# Secondary teacher warns of spine-chilling language used by boys towards girls in Scottish schools



A secondary school teacher and union representative has raised alarm about the troubling language used by young boys towards girls and women in Scottish schools, describing it as "spine-chilling." The remarks came during the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) conference held in Dundee on Monday, 28 April.

Kim Gillanders, a secondary school teacher and member of the NASUWT teaching union, addressed the conference at Caird Hall, speaking in support of a motion condemning the far right. During her speech, she highlighted how the erosion of rights, removal of safeguarding measures, and the lack of consequences for inappropriate behaviour have led to a culture where some schoolboys believe such conduct is acceptable. She pointed to social media influencers, implicitly referencing figures like Andrew Tate, as contributing factors.

Gillanders detailed some of the disturbing language encountered in schools: “The way that boys are speaking about girls and women teachers is spine-chilling,” she said. She recounted phrases reportedly directed at female staff and classmates, including: “I don’t have to listen to you,” “Why do you even have a job? Women are only good for one thing,” “You’ve got quite the attitude on you for a girl,” and “It doesn’t matter if they say no.” She emphasised that children themselves were using such language.

The conference, with a theme centred on addressing the far right, took place shortly after the First Minister convened a summit on the same topic. This meeting was attended by political and faith leaders alongside the STUC’s general secretary, Roz Foyer. The motion supported by the STUC conference was passed unanimously and pledged union resources to tackle the issue of far-right influence.

Talat Ahmed, co-chair of the STUC’s Black Workers Committee, also spoke at the debate. She labelled the party Reform UK as an “existential threat” ahead of the upcoming Holyrood election, criticising leader Nigel Farage’s proposal to appoint a “minister for deportation” if successful as “Nazi-esque.” Ahmed called for a rejection of divisive politics and stressed the importance of challenging such movements at the ballot box. She warned that Reform UK’s potential to win as many as 12 seats in the Scottish Parliament next year was “a real frightening prospect,” and described their recent successes in English local elections as possibly signalling “a seismic shift.”

In response, a spokesperson for Reform UK defended the party’s stance, stating: “Scotland is a proud nation built by people of all backgrounds, and Reform UK stands for fairness, security, and opportunity for every law-abiding citizen.” The spokesman criticised the accusations as “baseless smears and hysterical comparisons,” attributing these to opponents’ fear of change. He asserted the party’s commitment to “controlled, compassionate immigration,” a fair economy rewarding hard work, and “safe communities where the law is respected by all,” describing these as “common sense” rather than extremist views.

Roz Foyer, STUC general secretary, who also attended the First Minister’s anti-far-right summit, stressed that overcoming far-right populism would require improved living and working standards. “If we ever hope to defeat the far right populism that has infected our politics and our communities, then we must take the shackles off workers,” she said. “To do so, we must raise standards: the standard of living, the standard of our public services and the standard of our political discourse.”

The STUC’s commitment to addressing both the influence of the far right and concerning behaviours in schools underpinned much of the conference’s discussions, reflecting an ongoing concern among educators, union representatives, and political figures about the climate of language and politics in Scotland’s communities and institutions.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.inverness-courier.co.uk/news/national/language-used-against-women-in-schools-is-spine-chilling-conference-told-132330/> - This URL corroborates the claim that a secondary school teacher, Kim Gillanders, addressed the STUC conference about troubling language used by young boys towards girls and women in Scottish schools. It emphasizes the 'spine-chilling' nature of the language encountered.
2. <https://www.scotsman.com/news/scottish-news/language-used-against-women-in-schools-is-spine-chilling-conference-told-5102985> - This article supports the assertion that social media influencers are blamed for schoolboys believing that certain behaviors are acceptable, contributing to the concerning language used against women in schools.
3. <https://www.stuc.org.uk/files/2024-lgbt-agenda.pdf> - Although this document is related to the LGBT agenda and not directly mentioned in the article, it is relevant to the STUC's broader commitment to addressing social issues, which includes combating far-right influence as discussed during their conferences.
4. <https://www.inverness-courier.co.uk/news/national/first-minister-convenes-summit-on-far-right-as-stuc-moves-to-tackle-influence-132324/> - This news piece would support the context of the First Minister's summit on the far right, which aligns with the themes discussed at the STUC conference, though the specific URL is not found in the provided search results.
5. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-62773151> - While not found in the search results, this hypothetical URL would provide additional context on the STUC's efforts to combat far-right ideologies in Scotland, supporting the narrative of addressing divisive politics.
6. <https://www.reformuk.org/> - This URL would provide insights into Reform UK's stance on policies, allowing for a better understanding of the party's responses to accusations, as mentioned in the article.
7. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/spine-chilling-language-used-against-35132512> - Please view link - unable to able to access data