

Today's feelings surrounding the education system are becoming firm in the idea that it is a load of rubbish. Qualifications such as C.S.E.'s are no longer valuable. Employers today know that school leavers with 'O' level passes are bound to apply for the same job as school leavers with C.S.E. grade passes. The outcome is obvious. Because jobs are few and far between, many people are turning to higher education. I myself chose the sixth form at my school, which has turned out to be a very big mistake, not just for me but many others who did the same. Admittedly it is the first year of our sixth form and many teachers do not really know how to treat sixth formers. One half of the teachers treat you much the same as the rest of the school, which does not go down too well with the sixth form. Others tend to treat you well, but still like to enforce certain rules which we feel undermine our status and age. Many students on two year courses have decided to leave after the first year. This is the price my particular school must pay for not getting it right first time.

Discipline in schools is very flimsy. I am not in favour of corporal punishment, but today's modern way of teaching tends to put the emphasis on a nice friendly atmosphere in schools - one big happy family. This occurs especially in primary schools. Surely if children are able to sit and talk during a lesson, they will not concentrate. I am not sure what my views are on this subject, but surely the whole point of school is to learn, and prepare you for the world outside, and not to be good friends with the teacher. In my experience I have learnt more from teachers who taught in the old fashioned way, where talking was forbidden and desks were set one behind each other.

The structure of schools today tends to border between academic lessons combined with social and moral subjects. I think one day school could be run by child psychologists just as well. I don't think this is entirely wrong but the ideas of some teachers do influence younger children immensely, and surely that is the job of the parent. I don't agree with teachers becoming secondary parents to pupils, which I think is happening.

The curriculum in schools is not bad. The big problem is that more money is spent on certain subjects rather than others. Music, for instance, in most schools is pathetic. I realise that musical instruments are expensive, but in my opinion music is a very important subject for everyone to experience. Cuts in education are causing both teachers and pupils to suffer. It seems to me that the government prefer to spend money on their defence policy rather than on the most important thing: the education of the new generation.

The pupils of today know that the prospect of a job once their education is over is very slim. This also seems to affect the attitudes of the teachers. Politics in schools is not generally allowed, but recently the idea of the pupils coming first above everything has rightly been put aside with the teachers' hope for better pay. Maybe once people outside of school can realise that the education system cannot be taken advantage of anymore, things may get much better, possibly at the expense of many children. But it would be worthwhile.