

Sharon Davies, Head of Education  
Welsh Local Government Association

14 December 2022

## **Annual scrutiny follow-up**

Dear Sharon,

During the Children, Young People and Education Committee's inquiry into peer on peer sexual harassment among learners we heard some anecdotal evidence that some school staff are sexually harassed by pupils.

We wrote to trade unions on 26 September to hear their perspectives on the scale and nature of sexual harassment of school staff. We received three responses, which we considered during our meeting on 23 November 2022 (see items 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5).

The responses indicate that violence and harassment, in various forms, is a significant issue for many school staff. For example:

- A survey carried out by NASUWT in 2018 found that 81% of teachers surveyed believed that they had suffered sexual harassment or bullying in the workplace by a colleague, manager, parent or pupil. Nearly a third (30%) of those who had been sexually harassed have been subjected to unwanted touching, while two thirds (67%) had experienced inappropriate comments about their appearance or body.
- UNISON carried out a survey to inform their response to our letter. It found that 70% of 212 respondents were worried about violent behaviour in their job. 28.8% experience verbal abuse at least weekly, and 10.6% experience assaults at least daily. Worryingly, 41% of those who had experienced a violent incident felt unsupported by their line manager or head teacher.

I would therefore be grateful for your views on:

1. the scale and nature of violence, abuse, sexual harassment or sexual abuse towards school staff across maintained settings in Wales, whether by colleagues, managers, parents or pupils;
2. what steps schools should take to prevent violence, abuse and harassment (e.g. policies, guidance, training, risk assessments, etc.) and how effectively schools across Wales are taking those steps; and
3. what support schools should offer to staff who have suffered violence, abuse or harassment and how effectively schools across Wales are providing that support.

I would be very grateful for this information no later than Thursday 19 January.

If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact the Committee's clerking team (SeneddChildren@Senedd.Wales).

Yours sincerely,



Jayne Bryant MS  
Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.