Notre Dame High School

Anti-bullying

Policy and Practice

August 2017

1. Introduction

Bullying behaviour is never acceptable within Notre Dame High School and young people have an entitlement to achieve and develop in a vibrant learning environment that makes them feel valued, respected and safe. Our strong Catholic ethos provides a supportive and nurturing experience for all of our young people, and we work hard to ensure that our pupils are free from all forms of abuse, bullying or discrimination.

This booklet sets out the anti-bullying policy of Notre Dame High School and Education Services within the context of our overarching policy on inclusion *Every Child is Included and Supported* (www.goglasgow.org.uk/pages/show/521). It has been produced in consultation with respect*me*[1], Scotland's anti- bullying service and takes account of the wider legal framework underpinning equalities, inclusion and meeting learners' needs. Based on Scotland's National Approach, it outlines the process of prevention, identification and recording of incidences of bullying and discriminatory behaviour. It also informs how staff respond to alleged bullying.

This policy also reflects the principles of *Getting it Right for Every Child*, where every young person should be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. Health and Wellbeing is a central aspect of our curriculum and is the responsibility of all staff at Notre Dame High.

Bullying affects individuals, families and relationships as well as a child's education and participation. A young person that is bullied will not feel safe, included or respected and this can therefore constitute a well-being concern. The Equality Act 2010 act sets out rights which include legal protection from discrimination related to any of the nine protected characteristics[2].

- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Sex (Gender)
- Pregnancy/Maternity
- Religion/Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage/Civil Partnership
- Gender Reassignment

Children and young people may be bullied as a result of prejudice. This could be due to perceptions and prejudice about one of these protected characteristics or because of socio-economic prejudice. A young person may not have one of the characteristics but may still be bullied because of perceptions about them, their friends or their family. Notre Dame High School is committed to challenging prejudice-based bullying and makes an explicit commitment to each of the protected characteristics.

> Every child and young person in Scotland will grow up free from bullying and will develop respectful, responsible and confident relationships with other children, young people and adults. Children and young people, and their parents or carers, will have the skills and resilience to prevent or respond to bullying. All children will expect help and know who can help them; while those adults working with them will follow a consistent and effective approach in dealing with and preventing bullying from early years onwards.
> *(Scottish Government, 2010)* www.gov.scot/Publications/2010/11/12120420/0

1. respect*me* is Scotland's anti-bullying service which was launched in 2007.
2. In relation to the education of children and young people, the protected characteristics of age, marriage and civil partnership are not included.

2. What do we mean by bullying?

Notre Dame High has a positive, supportive and spiritual ethos. We recognize that bullying is not a normal part of growing up. Adults do not expect to be verbally or physically abused by colleagues or friends, and children and young people have the same right to be free from bullying and to feel safe in their school environment.

There have been many different definitions and theories about what constitutes bullying, but it is not helpful to define bullying purely in terms of behaviour.

*Bullying is behaviour **and** impact – never one on its own. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships. It is behaviour, actions or attitudes that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out.*

This can include:

- *being called names, teased, put down or threatened;*
- *being hit, tripped, pushed or kicked;*
- *having belongings taken or damaged;*
- *being ignored, left out or having rumours spread about you;*
- *receiving abusive messages electronically;*
- *behaviour which makes people feel like they are not in control of themselves;*
- *being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be.*

This can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the actual behaviour may not be repeated, the threat may be sustained over time, typically by actions, looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions or the fear of these. This is not an exhaustive list and it is important to consider impact, intent and persistence when defining bullying behaviour.

(respectme 2013)

In a recent survey carried out in Scotland's schools by respectme, 30% of children reported that they had been bullied in the last school year. Of these, 60% happened offline, 21% happened both on and offline and 19% took place online only. A consistent approach to addressing bullying within schools, both in terms of responding and recording incidences of bullying is crucial.

Online bullying

Children and young people experiencing online bullying usually know the identity of the person who is bullying them. 92% of the children and young people reporting bullying said they knew the person bullying them. Online bullying, or cyberbullying, is often the same type of behaviour as other bullying, for example name-calling, spreading rumours and leaving people out, but it takes place online, on social networking sites, in chatrooms, and via mobile technologies, gaming and instant messaging platforms. The impact of this is as hurtful and damaging as other forms of bullying behaviour. Advances in technology are simply providing an alternative means of reaching people. Where malicious messages were once written on school books or toilet walls, they can now be sent via mobile phone or the internet, making their reach greater, more immediate and much harder to remove or erase. Whilst advances in technology, including social media, provide many possibilities to enhance learning and teaching, teachers and other staff at Notre Dame High are alert to its possible misuse.

Some online behaviour is illegal. Children and young people need to be made aware of the far-reaching consequences of posting inappropriate or harmful content on forums, websites, social networking platforms, etc. Find out more about cyberbullying at: www.respectme.org.uk/cyberbullying.html

When talking about bullying, it is important not to label children and young people as *"bullies"* or *"victims"*. Labels can stick for life and can isolate a child, rather than helping them to recover or change their behaviour. Reference should be made instead to *"those experiencing bullying behaviour"* and *"those displaying bullying behaviour"*. All children and young people need help to understand why bullying behaviour is wrong in order that they can change it. It is important not to develop predisposed notions about which child or young person is likely to fall into which category. In some cases, children or young people may not be aware that their behaviour is actually bullying. They perhaps model the behaviour of adults or other children and young people. They may not understand that it is wrong because they have never been taught otherwise. In these circumstances, the intent to bully may not be present, but the impact and effect on the person being bullied will be no less severe. Bullying can affect people in different ways.

If you are unsure if behaviour is bullying, look at the effect it is having on the child or young person. In can be the case that one child says something unpleasant to another, but this is not always a case of bullying as it has no real impact on the child. Such behaviour should always be challenged, even if it is not bullying.

3. Ethos

Health and Wellbeing is the responsibility of all staff and it is a critical factor in creating and maintaining a positive ethos within our school. The guidance contained within this booklet is informed by the overarching principles in *Every Child is Included and Supported* with regard to inclusion, the roles and responsibilities of staff, meeting learners' needs and the nurturing city. At Notre Dame High school, we have clear whole school policies and procedures both to help prevent bullying but also to deal with any bullying incidents.

Last session, we conducted a pupil survey which asked pupils to comment on what aspects of school makes them feel they are Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Responsible, Respected and Included. Some quotes are shown below:

- "*I feel 100% safe in school and all teachers ensure at all times we are in a comfortable and safe environment*."
- *"There are many clubs and opportunities that encourage us to be active and take care of our bodies."*
- *"The teachers understand if something has happened and they support you …and want you to succeed."*
- *"School supports my health by encouraging me to eat healthy and to exercise. Counseling is offered and so is advice from the school nurse."*
- *"I feel as though over the past year I have become a lot more optimistic and outgoing making me feel a lot better about myself. I recently joined choir which has helped my confidence and it makes me feel good contributing to the school."*
- *"Opportunities are available to all. Teachers help you achieve your dreams."*
- *"PE encourages me to take on further sports outside of school."*
- *"I feel responsible because I am always trusted with stuff, like being asked to do stuff from teachers."*
- *"We are trusted in classes and that helps build a relationship between pupils and staff I also like the responsibility of my own revision for exams giving me a sense of maturity."*
- *"I feel respected when the teacher discusses my progress with me."*
- *"I feel respected when teachers listen to my opinion and take into consideration how I feel."*
- *"I wear a hijab … I feel like I am respected regardless of my beliefs."*
- *"I feel like the school has, at it's least, has a civil tolerance and respect of it's pupils, regardless."*
- *"Inclusion is not accepted in school and there is always help available for anyone who does not feel included."*

(3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion – Pupil Survey 2017, Notre Dame High School)

At Notre Dame High School, there are particular approaches that support our ethos, these include:

- Vision, Values and Aims statements which place an emphasis on mutual respect and which are agreed and discussed with all staff, learners and parents/carers;
- a proactive Pupil Council;
- S6 mentoring systems;
- Embedded restorative practices and solution-focused approaches;
- a code of conduct which makes clear that bullying is unacceptable and sets out everyone's responsibility in preventing and reacting to bullying;
- visual reminders such as posters or on school website or school display screens;
- discussion as part of PSSE;
- activities such as role-play e.g. drama and literature;
- featuring bullying at school assemblies;
- Presentations/workshop on keeping safe online and safe use of digital technology.

Bullying behaviour is never acceptable and Glasgow City Council Education Service is committed to reducing the incidence and effects of bullying behaviour within its schools/centres by:

- setting an ethos in schools/centres which places an emphasis on respecting, valuing and caring for self and others;
- establishing a climate where all members of the school community, irrespective of age or status, promote and model positive behaviours and values;
- putting in place anti-bullying policies at Council and school/centre levels;
- taking seriously any report or allegation of bullying behaviour, investigating and taking appropriate action;
- ensuring that staff, children and young people and parents/carers are fully conversant with the requirements of the school's anti-bullying policy and that its terms and implications are discussed and reviewed on a regular basis;
- providing support for children and young people who are experiencing bullying behaviour;
- helping the person displaying bullying behaviour to understand the impact of their behaviour and supporting them as they change their behaviour;
- involving parents/carers, as appropriate, in supporting both children and young people who are bullied and those who are displaying bullying behaviour;
- ensuring the level of bullying in schools/centres is monitored and procedures are in place for maintaining records in Click+Go;
- putting in place quality assurance procedures to monitor the effectiveness of the policy and reviewing as appropriate.

The above will be supported by:

- providing opportunities for peer support initiatives which promote skills of active citizenship;
- providing appropriate staff training in recognising and dealing appropriately with acts of bullying;
- ensuring that children and young people who have experienced bullying behaviour receive appropriate support and protection from further abuse;
- including anti-bullying education within the Personal, Social and Health Education curriculum for all young people as well as through cross curricular and whole school approaches;
- addressing anti-bullying through, for example, circle time and co-operative learning methodologies.

4. What we do if someone says they are being bullied (also see flowchart, Appendix 2)

Teachers and other school staff may become concerned about a young person. They may witness something which may be bullying. A child or young person may say to a member of school staff that they are being bullied. How the member of staff reacts is crucially important. Children and young people have usually gone through a lot of upset before they come forward and actually tell someone whom they trust. A child's experience will be directly affected by the response they get from the adult.

We need to listen and get it right. It's about the personal touch, and we should always be mindful of this, no matter how busy we are at the time.

What matters most is that staff should listen to what the child or young person is saying and reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling. Children and young people are often concerned that no one will take them seriously if they tell that they are being bullied. Staff should show them that they are believed and are being taken seriously.

Gently encourage them to talk, find out what happened, who was involved, where and when - write it down if that helps. Staff might have to do some probing, but should let the child or young person speak without interruption as far as possible. They should feel confident to ask questions once they have heard what the child or young person has to say. Keeping notes may be helpful but it is important that the child or young person knows why and how the notes will be used.

respect*me* recommend you ask the following three questions:

- What was the behaviour?
- What impact did it have?
- What do I need to do about it? *(respectme 2014)*

At this stage staff need to be very clear with the child or young person about what happens next. The young person needs to retain some feeling of control over the situation so it is vital that they are involved and updated on progress. Sometimes a particular incident can be resolved fairly quickly but in many cases it can take some time to work towards a resolution and it is important that the child experiencing the bullying behaviour feels supported and has some strategies to help. Bullying can have long-term impacts on children and young people. When the bullying behaviour stops, the impact may still be felt and the process of moving on from what may have been a traumatic event may need ongoing monitoring and support.

Dealing with behaviour and impact allows staff to respond to offensive behaviour and language that may not have resulted in a person being bullied or have little or no impact. The use of derogatory language and threats may be an attempt to bully and these should still be treated seriously.

5. What about the child who is bullying?

"Children and young people who are bullying will need help and support to help identify the feelings that cause them to act this way and develop strategies to cope with these feelings differently." (respectme 2014)

All behaviour is communication. It may well be that the bullying behaviour of the child or young person may stem from an unmet need, pastoral care staff may well look at developing a plan for that young person if it is appropriate.

6. Prejudice

Some Staff should be prepared to address prejudicial attitudes that may be behind the behaviour. Bullying behaviour can often be rooted in prejudice due to difference or perceived difference. Glasgow City Council and its education establishments have duties under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure the needs of all learners are met in policy and in practice. At Notre Dame High, all staff are expected to challenge inequality and promote inclusive and nurturing environments, making a clear and explicit commitment to each of the protected characteristics as outlined above and that bullying based on or motivated by these is never acceptable.

Glasgow City Council is also aware of the potential vulnerability of children/young person in relation to the following:

- Asylum seeker or refugee status;
- Body image;
- Looked after status/kinship care arrangements;
- Social or economic status;
- Young carer responsibilities;
- Imprisonment of parents/carers, siblings, or other family members.

Our staff work hard every day to ensure young people feel included and are treated with respect.
We recognize that in this environment, they are more likely to develop effective resolutions and responses to bullying.

7. Recording, Reporting and Monitoring of Bullying and Discriminatory Incidents/Alleged Incidents

To ensure consistency across all Glasgow schools, incidents of bullying and discriminatory behaviour are recorded on Seemis, our database.

Recording in this way has a number of advantages:

- It allows Education Services to collect data centrally;
- It allows Senior staff to interrogate data;
- It complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010;
- Incidents can be recorded under different types of discriminatory behaviour;
- The system records incidents against persons displaying the behaviour and persons experiencing the behaviour;

Notre Dame High has a clear set of procedures for dealing with allegations of bullying.

- We expect the member of staff to whom the incident is first reported, or who has witnessed the incident to take the incident seriously.
- Staff can use their professional judgement to decide upon appropriate action, taking into account the circumstances and the information they have.
- Staff members are expected to consult and agree procedure with a member of the Senior Management Team or Pupil Support Team.
- In all cases it is crucial that the child or young person is listened to and supported.
- All incidents of bullying or alleged bullying must be recorded on Seemis.

- There should always be clarity, for pupils and parents, how the case will be monitored and reviewed.
- A member of Senior Leadership Team at Notre Dame High will have overall responsibility for ensuring that procedures relating to allegations of bullying are implemented, usually the Year Group Head.
- Whole school incident reports available on SEEMIS are regularly monitored by the DHT Pupil Support.

Within Seemis, the information is recorded about both the person experiencing the behaviour and the person displaying the behaviour. The nature of the incident and the characteristic is completed in all cases. Sometimes an incident is covered by more than one headings below:

Nature of Incident

- Damage to property
- Physical
- Emotional
- Text or IT related
- Extortion
- Verbal
- Incitement
- Written
- Isolation

Characteristics

- Age
- Gender reassignment
- Medical Condition/Disability
- Homophobia/Sexual orientation
- Body image
- Marital status
- Care Circumstances
- Pregnancy/Maternity
- Disability of victim
- Racial
- Economic Circumstances
- Religion or belief
- Family Circumstances
- Sectarian
- Gender/Sexual harassment
- Substance Misuse
- Territorial/Gang related

As well as recording that an alleged incident has been reported, details about the incident are also recorded. Information about how the situation is to be monitored and reviewed is entered in the appropriate section the views of the person experiencing the person displaying. If appropriate, the views of parent are recorded as well.

Monitor and review

- Do they feel their concerns were listened to?
- Do they feel satisfied with the outcome?
- Does the parent/carer feel satisfied with the outcome?

Finally, staff complete the Action Progressed section by outlining the actions taken and the conclusion.

Incident Conclusion

- Being addressed
- Resolved
- Not resolved
- Unfounded

Information recorded in this part of Seemis automatically creates an entry into the pastoral notes for each of the young people. This entry does not contain detail about the incident – its purpose is to indicate that an incident has been recorded in the bullying and equalities section of the database.

Help sheets for staff are available from SEEMIS at:
www.seemis.gov.uk/site3/index.php/component/rs les/les?folder=Help%20Pages/Click-Go/MANAGEMENT%20-%20BULLYING%20AND%20 EQUALITIES

8. Useful Links

Respect*me* - Scotland's anti-bullying service was launched in March 2007. The service is fully funded by the Scottish Government and is managed by Scottish Association for Mental Health in partnership with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth Scotland.
Web www.respectme.org.uk

LGBT Youth Scotland
Web www.lgbtyouth.org.uk

Childline
Web www.childline.org.uk/Explore/Bullying/Pages/Bullyinginfo.aspx

Education Scotland – Health and Wellbeing Web
www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningandteaching/curriculumareas/healthandwellbeing/index.asp

A National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People
Web www.gov.scot/publications/2010/11/12120420/0

Cyberbullying
Web www.respectme.org.uk/cyberbullying

Appendix 1: Prejudice-based bullying[3]

Children and young people can experience bullying for a variety of reasons; where they live, their sexual orientations, gender, disability, the colour of their skin, what clothes they wear or what team they support. The one thing that these have in common is difference or perceived difference – some children and young people don't see or understand diversity, they still only see difference.

Difference, or perceived difference, can be a catalyst for children and young people being bullied. If you would like to find out more about the different types of prejudice-based bullying listed below, visit our useful links section.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees

Children and young people who are asylum seekers or refugees may be at greater risk of bullying directly and indirectly. Stigma, due to lack of knowledge and understanding of asylum seekers and refugees, together with a reluctance to burden parents with extra worries can allow bullying to continue and go undetected.

Body image

Body image is hugely important to children and young people and bullying because of body image can have a significantly negative impact. For example, a child or young person who is noticeably over or underweight may find that they are particularly vulnerable to bullying behaviour.

Homophobic bullying

Homophobic bullying is mainly directed towards young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender or young people who are questioning their sexuality. However, it can also be directed at young people who do not conform to strict gender *"norms"*. For example, a boy who doesn't like football may stand out as being different. Ultimately, any young person can be homophobically bullied and any young person can display homophobic attitudes which should be challenged.

Transgender

Is an umbrella term used to describe someone who does not conform to society's view of being male or female. Children and young people who are experiencing confusion over their gender identity may be the target of transphobia. Transphobia at its most basic is the fear of a transgender person and the hatred, discrimination, intolerance and prejudice that this fear brings. This can result in bullying behaviour towards an individual because they are not seen to be conforming to gender stereotyping and *"norms"*. If children and young people are experiencing confusion over their gender identity, they may be reluctant to challenge bullying behaviour that could attract further attention to them.

Looked after children

Children and young people who are looked after and accommodated are vulnerable to bullying behaviour for a number of reasons: It may be due to regular changes in schools or where they are placed, which can make forming friendships difficult; they may have poor relationship skills stemming from attachment difficulties; inappropriate reactions to situations as a result of learned behaviours; a reluctance to make friends; low self-esteem, lack of role models and a heightened sense of privacy.

3 Copyright respect*me*, reproduced with permission.

Race and Ethnicity

Children and young people from minority ethnic groups, including the gypsy/travelling community, often experience bullying based on perceived differences in dress, communication, appearance, beliefs and/or culture. The status of *"minority"* in a school, community or organisation can often make a child or young person the focus for those involved in bullying behaviour. This can arise from a misguided and/or learned belief that they 'deserve' to be treated differently or with less respect.

Religion and Belief

Lack of knowledge and understanding about the traditions, beliefs and etiquette of different faiths, or having no faith, can lead to religious intolerance. Lack of awareness about the differences in practices of religions such as prayer times, dietary requirements, fasting and the wearing of religious clothing or articles of faith can result in misunderstandings and stereotyping, which may fuel bullying.

Sectarianism

Most people understandably associate Sectarianism with religion. The reality of prejudice however means that your family background, the football team you support, the community you live in, the school you attend and even the colour of your clothing can mark you out as a target for sectarian abuse - whatever your beliefs may be.

Sexism and Gender

Gender inequality and stereotyping can leave children and young people, and in particular girls, who do not conform to these norms vulnerable to bullying. Bullying in the form of derogatory language, online comments and the spreading of malicious rumours can be used to regulate both girls' and boys' behaviour - suggesting that they are not being a real man or a real woman if they do not behave in such a way towards others. Personality traits that do not t in to the unwritten rules of *"appropriate"* male and female behaviour can make children and young people a target for their actual or perceived difference. These terms can be of an explicit gender- based nature and it is worth noting that many can involve using terms for people who are gay and lesbian as a negative towards someone.

This behaviour should not be confused with sexually aggressive behaviour, which is potentially a form of criminal harassment and should be treated as such. For this reason, in Scotland we do not recommend using the term *"sexual bullying"* as a descriptor in policies or in practice – it is an unclear and reductive term. Sexual assault and exploitation are not types of bullying, they are abuse.

Gender-based bullying – if unchallenged can lead to a deepening of attitudes and behaviour towards girls or those who do not conform to gender norms that can escalate to more abusive behaviours. This behaviour can take place face to face, in private and online or sometimes a combination of all of these. What happens or is shared online will directly impact on a person and that should be our focus. In all probability online activity will relate directly to an experience or conversation they have had in person. Successful anti-bullying work focuses on equalities and developing and modelling relationships based on respect and fairness – and this must include gender.

Disablist Bullying

People who bully others may see children and young people with disabilities as being less able to defend themselves and less able to tell an adult about the bullying. The bullying behaviour is likely to be focused upon their speci c disability or disabilities, whether they are in mainstream schooling or in specialist provision, and may result in a need for additional support to be provided.

Young Carers

The lives of young carers can be significantly affected by their responsibility to care for a family member who has a physical illness or disability, mental health problem, sensory or learning disability or issues with the misuse of drugs or alcohol.

Young carers are at risk of bullying for a variety of reasons. Depending on responsibilities at home, they may find themselves being unable to fully participate in school or after-school activities or *"fun stuff"*. This can make it difficult for them to form relationships; it can hinder successful transitions or lead to educational difficulties.

Social and Economic Prejudice

Bullying due to social and economic status can take place in any group no matter how little diversity exists in it. Small differences in perceived class/ family income/family living arrangements/social circumstances or values can be used as a basis for bullying behaviours. These behaviours, such as mocking speech patterns, belongings, clothing, hygiene, etc can become widespread through those considering themselves to be in the dominant social economic group or class. Bullying of children who endure parental substance misuse can also be prevalent in some locations.

Under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012, we have a duty to assess all new policies and guidance to ensure it fulfils our duties under the Act. The Equality Act 2010 sets out a range of individual characteristics that are *"Protected"* from discrimination and unfair treatment including bullying. All children and young people have the right to feel safe regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation. All anti- bullying guidance should include all of the protected characteristics as well as other issues that may see children discriminated against such as body image or socio economic status.

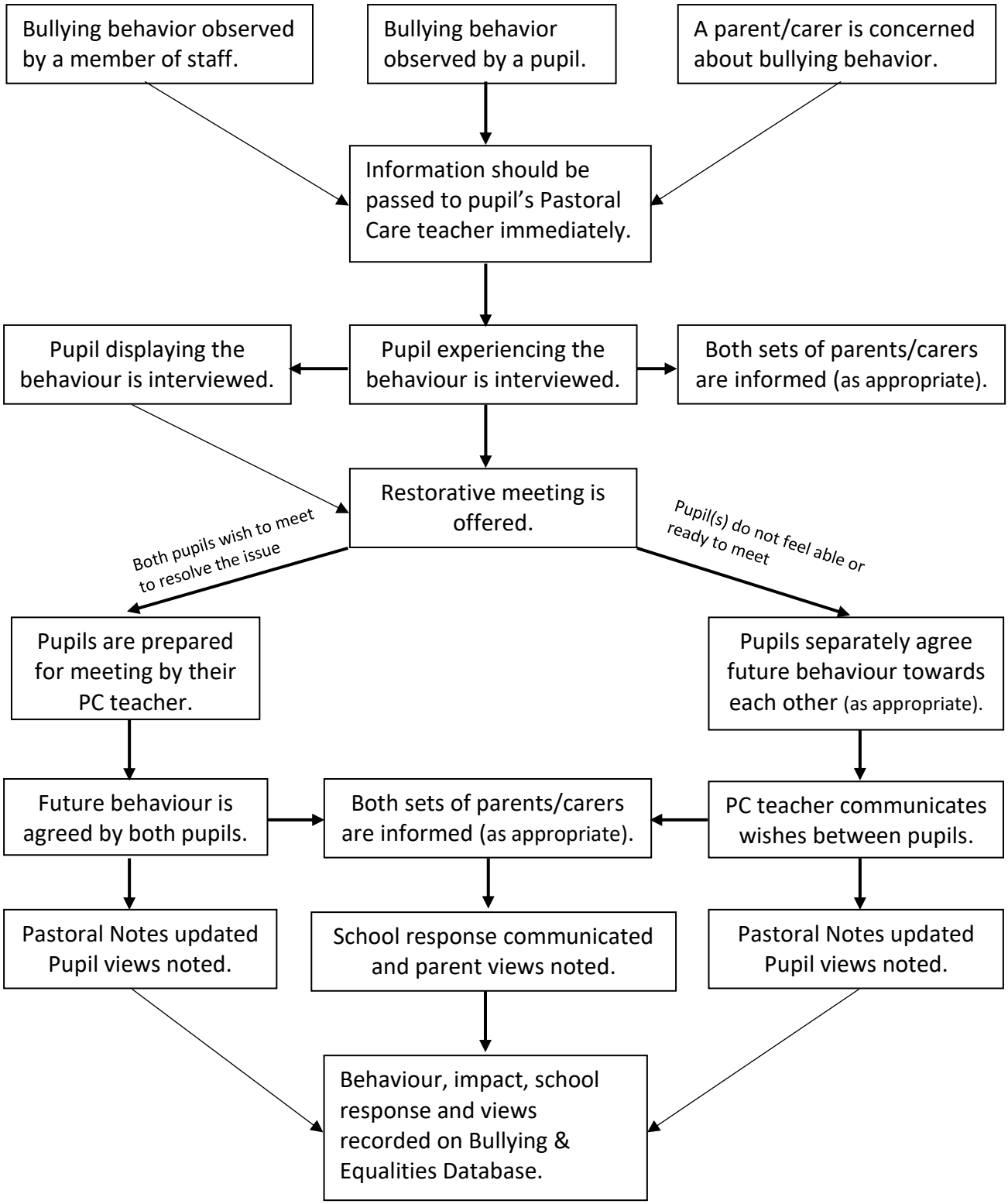
Bullying, whether linked to prejudicial attitudes or not, can sometimes create additional support needs for children and young people. There is specific legislation in this area in the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009.

Further support can be accessed at www.enquire.org.uk/pcp/pdf/ASL-Act-2009- changes.pdf

Glasgow City Council
Education Services
City Chambers East
40 John Street
Merchant City
Glasgow G1 1JL

0141 287 2000
www.glasgow.gov.uk

Appendix 2: What we do if someone says they are being bullied



Restorative conversations and meetings are embedded in our practice and are always offered, particularly if there has been a conflict between two friends. We do recognize that there are some incidents that occur where this would not be an appropriate course of action. Serious incidents involving bullying type behavior towards other pupils or members of staff would result in exclusion. Restorative Practice may be considered (if appropriate) when a pupil returns to from exclusion to support a positive way forward for all concerned.