

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	Burgh PS, Scottish Borders Council	
Date/time of visit	08.09.22	9:15am – 4:30pm
HMI	[REDACTED]	
Date ROV submitted	[REDACTED]	

Key contextual information (200 words)

School roll	189 P1-P7, 25 ELC
Composition	8 classes – P1, P1/2, P2/3, P3/4, P4/5, P5/6, P6, P7
Demographics (SIMD, ethnicity, ASN)	SIMD – 1-3 30.4%, 4-7 68.4%, 8-10 1.2% FSM – 22.8% ASN – 32% EAL – 12.8%
Leadership structure	HT, DHT and PT (PT has teaching commitment)

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

Burgh Primary School implement the local authority anti-bullying policy which was written in 2012. The policy was written in collaboration with children and young people and relevant stakeholders across local authority schools and colleges. The policy reflects UNCRC and GIRFEC principles. It does not reflect the Scottish Government guidance, 'Respect for All' which was published in 2017. The headteacher and local authority representative report that the anti-bullying policy for all local authority schools and settings is being renewed this session. Following the publication of the updated local authority policy, senior leaders would benefit writing additional guidance for staff, learners and parents. The additional guidance should detail the schools specific approaches for reporting, recording and monitoring incidents of bullying. Along with detailing how Burgh PS supports children who have been involved in an incident of bullying.

Most children feel safe at Burgh PS. In pre-questionnaires, almost all children stated that bullying is not accepted in their school. Almost all children know who to speak to if they or someone they know feels they are being bullied. Most children are confident that staff will tackle bullying if they see it happening in school.

Most parents feel the school promotes respect and positive relationship. The majority of parents are aware of the schools anti-bullying policy. However less than half of the parents know how the school investigates and records incidents of bullying. Senior leaders have identified the need to provide further information to parents regarding the schools anti-bullying policy.

All staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities in relation to reporting incidents of bullying. Staff report incidents of bullying to senior leaders. Senior leaders investigate all incidents of bullying and record them on SEEMiS. Senior leaders report that SEEMiS does not provide sufficient space to include all details of the incident. Staff therefore include additional detail in children's pastoral notes. Senior leaders feel a box needs to be added to allow them to record how they resolved the incident and what the outcome was for all involved. Senior leaders would also like to be able to upload documents relating to the incident. Senior leaders do not like that children's records on SEEMiS are labelled with a bullying incident flag, particularly if the case is unproven. They feel this is contradiction to the Respect for All policy which encourages us not to label a child as the bully.

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

Senior leaders monitor formally all incidents of alleged bullying well. Termly, they review the incidents to look for trends and patterns relating to groups and individuals. Senior leaders have noticed recently the term 'bullying' is often used incorrectly. Almost all children answered in the questionnaire that they understand what bullying is. However, children within the focus groups commented that they feel other children often use the word 'bullying' incorrectly. They will use it when they have a fall out with another child.[REDACTED]. However, children and staff reported in the focus groups that there is no bullying at Burgh PS. Staff plan to further explore the definition of bullying with children and continue to promote positive and respectful relationships with peers.

Staff ensure children's right to privacy throughout the investigation process. This applies to children who have been both perpetrators and victims of bullying. Staff use restorative conversations with children to try and find resolution following incidents of bullying. Children and staff both shared they found this approach successful. Parents and other relevant stakeholders are kept well informed about actions taken in relation to incidents of bullying and ongoing monitoring by staff throughout the process.

Senior leaders are very keen to gather the views of all relevant stakeholders and include them in a range of quality assurance activities. Senior leaders ensure safeguarding processes, including bullying are evaluated effectively. The parent forum is informed annually of the evaluation of incidents of bullying and the schools next steps through the Standards and Quality report and Parent Council meetings.

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

Most children feel staff act fairly and equitably to address issues of bullying promptly. They are confident that staff listen to them and take their views seriously.

Most children report that they learn about bullying regularly in school. Staff have implemented a range of universal strategies to promote positive relationships and an anti-bullying school culture. Staff have introduced emotional regulation strategies to support children in talking about their emotions and self-regulate. Children participate in anti-bullying week annually and the whole school has implemented a health and wellbeing programme to support children in developing their resilience. These approaches together will give children the confidence to deal appropriately with conflict and learn tools to restore respectful relationships.

Children complete wellbeing assessments twice a year. Staff use the data from the assessments to inform the health and wellbeing curriculum and identify children who would benefit from a targeted intervention.

Staff implement a range of appropriate and well-judged interventions. These interventions support children who have been involved in bullying incidents or require support to have positive relationships with others. For example, daily check-ins and participating in a friendship group.

All staff report that relevant professional learning takes place regularly for both universal and targeted approaches including nurture training, Zones of Regulation and Seasons for Growth. This learning supports a consistent approach across the school. Almost all staff report that this improves their ability to be responsive to the needs of children.

Staff participate in a refresher of the schools anti-bullying policy at the beginning of each new school session. For new staff joining during the school year, the anti-bullying policy is part of their induction.