EDUCATION SCOTLAND

EHRiC submission from Education Scotland for the session on bullying and harassment of children and young people in schools

Education Scotland is Scotland’s national agency for quality improvement in education. We promote improvement in all sectors of education and at all stages of the learning journey, from the early years to adult and continuing education. The Agency sits within the DG Learning & Justice portfolio, responsible to Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills and works closely with SG Directorates for Learning, ESLL and Children & Families. It also provides direct policy support for Ministers in a few areas, specifically Community Learning and Development, Youth Strategy and Adult Learning.

Background and policy landscape

Curriculum for Excellence

Health and wellbeing
Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) cannot be delivered without good relationships and positive behaviour. We want all our children to get the support they need to benefit fully from their education. The starting point for learning is a positive ethos and climate of mutual respect and trust based upon shared values across whole school communities where everyone can learn and work in a peaceful and safe environment. Children and young people should feel happy, safe, respected and included in the learning environment and all staff should be proactive in promoting positive relationships and behaviour in the classroom, playground, and wider learning community. All adults who work in schools have a responsibility to support and develop Mental, Emotional, Social and Physical Wellbeing.

CfE tries to ensure that all young people, no matter their race or identity, are respected and receive the support they need to make informed choices for themselves. Education establishments promote children’s health and wellbeing throughout early years, primary and secondary education through refreshed, age-appropriate and inclusive strategies and resources. This will enable children to learn about tolerance, respect and equality to help address and prevent prejudice.

Relationship Sexual health and Parenthood (RSHP) education
Schools need to address any issues of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and promote an inclusive approach to relationships, sexual health and parenthood education. The guidance on the Conduct of Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) education in schools, clearly states how important it is that RSHP education addresses diversity and reflects issues relating to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex young people or children with LGBTI parents, such as same sex marriage and hate-crime reporting.

The guidance also highlights a resource titled ‘Dealing with Homophobia and Homophobic Bullying in Scottish Schools, a Toolkit for Teachers’ which provides support for staff in recognising, challenging, and reducing homophobia and homophobic bullying in their schools. This offers a range of lesson plans for teachers
to choose from that can be used as deemed appropriate for the age and development stage of the class.

Education Scotland has numerous resources that are useful for different levels of RSHP education, all of which are accessible to practitioners on Glow. This is not intended to be a comprehensive or prescriptive list, but rather a list of materials that have been quality assured to ensure compliance with the ethos of RSHP. Education Scotland will continue to make sure resources are available for practitioners that are up-to-date, age appropriate and inclusive.

Officials in Scottish Government and Education Scotland are currently working with local authority and NHS representatives to explore what more can be done to support LGBTI inclusion in RSHP resources for Scottish schools. Representatives from LGBT Youth Scotland have been involved in this. NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde are working with these RSHP education partners to commission a RSHP web-based teaching resource that supports delivery RSHP education for schools in Scotland.

Mental health
The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) Act (Scotland) 2007 places a number of duties on local education authorities including ensuring that schools are health promoting. This includes promoting physical, social, mental and emotional wellbeing by supporting pupils to make positive lifestyle choices in relation to their health and wellbeing.

CfE has an important role to play in promoting the health and wellbeing of children and young people and all of those in the educational communities to which they belong. Under the experience and outcome (HWB 06a), teachers must ensure that children and young people understand the importance of mental wellbeing and that this can be fostered and strengthened through personal coping skills and positive relationships. It is for each local authority and school to decide how to develop their own approaches to implement CfE, based on local needs and circumstances.

This government is clear that children and young people should have an understanding that there is support available to them if they need it. A number of authorities provide access to school based counselling in their schools. In other areas, schools utilise the skills of their pastoral care staff and liaise with health services for specialist support when required. A mental health link person is available to every school, this has been achieved in a variety of ways using various models working to meet local needs. The link worker may be a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) clinician or another speciality such as a primary care worker.

Anti-Bullying Policy
Education Scotland supports the Scottish Government in projecting a very strong message that bullying of any kind is unacceptable and must be addressed quickly, whenever it arises. Each local authority is responsible for the care, safety and welfare of pupils in school in the authority area. All adults who work in schools have a responsibility to ensure the mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing of the children and young people in their care. The Responsibility of All is in place to
ensure each practitioner fulfils their role in promoting open, positive, supportive relationships across the school community.

We are committed to addressing prejudice and discrimination and to promoting equality and diversity in our schools. Every child and young person in Scotland should be able to grow up free from bullying and develop mutually respectful, responsible and confident relationships with other children, young people and adults.

The Scottish Government is committed to refreshing the National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland’s Children and Young People to ensure that it remains current and is in line with the legal framework outlined in the Equalities Act, reflects policy and legislative developments including Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC); Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014; relationships and behaviour and the respectme research Bullying in Schools 2014. The purpose of the refreshed National Approach is to communicate and promote a common vision and aims to make sure that work across all sectors and communities is consistently and coherently contributing to a holistic approach to anti-bullying in Scotland, which includes prejudice based bullying.

The working group tasked with refreshing the National Approach, is made up of experts from a diverse number of organisations that have experience of working in this area of work across the protected characteristics including the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), Education Scotland, ENABLE, LGBT Youth Scotland, Stonewall Scotland, Youthlink Scotland, Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS), Police Scotland, SportScotland and respectme, Scotland’s national anti-bullying service. You may be interested to know that the principals that we are basing the approach on are robust, children’s rights focussed, rooted in equalities and have been agreed by the working group and the parents and carers, children and young people and practitioners we consulted with.

The refreshed National Approach does make clear that some behaviour can be perceived as or assumed to be bullying and is clear that hate crime is defined through the law as a crime motivated by malice or ill will towards individuals because of their actual or perceived disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or transgender identity. The refreshed National Approach will be published in late 2016.

The Scottish Government continues to wholly fund respectme, a national anti-bullying service, to build confidence and capacity to address all types of bullying effectively, aligned to the National Approach. respectme provide direct support to local authorities, schools, youth groups and all those working with children and young people. You can find more about the work of respectme at www.respectme.org.

**Government commitments and priorities**

Improving health and wellbeing has been identified as one of the key priorities of the National Improvement Framework, along with a drive to improve attainment and close the attainment gap. Without an emphasis on health and wellbeing and focussing on every child as an individual by nurturing their wellbeing, talents and skills and ensuring they feel welcome, safe and cared for throughout their time in school; our children and young people simply cannot flourish or achieve positive
learning outcomes. In December 2016, the Scottish Government will publish plans for gathering information about the health and wellbeing of children and young people.

In addition, the Scottish Government has recently committed, in the national delivery plan ‘Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education’ to work with the General Teaching Council for Scotland to provide more support to all newly appointed, guidance and promoted teachers on equalities issues by August 2017. The Standard for Full Registration requires that, by the end of their teacher training, student teachers demonstrate the ability to respond appropriately to gender, social, cultural, religious and linguistic differences among pupils. In addition, the Delivery Plan also commits to a review of initial teacher education programmes to report by April 2017, to ensure that they provide appropriate detail on equality across both primary and secondary sectors; as well as working with the GTCS to provide more support for teachers in equality issues through career long professional learning to be in place by August 2017. The Scottish Government is committed to completing all activity in the Delivery Plan against the published timescales. Work is underway to review the content of Initial Teacher Education courses and we will shortly begin working with the GTCS to provide more support to teachers in respect of equality issues.

Education Scotland
Education Scotland continue to provide support to schools on promoting positive relationships with children and young people, which includes support and resources around anti-bullying strategies.

Education Scotland, in partnership with NHS Health Scotland, awarded grants to 5 local authorities as part of a pilot project to roll out Scotland’s Mental Health First Aid for Children and Young People. The aim of this is to train staff within secondary school communities in order to increase their confidence in approaching pupils who they think might be struggling with a mental health problem. This training should complement the range of mental health strategies that are already in place within the local authorities and the support should target the school communities that need it the most first.

The Scottish Advisory Group on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools (SAGRABIS)
SAGRABIS provides advice to local and national government on behaviour and relationships in schools. The group is chaired jointly by the Depute First Minister and Councillor Stephanie Primrose from COSLA. All of the major teaching unions in Scotland are represented on SAGRABIS. Stonewall and LGBT Youth Scotland gave a presentation outlining their work and what they can offer to support teachers’ understanding and confidence in managing any cases of prejudiced based bullying in schools. Their proposal is being considered by Scottish Government.

The nature and extent of prejudice and bullying in schools?

Research from Time for Inclusive Education (TIE)
TIE published a research report Attitudes Towards LGBT in Scottish Education on 11 September 2016. There were two surveys – one for ‘Pupils and Schools Leavers’
and the second one for ‘Teachers’. The Pupils and Schools Leavers survey received 317 responses and the Teachers survey received 408 responses. This sample is less than 1% of the 51,078 teachers in Scotland.

The key findings are:
• 90% of LGBT respondents reported experiencing HBT bullying while at school.
• 64% of LGBT respondents reported being bullied because of their gender identity or sexual orientation.
• 86% of LGBT respondents reported LGBT issues never discussed or taught in progressive manner at school. Many also highlighted lack of LGBT inclusive sex education at schools.
• 5% of LGBT respondents believe teachers adequately equipped to discuss LGBT issues in classroom.
• 72% of LGBT respondents reported HBT bullying not challenged by teachers at school.
• 4% of LGBT respondents believe SG has done enough to tackle HBT bullying in schools.
• 27% of LGBT respondents reported that they had attempted suicide at least once as a result of bullying.
• 15% of LGBT respondents reported attempted more than once as a result of bullying.
• 13% of LGBT respondents reported self-harmed once as a result of bullying.
• 45% of LGBT respondents reported self-harmed regularly as a result of bullying.
• 95% of LGBT respondents believe being bullied has had long lasting negative effects on them.

Stonewall Research based on a survey of young people and teachers within 2 separate reports.
Main findings:

• **More than half** (52 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual young people have experienced homophobic bullying
• **Ninety nine per cent** of lesbian, gay and bisexual young people hear the phrases ‘that’s so gay’ or ‘you’re so gay’ in school
• **One in four** report that teachers who hear homophobic language never challenge it
• **Almost half** (48 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils have never seen lesbian and gay issues addressed in class.
• **Nine in ten** secondary school teachers say children and young people regardless of their sexual orientation experience homophobic bullying.
• **44 per cent** of secondary school teachers and **77 per cent of** primary school teachers say they are told they cannot discuss LGBT issues in the classroom.
• **More than four** in five teachers have not had any specific training on how to tackle it.

Respectme Research
The 2014 research indicated that 30% of children said they have experienced bullying – face to face being the most common type of bullying. The top three behaviours experienced face to face were the same as the behaviours experienced online. Children and young people value whole school style approaches to bullying, ones that listen and include them rather than assemblies or just recording mechanisms.

How do schools respond to bullying and how are they supported in that role?

• Schools try to ensure that all young people, no matter their sexual orientation or identity, are respected and receive the support they need to make informed choices for themselves. Children and young people’s health and well-being are central to Curriculum for Excellence and the Getting it Right for Every Child policy. Schools adopt age-appropriate resources and inclusive strategies to teach children about tolerance, respect and equality to help address and prevent prejudice.

• The refreshed National Approach-Respect for All provides very clear guidance. It is explicit about prejudice based bullying and the Equality Act and stresses the importance of working within this framework.

• Education Scotland’s self-evaluation framework ‘How Good is Our School 4’ was launched in September 2015 and has been used in all school inspections since August 2016. This new framework now includes a new indicator specifically focusing on measuring the quality of safeguarding, wellbeing, equality and inclusion. This will support schools to effectively evaluate their own practice and support self-improvement.

• Education Scotland asks specific questions about bullying through pre-inspection questionnaires to pupils and parents. These questionnaire responses are analysed and followed up during the inspection if there are concerns about bullying in the school or the way bullying incidents are managed. Inspectors will ask to see records of bullying incidents where appropriate.

• Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) Scotland Programme is being developed and delivered to schools across the country by the Violence Reduction Unit in partnership with Education Scotland to promote positive relationships through health and wellbeing for young people in schools. MVP is a bystander programme which empowers young people to safely challenge and speak out against bullying, abusive and violent behaviour, as well as the negative attitudes and assumptions which underpin this behaviour. A key component of the types of behaviours and attitudes which MVP seeks to address centres on gender-based violence and attitudes and assumptions towards women and girls. The programme aims to raise awareness and challenge thinking by countering mainstream messages about gender, sex and violence. The programme encourages dialogue by creating a safe have supported environment for boys and girls to share their opinions and experiences. It inspires leadership by empowering participants with concrete options to effect change in their communities. Peer mentors (S5/6 pupils) are at the heart of the MVP Programme. Their training and their ability to influence their own peers is crucial.
The mentors deliver lessons on sensitive issues listed above to S1 and 2 pupils in their own school.

**Respectme, Scotland’s Anti-Bullying Service:**

- Respectme 31 of the 32 LA’s to develop a policy and train staff. Over 7,000 staff have been trained across Scotland

- Respectme ensures that all training events and policies they are involved in developing includes prejudice-based bullying and mentions all of the protected characteristics as well as the UNCRC. The training materials were developed in partnership with equalities bodies/organisations.

- Respectme has developed materials on specific equalities issues around LGBT Youth, Gender, Disability and worked with colleagues on race equality religion.

**What needs to change to ensure schools can deal with cases of bullying and promote inclusivity in schools?**

- Scottish Government has committed to a review of initial teacher education programmes, to report by April 2017, to ensure that they provide appropriate detail on equality across both primary and secondary sectors.

- Scottish Government has committed to providing more support to all newly appointed, guidance and promoted teachers on equalities issues by August 2017. Further discussions will take place on the detail of what the training includes and how the programme will be delivered with the GTCS.

- Scottish Government and Education Scotland will continue to engage with Stonewall Scotland, LGBT Youth Scotland and the TIE campaign to ensure that schools address the important issues that LGBT young people face; and ensure that teachers have the skills, knowledge and confidence to embed inclusive approaches in their schools.

- Education Scotland is planning training for all HMI in partnership with LGBT Youth Scotland and Stonewall. This will ensure all inspectors have current knowledge and understanding of any issues.

- LGBT Youth Scotland and respectme were provided with £10k of Scottish Government funding earlier this year to collaboratively produce a resource and deliver practice seminars that aim to improve the knowledge confidence and skills for teachers and those working in learning environments to address the issue of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying. The resource has not been published yet but will be promoted through the use of Education Scotland and Scottish Government’s media channels.

- Discussions are currently taking place between Stonewall Scotland and LGBT Youth Scotland and Scottish Government about a joint proposal outlining how both organisations can support LGBTI young people in schools and how they can support teachers build their confidence and capacity in supporting LGBTI young people. These
new areas of work will provide further support to teachers and staff in schools to develop their knowledge, understanding and confidence and enhance the support provided to manage bullying and equality issues.

- Further discussions could take place with the Scottish Guidance Network to explore their needs for further support and advice in this area.

- There is a need for consistent implementation of the refreshed National Approach – Respect For All. Respectme and Education Scotland will work together to support the implementation process. Respect For All has clear guidelines and responsibilities for all staff working with children and young people. Local Authorities should provide the appropriate support and challenge to ensure policies are developed and implemented in schools and are regularly reviewed.