

## 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	Linwood High school	
Date/time of visit	20/09/22	
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	430
Composition	S1 – S6
Demographics (SIMD, ethnicity, ASN)	SIMD EAL- 13 FSM- 110 ASN-131
Leadership structure	1 x HT 5 x DHT 10 x departmental/Faculty heads ( including pupil support )

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

An anti-bullying policy is in place in the school having been developed in consultation with staff and other stakeholders. Senior leaders led the development and publication in 2018 policy was developed and published in 2018. The policy promotes the development of a culture of inclusion, fairness and equality across the school. The school policy is underpinned by a clear promoting positive behaviour strategy and local authority anti- bullying documentation.

The importance of protected characteristics and the equalities act feature in the local authority policy. Senior leaders should now work to develop a clearer policy, which also features equalities legislation more robustly.

Senior leaders plan to review the anti-bullying policy during this session. As part of this review, the school should consider the inclusion of links to national guidance documents including links to UNCRC, GIRFEC and Respect for All. The majority of young people are not aware of an anti-bullying policy, nor how bullying is recorded when reported to staff or senior leaders. Therefore, a policy review should involve parents, young people, partners and staff in its development. Key external stakeholders should also be included to ensure that there is a clear understanding of anti-bullying across the community. Additionally, in pre questionnaires, parents reported that they were not aware of how incidents of bullying were recorded or monitored in Linwood High school.

Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities in relation to bullying. This includes processes to ensure that incidents are recorded timeously and a request for support form completed. Staff have a consistent approach to the identification of bullying behaviours, reporting incidences of bullying and closely monitoring children involved in reported bullying situations. This is underpinned by core school values and a shared vision across the school, which includes references to care, compassion and love. The school values were developed consultation with young people in Linwood High school. Almost all staff see their roles as central to supporting children in understanding the impact of their actions. They describe the approaches to supporting young people in Linwood as empowering them. They feel able to discuss inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour and language with young people.

Professional learning supports staff to implement strategies to support children, which includes annual child protection and safeguarding training for all members of staff. All staff and the wider support team have engaged in training around trauma, nurture and restorative approaches. Many potential bullying behaviours are regularly de-escalated by staff. These whole school approaches could be further strengthened by a more robust and comprehensive anti-bullying policy.

Senior leaders and pastoral care staff are responsible for recording incidences of bullying using both the SEEMiS module and in pastoral notes. They are aware of any emerging patterns and trends as they arise. Staff also record incidents of bullying and make requests for support for young people ( for example , mindfulness, restorative and reflection time and working with a key adult). Senior leaders should streamline the systems and processes linked to recording in order to ensure GDPR compliance in relation to the storing of data about individuals.

Senior leaders and guidance staff report that the provision for reporting incidences of bullying using SEEMiS is very limited. They report that the module is time consuming to navigate. Senior leaders would also like to see more space provided within the application to describe incidents, staff actions and all interactions in more detail.

Most parents and young people are not aware of how incidents of bullying are recorded.

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

Senior leaders and guidance staff identify, record and monitor incidents of bullying well.

Staff understand their responsibility to monitor incidents of bullying and check in with young people regularly. The wider support team have a clear focus on their responsibility to monitor and follow up on incidents of bullying both formally and informally in order to fully support young people. A range of interventions are in place including the use of group work, mindfulness, art therapy and “Take 5 minutes”. Staff support young people to use techniques to help them to regulate their emotions and behaviours. Safe spaces also provide young people with opportunities to access further support and avoid potential distress.

Senior leaders and the wider support team monitor the recorded incidents. From this, they can identify trends relating to particular groups, individuals or families across the community. These incidents are rare. Recently, staff have identified that tensions within friendship groups and an inability to engage well with others are common themes in Linwood High school. This is due in some part to the impact of COVID -19 and lengthy periods of closure. The support team are working together with young people to address these concerns. Incidents of bullying are recorded in SEEMiS within three working days and monitored for a few weeks thereafter. With the consent of the young people concerned, senior leaders inform parents of any incidents of bullying. During the investigation process, senior leaders and staff are sensitive to the needs of all those concerned and to their right to privacy. The health and wellbeing (HWB) curriculum has structured inputs on relationships, resilience and anti-bullying, but is flexible and adaptable when situations within the school or community need to be addressed.

Young people are able to describe different forms of bullying including prejudice based bullying behaviour. They are able to describe incidents to exemplify their understanding. This includes, gender based, racist, homophobic and cyber bullying.

The importance of protected characteristics and the equalities act feature in the local authority policy. Senior leaders should now work to develop a clearer policy, which also features equalities legislation more robustly.

Almost all young people understand what bullying is and know that this is not acceptable.

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

Young people in Linwood High school benefit from a wide range of support, including pupil support assistants, pastoral care teachers, class teaching staff, inclusion support and a very visible senior leadership team. Most young people report that they know who to go to if they need to talk to someone about bullying behaviours. Staff use preventative and restorative approaches to de-escalate potential incidents of bullying and address the use of inappropriate language as it occurs.

Pastoral care staff and the wider support team in Linwood High school play a central role in supporting young people with any reported and suspected incidents of bullying. Pastoral care staff have a specific focus on following up any reported incidents of bullying with those involved. They monitor the wellbeing of those involved to ensure that any potential harm is addressed. Staff report that any adult who is best placed to support this process, or who has the best relationship with a particular young person, is able to take on this key role. Staff could

now consider how better to support young people and address any potential issues through the use of existing surveys focussed around the wellbeing indicators. Young people report that they do not see any actions arising from the results of the survey. School leaders should ensure these results are followed up. This would enable staff to understand the needs of young people and put appropriate interventions in place.

A structured PSE programme also supports children to learn about relationships, emotions, resilience and anti-bullying. The HWB curriculum can also be adapted quickly to support young people and address situations, which occur in the local area or within the context of the school.

Most young people feel that everyone is treated fairly and equitably in Linwood High School. In pre inspection questionnaires, most young people shared that they feel safe in school, with almost all young people reporting that they understand what bullying is. Young people were able to describe specific incidents of bullying behaviour and how these were addressed by adults. Most young people feel that teachers tackle bullying when they see it. Young people we spoke to are mainly concerned with bullying behaviour outside the school, within the community.

#### Effective practice worth sharing if applicable

**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).**

[insert text]