

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	St John Vianney RC PS, City of Edinburgh Council	
Date/time of visit	22.09.22	9:15am – 4:30pm
HMI	[REDACTED]	
Date ROV submitted		

Key contextual information (200 words)

School roll	245
Composition	N, P1, P2, P3, P4, P5A, P5B, P6, P7
Demographics (SIMD, ethnicity, ASN)	SIMD - FSM – 17% ASN –25.4% EAL –39.9%
Leadership structure	Headteacher: Chris Kelly Depute headteacher: Aisling Christie Principal Teacher : Pauline Reid

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

St John Vianney RC PS anti-bullying policy was originally developed on 2017 following the publication of the Scottish Government guidance 'Respect for All'. The policy was written in partnership with children, staff and parents. It reflected the City of Edinburgh Council's anti-bullying guidance for schools. A revision of the policy started in session 2021-2022 and wider consultation with the school community is planned for this session. St John Vianney RC PS anti-bullying policy is implemented in conjunction with the school's positive behaviour policy. Both policies are underpinned by the school's values and beliefs. The anti-bullying policy includes a definition of bullying, a statement about equalities and procedures in place to promote an anti-bullying school ethos. Senior leaders could strengthen the policy by including reference to national guidance and legislation. They were encouraged to refer to the section, 'Your policy development' from 'Respect for All' guidance to support them.

All staff are familiar with the policy and clear about their roles and responsibilities to prevent bullying. All staff are aware of the processes in place to record and monitor incidents of bullying. However only 51% of children and 59% of parents are aware of these processes.

Senior leaders should ensure processes for recording and monitoring incidents of bullying are detailed within the anti-bullying policy.

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

Almost all parents feel the school promotes respect and positive relationships. Most parents are aware of the school's anti-bullying policy. The majority of parents know how the school investigates and records incidents of bullying. Almost all parents feel confident about reporting bullying.

Senior leaders investigate all perceived incidents of bullying. Senior leaders record all proven cases of bullying on the Bullying and Equalities module on SEEMiS. The headteacher was unaware that all incidents of bullying including unproven incidents should be recorded on SEEMiS. Going forwards, senior leaders will start doing this. The headteacher however is concerned about the workload of recording unproven incidents of bullying on SEEMiS when they are already recorded on an incident form.

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

Senior leaders learn about bullying incidents in a range of ways. In every classroom there is a 'worry box' where children can post a note to their class teacher sharing a worry or ask for help with something private. The headteacher also has a box outside his office. Children can also self-refer to 'Time2Talk' requesting time with one of the 'Place2Be' councillors to talk through a concern. Staff will also pass on incidents of bullying or behaviour to senior leaders using the school based incident form.

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 a decrease in incidents of bullying since 2018. They also commented that the number of arguments and fights between children has also significantly decreased. During focus groups with children, teachers and support staff, everyone stated bullying does not happen at St John Vianney RC PS and behaviour is really good for almost all children. [REDACTED] Senior leaders are concerned about this figure and plan to further explore this with children and staff. They want to investigate if these are historic incidents of bullying or current issues that the children are referring to.

Staff ensure children's right to privacy throughout the investigation process. This applies to children who have both demonstrated bullying behaviours and experienced bullying. Staff are responsive to relationship issues which arise in class or the playground. They have a restorative conversation between children and support children to discuss what has happened and how to move forward positively. 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.

Pastoral updates is a standing item at staff meetings. Senior leaders use this as an opportunity to update staff on the progress and wellbeing of learners. This includes being alerted to any ongoing bullying/ friendship situations, as well as monitoring incidents that have

taken place. In addition, senior leaders monitor the wellbeing of children monthly to notice any trends or concerns for individuals or groups.

The headteacher, on an ongoing basis, gathers the views of all relevant stakeholders and includes them in a range of quality assurance activities. The headteacher ensures safeguarding processes, including bullying are evaluated regularly.

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

St John Vianney RC PS has a very diverse school community [REDACTED]. At the beginning of the school session, teachers are provided with class community data packs which details information about the children in their class including; SIMD, FSM, ASN, EAL, Religious background and language acquisition. This supports teachers in knowing children well and supporting their wellbeing and learning effectively. Staff have undertaken a range of professional learning opportunities to support them in creating an inclusive school community where diversity is celebrated. Children shared in focus groups that their school is a school where everyone is welcome and everyone is treated the same. (Please refer to the school case study for further detail regarding their approach to celebrating diversity in their school.)

The school has a very strong anti-bullying ethos. The school values and beliefs guide and influence positive relationships and behaviour across the school. The headteacher regularly discusses the school's values and beliefs with children at assembly. Safeguarding and mental health messages are shared at assemblies and in weekly newsletters to parents. Parents appreciate the ongoing promotion of resilience and mental health in children.

Most children report that they learn about bullying regularly in school. Staff implement a range of approaches to promote and foster respectful relationships. Staff have introduced a visual resource tool to support children to recognise and communication their emotions. The resource provides a structure for children to talk about and respond to their needs and the needs of others. Staff have noticed since introducing this resource, children's empathy towards others' feelings has improved. Children participate in mental health and anti-bullying weeks annually and the whole school has implemented a health and wellbeing programme to support children in developing their resilience. All of these approaches together are supporting children to deal appropriately with conflict and learn tools to restore respectful relationships.

Children complete wellbeing assessments annually. 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. Seniors leaders are looking into setting up a nurture group to provide additional support for identified learners.

The school has a very effective partnership with 'Place2be'. 'Place2be' provides mental health support through one-to-one counselling or group counselling for children, parent support sessions and professional learning opportunities for staff. Children can self-refer for a chat or parents and staff can refer them to receive support. All children and staff talk very positively about the support 'Place2be' councillors offer children. The reasons why children use 'Place2be' is monitored and tracked. Last session, councillors had over 1000 sessions with children. 40% of the cases were linked to friendships.

All staff report that relevant professional learning takes place regularly and this supports a consistent approach across the school. 'Place2be' provides bespoke staff training reflecting on the themes emerging from how the children use their service. 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.

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]