

National Thematic: Bullying

The purpose of this national thematic is to evaluate the approaches taken by schools to record and monitor incidents of bullying. HM Inspectors will provide a national overview of the approaches adopted in their national report

We will use the information below to draw out national messages and potential case studies of practice worth sharing.

Record of visit (ROV)

- The ROV contains all information gathered in relation to the work. Any other materials should only be retained in line with our records management policy.
- The ROV should be completed in line with confidentiality, information security and Freedom of Information policies.
- The ROV must be completed timeously and sent to [REDACTED]

Establishment/Setting	Aberdeen School for the Deaf	
Date/time of visit	5 September 2022	
HMI	[REDACTED]	
Date ROV submitted	[REDACTED]	

Key contextual information (200 words)

School roll	17
Composition	5 classes: nursery, P1, P2/3, P4 and P6/7. No P5s at the school currently. Aberdeen School for the Deaf (ASFD) is situated within the building of Sunnybank Primary School. Staff at the two schools work very closely together. Children learn British Sign Language (BSL) at the ASFD, and in all classes at Sunnybank Primary as part of its 1+2 approach to learning language. Staff at Sunnybank PS are also learning BSL.
Demographics (SIMD, ethnicity, ASN)	The 17 children on the school roll are spread evenly between SIMD 2-10. [REDACTED]. All the learners have additional support needs.
Leadership structure	Headteacher, depute headteacher, and principal teacher. The headteacher is also head of ASN and outreach services for the local authority.

1. Approaches schools have taken to record incidents of bullying (400 words)

Senior leaders updated the school's anti-bullying policy in June 2022. At the same time, they also created a complimentary positive relationships policy. This policy is linked to the school's shared values, and outlines clearly ways that staff can create an environment where their learners can flourish. This centres around creating a climate of mutual respect and support. All children feel safe in school and understand what bullying is. They can give examples of bullying behaviour such as name calling, being hit and being left out. Senior leaders discussed the policies with staff and learners during their creation. They plan to review the

policies annually and evaluate their implementation and effectiveness. This may involve an earlier review if evidence from their monitoring procedures suggests that this is required.

The tone of the anti-bullying policy is about prevention. It outlines procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour, including keeping parents informed and supporting learners. It sets out clearly responsibilities of staff, learners and parents, and how they can support the school's approaches. The policy document would benefit from taking greater account of Scottish national guidance and children's rights. This includes making reference to protected characteristics or other forms of prejudice-based bullying. The ASN school is situated entirely within the building of Sunnybank Primary. Staff from both schools work together effectively to promote inclusion, equality and diversity. As a result of these approaches, levels of bullying are minimal. The policy should reflect this unique campus context and the proactive work they are doing to prevent bullying.

The policy includes reference to staff recording incidents of bullying and senior leaders using the Bullying and Equalities Module in SEEMiS. This session, senior leaders introduced a new bullying recording form. Staff are clear about how they should record bullying incidents, if they arise, using the new form. Senior leaders have not yet recorded any bullying incidents on SEEMiS. A majority of children and parents are not aware of the process for recording bullying incidents at the school. Senior leaders should make stakeholders more aware of recording mechanisms for bullying at the school. Children who experience negative behaviours against them need to have more of a say in how this is recorded and followed up by staff.

Senior leaders describe a significant challenge they have in the permanent labelling of children as bullies or victims by using the SEEMiS module. This is a clear tension for them with their focus on promoting inclusion and reducing stigma for their deaf children. The headteacher describes the module as clunky. He feels that bullying could be recorded and monitored robustly using existing applications on SEEMiS, or their own existing trackers.

2. The arrangements for monitoring incidents of bullying (400 words)

Senior leaders meet termly to review formally any emerging issues related to child protection, wellbeing and bullying. The headteacher has a very strong awareness of the need to monitor trends and patterns to inform improvements. Officers from the local authority also conduct a monthly review of data and discuss any emerging concerns with senior leaders. The local authority carried out well-considered sound proofing work to improve the environment for deaf learners across the campus. Senior leaders are aware of the need to strengthen the involvement of stakeholders in reviewing bullying approaches across the campus.

Teachers plan learning experiences carefully and through the school's 'deaf education' curriculum to support children's needs. Experiences are linked closely to children's social and emotional and communication targets in their individual education plans. Teachers and support staff monitor learners' progress on an ongoing basis. Any incidences of bullying would be included in this on-going monitoring and review. This includes discussions with senior leaders as appropriate. Senior leaders and teachers review individual education plans and targets together with children and their parents at least termly.

All teaching and support staff report that they are aware of the challenges children face in relation to bullying. They understand clearly that some behaviours may arise from barriers children have in communicating with others. A major focus for staff is supporting children's language and communication needs and helping learners to develop interpersonal skills. All

staff view all behaviour as communication and nurture children to learn from any disagreements with their peers. Support staff intervene quickly in the playground with any fall outs, treating this as learning opportunities for the children. Staff are discreet and sensitive about how they do this to ensure they protect children's dignity and privacy. [REDACTED] Almost all children report that staff will tackle bullying when they see it happening in school. A few children are developing the skills of assertiveness to develop their ability to call out behaviour that is unacceptable.

3. The effectiveness of measures taken to respond to incidents of bullying and in supporting children and young people. (400 words)

There is a warm, happy and inclusive ethos at the school. The shared values of respect, resilience, responsibility, inclusion and aspirations are very evident in practice. Staff work proactively across the whole campus to promote inclusion and equality, celebrate diversity, and prevent bullying. The school's partnership work with Sunnybank Primary exemplifies this very well. Children attend a wide range of mainstream classes at Sunnybank and they share lunchtimes and playtimes happily, together with Sunnybank children. All staff ensure that children feel treated as individuals and are proud to be a member of the deaf community. All children feel safe, valued and encouraged to flourish. All stakeholders are clear that bullying has no place in their school.

The school's deaf education curriculum challenges inequalities and promotes fairness, respect and inclusion. All staff implement strategies and interventions to support children in line with school policy and children's individual education plans. Learners are benefitting from a planned and progressive health and wellbeing curriculum that helps them to have positive attitudes towards each other. They enjoy regular opportunities to discuss communication and relationships with others. Staff make effective use of restorative approaches to help and encourage children sensitively to resolve any conflicts without apportioning blame. This is supporting children to build their resilience very well. Children know who to speak to if they or someone they know is being bullied. Almost all are confident that staff will tackle bullying if they see it happening. [REDACTED]

Children are beginning to recognise and talk about the wellbeing indicators in a developmentally appropriate way. Increasingly, staff are talking to the children about the indicators as part of their day-to-day work. Staff support children to reflect on their wellbeing using the indicators for their child planning meetings.

Effective practice worth sharing if applicable

I have asked senior leaders to complete the template. I would like to exemplify their highly effective proactive approaches to promoting positive relationships and inclusion across their unique campus context.

Quotes: Please add any quotes below with each one clearly separated by the use of "quotation marks". Please add in brackets who they are from (e.g headteacher).

[REDACTED]