

SPSO decision report

Case: 202105309, Glasgow City Council
Sector: Local Government
Subject: Primary School
Decision: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

C complained about the council's handling of their complaints about their child (A) being bullied at their school by another child. They advised that the bullying had persisted for a number of years and complained of the school repeatedly using the same strategies with little effect or of them being stopped prematurely. They also complained that the council had failed to keep proper records of the incidents of bullying. C said that this lack of documentation had contributed to the school continually using the same anti-bullying strategies despite them not working.

C made two formal complaints to the council, both of which were partially upheld by the council and which identified failings and described actions for improvement.

We found that the council had implemented anti-bullying strategies following C's first complaint which had had a positive impact on behaviour, however they did not keep this under review in line with their policies and the bullying recommenced during a period when no measures were in place. This led to C making a further complaint. Following C's second complaint, we found that the council were now monitoring the behaviour and adhering to their anti-bullying policies. However, as C had been required to make a second formal complaint to achieve this outcome, we upheld this complaint.

In reference to the council's record-keeping of the reported incidents of bullying, we found that the council had improved their documentation since C's first complaint about this and incidents of bullying were now being recorded on the appropriate systems. As this was no longer a problem at the time of C's second complaint, we did not uphold this complaint.

As C had advised of being unaware of the stage at which their complaints were being handled, we provided feedback to the council to ensure that the complaint handling procedure was clearly explained to complainants.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- The council have been asked to apologise to C for failing to manage reports of bullying in line with their policies and procedures. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets.

We have asked the organisation to provide us with evidence that they have implemented the recommendations we have made on this case by the deadline we set.