

**REPORT TO: EDUCATION COMMITTEE - 21st NOVEMBER 2005**  
**REPORT ON: MANAGING UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOLS**  
**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**  
**REPORT NO: 703-2005**

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 This report acknowledges that measures are already in place and being used by Head Teachers to deal with misbehaviour, but proposes that additional measures are now required to deal with pupils whose behaviour is wholly unacceptable. There is an expectation that the parent/carer will co-operate fully, by accepting responsibility for the child's behaviour and agreeing to whatever measures are considered appropriate.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 The Education Committee is recommended to:

- i. note the contents of this report;
- ii. instruct the Director of Education to share and discuss this report with all relevant departments and agencies, including the Chief Constable of Tayside Police;
- iii. approve the proposal to review the guidelines on exclusion;
- iv. approve the proposal to plan and implement an anti-violence poster campaign in schools;
- v. note that the Director of Education will bring a detailed report to Education Committee in January 2006 on the management of disruptive behaviour, incorporating a review of the policy on the management of pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, first approved in 2001.

## **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no direct Local Agenda 21 implications.

## **5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 It is the aim of this report to ensure that the educational opportunities of the majority of learners are not hindered by the actions of a disruptive minority, but furthermore that due support is given to those whose actions in the classroom are unacceptable.

## **6.0 BACKGROUND**

- 6.1 The Education Committee at its meeting on 19th November 2001 approved Report No. 731-2001 on *Supporting Pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*. That policy was extensively evaluated in 2003. Work is now at an advanced stage in the preparation of guidelines for staff in schools on the general management of all disruptive and unacceptable behaviour, including both the persistent, low-level disruption that frustrates staff and interrupts classroom work, and the much more serious misbehaviour displayed by individuals with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- 6.2 The Education Committee, at its meeting on 24th October 2005, approved the provision of an additional offsite centre for pupils unable to sustain a place in mainstream education, along with a review of offsite provision in general (Report No. 648-2005 refers).
- 6.3 The Council has emphasised its refusal to tolerate staff being subjected to violent and abusive behaviour, whether the perpetrators are school pupils or adults.
- 6.4 Severe behavioural difficulties can only be effectively addressed by the different agencies that deliver children's services - Education, Social Work, Leisure & Communities, Health, Police, all supported by the voluntary sector - working together to support a young person. Each secondary school has a multi-agency Joint Action Team (formerly known as School Referral Team) to consider the needs of all vulnerable and damaged young people. It is the Education Department's intention, supported by these key partners, to implement this successful strategy in the early years and primary sectors as well.

## **7.0 ISSUES**

- 7.1 There is no place in our schools and classrooms for poor behaviour at any level. It eats into the learning and teaching process and disrupts the educational experience of the majority who want to learn, and the perpetrator as well. It adds stress to the already demanding job of the teacher, and deflects from the key task of teaching.
- 7.2 Any effective strategy will begin in the individual classroom, where clear and firm boundaries are set down and applied firmly and consistently, and go hand in hand with well developed learning and teaching techniques. A strategy will be more successful when applied by all staff in a school with a positive, supportive and inclusive ethos.
- 7.3 Within an overall policy of positive behaviour management, Head Teachers and their staff already use a range of support strategies to deal with disruptive behaviour: alternative educational programmes; use of specialist Support for Learning staff; parents/carers encouraged to work with school; intervention of agencies within Education such as the Home School Support Service and Dundee Educational Psychology Service; and referral to appropriate outside agencies. They also impose sanctions ranging from reprimand through to formal exclusion from school.
- 7.4 Serious and unacceptable behavioural patterns are often presented by children and young people whose social and emotional development is at a very early stage, perhaps because of negative factors in their domestic lives. It is incumbent on all of us who seek to deliver effective children's services to work together to support these individuals, and to give them every opportunity and encouragement to develop.

- 7.5 Nevertheless, we have to recognise that there is a small minority of young people whose behaviour is constantly unacceptable or who commit extremely serious offences.
- 7.6 We must also note with concern that statistics over the past three sessions have indicated a rise in the number of reported incidents of violence against staff (Appendix 1), and an overall rise in the number of school exclusions (Appendix 2).
- 7.7 It is entirely appropriate that professionals from all relevant departments and agencies respond seriously and firmly to these people. There are, however, two provisos:
- i. Whatever the needs of these young people, and however serious their misdemeanours, the Council retains a duty and a responsibility to educate and support them. It will be for the Education, Social Work and Leisure & Communities Departments, supported by colleagues in Health and the Police, to work together, along with the parent/carer, to deliver the commitment to education.
  - ii. Professionals alone have little or no chance of changing an entrenched negative behaviour pattern. The most important and influential attachment for all young persons should be to the adult figure(s) with whom they spend most of their life. We therefore have to oblige parents and carers to deliver their responsibilities to their children, we should expect their full co-operation in controlling and supervising their children, and we should be prepared to make use of Anti-Social Behaviour and/or Parenting Order legislation when parents fail to co-operate.

## **8.0 PROPOSALS**

- 8.1 It is proposed that a detailed report should be brought to Education Committee in January 2006, which will provide revised guidelines for staff on the management of all disruptive behaviour, including that displayed by pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and will indicate how the expansion of offsite centres will be managed.
- 8.2 Formal exclusion is an important sanction, delegated by the Director of Education to the Head Teacher alone. The Education Department's guidelines on exclusion stress that Head Teachers should generally use it as a last resort, short in duration, and imposed in accordance with agreed procedures. It is now proposed that these guidelines should be reviewed to make specific reference to its use with pupils whose behaviour is completely unacceptable.
- 8.3 Decisions about exclusion must be made having full regard to the circumstances of each individual case: it is not possible to list all misdemeanours that might result in exclusion.
- 8.4 Nevertheless there are wholly unacceptable incidents involving violence which must always result in immediate exclusion, and consideration of the need to report to Police, unless there are extraordinary mitigating circumstances:
- any physical assault on a member of staff;
  - any instance of verbal assault on staff which is sustained, or threatening, or intimidating, or accompanied by overt signs of physical aggression;
  - use of intimidating or offensive sexual language;
  - sustained involvement in bullying activities; and
  - spontaneous, violent, unprovoked attacks on pupils

- 8.5 To the examples in 8.4 above should be added the case of any young person who is the subject of multiple exclusions, for whatever reason, and who is demonstrating complete unwillingness to co-operate with school staff. It is proposed that exclusions are defined as 'multiple' when the sanction is imposed for the fourth time in any one session.
- 8.6 Head Teachers will continue to use all the measures currently available to them when dealing with disruptive behaviour. However, in the cases referred to in 8.4 and 8.5 additional measures are proposed. Specifically, the pupil is to remain excluded until the Head Teacher has brought the case to the attention of an Education Services Manager for discussion of possible disposals, which might include one or more of the following:
- formal referral to the Joint Action Team for multi-agency consideration and disposal, including the identification of a Link Person, from the most appropriate department or agency, to support the young person on return to school
  - permanent exclusion from the named school, and negotiation with the parent/carer of a place in another school
  - application for imposition of an Anti-Social Behaviour Order and/or a Parenting Order
  - extended period of exclusion from school, during which the parent/carer arranges to collect basic literacy and numeracy work from school, and on completion returns it to school – this disposal is to be monitored by the Joint Action Team
  - placement in an offsite centre or other alternative provision outside mainstream school
- 8.7 Violence against staff and pupils is deplored, and is a matter which is already taken very seriously by Head Teachers. It is now proposed that the Education Department draws up plans for a major poster campaign, drawing public attention to the issue, making a firm statement regarding our refusal to tolerate it, and making clear our intention to take appropriate action when faced with instances of violence.

## **9.0 CONSULTATION**

- 9.1 This report has been subject to consultation with the Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance), Director of Social Work and Director of Leisure & Communities.

## **10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 10.1 None

ANNE WILSON  
Director of Education

11th November 2005

JC/DD

## Reported Incidents Of Violence Against School Staff

### 2002-03

Incidents of violence reported by staff in ...	Total All	Number against teaching staff only	Number against non-teaching staff only	Number against both teaching and non-teaching staff	Number in which Police notified
Pre-school centres	22	6	16	0	0
Primary schools	112	60	49	3	6
Secondary schools	183	172	10	1	15
Behavioural support	24	11	13	0	4
<b>Total all incidents</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>25</b>

### 2003-04

Incidents of violence reported by staff in ...	Total All	Number against teaching staff only	Number against non-teaching staff only	Number against both teaching and non-teaching staff	Number in which Police notified
Pre-school centres	26	5	21	0	0
Primary schools	122	75	45	2	1
Secondary schools	200	188	11	1	9
Behavioural support	6	2	3	1	1
<b>Total all incidents</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>

### 2004-05

Incidents of violence reported by staff in ...	Total All	Number against teaching staff only	Number against non-teaching staff only	Number against both teaching and non-teaching staff	Number in which Police notified
Pre-school centres	17	1	16	0	0

Primary schools	243	153	79	11	4
Secondary schools	223	203	15	5	7
Behavioural support	5	4	1	0	0
<b>Total all incidents</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>

Appendix 2

### Exclusions

	Primary		Secondary		Total	
	Number of Pupils with Exclusions Absence	Number of Half-days Exclusions Absence	Number of Pupils with Exclusions Absence	Number of Half-days Exclusions Absence	Number of Pupils with Exclusions Absence	Number of Half-days Exclusions Absence
2002-03	122	1377	793	13729	915	15106
2003-04	133	1306	776	11383	909	12689
2004-05	181	2593	843	15317	1024	17910

