

Violence against Education Support Staff continues to escalate in our schools

We are seeing more personal injury claims coming through the branch and these are being passed onto Thompsons UNISON'S lawyers.

These vary from broken hands, broken noses, head injuries, deep scratches leaving scars on faces and arms, horrible bites and the need for a tetanus injection. All of the above incidents have happened to WOMEN education

support staff working in Edinburgh schools and early years.

Members are asked to continue to Raise it. Record it. Report it.



If you havent already done so, take the survey here:

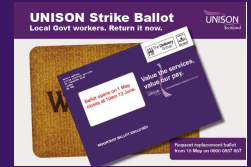
<https://survey.alchemer.eu/s3/90829092/City-of-Edinburgh-Zero-Tolerance-Towards->

Violence

It only takes a few minutes — and your answers will help us hold the Council to account, push for action, and demand safer workplaces for everyone.

There is a Behaviours of Concern meeting with Lynne Binnie, HR, trade unions and teaching unions on Monday 26 May 2025 to discuss unacceptable & concerning behaviours in schools.

STRIKE BALLOT PURPLE ENVELOPES IN THE POST



Vote **YES** to strike! Give us the bargaining power to go back to the table and demand more than the miserable 3% offer. **Ballot closes 12 June 2025**

We deserve more! You deserve more!

THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL'S MENOPAUSE POLICY

The aims of this policy are to create a supportive and understanding workplace for colleagues experiencing menopause, offering resources and guidance to help them manage their symptoms and maintain their wellbeing.



Key Aspects of the City of Edinburgh Council's Menopause Policy:

- **Awareness and Support**
The policy aims to create a

supportive workplace culture where colleagues feel comfortable raising issues about menopause and requesting adjustments.

- **Open Communication**
It encourages open dialogue between colleagues and managers, providing helpful definitions and lists of symptoms to foster understanding.
- **Reasonable Adjustments**
The policy outlines how colleagues can request reasonable adjustments to their working environment and working pattern.

- **Access to Resources**
The policy provides a list of further advice and services available, with links to other relevant policies, including the Special Leave Policy and Sickness Absence Policy.

- **Support for Sickness Absence**
The policy also acknowledges that colleagues may need to take sick leave due to menopause symptoms, and the Sickness Absence Policy provides guidance on managing these absences.

Reviews

ASL Review

Consultation complete. ASL support staff are now being matched into some Early Years positions and Pupil Support Officer positions in schools/communities.

Support Worker Project

Consultation now complete.

Proposed new job descriptions on the council ORB.

As the employer has chosen to unilaterally implement these proposals without following their own policy and procedures, UNISON are seeking immediate resolution to this failure via senior levels of the Council. If proper

process remains unfollowed, then we shall contact our members with a suggested way forward

Upcoming Review

The Early Years Provision and Staffing Review is coming up in August 2025.

Health & Safety Committee's in every School

It is important to highlight that all schools should have a Health & Safety Committee set up in their school. At present, not all schools have one and if they do, they don't meet frequently enough.

We recommend these committees should meet at least once a month. The committee should be made up of a UNISON rep, an EIS rep your Head Teacher or another member of

management and the Business Manager. The committee should discuss matters in the school such as violence against staff and what procedures should be in place to protect staff from harm. Actions should be taken from these meetings.

UNISON run courses for health and safety reps. However to attend you must be an elected Health &

Safety Rep in the first instance. It is our aim to have a Shop Steward and Health & Safety rep in every school & Early Year Centre.



National School Support Staff Seminar Bristol April 2025

The seminar discussed the nationwide escalation of violence against education support staff in schools. Reporting these incidents is paramount.

Unfortunately, there is still a lack of reporting by management in schools.

- More support needed for staff who are being assaulted both physically and verbally.
- Encouraging reporting to Police and getting an incident number.
- After an incident there should be a debrief with staff involved and support given.

- Staff should not be expected to go back to their duties immediately after an incident as their well-being needs to be considered. Management in schools has a duty of care not just towards the children but also their staff.

Also discussed at the seminar was **Artificial intelligence** being used in schools and other workplaces.

Positives:

- AI can mark assessments and organise online resources, giving teachers more time to spend with

the children.

Negatives:

- AI is also being used in clerical and administration and showing a more efficient service posing a possible threat to the future of these jobs.
- More and more children have a chatbot (AI friend) positive or negative?
- Young minds can be easily influenced by online chatbot.
- Mental health can be affected.

AI will come into our local government services with a new level of surveillance.

Be more active in your union help make a difference!

There are five types of representatives:

- workplace contact
- steward
- health & safety representative
- union learning representative
- equality representative

So there's bound to be one to suit you. Contact Branch Office for further details:

0131 558 7488 option2 or email: branchoffice@unison-edinburgh.org.uk



Join us in UNISON 0131 558 7488 or www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk