# Far-right rhetoric fuels rise in violence and harassment in Scottish schools, says NASUWT



Far-right movements have been identified as contributing to a rise in violence within Scottish schools, according to a report from the teaching union NASUWT. The organisation claims that rhetoric associated with racism, misogyny, and anti-immigration sentiments is infiltrating educational settings, resulting in what they describe as a "battleground of blame and violence."

David Anderson, the incoming president of NASUWT, highlighted the troubling influence of far-right ideologies on young people, stating that this has led to incidences of harassment and violence against educators and students alike. A motion to address the challenges posed by the far-right is set to be discussed at the union's Scotland annual conference in Glasgow. The conference commenced today.

Mr Anderson expressed concern over the implications of hostile political speech. He stated, “Abusive rhetoric by politicians is trickling down and facilitating increasingly abusive and hateful speech in social media, which in turn seems to be spurring rapid increases in the frequency of bias-motivated incidents of harassment, threats, and violence, including rampant surges in hate crimes.” He further characterised schools as "battlegrounds" in this context.

The NASUWT has advocated for educational measures to begin as early as primary school, aimed at teaching pupils about the risks associated with hate speech and prejudice. This initiative is in alignment with the publication's ongoing campaign titled "Our Kids ... Our Future," which aims to highlight youth violence in schools. Launched over two years ago, this campaign was a response to increasing incidents of aggression directed at both teachers and students.

In recent revelations, the union pointed out incidents involving young activists affiliated with far-right groups, such as the Homeland Party, which has reportedly targeted young men with extremist messages online. A notable case involved a 16-year-old, a known member of this group, who expressed deeply troubling views about race and relationships through social media.

The union's concerns are echoed in findings from a recent survey of teachers in Scotland, where nearly two-thirds (63%) reported that social media adversely affects student behaviour. Among female teachers, 5% reported experiencing sexual abuse from pupils, compared to 2% of their male counterparts. Issues of sexism and misogyny were also highlighted as prevalent threats faced by educators.

Mr Anderson further condemned the extreme right's opposition to educational institutions, stating, “Education is often perceived as a threat by the extreme right.” He referenced efforts to dismantle educational programmes focused on inclusivity and equality, remarking on global trends that threaten these principles.

In response to the situation, a spokesperson for the Scottish Government reaffirmed their commitment to maintaining safe educational environments, declaring that violent and abusive behaviours towards students or staff will not be tolerated. They noted ongoing support for initiatives aimed at facilitating better behaviour and countering online hate.

One such initiative is the Digital Discourse Initiative, which equips teachers with strategies and resources to combat the effects of online disinformation and hate on young individuals.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/article-listing/behaviour-action-plan-no-impact-abuse-increasing.html> - This NASUWT report highlights that 83% of teachers in Scotland reported an increase in physically violent and abusive behaviors among pupils over the past year, despite the implementation of a National Action Plan on Relationships and Behaviour.
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2025/feb/06/scotland-schools-pupil-violence-increase> - An article from The Guardian discusses the 'exponential increase' in pupil violence in Scottish schools, with 44% of teachers experiencing physical abuse or violence in the last 12 months and 90% facing verbal abuse.
3. <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/article-listing/scottish-government-failing-pupil-restraint.html> - This NASUWT article criticizes the Scottish Government for failing to publish guidance on pupil restraint and physical intervention, leaving teachers vulnerable to assaults and attacks from pupils.
4. <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/news/campaigns/responding-to-the-rise-of-the-far-right.html> - The NASUWT's statement addresses the rise of far-right extremism and hate crimes in the UK, emphasizing the need for anti-racism to be central to the curriculum and for schools to be equipped to challenge all forms of bigotry.
5. <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/article-listing/union-partnership-to-combat-far-right-extremism.html> - This NASUWT article details a partnership with the German teachers’ union GEW to examine the impacts of far-right extremism in classrooms and develop materials and guidelines to address the issue.
6. <https://www.scottishdailyexpress.co.uk/news/scottish-news/scottish-far-right-group-centre-28916910> - A report from the Scottish Daily Express reveals that a counter-terrorism investigation has been launched into a far-right group operating in Scotland, highlighting concerns about the targeting of schools.
7. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/far-right-movements-fuelling-epidemic-35151900> - Please view link - unable to able to access data