

(xii) Mr A Baxter

To the Chair of the Education Committee

"What reassurance can you give to Highland parents that there are safeguards to prevent any cover up of violent incidences towards pupils in our schools as recent investigations have revealed occurred at Scottish Borders Council and what procedures are in place to ensure any such complaints are dealt with in an open and transparent manner?"

Violent incidents are recorded locally by schools. Significant incidents are noted in pastoral notes on Seemis. Complaints are dealt with in line with the council's staged policies. Stage 1 complaints are dealt with by the headteacher, and where the complainant is unsatisfied with that response, it can be escalated to stage 2. In this case, it is investigated by an area officer and a formal response sent out. Should the complainant still be unsatisfied, they may complain further to the Scottish Ombudsman (SPSO)

If there is a violent incident against a pupil by a member of staff, this will be dealt with through our child protection procedures and we liaise with Health & Social Care and the Police. All child protection concerns are reported to relevant partners as per THC child protection policy. In the event of any criminal proceedings, we would wait until this was concluded and then it would also be dealt with through the council's disciplinary processes. We also inform the Care Inspectorate, Scottish Social Services Council and The General Teaching Council for Scotland where appropriate, who may then choose to undertake their own investigation.

Separate arrangements are in place for acts of violence against staff.