# Over 700 violent incidents reported in Renfrewshire schools amid national concerns



Renfrewshire schools have reported over 700 violent incidents so far in the 2024/25 academic year, raising concerns about the safety of pupils and staff. According to research by the Scottish Liberal Democrats, there have been 712 recorded episodes of violence across both primary and secondary educational settings in the region. This data has heightened local awareness and unease, coinciding with a national discussion on youth violence that has recently been amplified by the popularity of the Netflix drama Adolescence.

Further escalating worries, two girls aged 12 and 13 were charged following an assault in the Boden Boo area of Erskine on a Friday night, which resulted in a 13-year-old girl requiring hospital treatment.

Grant Toghill, spokesperson for the Renfrewshire Liberal Democrats and a youth group leader, stressed that pupils “shouldn't be going to school afraid” and advocated for greater investment in educational psychologists to address the root causes of violence. Speaking to the Daily Record, Toghill said, “Since the launch of the Netflix drama Adolescence, everybody is talking about the challenges young people face like violence in schools, the rise of toxic misogynists like Andrew Tate and online bullying. It isn’t just a drama, it’s happening here and now in Renfrewshire too.”

Toghill also highlighted the Scottish Government's recent action plan, published last summer, which aims to create safer environments for both pupils and staff. However, he expressed concern that despite this plan, violent incidents have continued unabated, with over 700 cases reported in Renfrewshire since the plan’s publication. He added, “Teachers deserve to know this government has their back. Ministers need to demonstrate that their plan is having an effect, but we also need investment in educational psychologists to help deal with the underlying causes of violence.”

Renfrewshire Council responded by emphasising that the health and wellbeing of children, young people, and staff remains its highest priority. A council spokesperson said, “We take all incidents of violence and aggression seriously. Our recently updated policy ensures robust processes are in place and we provide extensive training and support to our school staff on the universal and targeted interventions available to support children and young people, how staff can support distressed and dysregulated behaviour and how to report any incidents accurately.” The spokesperson also mentioned programmes such as Mentors in Violence Prevention and Equally Safe at School, which aim to support both pupils and staff.

More widely, the Scottish Liberal Democrats obtained data from 30 of Scotland’s 32 local authorities, revealing a total of 24,387 violent incidents reported in schools across the nation during this academic year to date.

A Scottish Government spokesperson acknowledged that violence and abusive behaviour in schools is “completely unacceptable” and affirmed the goal of ensuring safe and consistent learning environments. The spokesperson highlighted progress made under the National Behaviour Action Plan, which includes guidance on reducing violence and harm within schools. They noted that while local authorities hold statutory responsibility for education delivery, the Scottish Government is providing support through investments, including £2 million annually for training educational psychologists. The number of educational psychologists in training has more than doubled from 29 in 2016/17 to over 76 in 2023/24. Additionally, a further £29 million has been allocated in this year’s budget to enhance resources for the additional support needs workforce in schools, enabling local councils to recruit more educational psychologists.

The issues faced by Renfrewshire schools reflect a broader challenge throughout Scotland, where ongoing efforts are geared towards improving safety and wellbeing in educational settings across the country.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.scotlibdems.org.uk/news/article/over-24000-violent-incidents-in-schools-so-far-this-year> - This article corroborates the national context of violence in schools, noting over 24,000 incidents reported so far in the current academic year across Scotland, which highlights a broader concern beyond Renfrewshire.
* <https://www.glasgowlibdems.org.uk/news/article/over-2700-violent-incidents-in-glasgow-schools-so-far-this-year> - This source shows that Glasgow, another region in Scotland, is also experiencing significant levels of school violence, further underscoring the widespread nature of the issue.
* <https://www.edlibdems.org.uk/news/article/violence-in-schools> - This article discusses the concern about violence in Scottish schools generally, aligning with the broader context of school safety discussed in Renfrewshire.
* <https://www.scotlibdems.org.uk/news/article/rennie-responds-to-school-violence-announcement> - This article provides insight into the Scottish Liberal Democrats' stance on school violence, advocating for increased support and specialized provisions, which matches Grant Toghill's call for more educational psychologists.
* <https://www.fifetoday.co.uk/news/opinion/over-3000-violent-incidents-in-fife-schools-so-far-this-year-5077648> - This article highlights the prevalence of violent incidents in Fife schools, contributing to the overall narrative of school violence being a national concern in Scotland.