

Chapter 7 The school teaching environment

Chapter outline

This chapter presents findings relating to the school teaching environment, as reported by teachers and headteachers. The first sections relate to teachers' specialisms during training, their views on career satisfaction and the extent to which teachers share their practice. These are followed by sections that examine the extent to which academic success is emphasised, and on perceptions of safety, orderliness and discipline. The final sections deal with teacher reports of the extent of the impact of disruptive and uninterested pupils on their teaching, and pupils' reports of the extent to which they experience bullying.

Outcomes for England are compared with those of other countries.

Comparisons over time are made where possible. However, a number of the scales have been altered since previous surveys, and therefore reliable comparisons have not been possible.

Key findings

- In England, the majority of pupils (74 per cent) are taught reading by teachers whose training included an emphasis on *English language*.
- In England, 94 per cent of pupils had teachers who reported that they were *Satisfied* or *Somewhat satisfied* with their careers.
- Teachers in England reported high levels of collaboration to improve teaching.
- Headteachers and teachers in England reported among the highest levels of emphasis on academic success.
- The vast majority of pupils in England had teachers who reported that their schools were safe and orderly and three-quarters of pupils attended schools where the headteacher reported hardly any problems of discipline or safety.
- The vast majority of pupils in England had teachers who felt that their teaching was rarely limited by disruptive or uninterested pupils.
- Reports of bullying from pupils in England corresponded very closely with international averages; 45 per cent of pupils reported that they were *Almost never* bullied but 20 per cent reported that they experienced bullying behaviours *About weekly*.

Interpreting the data: scaled data from teachers and headteachers

Much of the data in this chapter is reported by teachers and headteachers. Reported percentages refer to pupils and can usually (unless otherwise indicated) be interpreted as the percentage of pupils whose teacher or headteacher reported a particular practice or gave a particular response to a questionnaire item.

When interpreting the data from pupils, headteachers and teachers it is important to take account of the relative sample sizes. Participants are expected to sample a minimum of 150 schools and a minimum of 4,000 pupils. Numbers of schools participating internationally ranged from 96 to 1,111. This wide range reflected the fact that some participants had fewer than 150 schools available and some participants chose to over-sample schools. The majority of participants sampled between 150 and 200 schools.

For PIRLS 2011 in England, the number of participating schools was 129. The numbers of participants within these schools were:

- 3,927 pupils
- 123 headteachers completed the School Questionnaire
- 174 teachers completed the Teacher Questionnaire.

7.1 Teachers' educational emphasis on language and reading areas during training

Teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which, during their formal education and training, their studies emphasised specialist areas related to language and the teaching of reading. The question and results are shown in Table 7.1.

The most common specialist area of study, reported by teachers of 74 per cent of pupils in England, was *English language*. This was in line with the international average.

Forty-eight per cent of pupils had teachers whose studies emphasised *Pedagogy/teaching reading* and 17 per cent had teachers whose formal education and training studies had emphasised *Reading theory*. These figures compare with respective international averages of 62 and 33 per cent in these areas.

Among the comparator countries, teachers in the Russian Federation, the Republic of Ireland and Hong Kong reported the greatest emphasis on *Language study* (i.e. the language of the test) during their education and training. In terms of studying *Pedagogy and the teaching of reading*, teachers from the Russian Federation, the Republic of Ireland and Singapore reported more emphasis than other comparator countries. Teachers who reported the greatest emphasis on *Reading theory* in their formal education and training were from the Russian Federation, the Republic of Ireland, Sweden and the United States.

The areas of language, pedagogy and reading theory might be expected to play a significant part in the study of education generally, and of reading in particular. While teachers in the Russian Federation and the Republic of Ireland report greater emphases on each of these three areas than other comparator countries, this can be contrasted with teachers in Finland and Chinese Taipei who report the lowest emphases across all three.

There does not appear to be any clear pattern of pupil attainment within individual countries in relation to the different areas of emphasis in their teachers' formal training and education.

7.2 Teachers' reported career satisfaction

Teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which they were satisfied with their profession as a teacher. The questions and details of the scoring are shown in Table 7.2.

Based on their responses, teachers were categorised as being *Satisfied*, *Somewhat satisfied* or *Less than satisfied* with their career as a teacher. The average scale score of 9.9 is just below the threshold for the *Satisfied* category and country scores on the scale range from 11.6 to 8.6.

In England, 52 per cent of pupils had teachers who reported that they were *Satisfied* with their career and a further 42 per cent had teachers who were *Somewhat satisfied*. Teachers of only six per cent of pupils reported that they were *Less than satisfied*. The percentage of pupils in England falling into each category corresponded closely to the international averages on this scale.

Among the comparator countries, the highest percentage of pupils who had *Satisfied* teachers were in the Republic of Ireland and the Russian Federation with 69 and 60 per cent respectively, compared with an international average of 54 per cent of pupils taught by *Satisfied* teachers.

The highest percentage of pupils who had *Less than satisfied* teachers were in Hong Kong (12 per cent), Sweden (12 per cent) and Singapore (11 per cent) compared with an international average of five per cent.

No clear pattern of pupil attainment was apparent within or across individual countries in relation to teachers' reported levels of career satisfaction.

A similar question was asked in the PIRLS 2006 survey but significant changes to the component items means that direct comparisons on this scale were not possible. However, examination of teacher responses to the individual items presented in both the 2006 and 2011 surveys (items a, b, c and d under Table 7.2 below) suggest that there has been very little change in patterns of teacher response.

7.3 Teacher reports of collaboration to improve teaching

Teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which they worked with their colleagues in particular aspects of teaching. The questions and details of the scoring are shown in Table 7.3. On the basis of their responses to the questions, teachers were categorised as *Very collaborative*, *Collaborative* or *Somewhat collaborative*. The average scale score of 10.6 for teachers in England is higher than any comparator countries and was in the *Very collaborative* category.

As the average scale score indicates, teachers in England reported high levels of collaboration to improve teaching. Teachers of 48 per cent of pupils were categorised as being *Very collaborative*, and a further 44 per cent as being *Collaborative*. This compares with international averages of 35 and 54 per cent respectively.

Teachers in England had a pattern of response similar to those in the United States. Teachers in Australia and New Zealand also reported high levels of collaboration, whereas teachers in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland reported least collaboration among the comparator countries.

Internationally, no clear patterns of pupil attainment appear associated with categories in this scale.

Table 7.3 Collaboration to improve teaching (comparator countries)

Reported by teachers

Pupils were scored according to their teachers' responses to how often they interacted with other teachers in each of five teaching areas on the *Collaborate to improve teaching* scale. Pupils with **Very collaborative** teachers had a score on the scale of at least 11.0, which corresponds to their teachers having interactions with other teachers at least "one to three times per week" in each of three of the five areas and "two or three times per month" in each of the other two, on average. Pupils with **Somewhat collaborative** teachers had a score no higher than 7.2, which corresponds to their teachers interacting with other teachers "never or almost never" in each of three of the five areas and "two or three times per month" in each of the other two, on average. All other pupils had **Collaborative** teachers.

Country	Very collaborative		Collaborative		Somewhat collaborative		Average scale score
	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	
United States	48 (2.9)	556 (2.4)	42 (2.7)	556 (2.9)	10 (1.5)	560 (5.5)	10.5 (0.11)
England	48 (4.5)	554 (4.3)	44 (4.4)	548 (4.6)	8 (2.6)	548 (11.8)	10.6 (0.19)
Australia r	44 (3.7)	532 (4.5)	44 (3.9)	532 (4.6)	12 (2.6)	526 (7.4)	10.3 (0.15)
New Zealand	41 (3.0)	528 (3.7)	53 (3.2)	540 (3.6)	6 (1.5)	514 (16.7)	10.3 (0.10)
Sweden r	37 (4.6)	541 (3.7)	52 (4.4)	540 (3.1)	12 (2.9)	556 (6.1)	10.0 (0.22)
Russian Federation	31 (3.8)	566 (5.3)	67 (4.0)	569 (2.9)	1 (0.8)	~ ~	10.3 (0.08)
Singapore	29 (2.0)	569 (6.2)	64 (2.4)	567 (4.3)	8 (1.6)	563 (10.5)	9.9 (0.08)
Finland	27 (2.8)	571 (3.9)	58 (2.7)	567 (2.4)	15 (2.0)	566 (3.4)	9.6 (0.13)
Canada	24 (2.1)	546 (2.7)	58 (2.3)	549 (2.7)	17 (1.7)	550 (3.7)	9.5 (0.10)
Hong Kong SAR	23 (4.0)	566 (5.6)	66 (3.9)	570 (3.3)	11 (2.4)	579 (6.2)	9.5 (0.15)
Chinese Taipei	23 (3.5)	558 (3.8)	57 (3.9)	553 (2.4)	20 (3.6)	547 (4.6)	9.4 (0.18)
Northern Ireland r	21 (4.0)	562 (6.6)	55 (4.9)	559 (3.6)	24 (3.7)	560 (6.5)	9.3 (0.22)
Ireland, Rep. of	16 (2.7)	556 (7.0)	60 (3.4)	547 (2.8)	25 (3.1)	562 (4.3)	8.8 (0.15)
International Avg.	35 (0.5)	513 (0.8)	54 (0.5)	512 (0.6)	11 (0.3)	510 (1.9)	

Centre point of scale set at 10.

() Standard errors appear in parentheses. Because of rounding some results may appear inconsistent.

A tilde (~) indicates insufficient data to report achievement.

An "r" indicates data are available for at least 70% but less than 85% of the pupils.

Source Exhibit 8.5 in the 2011 international PIRLS report

The index was constructed according to teachers' responses to the following questions.

How often do you have the following types of interactions with other teachers?

Tick **one** circle for each row.

	Daily or almost daily	1-3 times per week	2 or 3 times per month	Never or almost never
a) Discuss how to teach a particular topic -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Collaborate in planning and preparing teaching materials -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) Share what I have learned about my teaching experiences -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) Visit another classroom to learn more about teaching -	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e) Work together to try out new ideas -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

←
↑
↑
→

Very Collaborative
Collaborative
Somewhat Collaborative

11.0
7.2

7.4 Schools' emphasis on academic success – views of teachers and headteachers

Headteachers and teachers were asked to rate the emphasis placed on academic success within their school by teachers, parents and pupils. The questions and details of the scoring are shown in Table 7.4. The same set of questions was given to both headteachers and teachers and included questions about the level of parental support and pupil motivation, as well as teachers' understanding of curricula goals and their expectations of pupils. The average scale scores are both above 11, indicating a *High emphasis* on academic success overall.

In England, headteachers of 84 per cent of pupils reported that their schools placed a *High* (57 per cent) or *Very high* (27 per cent) emphasis on academic success. Teacher reports mirrored headteacher reports almost exactly, with teachers of 83 per cent of pupils reporting a *High* or *Very high* emphasis on academic success.

Among comparator countries, headteachers in Northern Ireland reported the highest percentage of pupils (33 per cent) in schools that placed a *Very high emphasis* on academic success, followed by the Republic of Ireland (28 per cent). The Russian

Federation, Hong Kong, Singapore and Sweden were among the comparator countries where over a quarter of pupils were in schools whose headteachers and/or teachers reported a *Medium emphasis* on academic success, the lowest category.

In general, headteachers reported a slightly greater emphasis on academic success than teachers. The greatest discrepancy between the views of teachers and headteachers was in Chinese Taipei where teachers reported *Medium emphasis* on this aspect in schools attended by 26 per cent of pupils, whereas headteachers reported this emphasis in schools attended by only 12 per cent of pupils.

Internationally, within countries, pupil attainment tended to be higher where teachers and headteachers reported a higher emphasis on academic success. However, having a high emphasis on academic success did not relate directly to the overall performance in reading across countries. Pupil attainment in England reflected the international pattern of higher attainment, on average, in schools where academic success was more highly emphasised although the difference between the achievement in schools where academic success has a *Very high* emphasis and those where it has a *High* emphasis is unlikely to be significant.

Table 7.4 School emphasis on academic success (comparator countries)

Reported by headteachers and teachers

Pupils were scored according to their headteachers' responses characterising five aspects on the *School emphasis on academic success* scale. Pupils in schools where their headteachers reported a **Very high emphasis** on academic success had a score on the scale of at least 13.0, which corresponds to their headteachers / teachers characterising three of the five aspects as "very high" and the other two as "high," on average. Pupils in schools with a **Medium emphasis** on academic success had a score no higher than 8.8 (headteachers) / 8.7 (teachers) and, which corresponds to their headteachers characterising three of the five aspects as "medium" and the other two as "high," on average. All other pupils attended schools with a **High emphasis** on academic success.

Country		Very high emphasis		High emphasis		Medium emphasis		Average scale score
		Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	
Northern Ireland	Headteachers	33 (4.2)	570 (4.9)	60 (4.3)	556 (2.9)	7 (2.5)	529 (9.8)	11.9 (0.19)
	Teachers	28 (4.2)	572 (3.9)	65 (4.4)	557 (3.7)	7 (2.2)	533 (8.5)	11.7 (0.19)
Ireland, Rep. of	Headteachers	28 (3.7)	563 (3.6)	67 (3.8)	549 (3.3)	5 (1.8)	526 (7.4)	11.8 (0.16)
	Teachers	22 (3.1)	566 (3.5)	69 (3.0)	552 (2.9)	9 (1.9)	519 (6.8)	11.4 (0.15)
England	Headteachers	27 (4.3)	562 (5.9)	57 (4.6)	552 (4.4)	16 (2.8)	528 (5.8)	11.3 (0.20)
	Teachers	25 (4.2)	566 (7.3)	58 (4.8)	552 (3.4)	17 (3.1)	523 (5.9)	11.1 (0.16)
New Zealand	Headteachers	25 (3.4)	555 (4.6)	63 (4.2)	531 (3.7)	12 (2.2)	508 (9.3)	11.2 (0.14)
	Teachers	18 (2.0)	567 (4.9)	65 (2.8)	529 (3.3)	17 (2.3)	511 (4.7)	11.1 (0.11)
United States	Headteachers	24 (2.1)	578 (3.8)	59 (2.6)	555 (2.4)	17 (2.2)	538 (4.8)	11.2 (0.12)
	Teachers	16 (1.7)	575 (4.9)	63 (2.4)	558 (2.1)	21 (2.0)	538 (4.5)	10.8 (0.10)
Chinese Taipei	Headteachers	17 (3.0)	555 (4.5)	71 (3.7)	554 (2.4)	12 (2.5)	544 (4.8)	11.2 (0.15)
	Teachers	7 (1.9)	557 (6.9)	67 (3.8)	554 (2.3)	26 (3.6)	548 (3.9)	10.0 (0.16)
Australia	Headteachers	16 (3.0)	554 (6.6)	64 (3.8)	531 (3.1)	21 (3.0)	498 (5.3)	10.8 (0.14)
	Teachers	17 (3.0)	554 (8.8)	63 (4.4)	533 (3.6)	20 (3.1)	507 (4.3)	10.7 (0.16)
Canada	Headteachers	12 (1.7)	570 (3.8)	67 (2.5)	549 (2.4)	21 (2.0)	535 (2.8)	10.5 (0.09)
	Teachers	10 (1.2)	570 (4.3)	68 (2.5)	549 (2.2)	22 (2.4)	536 (3.4)	10.4 (0.11)
Sweden	Headteachers	9 (2.7)	553 (6.8)	59 (4.8)	543 (3.0)	32 (5.0)	535 (3.8)	10.2 (0.17)
	Teachers	7 (1.7)	549 (6.8)	65 (4.2)	547 (2.6)	29 (4.1)	530 (4.0)	10.0 (0.14)
Singapore	Headteachers	8 (0.0)	594 (10.9)	62 (0.0)	573 (4.4)	31 (0.0)	549 (6.4)	10.1 (0.00)
	Teachers	3 (1.0)	600 (16.5)	61 (2.4)	576 (4.5)	36 (2.3)	548 (5.2)	9.6 (0.10)
Finland	Headteachers	6 (1.9)	576 (5.7)	71 (4.2)	571 (2.1)	24 (4.2)	559 (3.8)	10.2 (0.16)
	Teachers	4 (1.6)	572 (7.3)	62 (3.2)	571 (1.9)	34 (3.4)	561 (3.4)	9.8 (0.12)
Russian Federation	Headteachers	2 (0.9)	~ ~	50 (4.4)	576 (3.8)	48 (4.3)	562 (3.5)	9.1 (0.11)
	Teachers	1 (0.0)	~ ~	52 (3.9)	574 (3.5)	47 (4.0)	563 (3.7)	9.2 (0.12)
Hong Kong SAR	Headteachers	1 (0.9)	~ ~	60 (4.5)	570 (2.7)	39 (4.6)	570 (4.7)	9.6 (0.15)
	Teachers	7 (2.0)	583 (6.4)	58 (4.1)	572 (3.1)	36 (4.2)	565 (4.6)	9.6 (0.16)
International Avg.	Headteachers	9 (0.3)	527 (1.9)	59 (0.6)	517 (0.6)	32 (0.5)	497 (0.8)	
	Teachers	9 (0.3)	529 (1.8)	60 (0.6)	517 (0.6)	31 (0.5)	497 (0.8)	

Centre point of scale set at 10.

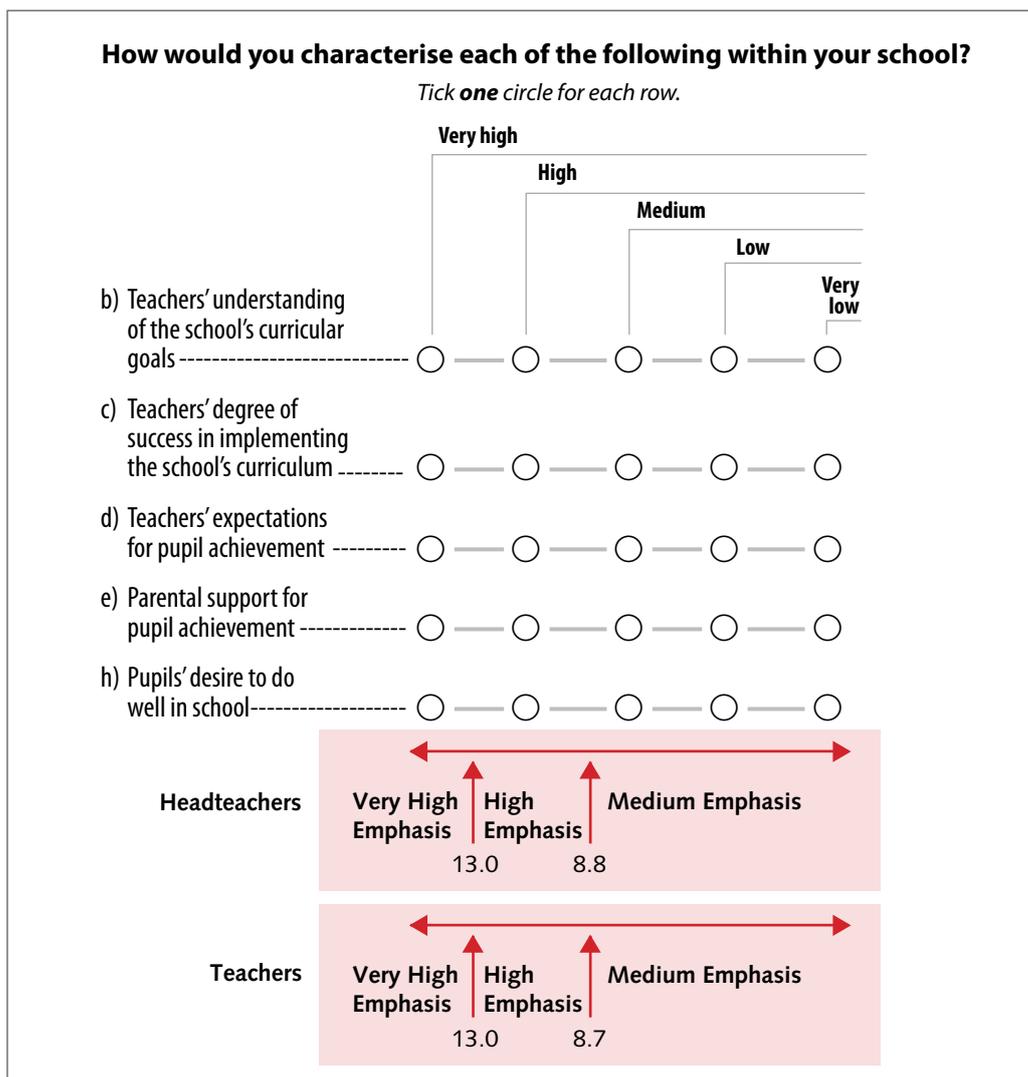
() Standard errors appear in parentheses. Because of rounding some results may appear inconsistent.

A tilde (~) indicates insufficient data to report achievement.

An "r" indicates data are available for at least 70% but less than 85% of the pupils.

Source Exhibits 6.1 and 6.2 in the 2011 international PIRLS report

The index was constructed according to headteachers' and teachers' responses to the following questions.



Three of the components of this scale were also completed by headteachers in PIRLS 2006 and a summary of headteacher responses for the 2006 and 2011 surveys is shown below.

Table 7.5 Schools' emphasis on academic success – trends in headteacher views¹

		Percentage of pupils				
		Very high	High	Medium	Low	Very low
How would you characterise teachers' expectations for pupil achievement within your school?	2006	29	56	15	0	0
	2011	38	53	9	0	0
How would you characterise parental support for pupil achievement within your school?	2006	15	36	36	13	1
	2011	20	28	36	14	2
How would you characterise pupils' desire to do well in school within your school?	2006	22	59	18	0	0
	2011	39	41	20	0	0

¹ Data from weighted almanacs; standard errors not available.

Looking across all three items, the data contained in Table 7.5 suggests that headteachers perceived a slightly greater emphasis on factors related to academic success in the most recent survey. However, this trend has not been tested for statistical significance.

7.5 Teachers' ratings of the extent to which their schools are 'safe and orderly'

Teachers were asked about their perceptions of safety and the behaviour of pupils in their school. The questions and details of the scoring are shown in Table 7.6. Based on teachers' responses, pupils were categorised as attending schools which were *Safe and orderly*, *Somewhat safe and orderly* and *Not safe and orderly*. The average scale score for England of 10.9 is well within the *Safe and orderly* school category.

The vast majority of pupils in England (72 per cent) had teachers who reported that their schools were *Safe and orderly*. Pupils in schools that teachers reported as *Safe and orderly* scored, on average, higher than those in schools that teachers reported were *Somewhat safe and orderly*. This suggests there may be an association between safety and orderliness, and attainment – but no significance tests have been carried out and the direction of causality cannot be inferred from this data.

Compared to England, only three comparator countries (Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Australia) had a greater proportion of pupils whose teachers considered their schools to be *Safe and orderly*. Lowest ratings for safety and orderliness in their schools were given by teachers from Chinese Taipei and Finland.

Internationally, within countries, pupil attainment tended to be higher where teachers reported that their schools were safe and orderly. Between countries, however, there is no clear pattern, with teachers in some high achieving countries, such as Northern Ireland, giving responses that placed a high proportion of pupils in schools that were judged by teachers to be safe and orderly, along with some lower achieving countries, such as Indonesia and Azerbaijan. In contrast, responses from teachers in Finland led to over half of pupils (59 per cent) being placed in the middle category: attending *Somewhat safe and orderly* schools.

Table 7.6 Safe and orderly schools — teacher reports

Reported by teachers

Pupils were scored according to their teachers' degree of agreement with five statements on the *Safe and Orderly School* scale. Pupils in **Safe and orderly** schools had a score on the scale of at least 10.1, which corresponds to their teachers "agreeing a lot" with three of the five qualities of a safe and orderly school and "agreeing a little" with the other two, on average. Pupils in **Not safe and orderly** schools had a score no higher than 6.2, which corresponds to their teachers "disagreeing a little" with three of the five qualities and "agreeing a little" with the other two, on average. All other pupils attended **Somewhat safe and orderly** schools.

Country	Safe and orderly		Somewhat safe and orderly		Not safe and orderly		Average scale score
	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	
Northern Ireland	84 (2.9)	564 (3.1)	16 (2.8)	538 (7.9)	0 (0.4)	~ ~	11.4 (0.14)
Ireland, Rep. of	77 (3.4)	560 (2.4)	21 (3.3)	527 (5.2)	2 (1.0)	~ ~	11.2 (0.15)
Australia	76 (3.2)	540 (3.1)	21 (3.1)	509 (6.9)	4 (1.4)	489 (15.1)	11.0 (0.16)
England	72 (3.7)	561 (3.0)	27 (3.7)	524 (5.2)	0 (0.3)	~ ~	10.9 (0.14)
New Zealand	72 (2.5)	545 (2.4)	25 (2.3)	504 (4.6)	4 (1.2)	490 (16.0)	10.8 (0.12)
Singapore	64 (2.2)	576 (4.1)	34 (2.2)	551 (5.2)	2 (0.6)	~ ~	10.3 (0.09)
United States	64 (2.1)	567 (2.0)	30 (2.1)	542 (2.9)	6 (1.1)	521 (7.2)	10.3 (0.09)
Canada	62 (2.8)	555 (2.2)	34 (2.6)	540 (2.6)	4 (0.9)	521 (4.5)	10.3 (0.13)
Hong Kong SAR	52 (4.5)	574 (2.8)	46 (4.3)	566 (3.5)	3 (1.5)	572 (30.3)	9.9 (0.17)
Russian Federation	49 (4.0)	569 (5.4)	49 (3.8)	569 (3.7)	2 (1.3)	~ ~	9.7 (0.17)
Sweden	40 (4.7)	551 (2.9)	55 (4.8)	540 (3.0)	5 (1.4)	498 (10.1)	9.4 (0.15)
Finland	35 (3.5)	573 (2.6)	59 (3.8)	566 (2.3)	6 (1.7)	554 (4.7)	9.2 (0.12)
Chinese Taipei	31 (3.8)	552 (2.9)	62 (3.7)	556 (2.5)	7 (2.0)	532 (5.8)	8.9 (0.15)
International Avg.	55 (0.5)	518 (0.6)	41 (0.5)	505 (0.8)	4 (0.2)	486 (3.6)	

Centre point of scale set at 10.

() Standard errors appear in parentheses. Because of rounding some results may appear inconsistent.

A tilde (~) indicates insufficient data to report achievement.

An "r" indicates data are available for at least 70% but less than 85% of the pupils.

Source Exhibits 6.5 in the 2011 international PIRLS report

The index was constructed according to teachers' responses to the following questions.

Thinking about your current school, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

Tick **one** circle for each row.

Agree a lot **Agree a little** **Disagree a little** **Disagree a lot**

a) This school is located in a safe area ----- ○ ——— ○ ——— ○ ——— ○

b) I feel safe at this school ----- ○ ——— ○ ——— ○ ——— ○

c) This school's security policies and practices are sufficient ----- ○ ——— ○ ——— ○ ——— ○

d) The pupils behave in an orderly manner ----- ○ ——— ○ ——— ○ ——— ○

e) The pupils are respectful of the teachers ----- ○ ——— ○ ——— ○ ——— ○

←-----→

Safe and Orderly **Somewhat Safe and Orderly** **Not Safe and Orderly**

10.1 6.2

7.6 Headteachers' views of school discipline and safety

Headteachers were asked about the degree to which a number of potential safety and discipline issues were a problem in their school. The questions and details of the scoring are shown in Table 7.7. Based on headteacher responses, pupils were categorised as attending schools with *Hardly any problems*, *Minor problems* and *Moderate problems*. The average scale score for England of 10.8 is securely in the category of *Hardly any problems*.

The vast majority of pupils in England (75 per cent) attend schools whose headteachers reported *Hardly any* discipline or safety problems in their schools. A further 24 per cent of pupils attend schools where headteachers reported *Minor problems*. A very few pupils in England attend schools where headteachers reported *Moderate problems* of discipline and safety, compared with an international average of 11 per cent.

Pupils in schools perceived by headteachers in England to have *Hardly any problems* scored, on average, higher in their reading assessment than those in schools perceived by headteachers to have *Minor problems*. This suggests an association between discipline and safety and attainment – but it is not possible to conclude whether discipline and safety problems are the cause of lower average attainment.

Among comparator countries, only pupils in Hong Kong, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Chinese Taipei were more likely to attend schools where headteachers perceived fewer discipline and safety problems than in England. Headteachers in all comparator countries reported a low percentage of pupils in schools with *Moderate* discipline and safety problems.

Internationally, within countries, pupil attainment tended to be higher where headteachers reported fewer problems in terms of school discipline and safety. However, the full table shows that having a low rating for discipline and safety problems does not necessarily relate directly to the overall performance in reading across countries.

Whilst the scale has been constructed differently compared to that used in 2006, a number of the individual items are unchanged. In both surveys, there were very few pupils whose headteachers reported any *Moderate* problems. Of all items related to school discipline and safety, pupil absenteeism was the one most likely to be seen as a moderate problem in both 2006 and 2011.

Table 7.7 School discipline and safety — headteacher reports

Reported by headteachers

Pupils were scored according to their headteachers' responses concerning ten potential school problems on the *School discipline and safety scale*. Pupils in schools with **Hardly any problems** had a score on the scale of at least 9.9, which corresponds to their headteachers reporting "not a problem" for five of the ten discipline and safety issues and "minor problem" for the other five, on average. Pupils in schools with **Moderate problems** had a score no higher than 7.7, which corresponds to their headteachers reporting "moderate problem" for five of the ten issues and "minor problem" for the other five, on average. All other pupils attended schools with **Minor problems**.

Country	Hardly any problems		Minor problems		Moderate problems		Average scale score
	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	
Hong Kong SAR	87 (2.9)	570 (2.5)	12 (2.8)	566 (10.1)	1 (0.0)	~ ~	11.4 (0.12)
Northern Ireland	85 (3.7)	561 (2.9)	15 (3.7)	546 (7.1)	0 (0.0)	~ ~	11.1 (0.13)
Ireland, Rep. of	83 (3.5)	556 (2.5)	16 (3.3)	531 (9.0)	1 (1.0)	~ ~	11.2 (0.12)
Chinese Taipei	77 (3.3)	552 (2.1)	23 (3.3)	555 (4.5)	0 (0.0)	~ ~	11.4 (0.13)
England	75 (4.4)	557 (3.3)	24 (4.3)	532 (5.8)	1 (1.0)	~ ~	10.8 (0.15)
New Zealand	68 (3.3)	544 (2.9)	32 (3.3)	514 (5.7)	0 (0.4)	~ ~	10.6 (0.11)
Singapore	67 (0.0)	568 (4.0)	33 (0.0)	565 (5.8)	0 (0.0)	~ ~	10.8 (0.00)
Russian Federation	65 (3.9)	571 (3.5)	35 (3.8)	564 (4.3)	0 (0.5)	~ ~	10.3 (0.09)
Australia	64 (3.9)	534 (3.5)	34 (3.8)	521 (4.5)	2 (1.0)	~ ~	10.5 (0.12)
Finland	64 (4.5)	571 (2.3)	34 (4.4)	564 (3.2)	2 (1.2)	~ ~	10.3 (0.12)
United States	63 (2.7)	564 (2.0)	35 (2.8)	548 (2.7)	2 (0.8)	~ ~	10.3 (0.09)
Canada	60 (2.4)	554 (2.0)	37 (2.4)	539 (2.4)	3 (0.7)	531 (4.5)	10.3 (0.07)
Sweden	49 (4.7)	551 (2.7)	45 (4.7)	534 (4.0)	6 (1.2)	523 (7.6)	9.8 (0.13)
International Avg.	58 (0.5)	519 (0.7)	31 (0.5)	504 (1.0)	11 (0.3)	476 (2.0)	

Centre point of scale set at 10.

() Standard errors appear in parentheses. Because of rounding some results may appear inconsistent.

A tilde (~) indicates insufficient data to report achievement.

Source Exhibit 6.6 in the 2011 international PIRLS report

The index was constructed according to headteachers' responses to the following questions.

To what degree is each of the following a problem among Year 5 pupils in your school?

Tick **one** circle for each row.

Not a problem Minor problem Moderate problem Serious problem

a) Arriving late at school — — —

b) Absenteeism (i.e., unjustified absences) — — —

c) Classroom disturbance — — —

d) Cheating — — —

e) Swearing — — —

f) Vandalism — — —

g) Theft — — —

h) Intimidation or verbal abuse among pupils (including texting, emailing, etc.) — — —

i) Physical conflicts among pupils — — —

j) Intimidation or verbal abuse of teachers or staff (including texting, emailing, etc.) — — —

←—————→

Hardly Any Problems Minor Problems Moderate Problems

9.9 7.7

7.7 Teachers' reports of the extent to which their teaching is limited by disruptive or uninterested pupils

Teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which they felt their teaching was limited by disruptive or uninterested pupils (*Not at all, Some or A lot*).

The data in Table 7.8 shows that the vast majority of pupils in England were in classes whose teachers felt that their teaching was rarely limited by *Disruptive or Uninterested pupils*. At the other end of the scale, nine per cent of pupils in England were in classes whose teachers reported that their teaching was limited *A lot* by disruptive pupils. This compared with the international average of 12 per cent.

Only three per cent of pupils were in classes whose teachers reported that their lessons were limited *A lot* by pupils who were uninterested. This compares with an international average of ten per cent.

Among the comparator countries, the highest percentage of pupils in classes whose teachers reported lessons limited *A lot* by disruptive pupils were in Canada (18 per cent) and the United States (16 per cent). Teachers from Northern Ireland and Chinese Taipei reported the lowest percentages of pupils in classes where teaching was limited by disruptive pupils (5 per cent and 3 per cent respectively).

In terms of lessons limited *A lot* by uninterested pupils, among the comparator countries, only pupils in the United States were in classes where teachers reported a greater percentage of pupils than the international average. Teachers in Sweden, England, Finland and Northern Ireland reported a very low percentage of pupils whose lessons were limited by uninterested pupils.

Internationally, within countries, pupil attainment tended to be lower where teachers reported high levels of limitation caused by disruptive or uninterested pupils. However, no significance tests have been carried out and the data do not show whether lower attainment is a direct result of teaching being limited by disruptive or uninterested pupils.

These questions were not asked in PIRLS 2006.

Table 7.8 Teaching limited by disruptive or disinterested pupils (comparator countries)

Reported by teachers

Country	Pupils in classrooms where teachers report instruction is limited by disruptive pupils				Pupils in classrooms where teachers report instruction is limited by uninterested pupils			
	Some or not at all		A lot		Some or not at all		A lot	
	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement
Australia	r 86 (2.7)	535 (3.2)	14 (2.7)	509 (5.2)	r 95 (1.7)	533 (2.9)	5 (1.7)	503 (11.0)
Canada	82 (1.9)	551 (1.9)	18 (1.9)	538 (3.2)	94 (0.9)	550 (1.8)	6 (0.9)	528 (4.0)
Chinese Taipei	97 (1.6)	554 (1.9)	3 (1.6)	526 (15.3)	91 (2.3)	554 (1.9)	9 (2.3)	541 (8.1)
England	91 (1.8)	553 (2.9)	9 (1.8)	525 (9.3)	97 (1.5)	551 (2.9)	3 (1.5)	539 (9.6)
Finland	89 (2.3)	569 (1.9)	11 (2.3)	559 (3.4)	97 (0.8)	568 (1.8)	3 (0.8)	564 (12.1)
Hong Kong SAR	94 (2.0)	572 (2.2)	6 (2.0)	543 (14.3)	92 (2.5)	573 (2.2)	8 (2.5)	547 (10.1)
Ireland, Rep. of	90 (2.4)	553 (2.2)	10 (2.4)	547 (8.2)	96 (1.5)	552 (2.2)	4 (1.5)	544 (11.5)
New Zealand	90 (1.4)	536 (2.7)	10 (1.4)	507 (6.8)	96 (1.0)	534 (2.4)	4 (1.0)	512 (13.7)
Northern Ireland	r 95 (2.1)	560 (2.9)	5 (2.1)	554 (10.5)	r 97 (1.6)	561 (2.7)	3 (1.6)	535 (8.3)
Russian Federation	94 (1.8)	569 (3.0)	6 (1.8)	556 (8.3)	95 (1.8)	570 (2.7)	5 (1.8)	547 (10.7)
Singapore	89 (1.9)	571 (3.5)	11 (1.9)	541 (11.0)	91 (1.8)	570 (3.4)	9 (1.8)	538 (12.2)
Sweden	r 94 (1.7)	544 (2.4)	6 (1.7)	518 (7.4)	r 98 (1.0)	542 (2.3)	2 (1.0)	~ ~
United States	84 (1.6)	560 (1.9)	16 (1.6)	535 (3.6)	r 89 (1.5)	558 (1.8)	11 (1.5)	539 (6.7)
International Avg.	88 (0.3)	514 (0.4)	12 (0.3)	501 (1.4)	90 (0.3)	515 (0.4)	10 (0.3)	494 (1.6)

SOURCE: Adapted from IEA's Progress in International Reading Literacy Study – PIRLS 2011

() Standard errors appear in parentheses. Because of rounding some results may appear inconsistent.

A tilde (~) indicates insufficient data to report achievement.

An "r" indicates data are available for at least 70% but less than 85% of the pupils.

Source Exhibit 8.11 in the 2011 international PIRLS report

7.8 Pupil reports of bullying in school

Pupils were asked about the extent to which they had experienced a range of behaviours which were considered to demonstrate bullying at school. The questions and details of the scoring are shown in Table 7.9. Based on their responses, pupils were categorised as being in one of three bands which described the frequency with which they had experienced the six bullying behaviours in their school during the last year: *Almost never*, *About monthly* and *About weekly*. England's average scale score was 9.9, very close to the *Almost never* category.

Reports from pupils in England of frequency of bullying corresponded very closely with international averages. Although forty-five per cent of pupils reported that they were *Almost never* bullied, 20 per cent were categorised as experiencing bullying behaviours *About weekly*. The responses of the remaining 35 per cent led to them being categorised as experiencing bullying behaviours *About monthly*.

Among the comparator countries, pupils in Sweden, the Republic of Ireland and Finland reported experiencing the lowest levels of bullying behaviour, while the highest levels were reported in New Zealand and Australia.

Internationally, within countries, pupil attainment tended to be higher where bullying was reported to occur less frequently. This general pattern was also true in England, however it is not possible to tell whether the two measures are directly related.

Although a similar question was asked in the PIRLS 2006 survey, the individual components of the scale were significantly changed for the 2011 survey therefore comparisons over time are not possible.

Table 7.9 Pupils bullied at school (comparator countries)

Reported by pupils

Pupils were scored according to their responses to how often they experienced six bullying behaviours on the *Pupils Bullied at School* scale. Pupils bullied **Almost never** had a score on the scale of at least 10.1, which corresponds to “never” experiencing three of the six bullying behaviours and each of the other three behaviours “a few times a year,” on average. Pupils bullied **About weekly** had a score no higher than 8.3, which corresponds to their experiencing each of three of the six behaviours “once or twice a month” and each of the other three “a few times a year,” on average. All other pupils were bullied **About monthly**.

Country	Almost never		About monthly		About weekly		Average scale score
	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	
Sweden	68 (1.0)	548 (2.4)	25 (1.0)	535 (3.0)	7 (0.5)	509 (4.7)	11.0 (0.04)
Ireland, Rep. of	64 (1.2)	563 (2.5)	25 (0.9)	545 (4.0)	12 (0.8)	510 (5.0)	10.7 (0.05)
Finland	61 (1.2)	573 (2.1)	30 (0.9)	566 (2.7)	9 (0.6)	543 (4.0)	10.6 (0.04)
Northern Ireland	57 (1.3)	567 (2.7)	29 (1.0)	557 (3.8)	14 (0.9)	527 (5.0)	10.4 (0.06)
Chinese Taipei	53 (1.3)	562 (2.1)	30 (0.8)	552 (2.6)	17 (0.8)	528 (3.2)	10.3 (0.06)
United States	52 (0.7)	568 (1.7)	30 (0.5)	557 (1.7)	18 (0.5)	531 (2.8)	10.2 (0.03)
Hong Kong SAR	51 (1.2)	577 (2.4)	33 (0.8)	571 (2.6)	17 (0.6)	553 (3.7)	10.1 (0.04)
Russian Federation	45 (1.4)	576 (2.9)	35 (1.0)	567 (3.1)	19 (1.0)	555 (3.9)	10.0 (0.06)
England	45 (1.5)	567 (3.2)	35 (1.0)	552 (3.0)	20 (1.1)	521 (4.8)	9.9 (0.06)
Canada	44 (0.7)	561 (2.0)	36 (0.6)	548 (2.0)	20 (0.6)	526 (2.5)	9.8 (0.03)
Singapore	39 (0.9)	581 (3.2)	38 (0.6)	569 (3.5)	23 (0.8)	543 (4.3)	9.7 (0.04)
Australia	37 (1.1)	539 (2.8)	38 (1.0)	529 (2.7)	25 (0.8)	509 (3.8)	9.6 (0.04)
New Zealand	33 (0.8)	554 (2.6)	37 (0.7)	537 (2.7)	30 (0.8)	504 (2.9)	9.3 (0.03)
Oman	31 (1.2)	407 (3.5)	37 (0.9)	392 (3.5)	31 (1.0)	377 (3.5)	9.3 (0.05)
Qatar	30 (1.1)	459 (4.9)	32 (1.0)	438 (5.1)	38 (1.0)	399 (3.7)	9.1 (0.05)
International Avg.	47 (0.2)	523 (0.5)	33 (0.1)	513 (0.5)	20 (0.1)	489 (0.7)	

SOURCE: IEA's Progress in International Reading Literacy Study – PIRLS 2011

Centre point of scale set at 10.

() Standard errors appear in parentheses. Because of rounding some results may appear inconsistent.

Source Exhibit 6.7 in the 2011 international PIRLS report

The index was constructed according to pupils' responses to the following questions.

During this year, how often have any of the following things happened to you at school?

Tick **one** box for each row.

	Never	A few times a year	Once or twice a month	At least once a week
a) I was made fun of or called names	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) I was left out of games or activities by other children	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) Someone spread lies about me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) Something was stolen from me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e) I was hit or hurt by other children (e.g. shoving, hitting, kicking)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f) I was made to do things I didn't want to do by other children	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10.1 8.3