

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	Eastwood High School (East Renfrewshire Council)	
Date/time of visit	11.10.22	9.10 am – 4.00 pm
HMI	[REDACTED]	
Date ROV submitted	[REDACTED]	

Key contextual information (200 words)

School roll	1194
Composition	S1-6
Demographics (SIMD, ethnicity, ASN)	94 pupils FME, Average SIMD 7.9, Diverse catchment – 167 EAL, [REDACTED]
Leadership structure	1 x HT, 5 DHTs

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

Senior leaders renewed their anti-bullying policy in April 2022. They developed it with the school community to reflect the latest local authority and national guidance. Staff and young people updated the policy to include their new LGBT+ charter and to detail young people's rights. Staff also used the opportunity to clarify the definition of bullying and provide more detailed examples in the policy.

Young people, staff and parents agree that the school operates a zero-tolerance stance towards bullying. A majority of parents are unaware of the existence of the school's policy or how the school responds to bullying. Senior leaders aim to review and promote the policy on an annual basis. They plan to use this opportunity to help the school community to understand how the many initiatives in place promote positive behaviour.

Almost all young people are aware of a range of ways to report bullying. They display a strong understanding of the nature of bullying and give examples of bullying behaviour. Almost all young people know the process for reporting bullying. However, a minority of young people do not feel confident to report incidents. Senior leaders are aware of this issue and are exploring a greater range of options for young people to report their concerns. This includes increasing the number of senior learners who are available to provide peer support.

Senior leaders are highly regarded across the school community. Young people and staff feel that they are proactive, approachable and visible. This is resulting in a calm and orderly school environment.

Pastoral staff are developing a responsive personal and social education (PSE) curriculum which addresses the causes of bullying. Young people value recent developments to the programme. They welcome further opportunities to influence content and delivery so that it continues to be relevant to their needs and interests.

Senior leaders have embedded a robust system for staff to record bullying on an in-house system. Senior leaders record these incidents subsequently in the Bullying and Equalities module in SEEMiS. They find this system bureaucratic and lacking in the detail that their own system allows them to capture. Senior leaders also note frustration with SEEMiS in terms of the overview sheet failing to provide details of actions taken.

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

Senior leaders and pastoral staff monitor incidents of reported bullying very well. They review data formally on a weekly then on a termly basis to identify trends and patterns. Pastoral staff monitor this issue informally and share relevant information with staff. They use the information to plan partner input, which results in a high level of targeted support bespoke to the needs of the young person.

The school community agrees that the nature of bullying is mainly of an online and verbal nature. Staff and young people express concern over continued use of racial and homophobic language among a minority of learners.

Pastoral staff use the data to plan input to lessons from partners and other departments. For example, the campus police officer delivers inserts to promote a greater understanding of online safety. A few subject departments make links in their courses to focus on challenging prejudice as well as promoting diversity. Young people describe how these activities are increasing their awareness of all aspects of bullying. Staff are well-placed to develop greater links across the curriculum and build on planning approaches recently developed.

Young people demonstrate a good understanding of the wellbeing indicators. They can describe what they would do if they or someone they know was being bullied. They feel that staff respond promptly and effectively. Staff are proactive and provide a clear response to any incidents, including follow up support.

Senior leaders are aware of the need to guarantee the right to privacy for all young people involved in bullying incidents. They acknowledge that this can cause tension with a few parents but agree that it needs a more consistent approach.

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

Almost all young people agree that bullying is not a significant issue as a result of the proactive approach to prevention in school. Staff are flexible and responsive to emerging issues. They offer an extensive range of clubs. This helps provide activities at lunchtime as well as contributing to the positive and inclusive ethos. Staff use weekly assemblies and wall displays effectively to promote inclusion and diversity. They promote a respectful and calm ethos, where young people and staff build trusting relationships. They are visible and supervise social areas, supported by the campus police officer. Senior leaders also maintain a presence at the train station at the start and end of the school day. These preventative measures are leading to young people feeling safe around the school campus.

Senior leaders and pastoral staff have implemented strategies to respond successfully to reported cases of bullying. The pupil support team determine the appropriate response which is bespoke to the needs and wishes of the young people involved. A few young people have experienced incidents of bullying. They felt that staff listened to them and took their views seriously. Staff also provide safe spaces at breaks for young people who have experienced bullying. This has led to learners feeling supported by staff and partners following incidents of bullying. Staff also work with partners to support young people who display bullying behaviour. This includes, for example, services such as Educational Psychology, Community Learning and Development and programmes such as 'Healthier Minds'. Most young people are aware of the availability and accessibility of their pupil support teacher. Senior leaders recognise the need to continue to explore ways for all young people to access support.

Senior leaders have targeted professional learning towards developing a relational and nurturing approach. This is leading to a more consistent response to bullying across the school. Staff undertake a wide range of professional learning to support young people's wellbeing. Senior leaders are well placed to build on a previously successful practitioner enquiry where the school community explored racism and homophobia. They are mindful of the need to continue to influence all members of the school community to be inclusive and understand the needs of all young people.

Senior leaders are exploring ways to increase the range of leadership opportunities available to learners. They offer a range of roles including Mentors in Violence Prevention, mental health champions and anti-bullying ambassadors. This is providing an alternative offer of support as a few learners are more comfortable confiding in a peer. Young people speak positively about their role as ambassadors and display a sense of ownership in both addressing bullying and promoting equality.

Effective practice worth sharing if applicable

This school community's approach has many aspects of practice worth sharing. Senior leaders have worked hard to implement robust systems as well as developing an ethos which prevents bullying. Where bullying does occur, targeted support and partnership working is having a positive impact on supporting both young people who have experienced and/or displayed bullying behaviour. Staff sharing professional learning with young people who in turn undertake leadership roles is having a significant impact on their leadership development as well as responding effectively to the school's ethos.

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).

