

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	Stornoway PS and ELC Setting ,Bun-sgoil Steòrnabhagh Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	
Date/time of visit	20.09.22	9:15am – 4:30pm
HMI	[Redacted]	
Date ROV submitted	[Redacted]	

Key contextual information (200 words)

School roll	384 P1-P7 including GME (108), 54 ELC
Composition	12 classes P1- P7 6 classes P1-P7 GME
Demographics (SIMD, ethnicity, ASN)	[Redacted] ASN – 29% GME – 28% EAL – 12%
Leadership structure	Executive Headteacher Head of School Depute Headteacher 4 Principal teachers (all with teaching commitment)

1. Approaches schools have taken to record incidents of bullying

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's anti-bullying policy (2016) was created with the intention to provide guidance for all learning settings on the approach, processes and procedures that should be followed to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying behaviour. The core messages from the authority document were to shape individual learning settings policies following consultation with children, staff and parents.

Stornoway PS have recently reviewed their anti-bullying policy, with their positive relationships policy and nurture policy. All three policies are underpinned by the school's vision, 'At Stornoway PS we support our learners' health and wellbeing to raise attainment and achievement through high quality teaching and learning experiences.' The anti-bullying policy aims to provide clarity, consistency and coherence in approaches towards recognising, responding to, recording and preventing bullying. The policy reflects UNCRC and GIRFEC

principles. Staff and partners are familiar with the policy and clear about their roles and responsibilities to prevent bullying. The headteacher could strengthen this policy by including reference to national guidance and legislation. The children have produced a summary of the key points of the policy in English and Gaelic. This should now be further developed to provide a child friendly overview of the policy to be displayed in classrooms and around the school.

The school's anti-bullying policy includes the local authority's procedure flowchart for when an allegation of bullying is made. The headteacher should update this flowchart to detail the schools specific procedures to responding to incidents of bullying and make reference to recording incidents on SEEMiS.

Almost all children understand what bullying is and feel safe at Stornoway PS. In pre-questionnaires, almost all children stated that bullying is not accepted in their school. Almost all children know who to speak to if they or someone they know feels they are being bullied. Almost all children are confident that staff will tackle bullying if they see it happening in school. They are aware that incidents of bullying are recorded on SEEMiS.

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

All staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities in relation to reporting incidents of bullying. Staff report incidents of bullying to senior leaders. Senior leaders investigate all incidents of bullying and record them on Pastoral Notes, SEEMiS. The headteacher records all proven cases of bullying on the Bullying and Equalities module (BEM), SEEMiS. The headteacher is reluctant to record perceived incidents of bullying on BEM, SEEMiS. She does not like that children's records on SEEMiS are labelled with a bullying incident flag, particularly if the case is unproven. She feels this is a contradiction to the 'Respect for All' policy which encourages us not to label a child as the bully.

2. The arrangements for monitoring incidents of bullying

Senior leaders monitor formally all incidents of alleged bullying well. Termly, they review incidents to identify trends and patterns relating to groups and individuals. Senior leaders have noticed an increase in the reporting of incidents of bullying since sharing the updated anti-bullying policy with children and parents. Senior leaders have also noticed the children who have demonstrated bullying behaviours, often all are experiencing challenges at home.

In the pre-questionnaires, almost all children answered that they understand what bullying is. 35% of children report they have experienced bullying in school at some point. However, children and staff reported in the focus groups that there is no bullying at Stornoway PS. Staff plan to further explore the definition of bullying with children and continue to promote positive and respectful relationships with peers.

[Redacted]

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.

The headteacher is very keen to gather the views of all relevant stakeholders and include them in a range of quality assurance activities. The headteacher ensures safeguarding processes, including bullying are evaluated regularly. The headteacher has recently shared the updated anti-bullying policy with children at assembly. She also plans to gather parents' views on the policy at an upcoming parent event in school.

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

All staff at Stornoway PS actively promote positive relationships and work in partnership with children, parents and partners to prevent bullying behaviour at school. The school implements a range of approaches to promote and foster respectful relationships. The school's values and UNCRC class/ school charter's, which are also in Gaelic, guide and influence behaviour and daily interactions across the school. The nurturing principles are embedded across the school and the recent creation of a nurture classroom is providing enhanced support for identified individual learners. In the nurture classroom children engage in experiences to develop preventative and responsive strategies to support self-regulation in a safe, nurturing environment. Staff teach children how to recognise their own feelings and behaviours. They have given them different tools to monitor and manage their own emotions and mental health through using approaches from 'Zones of Regulation' and the 'Decider Skills.' Children talk positively about using approaches to self-regulate and help them respond appropriately to a range of situations. Children and staff in Gaelic Medium (GM) would like to see these resources now produced nationally in Gaelic. Staff currently translate much of the material.

A class within Stornoway PS are 'Anti-bullying Ambassadors' for the school. In session 2021-2022, they participated in the Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme. Participation in the programme equips the children and key staff with the tools to transform their school's approach to anti-bullying and create a safer, kinder school community. The 'Anti-bullying Ambassadors' lead whole school initiatives to raise awareness through pro-active strategies including anti-bullying focus week, assemblies and posters displayed around the school. The 'Anti-bullying Ambassadors' support their peers in the playground when they have fall outs with their friends. The school now wish to develop this initiative further prior to the P6 class transitioning to secondary, and to include GM ambassadors.

Staff talked about an increase in relationship issues between children since periods of lockdown. Staff talked about children losing their temper with others quicker, lacking resilience when there is conflict with others, and struggling with free-flowing play opportunities.

Children complete wellbeing assessments twice a year, through the medium of English and Gaelic Staff use the data from the assessments to plan 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.

All staff report that relevant professional learning takes place regularly for both universal and targeted approaches including nurture training, trauma informed practice and Rights Respecting Schools. This learning supports a consistent approach across the school. Almost all staff report that this improves their ability to recognise all behaviour as communication, consider the underlying reasons for a child's behaviour and provide appropriate support.

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.

Effective practice worth sharing if applicable

Case study to follow re Anti-bullying Ambassadors

Effective practice worth sharing if applicable

Case study to follow. Request made to HT on visit date

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).

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