Education Scotland
Foghlam Alba

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	Dunoon Grammar School	
Date/time of visit	22 September 2022	08:30 – 15:00
HMI	[REDACTED]	
Date ROV submitted	[REDACTED]	

Key contextual information (200 words)	
School roll	790
Composition	S1-6 17 Gaelic medium education (GME) learners in S1-6
Demographics (SIMD, ethnicity, ASN)	Mainly SIMD 4 and 5, ranging from 1-8. [REDACTED]
Leadership structure	Headteacher (currently joint headteacher of Campbeltown Grammar). He is supported by a senior depute headteacher and three depute headteachers. One depute headteacher, who previously led on anti-bullying approaches, is currently seconded to the Northern Alliance. There are four PTs Guidance as Heads of House, and a PT behaviour and learning.

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

Senior leaders created the school's anti-bullying policy in November 2020, following consultation with stakeholders in 2019. The anti-bullying policy references national guidance and relevant legislation, including children's rights and protected characteristics. It sets out clear expectations of learners, staff, parents and partner agencies, including the recording of incidents. In the policy, it states that there will be an annual review involving stakeholders. Senior leaders need to ensure that all stakeholders are involved fully in the next review they intend to carry out.

Senior leaders developed the school's Relationships Policy some time before the anti-bullying policy to support staff to manage young people's behaviour. Additional working documents support this, including Our Promise and School Charter. The relevant member of staff has

translated these documents into Gaelic. Senior leaders now need to revisit this policy to focus more on how staff promote respect and positive relationships. They should ensure that the school's values and children's rights underpin this approach.

Almost all young people understand what bullying is, and most say that bullying is unacceptable in their school. A majority of parents say that bullying is not acceptable at Dunoon Grammar. Whilst a majority of parents are aware of the school's anti-bullying policy, most disagree or are unsure if they had a say in developing it.

Staff have been using the Bullying and Equalities Module since 2017. Staff report incidents of bullying to Head of House. Heads of House investigate all perceived incidents of bullying and record them on the Bullying and Equalities module in SEEMiS. The depute headteachers record all actions in the module. Staff record peer conflicts that are not bullying behaviour in pastoral notes.

Senior leaders acknowledge that SEEMiS has the potential to highlight trends and patterns in bullying at the school. However, they are frustrated that the module does not allow them currently to extract this information easily. They also do not receive alerts about a bullying incident, in the way they do with referrals or pastoral notes. Instead, they rely on emails from Guidance staff to alert them that they need to take action. Guidance staff describe using SEEMiS as clunky. The acting depute headteacher uses her own spreadsheet to record incidents and to allow her to filter information and trends. She recognises that this is adding to the workload of guidance staff.

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

Senior leaders and guidance staff monitor all incidents of alleged bullying very well. They review the incidents fortnightly to look for trends and patterns relating to groups and individuals. For example, learners in Gaelic medium education, and those who are care experienced or have additional support needs. They also monitor any incidents related to sexuality, race or other protected characteristics. [REDACTED]. Senior leaders have not discussed bullying data with the local authority for over a year.

Guidance staff have drawn up case studies from the information in SEEMiS for further discussion at SLT meetings. They noticed patterns in name calling related to body image and adapted the personal and social education programme to address this. Senior leaders have also looked at the structure of break times. They staggered breaks for year groups on certain days of the week to try to reduce conflict amongst young people. Staff should continue to monitor behaviour in social spaces to ensure young people treat each other fairly and with respect. The 'playfair' day at the start of S1 supports learners to understand what to do if someone bullies them.

Guidance staff update all staff on reported bullying incidents on a weekly basis. They provide a clear script to staff about how to work with the young people displaying bullying behaviours. Staff have responsibilities for monitoring and supporting the young people in their classrooms, working with Guidance teacher and SLT. They check in with the young person regularly and feedback to Guidance staff.

Senior leaders and guidance staff have a clear understanding of the need for privacy when investigating allegations of bullying. This applies to young people who have been both perpetrators and victims of bullying behaviour. Guidance staff keep parents and other relevant stakeholders informed about actions taken in relation to incidents of bullying. A small majority

of young people feel confident about reporting bullying. However, a significant number expressed concern about reporting incidents of bullying to staff. They are afraid of negative consequences for themselves and for victims of bullying if they speak out. Senior leaders need to continue to develop a culture and ethos where young people feel more confident to report bullying. For example, by continuing to develop Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) and bystander approaches.

Senior leaders need to seek feedback more regularly from all stakeholders about the effectiveness of their anti-bullying approaches. They also need to ensure that parents and young people are more aware of what happens when they report an incident.

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

Staff have done a variety of relevant professional learning over a number of years to support their approaches to anti-bullying. This includes Respect Me training since 2014, as well as more recent sessions on children's rights and restorative approaches. Ongoing nurture training is supporting staff to be more aware of the impact of adverse childhood experiences and to be more trauma-informed. This is supporting a more consistent approach to bullying across the school.

Staff take a proactive universal approach to educating the young people about the impact of bullying behaviour. Guidance staff use Respectme anti-bullying resources in PSE. Whole-school activities, such as on International Women's Day and Holocaust Memorial Day, raise awareness of prejudice. Senior learners train as MVP mentors and raise awareness about the impact of violence. Guidance staff are developing peer-mentoring approaches through twice-weekly house group meetings. They need to continue to strengthen this approach and encourage all young people to take responsibility for preventing bullying. They also need to ensure that all young people understand the meaning and relevance of the wellbeing indicators in day-to-day life.

Gaelic learners value their house time, led well by their Gàidhlig teacher. They get together as a group of S1-6 pupils, discussing a variety of topics in Gaelic including opportunities for reviewing the wellbeing indicators. Young people studying Gàidhlig also learn about respect, moral issues, and bullying, through weekly lessons and studying some novels.

Guidance staff use QR codes throughout the school so that young people can ask for support discreetly at any time. They also use this approach in weekly PSE lessons for S1-4. This provides an overview about how young people are feeling and they put targeted support in place, as required. This includes working with the school's SeeMe Champions, Living Life to the Full Supporters, an in-school supporter, or access to a wide range of partners. Nurture groups support young people with social skills, and a few young people have planned access to school support hubs.

Most young people have someone to speak to if they are concerned about bullying. A majority feel safe and say that staff will tackle bullying if they see it happening in school. However, a majority of young people feel that the school does not deal well with bullying. A few young people feel that homophobia and cyber bullying are a concern. Most parents feel that staff promote positive relationships, and that they treat their child fairly and with respect. However just under half agree that the school deals well with bullying. The headteacher acknowledges that they need to continue to improve their approaches.

Effective practice worth sharing if applicable

I have asked the headteacher to write up their '**Playfair Day**' that they hold in the first term as a possible case study. They devised this for S1 to encourage them to accept that everyone is an individual and that they should treat others fairly. They have developed the day over the years and it now includes many different workshops. The most recent event involved sports leaders and drama students at the school delivering workshops, as well as a range of partner agencies.

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]

[REDACTED]

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