SAFER AT SCHOOL

Summarising report for the EU conference to be held in Utrecht, the Netherlands from 24 to 26 February 1997

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1. THE CONFERENCE

1. From 24 to 26 February 1997, an EU conference on the subject of bullying, violence and sexual harassment in schools is to be held in Utrecht, the Netherlands. The conference will mainly examine the subject from the point of view of making and keeping schools safe for both pupils and teachers. The following issues will be dealt with:

- definitions and basic principles, an analysis of the factors relating to bullying, violence and sexual harassment among school children and the extent of these problems;
- the possible causes of the various forms of antisocial pupil behaviour;
- preventive approaches to antisocial pupil behaviour;
- the encouragement of pro-social pupil behaviour in schools;
- education policy and its relationship to each of the above subjects;
- the relationship between education policy, educational development at various levels, and the empirical promotion of pro-social behaviour among school children.

2. In the run-up to the conference, researchers from five member states (Germany, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands) were asked to draw up a report on the current situation in their own country. To enable comparison, the same format was used for each. This format is enclosed in appendix 1 to this report.

3. The main purpose of these national reports was to obtain factual information on the various subjects at issue. They may be used as evidence to aid the experts from each member state (including those from the country in which the reports originated) in formulating their ideas and as a source of information during the conference itself. The national reports are included as appendices to this report.
4. This report is intended for the information of all delegates to the conference. It is a synthesis of the findings contained in the national reports\(^1\), and has been drawn up with two objectives in mind; firstly, to encourage exchanges of information and views, to fuel and structure debate and to form the basis of possible common action; secondly to provide suggestions for subjects that might be discussed and activities that might be undertaken either during or after the conference.

5. The summary is included in chapters 2 to 8 of this report. Its contents are based on the national reports, which also contain the relevant bibliographies (see appendices).

\(^1\)with the exception of the United Kingdom report which could not be completed in time, due to illness.
2. DEFINITIONS

2.1. Defining antisocial pupil behaviour

1. A common element in the national reports (see appendices) is that antisocial behaviour such as "bullying", "violence" and "sexual harassment" is characterised by the use of one or more forms of abusive behaviour. Of central importance is the balance of power. One party - an individual, group or social class - tilts the balance in its favour, to the detriment of other individuals, groups or social classes, or to damage property.

2. Abusive behaviour may take a variety of forms:
   * Individuals or groups may abuse other individuals or groups
     - psychologically (e.g. by ostracising, isolating, intimidating or threatening them or using abusive language towards them);
     - physically (e.g. by pushing, hitting or injuring them)
     - by using a combination of both, which is frequently the case;
   They may also direct their violence at objects, e.g. by destroying them, or by committing acts of vandalism.

3. This core of violent behaviour makes it initially more difficult to arrive at clear definitions. This is evident from the various ways in which bullying, aggression, violence and sexual harassment are defined in the national reports. The German report, for example, draws no distinction - unlike the other reports - between "bullying" and "violence".

4. Nevertheless, antisocial behaviour exhibits largely the same features in all the national reports. It may therefore be concluded that relatively similar variations of pupil behaviour, the occurrence and intensity of which are largely age-related, manifest themselves in a wide range of guises and are fairly widespread. More specifically, the reports identify a number of features, to which the following definitions may be given.
5. **Bullying and being the victim of bullying** largely relate to, for example, one party ignoring, isolating, hitting or using abusive language towards another party (see 2). A number of countries (e.g., Spain), adhere to the definition given by Olweus. In various national reports, this type of behaviour largely occurs among young children attending primary school (i.e., up to the age of 12). It is usually the same children who either bully or are the victims of bullying, and the bullies pick on their victims for a long period of time, at different locations, both in school and elsewhere. Little mention is made of bullying between pupils and teachers. Within a hierarchy, pupils who are scapegoated may, in their turn, bully their weaker classmates. For all the victims or scapegoats concerned, prolonged, extensive bullying can be a real problem, especially if the aggression escalates.

6. From the viewpoint of educational psychology, the research data from some countries (Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands) substantiate the view that impulsive, aggressive behaviour among young children, especially boys, can gradually lead to bullying and, later, to more violent behaviour. Their victims are often ill-equipped to stand up for themselves, tend to be introverted, and are easily intimidated. Bullies exploit these qualities. Moreover, the victims also tend to be relatively unpopular among their classmates, and receive little help from them (see the Dutch report).

7. **Violence** may take a number of forms. It may be psychological, physical or, more commonly, a combination of the two. The German report also examines abusive pupil-teacher behaviour. Victims of violence - unlike pupils who are bullied - are sometimes chosen at random. Another difference with bullying is that violent behaviour may be of very short duration. However, it also leads to more serious, often physical injury and can traumatised the victims, as well as their families and friends.

8. The national reports have little to say on the subject of sexual harassment or sexual violence, although they may possibly be regarded as forms of bullying or
violence. Sexual harassment usually takes the form of intimidation, the culprit focusing on the victim’s sexual characteristics. Sexual violence could hence be defined as violence targeted at the victim’s sexual characteristics.

It would appear necessary for the conference to examine both bullying and violence separately in relation to sexual harassment and sexual violence (see suggestions in section 2.2), as other forms of intimidation and abusive behaviour - cultural or age-related intimidation or violence, for instance - may be interpreted in a similar way.

9. Violence may enter the sphere of criminal behaviour, defined as violent behaviour to which criminal law penalties apply.

10. Teasing may in principle be characterised as positive social behaviour. It generally occurs when, in a playful fashion, individuals or groups explore the boundaries of the acceptable in their relations with other individuals or groups, or when they focus on something in a creative, constructive way, etc.

2.2. Suggestions for further discussion

1. The definitions of the concepts "bullying", "violence" and "sexual harassment" used in the national reports do not wholly correspond. This is the case not only between countries, but also between studies conducted in the same country (e.g. Germany). Additional information as well as relevant research findings will most certainly be available in Germany and elsewhere. This information should be brought to the conference, as it could provide very useful background material.

2. The conference should devote further attention to producing precise definitions of the various concepts, and to identifying similarities and differences between them. In this respect, it may be useful to define both antisocial and pro-social behaviour more precisely.
3. **Pro-social behaviour** entails forms of cooperation between two or more parties (individuals, groups, social systems), pursuing the same, or complementary goals, and attempting to achieve them in harmony.

For example: the pupil is engaged in a learning process with the assistance of the teacher; or one individual does not understand what another individual means and the latter attempts to clarify matters by giving an example.

Spending more time on the development of pro-social behaviour in schools and in other educational situations would prevent the development of antisocial behaviour.

4. Paragraph 2.1 defines a number of forms of **antisocial behaviour**. The participants could discuss the need to elaborate or change these definitions. The following factors should be taken into account.

5. In view of the fact that we have been unable to reach total agreement on either our definitions of these concepts or the relevance of pro-social behaviour, might it not be advisable to adopt a totally different approach? In my view, pro-social and antisocial behaviour could be defined as the opposite poles of a behaviour continuum - from antisocial through neutral-social to pro-social. Various aspects of social behaviour can then be identified:

   - *type of behaviour*, e.g.
   - verbal, non-verbal;
   - psychological, physical, sexual, age-related
   - or combinations of these;

   - *orientation*, i.e. biased towards the pro-social or antisocial end of the spectrum;

   - *intensity* of the pro-social or antisocial behaviour;
i.e. the nature and orientation of the behaviour, e.g. antisocial but non-intensive (e.g. using abusive language), to extremely intensive (e.g. causing physical injury).
- frequency;
- duration:

In view of the information contained in the national reports, duration would seem to be the only factor distinguishing "bullying" from "violence". Bullying occurs on a long-term basis, while violence can be either long-term or short-term. The question is whether this is an adequate distinction, and whether it provides sufficient clarity for the formulation of definitions, or their practical application or measurement (see the empirical findings of the German report);
- actors:

who is doing what to whom or what (e.g. pupil-pupil, pupil-teacher, pupils-pupil, pupil-object).

6. Adopting the method put forward at 5, a multi-dimensional definition of pro-social and antisocial behaviour could be developed. This would reduce or solve the problems now being encountered in defining concepts. This suggestion should at least be discussed during the conference.

7. The conference could recommend that efforts be made to reach a multi-dimensional definition, complete with possible methods of applying and measuring it. This would lead to greater uniformity, Europe-wide, in definitions of pro-social and antisocial behaviour. Only then will it be possible to reach conclusions on the situation in each country and compare developments.

8. During the conference itself, an attempt could be made to discuss each EU member state's definitions and methods of application and measurement. Only when we have some insight into the precise meaning of each concept and the way in which each can be applied will it be possible to establish the extent of the problem. In the Netherlands, for instance, some instruments are in use which treat "teasing" and "bullying" as synonymous, while others draw a very
clear distinction between them. The figures contained in the German national report draw no distinction between "bullying" and "violence". It is extremely important to ensure that this terminology is used more consistently, and to apply uniform definitions in deploying the relevant instruments. Only then will it be possible to assess the effects of preventive or curative action, especially on an international level.

9. The current arbitrariness with which definitions are used makes it extremely difficult to reach conclusions on the problem of antisocial pupil behaviour.
3. BULLYING, VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

3.1 Frequency

1. The national reports provide varying types of information on the frequency of bullying, violence and sexual harassment. A variety of factors play a role here. In Germany, the Länder are responsible for educational provision, education policy and the organisation of teaching. It is therefore difficult to obtain information representative of the entire country. This may also apply to other countries. The studies reported apply a variety of criteria, not only from country to country, but even within the same country. Here too, greater uniformity is needed.

2. Information on reliability and validity, or impact is not always included in reports on research, developments, or policy measures. This information is, however, essential for a reliable, scientific assessment of measurements of and approaches to antisocial behaviour, specific educational developments and their effects, and education policy and its effects at various levels of the education system, and to plan any new steps that are to be taken. This would also apply if it were decided to place the primary emphasis on the promotion of pro-social behaviour, particularly among high-risk pupils.

3. These remarks notwithstanding, the following provisional conclusions can be drawn. The reports submitted by the various member states provide empirical evidence of relatively high levels of bullying and violence among school children. Little research has been conducted into sexual harassment and sexual violence. The few results that are available indicate a link with "physical, planned abuse" (see reports from Germany and the Netherlands).

3.2 Has there been an increase?

1. Since no empirical data were collected in the past, it is not possible to give a
reliable answer to this question.

2. The general impression is that the incidence of bullying, violence and sexual harassment has not actually increased, but that it is receiving more attention. In any event, growing media coverage and the publicity given to a number of exceptionally brutal incidents have heightened interest in these aspects of pupil behaviour.

4. RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER CHARACTERISTICS

1. A number of national reports provide a wide range of specific data on the relationship between antisocial behaviour and other characteristics of school children. These data form an important source of information.

2. Up to now, research has generally demonstrated a wide spectrum of types of behaviour, ranging from pro-social through relatively neutral to various forms of antisocial behaviour (see under intensity, section 2.2).

An example of the swing from neutral to antisocial behaviour is given in the report on the Netherlands (see appendix). 59 pupil characteristics were grouped under 14 relatively independent sub-groups (factors) on the basis of simultaneous statistical analyses. These sub-groups were then grouped under four headings. In this way, a pattern emerged relating behaviour to pupil violence:

- pro-social behaviour only (group 1)
- slightly or potentially violent behaviour (group 2)
- disruptive behaviour, bullying and mild forms of victim/victimiser behaviour, in conjunction with disciplinarian teacher (group 3)
- up to and including serious violence, combined with drug use, by male pupils (group 4).
3. The empirical data contained in the German report are in line with the above interpretation. All four national reports show that where antisocial or violent pupil behaviour increases or intensifies, the positive or social integration of the child in question, both at school and at home, decreases accordingly. Personal characteristics (gender, personality traits such as emotional stability, extroversion etc) also play a role.

4. The Dutch national report also demonstrates the following. After correcting for differences between groups (classes) of pupils, "bullying" and "being bullied" do not necessarily occur together. However, this is the case in groups or classes in which bullying is relatively more common. Much depends on the degree to which the teacher enforces discipline. In other words, in groups or classes in which bullying is more prevalent, pupils are more likely to join in. Indeed, self-preservation may force them to do so. This also applies to violent behaviour.

5. Apart from differences between groups and classes, enormous differences also exist between schools (see the German, Swedish and Dutch national reports).

6. However, multi-level research findings show that differences between pupils and classes play a greater role than those between schools. Home background (poor upbringing) and living in a certain type of neighbourhood are also linked to antisocial behaviour.

7. Too little adequate, methodical multi-level research is currently being performed. As a result, it is difficult to establish the relationship between, for example, pupil behaviour and the characteristics of the school and neighbourhood. The fact that few longitudinal research findings are available also prevents us from reaching firmer conclusions on the links between prosocial or antisocial behaviour and other factors, especially when we are trying to establish causal relationships.
5. POSSIBLE CAUSES AND INFLUENTIAL FACTORS

The national reports suggest three main reasons for the development of pro-social and antisocial behaviour; these are often identified in the literature.

5.1. Congenital personality profile

1. According to this explanation, the causes of antisocial and pro-social behaviour must mainly be sought in the person in question.

2. Practically all studies show that personality profile plays an important role. Of significance are biological-cultural variables, such as gender (males being more at risk), and the emotional and social factors which have a relatively long-term impact on an individual (e.g. emotional stability, congenial/uncongenial behaviour, degree of extroversion).

5.2 External factors

1. This explanation seeks the causes of pro-social and antisocial behaviour in the child's environment. Various types of environment and their component factors can be distinguished.

2. The first factor to be identified is the mother-infant relationship, and in particular the tendency of the mother to dominate and inflict harsh punishment on the child. This leads to the development of antisocial behaviour in the child, while pro-social behaviour tends to be underdeveloped or even suppressed.

3. Secondly, social and group processes are of importance. Examples include power and identity processes within the child's own group; wanting to impress friends; awareness of lack of social control and knowing that there is little chance of being caught out; recognition that the potential victim is weaker.
4. Thirdly, friends may exert a more specific influence. For example, they may literally force another child to engage in antisocial behaviour, such as hitting or stealing; acting in an antisocial manner may give the child a higher status in the hierarchy of friends.

5. Fourthly, educational factors also play a role. These factors include the curriculum, the method of assessment and teaching, and the educational and organisational characteristics typical of the year group system. These factors may play a role at different levels within the organisation of the school (e.g. at the level of the pupil, the group or class, or the school). Negative selection on the basis of comparative pupil performance, which means that there will always some pupils obtaining fail marks, is an important causal factor, as the pupils whose performance is relatively poor will need the most support and encouragement from the school. These children often have a different cultural or linguistic background, and are highly vulnerable from the social viewpoint too.

6. Fifthly, the neighbourhood in which the school is located may also play a role. Factors include economic and sociocultural background, unemployment rates, and the nature and extent of social control. However, more empirical multilevel data are needed if more reliable conclusions are to be reached.

7. Finally, the characteristics of the society in which the child lives also play a role. Examples here include the extent to which society is performance and power oriented, the importance society attaches to macho behaviour and sensationalism (violence in the media), and widespread urbanisation, together with urban blight.

5.3 Personal and external factors

1. According to this explanation, both personal and external factors are responsible, in particular the relationship between them and their interaction over time. Various environments (the home environment, the school, and the
street) and their characteristics - at various levels - can be identified.

2. Pupils whose social background, cognitive abilities and linguistic or cultural background deviate from those of the other children in their group or class run an extra risk. Given the negative selection applied in most school systems, these pupils may lose their enthusiasm for school at an early stage, and may thus become disruptive. Behaviour of this type will generally meet with a negative response from teachers. The ensuing conflict may lead, in secondary school, to truancy, violent behaviour and dropping out, with criminal behaviour one step away.

3. This interactional, longitudinal explanation may be regarded as the most satisfactory, from both the theoretical and empirical points of view. For example: pupils with certain personality traits who gradually become estranged from home, school or socially acceptable values and standards, and who increasingly engage in various forms of antisocial behaviour are the victims of a longitudinal interaction between personal and external factors at different levels: the level of the pupil, class, school and neighbourhood.

5.4 Interaction between knowledge and policy

1. The explanation given in section 5.3 is the most relevant from both the theoretical and empirical points of view and for the purposes of devising policy. Yet it has received the least attention, and very few studies or tests have been conducted. It is therefore a somewhat risky business to draw conclusions on 'the' causes or 'the' way to tackle antisocial behaviour and promote pro-social attitudes. It is however preferable to set up studies using an interactional, longitudinal multi-level approach, so as to keep in touch with actual developments.

2. It is very important to note that such approaches to research may also be used, at the same time, to identify methods of promoting pro-social behaviour
and to conduct scientifically monitored projects to encourage it. This may be achieved with the assistance of development-related research in schools, in which children in high-risk categories whose social and cognitive development lags behind are given extra assistance, and the longitudinal effects of providing this extra assistance are recorded.

3. This preventive approach is hence of supreme relevance to education policy. The national reports show that many projects have been launched and facilities created within the context of targeted education policy to promote pro-social behaviour among high-risk pupils and their class-mates at a very early stage in their school careers, and that the effects of these policies are being monitored. The possible ramifications will be dealt with in the next chapter.

6. TACKLING AND PREVENTING ANTISOCIAL PUPIL BEHAVIOUR

6.1 Direct response

1. Pupils say that teachers are not always aware that other pupils are being aggressive (see the report from Germany). They also say that teachers do not always intervene.

2. The national reports agree that antisocial pupil behaviour needs tackling directly. In actual situations, the intervention required will depend on such factors as the antisocial behaviour in question, the situation, the ages of the pupils concerned and their understanding of their own behaviour, the number of culprits, and the availability of help in intervening. Educationally, it makes a great deal of difference whether the antisocial behaviour takes place in a playgroup of four-year-olds, a group of ten-year-olds, or a class of fifteen-year-olds in a secondary school. All these situations, however, warrant a direct, educationally sound response.
3. There are clearly many scenarios in which schools can respond directly to undesirable social situations or behaviour. An acutely problematic situation will require a direct response both inside and outside school. Such a response will basically consist of stopping the antisocial behaviour, getting assistance, helping the victim or victims, and reporting the culprits to the school authorities and possibly the police.

4. An incident may acquire an additional - and fairly direct - preventive value if information about it is disseminated among pupils, teachers, others in the school, parents, relevant care agencies outside the school, and possibly the press and other media. It is important to "exploit" such incidents by pointing out, for instance, that "we" do not act in such a way or permit such behaviour and by emphasising how we do behave with each other and why. The national reports suggest that school authorities have an important task to fulfil in this regard.

5. In this connection, we also need to focus on long-term support and guidance for the victims, their families and/or friends, and possibly care workers. Serious incidents may have a deep and traumatic impact on victims and their families. A standard feature of such scenarios in schools ought to be support and guidance for victims in dealing with the emotional impact of antisocial behaviour. School counsellors and professional care workers could play a part in this. Care workers sometimes also need support and guidance.

6.2 In-school and school-based strategies

1. Germany, Sweden, and the Netherlands have developed strategies for controlling antisocial pupil behaviour. Spain has concentrated on developing and evaluating programmes to promote socially desirable pupil behaviour.

2. Pupils might be called on to:
   - agree on their own rules of behaviour and how to enforce them;
- make an agreement in writing (a "protocol"), e.g., not to tease each other;
- keep a checklist to assess their own school with regard to:
  - the school building and school organisation;
  - teachers and lessons;
  - persons (management and administration, support staff, pupils, parents);
  - personal matters (counselling, teasing);
  - involvement and participation (pupils' council, pupils' statute, extra-curricular activities, and more general information)

3. The school might take measures such as:
- appointing a confidential counsellor;
- setting up a complaints committee;
- devising a complaints procedure;
- giving information to pupils and parents;
- using relevant educational materials in lessons (teaching aids, books for young readers, audiovisual material, drama productions).

4. Within the framework of the Safe School Policy (see the Netherlands), a school might use materials to identify the problems of pupils or teachers and show how to cope in disasters, take measures, and eventually determine whether there has been any improvement.

5. All the national reports show that in principle there are many external bodies that could play a support role in tackling antisocial pupil behaviour.

6. It has been observed that the key concepts relating to antisocial behaviour are still rather vaguely defined (see 2.2). It would therefore seem necessary to assess materials and strategies in schools on the basis of more clearly defined concepts and terminology. The main reason for doing so is to gain a better understanding of the relevance and availability of materials. This would make it
possible to discover what sort of approach, deployment of materials, or strategies actually have the desired impact in schools. After all, the acceptance of existing materials and strategies and the development of new ones in connection with antisocial behaviour ought to be based on a controlled assessment of where and to what extent the desired impact is needed and can be measured reliably.

7. THE PROMOTION OF PRO-SOCIAL PUPIL BEHAVIOUR

7.1 Vulnerable young children

1. The national reports show that there are "vulnerable" children who, from a very early age, function at a below-average level in one or more respects - socially, emotionally, linguistically, cognitively, with regard to motor skills, etc. These children run a high risk of encountering various types of problems at home, school, and later at work.

2. It is important to identify such children as early as possible, and if possible, give them extra support in their development. In the Netherlands, this may take place via child welfare centres, pre-school playgroups, multidisciplinary teams for children whose development is at risk, and early language development programmes. These programmes usually also require the deployment of professional experts.

3. It is only useful to identify children at risk if support is available to remedy the vulnerable aspects of a child's development. Cooperation between parents, outside agencies, and the school is necessary to achieve an optimum impact as early as possible. This is especially true of support for the development of children's social behaviour. The various countries studied here have programmes for this purpose, although their precise importance and impact are yet to be determined.
7.2 Promoting pro-social behaviour at school

1. When a child enters nursery school or primary school, the teacher may apply one or more scientifically controlled indicators to assess the child's level of development. Research in the Netherlands points to the relevance of certain indicators:
   - language skills or fluency (non-Dutch pupils);
   - general cognitive level or intellectual level (general, linguistic-spatial-numerical skills);
   - socio-communicative level (attitude to work, pleasant manner, extroversion);
   - level of emotional stability.

Teachers can use existing controlled methods to test four-year-olds in one or more of these areas, and assess whether their behaviour indicates that they are at risk.

2. Once teachers have identified one or more of these initial indicators, they should manage the playing/learning situation to take account of the differences in level and speed of development among pupils in a group. All the national reports briefly describe examples of relevant practical changes in school systems.

3. With regard to "socio-communicative" and "emotional" programmes, three countries (Sweden, Spain, and the Netherlands) run interesting projects. The Spanish national report, for instance, presents four projects, already evaluated, for promoting:
   1. emotional and social development in the classroom (Málaga);
   2. tolerance of differences in ethnically heterogeneous settings;
   3. moral development by inculcating habits of reflection;
   4. improvements in pupil behaviour by teaching rules

It would be worthwhile to discuss this and other relevant programmes as
operated in each EU country at the conference.

4. The school authorities, school management, teachers, other staff, pupils, and parents should all be involved in devising activities to promote pro-social pupil behaviour and should share responsibility for it. Basically, it requires coherent educational, social, methodological, and organisational changes.

8. EDUCATION POLICY AND SOCIAL PUPIL BEHAVIOUR

8.1 Similarities and differences between member states

1. The various countries describe their problems in varying degrees of depth. None of the national reports gives a complete picture. There is no up-to-date, comprehensive overview of the situation in all the member states.

2. There are similarities and differences among the various countries in the educational duties of school authorities, teaching staff, and parents. Sweden and the Netherlands have formulated explicit policies. Spain has reached some initial empirical findings, but is focusing, interestingly, on the promotion of pro-social behaviour among pupils. In Germany, there are variations among the Länder.

3. In formulating the details of educational policy, cooperation among ministries (such as Education, Culture, Welfare, Social Affairs, and Justice) can play an important part in improving efficiency and enhancing the impact of policy. This applies at national, regional, municipal, and school level. Slightly disparate examples of this are shown in the reports from Sweden and the Netherlands.

8.2 Example: Sweden

1. Swedish legislation focuses explicitly on making schools safe by preventing teasing and violence in all their forms (see the national report). Responsibility for
making schools safe rests primarily with municipalities and school managers. There are separate national, municipal, and school policies.

2. At national level, Swedish legislation contains provisions for a "safety policy". A network of around 30 organisations is concerned with putting these provisions into practice (see the national report).

3. In accordance with national guidelines, the municipalities are responsible for introducing anti-teasing and anti-violence programmes in schools. These programmes vary according to the municipality and the school. The Swedish report describes two anti-violence programmes, including codes of behaviour for pupils and guidelines for their supervision.

4. The programmes need to be put into practice in the schools themselves. Research has shown that, though around 90% of Swedish schools have policy plans for tackling and preventing violence, it is not entirely clear to what extent the prescribed integrated strategy is being implemented and whether it has had the desired impact on pupils.

5. The Swedish report closes with the authors' observation that the problems of implementing educational policy in day-to-day school life should be one of the main topics for discussion at the conference.

8.3 Example: The Netherlands

1. In the Netherlands, coordinating the implementation of the Safe School Policy is the duty of the institution that is also responsible for coordinating core innovations in education. In allocating this duty, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has opted in principle to integrate safety policy into the school development process. National educational centres are responsible for developing support material. The strategies and materials of the Safe School focus mainly on tackling antisocial behaviour, but can also serve in part to
promote pro-social behaviour.

2. At national level, it is the policy of various ministries (especially Education, Culture and Science; Health, Welfare and Sport; Justice; and the Interior) to partly integrate their youth and modernisation policies. Covenants have been concluded with some large and medium-sized cities giving lower levels more input within the framework of national guidelines (c.f. the situation in Sweden, 8.2).

3. Institutions such as municipalities, school authorities, welfare bodies, and youth services conclude agreements for coordination and cooperation at regional, municipal, and local level. Policy behind the Safe School campaign is part of this.

4. At individual school level, part of the campaign’s policy is to disseminate information about models and successful examples of tackling antisocial behaviour. The campaign also provides training and support for teachers. By regularly measuring the impact of instruments, schools can diagnose and steer their own development. It has not yet been possible to determine the scientific quality of the instruments or the impact of their use. Schools are provided with help in formulating a safety and care plan in accordance with the applicable legislation (a policy plan to be adjusted once every four years).

5. The National Pupils’ Action Committee, supported by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Secondary Education Process Management team monitors and promotes the interests and rights of school pupils.

6. It is vital to coordinate home- and school-based social education, taking account of cultural differences. It is also necessary to integrate different ethnic backgrounds and features correctly and constructively.
8.4 Relevance to research and development

1. In addition to defining key concepts relating to antisocial and pro-social behaviour, the various countries should together formulate ideas on their practical implementation in schools in terms of desirable pupil behaviour and relevant educational features at pupil, class, and school level. The aim is to translate educational legislation and central government policy into school policy and school practice in terms of optimum teaching and learning processes, especially in social and cognitive areas.

2. Together with support measures at the educational, methodological, and organisational level, it is possible to achieve a stronger social and cognitive impact and enhance motivation. For the more vulnerable pupil, especially, these provide a whole array of measures, especially for the prevention of undesirable social and cognitive developmental and learning processes among pupils at risk.

3. Information concerning the reliability and validity of instruments for measuring processes and determining their impact are necessary in this connection, especially to gain a clear understanding of what approaches and developments are important for the promotion of pro-social pupil behaviour.