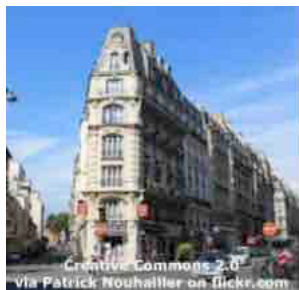


Schools closed in France as students clash with police

5th October 2026



Thousands of students across France have taken to the streets to protest against the state of French schools. They have clashed with riot police in violent protests. There are reports that police used tear gas against some

demonstrators. The student action began in high schools near Paris in late September and quickly spread nationwide. France's Education Ministry has reported that more than 1,020 high schools have been affected by protests or strikes. This is roughly one in four high schools. The country's interior minister reported that around 5,000 people had been arrested in the past week. He said the majority of them were teenagers. At least 65 school staff have also been injured.

The students' main concerns are what they perceive as poor conditions in high schools. They are angry about a lack of teachers, overcrowded classrooms, inadequate facilities, and dilapidated school buildings. One 15-year-old student said: "There are 35 pupils per class. We don't even have enough chairs." Students are calling for greater investment in education after what they see as years of underinvestment. In particular, they want more spending on schools in poorer suburbs. Students say schools in deprived areas of Paris receive fewer resources despite greater educational needs. The education minister said there would be "concrete responses" from the government.

Sources: france24.com / time.com / bbc.com

Writing

The largest part of government spending should be on schools. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

students / protest / riot police / tear gas / high schools / strikes / arrested / teenagers / poor conditions / teachers / classrooms / school buildings / investment / suburbs

True / False

- 1) Students in France are clashing with riot police in French streets. T / F
- 2) Police have used tear gas against some students. T / F
- 3) Around a quarter of French high schools have been affected by protests. T / F
- 4) Around 65 French teachers have been injured. T / F
- 5) Students say there aren't enough teachers in their schools. T / F
- 6) Students are complaining that there are up to 50 students in classes. T / F
- 7) Students say there is overinvestment in schools in richer areas. T / F
- 8) The government said it would respond in a concrete manner. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. take to the streets | a. poor |
| 2. state | b. fought |
| 3. clashed | c. run down |
| 4. affected | d. bulk |
| 5. majority | e. demonstrate |
| 6. perceive | f. outlying areas |
| 7. inadequate | g. hit |
| 8. dilapidated | h. definite |
| 9. suburbs | i. condition |
| 10. concrete | j. see |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What are your main concerns about schools?
- c) What were your teachers like at school?
- d) How many students should be in a class?
- e) How would society change with more investment in education?
- f) What changes would you make to your education system?
- g) What should the French government do?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the French government?

Phrase Match

1. students across France have taken
 2. They have clashed with riot
 3. police used tear
 4. This is roughly one in
 5. the majority
 6. what they perceive
 7. dilapidated
 8. more spending on schools in poorer
 9. schools in
 10. greater educational
- a. as poor conditions
 - b. four high schools
 - c. needs
 - d. police in violent protests
 - e. suburbs
 - f. of them were teenagers
 - g. to the streets to protest
 - h. deprived areas
 - i. school buildings
 - j. gas

Discussion – Student B

- a) What do you think of students protesting?
- b) What kind of protests are there in your country?
- c) What would make you take to the streets?
- d) Should riot police use tear gas against students?
- e) What were your schools like?
- f) How much of government spending should be on schools?
- g) Should students who protest be expelled?
- h) What advice do you have for the protestors?

Spelling

1. rtio police
2. police used tear gas against some rrsaentosodtm
3. eadcftfe by protests or strikes
4. The country's irnirteo minister
5. the trjiyoma of them were teenagers
6. 65 school staff have also been drjuein
7. what they epereicv as poor conditions
8. etqndaiaeu facilities
9. iddtaailped school buildings
10. schools in poorer bbursus
11. edprevdi areas of Paris
12. cteocnre responses from the government

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. i	3. b	4. g	5. d
6. j	7. a	8. c	9. f	10. h

Comprehension Questions

Listen to / read the news article. Answer these questions.
(Answers are on p. 27 of the 27-page PDF.)

1.	What are French students taking to?
2.	What have French riot police used against some students?
3.	Roughly what percentage of high schools have the protests affected?
4.	How many people have been arrested in the past week?
5.	How many school staff have been injured?
6.	What did the students say were inadequate?
7.	How did students describe school buildings as being?
8.	What are students calling for?
9.	Where are schools receiving fewer resources?
10.	What kind of responses did the education minister say there would be?

Speaking – Protests

Rank these with your partner. Put the things that would most make you protest at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Education
- AI
- War
- Immigration
- Corruption
- Taxes
- Climate
- Equality

Answers – True False

1	T	2	T	3	T	4	F	5	T	6	F	7	F	8	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.