

Is there such a thing as school phobia?

Adapted from an article by Finlo Rohrer

- 1 Most adults can remember days when they vehemently didn't want to go to school. There would be protestations of illness, and of the danger of passing on an unpleasant disease, before the eventual acceptance that the journey into school was inevitable. 3 many might react with scepticism to the idea that there is such a thing as "school phobia".
- 2 But, says Nigel Blagg, author of *School Phobia and Its Treatment*, it is a condition that has been recognised since the 1960s. "Sufferers will experience extreme anxiety. They are off school, typically with their parents' knowledge and approval. And they often have symptoms like tummy aches, headaches and nausea. Some of them suffer severely with depression. Any attempts to get them to school when they are at their worst can lead to quite extreme behaviour – temper tantrums, screaming and kicking. It is very distressing for the adults."
- 3 The sceptics might of course want to bracket these children as truants, but, says Mr Blagg, school phobia sufferers are quite distinct in background and behaviour. "They are typically well behaved, socially conforming and usually doing quite well. Normally they come from caring families. The truant group are the ones who miss school because they want to and they are often involved in delinquent behaviour."
- 4 There is a recognition among psychologists and other education professionals that school phobia covers a range of different problems. "Typically what you have is an accumulation of stresses to do with home and school that add up over time and cause the child to become troubled," says Mr Blagg. "The avoidance leads to greater problems. They fall behind with school work. They worry what friends will say. The longer they are out, the worse the problems get. If they are told they don't have to go, they feel fine and the symptoms disappear."
- 5 Not only is there disagreement over the name for the condition, but also over how to treat it, and whether it exists at all. Sociologist Frank Furedi 6. "You take an understandable anxiety about going to school and turn it into a disease. Children will internalise it and play the role that's been assigned to them. It cultivates the idea that these anxieties are normal. You begin to encourage children to think in these terms."
- 6 Even if you do accept that school phobia exists, there can still be disagreement over the best approach to 7 it. Mr Blagg insists that while educational psychologists, teachers and parents must be sensitive to the child's needs, they must recognise that confrontation and getting the child back to school is

necessary. For those who have been away schools should assign tutors, help them catch up and offer them quiet space to be in while they are adjusting.

- 7 8 there are some people who believe that rather than being a psychological aberration requiring a cure, the symptoms of school phobia may simply indicate that the child is best educated away from the school, at home. Ann Newstead, a spokesperson for the home tuition charity Education Otherwise, says school phobia is a "very real condition". "You wouldn't dream of forcing an adult to engage in an environment that wasn't beneficial to them. So why do we think it's OK to treat children in this way? That's like treating someone who is scared of spiders by putting a spider in their hand. You tackle these things gradually, helping someone to overcome a phobia, and home education is a way of doing that."
- 8 More generally, many schools seek to make some of the changes for children less stressful, for example working on acclimatisation for children moving up to secondary school. Professor Furedi, however, does not believe that such sensitive treatment is always 9. "Kids going from primary school to secondary school often get transitional counselling. If you tell them enough times this is an extremely difficult, painful step, you make the kids more anxious."

bbc.co.uk, 2009

Tekst 3 Is there such a thing as school phobia?

- 1p 3 Which of the following fits the gap in paragraph 1?
A Consequently,
B Likewise,
C Moreover,
- 2p 4 Geef van elk van de volgende beweringen aan of deze juist of onjuist is volgens de alinea's 2 en 3.
1 Kinderen met schoolvrees verzuimen vaak met medeweten van hun ouders.
2 Kinderen met schoolvrees krijgen soms driftbuien als ze toch naar school moeten.
3 Niet iedereen gelooft dat schoolvrees werkelijk bestaat.
4 Kinderen met schoolvrees vertonen vaak crimineel gedrag.
Noteer het nummer van elke bewering, gevolgd door "juist" of "onjuist".
- 1p 5 What is the main point made in paragraph 4?
A A combination of several anxieties may result in school phobia.
B Children with school phobia need help to overcome their fears.
C School phobia can be caused by schools giving too much homework.
D There is an easy and effective treatment to deal with school phobia.
- 1p 6 Which of the following fits the gap in paragraph 5?
A is not convinced
B remains optimistic
C suspects deceit
- 1p 7 Which of the following fits the gap in paragraph 6?
A dealing with
B detecting
C preventing
D reporting about
E researching

1p 8 Which of the following fits the gap in paragraph 7?

- A As a result,
- B In short,
- C On the other hand,
- D On top of that,

1p 9 Which of the following fits the gap in paragraph 8?

- A available
- B avoidable
- C beneficial
- D damaging

“If you ... more anxious.” (laatste zin)

1p 10 In welke eerdere alinea is een vergelijkbaar argument ook al genoemd?
Noteer het nummer van deze alinea.

Bronvermelding

Een opsomming van de in dit examen gebruikte bronnen, zoals teksten en afbeeldingen, is te vinden in het bij dit examen behorende correctievoorschrift, dat na afloop van het examen wordt gepubliceerd.