pupils listening to others’ views respectfully’ and ‘pupils interacting supportively with others’, while primary teachers and support staff were least likely to see ‘pupils settling down quickly’ (Table 20).

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<sup>10</sup> The response option was all/almost all but has been shortened to all in reporting for simplicity.

<sup>11</sup> For full details of question wording please see Annex 1.

<sup>12</sup> All tables references apply to Annex 6

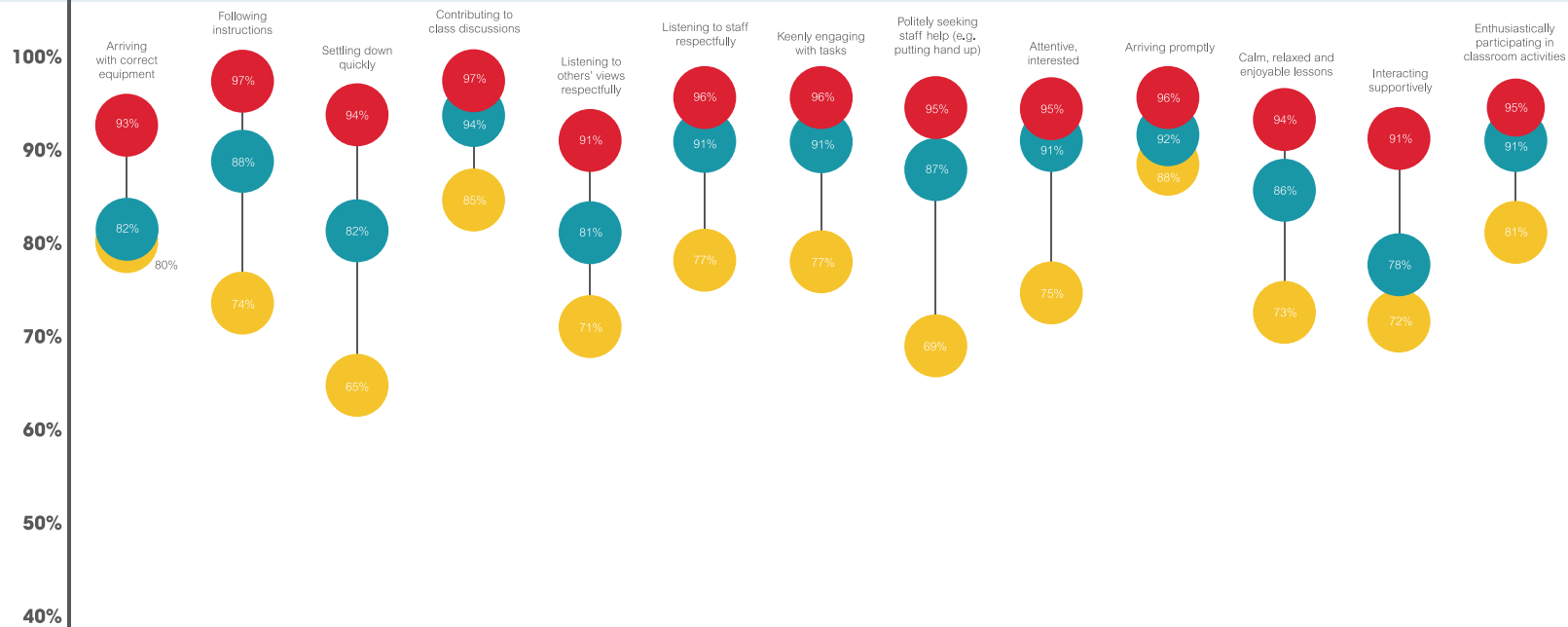


Fig 2.1

# POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS IN THE PRIMARY CLASSROOM

This chart shows the percentage of primary teachers and support staff who said they had experienced each behaviour in 'All' or 'Most' lessons in the last full teaching week, and the percentage of primary heads who said that, from their perspective, the behaviour was exhibited in 'All' or 'Most' lessons in the last full teaching week.

● Head Teachers ● Teachers ● Support Staff

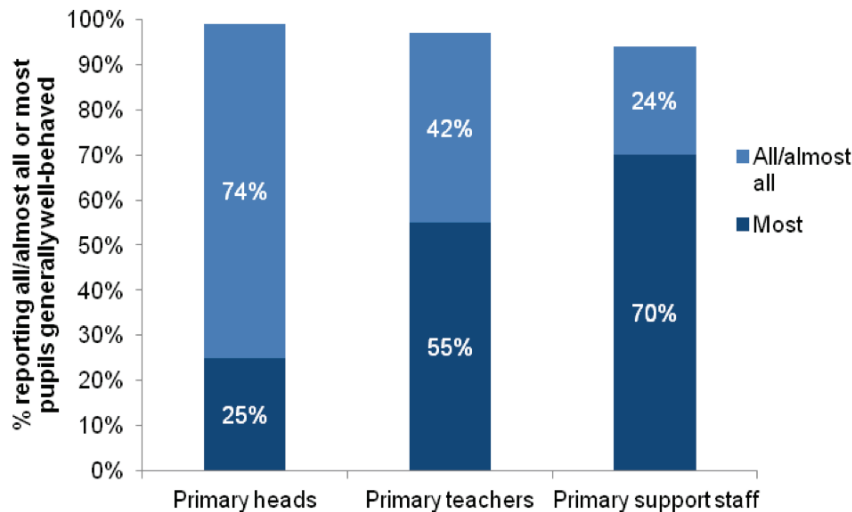


Centre of circles represent data point.  
 Bases: primary heads n=309, primary teachers n=866, primary support staff n= 585

## Positive behaviour around the primary school

2.4 General perceptions of behaviour around the school followed a similar pattern to behaviour in the classroom, with all three staff groups being very positive: (Figure 2.2) (Table 24).

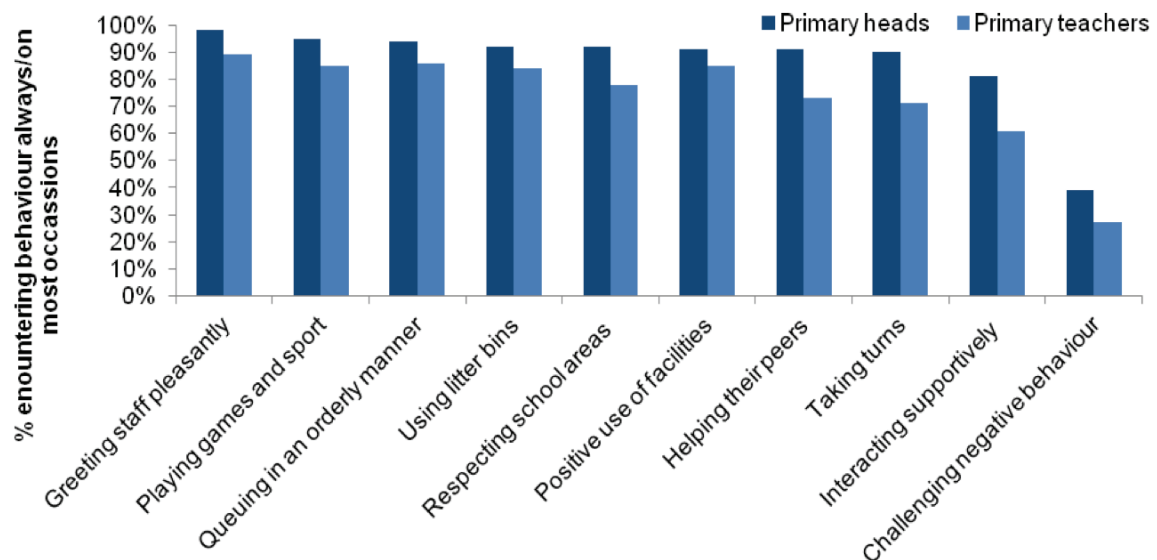
Figure 2.2 Overall perceptions of positive behaviour around the school



Bases: primary heads n = 303, primary teachers n = 873, primary support staff n = 594

2.5 Among primary heads and teachers<sup>13</sup>, the most frequently encountered positive behaviour around the school was 'pupils greeting staff pleasantly'. In contrast, the least frequent was 'pupils challenging others' negative behaviour' (see Figure 2.3) (Table 25).

Figure 2.3 Perceptions of specific positive behaviours around the school



Bases: primary heads n = 314, primary teachers n = 877

<sup>13</sup> Support staff were not asked about specific positive behaviours around the school.

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

- 2.6 As with staff from the primary sector, secondary heads, teachers and support staff were positive about the level of good behaviour in the classroom. The majority stated that they encountered positive behaviour 'all' or 'most' of the time: (99% of secondary heads indicated that all or most pupils were generally well behaved in the classroom and 88% of secondary teachers and 61% of secondary support staff indicated that pupils were generally well behaved in all or most of their lessons) (Table 19).
- 2.7 Among secondary heads, the most frequently encountered type of positive behaviour was 'pupils listening to staff respectfully', among secondary teachers it was 'pupils following instructions' and among secondary support staff it was 'pupils arriving promptly for lessons'. The least common type of positive behaviour that secondary heads saw was 'pupils enthusiastically participating in classroom activities'. Secondary teachers and support staff were least likely to encounter 'pupils arriving with the correct equipment' (Figure 2.4) (Table 20).

Fig 2.4

# POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS IN THE SECONDARY CLASSROOM

This chart shows the percentage of secondary teachers and support staff who said they had experienced each behaviour in 'All' or 'Most' lessons in the last full teaching week, and the percentage of secondary heads who said that, from their perspective, the behaviour was exhibited in 'All' or 'Most' lessons in the last full teaching week.

● Head Teachers ● Teachers ● Support Staff



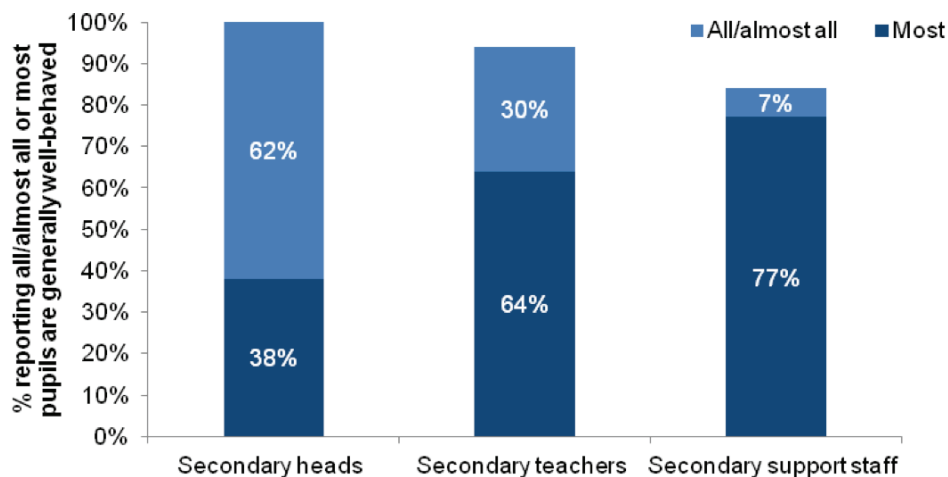
Centre of circles represent data point.  
 Bases: secondary heads n=248, secondary teachers n=2,027, secondary support staff n=775

2.8 In contrast to the general trend for heads to encounter more positive behaviour than teachers, secondary teachers were slightly more likely than secondary heads to say that they encountered the following specific positive behaviours in all lessons: ‘contributing to class discussions’; ‘listening to others’ views respectfully’; ‘listening to staff respectfully’; ‘politely seeking staff help’ and ‘lessons that are calm, relaxed and enjoyable’.

### Positive behaviour around the secondary school

2.9 Overall, perceptions of positive behaviour around the school followed a similar pattern to positive behaviour in the classroom. The vast majority of secondary staff thought that all or most pupils were generally well behaved around the school (Figure 2.5) (Table 24).

**Figure 2.5 Overall perceptions of positive behaviour around the school**

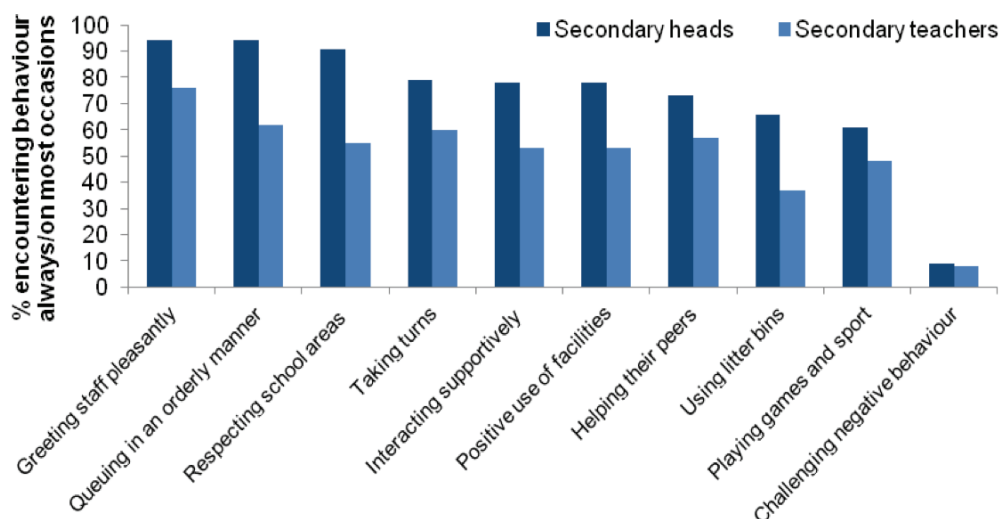


**Bases: secondary heads n = 253, secondary teachers n = 2027, secondary support staff n = 779**

2.10 Secondary heads and teachers saw ‘pupils greeting staff pleasantly’ and ‘pupils queuing in an orderly manner’ most frequently<sup>14</sup>. They were least likely to say that they had encountered pupils ‘challenging each others’ negative behaviour’ (Figure 2.6) (Table 25).

<sup>14</sup> Support staff were not asked about specific positive behaviours around the school

**Figure 2.6 Perceptions of specific positive behaviours around the school**



**Bases: secondary heads n = 255, secondary teachers n = 2026**

### **Comparisons with 2006 and 2009**

- 2.11 Overall, there has been very little change in experiences of positive behaviour either in the classroom or around the school. Nearly all heads (primary and secondary) said that all/most pupils are well behaved in lessons and pupils are always/most of the time well behaved around the school. As heads' opinions were so positive there was little scope for improvement and there was no change in their views over time.
- 2.12 Among primary teachers, there have been no significant changes between 2006 and 2012 in views of overall positive behaviour either in the classroom or around the school. Among secondary teachers, there was an increase in the proportion encountering pupils behaving well in all/most lessons and always/most of the time around the school between 2006 and 2009 but no change between 2009 and 2012.
- 2.13 There was very little change in views of positive behaviour among either primary or secondary support staff. However, between 2006 and 2012 there was an increase in the proportion of secondary support staff who encountered pupils behaving well always or most of the time around the school.
- 2.14 The majority of the specific positive behaviours showed similar patterns to the overall measures – either improving or remaining the same between 2006 and 2012. The only exception to this was amongst primary support staff who reported decreases in 4 out of the 11 positive behaviours in the classroom (for full details see Annex 7).

### 3 LOW-LEVEL DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR

#### SUMMARY

- The most common type of low-level disruptive behaviour in the classroom was 'talking out of turn'. Around the school, the most common type was 'running in the corridor'.
- Teachers and support staff thought that low-level disruptive behaviours had a greater negative impact on their teaching experience than serious disruptive behaviour/violence.
- Among both teachers and support staff, the behaviour said to cause the greatest disruption was 'talking out of turn'.
- Overall, secondary staff were more likely than primary staff to encounter low-level disruptive behaviour.
- The proportions of heads and teachers encountering low-level disruptive behaviour (in the classroom and around the school) are, with the exception of talking out of turn in primary schools, and mobile phone use in secondary schools, unchanged or decreasing.
- The picture for support staff is less positive. There has been an increase in the proportion of both primary and secondary support staff encountering a number of low-level disruptive behaviours in the classroom between 2006 and 2012.

#### Introduction

- 3.1 Staff were given a list of different low-level disruptive behaviours and asked how frequently they encountered them. This was done for both behaviour in the classroom and behaviour around the school. The chapter is split into two sections, the first for the primary sector and the second for the secondary sector.

#### Low-level disruptive behaviour in the primary classroom

- 3.2 Nearly two thirds (66%) of primary heads said that they had low-level disruptive behaviour in the classroom referred to them at some point in the previous week (Table 21).
- 3.3 The low-level disruptive behaviour most frequently experienced in the classroom was 'talking out of turn'<sup>15</sup>. The least common was 'using mobile phones/texting'. Overall, primary teachers tend to encounter less low-level disruptive behaviour in the classroom than primary support staff (Figure 3.1) (Table 22).

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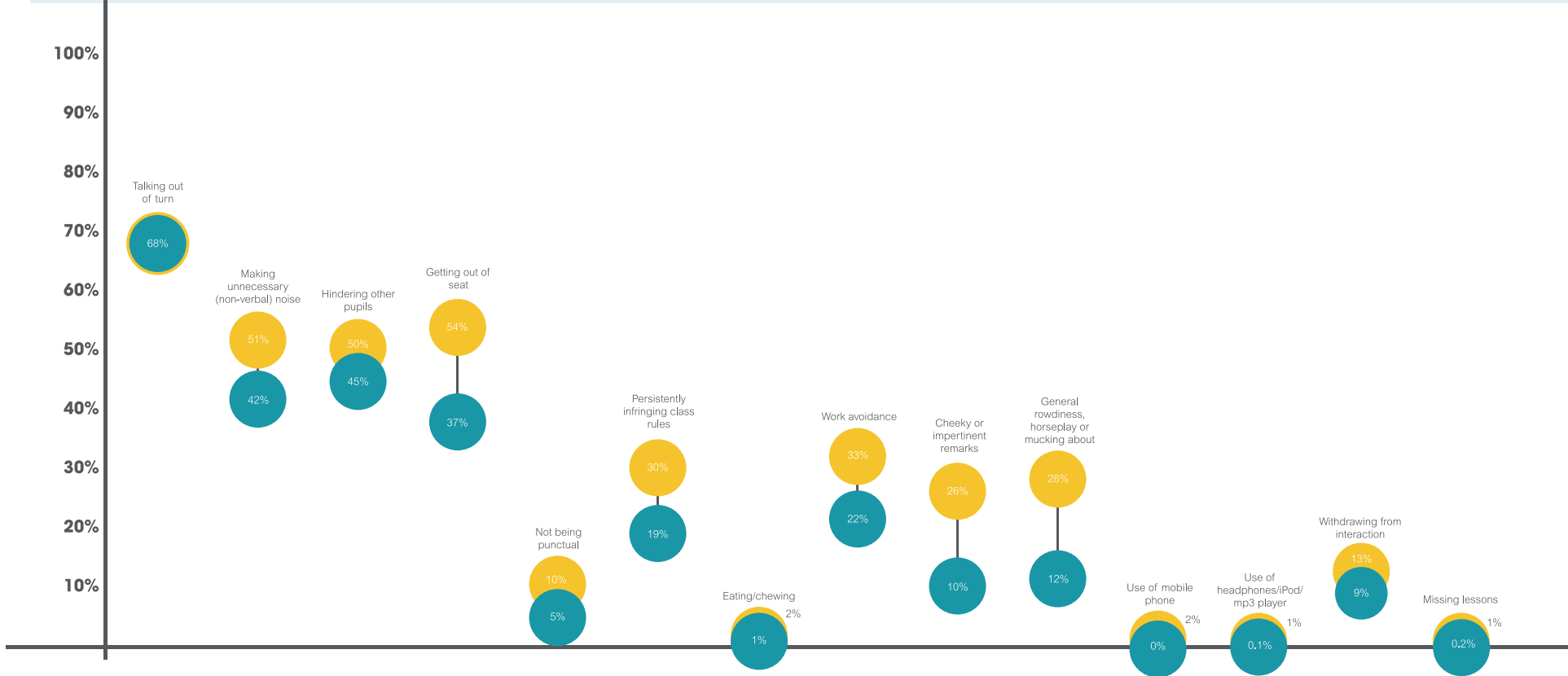
<sup>15</sup> This question was only asked of teachers and support staff.

Fig 3.1

# LOW-LEVEL DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOURS IN THE PRIMARY CLASSROOM

This chart shows the percentage of primary teachers and support staff who said that they had experienced the behaviour at least twice a day in the last full teaching week.

● Teachers ● Support Staff



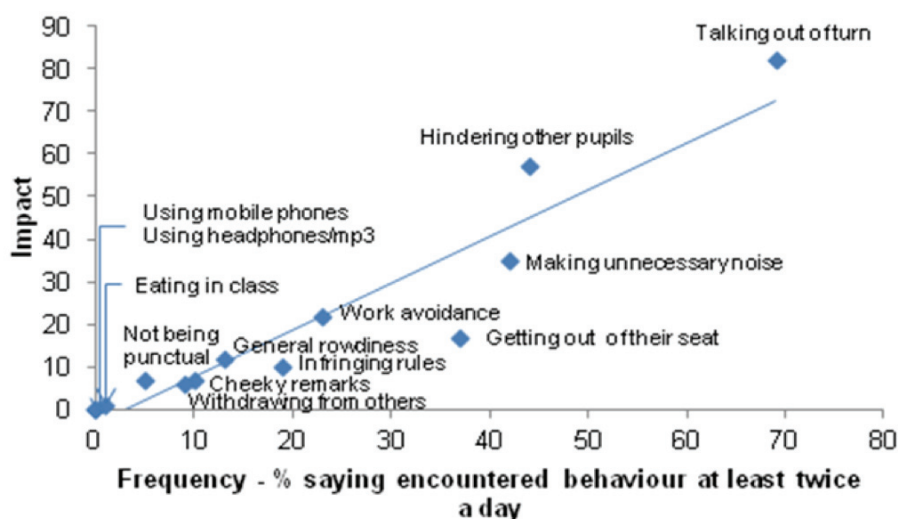
Centre of circles represent data point.  
 Bases: primary teachers n=879, primary support staff n=592



3.4 While these forms of disruptive behaviour are termed ‘low-level’, they can still have a notable impact on the day-to-day classroom environment. Teachers and support staff were asked which behaviours had the greatest negative impact on their teaching experience in the previous week and, from a list including both low-level disruptive behaviours and serious disruptive behaviour/violence, it was the low-level behaviours which had the most impact. Among both primary teachers and support staff, the behaviours said to cause the greatest disruption were ‘talking out of turn’ and ‘hindering other pupils’ (Table 23).

3.5 The chart below (Figure 3.2) shows that, in terms of low-level disruptive behaviour in the classroom, there is a relationship between perceptions of how often a behaviour occurs, and how disruptive it is ( $r^{16} = 0.94$ ).

**Figure 3.2 Frequency of the perceptions of low-level disruptive behaviour in the classroom by percentage of primary teachers ranking it as one of the three behaviours that have the greatest negative impact on staff experience**



Base: primary teachers n = 877

### Low-level disruptive behaviour around the primary school<sup>17</sup>

3.6 The most common types of disruptive behaviour seen around the school were ‘running in the corridor’ and ‘unruliness while waiting’. The least common behaviours were ‘use of mobile phones against school policies’ and ‘leaving school without permission’ (Table 26).

<sup>16</sup> r represents the correlation coefficient for the two variables and measures the strength of the relationship between them i.e. as one variable increases in its values, the other variable also increases in its values. In a perfect relationship between two variables  $r = 1$ , so the closer the r value is to 1 the stronger the relationship. However, it is important to bear in mind that correlation does not imply causation.

<sup>17</sup> This question was only asked of heads and teachers.

## **Disruptive behaviour outside of the primary school premises<sup>18</sup>**

- 3.7 Complaints from the public about primary pupils' conduct outside the school premises were rare: 30% of heads said they never received complaints and 63% received them 'rarely' (Table 33).
- 3.8 On the rare occasions there were complaints, the most common reasons were: 'cheeky or impertinent remarks', 'general rowdiness, horseplay, mucking about' and 'anti-social behaviour (e.g. smoking, swearing, shouting)' (Table 34).

## **Comparisons with 2006 and 2009**

- 3.9 Overall, primary teachers' views of the frequency of low level disruptive behaviour in the classroom have either improved or stayed the same between 2006 and 2012. The only exception to this is 'talking out of turn' which has increased over the period.
- 3.10 For primary support staff, there have been perceived increases between 2006 and 2012 in 5 out of the 11 behaviours listed in Fig 3.1 ('talking out of turn', 'making unnecessary non-verbal noise', 'hindering other pupils', 'getting out of seat without permission' and 'not being punctual'). However, none of these changed significantly in the last 3 years (2009-2012), suggesting that this increase may be levelling off.
- 3.11 In terms of low level disruptive behaviour around the school, primary teachers perceived the frequency of such behaviours to be declining across the board, although most of these decreases occurred between 2006 and 2009, with no significant change over the last 3 years. The one exception to this was 'running in the corridor', which has not changed over 2006-2012.
- 3.12 This was much the same for primary heads, with the exceptions of 'running in the corridor' and 'leaving school premises without permission', which have not changed over 2006-2012, and the 'use of mobile phones/texting against school policies', which increased between 2006 and 2012.
- 3.13 For more detail on these findings, please see Annex 6.

## **Low-level disruptive behaviour in the secondary classroom**

- 3.14 Nearly half of secondary heads had had pupils referred to them at least once in the previous week for what was deemed to be low level disruption (Table 21).
- 3.15 Among secondary teachers and secondary support staff, the most commonly observed type of low level disruptive behaviour was 'talking out of turn'<sup>19</sup>. The least common type of behaviour encountered was 'pupils withdrawing from interaction with others/you'. In general, support staff witnessed more low-level disruptive behaviour in the classroom than secondary teachers (Figure 3.3) (Table 22).

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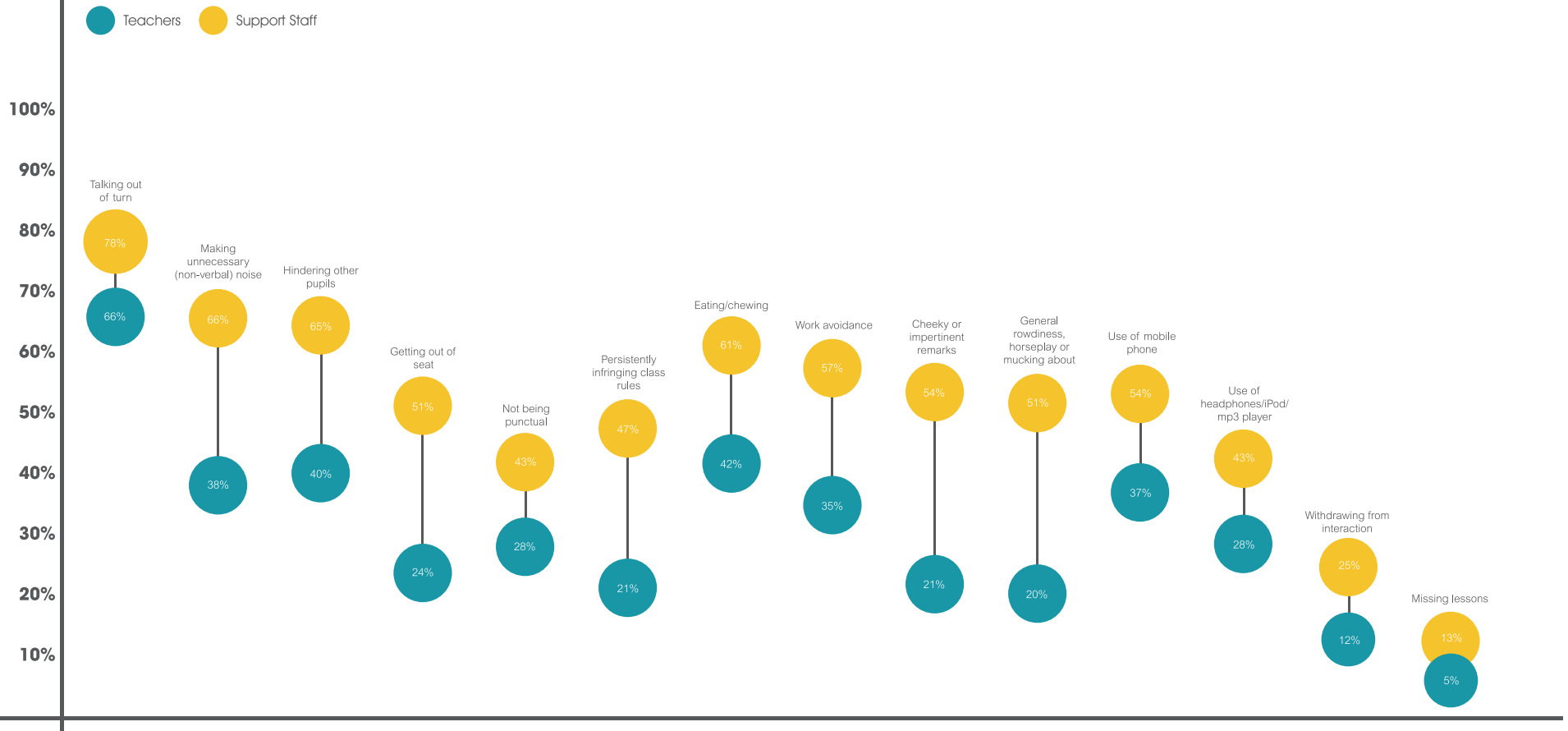
<sup>18</sup> These questions were only asked of heads.

<sup>19</sup> This question was only asked of teachers and support staff.

Fig 3.3

# LOW-LEVEL DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOURS IN THE SECONDARY CLASSROOM

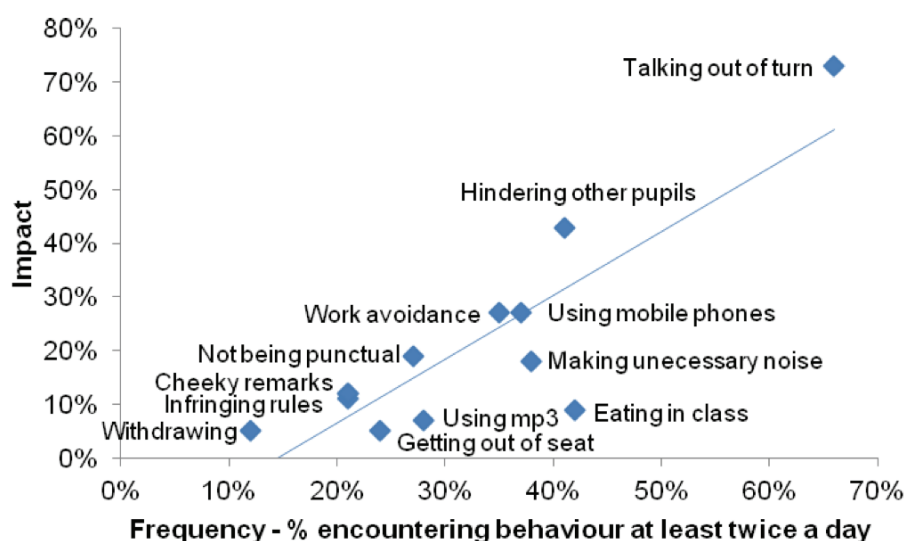
This chart shows the percentage of secondary teachers and support staff who said that they had experienced the behaviour at least twice a day in the last full teaching week.



Centre of circles represent data point.  
Bases: secondary teachers n=2,025, secondary support staff n=779

3.16 Teachers and support staff were asked which behaviours had the greatest negative impact on their teaching experience in the previous week and, from a list including both low-level and serious disruptive behaviour/violence, it was the low-level behaviours which had the most impact. Secondary teachers and support staff both thought that the behaviours that had the greatest impact on their work were pupils ‘talking out of turn’ and ‘hindering other pupils’ (Table 23). In general, the behaviours that were most frequent were also perceived to have the greatest negative impact ( $r^{20} = 0.85$ ) (Figure 3.4).

**Figure 3.4 Frequency or the perceptions of low-level disruptive behaviour in the classroom by percentage of secondary teachers ranking it as one of the three behaviours that have the greatest negative impact on staff experience**



Base: secondary teachers n = 2027

### Low-level disruptive behaviour around the secondary school

3.17 The most common low-level disruptive behaviours encountered around the schools were ‘using mobile phones against school policies’ and ‘running in the corridor’. The least common behaviour encountered was ‘withdrawing from peers’ (Table 26).

3.18 Secondary heads felt that ‘using mobile phones against school policies’ had the greatest negative impact on staff’s experience at school, while teachers thought that ‘general rowdiness’ had the greatest effect (Table 27).

<sup>20</sup> r represents the correlation coefficient for the two variables and measures the strength of the relationship between them i.e. as one variable increases in its values, the other variable also increases in its values. In a perfect relationship between two variables  $r = 1$ , so the closer the r value is to 1 the stronger the relationship. However, it is important to bear in mind that correlation does not imply causation.

## **Disruptive behaviour outside the secondary school premises**

- 3.19 Almost all secondary heads (98%) had received complaints about their pupils' conduct outside school premises. However, only 5% received complaints frequently (Table 33).
- 3.20 The three most common reasons for complaints from the public were; 'general rowdiness, horseplay, mucking about', 'anti-social behaviour (e.g. smoking, swearing, shouting)' and 'dropping litter' (Table 34).

## **Comparisons with 2006 and 2009**

- 3.21 Secondary teachers' views of the frequency of low level disruptive behaviour in the classroom have improved between 2006 and 2012 across all behaviours listed in Figure 3.3, with the exceptions of 'talking out of turn', which has not changed, and the 'use of mobile phones/texting', which increased between 2009 and 2012.
- 3.22 For secondary support staff, perceptions of the frequency of most of the low level disruptive behaviours in the classroom have not changed between 2006 and 2012, with the exception of 'talking out of turn', 'hindering other pupils' and the 'use of mobile phones/texting', which have all increased.
- 3.23 In terms of low level disruptive behaviour around the school, secondary teachers perceived the frequency of such behaviours to be decreasing across the board between 2006 and 2012, although most of this change occurred between 2006 and 2009. The only exception to this was the 'use of mobile phones/texting against school policies' which went down between 2006 and 2009, but didn't change between 2009 and 2012.
- 3.24 Again, this was much the same for secondary heads, who perceived a decline in the frequency of most low level disruptive behaviours between 2006 and 2009, and further between 2009 and 2012. Again the key exception was mobile phone use against school policies, which increased between 2009 and 2012.
- 3.25 For more detail on these findings, please see Annex 7.

## 4 SERIOUS DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR/VIOLENCE

### SUMMARY

- Serious disruptive behaviour was much less common than low-level disruptive behaviour.
- Serious disruptive behaviour was more commonly directed at other pupils rather than staff.
- Overall, heads and support staff encountered similar levels of serious disruptive behaviour and both were more likely to see this than teachers.
- In general, those working in the secondary sector were more likely to encounter serious disruptive behaviour than those in the primary sector, with the exception of physical aggression and physical violence.
- On the whole, serious disruptive behaviour has been decreasing over time. However there are a few specific behaviours that saw an increase. In particular, all staff groups had seen an increase in the abusive use of mobile phones from 2009 to 2012.

### Introduction

- 4.1 Staff were given a list of 15 serious disruptive behaviours and asked how frequently they had occurred in the classroom and around the school in the previous full teaching week before the survey. The results for the primary and secondary sectors are discussed in turn.
- 4.2 Overall, serious disruptive or violent behaviour in the classroom was much less common than low-level disruptive behaviour. We mainly report on the percentage of staff who had encountered a behaviour at least once in the previous week. However, where there are sufficient numbers to explore the differences at a more detailed level we do so. It must also be borne in mind that these results relate to the number of incidents and not the number of pupils. While there may be several incidents in a school in one week, they may only involve a single pupil.

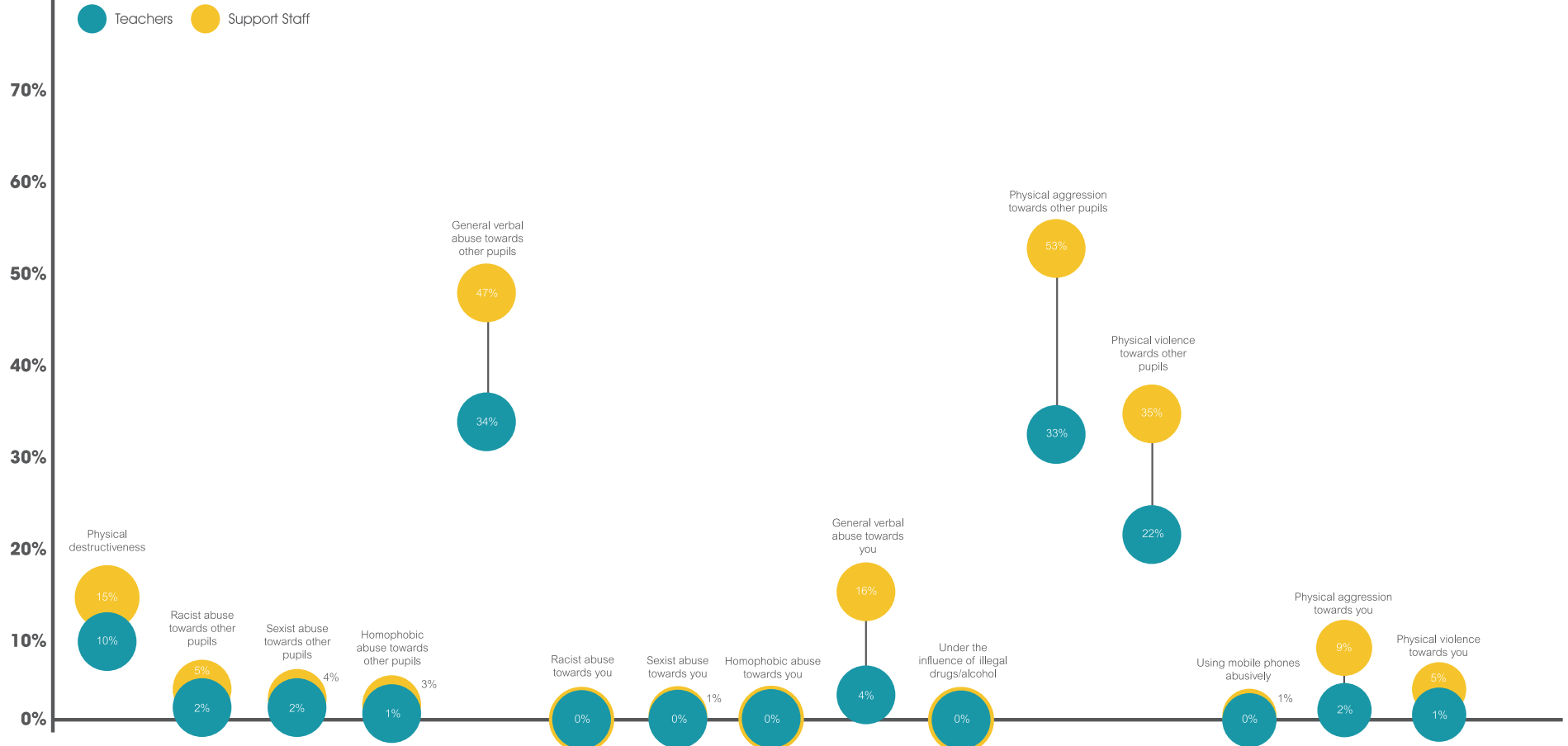
### Serious disruptive behaviour/violence in the primary classroom

- 4.3 It was more common for serious disruptive behaviour in the classroom to be directed at other pupils than at staff. The most frequently encountered behaviours in the classroom were 'physical aggression towards other pupils' and 'general verbal abuse towards other pupils'. The most common form of serious behaviour directed at staff members was 'general verbal abuse towards you/your staff' (Figure 4.1) (Table 22).

Fig 4.1

# SERIOUS DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOURS/ VIOLENCE IN THE PRIMARY CLASSROOM

This chart shows the percentage of primary teachers and support staff who said that they had experienced the behaviour in the last full teaching week.



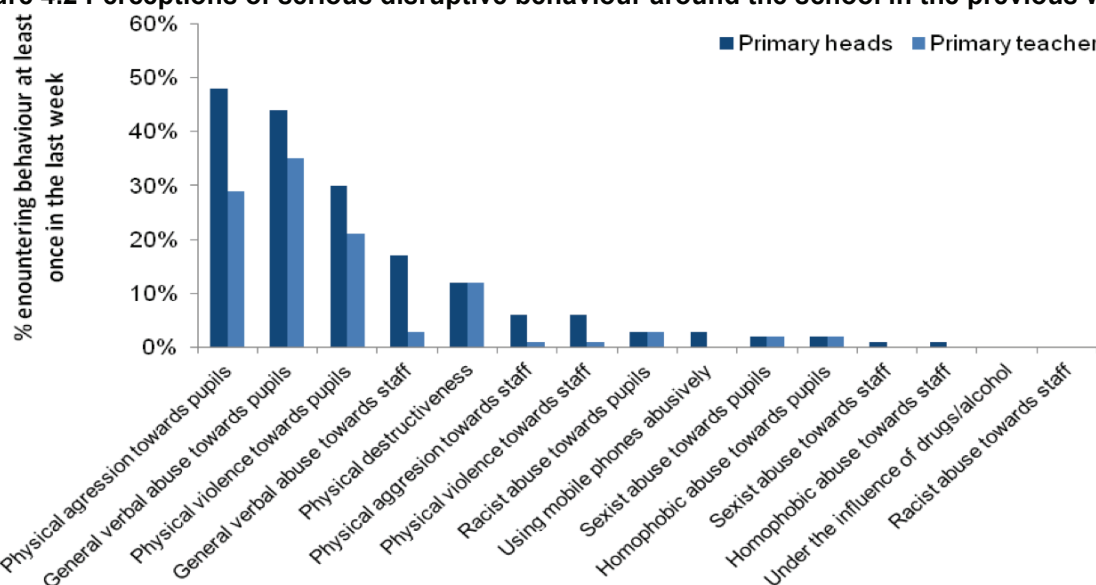
Centre of circles represent data point.  
Bases: primary teachers n=878, primary support staff n=589

- 4.4 The least common behaviour was ‘pupils under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol’. No staff from the primary sector had observed this in the classroom in the previous week. There were also very low levels of sexist, racist or homophobic abuse towards staff (Table 22).
- 4.5 Both primary heads<sup>21</sup> and support staff<sup>22</sup> encountered more serious disruptive behaviour in the preceding week than primary teachers.

### Serious disruptive behaviour/violence around the primary school

- 4.6 Serious disruptive behaviour around the school followed the same pattern as behaviour in the classroom<sup>23</sup>. It was less common for primary staff to see serious disruptive behaviour than low-level disruptive behaviour. When serious disruptive behaviour was encountered, it was mostly directed at other pupils as opposed to staff. (Figure 4.2) (Table 26).

**Figure 4.2 Perceptions of serious disruptive behaviour around the school in the previous week**



Bases: primary heads n = 314, primary teachers n = 876

### Personal experience of serious disruptive behaviour in the primary school in the previous 12 months

- 4.7 Staff were asked if they, personally, had experienced abuse (including verbal abuse) or violence against them in the previous 12 months. Twenty-seven per cent of primary heads, 19% of primary teachers and 23% of primary support staff had experienced some form of abuse or violence in the previous 12 months.

<sup>21</sup> Heads were asked about serious disruptive behaviour that they had personally encountered *and* behaviour that had been referred to them. Consequently, it is understandable that a higher proportion would report that they encountered such behaviour than teachers who were only asked about their own experience.

<sup>22</sup> This is probably due to the type of pupils that support staff are working with. As they often deal with the most challenging pupils, it is likely that they will encounter more serious disruptive behaviour.

<sup>23</sup> This question was only asked of heads and teachers.



- 4.8 The most common form of incident was ‘verbal abuse towards you (i.e. threatening remarks)’, followed by ‘physical aggression towards you (e.g. by pushing, squaring up)’ and ‘physical violence towards you (e.g. punching, kicking, head butting, use of a weapon)’. It was very rare for primary staff to say they personally experienced racist abuse, sexist abuse or homophobic abuse in the previous 12 months (Table 28).
- 4.9 It was most common for incidents involving primary heads to be followed up with a restorative meeting, while for teachers and support staff it was most common for incidents to be followed up with ‘feedback on the incident’ (Table 31). While the questionnaire provided no further information on what feedback was provided, staff comments from the questionnaire pilot suggest that they perceived this to be feedback from the head or the senior management team (SMT).
- 4.10 Primary heads and teachers reported similar levels of satisfaction with how the incident was followed up (77% of heads and 73% of teachers were ‘very’ or ‘fairly satisfied’ with the way it was handled). A lower proportion of support staff were satisfied with the way the incident was handled (58%) (Table 32).

### **Impact of serious indiscipline/pupil violence in primary school**

- 4.11 In general, primary staff perceived serious disruptive behaviour to have a much lower impact on their day-to-day school experience than low-level disruptive behaviour<sup>24</sup>. This is perhaps unsurprising given the fact that it was much rarer. The serious behaviours that were thought to have the greatest impact (both in the classroom and around the school) were ‘physical aggression towards other pupils’ and ‘general abuse towards other pupils’ (Table 23 and 27).
- 4.12 Staff were also asked about the overall impact of serious disruptive behaviour/pupil violence on the performance of their school. The majority of primary staff felt it had little impact. Eighty-three per cent of primary heads, 73% of primary teachers and 65% of primary support staff thought this type of behaviour had little impact on the performance of their school<sup>25</sup> (Table 48).

### **Comparisons with 2006 and 2009**

- 4.13 For all primary staff, the frequency of encountering serious disruptive behaviours/violence in the classroom either declined or stayed the same between 2006 and 2012, with the exception of an increase in the proportion of primary heads’ experiencing ‘general verbal abuse towards you/your staff’. However, this change was only significant between 2006 and 2009, suggesting that it may have levelled off in the last three years. Interestingly, across all staff groups there was a decrease in physical violence towards other pupils between 2006 and 2012, but again most of this change took

<sup>24</sup> We asked which three types of behaviour (from the list including low-level and serious disruptive behaviour) had the greatest negative impact on staff experiences in the classroom in the previous week. Most staff cited low-level behaviours.

<sup>25</sup> The wording of this question was revised in 2012 following the pilot, so the results are not comparable with 2009.

place between 2006 and 2009, with no significant change between 2009 and 2012.

- 4.14 Similarly, primary heads and teachers generally encountered either less or the same amount of serious disruptive behaviours/violence around the school between 2006 and 2012. Notable exceptions to this were primary heads' experiences of 'general verbal abuse towards you/your staff' and 'physical aggression towards you', which increased between 2006 and 2009, but had levelled off by 2009-2012 (resulting in no overall change between 2006 and 2012).
- 4.15 Among all staff groups, there had also been no change since 2009 in the proportion who personally experienced some form of abuse or violence in the last 12 months.
- 4.16 For more detail on these findings, please see Annex 7.

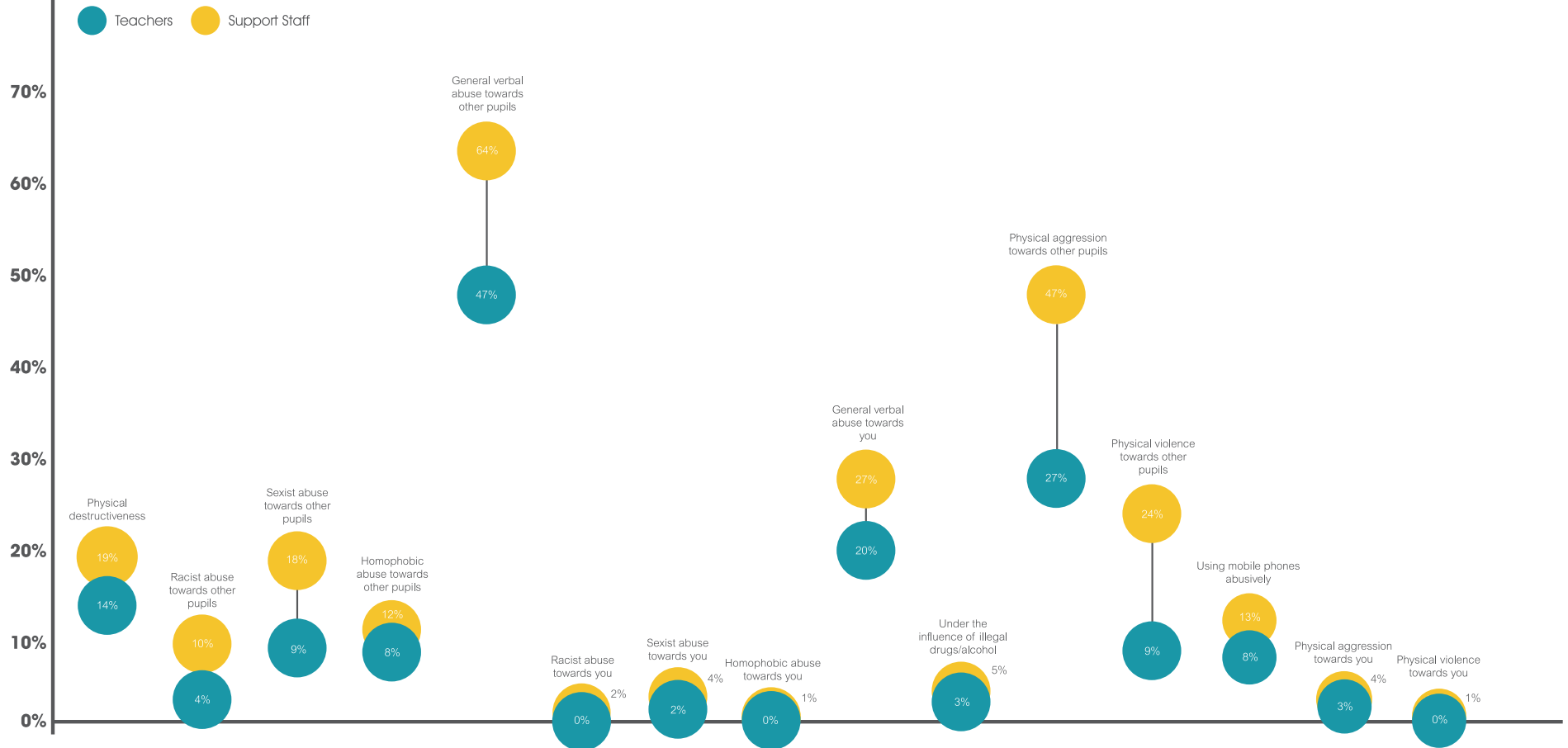
### **Serious disruptive behaviour/violence in the secondary classroom**

- 4.17 The most common forms of serious disruptive behaviour in the classroom seen by secondary staff were: 'general verbal abuse towards other pupils'; 'general verbal abuse towards you/your staff'; and 'physical aggression towards other pupils'. (Figure 4.3) (Table 22).

Fig 4.3

# SERIOUS DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOURS/ VIOLENCE IN THE SECONDARY CLASSROOM

This chart shows the percentage of secondary teachers and support staff who said that they had experienced the behaviour in the last full teaching week.



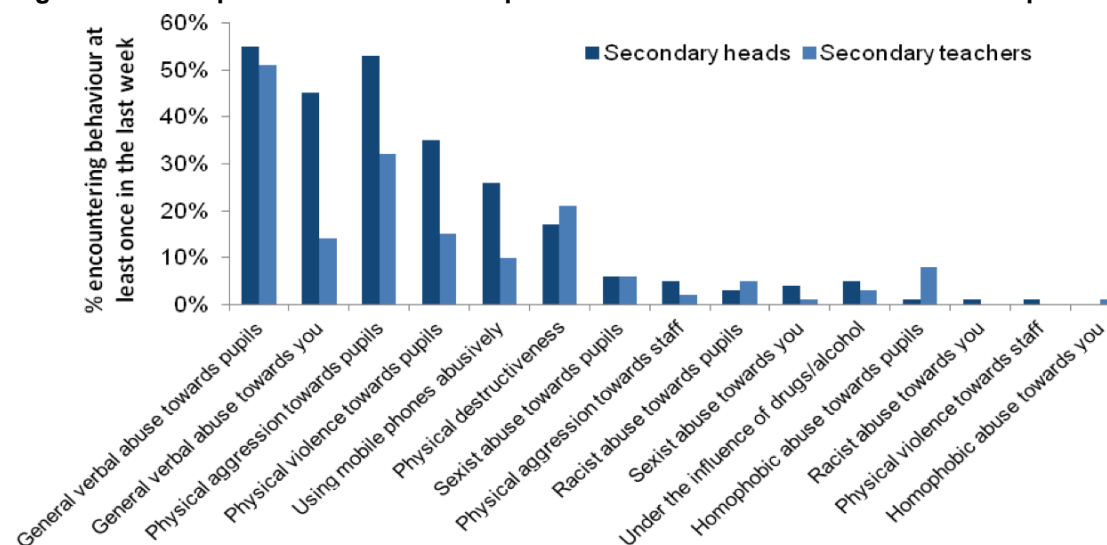
Centre of circles represent data point.  
Bases: secondary teachers n=2,027, secondary support staff n=777

4.18 Overall, secondary heads<sup>26</sup> and support staff<sup>27</sup> were more likely than teachers to encounter serious disruptive behaviour in the classroom in the previous week.

### Serious disruptive behaviour/violence around the secondary school

4.19 Secondary heads and teachers said that the most common forms of serious disruptive behaviour around the school were ‘general verbal abuse towards other pupils’ and ‘physical aggression towards other pupils’. In general, secondary heads were more likely to encounter serious disruptive behaviour around the school than teachers<sup>28</sup>. (Figure 4.4) (Table 26).

**Figure 4.4 Perceptions of serious disruptive behaviour around the school in the previous week**



Bases: secondary heads n = 254, secondary teachers n = 2026

### Personal experience of serious disruptive behaviour in the secondary school in the previous 12 months

4.20 Staff were asked if they, personally, had experienced abuse (including verbal abuse) or violence against them in the previous 12 months. Thirty-five per cent of secondary heads and teachers and 26% of secondary support staff had experienced some form of violence or abuse in the previous 12 months.

4.21 The most common serious behaviour was ‘verbal abuse towards you (i.e. threatening remarks)’, followed by ‘physical aggression towards you’ (e.g. pushing, squaring up). It was extremely rare for secondary staff to say they

<sup>26</sup> Heads were asked about serious disruptive behaviour that they had personally encountered *and* behaviour that had been referred to them. Consequently, it is understandable that a higher proportion would report that they encountered such behaviour than teachers who were only asked about their own experience.

<sup>27</sup> This is probably due to the type of pupils that support staff are working with. As they often deal with the most challenging pupils, it is likely that they will encounter more serious disruptive behaviour.

<sup>28</sup> Heads were asked about serious disruptive behaviour that they had personally encountered *and* behaviour that had been referred to them. Consequently, it is understandable that a higher proportion would report that they encountered such behaviour than teachers who were only asked about their own experience.

personally experienced any other kind of abuse or violence in the previous 12 months. Among those staff who had experienced some form of abuse, the most recent incident was most likely to have been 'verbal abuse towards you' (Table 28).

- 4.22 It was most common for an incident involving a head to be followed up with a formal meeting. Among teachers and support staff the most common outcome was 'feedback on the incident'. While the questionnaire provided no further information on what feedback was provided, staff comments from the questionnaire pilot suggest that they perceived this to be feedback from the head or the senior management team (SMT) (Table 31).
- 4.23 Overall, the majority of secondary staff were satisfied with how the most recent incident they experienced was handled. However, secondary heads were more satisfied than secondary teachers or support staff (87% of secondary heads, compared with 61% of secondary teachers and 56% of secondary support staff were very or fairly satisfied) (Table 32).

### **Impact of serious indiscipline/pupil violence in secondary school**

- 4.24 Secondary teachers and support staff did not rank the impact of any of the serious disruptive behaviours highly<sup>29</sup>. This may be because these incidents are, in fact, relatively rare. The serious disruptive behaviour thought to have the greatest impact in the classroom was 'general verbal abuse towards other pupils' (Table 23 and 27).
- 4.25 The majority of secondary heads and teachers thought the serious disruptive behaviour/pupil violence had little impact on the performance of their school. Eighty-six per cent of secondary heads, 60% of secondary teachers and 47% of secondary support staff thought this type of behaviour had little impact on the performance of their school<sup>30</sup> (Table 48).

### **Comparisons with 2006 and 2009**

- 4.26 Across most of the categories for serious disruptive behaviours/violence in the classroom, there had been a decline from 2006 to 2012 across all staff. However, secondary heads saw a rise between 2006 and 2009 in:
- 'sexist abuse towards you/your staff'
  - 'general verbal abuse towards you/your staff'
  - 'physical aggression towards you'

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<sup>29</sup> We asked which three types of behaviour (from the list including low-level and serious disruptive behaviour) had the greatest negative impact on staff experiences in the classroom in the previous week. Most staff cited low-level behaviours.

<sup>30</sup> The wording of this question was revised in 2012 following the pilot, so the results are not comparable with 2009.

- 4.27 By 2012 this had levelled off, but was still at a significantly higher level than in 2006.
- 4.28 The other notable finding was that secondary teachers and support staff had seen a rise in using mobile phones abusively in the classroom between 2009 and 2012 (question not asked in 2006).
- 4.29 Similarly, the general picture of serious disruptive behaviours/violence around the school was one of improvement between 2006 and 2012, but again, secondary heads saw a rise between 2006 and 2009 in the three categories of serious disruptive behaviour listed above. Once again, this had levelled off by 2012, but was still higher than it had been in 2006. Secondary heads also saw a rise in 'using mobile phones abusively' around the school between 2009 and 2012, but there was no change for secondary teachers in this regard.
- 4.30 There has also been an increase in secondary heads' personal experience of physical violence in the last 12 months: 3% (8 of 257) of secondary heads had experienced this in 2012, compared with 1% (3 of 246) in 2009. While an increase in physical violence towards secondary heads is a very serious matter, and should be monitored, it must be borne in mind that the absolute number of incidents is very small and is therefore subject to fluctuation when comparing two time periods. Physical violence is one out of six types of serious disruptive behaviour examined. For the other five, there was no evidence of change between 2009 and 2012 among secondary heads. Therefore, the change seen in the level of physical violence towards secondary heads does not appear to reflect a wider trend.
- 4.31 For more detail on these findings, please see Annex 7.

## 5 FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE EXPERIENCES OF BEHAVIOUR

### SUMMARY

- We carried out further analysis to explore the influence that specific variables (school sector, school size, level of free school meal registration (which is used as a proxy for deprivation), school capacity, school condition, length of service, the proportion of pupils that have additional support needs, urban/rural classification, and suitability of school premises) had on experiences of disruptive pupil behaviour. There are, of course, many other variables which might impact on experiences and this exercise was not intended to provide a full explanation of pupil behaviour.
- The variables included in the analysis only explained a small amount of the variation in experiences of disruptive pupil behaviour: among heads it ranged from 11-31%; among teachers 6-10%; and among support staff 4-12%. This reinforces the point that there are other variables which have an influence.
- The aspects that had the greatest impact on experiences of disruptive pupil behaviour overall were school sector (secondary staff experienced more disruptive behaviour), level of free school meal registration (staff working in schools with a higher rate of free school meal registration experienced more disruptive behaviour), and length of service (less experienced staff experienced more disruptive behaviour).

- 5.1 This chapter explores the extent to which some specific variables influence staff experiences of pupil behaviour. The scope of the research only extended to exploring some specific aspects of school demographics which might influence experiences of pupil behaviour. It was not intended to provide a full explanation of pupil behaviour as there are clearly many other variables that could contribute to this (e.g. aspects of pupils' home lives, peer pressure or aspects of the school culture and ethos which are difficult to quantify).
- 5.2 We first detail how we identified broad types of behaviour from the list of specific behaviours in the questionnaires and then discuss which variables best predict staff experiences of those types of behaviour.

### Using factor analysis to create behaviour groupings

- 5.3 The questionnaires covered staff experiences of a great number of specific disruptive behaviours. We simplified this data using a method called factor analysis. In this instance, factor analysis grouped together the specific behaviours that staff had experienced (based on their tendency to occur together) into six distinct factors (for full technical details please see Annex 8). This means that the specific behaviours grouped within a factor were highly correlated i.e. they tended to occur together and if a staff member had encountered one, they were more likely to have experienced the others.
- 5.4 Although the factor analysis highlights which behaviours are highly correlated it does not provide an explanation of what broad type of behaviour each grouping actually represents. However, it was clear that there were meaningful themes linking the behaviours in each grouping that emerged. The

table below highlights how we interpreted each factor (in the first column) and the specific behaviours that they contain (in the second column)<sup>31</sup> (Table 5.1).

**Table 5.1 Factor groupings**

<b>Factor one - low-level disruptive behaviour in the classroom</b>	Talking out of turn, making unnecessary noise, hindering other pupils, getting out of seat without permission, persistently infringing class rules, work avoidance, cheeky or impertinent remarks (in the classroom), general rowdiness (in the classroom)
<b>Factor two - low-level disruptive behaviour around the school</b>	Running in the corridor, unruliness while waiting, showing lack of concern for others, persistently infringing school rules, cheeky or impertinent remarks (around the school), loitering in prohibited areas, general rowdiness (around the school)
<b>Factor three - disengagement</b>	Not being punctual, eating/chewing in class, use of mobile phones/texting (in the classroom), use of headphones/iPod/mp3 player, missing lessons, leaving school premises without permission, use of mobile phones/texting against school policies, truanting
<b>Factor four - aggression and violence towards other pupils</b>	General verbal abuse towards other pupils (in the classroom and around the school), physical aggression towards other pupils (in the classroom and around the school), physical violence towards other pupils (in the classroom and around the school)
<b>Factor five - discriminatory verbal abuse towards other pupils</b>	Racist abuse towards other pupils (in the classroom and around the school), sexist abuse or harassment of other pupils (in the classroom and around the school), homophobic abuse towards other pupils (in the classroom and around the school)
<b>Factor six - abuse towards staff</b>	Physical aggression towards you (in the classroom and around the school), physical violence towards you (in the classroom and around the school), physical destructiveness (in the classroom and around the school), general verbal abuse towards you (in the classroom and around the school)

### Using logistic regression to identify drivers of staff experiences of pupil behaviour

5.5 Each logistic regression was conducted using the following variables to predict whether a type of behaviour would be encountered by a staff member or not: school sector, school size, level of free school meal registration (which is used as a proxy for deprivation), school capacity, school condition, length of service and the proportion of pupils that have additional support needs<sup>32</sup> (for full details on how these variables were defined please see Annex 8). The variables included in the analysis were chosen on the basis of the availability of the data and whether we thought they would have an influence. A further two variables were included in the original analyses: suitability of school premises and urban/rural classification. However, they did not have a significant impact on experiences of disruptive behaviour and were, therefore, excluded from further analyses.

5.6 Logistic regression creates a model that explains a certain amount of variation in the outcomes. In other words, it lets us know the extent to which the variables we have used as predictors are able to explain experiences of different types of behaviours. Among heads, the logistic regression models

<sup>31</sup> Due to differences in the questionnaire, factor one only applies to teachers and support staff and factor two only applies to teachers and heads.

<sup>32</sup> These variables were based on Scottish Government schools data.



were able to explain a reasonably high proportion of the variation for each factor (between 11% and 31%). While the models for teachers and support staff were only able to explain quite a small amount of the variation in outcomes, the influence of the predictor variables was statistically significant. Among teachers, the amount of variation explained ranged from 6% to 10% and, among support staff, it ranged from 4% to 12%.

- 5.7 It is clear from the amount of variation that remains unexplained that there are other variables that have an influence on whether staff encounter certain types of behaviour. These could be, for example, aspects of pupils' home lives, peer pressure or aspects of the school culture and ethos which are difficult to quantify. However the models do allow us to comment on which of the variables have a significant impact on experiences of disruptive behaviour.
- 5.8 The tables below summarise which variables best predicted whether staff encountered the different types of behaviour. Disengagement was particularly influenced by school sector (it was much more common in secondary schools), therefore we conducted extra analyses based only on secondary sector staff. Among heads, school size was no longer a predictor of disengagement. Among teachers and support staff, school condition had a significant impact which it did not when both primary and secondary staff were included. In addition, among support staff, the proportion of pupils with additional support needs became a significant predictor of disengagement.

**Table 5.4 Variables with a significant influence on whether heads encountered different types of behaviour**

	Secondary sector	Larger school size	Higher levels of FSM registration	Closer to school capacity	Poorer school condition	Shorter length of service	Higher level of ASN pupils
Low-level disruptive behaviour around the school				✓		✓	
Disengagement	✓		✓			✓	✓
Disengagement - secondary sector only			✓			✓	✓
Aggression and violence towards other pupils		✓	✓			✓	
Discriminatory verbal abuse towards other pupils		✓		✓		✓	
Abuse towards staff	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	

**Table 5.5 Variables with a significant influence on whether teachers encountered different types of behaviour**

	Secondary sector	Larger school size	Higher levels of FSM registration	Closer to school capacity	Poorer school condition	Shorter length of service	Higher level of ASN pupils
Low-level disruptive behaviour in the classroom		✓	✓			✓	
Low-level disruptive behaviour around the school	✓		✓				
Disengagement	✓		✓			✓	
Disengagement - secondary sector only		✓	✓		✓	✓	
Aggression and violence towards other pupils	✓		✓				
Discriminatory verbal abuse towards other pupils	✓		✓	✓			✓
Abuse towards staff	✓		✓				

**Table 5.6 Variables with a significant influence on whether support staff encountered different groups of behaviour**

	Secondary sector	Larger school size	Higher levels of FSM registration	Closer to school capacity	Poorer school condition	Shorter length of service	Higher level of ASN pupils
Low-level disruptive behaviour in the classroom	✓						✓
Disengagement	✓		✓				
Disengagement - secondary sector only		✓	✓		✓		✓
Aggression and violence towards other pupils	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Discriminatory verbal abuse towards other pupils	✓			✓			✓
Abuse towards staff	✓		✓				

5.9 Among teachers and support staff, the variables which impacted on the greatest number of types of behaviour are school sector and level of free school meal registration. However, among heads it is level of free school meal registration and length of service that influence the most behaviours. Being closer to school capacity had an influence on staff encountering discriminatory verbal abuse towards other pupils (this was true for all three staff groups). Among secondary teachers and support staff, poor school condition made them more likely to encounter disengagement. Clearly, further research would be required to explore the ways in which these variables influence different types of behaviours.

## Conclusions

- 5.10 Overall, the variables included in the analysis only explained a small amount of the variation in experiences of disruptive pupil behaviour (and they explain more of heads' experiences of disruptive pupil behaviour than that of teachers or support staff). The aspects that had the greatest impact were school sector (secondary staff experienced more disruptive behaviour), higher levels of free school meal registration (staff working in schools with a higher rate of free school meal registration experienced more disruptive behaviour) and length of service (less experienced staff experienced more disruptive behaviour). It is also important to note that there were some variables that we thought might have an influence on behaviour, however, this was not evidenced. These were the suitability of the school<sup>33</sup> and urban/rural classification. When all the variables are taken into account, suitability does not appear to explain any variation in experiences of behaviour.
- 5.11 Level of free school meal registration (a proxy for deprivation) was the variable that had the most consistent influence on experiences of behaviour across the three staff groups. While this may not come as a surprise, it indicates the importance of a continued focus on reducing inequalities and providing support for parents/early years interventions in areas of high deprivation.

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<sup>33</sup> The suitability information was taken from the Scottish Government's school estates data. The measure is defined as follows: the extent to which a school building and its grounds are appropriate in providing an environment which supports quality learning and teaching and those other services provided to individual children and to the school community, in terms of practicality, accessibility and convenience.

## 6 BEHAVIOUR POLICY AND PRACTICE

### SUMMARY

- A wide range of approaches are used in schools to encourage positive behaviour. Positive and supportive approaches dominate and ‘the promotion of positive behaviour through whole school ethos and values’ is seen by staff as the most important.
- Since 2009, there has been an increase in the use of Local Authority off-site provision for pupils with Social and Emotional Behavioural Needs (in primary schools) and nurture groups/nurture principles (in secondary schools). In both primary and secondary schools, there has been a decrease in the use of punishment exercises, ‘The Motivated School’ and learning approaches (e.g. SELF)<sup>34</sup>.
- Teachers are generally confident in their ability to promote positive behaviour and respond to indiscipline.
- Staff are generally positive about the ethos of their school and support from colleagues.
- Staff, particularly in primary schools, felt that health and wellbeing as a responsibility of all staff had become a feature of school culture. Views were more mixed on the extent to which this had helped develop positive relationships and behaviour.
- Overall, where there have been changes since 2006 and 2009, they are in a positive direction. In particular, there have been improvements in primary teachers’ perceptions of overall school ethos, support from colleagues and involvement in discussions about improving behaviour. There have been improvements in secondary teachers’ perceptions of support from colleagues.
- Primary support staff perceptions of overall school ethos have declined since 2009. The number of schools involved in training/events related to managing behaviour and the number receiving support from local authorities for new initiatives has also decreased since 2009.

### Introduction

- 6.1 This chapter looks at the different approaches used in schools to encourage positive behaviour. We then explore staff perceptions of the overall ethos of their school, their confidence in promoting positive behaviour and responding to negative behaviour, and their views of the training and support they receive. Next, we provide an overview of who is involved in discussing and developing strategies. Finally, we discuss perceptions of the impact of *CfE* on health and wellbeing.

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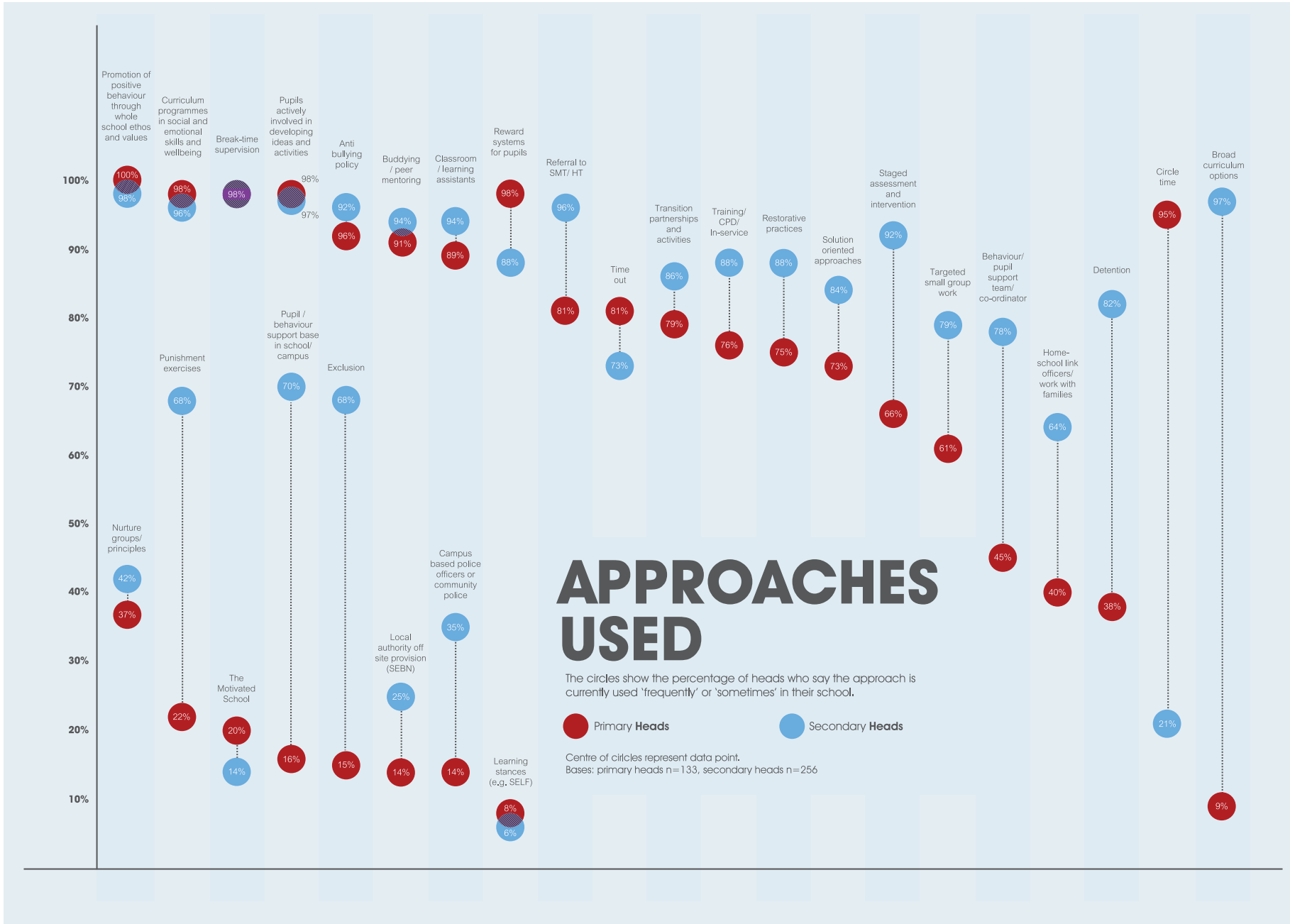
<sup>34</sup> Descriptions of some the specific approaches asked about in the surveys can be found on the Education Scotland website:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/supportinglearners/positivelearningenvironments/positivebehaviour/aboutposrelationships/index.asp>

## **Approaches used in primary schools**

- 6.2 A wide range of different approaches are used in primary schools to encourage positive behaviour. Heads and teachers were presented with a list of 29 different approaches and asked how often each approach was used within their school. Figure 6.1 shows which approaches are used most frequently and is based on the proportion of heads saying that approach was used 'frequently' or 'sometimes'. Positive and supportive approaches dominated (e.g. 'promotion of positive behaviour through whole school ethos and values', 'curriculum programmes in social and emotional skills and wellbeing' and 'reward systems for pupils') (Table 38).

Fig 6.1



- 6.3 In general, primary heads and primary teachers were in agreement about which approaches were used most often. However, more primary teachers than heads said that punishment exercises and referral to Senior Management/Headteacher were used frequently/sometimes<sup>35</sup> (Table 38).
- 6.4 There were few changes between 2009 and 2012 in terms of which approaches were used most often. More heads said they used Local Authority off site provision (Social and Emotional Behavioural Needs) frequently/sometimes (14% in 2012 compared with 8% in 2009) and there was a reduction in the use of punishment exercises (22% in 2012 compared with 39% in 2009)<sup>36</sup>, 'The Motivated School' (20% in 2012 compared with 42% in 2009), learning approaches (8% in 2012 compared with 16% in 2009), and broad curriculum options (9% in 2012 compared with 20% in 2009).
- 6.5 When asked which three of the listed approaches had been most helpful in encouraging positive behaviour and managing negative behaviour, by far the most common response was the promotion of positive behaviour through whole school ethos and values (Table 39).

### **Perceptions of school ethos in primary schools**

- 6.6 Staff were positive about the 'overall ethos' of their school, 'the quality of leadership provided by senior management' and 'how all staff work together (e.g. the level of collegiality)' with most rating each as 4 or 5 (on a scale with 1 being 'poor' and 5 being 'very good') (Table 49).
- 6.7 There have been no changes over time in primary heads' perceptions of these issues. However, primary teachers have become more positive and support staff have become less positive.
- 6.8 Since 2006, the proportion of primary teachers rating each area as 'very good' has increased ('overall ethos' has increased from 49% in 2006 to 56% in 2012, 'quality of leadership' has increased from 42% to 51% and 'how all staff work together' has increased from 46% to 54%).
- 6.9 However, since 2009<sup>37</sup>, the proportion of support staff rating each as 'very good' has decreased ('overall ethos' has decreased from 49% in 2009 to 41% in 2012, 'quality of leadership' has decreased from 48% to 40% and 'how all staff work together' has decreased from 41% to 33%).

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<sup>35</sup> Other differences were in relation to approaches where a high proportion of teachers answered 'don't know/not applicable'. This is likely to reflect the fact that heads will have more of an overview of approaches used across the school and be more confident about answering the question – rather than there being a real difference in the perception of how often an approach is used.

<sup>36</sup> It was noted above that primary teachers indicated more use of punishment exercises than primary heads. The results for teachers also show a reduction since 2009, although the reduction is not as great: 36% of primary teachers in 2012 said that punishment exercises were used frequently or sometimes, compared with 43% in 2009.

<sup>37</sup> 2006 data not available by sector.

## **Primary teacher confidence**

- 6.10 Primary teachers were confident in their ability to promote positive behaviour in their classrooms: 57% said they were 'very confident' (5 on a 5 point scale from 'not confident at all' to 'very confident') and 37% rated their confidence as 4 out of 5 on the scale (Table 46).
- 6.11 They were almost as confident in their ability to respond to indiscipline in their classrooms: 48% said they were 'very confident' (5 on the scale) and 41% rated their confidence as 4 out of 5 on the scale (Table 47).
- 6.12 Levels of confidence were very similar to those in 2009 and 2006.



## **Training in primary schools**

### ***Local authority and external support***

- 6.13 Two-thirds (67%) of primary heads indicated that, in the previous three years, their school had been involved in training/events relevant to promoting positive behaviour and/or managing indiscipline. This is a lower proportion than in 2009<sup>38</sup> when 77% of primary heads said their school had been involved in such training/events in the previous three years (Table 12).
- 6.14 Most of the training was provided by the local authority (cited as the provider by 77% of heads who said their school had been involved). Other external providers were independent providers (13%) and the Scottish Government Positive Behaviour Team (9%). Eighteen per cent of heads said they had undertaken the training in-house (Table 13).
- 6.15 In comparison with 2009, relatively more training was provided by the local authority (77% in 2012 compared with 56% in 2009), less was provided by independent providers (13% in 2012 compared with 21% in 2009) and the same amount by the Scottish Government Positive Behaviour Team.
- 6.16 Half (49%) of primary heads said that, in the previous three years, they had received support or assistance from their local authority to try new initiatives for promoting positive behaviour. This is a considerably lower proportion than in 2009<sup>39</sup> when 64% of heads said they had received such support (Table 14).
- 6.17 Training was the most common form of local authority support for new initiatives (77% of heads indicated this). Advice and consultancy was received by 40%, strategic or policy support by 30% and additional funding or staff support by 21%<sup>40</sup> (Table 15).

### ***Primary teachers and support staff experiences of training***

- 6.18 Most primary teachers felt that they had received effective training in the behaviour management approaches used in their school. Levels of agreement were the same as in 2009<sup>41</sup> (Table 43).
- 6.19 Most had also been involved in some kind of staff development activity or training in relation to discipline and positive behaviour in the previous three years. Thirty-six per cent had been involved more than twice, 48% had been involved once or twice and only 15% had not been involved. Again, these results were the same as in 2009<sup>42</sup> (Table 44).
- 6.20 Primary support staff had mixed views about their training. When asked whether 'there is adequate training for classroom assistants on how to deal

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<sup>38</sup> Not asked in 2006 survey.

<sup>39</sup> No time frame given in equivalent 2006 survey question so results not comparable.

<sup>40</sup> The responses do not sum to 100% because more than one type of support could be received.

<sup>41</sup> Not asked in 2006 survey.

<sup>42</sup> Not asked in 2006 survey.

with behaviour difficulties', 42% agreed but 34% disagreed. There has been no statistically significant change since 2009<sup>43</sup> (Table 35).

### **Support for primary staff**

- 6.21 Almost all primary teachers and support staff felt that they could talk openly to colleagues about behaviour-related challenges – and most strongly agreed that they could do so (Table 35).
- 6.22 Most teachers and support staff were also confident that senior staff would help them if they experienced behaviour management difficulties (65% of teachers and 58% of support staff strongly agreed that senior staff would help them) (Table 35).
- 6.23 Three-quarters of primary teachers (76%) and support staff (75%) knew that confidential support was available within their school<sup>44</sup>. However, this does indicate that a substantial minority did not think such support was available or were unsure whether it was or not (Table 35).
- 6.24 Compared with their awareness of within school provision, support staff were less aware of confidential support and counselling available within their authority (57% were aware) (Table 35).

### **Changes over time**

- 6.25 Primary teachers' perceptions of support have steadily improved since the first survey in 2006, with a higher proportion strongly agreeing with each of the statements:
- 83% in 2012 compared with 75% in 2009 and 71% in 2006 strongly agreed that 'I can talk to colleagues openly about any behaviour-related challenges I experience'
  - 65% in 2012 compared with 54% in 2009 and 45% in 2006 strongly agreed that 'I am confident that senior staff will help me if I experience behaviour management difficulties'
  - 48% in 2012 compared with 36% in 2009 and 32% in 2006 strongly agreed that 'I know there is confidential support and counselling for staff if I need it'.
- 6.26 Primary support staff were more positive about talking openly to other classroom assistants (78% in 2012 compared with 72% in 2009 strongly agreed that 'I can talk to other classroom assistants openly about any behaviour-related challenges I experience'). There was also an increase in the proportion who knew that there was confidential support and counselling

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<sup>43</sup> Not asked in 2006 survey.

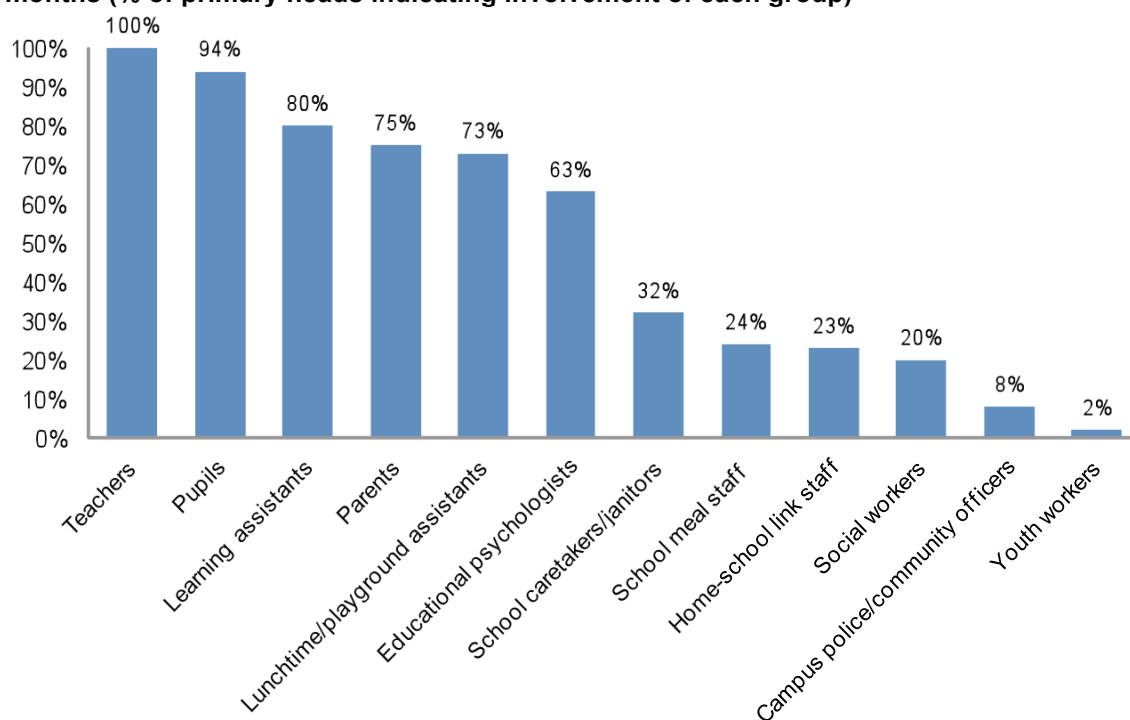
<sup>44</sup> Teachers and support staff were asked slightly different questions about their awareness of confidential support and counselling. Support staff were asked separately about provision within the school and within the authority. Teachers were presented with one statement ('I know there is confidential support and counselling for staff if I need it') but the introduction to that section of the questionnaire said '...support offered to teachers in your school' and the preceding two statements related to the school, so we can assume that teachers were thinking about within school support when answering.

available within their local authority (30% strongly agreed in 2012 compared with 26% in 2009)<sup>45</sup>.

### Who is involved in discussing and developing strategies?

6.27 Primary heads were asked ‘Thinking back over the LAST TWELVE MONTHS, which members of the school community have been actively involved in discussing and developing strategies related to discipline and the promotion of positive behaviour in your school?’. The results are shown in Figure 6.2 below. These results are very similar to 2009 and 2006 (Table 40).

**Figure 6.2: Members of school community involved in developing strategies in previous twelve months (% of primary heads indicating involvement of each group)**



**Base: Primary heads n=313**

6.28 Primary teachers were asked ‘Thinking back over the LAST 3 YEARS, approximately how many times have you been involved in whole school planning in relation to discipline and positive behaviour?’. Most said they had been involved: 41% said they had been involved more than twice and 45% said they had been involved once or twice. Only 14% said they had not been involved. There has been no change in levels of involvement since the 2009 survey<sup>46</sup> (Table 44).

6.29 Almost all primary teachers agreed that they ‘contribute ideas and provide support to my colleagues regarding pupil behaviour’ (52% strongly agreed

<sup>45</sup> 2006 data for support staff not available by sector

<sup>46</sup> Equivalent question in 2006 survey asked about involvement over the last year so results not comparable.

and a further 41% agreed). The results have steadily improved over time (46% in 2009 and 42% in 2006 strongly agreed) (Table 35).

- 6.30 Most primary teachers also agreed that they and their colleagues were 'regularly involved in discussion about improving behaviour in the whole school': 44% strongly agreed with the statement and a further 37% agreed. Only 8% disagreed. Again, the results have improved over time (36% in 2009 and 32% in 2006 strongly agreed) (Table 35).
- 6.31 The majority of primary support staff felt that they were 'regularly involved in discussions about improving behaviour in the whole school': 59% strongly agreed/agreed and 20% strongly disagreed/disagreed. This is an improvement on 2009 when just 39% strongly agreed/agreed that they were regularly involved<sup>47</sup> (Table 35).

### **Approaches used in secondary schools**

- 6.32 A wide range of different approaches are used in secondary schools to encourage positive behaviour. Heads and teachers were presented with a list of 29 different approaches and asked how often each approach was used within their school. Figure 6.1 shows which approaches are used most frequently and is based on the proportion of heads saying that the approach was used 'frequently' or 'sometimes'. Positive and supportive approaches dominated (e.g. 'promotion of positive behaviour through whole school ethos and values', 'pupils actively involved in developing ideas and activities' and 'curriculum programmes in social and emotional skills and wellbeing') (Table 38).
- 6.33 Broadly, secondary heads and secondary teachers were in agreement about which approaches were used most often<sup>48</sup>. However, more secondary teachers than heads indicated that the following were used frequently/sometimes: punishment exercises, detention and pupil/behaviour support base in school/campus. Heads were more likely to say that training/CPD/in-service was used frequently/sometimes (Table 38).
- 6.34 Since 2009, there has been an increase in the use of the following:
- classroom/learning assistants (94% of heads in 2012 said they were used frequently/sometimes compared with 87% in 2009)<sup>49</sup>
  - restorative practices (88% in 2012 compared with 75% in 2009)
  - transition partnerships and activities (86% in 2012 compared with 79% in 2009)

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<sup>47</sup> 2006 data not available by sector

<sup>48</sup> For many of the approaches, a somewhat higher number of heads than teachers indicated that they were used frequently/sometimes, but was often because more teachers said 'don't know/not applicable'. This is likely to reflect the fact that heads will have more of an overview of approaches used across the school and be more confident about answering the question – rather than there being a real difference in the perception of how often an approach is used.

<sup>49</sup> This does not mean that there has been an increase in the number of classroom/learning approaches, simply that more heads said they used them frequently/sometimes to encourage positive behaviour and manage negative behaviour, which may reflect a change in how they are deployed.

- nurture groups/nurture principles (42% in 2012 compared with 32% in 2009).

6.35 Use of the following approaches has decreased since 2009:

- targeted small group work e.g. anger management (79% of heads in 2012 said they were using frequently/sometimes compared with 86% in 2009)
- time out (73% in 2012 compared with 81% in 2009)
- punishment exercises (68% in 2012 compared with 79% in 2009)<sup>50</sup>
- The Motivated School (14% in 2012 compared with 26% in 2009)
- learning approaches e.g. SELF (6% in 2012 compared with 15% in 2009).

6.36 When asked which three of the listed approaches had been most helpful in encouraging positive behaviour and managing negative behaviour, by far the most common response was the promotion of positive behaviour through whole school ethos and values. Reward systems for pupils, referral to SMT/HT and restorative practices were also commonly cited among the top three approaches (Table 39).

### **Perceptions of ethos in secondary schools**

6.37 Staff were positive about the ‘overall ethos’ of their school (96% of secondary heads, 69% of secondary teachers and 58% of secondary support staff), ‘the quality of leadership provided by senior management’ (92% of secondary heads, 62% of secondary teachers and 58% of secondary support staff) and ‘how all staff work together (e.g. the level of collegiality)’ (88% of secondary heads, 59% of secondary teachers and 51% of secondary support staff) with the majority rating each as 4 or 5 (on a scale with 1 being ‘poor’ and 5 being ‘very good’) (Table 49).

6.38 There have been few changes over time on these issues. However, the proportion of both heads and teachers who rate the ‘overall ethos’ of their school as ‘very good’ has increased since 2006 (from 44% to 59% among heads and from 22% to 29% among teachers). The perceptions of support staff have not changed since 2009<sup>51</sup>.

### **Secondary teacher confidence**

6.39 Secondary teachers were confident in their ability to promote positive behaviour in their classrooms: 51% said they were ‘very confident’ (5 on a 5 point scale from ‘not confident at all’ to ‘very confident’) and 39% rated their confidence as 4 out of 5 on the scale (Table 46).

6.40 They were similarly confident in their ability to respond to indiscipline in their classrooms: 50% said they were ‘very confident’ and 37% rated their confidence as 4 out of 5 on the scale (Table 47).

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<sup>50</sup> It was noted above that secondary teachers indicated more use of punishment exercises than secondary heads. The results for teachers also show a reduction since 2009, although the reduction is not as great: 79% of secondary teachers in 2012 said that punishment exercises were used frequently or sometimes, compared with 85% in 2009.

<sup>51</sup> 2006 data not available by sector for support staff.

- 6.41 Levels of confidence in 2012 were slightly higher than they had been in 2006 and 2009 (51% were 'very confident' in their ability to promote positive behaviour compared with 45% in 2006 and 43% in 2009, and 50% were 'very confident' in their ability to respond to indiscipline compared with 43% in both 2006 and 2009).

## **Training in secondary schools**

### ***Local authority and external support***

- 6.42 Eighty-two per cent of secondary heads indicated that, in the previous three years, their school had been involved in training/events relevant to promoting positive behaviour and/or managing indiscipline. This is a slightly lower proportion than in 2009 when 89% of secondary heads said their school had been involved in such training/events in the previous three years (Table 12).
- 6.43 The majority of training was provided by the local authority (cited as the provider by 57% of heads who said their school had been involved). Other external providers were independent providers (28%) and the Scottish Government Positive Behaviour Team (17%). Thirty-five per cent of heads said they had undertaken the training in-house (Table 13).
- 6.44 Just over half (55%) of secondary heads said that, in the previous three years, they had received support or assistance from their local authority to try new initiatives for promoting positive behaviour. This is a somewhat lower proportion than in 2009 (64% of heads said they had received such support) (Table 14).
- 6.45 Training was the most common form of local authority support for new initiatives (58% of heads indicated this). Strategic or policy support was received by 42%, advice and consultancy by 38% and additional funding or staff support by 35%<sup>52</sup> (Table 15).

### ***Secondary teachers and support staff experiences of training***

- 6.46 Secondary teachers had differing views on whether they had received effective training in the behaviour management approaches used in their school. While 45% strongly agreed/agreed (1 or 2 on a 5 point scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'), a quarter (26%) strongly disagreed/disagreed (4 or 5 on the scale). Levels of agreement were the same as in 2009 (Table 43).
- 6.47 Most teachers had been involved in some kind of staff development activity or training in relation to discipline and positive behaviour in the previous three years (Table 44).
- 6.48 Compared with 2009, slightly more secondary teachers said they had not been involved in any kind of staff development activity or training in relation to discipline and positive behaviour in the previous three years (24% in 2012 compared with 18% in 2009).

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<sup>52</sup> The responses do not sum to 100% because more than one type of support could be received.

6.49 When asked whether 'there is adequate training for classroom assistants on how to deal with behaviour difficulties', 24% of secondary support staff agreed but 53% disagreed. However, this is a slight improvement on 2009 when 20% agreed and 59% disagreed (Table 35).

### ***Support for secondary staff***

6.50 Almost all secondary teachers and support staff felt that they could talk openly to colleagues about behaviour-related challenges. Most strongly agreed that they could do so – although support staff were less confident about talking to teachers openly than they were about talking to other classroom assistants (Table 35).

6.51 Three-quarters (74%) of secondary teachers and support staff were confident that senior staff would help them if they experienced behaviour management difficulties (Table 35).

6.52 Sixty per cent of secondary teachers and 61% of support staff agreed with the statement 'I know that there is confidential support available if I need it (within my school)',<sup>53</sup>. However, this does mean that four in ten disagreed with this statement. This indicates that these staff members could either think that such support was available or were unsure whether it was or not (Table 35).

6.53 Compared with their awareness of within school provision, support staff were less aware of confidential support and counselling available within their authority (49% were aware) (Table 35).

### ***Changes over time***

6.54 Secondary teachers' perceptions of support from colleagues have steadily increased over time with a higher proportion strongly agreeing with the following statements:

- 'I can talk to colleagues openly about any behaviour-related challenges I experience' (71% in 2012 compared with 67% in 2009 and 63% in 2006)
- 'I am confident that senior staff will help me if I experience behaviour management difficulties' (41% compared with 33% in 2009 and 28% in 2006).

6.55 The proportion of secondary teachers strongly agreeing that 'I know there is confidential support and counselling for staff if I need it' has also increased (33% in 2012 compared with 22% in 2009 and 21% in 2006).

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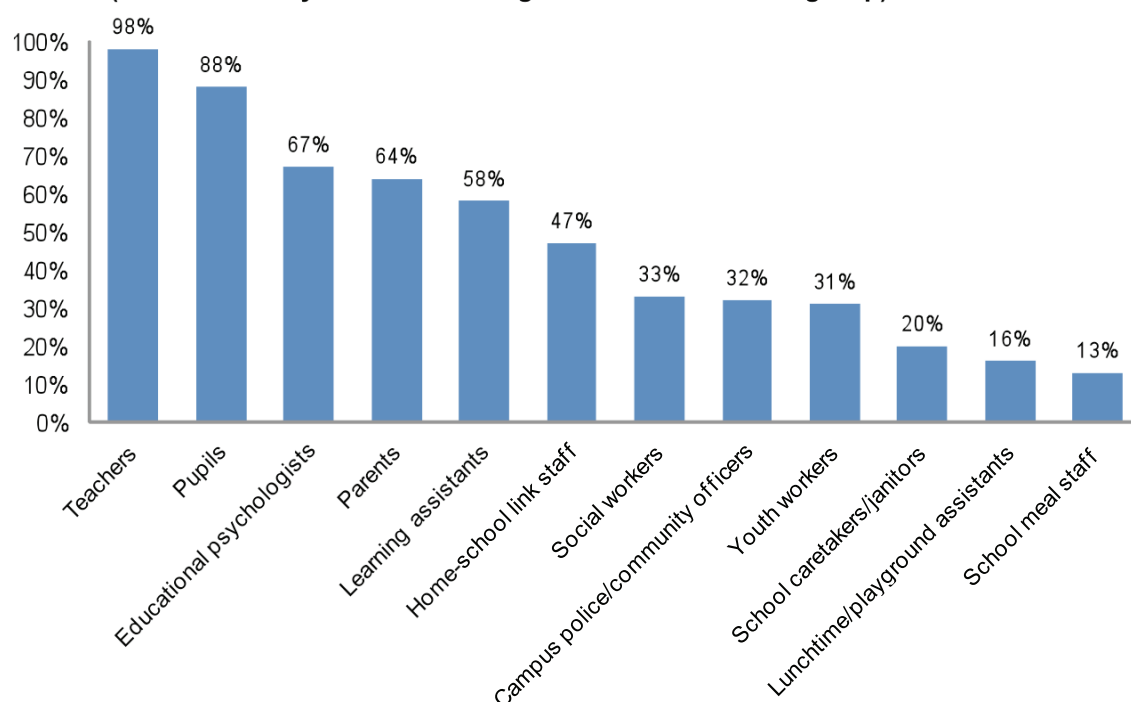
<sup>53</sup> Teachers and support staff were asked slightly different questions about their awareness of confidential support and counselling. Support staff were asked separately about provision within the school and within the authority. Teachers were presented with one statement ('I know there is confidential support and counselling for staff if I need it') but the introduction to that section of the questionnaire said '...support offered to teachers in your school' and the preceding two statements related to the school, so we can assume that teachers were thinking about within school support when answering.

6.56 Secondary support staff were more positive about being able to talk openly to other staff: 80% in 2012 compared with 71% in 2009<sup>54</sup> strongly agreed that they could talk openly to other classroom assistants about behaviour-related challenges and 54% compared with 46% strongly agreed that they could talk openly to teachers about this. There were no notable changes in relation to help from senior staff or awareness of available support.

**Who is involved in discussing and developing strategies?**

6.57 Secondary heads were asked ‘Thinking back over the LAST TWELVE MONTHS, which members of the school community have been actively involved in discussing and developing strategies related to discipline and the promotion of positive behaviour in your school?’. The results are shown in Figure 6.3 below. The results are very similar to 2009. However, compared with 2006, fewer heads said the following had been involved: home-school link staff (47% in 2012 compared with 60% in 2006), social workers (33% in 2012 compared with 48% in 2006) and school caretakers/janitors (20% in 2012 compared with 38% in 2006) (Table 40).

**Figure 6.3: Members of school community involved in developing strategies in previous twelve months (% of secondary heads indicating involvement of each group)**



**Base: Secondary heads n=253**

6.58 Secondary teachers were asked ‘Thinking back over the LAST 3 YEARS, approximately how many times have you been involved in whole school planning in relation to discipline and positive behaviour?’. Most said they had been involved: 29% said they had been involved more than twice and 42% said they had been involved once or twice. However, almost a third (29%) said they had not been involved. Since 2009, there has been an increase in

<sup>54</sup> 2006 data not available by sector.



the proportion saying they have not been involved (29% in 2012 compared with 22% in 2009) (Table 44).

- 6.59 Most secondary teachers agreed that they 'contribute ideas and provide support to my colleagues regarding pupil behaviour'. The results were similar to 2009 but have improved since 2006 (40% strongly agreed in 2012 compared with 33% in 2006). (Table 35)
- 6.60 Most secondary teachers also agreed that they and their colleagues were 'regularly involved in discussion about improving behaviour in the whole school'. The results were similar to 2009 and 2006 (Table 35).
- 6.61 When secondary support staff were asked if they were 'regularly involved in discussion about improving behaviour in the whole school', only 24% agreed and 53% disagreed. These results are also similar to 2009<sup>55</sup> (Table 35).

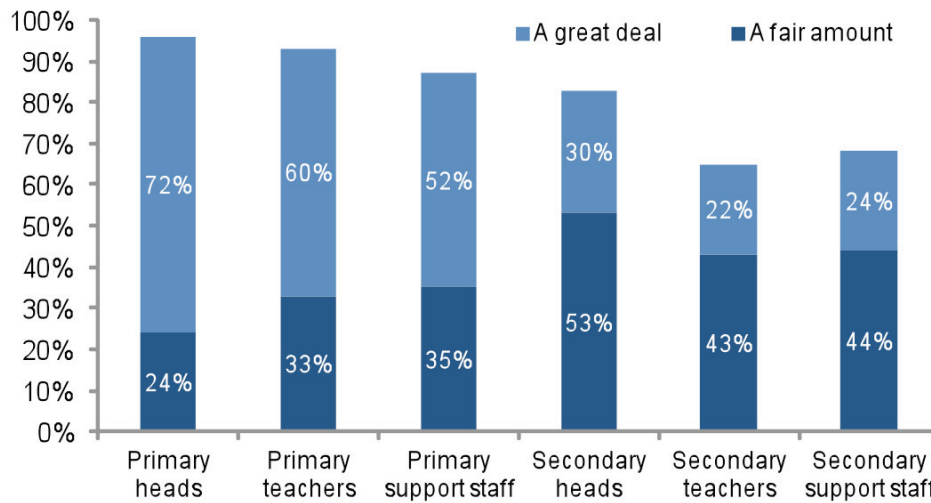
### **The impact of *Curriculum for Excellence* on health and wellbeing**

- 6.62 Health and wellbeing as a responsibility of all staff is intended to be a key feature of *CfE*. In the qualitative interviews, staff tended to feel that it was still too early to definitively say whether *CfE* has had a direct influence on the health and wellbeing of pupils in school and, therefore, whether that has had a knock-on effect on behaviour.
- 6.63 However, in order to provide a baseline measure of the impact, which can be tracked over time as *CfE* becomes embedded, two new questions were asked in the surveys: 'to what extent has health and wellbeing as a responsibility of all staff become a feature of school culture?' and 'to what extent has this helped develop positive relationships and behaviour?' The results are shown in Figures 6.4 and 6.5 below.
- 6.64 Primary staff were very positive about the extent to which health and wellbeing as a responsibility of all staff had become a feature of their school's culture. Almost all felt that it had become a feature 'to a great extent' or 'a fair amount' (Table 41).
- 6.65 Primary staff also felt that health and wellbeing as a responsibility of all staff had helped to develop positive relationships and behaviour at their school, though not to quite the same extent: they were more likely to say this had helped 'a fair amount' rather than 'a great deal' (Table 42).
- 6.66 Although the majority of secondary staff also thought that health and wellbeing as a responsibility of all had become a feature, they were more likely to say it had done so 'a fair amount' rather than 'a great deal' (Table 41).
- 6.67 However, secondary staff were less likely to think that health and wellbeing as a responsibility of all staff had helped to develop positive relationships and behaviour at their school. Very few thought it had helped 'a great deal' (Table 42).

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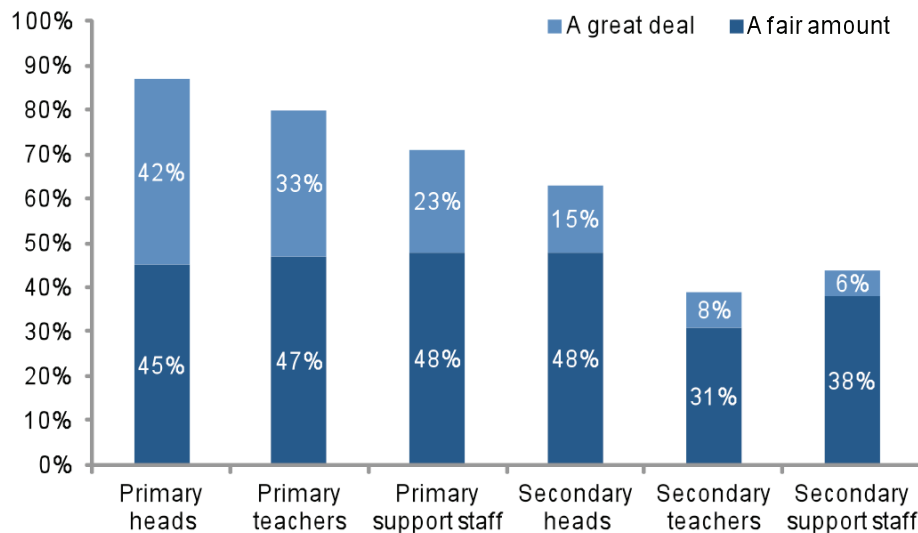
<sup>55</sup> 2006 data not available by sector.

**Figure 6.4: Perceptions of the extent to which Health and Wellbeing as a responsibility of all staff has become a feature of the school's culture**



**Bases: Primary heads n=313, Primary teachers n=873, Primary support staff n=587, Secondary heads n=257, Secondary teachers n=2030, Secondary support staff n=780**

**Figure 6.5: Perceptions of the extent to which Health and Wellbeing as a responsibility of all staff has helped to develop positive relationships and behaviour at the school**



**Bases: Primary heads n=311, Primary teachers n=865, Primary support staff n=588, Secondary heads n=256, Secondary teachers n=2014, Secondary support staff n=777**

## 7 CASE STUDY TOPICS

### SUMMARY

#### Parental involvement and support

- In the vast majority of cases, parents were thought to be supportive and happy to co-operate with the school if behavioural issues arose.
- The parents of the most challenging children (who teachers are most keen to engage with) are often the ones who do not attend parents' evenings and other events.

#### Emotional wellbeing

- Staff felt that, to a large degree, there has always been a focus on looking after the emotional wellbeing of pupils while they are in school. However, there was recognition that *CfE* has encouraged more active learning strategies (which help increase engagement) and ensured that health and wellbeing has been embraced across the school.

#### Transitions

- Schools have in place formal and informal strategies to ensure that transition phases go as smoothly as possible for their pupils. Concerns regarding behaviour in primary schools mostly relate to emotional difficulties among P1 pupils and a lack of focus and engagement among P7s. At secondary level, S1 and S2 pupils are most likely to be disruptive or badly behaved, usually attributed to them taking a while to settle into high school and become more independent in their learning.

#### Use of mobile phones

- Few primary children bring a mobile phone to school, whereas ownership of phones among secondary pupils is widespread. Although secondary staff said that use of mobile phones can be a frequent and disruptive influence in classrooms, in many cases, it was felt to be no more annoying or disruptive than many of the other negative behaviours pupils engage in. Staff were more concerned about the potential for abusive use causing offence, harm or upset to teachers or fellow pupils. While such abuse was perceived to be rare, teachers were concerned about the significant impact that it could have on the pupils or teachers targeted.

### Case study methods

7.1 In partnership with the research advisory group, Ipsos MORI identified four areas for further investigation in the case study schools. Each topic was explored in depth with a subset of three schools, and as a secondary topic in three other schools. The topics were:

- parental involvement and support
- emotional wellbeing
- transitions (early years to primary, P7 to S1 and senior phase to post-school)
- use of mobile phones.

7.2 The focus on mobile phones was born out of the survey findings which showed a sharp increase in inappropriate, and in a minority of cases, abusive use of mobile phones in classrooms and around schools. The other three issues were identified by the research team and the research advisory group,

based on important issues that emerged from the interviews with local authority representatives.

- 7.3 Five primary schools and seven secondary schools from ten different local authority areas were selected for participation in the case study phase of the research. The schools were sampled from all those involved in the quantitative survey. To ensure a range of schools was included, a number of criteria were used for selection, including school size, Free School Meal registration levels, local authority area and urban-rural classification.

**Table 7.1 Profile of participating schools and the topics covered in each.**

	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Size band</b>	<b>FMR band</b>	<b>Urban-rural classification</b>	<b>Main topic</b>	<b>Secondary topic</b>
1	Primary	3	3	Other urban area	Mobile technology	Parents
2	Primary	4	4	Accessible small town	Emotional wellbeing	Transitions
3	Primary	3	2	Other urban area	Transitions	Parents
4	Primary	5	2	Other urban area	Emotional wellbeing	Mobile technology
5	Primary	2	5	Large urban	Transitions	Emotional wellbeing
6	Secondary	2	2	Accessible rural	Mobile technology	Emotional wellbeing
7	Secondary	5	5	Other urban area	Mobile technology	Transitions
8	Secondary	3	2	Remote rural area	Parents	Mobile technology
9	Secondary	2	5	Other urban area	Emotional wellbeing	Parents
10	Secondary	4	3	Other urban area	Transitions	Emotional wellbeing
11	Secondary	3	2	Very remote small town	Transitions	Parents
12	Secondary	5	2	Other urban area	Parents	Mobile technology

- 7.4 A member of the Ipsos MORI research team spent one day in each school. Semi-structured interviews were conducted individually with the Headteacher and another member of the senior management team (SMT) in each school (although in one school, the Headteacher was unexpectedly absent on the day of the visit so a deputy head took part instead). The views of teachers, support staff and pupils were also collected in each school. A total of 23 semi-structured interviews and 48 focus groups were conducted, lasting approximately 40-60 minutes each.
- 7.5 For practical reasons it was agreed that the schools would select the pupils, teachers and support staff to take part in the research. For pupils, opt-out consent was requested from parents, via the school.

- 7.6 All interviews and focus groups were conducted using topic guides designed by Ipsos MORI with input from the research advisory group (attached at Annex 9). With the permission of participants, all discussions were recorded and then transcribed for analysis.
- 7.7 The analysis of qualitative data was carried out in two stages. The first step involved becoming familiar with the data by reading through transcripts and at this stage, initial impressions or emerging themes were noted. The second stage involved identifying the key themes in the data and organising the data into categories and sub categories. Both stages were framed by the original aims of the research to ensure that the analysis was focused on answering the key research questions. This analysis and the identification of emerging key themes was informed by brainstorming sessions conducted by the Ipsos MORI research team.
- 7.8 It should be noted that the aim of the qualitative research was to identify and explore in detail the different issues and themes arising from the quantitative research. The assumption is that the issues and themes affecting the case study schools are a reflection of the issues and themes occurring in other schools. The value of qualitative research is in identifying and understanding the range of different issues involved and the ways in which they can impact on people.

### **Parental involvement and support**

- 7.9 The influence and involvement of parents cannot be viewed in isolation from other aspects of learning and behaviour. The following section contains further detail about the ways in which parents are engaged with school; the perceived importance of the support they are able to provide, and the effect on encouraging the development of positive relationships and behaviour.
- 7.10 Although our initial focus was on parental involvement and support as it affected behaviour, it was clear that this could not be separated from parents' broader relationship with the school and staff (echoing the emphasis on relationships between pupils and staff rather than 'behaviour management'). For example, there was a perception that if parents feel that they have a good relationship with the school, they may be more likely to keep teachers informed about any incidents or issues at home that might be affecting their child (and therefore their behaviour), so that in turn, teachers are able to show more understanding if problems arise.
- 7.11 Many children talked about how much they enjoyed having their parents come into school, being able to share with them what they had been learning and show off their work. A number of pupils expressed a desire to have their parents more involved in school life, coming along to open days, sports day, and accompanying their class on school trips.
- 7.12 In most cases, teachers agree that pupils have supportive parents who clearly want the best for their children, will happily co-operate with the school where issues arise, and trust the school to be 'getting on with their job'.

- 7.13 Many schools have strong and active Parent Council and Parent Teacher Associations and try to encourage parents to be involved with the school wherever possible. This may be to help with fundraising, attend open days and assemblies, take part in consultations or join in with workshops focused on developing new policies, rather than just on parents' evening or at other times when they have been asked to come in to discuss their child's behaviour.
- 7.14 There was recognition among senior staff members and teachers that it is important to keep parents informed about the good things that their child has been doing in school, rather than only making contact when they have something negative to discuss.
- 7.15 Some teachers maintained, however, that where attempts are made to try to involve parents in the school, other than attending parents' evenings once or twice a year, their efforts usually result in the same cluster of parents showing up, while they do not see some of the parents they particularly want to see and speak to about their child.
- 7.16 Senior school staff recognised that parents are inevitably more likely to be interested in engaging with the school in some ways more than others and that, in general, they are content with letting the school get on with the job of teaching their child. For example, whereas parents' evenings and concerts are attended very well, often only a small cohort of parents will turn up to a maths or reading workshop or an information meeting on *CfE*, and these would tend not to be the group of parents which the school would really like to get involved more.
- 7.17 There was also acceptance that while parents are genuinely interested in finding out about their child's school and, in particular, the environment in which they are being taught, with busy working lives themselves, for some parents there are limits to what they want to know about and the extent to which they wish to engage with the school.
- 7.18 Overall, it was felt that it is only a small minority of parents who do not tend to agree with or support the actions taken by their school, listening only to their child's point of view and querying the use of the school's policies and the fairness of their decisions.
- 7.19 A number of teachers and support staff highlighted that, for some of their pupils, parents view their child's education as being the sole responsibility of the school and do not recognise that they also have a role in supporting the learning of their children. Similarly, school staff described how there appear to be a small minority of children living in chaotic households, possibly experiencing emotional abuse and neglect, and not receiving the support they need from their parents to cope well at school.
- 7.20 While pupils, in the main, valued the involvement of their parents in their school life, there were some comments about how parents were far more likely to know if their child was being poorly behaved than if they were doing well.

## Looking after the emotional wellbeing of pupils

- 7.21 The focus on the emotional wellbeing of young people is central to the way in which schools teach and care for pupils, and cannot be viewed in isolation from other aspects of learning and behaviour. The following section contains further detail about the effect that the focus on health and wellbeing is thought to have in encouraging the development of positive relationships and behaviour in school.
- 7.22 When asked about the impact of *CfE* on behaviour in schools, many headteachers, senior school staff and teachers argued that, to a large extent, they have always endeavoured to support and nurture pupils, recognise the broad range of achievements attained, encourage those with additional support needs or who are feeling disengaged from school, and ensure that pupils are safe and well looked after. That said, teachers described how they have been encouraged to look at their courses to ensure that they meet the needs of everybody, and while they recognised that this should always have been the case, they did accept that with *CfE* there was more emphasis on active learning strategies and engaging pupils in their lessons. School staff acknowledged that *CfE* has meant that health and wellbeing has become incorporated into all subject areas and not just taught as a standalone topic. *CfE* was also thought to have allowed staff more autonomy and creativity while engaging and planning with the outcomes and experiences.
- 7.23 Reference was made to the work schools have already been doing with children in building their emotional literacy, such as: 'Circle Time', a technique which allows children to explore and address issues which concern them; an 'emotional check-in', whereby pupils are encouraged to express their feelings by sticking pictograms onto a wall chart first thing in the morning to tell their teacher about their mood; and the provision of a 'concerns box', where children who don't want to approach a teacher themselves, can post their comments and wait for a teacher to contact them. School staff also discussed how the wider achievements of pupils, in passing a dancing exam or being part of a winning rugby team, for instance, were recognised and announced in assemblies and newsletters.

*There's certainly a lot of positive things going on in the school which contribute to the health and wellbeing of the kids in school, a huge number of positive things. But at the moment I would say that is not directly linked to Curriculum for Excellence because these same things were happening in previous years. (Teacher, secondary school)*

- 7.24 Nurture approaches, where whole school and classroom ethos provide a context in which pupils feel valued, engaged and involved in the school community were highly regarded by school staff, although widespread use was seen to be restricted on funding grounds as they require to be supported by trained teachers or learning assistants.
- 7.25 On a practical level, teachers talked about the efforts being made to integrate health and wellbeing into subjects such as modern languages or the sciences

and the challenges faced in trying to incorporate it without it appearing tokenistic or irrelevant to the topics being covered.

- 7.26 School staff also described how they work with external organisations and individuals to deliver learning experiences in health and wellbeing, including community police, nutritionists, the Institute of Civil Engineers, Deaf/Blind Scotland and drama companies.
- 7.27 Both primary and secondary pupils were able to describe the classes which focused on health and wellbeing, such as home economics and PE, covering issues relating to healthy lifestyle choices, nutrition, food hygiene and exercise. This was in addition to the social education programme they were also taught, covering issues relating to relationships, alcohol, drugs and smoking, peer pressure, family matters and healthy eating. Pupils were positive about these lessons, recognising that it was important to learn about healthy living as well as being prepared for living on their own and cooking for themselves when they are older.
- 7.28 In the case study schools pupils, appeared to feel content, secure, respected and included in the school environment. They also seemed knowledgeable about the benefits of healthy living and activity, recognising the importance of establishing a pattern of health and wellbeing into adult life. However, among pupils, there appeared to be less appreciation and awareness of emotional wellbeing and there was little mention of how they are encouraged to recognise, understand, manage and express their feelings and emotions.

## **Transitions**

- 7.29 Making the transition from pre-school to primary school, from primary school to secondary school, and onwards from secondary school can be a daunting experience for young people.
- 7.30 There is a range of formal and informal transition strategies, addressing pastoral and curriculum issues. These are planned at local authority and school-level. The result is that staff and pupils alike consider transitions through these phases to be a positive experience for the majority of pupils.
- 7.31 Where behavioural challenges were faced in primary schools, they were commonly perceived to relate to emotional issues among P1 pupils and classroom disturbances among P7 pupils due to growing excitement and anxiety, about progressing to secondary school.
- 7.32 In secondary schools, concerns related to individual pupils taking time to adjust to their new setting and lack of curriculum continuity and academic progression in S1.

### ***The transition to primary school***

- 7.33 A perceived increase in pupils arriving in P1 with emotional issues that impact upon their behaviour was a concern among primary teachers and support staff. Pupils with 'attachment issues' and those who are 'not ready for school'



displayed a range of disruptive behaviours, from persistent chattering or fidgeting to, in a minority of cases, violence and aggression towards staff or fellow pupils, or destruction of school property.

- 7.34 Primary staff talked of classroom disturbances resulting from P1 pupils being anxious, insecure and clingy and becoming upset or distressed when they are dropped off at school in the morning. They also identified disruptions which were related to pupils finding it difficult to settle in the classroom, adapt to new rules (e.g. sitting and listening) and new routines in the structure of the day. Behaviours such as pupils being agitated, having difficulty making friends, becoming involved in scuffles and a small minority exhibiting violent, aggressive or destructive behaviours, were also thought to flow from emotional and attachment issues.
- 7.35 During the period of transition the sharing of information by pre-school nurseries and primary schools about children's emotional issues and effective strategies for managing them was seen to alleviate some of the behavioural problems. Where forewarning was given, staff felt they were generally able to plan for and sensitively address difficulties that arise.
- 7.36 Primary school SMTs said there was better information sharing with attached or neighbouring pre-schools than with out of catchment pre-schools.
- 7.37 Children who have not attended pre-school (particularly those from non-English speaking households) present additional challenges. These are compounded by there being no pre-school information about the pupil, meaning it can be more difficult to deal with issues when they unexpectedly arise.
- 7.38 School staff recognised the importance of involving parents in the process of transition to primary school in order that they can support their child at a time that can be quite worrying and overwhelming for them. Parental expectations, values, experiences and anxieties were all felt to have an impact on post-transition behaviour and wellbeing. Communicating to parents what will be expected of pupils, how their emotional wellbeing will be looked after in school, and how they can support their child at home both in terms of their learning and in reinforcing good behaviour, was viewed as an important aspect of the transition process.
- 7.39 A typical experience involved primary heads organising visits for pre-school pupils and their parents. Offering personal interviews was also seen to encourage parents to raise concerns and provide useful additional information about their child.
- 7.40 Some interviewees had experience of transition strategies linking up with, or signposting to parenting programmes. These programmes were considered to help foster good behaviour in schools by encouraging parents to provide consistent messages and adopt appropriate techniques in dealing with any challenges posed.

- 7.41 Staff, at some of the smaller schools in particular, talked about the benefits of having close links with the local community and being able to develop good relationships with families. For staff in some larger schools, particularly those in more deprived areas, it was more difficult to engage effectively with parents and receive their support.

### ***Making the transition from P7 to secondary school***

- 7.42 Pupils in P6 and P7 said they were excited, though a little apprehensive, about progressing from primary to secondary school. Their class teachers thought that this anxiety and enthusiasm could result in a lack of concentration and engagement in classes, particularly towards the end of the summer term.
- 7.43 Primary school staff thought the dwindling engagement towards the end of P7 was only to be expected and generally led to low-level disruptions which were dealt with, usually, by school reward systems. Teachers and support staff felt well equipped and supported in dealing with the issues.
- 7.44 Across secondary schools, S1 and S2 pupils were thought to be the most likely to be disruptive or badly behaved. This was usually attributed to them taking some time to 'find their feet', become more independent in their learning and moderate their behaviour accordingly. However, some pupils were seen as being quite immature and emotionally ill prepared for secondary school.
- 7.45 As well as concerns about individual pupils, broader curriculum issues in the transition between P7 and S1 were felt to present challenges. A lack, or perceived lack, of academic progression in S1 – either by 'stretching' pupils unprepared for the level of work, or by setting unchallenging work or repetition of work already undertaken – was viewed as resulting in pupils losing momentum, disengaging, and becoming disruptive in class.
- 7.46 One primary head took on feedback on transition experiences from questionnaires completed by S1 pupils. Concerns pupils raised were addressed over the course of the year with the next P7 cohort.
- 7.47 It was felt that *CfE* might help ensure that S1 pupils are starting from the same place in terms of their knowledge and skills gained through following a common set of experiences and outcomes. Heads also hoped that the imaginative styles of teaching required by *CfE* might engage pupils who are traditionally less engaged in classes.
- 7.48 For pupils who find it difficult to respond to the change from P7 to secondary school, school staff felt there was value in having several visits to the new school to become familiarised with the setting, buildings, procedures, and staff.
- 7.49 Pre-transition visits where pupils follow their S1 timetable were viewed as being most beneficial. Pupils are familiarised with the structure of the school

day and the teachers who will actually teach them in S1 and the teachers can observe pupils in the classroom environment.

- 7.50 Some pre-transition visits were co-ordinated so that all feeder schools would visit the secondary on the same day. Becoming familiar with their peers was felt to lessen anxieties among pupils.
- 7.51 Pre-transition sports and cultural events, where P7 pupils meet fellow pupils and sometimes their new teachers, were also viewed as helpful in encouraging relationships among pupils, as well as providing opportunity for teachers to see individual pupils interacting. However, some staff and pupils felt children tend to socialise with pupils from their own school at these events rather than those from other schools. Having teams which mixed pupils from different schools was one way in which schools tried to overcome this.
- 7.52 Approaches viewed as beneficial in promoting continuity and progression included bridging projects where pupils start a piece of work in primary and complete it in secondary.
- 7.53 Other cross-sector projects such as visits by secondary staff to primary schools to meet and give lessons to P7 classes were viewed as a useful method of familiarising pupils with teachers, but also of familiarising teachers with pupils, any behavioural issues they present and successful approaches to dealing with them.
- 7.54 Primary and secondary teachers alike thought that it would be useful if P7 teachers spent more time in secondary schools to increase their awareness of what they are preparing pupils for and if S1 teachers visited primary school classes more regularly to see how pupils are being prepared.
- 7.55 More cross-phase visits would increase teachers' awareness of the curriculum content, as well as allowing them to see examples of individual pupils' work and behaviour. Although such visits were perceived to be increasingly commonplace, the frequency and timing varied and it was felt that links between primaries and secondaries could be better developed.
- 7.56 Adapting to the pastoral systems of secondary schools was seen to present a challenge to some pupils. Primary and secondary teachers alike felt that some pupils face a particular challenge in the change from being taught by a small team of teachers who come to know them all as individuals and provide high levels of personal support, to contact with maybe 12 class teachers in S1. This is a particular issue in larger schools where pastoral support may not immediately appear to be there, because staff take time to get to know individual pupils and their circumstances.
- 7.57 Staff at one of the secondary schools had been involved in establishing tutor groups designed to improve pastoral links. Every teacher in the school would be assigned a group of around 15 pupils, who remain their tutor group as they progress through school. Intended to enhance the school's pupil support capacity by encouraging each pupil to get to know one member of staff really well, the approach was viewed as being particularly useful for enhancing

contact time and building positive relationships with the 'middle core' of pupils who do not usually come to the attention of traditional guidance systems.

### ***Sharing of information***

- 7.58 Adequate transfer of pupil information from pre-schools to primary schools and from primary schools to secondary schools was thought to be vital for advance identification of pupils known to have disruptive behaviour and the strategies used to deal with them. This helped to ensure that staff are satisfactorily prepared and supported to deal with issues that may emerge.
- 7.59 One-to-one meetings concerning 'high tariff' pupils are used to ensure that schools can put in place the pastoral and behavioural support and strategies required. For pupils with more complex, or pre-identified, support needs (such as those on the autistic spectrum, those with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Needs, ADHD, medical conditions, or pupils for whom English is not a first language), information sharing and one-to-one meetings between both establishments were seen to be effective. Transition meetings with all agencies involved with the child and family (e.g. social workers or speech and language therapists) were said to be taking place more often and to be of great value.
- 7.60 While primary and secondary school staff tended to feel they have close relationships and good co-ordination in transition arrangements with their associated schools or pre-schools, there was a view that effective information sharing with schools and pre-schools outwith their catchment area, or those from where only one or two pupils joined each year, could be better developed and co-ordinated.
- 7.61 Some primary heads were unclear about how transition information was used by secondary schools. An increased understanding of this could result in better quality of information.

### ***Post-secondary transitions***

- 7.62 Behavioural issues among senior secondary pupils moving on from school were not seen as a big problem. Teachers and heads felt that, in the main, pupils who choose to stay on at school for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year do not present problems either around school, or within classes.
- 7.63 That said, concerns were raised about the lack of engagement and effective progression of winter leavers. Related to concerns about identifying positive destinations for these pupils, there was widespread disquiet regarding the proposed cuts to FE budgets which might result in even fewer options for them.
- 7.64 While staff indicated that winter leavers tend to truant, so do not generally cause disruption, this may change if a reduction in FE budgets results in fewer positive destinations for these pupils – these pupils may instead attend school, and if not sufficiently engaged, disrupt classes.

## **Use of mobile phones**

### ***Nature and extent of use of mobile devices in schools***

- 7.65 Primary staff did not, on the whole, identify mobile phone use as a particular issue. Although they agreed there was increased ownership among primary pupils, rarely do pupils bring them in to school. Pupils who bring phones to school tend to be required to hand it over to the school office for the duration of the day. In some larger primaries, pupils were allowed to keep their phone on silent and out of sight, in their bag or pocket, rather than hand it in.
- 7.66 Because primary schools are relatively small and ownership of mobiles among primary pupils is not currently widespread, interviewees noted that this approach is relatively effective. While pupils were generally considered to be compliant, staff and pupils alike were aware that some pupils do keep their phone with them. However, awareness of the sanctions for use means that the phone is kept out of sight.
- 7.67 One case study primary school was trialling the use of mobile phones to enhance learning among P5-P7 pupils. This is discussed in sections 7.79 to 7.77 below.
- 7.68 Among secondary pupils, ownership of mobile phones and increasingly Smartphones, is ever more widespread. Secondary teachers said that the majority of pupils own a mobile phone and they often bring them into school, using them for gaming, texting and accessing social networks to 'update their status' and stay in touch with friends.
- 7.69 Although secondary staff felt that use of mobile phones can be a distracting and disruptive influence in classrooms and typically described use as a 'daily occurrence', in many cases it was felt to be no more annoying or disruptive than many of the other negative behaviours pupils engage in. Staff were more concerned about the potential for abusive use causing offence, harm or upset to teachers or fellow pupils. While such abuse was perceived to be rare in schools, teachers were concerned about the significant impact that it could have on the pupils or teachers targeted.
- 7.70 There was a perception that girls may be more likely than boys to use social networking sites such as Facebook to make spiteful comments or spread malicious gossip about each other.

### ***Mobile phone policies***

- 7.71 Controlling mobile phone use within schools generally started 5-10 years ago, with schools introducing a 'zero tolerance' approach whereby mobiles seen in school would be confiscated for a set period of time (e.g. until the end of class, the end of the day or until a parent made contact to acknowledge use and retrieve it). However, as ownership of mobile phones has risen and the benefits of using a phone have increased, teaching staff say that this approach has become increasingly difficult to enforce and has had to be relaxed.

- 7.72 Most schools now allow mobile phones to be taken to school, although use is restricted. In some schools, phones are still required to be handed in and collected at the end of the day; while in others pupils are allowed to keep the phone as long as it remains switched off and in their school bag.
- 7.73 Staff recognised that allowing pupils to bring their phone to school is not without difficulties and there are associated risks such as pupils losing or damaging their handset or having it stolen.
- 7.74 While staff generally disliked the idea of pupils bringing their phone into school, there was acceptance that an outright ban would be difficult to enforce and that, in some instances, they can be of practical use, particularly for pupils who live some distance from the school and are dependent on public transport to get home. There was also recognition that many parents like their child to carry a mobile phone for their own personal safety, enabling them to get in touch in an emergency, although teachers also noted that problems could arise when parents text their child during the course of the school day. There was concern that implementing a ban on mobiles or confiscating a pupil's phone during the day may potentially prompt a confrontation with an irate parent who did not agree with the school's decision.
- 7.75 There was a view that since the use of mobile phones is so widespread and an intrinsic part of young people's lives, trying to control their use in school is complicated:
- ...they are in a culture now with it, if at home they can have their phone at the dinner table or whatever, they don't have that sense of there is a time for using the phone and a time for not using the phone.... Coming here and telling them it's wrong, the concepts don't work in their brains. It doesn't mean we should let them off with it; it just becomes a little more complicated to deal with it. (Teacher, secondary school)*
- 7.76 In an effort to tackle this wider issue of lack of 'mobile etiquette', some schools involved parents in the issue, for instance, by offering them the same type of advice and guidance that is given to pupils on the safe and appropriate use of mobiles and the internet. This approach was viewed to help to encourage co-operation from families and further support responsible use by reinforcement of messages at home.
- 7.77 Moreover, although most pupils were thought to adhere to the policy in place in their school, some teachers felt that the arguments that can ensue sometimes outweigh the disruption being caused. Although use of a phone for texting, gaming or social networking can be offensive to a teacher and can present an unwelcome distractive influence in a classroom, staff also felt that confronting a pupil who is surreptitiously looking at their phone under a desk or in a bag or jacket can cause more problems than tactically ignoring it. For some interviewees, this raised concerns regarding consistency of response, while to others, it is no different to some teachers allowing pupils to listen to music while others do not. Both staff and pupils said that pupils learn the boundaries of individual teachers – though some pupils like to push the boundaries or deliberately antagonise teachers.

### ***Encouraging the positive use of mobile devices in schools***

- 7.78 Views on encouraging mobile phones in schools were mixed. Staff generally recognised smart technologies as an increasingly important part of our lives, which they felt would inevitably find its way into teaching and learning in the classroom. While some embraced this idea, others felt that the opportunity for misuse is too great to encourage widespread use of mobile phones in schools:

*My concern is, I totally agree it has to be about embracing and about recognition, but there is a real danger in that the capacity they have, particularly to film teachers and set scenarios up where you film someone and put it on YouTube, and how do you stop that? And it just takes one kid to do it. (Teacher, secondary school)*

### ***Trialling use of mobile devices in school***

- 7.79 One of the case study primary schools was trialling the use of mobile devices among P5-P7 pupils. Pupils were encouraged to use their own phone in class where it would 'enhance learning'. Staff indicated that mobiles were frequently being used in place of dictionaries and calculators. There was a view among staff that use of mobiles makes learning more fun for pupils. They also felt that such use allows pupils to develop additional skills and in many instances, allows for a quicker retrieval of an answer. For instance, pupils might quickly check a capital city. Staff also discussed the benefits of them being able to readily access news video clips.
- 7.80 In this school, the use of mobiles was not viewed as causing any problems in the classroom or playground. Teachers, support staff and pupils spoke extremely positively about the trial, which was already perceived to have been a success. In the course of the year, only one incident had been experienced: a P7 pupil texting another P7 pupil to say 'Hi'. The pupil had their phone confiscated, privileges revoked, and their parents informed.
- 7.81 At the outset of the trial, staff, senior pupils, parents, ICT staff and the local authority worked together to draw up a code of conduct for safe use of mobile phones within the school. Pupils and parents were required to sign the code, which included a number of stipulations: that phones should be kept on silent at all times; their use is only on the direction of the class teacher; use is only to support or enhance learning; and importantly that any breach of the rules would result in the immediate removal of the device.
- 7.82 Involving all stakeholders in drawing up the code of conduct, making clear the parameters of responsible and acceptable use and ensuring a firm understanding of the sanctions for misuse were viewed as having helped facilitate successful implementation of the trial. Explaining to pupils that they have an individual ID on the school network, which tracks everything they do, was seen to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their actions.
- 7.83 School staff felt that potential problems, such as pupils being stigmatised for not having a mobile or a 'cool' enough device, had been avoided by the

school purchasing high-spec ICT equipment (such as iPads and Kindles) for pupils to use in classes. It was felt that no pupil 'stands out' because pupils are encouraged to use either their mobile phone or 'traditional' means like calculators and dictionaries and some pupils prefer traditional methods even if they do have their own phone.

- 7.84 There was a view among staff at other schools that pupils have less fear of being caught abusing someone via mobile phone than they would if they engaged in face-to-face abuse. However, staff at the trial school felt that reminding pupils that their use is tracked helps prevent this.

### ***Abusive use of mobile devices***

- 7.85 Abusive use of mobile phones in school was perceived to be rare, with problems mainly arising outside school. Incidents of pupils using text messages or social networks to intimidate or harass other pupils were dealt with as other forms of serious behaviour would be, generally resulting in referral to the head, parental involvement and where appropriate, the involvement of the police. This policy was common across all schools and staff and pupils were clearly aware of it.
- 7.86 There were mixed views on the impact of cyber-bullying. While one position was that the impact is comparable to 'traditional' bullying, another view was that cyber-bullies are different because they can torment others without their identity being known, or with an audience of hundreds, or even thousands. Moreover, it was felt that cyber-bullying can allow pupils to say things they would not say in front of adults or other children, and so can be far more malicious. Some staff therefore felt that cyber-bullying is a greater threat to young people than 'traditional' bullying.
- 7.87 Abusive use of phones against teachers was thought to be rare and rather than having personal experience of it, staff were more concerned about the "what if?" Many felt that having a zero tolerance policy on mobile phones had ensured that instances of abuse were few and far between – so the move to allowing phones in schools was felt to place pupils and staff at greater risk of abuse:

*It's very, very difficult because part of me thinks what an excellent resource, you know the pupils can use them in lots and lots of ways that would actually enhance their learning. However, too many pupils are irresponsible in their use of mobile technology and I feel that to an extent allowing them in schools is putting other pupils at risk, you know for example people taking pictures of people in changing rooms while they're getting changed, people recording things in classrooms that people don't want to be recorded, so there's real issues of privacy that I think pupils don't have enough respect about that and they don't seem to have enough understanding. (SMT, secondary school)*



## 8 LOCAL AUTHORITY POLICY AND APPROACHES

### SUMMARY

- As in schools, an emphasis on relationships and an inclusive ethos was a central theme of local authority-level behaviour management policies. Strategies to manage behaviour are now more likely to sit under a wider 'inclusion' agenda.
- There was a prevailing view that there are fewer incidents of negative behaviours than in the past. This was attributed to the greater focus on the needs of the individual child, promoting positive relationships and inclusion; better multi-agency working; teachers being more adept at motivating pupils and a more engaging curriculum.
- Although still very rare, there was a perception that there may have been a slight increase in violent incidents among primary school pupils over the last few years. Concern was also expressed about the small, but felt to be increasing, number of children entering school with complex difficulties, including nurture and attachment issues.
- In secondary schools, the main problems identified were lower-level disruptive behaviour, non-compliance, a lack of respect for authority, and S3/S4 pupils becoming disengaged with school.
- Across both sectors, a perceived increase in the incidence of severe mental health issues among pupils and the management of autistic pupils were of concern.
- Few gaps in training provision were identified – areas in which training was felt to be less readily available tended to relate to specialist topics: dealing with issues around autism, therapeutic crisis intervention and high-end violence intervention.
- Interviewees felt that key priorities should be: a focus on maintaining and developing good relationships; a commitment to effective multi-agency working, particularly with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS); sustained funding for behaviour/classroom support workers; increased funding for early years interventions for vulnerable families; and more broadly, increased parental engagement and involvement in their children's development and learning.

### Introduction

8.1 This chapter presents the findings from the qualitative in-depth interviews with local authority representatives (interviewees included positive behaviour team link officers, educational psychologists, behaviour support managers, heads of service, Additional Support for Learning managers, education officers, inclusion officers and quality improvement officers). The interviews focused on:

- general perceptions of behaviour in schools
- policies on behaviour management
- *Curriculum for Excellence*
- policy development and communication
- effectiveness and monitoring of policies
- training and support provided to schools
- impact of current financial climate
- views on future priorities.

## **Key comparisons with 2009**

- 8.2 Looking back at the research findings from the 2009 study, it appears that there have been only slight shifts in opinion with regard to the development and effectiveness of behaviour management policies, training and support provided for schools and views on future priorities.
- 8.3 As in 2009, interviewees were in agreement that there continues to be a move away from the use of sanctions and punitive measures towards more positive approaches for promoting good behaviour – taking a holistic, whole-child approach which focuses on the importance of developing good relationships in school and understanding the reasons why pupils behave the way they do.
- 8.4 In 2012, there remains a focus on research-informed policy development and Scottish Government policies are still often used as the starting point for making changes and improvements. The knowledge and expertise of the Positive Behaviour Team continues to be valued.
- 8.5 In comparison with 2009, there now appears to be more of an emphasis on training teachers on restorative approaches and a greater use and acceptance of training being provided internally by staff members already skilled in the approach or issue in question.
- 8.6 Monitoring the effectiveness of the various behaviour-related policies used in schools still appears to be a little inconsistent across authorities. Interviewees mentioned that different reporting and recording systems makes it difficult to identify significant trends. While some interviewees felt that more rigorous recording would be valuable in helping identify and encourage effective approaches, a more typical view was that a sufficient overview of effectiveness can be obtained in the course of their work with schools. Moreover, interviewees felt that the individual circumstances of incidents are of more importance than focusing on wider trends.
- 8.7 There does not appear to have been any significant increase in levels of concern related to the budget constraints local authorities are increasingly experiencing. That said, in 2012 local authorities are more likely to recognise that there will be ongoing issues related to reduced budgets, particularly a potential shortage of classroom support staff and a reduction in ASN provision.

## **General perceptions of behaviour in schools**

- 8.8 Interviewees thought the vast majority of pupils were generally well behaved, with instances of negative behaviour being low in frequency relative to the overall population of pupils.
- 8.9 There was a prevailing view that there are fewer incidents of negative behaviours than in the past. This tended to be attributed to:
- a move away from a traditional discipline construct, towards identifying and understanding needs on an individual basis

- a focus on relationships, wellbeing and inclusion, resulting in improved pupil-pupil and staff-pupil relations
  - a wider recognition of achievement, resulting in there being fewer pupils on the 'margins'
  - better support being available to schools, including better multi-agency partnerships, resulting in behavioural issues being dealt with more quickly and effectively
  - teachers being more adept at motivating pupils
  - curriculum being better designed to engage pupils, including work being done to design appropriate interventions for pupils on an individual basis.
- 8.10 Instances of negative behaviour were considered to concern mainly low-level disruption and non-compliance, such as continual disruptive behaviour, belligerence and lack of respect. However, interviewees felt that teachers find these behaviours the most tiresome to deal with (and this was borne out by the quantitative survey of teachers).
- 8.11 Interviewees were more positive in their perceptions of behaviour in primary schools than in secondary schools. This was commonly attributed to the fact that secondary school pupils, because of their age, can display more challenging behaviour. There was also a view that it is due to secondary schools tending to be larger establishments where pupils have less close contact with only one or two teachers.
- 8.12 Across both sectors, instances of serious indiscipline were considered to be very rare. There was a view that cases of physical aggression and violence, although particularly rare, are most common – and perhaps slightly increasing – among P2/P3 boys. This included aggression and violence between pupils and aggression and violence directed at staff. Reasons given for this perceived increase include the increasing number of pupils with emotional and behavioural needs remaining in mainstream provision.
- 8.13 As well as the perceived slight increase in violent incidents among primary school pupils, interviewees expressed concern about the small, but felt to be increasing, numbers of children entering primary schools with complex difficulties, including nurture and attachment issues. A lack of basic social skills was also felt to lead to behavioural problems among a small proportion of pupils.
- 8.14 In secondary schools the main problems identified were pupil non-compliance, lower-level incidents such as (continual) disruptive behaviour, a general lack of respect for authority, and S3/S4 pupils becoming disengaged with school. There was a view that while S3/S4 boys have traditionally been problematic, S1/S2 pupils are increasingly causing concern. Another view was that S3/S4 girls are presenting more problems than was traditionally the case.
- 8.15 Across both sectors, the management of autistic children was a concern. Another common concern was a perceived increase in the incidences of severe mental health issues among pupils. Deprivation, problems at home and a lack of discipline at home were viewed as key drivers of negative behaviour. There was a view that behaviour is getting worse as a result of a

greater number of family breakdowns due to alcohol abuse and financial difficulties.

- 8.16 Some interviewees mentioned that relationship difficulties between certain pupils have been made worse as a result of issues around online social networks. Interviewees mentioned that this is an area schools are keen to develop in school handbooks and policies. While this was not viewed as a particularly widespread problem, it was viewed as a growing issue.

### **Policies on behaviour management**

- 8.17 There was a view that, in recent years, there has been a continued move away from punitive approaches to managing behaviour, towards more positive approaches and an ethos centred on health and wellbeing. Policies generally focus on relationships as opposed to only behaviour and are geared towards identifying and tackling the reasons for negative behaviour.
- 8.18 The promotion of a positive ethos – built on mutual respect between staff and pupils and among pupils – was seen as the basis of approaches to behaviour management. Interviewees described local authority level policies and guidance as focusing on promoting positive behaviour, building pupils’ emotional literacy and training staff so that they are aware of the impact their own behaviour has on pupils.
- 8.19 Scottish Government policies were seen as providing the foundations for policy development, with *Better Behaviour, Better Learning* remaining influential in shaping policy and practice. Other policy documents mentioned included *Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)* (as a multi-disciplinary approach), *Included, engaged and involved part two* (as the position around exclusion, and supporting the inclusion, engagement and involvement of pupils) and ASN legislation (as a framework for supporting all children).
- 8.20 The extent to which behaviour management was viewed as distinct from other policies varied among authorities. In some instances, behaviour management was a standalone policy, while in others it formed part of a broader, overarching policy, such as an ‘Improving Relationships Strategy’ or a ‘Learning and Teaching Policy’. As a result of changes in attitudes and philosophies, strategies to manage behaviour are now more likely to sit under a wider ‘inclusion’ agenda.
- 8.21 Policies differed in terms of how prescriptive they were. While policies on exclusions had to be adopted in all schools within an authority, for other strands of behaviour management, schools were able to interpret policies themselves, within broad local authority guidelines. This approach was viewed as advantageous because of the perception that behaviour management on a day-to-day basis is best handled by teachers and senior management teams within schools. There was also a view that having a range of approaches and a menu of options was required because some schools are not yet ready to adopt specific approaches (e.g. restorative practices or solution oriented approaches). However, other interviewees expressed concern about the

degree of flexibility that schools have to interpret and implement policy and the lack of consistency between schools and across authorities.

- 8.22 Although the detail of behaviour management policies differed between authorities, a central theme was an emphasis on relationships and an inclusive ethos. Although interviewees were aware of punitive approaches being used in some schools, they noted this was often the exception and they were being used less frequently than in the past. There was a view that ongoing use of such strategies was largely due to individual 'traditionalist' heads who were less open to new ideas and approaches to learning and teaching.
- 8.23 In terms of approaches to managing behaviour, a range of strategies and initiatives were mentioned. Some approaches concentrate on tackling low-level indiscipline while others are tailored towards supporting pupils with deeper emotional and behavioural problems. Almost all interviewees mentioned staged intervention as a key component of their behaviour management. Although the precise nature of staged intervention differed between authorities, the founding principle was its use as a means of identification, assessment, planning, recording and reviewing the learning needs of pupils. Some interviewees discussed the use of nurture principles. Although the focus of nurture has been on the early years in primary schools, interviewees noted that it has more recently been adopted in secondary schools to help foster emotional literacy in older pupils. Alongside these specific approaches, referral to a senior member of staff was a much-cited strategy for managing behaviour.

### ***Curriculum for Excellence***

- 8.24 It was typically felt that it was too early to comment upon the impact of *CfE*, although its potentially positive influence in the future was recognised.
- 8.25 The *CfE* focus on health and wellbeing was viewed very positively. That said, interviewees invariably pointed out that this focus had predated *CfE* and was already having some impact. The basis of the personal support agenda in focusing on pupils as individuals and ensuring that every pupil has a close and supportive relationship with one adult in school, was viewed as a particularly positive approach to promoting mental and emotional wellbeing. The approach was viewed as potentially being most beneficial to pupils who may not experience strong, positive and supportive relationships outwith school.
- 8.26 The flexibility *CfE* offers to personalise the learning experience and the accompanying shift to focus on experiential learning, was viewed as potentially helpful in tackling disengagement. The opportunities offered are viewed as being particularly beneficial to pupils who might traditionally have become disruptive as a result of finding it hard to engage in the learning process.
- 8.27 That said, the approach and practices associated with *CfE* are considered to demand a very high level of skill from staff, requiring teachers not only to

teach, but also to help develop pupils' wider skills such as critical thinking, dealing with emotions and building resilience. While some teachers had adopted this culture before the introduction of *CfE*, interviewees referred to the focus on health and wellbeing as a cultural change for others. It was recognised that some teachers would require significant and ongoing support in order for them to feel confident about changing their practice and adopting new approaches.

### **Policy development and communication**

- 8.28 On the whole, local authority representatives believed authority-level policies and guidance relating to behaviour were communicated effectively to individual schools.
- 8.29 As well as policy officers liaising with schools individually, policies are communicated via teacher conferences and briefings, intranets, email, management circulars, bulletins and training/CPD events. Policies tended to be viewed as 'working documents' and policy development was described as being consultative, involving regular meetings with heads and sometimes with the various agencies (e.g. health and social work colleagues) involved. Pupils and parents also had input into policy development, primarily through Pupil Councils and Parent Councils or Parent Forums.
- 8.30 One approach to policy development described by interviewees was one based on research, whereby Higher Education partners had been commissioned by the local authority to review practice. The expertise of staff who had attended training was drawn on. Where the Positive Behaviour Team had input into the policy development process, this was viewed as having been useful, as they had facilitated sharing of information and provided steer on good practice.
- 8.31 However, there was a concern among some interviewees that teachers cannot dedicate sufficient time to learning new approaches, because of all the other pressures on them. The focus on implementing *CfE* was commonly mentioned in this respect.

### **Training and support offered to schools**

- 8.32 In terms of the training and support available to staff, training in restorative practices, GIRFEC, solution oriented approaches and CALM (Crisis, Aggression, Limitation and Management) were typically mentioned by interviewees. Educational psychologists were frequently mentioned as being increasingly involved in providing this training and supporting school staff.
- 8.33 While interviewees described instances of training needs being determined at a local authority level, they tend to be identified at an individual school level (in particular, when specific requirements are identified in the school improvement planning process), or individual teacher level (individual teacher identified CPD needs).

- 8.34 A culture of 'training the trainers' exists, whereby teachers (often heads or SMT members) are trained in a specific approach and then train their colleagues.
- 8.35 The increasing focus on providing 'twilight' training sessions was perceived to discourage support staff taking part in training sessions, since these were delivered outwith their core working hours. Twilight training sessions were viewed as being particularly challenging to rural local authorities, where travel time and costs present additional barriers to attendance. Difficulties in providing cover to enable staff to attend training were also viewed as a barrier.
- 8.36 In the main, interviewees felt that teaching staff are provided with adequate training opportunities and identified few gaps in provision. Areas in which training was felt to be less readily available tended to relate to how to handle issues around autism, therapeutic crisis intervention and high-end violence intervention.
- 8.37 While interviewees felt more training is available to support staff than ever before, a small number expressed concern that staff in specific roles – such as pupil escorts – still do not have access to training from which they might benefit.

### **Effectiveness and monitoring of policies**

- 8.38 Interviewees discussed the ways in which effectiveness of behaviour policies is monitored. It was commonly noted that attendance, attainment and exclusion rates provide an indication of effectiveness. The decline in the number of exclusions was often attributed to the development of policies based on principles of inclusion and a supportive ethos, encouraging disengaged pupils to participate more fully in school life. Changes to the parameters of what is regarded as acceptable behaviour was also mentioned.
- 8.39 However, there was also a prevailing view that it can be difficult to monitor the effectiveness of policies and to identify trends via data analysis. Five main reasons were given for this:
- teachers making more use of the violent and aggressive incidents reporting systems than in the past, resulting in figures looking inflated
  - different recording systems being in place
  - new reporting structures, which interviewees felt were too recently implemented to be assessed at the time of interview
  - school staff have different thresholds in deciding what is serious enough to report
  - the fact that a significant number of incidents in a school can be attributed to one or two pupils.

## **Impact of the current financial climate**

- 8.40 Interviewees were asked whether they felt that the financial climate had impacted upon the ways in which behaviour is managed in schools and local authorities. A common view was that education had, thus far, been largely protected from budget cuts. However, there was an expectation that it might have more of an impact over the next few years.
- 8.41 While some areas were identified as having been constrained because of spending cuts – mainly partnerships with FE institutions, ASN provision and in some cases, staffing levels (particularly classroom assistants) – the typical view was that any financial constraints experienced had not had a detrimental impact.
- 8.42 A fairly typical view among respondents was that budget cuts had led to a refocusing of priorities, helping ensure that resources are targeted where most required. Interviewees noted that local authorities have had to identify more creative ways of empowering schools to deal with behavioural issues themselves, as opposed to relying on central local authority support. This in turn has been seen to encourage better working with other partners, such as health and social work.

## **Priorities for the future**

- 8.43 There is a degree of overlap in the priorities for the future cited by local authorities in 2012 and in 2009. There remains a focus on maintaining and developing good relationships and a commitment to effective multi-agency working, particularly with CAMHS.
- 8.44 Local authorities continue to call for sustained funding for behaviour/classroom support workers and increased spending on interventions in the early years with vulnerable families.
- 8.45 Perhaps more notable in 2012 is the emphasis placed on the benefits of engaging and involving parents in their child's development and education from an early age. The need for some parents to be encouraged or required to attend parenting courses in order that they are better equipped to nurture, discipline and set appropriate boundaries for their children, was also a common theme.



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