

Module A: Context, Definitions and Knowledge of School Violence

Unit A2: What We Know About School Violence: Findings From Research and Practice

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Objectives of Unit A2

- To increase knowledge and understanding of the concept of school bullying and violence
- To increase knowledge of how to identify violent behaviour and separate it from less serious (e.g. disruptive) behaviour
- To be familiar with knowledge about the incidence of school bullying and violence in Europe
- To increase knowledge of the characteristics of perpetrators and victims of school bullying and violence.
- To be familiar with the role of new technology in school bullying

Facilitation skills to be developed through this Unit

Knowledge and understanding of:

- up-to-date knowledge of main characteristics of perpetrators of school bullying and violence
- the complexity of school bullying and violence
- the range and causes of aggressive and challenging behaviour
- the importance of a research based approach to intervention

Personal qualities and attributes include:

- being an effective communicator
- having a good understanding of the complexity of school bullying and violence
- having a good understanding of implementation strategies
- being an effective trainer of all members of the school community

Pre-unit reading

“An introductory story” (see Appendix 1)

Read the introduction and your country's or a neighbouring country's report in:
Smith, P. K. (Ed.). (2003). *Violence in schools. The response in Europe.*
London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Summary of what we know about school violence

School bullying and violence is a problem in many nations. Throughout Europe, violence has become a major concern for educational policymakers and professionals who work in schools. The exposure of children to various forms of violence at school has become a frequent topic of discussion in the

media in recent years. It has also attracted increasing interest among researchers studying forms and prevalence of violence in various settings, usually the school and community (e.g., Smith, 2003). Increasing evidence points to the negative effects of exposure to violence on children's development and everyday functioning (see different national reports in Smith, 2003). There is no doubt that living under conditions of insecurity and the threat of extreme violence is detrimental to children's development.

Many schools have responded to the problem by implementing strategies to prevent and reduce school violence. Some of them report positive results, however, too many are of limited or unknown efficacy. Therefore, it is imperative that schools be aware of effective preventions and interventions. An important first step is knowledge of school bullying and violence.

As discussed in Unit A1 the concept of school bullying and violence is diverse and covers a variety of incidents and situations. Exposure to violence at school is a significant problem for European pupils, although seriousness might differ both in frequency and in how damaging it is for pupils and/or staff involved. Every day there will be fights, pupils hitting and kicking each other, in schools all over Europe. For some students this is a single fight never happening again and with limited damage. Others might be involved in repeated incidents of harassment, terror and physical or psychological abuse over longer periods of time. From time to time we hear about extremely serious incidents at school, such as hostage taking, pupils that are stabbed or shot with fatal results. Witnessing violence and experiencing threats of violence is also related to a high level of trauma symptoms (Flannery, Wester, & Singer 2004). Therefore, school bullying and violence affect more pupils and teachers than those directly involved.

The purpose of this Unit is to provide some background information and context related to school violence. It should help professionals in school to understand the complexities of the issue when making a decision about what to do about violent situations they may encounter. A central point of this Unit is that the phenomenon of school violence draws upon a range of policies and actions used to respond to school violence or threats of violence. In other words, a fight between two pupils is one aspect of school violence; but other aspects include the policies that are in place to deal with the fight and the responses to the fight by adults in school. Knowing how to handle bullying and violence in schools takes knowledge of the phenomenon.

Violence in schools and communities is no longer an urban school problem; it is every school's problem (Garbarino, 1999). What factors cause children to interact with increasingly violent and anti-social behaviours? What strategies can teachers and schools use in order to help these childhood bullies who grow up to be violent youths?

Many promising options are available to schools to address violence and other inappropriate pupil behaviour; some of them are presented in Module E. The very breadth and diversity of these options may pose a problem in attempting to develop a comprehensive local policy on this topic. Effective

school bullying and violence prevention requires comprehensive planning involving documenting the effects of best practice programs, preventive strategies, and effective responses to any violence that may occur. Since research documentation is inconsistent, it is incumbent upon schools to consider carefully which programs best meet the needs of their local situation, and to monitor the effectiveness of new programs in improving school safety and reducing disruption and incivility.

Responsibilities of the Unit facilitators

Your tasks within this Unit are to:

- send to all participants information about when and where the session will be held and details of preparatory reading to be done
- familiarise yourself with the Unit text and the facilitators' notes
- plan the session to meet the needs of the participants
- ensure that all relevant resources/materials are copied and/or prepared
- lead the session and all the activities

Sequence for activities for Unit A2

This Unit represents a half-day training of 2.5 hours plus breaks. Please note that this Unit is accompanied by a power point presentation. The slides are referred to in the text. The text is not intended as a fixed manuscript for the Unit. However, it will provide the facilitator with sufficient background material to lead the session. This offers flexibility together with the opportunity to extend the introduction if necessary. The Unit consists of two parts. Part 1 is an introduction providing knowledge about the extent and nature of school bullying and violence. Part 2 introduces a case study and activities based on the case study.

Part 1

Activity 1 Lecture: What do we know? (20 minutes)

Procedure

It is intended that the text that follows will be used as a reference to guide the presentation of the PowerPoint slides.

Slides 2 and 3

School bullying and violence ranges from incidents of bullying (Ertesvåg & Vaaland, 2006; Roland, 1998) and threats (Flannery et al., 2004) to weapon carrying, murder, spree shooting and fatalities (Barta, 2000). Although more violence perpetration and victimization occurs away from school, schools have not been immune to the severest forms of violence. While the risk of being a murder victim at school is extremely low, pupils and teachers are not isolated from other types of violence and threats of being a victim of bullying or violence might be as harmful as actually being affected by violence (Flannery et al., 2004). This Unit will mainly focus on the types of violence all teachers might expect to meet in their work more or less on a daily basis and on the prevention of these types of violence.

How we interpret school bullying and violence is influenced by the ideas we have about violence. Among the pre-reading texts there is a story about

school professionals discussing a fight between two pupils and what to do about the situation. Certainly, it is difficult to discuss a situation without more information. However, even if we got the so-called facts of the incident, we would still face ambiguities based on our own thoughts about the situation and may disagree on how the problem should be solved. This occurs partly because we all have different ideas about violence and different definitions of what is and is not violence, we have different feelings about young people and how they should be treated, and we also have different levels of understanding about the responsibilities of schools (see Unit A1). In Unit B2 the need for schools to develop a shared philosophy of school bullying and violence to succeed in implementing sustainable change will be discussed. In Unit E5 an example of how this might be initiated in a school is discussed. However, for the time being we look into what we know about the topic from research and theory.

Because of increasing reports of incidents of bullying and violence in schools, by professionals in school, by media and politicians, in most countries throughout Europe governments have stressed the importance of safe, violence-free schools. A number of programs have been implemented in schools and some report positive results. However, a lot of them have limited or unknown efficacy. School bullying and violence represents a real threat to the safety of pupils and staff and the belief that it is proliferating, as well as the perceived lack of knowledge of what actions to take by professionals in school might increase the interest in the topic in schools throughout Europe.

Incidence

Slide 4

There is great variation in the extent of our knowledge base about school violence. Although a range of statistics is available, many country reports deplore the lack of systematic data gathered on a large scale over time. As Smith (2003) outlines, this is partly an issue of definition and partly a lack of data on violence. Furthermore, statistics on school violence are based on a variety of instruments, mostly pupil questionnaire self-reports, but also structured interviews, teacher reports or observations. One of the most extensive reviews of school violence in European countries was reported through the EU-funded Connect projects and presented by Smith (2003). All countries in the European Union (at the time), Norway and Iceland reported the situation in their country. Participants in the VISTA course are advised to read their country's (or a neighbouring country's) report as part of the Unit. In the report Smith points out that most countries provide some data on violence among pupils; other dyads (e.g. pupil to teacher violence or teacher to pupil violence) however are less frequently reported.

Slide 5

School violence is a major problem affecting pupils' learning environment around the world and the gross inadequacy of official data on school violence has stimulated an important growth in empirical research on the phenomenon, be it violence or bullying. One extensive report on school violence was based on survey data exploring the amount of school violence in 37 nations

worldwide (Akiba, LeTendre, Baker, & Goesling, 2002). In this study school violence was measured through self-reference victimization reports by pupils.

Slide 6

When looking at pupils' reports as victims of school violence in European countries relative to other nations, most countries reported about or below average. However, there were large differences among European countries. Pupils in Denmark reported the lowest percentage (ca. 7%) of pupils in all nations who became victims of school violence at least once during the previous month of the survey. Countries like Switzerland, Belgium, Sweden and Norway reported 15% or less, and Ireland and Spain were among countries reporting between 15% and 30%. At the other end of the scale, in Romania and Hungary about 65% and 75% of the pupils reported being victims of school violence. Not all European countries were part of the survey, for example, the United Kingdom was not included.

An interesting result from the TIMMS survey data was that school violence rates were not related to general crime rated in these 37 nations.

Furthermore, school violence rates were related to some social indicators such as absolute deprivation and age distribution but not to others such as income inequality or social integration. School violence rates were related to school-system variables and the effect of these variables was independent of social variables.

What do we know about school bullying and violence?

Slide 7

The concept of school bullying and violence was defined and discussed in Unit A1. Here we do not go further into the discussion about definition.

Working on school bullying and violence is closely linked with working on less serious behaviour, such as indiscipline, disobedience and disruption (see Unit B6). Bullying, violence, harassment and disruptive classroom behaviour are serious and interrelated problems in schools throughout Europe and the rest of the world. A disruptive pupil, however, is not necessarily a violent one.

“Class clowns” can have a devastating effect on instruction but may in no way cause pupils or teachers to worry about their safety. This does not imply that disruptive behaviour is not related to school bullying and violence (Roland, 1998). Classrooms characterised by disruptive behaviour might experience a cumulative effect which eventually leads to more serious incidents if the disruptive behaviour is not reduced. Furthermore, teacher style is related to the amount of school bullying and violence (Roland & Galloway, 2002). Thus, less serious violence carries major psychological weight through its cumulative effect. This should be taken into account when evaluating policies and programs in the devising of which actions to take. Most researchers into school violence and bullying agree on its social implications and on some inner aspects of the aggressive situation.

A danger in focusing on school violence and bullying might be to paint a picture of teachers and administrators who do not care about the problem of bullying, or seemingly about the pupils at all. In daily life we can hear teachers described negatively as “lazy”, “indifferent” and “unaware”. Some of the

features reveal an unfavourable and unfair bias against teachers and administrators as a whole. These kinds of descriptions will certainly not encourage teachers or administrators to improve their professional development. However, it might sometimes seem as if teachers, and other professionals, are reluctant to intervene in incidents of violence or bullying. Probably it is not because they are indifferent, but more for the reason a Norwegian head teacher stated during an informal observation:

“I think some of the teachers at our school turn away from incidents of bullying, but it is not because they don’t care, it’s because they don’t know what actions to take”.

A first step in knowing what to do is basic knowledge of the phenomenon. We will now look into some summarised knowledge about bullying. There is some evidence that at least some of this knowledge also relates to violence in general (Akiba et al, 2002).

What do we know about victims of bullying?

Slides 8 and 9

- No clear gender differences. Boys are somewhat more likely to become victims of bullying than girls in some studies (e.g., Roland & Galloway, 2002). The opposite is found in other studies and countries (e.g., Ortega, del Rey, & Fernández, 2003)
- Occurrence of bullying decreases the older the pupils become. However the decrease is smaller for boys than girls.
- The most frequent type of bullying is verbal bullying both for boys and girls.
- Boys are more often victims of physical harassment and bullying, girls are more often victims of social exclusion.
- At least 5% of pupils in primary and secondary schools are bullied weekly or more often in countries all over the world

(Based on Roland & Galloway, 2002; Cowie, Jennifer, & Sharp, 2003; Ortega et al., 2003; O’Moore & Minton, 2003).

What do we know about perpetrators of bullying?

Slides 10 and 11

- Boys are more often offenders of bullying than girls. These gender differences increase with age
- Rates of offenders of bullying among boys (in percent) show marked increase with age
- Rates of offenders of bullying among girls (in percent) are relatively stable over age. Boys’ bullying contains, more than girls’ bullying, physical harassment; girls more often use social exclusion
- Both boys and girls use teasing
- At least 5% of pupils bully others every week or more often (differs from one country to another)

(Based on Smith & Sharp, 1994; Everett & Price, 1995; Roland & Galloway, 2002; Ortega et al., 2003).

Bullying by mobile phone – studies from Norway

Slides 12 and 13

In recent years new technology has brought about new types of bullying. Roland (2002) and Auestad and Roland (2005) have studied bullying by mobile phone among a representative sample of pupils in Norwegian schools.

- About 15% of pupils using mobile phones have experienced bullying.
- There are more reports of bullying others and be victim of bullying by SMS than by calls.
- More boys than girls are victims of serious (every week or more often) bullying by mobile phone. However, more girls than boys are victims of less serious (sometimes) bullying.
- Being the victim of bullying by mobile phone is not related to grade level
- More pupils have mobile phone in higher grades, therefore the problem increases with age.
- From 2001 to 2004 there was a decrease (about 50%) in the most serious bullying, the less serious bullying also decreased. However, the decrease was less.
- Recently, photos taken by mobile have become a problem. 4.5% of boys and 2.2% of girls admitted they had taken photos of other in the locker room once or more.

To sum up:

What do we know about school violence?

Slides 14 and 15

- School violence, like all violence, cannot be explained simply by a single cause but is complex and multi-determined
- The educational literature makes it abundantly clear that school violence prevention and school improvement go hand-in hand, yet there is also a reluctance to discuss many of the sensitive topics associated with school bullying and violence (Midthassel & Ertesvåg, 2006).
- School violence is not limited to one country. It is international in scope (Akiba et al., 2002; Smith, 2003)
- In many countries, significant research has been done in the past 25 years (Smith, 2003)
- Bullying is a major component of school violence yet bullying is not a well-understood phenomenon in all countries throughout Europe, although we gradually increase our knowledge.

How we understand school violence and bullying partly depends on what theoretical approach we have. There is a multitude of different theoretical approaches to school violence. We have chosen an ecological approach, a perspective well suited for approaching the complex aspects of school violence and bullying. Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological perspective

(Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1995; Bronfenbrenner & Morris 1998) offers a framework integrating the various factors associated with school violence. In this framework we can describe school violence and bullying as an interplay among several relevant subsystems (i.e pupil, family school and neighbourhood). This type of nested ecological theory can be described as an interactionist theory that tries to understand human behaviour as a “duet” between a person’s individual biological and psychological characteristics and contextual and environmental variables, both social and physical (Ertesvåg & Bø, in press). This environment may include other human beings who are involved in the situation (other pupils, teachers) and includes the physical environment (class and school size, school structure). As obvious as this may seem, many interventions to prevent or reduce school bullying and violence overlook the multilevel nature of the phenomena, focusing either on pupils or the school as an organization. Interventions will benefit from addressing school bullying and violence both at individual, class and school level.

Factors related to school violence range from those concerning the individual pupil to social factors – school organization, the community in which the school is embedded, the characteristics of the pupil’s family, including their culture and country of residence. These factors follow many levels of hierarchy – individual pupils within their classes, classes within schools, schools within neighbourhoods, and neighbourhoods within societies and cultures (Duncan & Raudenbush, 1999; Lee, 2000). One important question concerning school violence is the degree to which these nested ecological factors contribute to pupil victimization in the school grounds and furthermore, how to prevent and reduce school bullying and violence.

There are many recommendations from schools and school psychology services on how to approach school bullying and violence based on research and practice. We will attend to these later in the course. For the time being we will look into some recommendations for work on school district level based on this theoretical approach (see also Unit D3).

The school district administration has a unique opportunity to initiate collaborative approaches to interventions aimed at preventing and reducing school bullying and violence including different schools in a community. A broad-based project group might be organized and serve as the facilitative body to guide schools through the program. An example is the local educational board of Oslo that in cooperation with the Centre of Behavioural Research, University of Stavanger, initiated a comprehensive program involving 30 primary, secondary and combined schools in the ConnectOSLO program, a continuation of the Norwegian branch of the European Connect UK 001 project.

The Local Educational Board of the city of Oslo had the responsibility for administration of the project and played an important role in promoting non-violence in the Schools of Oslo (Ertesvåg & Vaaland, 2006).

In order for a school district to choose a conceptual model and to prioritise the order of the components of a comprehensive violence prevention and

intervention program it might be helpful to construct a procedural scaffolding to guide the planning and implementation of the initiative. The procedures need to be based on theory and research on innovation and adjusted to the country in which it is carried out. (In a Norwegian setting a guide to implementing intervention is presented in Ertesvåg, 2001, 2002). The relative usefulness of such a plan is a function of its capacity to organize the effort along a pathway that brings order to the process and understanding to the participants.

We will return to the role of the school district administration in implementation of prevention and intervention programs in Unit B2.

Part 2: A whole school approach to school bullying and violence

Note to the facilitator: Part 2 contains three activities focusing on the classroom, school and individual level. Although it might seem natural to start either with school level or individual level, The first (Activity 2) focuses on the classroom level. Often, but not always, violent behaviour happens and/or has consequences for the classroom context. Although both individual and school level actions are necessary, the classroom level is essential in identifying, preventing and action and consequently the classroom level is discussed first. The second and third (Activities 3 and 4) focus on types of behaviour, bullying and violence all teachers might expect to experience. Furthermore, the emphasis is on preventing as well as reducing incidents.

Activity 2: Classroom level (30 minutes)

Purpose

- To reflect on how we interpret and understand school bullying and violence
- To provide the opportunity to recognise that we might understand the nature and concept of school bullying and violence in different ways, that is, based on professional position, education and the ideas we have about life in general
- To be able to identify different types of problem behaviour in a classroom context and to separate violent behaviour from disruptive behaviour
- To reflect on teacher style as part of preventing and reducing school bullying and violence

Materials

Resource 1 *The classroom*

Resource 4 *Suggestions for systematizing measures*

Procedure

Read the story described in Resource 1 *The classroom*. Discuss the following question in groups of about 5 people:

- *What is violent behaviour and what can be considered as disruptive behaviour described, discussed or actually happening in this classroom setting?*
- *What are the problems related to preventing and reducing school bullying and violence in the classroom described?*
- *What measures will you implement on classroom level? (See Resource 4).*

Activity 3 The school level (30 minutes)

Purpose

- To provide an opportunity to reflect on the necessity of a shared understanding of school bullying and violence
- To understand possible reasons for different opinions of school bullying and violence among actors at school

Materials

Resource 2 *The school*

Resource 4 *Suggestions for systemising measures*

Procedure

Read the case described in Resource 2 *The school* individually. Discuss the following questions in the same groups as in exercise 1.

- *Why is there a need for a shared understanding of what behaviour to expect from the pupils among staff in a school and among staff and parents?*
- *How can schools work on creating a shared understanding of school bullying and violence?*
- *What measures will you implement to create a shared understanding of school bullying and violence? (See Resource 4 Suggestions for systemising measures).*

Activity 4 A whole school approach (40 minutes)

Purpose

- To be able to recognise action needed at individual, class and school level
- To be able to identify problem areas and decide on possible measures

Materials

Resource 3 *John*

Procedure

In the same groups as before and based on all the information you have from Resource 1, 2 and 3 discuss the following questions. Emphasis the individual level and discuss the interrelation between the three levels. Measures will mutually strengthen each other if they have the same focus.

- *What kind of measures would you use at classroom, school and individual level?*
- *Who is responsible for carrying out the measures?*
- *Which target group(s) do you have for your work?*
- *Is there any particular circumstance you have to take care of?*
- *For how long will you work before you do an evaluation?*

Activity 5 Debriefing (30 minutes)

At the end of the discussions, there could be a plenary discussion of how best to respond to the problems presented in Activities 2, 3 and 4. This is an opportunity to share different views and relief measures at all three levels of school bullying and violence. The facilitator summarises the results of the activities, drawing upon the examples arising in the group work and the

plenary session, and making links with the theoretical issues raised in the pre-reading and the summary. Finally, the facilitator should allow time for participants to raise any questions or make any comments regarding the power point presentation and the results of the activities.

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Appendix 1 An introductory story...

In a meeting teachers, school leaders and school psychologists discussed an incident that had occurred in a primary school. Two boys, John and Brian, had fought on a school outing, and though nobody was hurt, both boys had thrown punches. Brian was a star pupil, with excellent grades and a promising athlete. John did not perform well academically and his form teacher had asked the school psychology service for classroom observation due to the boys' disruptive behaviour. After the fight, John claimed the other pupil had taunted him in the past. Brian claimed that he had never spoken to John before, let alone taunted him.

When the group of professionals discussed the incident, important issues were raised about youth violence and responses to violence in schools. One teacher wanted to suspend John for starting the fight, and another insisted that both boys be expelled because each had violated the school's zero-tolerance policy. One teacher felt that the boys should be required to attend peer mediation and perform some type of community service but not be suspended or expelled. Another felt that they should be arrested and charged with "breach of the peace". The one who recommended peer mediation and community service felt that John should be offered a second chance because he was "disadvantaged" and had academic problems, a second teacher responded that the boy would never "learn his lesson" if he "got away with it". Some teachers wanted to explore whether Brian had taunted John. One teacher wanted to let the whole thing blow over, stating "it was only a tussle between two boys".

How we interpret this incident is influenced by the knowledge and ideas we have of violence. Certainly, we could do with more information about the incident and about the boys. However, even if we got the so-called facts of the incident, we would still face ambiguities based on our own thoughts about the situation and may disagree on how the problem should be solved. This occurs partly because we all have different ideas about violence and different definitions of what is and is not violence, we have different feelings about young people and how they should be treated: and we also have different levels of understanding about the responsibilities of schools. Unit A2 aims to introduce some key knowledge to professionals to increase their knowledge of school bullying and violence. The pre-reading text is meant to give background information and context related to school bullying and violence. It should help readers understand the complexities of the issue when deciding how to approach school bullying and violence at their own school.

Resource 1 The classroom

Introduction

John is nine years old, a grade 4 boy at a primary school. You met him in the pre-unit reading story (Appendix 1). His form teacher has reported concerns about John due to disruptive behaviour and repeated incidents of harassment and bullying of other pupils. The teacher has also told the observers that there have been repeated incidents of verbal bullying of a girl in class and John seems to be very active in this harassment. The School Psychology Service is supervising the school in this case. A preliminary inquiry reveals that the case is not limited to John and his problems. Based on an ecological perspective, measures at the class-, school-, and individual level are recommended. Along with individual measures, classroom initiatives are made to strengthen the social climate of the class. As part of classroom measures colleagues from the School Psychology Service do an observation in the classroom.

The students are returning from break. It is noisy, pupils are talking loudly and shoving chairs and desks. The lesson starts with a twenty minute lunch break in the classroom. While the students are eating, the teacher is talking about a school outing and a fight between two boys, Brian from grade 5 and John. While the teacher talks, some pupils make comments to the teachers and he responds. Four of the boys are talking loudly to each other. They leave their desks and walk around in the classroom. The teacher acts calmly and does not pay attention to their talking, but he comments that they are walking around in the classroom. The pupils pay no attention. However, after a while they return to their desks.

John is seated at the front of the classroom. He is very loudmouthed and makes many cheeky comments to the teacher: "Peter (the teacher), why are you saying that....", "That was stupid, Peter". The other boys have comments on John, "You are stupid, John", "You always mess up", "You are the reason we will never have an outing again"...

The class has now finished the meal break and is going to work on English language. John starts to pull the curtains in such a way that the teacher gets the sun in his eyes. The teacher does not comment, but moves away from the sun. John starts calling a girl: "bitch, witch..." The girl responds by raising her hand, calling for the teacher's attention. It takes a long time before she gets a response. The teacher is listening to the girl and then asks John to stop.

While this is happening the teacher is instructing the class to listen to a story on the CD-player. When he goes to insert the CD he discovers that he left it in the staff room and has to leave the classroom too fetch it. While he returns to the classroom half of the boys are gone and the rest of them are running around in the classroom, hiding themselves behind the curtains or standing on the desks. The girls are sitting quietly at their desks. The teacher finds the pupils that have left the classroom, but has to struggle to get them back as they were making objections. John did not interact with any of the other pupils. He was standing at the top of his desk yelling into the classroom. At last the teacher gets all the pupils into their places and the lesson can continue...

Resource 2 The school

The head teacher and the form teacher in John's class are interviewed by the educational psychologists about the situation at the school and within John's class in particular.

The situation in John's class was not special, several classes at the school were in the same situation especially concerning disruptive behaviour in the classroom. The head teacher was aware of the situation in John's class, since both the form teacher and parents had discussed the situation with him.

The head teacher had participated in class parent meetings, but overall shown little interest in arranging for practical measures that the form teacher had suggested to solve the problem.

The head teacher spent overall little time at the school and the form teacher did not think he knew him very well either. He had the impression that most of the staff felt the same way.

John's class had several teachers during the school week. There was little or no cooperation between the different teachers. There was no discussion about how to address the pupils' disruptive behaviour in the classroom, no procedures on how to handle incidents of bullying or other types of violence. Accordingly, there was no consensus about what behaviour they expected from the students. Some of them thought it was acceptable for students to walk around in the classrooms or go to the toilet without asking for permission, others did not think this was good pupil behaviour.

The form teacher of the class had tried to cooperate with the parents at parent meetings and parent conferences. The parents had attended school activity days but they were now more and more hostile against teachers, the head teacher and the school because they did not handle the class well.

Resource 3 John

In the interview the head teacher and form teacher also revealed:

John has serious academic difficulties, with his behaviour and with peer relations at school. He is struggling both with reading and mathematics. He is falling behind the academic development of the rest of the class'. He has repeatedly been in fights with other pupils in and outside the school. John also had problems in kindergarten.

John has the same problems outside school. The school explain the boys' difficulties through trouble in the family. Johns mother has been addicted to drugs and Social Services have taken care of the family since John was a baby. John's father has a steady job and has managed relatively well. After the boy tried to set a garbage container on fire, the school asked for help.

Resource 4: Suggestions for systemising measures

A visual presentation of (possible) goals and measures in a whole school approach to the problems described might help you to systemise individual measures (Resource 4 will be further developed in Unit B2).

Goal Classroom level	Measure	Date (done within)	Target group	Responsible	Comments
Goal School level	Measure	Date (done within)	Target group	Responsible	Comments
Example: Map the school situation according to disruptive behaviour at classroom level	To give an account of the problem at school level	January 15th	Those employed at the school	The head teacher	A step towards shared understanding of school violence at school level
Goal Individual level	Measure	Date (done within)	Target group	Responsible	Comments