![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	Leuchars PS Fife Council	
Date/time of visit	27th September 2022	
HMI	[REDACTED]	
Date ROV submitted	[REDACTED]	

Key contextual information (200 words)

This **should** include information about school roll and composition, demographics and leadership structure.

School roll	256 approx. The school supports children who have families based at the local army base. This accounts for: 41% of nursery roll and 65% of school roll. Roll is transient due to personnel moving onto different postings on a fairly regular basis.
Composition	10 classes in total P1, 1/2, 2, 3, 3/4, 4, 5, 5/6, 6, 7
Demographics (SIMD, ethnicity, ASN)	SIMD – 2- 12%, 3 -14%. 4- 4.5%, 5- 69% Due to the percentage of Ministry of Defence housing, the rate is not viewed as being an accurate reflection of the relative deprivation FME – 26 children Attendance 92%
Leadership structure	HT, DHT and PT(PEF) HT appointed in Jan 22 DHT appointed in August 21 PEF PT appointed in March 22

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

How well does your anti-bullying policy support learners and how do you know?

What are your views on how well SEEMiS supports the recording of bullying incidents?

Following a period of significant change in the school, the recently appointed headteacher and depute headteacher have been establishing their culture, ethos and vision for the school. An anti-bullying policy was drafted in August 2022 by senior leaders in the absence of an existing one. This policy complements the school vision and values as well as the agreed 'Positive Behaviour' policy established last session. The policy shares a definition of bullying based on national guidance however, all stakeholders do not yet have ownership of this nor a shared understanding due to lack of consultation. Whilst the majority of parents are aware the school have a policy, only a few parents feel they are included in developing approaches to bullying. Senior leaders have identified the need for the school community to have an agreed definition of bullying and clarity over the thresholds for when behaviour should be defined as bullying. The policy promotes the development of a culture of inclusion across the school and makes reference to Respect for All and the wellbeing indicators. As part of the planned review, the school should now consider the inclusion of links with the Getting it Right for every Child (GIRFEC) principles and United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC) to ensure there is clarity as to how these influence their anti-bullying approaches.

The policy should include guidance for all staff and key stakeholders in the processes involved in recording, monitoring and addressing incidents of bullying. Children's right to privacy, respect and equality needs to be agreed and included in the revised policy. Using appropriate language, senior leaders plan to develop alternative formats of the policy for parents and children once all processes are fully agreed. Appendices to the policy will include flowcharts to exemplify each stage of the process around an incident of bullying. The flowcharts will provide clarity as to the roles, responsibilities, and procedures for parents and children.

The majority of children report feeling safe in school and most parents feel the school promotes respect and positive relationships. Most children know who to speak to if they experience bullying but only a minority know how the school records incidents of bullying. Support staff feel included in learning about bullying procedures through weekly meetings. They will readily share information about children they have concerns about with teachers and senior leaders as appropriate. The headteacher should ensure that the recording method currently in use for support staff adheres fully to children's right to privacy and is in line with GDPR legislation. The headteacher has recently purchased new books to support further and celebrate the diverse community they have at Leuchars.

Since August 2022, the SEEMiS Bullying and Equalities module (BEM) is used to record incidents of bullying. The headteacher or depute headteacher record these within three working days. Senior leaders appreciate some elements of the application such as drop down menus to select from however other aspects of the application are limited. Not being able to swiftly move between the BEM in SEEMiS, Click and Go and the Wellbeing App makes SEEMiS more challenging to use. They would like more space within the application to describe both reported incidents and staff actions and interactions more fully. Senior leaders have yet to agree where they should be recording follow up discussions regarding and incident and whether these should be recorded within the BEM before the incident is closed off. The school are not yet using pastoral notes to capture additional information. They are in discussion with local authority representatives to plan their next steps in the use of latest pastoral notes to ensure they are in line with local authority guidance.

All children and staff have a clear understanding of bullying behaviours. The policy has useful information relating to prejudice-based bullying, including protected characteristics and types of behaviours. Children can confidently discuss all of these. Currently the policy does not guide parents and families to other supports and resources.

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

How well does the school's approaches to monitoring incidents of bullying inform any changes to practice or policy?

Due to the small numbers of incidents gathered to date, senior leaders have not yet identified any patterns or trends. Although most children and staff feel they know what bullying is, definitions varied during focus group discussions. From pre-visit questionnaires, the majority of children shared they have experienced bullying although only a very small number of incidents are included on SEEMiS. This indicates a lack of clarity around the definition. Clarity of definition is crucial to ensure there is not an underreporting of incidents.

The majority of children feel that the school deals well with bullying and most know who to speak to if they feel bullied. Policy and practice need to ensure that children's views are taken into account. In particular, how they will ensure children are included in all aspects of the investigation process in particular relating to when and how information is shared with parents.

From the pre-visit questionnaire, a minority of parents know how incidents are investigated and a few know how this is recorded. Only a few parents are aware of the complaints procedures if they are unsatisfied with the action taken by the school.

Senior leaders highlight the importance of closely monitoring children involved in reported bullying situations. Children shared they welcome the informal check ins with them to ensure that the situation is resolved. All staff see their roles as central to supporting children in understanding the impact of bullying and helping them develop strategies to address it.

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

What measures are used to support children and young people and how well are these working?

Support for children is offered through a range of universal and targeted approaches. The school have funded additional resources for nurture for targeted children who struggle to regulate their emotions. Last session, staff used the Glasgow Wellbeing Module to assess children's wellbeing. Using the results, they identified interventions to support individual children and groups. They plan to complete this on an annual basis as an early intervention approach. A minority of children feel they learn about bullying at school in classes. Weekly assemblies share key information with children around the newly established vision, values and aims. This presentation is shared with parents each week which is involving them as the school's new ethos and culture develops.

Senior leaders work well in partnership with Forces Children Scotland and Army Welfare to support children who may be struggling to cope with transitioning in and out of school as deployments change. They also support the static pupil population to manage their responses to regular changes that impact on creating and sustaining friendships.

Some time ago, the school received gold status as a Rights Respecting School (RRS). Due to a lapse in time and a significant change of staff, the school wish to revisit this accreditation

and ensure the practices and processes in school continue to reflect this status. Children talk confidently about their rights and how they use the language of the class charter to respond to behaviour. This work underpins the positive culture and ethos that is developing across the school.

Teachers and support staff share that children are not displaying levels of resilience seen in pre-pandemic time. Social skills have declined and anxieties heightened which has had an impact on friendships and an increase in low level behaviour and conflict in and around the school. Senior leaders have proactively identified the need for professional learning for all staff around developing resilience to support this. Staff shared they would welcome more professional learning focusing specifically on bullying. A few support staff are trained in Seasons for Growth and use this to support a few individuals. Staff use Kitbag, Cool in School and restorative conversations with children to try and find resolution following incidents of bullying.

Most parents feel that the school sees bullying as unacceptable however only a majority feel they deal well with bullying. In response to this, the head teacher has planned a series of parent sessions to discuss their work to date, review policy plans for bullying and share some key messages.