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. Mungo's HS, Falkirk Council	
Date/time of visit	06.09.22	9:15am – 3:30pm
HMI	[Redacted]	
Date ROV submitted	[Redacted]	

Key contextual information (200 words)

School roll	1226	
Composition		

SCHOOL ROLL	Total
S1	253
S2	234
S3	209
S4	220
S5	182
S6	128
OVERALL	1226

Demographics (SIMD, ethnicity, ASN)	Denominational school (mainly Roman Catholic) 20 % EAL 25% ethnic composition other than White Scottish SIMD spread from band 1-10, main group 5 ASL – 44% of school roll

Leadership structure		

Head Teacher	1
Depute Head Teacher	4
Resource Manager	1
Faculty Head	9
PT Pastoral	4
PT GIRFEC	

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

Senior leaders renewed their anti-bullying policy in 2021. They developed it in collaboration with young people and relevant stakeholders to reflect the latest local authority and national guidance. Young people led the creation of a "pupil-friendly" version of the policy and a short animation film. All young people receive a copy of the policy and watch the animation during their annual anti-bullying week. Young people devised a whole-school definition of bullying and created an anti-bullying pledge. Almost all young people sign the pledge during anti-bullying week. Senior leaders are committed to reviewing the policy next session, particularly as a few learners struggle to understand the definition.

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. They speak positively in particular about the availability of a QR code for young people to report bullying privately. Senior leaders are aware that the number of recorded incidents for last session is low for the size of school. This contradicts the numbers of young people who state that they have experienced bullying. Also, a minority of young people report that they do not feel confident in reporting bullying. Senior leaders are aware of the need to explore a range reporting mechanisms to ensure that all young people are reporting incidents or concerns.

Most parents agree that staff deal well with bullying. They demonstrate awareness of the school's anti-bullying policy, which is available online. A majority of parents confirm that they know how staff at the school investigate incidents of bullying. However, only a minority of parents know how staff record and respond to incidents of bullying.

Staff display a strong understanding of the policy, with most having been involved in its development. They are clear about their roles and responsibilities and how to report incidents of bullying for further investigation. Staff use the local authority's information management system, 'On the Button', to record incidents of bullying. Senior staff record incidents of bullying that fall under the Equality Act (2010) on SEEMiS (Bullying and Equalities Module). Staff use SEEMiS to register attendance and record incidents of bullying following on from a concluded investigation. They prefer the local authority information system to SEEMiS as they can tailor it to the bespoke needs of their school. They also maintain that their system leads to more effective communication between members of staff.

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

Senior leaders and pastoral staff monitor and respond to concerns raised about bullying very well. They review these incidents on a fortnightly basis to identify trends and patterns. Senior leaders report that analysis of the data highlights a need to continue their focus on racism. They also note recent increases in online bullying. Senior leaders have responded through assemblies and health and wellbeing lessons to target the root causes of prejudice. Staff have used support from external partners and key national resources to support their work. Young people speak positively about how this increases their knowledge and understanding of all aspects of bullying.

Young people have a sound understanding of the wellbeing indicators. They can describe what they would do if they or someone they knew was being bullied. Learners can also detail the support offered by staff and that all staff approach bullying in the same way. Senior leaders and pastoral staff provide weekly updates to staff on learners who require additional monitoring or support. This includes those who have been involved in bullying incidents. Staff use data from the termly wellbeing assessments to adapt the personal and social education

curriculum. They identify young people who would benefit from targeted interventions and provide appropriate support. Young people agree that incidents of bullying are well monitored by staff.

The school community is aware that the initial response to address an incident of bullying is based around restorative practice. As a faith school, this approach is centred on one of their core values: forgiveness. Senior leaders and pastoral staff ensure the privacy of young people is protected throughout the process. There can be tensions with a few parents who wish to know the school's response or who do not agree with the restorative approach.

Senior leaders review data about bullying and share annual statistics to the Parent Council who are consulted on the school's anti-bullying approaches. They recognise the need to continue to involve stakeholders in the ongoing review of bullying, including clarifying the school's procedure to parents.

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 concern as a result of the strong approach to prevention in school. Staff foster a strong and calm ethos, based on the values of the Gospel, which leads to a positive and respectful climate. Staff are visible and monitor the corridors and social areas during breaks. Senior students and a campus police officer support staff to provide supervision during the school day. These efforts are resulting in young people feeling safe in school.

Young people feel that where bullying occurs, staff act promptly and effectively with a range of interventions. A few young people have experienced incidents of bullying. They felt that staff listened to them and took their views seriously. Young people also value being able to access counselling services. This has led to almost all 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, programmes such as anger management and mindfulness.

Anti-bullying is a feature of young people's learning in assemblies and classrooms and as part of the health and wellbeing curriculum. Staff have implemented a range of strategies to promote positive relationships and an anti-bullying culture. Senior learners are also developing skills to provide peer support such as those who are training as Mentors in Violence Prevention.

An increasing number of staff use bullying as a context for interdisciplinary learning. The school community participates in anti-bullying week and initiatives such as 'Show Racism the Red Card'. This is led by the PE department with input from other departments such as English and RME. Young people feel that this is helping them to value and respect other cultures and promote diversity. They understand better why other young people display bullying behaviour and react from a position of understanding.

Almost all staff confirm that they undertake relevant professional learning, based around both national and local guidance and resources. This includes training to use "On the Button", to refer bullying concerns to pastoral teams. Professional learning is enabling staff to provide their universal offer of support to young people, often referring to pastoral staff for information rather than action. This is developing a more consistent approach to respond to bullying across the school. Staff speak positively about recent training focusing on cyber bullying and

celebrating diversity. As a result, staff are planning to develop greater opportunities for young people to learn about online bullying.

Almost all young people and staff describe the school's approach to bullying very positively.