



Stanchester

Academy

Anti-Bullying Policy

2023-24

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L. M. M.', written in a cursive style.

Headteacher

Approval Date: July 2023

Review Date: July 2024

Statement of Intent: We are a TELLING school

At Stanchester Academy we are committed to providing a warm, caring, and safe environment for all our students so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure environment.

- Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at our school.
- We take all incidents of bullying seriously.
- Bullying hurts.
- No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying.
- Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving.
- We cannot resolve the bullying if we do not know about it.
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At Stanchester Academy, we acknowledge that bullying does happen from time to time – indeed, it would be unrealistic to claim that it does not. When bullying does occur, everyone should be able to **tell** and **know** that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our anti-bullying policy. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff. We are unable to deal with bullying if we do not know about it.

Aim and objective of this policy

The aim of this policy is to try to prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in.

All members of the school have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with this policy. This will happen in the following ways:

- The school will provide a safe and caring environment. All staff will be aware of their duty of care towards students and the need to promote well-being.
- The school will meet the legal requirement for all schools to have an anti-bullying policy in place.
- The school will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that students stay safe.
- Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Students will understand through assemblies, bulletins, anti-bullying activities during SSMC/PSHE and during anti-bullying week and across the school curriculum that there is a zero-tolerance approach to bullying behaviour.
- All reports of bullying will be taken seriously. Staff know that they must act on instances of bullying which are brought to their attention and must report each instance to the head of year.
- Everyone will be listened to; will know it is “OK” to tell, who to tell and how.
- It will be made clear to all students that they can approach anyone at the school should they have a problem.
- All members of the school will treat each other with respect.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents/carers will understand what constitutes bullying.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it when bullying is reported.
- All students and parents/carers will know what the school policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs.

- students and parents/carers will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Whole school initiatives (staff training, celebration assemblies etc) and proactive teaching strategies (PHSE [Personal, Health & Social Education] lessons, etc) will be used throughout the school to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.
- A positive, caring ethos will be created within the school environment where everyone can work, and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

Rationale:

For our students to achieve their best it is of utmost importance that we strive to provide an environment for all that is safe both physically and emotionally and is free from bullying.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006

Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 states that maintained schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour, or communications, may be a criminal offence. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, any person who sends an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender, is guilty of an offence if their purpose in sending it was to cause distress or anxiety to the recipient.

Definition: What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

- Bullying (including unkindness) whether physical or emotional, is entirely unacceptable at the school. It conflicts with the school's principles, and we will always treat it seriously.
- Bullying can take many forms such as name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, pushing, taking belongings, sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet, producing offensive graffiti, gossiping, excluding people from groups, and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
- Child-on-child abuse can be a form of bullying and, in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, any such abuse will be treated as a safeguarding matter and passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Designated Deputy Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) (Please refer to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for further information on child-on-child abuse)
- Bullying will **never stop** if it is kept secret, and no one faces up to it. If you think someone else is being bullied, talk to a member of staff. We guarantee that whistle-blowers who act in good faith will not be penalised and will be supported.
- It is important to recognise that there is culpability if you see or are aware of bullying but do nothing about it. Neglecting to act makes the bystander complicit in the bullying. If you are aware of bullying happening in the school, it should immediately be reported to a member of staff.

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a student is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school.

- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet.
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with, or spoiled by others.
- Books, bags, and other belongings going missing, or are damaged.
- Change to established habits (e.g., giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent requests for first aid with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiencing nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and relevant staff.

Incidents of bullying may fall into one of the following categories:

- Any kind of behaviour that the victim is frightened to report.
- Bodily contact, which is aggressive and hurtful and is given without provocation.
- Persistent name-calling.
- Physical assault on persons and/or their property
- Persistent teasing.
- Any form of extortion.
- Persistent intimidation e.g. pushing and nudging.

Specific Types of Bullying:

Physical abuse: Physical abuse may involve hitting, kicking, shaking, nipping, pinching, biting, and hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm to another person (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)

There may be underlying reasons why a child harms another child, and it is important to understand why a child has engaged in such behaviour, including the possibility of the harm being accidental, before considering the next action or sanction to be taken.

Child-on-child abuse: All staff are aware that children can abuse other children and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. It is important that staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff understand that even if there are no reports in our school, it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important that if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse, they should speak to the DSL or DDSL.

All staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviour between children. Some of this behaviour may be abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe

environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not reporting it.

All staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse and the important role they play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence) For further information about sexual violence see the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Sexually harmful behaviour/sexual violence/sexual abuse: e.g., inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault: This can involve one or more children engaging in sexual discussions or acts that are inappropriate for their age or stage of development. Harmful sexual behaviour can occur online and offline and can also occur simultaneously between the two. It is important staff are aware of child-on-child sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse other children in this way eg rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault. Abuse may also occur in intimate personal relationships between children.

Sexual Harassment: means 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature'. This can include sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, and calling someone sexualised names; sexual jokes or taunting including deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes, displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature, including online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse

- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery, formerly referred to as 'sexting') occurs when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image, or video. This includes sending nude pictures, rude pictures, or nude selfies. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture can happen in any relationship and to anyone, whatever their age, gender, or sexual preference. Once the image is taken and sent, the sender loses all control of the image, and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession or distributing indecent images of a person under 18, young people may be committing offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Upskirting: The Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 (commonly known as the 'Upskirting' Act) provides that it is an offence to take a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a

skirt) without their permission and/or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm. Anyone of any sex, can be a victim.

Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals: Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony which may be used to induct newcomers into a school, sports team, group, or gang. Forms of initiation/hazing can vary from relatively mild rituals to severe and violent ceremonies. This practice is intended to create a bond between the newcomer and the existing members and is often deemed a rite of passage. (This could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

Cyberbullying: Cyberbullying is a “method” of bullying, rather than a “type” of bullying. It includes bullying via text message; via instant messenger services and social network sites; via email; and via images or videos posted on the internet or spread via mobile phone. It can take the form of any of the previously discussed types of bullying and technology can be used to bully for reasons of race, religion, sexuality, disability etc. Unlike other forms of bullying, cyberbullying can affect a child 24 hours a day and invade their personal space and even enter the ‘safe’ home environment. The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for ‘virtual’ bullying, which can occur inside and outside of school. Cyberbullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories, as people forward on content at a click.

Cyberbullying can be criminal behaviour under the Malicious Communications Act 1988. Section 1 states that electronic communications which are indecent or grossly offensive convey a threat or false information or demonstrate that there is an intention to cause distress or anxiety to the victim would be deemed to be criminal. This is also supported by the Communications Act 2003, Section 127, which states that electronic communications which are grossly offensive or indecent, obscene, or menacing, or false, used again for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience, or needless anxiety to another could also be deemed to be criminal behaviour. If the behaviour involves the use of taking or distributing indecent images of young people under the age of 18 then this is also a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Outside of the immediate support young people may require in these instances, the school will have no choice but to involve the police to investigate these situations.

Prejudiced Behaviour: Prejudice-related bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, both physically and emotionally, which causes the victim to feel powerless, worthless, excluded, or marginalised, and which relates to prejudices around belonging, identity, and equality in wider society. Specifically, prejudices surrounding disability, special educational needs, ethnic, cultural, or religious backgrounds, gender, home life (eg in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social classes) and sexual identity (homosexual, bisexual, transsexual and transgender).

Discriminatory bullying includes:

Bullying related to special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities: Children and young people with SEN and disabilities are more at risk of bullying than their peers. Public bodies have responsibilities to actively promote equality of opportunity for all disabled people and eliminate disability-related harassment. Children and young people with SEN and disabilities, whether in mainstream or special schools, do not always have the levels of social confidence and competence and the robust friendship bonds that can protect against bullying.

Bullying related to appearance or health conditions: Those with health or visible medical conditions, such as eczema, may be more likely than their peers to become targets for bullying behaviour. Perceived physical limitations, such as size and weight and other body image issues can result in bullying.

Bullying related to sexual orientation: Evidence of homophobic bullying suggests that children and young people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered (trans) person (or perceived to be) face a higher risk of victimisation than their peers. Homophobic bullying is perhaps the form of bullying least likely to be self-reported, since disclosure carries risks not associated with other forms of bullying. People do not have to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans to suffer homophobic bullying. This bullying not only impacts on the individual, but on their families and others perceived to be from that same group. It may be based on gender stereotyping.

Bullying of young carers or looked-after children, or otherwise linked to home circumstances: Children may be made vulnerable to bullying by the fact that they provide care to someone in their family with an illness, disability, mental health, or substance misuse problem. Young carers may be taking on practical and emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult. Research has highlighted the difficulties young carers face, including risks of ill-health, stress, and tiredness, especially when they care through the night. Many feel bullied or isolated. Children in care may also be vulnerable to bullying for a variety of reasons, such as they are not living with their birth parents or because they have fallen behind in their studies. Some students are heavily influenced by their communities or homes where bullying and abuse may be common. Some bullying at school may arise from trauma or instability at home related to issues of domestic violence or bereavement or from the experience of being part of a refugee family. Siblings of vulnerable children may themselves be the subject of bullying by association.

Sexist or Sexual bullying: Sexist and sexual bullying affects both genders. Boys may be victims as well as girls, and both sexes may be victims of their own sex. Sexual bullying may be characterised by name calling, comments and overt “looks” about appearance, attractiveness, and emerging puberty. In addition, uninvited touching, innuendos and propositions, pornographic imagery or graffiti may be used.

Bullying Related to Race, Religion or Culture: Some surveys across the UK have found that a high proportion of bullied students have experienced racist or faith-based bullying. Recent political and social issues also appear to have been a factor in bullying and harassment. There is research to support the suggestion that where black and minority ethnic (BME) children experience bullying, it is more likely to be severe bullying.

Preventative Measures:

Staff, students and parents, **MUST** work together to create a happy, caring, learning environment. Bullying be it verbal, physical or indirect is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It is everyone’s responsibility to aim to prevent occurrences of bullying behaviour and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively. Bullying behaviour can be brought to the attention of staff either by the pupils who are affected, their friend(s), their parent(s), or other interested parties

The ethos of the school will discourage any form of bullying behaviour and will encourage good relations through the following measures:

- Use of CCTV cameras
- The school’s Behaviour and Rewards Policy

- Student guidance and mentoring
- Assemblies/Anti bullying focus days
- Thrive programme with PFSA to build self-esteem
- Posters
- Display material in rooms/public spaces
- Vigilance always
- Use of Learning Centre at lunchtimes for vulnerable students
- 1: 1 support as appropriate
- Guidance to both students and parents in relation to the use of IT and mobile phones

Within the PSHE **curriculum**, and other curriculum areas there is a commitment to teaching and exploring the impact of bullying. This will help to:

- Raise awareness about bullying behaviour, its effect on emotional health and well-being, and how it will be combated.
- Develop personal and social skills through the promotion of friendship skills, assertiveness skills, conflict resolution and problem-solving skills, communication skills and the exploration of spiritual and moral values.
- Build and maintain self-esteem.
- Promote positive role models and positive student/staff relationships.

Action to be taken if Bullying has occurred:

1. Students involved may be asked to complete statements. A concern may be raised on 'My Concern'.
2. The student who is bullied must be offered help within the pastoral structure of the school. Each case must be dealt with discreetly and sensitively. Interviews with parties must take place.
3. The parents of all the students involved should be contacted. Discussion of action strategies must take place hopefully with parental co-operation.
4. Each case will be dealt with on an individual basis. Depending on the severity of the case various forms of action may be taken. The victim will need support and strategies need to be used to rebuild the student's self-esteem.
5. The student who bullies others however will need careful counselling on reasons for bullying, aspects, and consequences of this sort of anti-social behaviour. Counselling is available via the Head of Year, PFSA or DDSL
6. Governors must be kept fully informed of cases of bullying and in the more severe cases Governors may need to be involved with any disciplinary action taken eg exclusion.
7. Responses will vary depending on the nature of the incident, but may include:
 - Assertiveness training through Thrive
 - Head of Year, HLTA, PFSA or safeguarding team support
 - Involvement of external agencies
 - Monitoring by tutor/Head of Year; peer support/peer mentoring
 - Use of Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC) contract
 - Alternative to Internal Isolation
 - Safety plans
 - Fixed term suspension.

See Appendix A: Resolving it together flow chart for students, Appendix B: Anti-bullying procedures for students, staff and parents/carers

Student Guidelines:

What to do if you think you are being bullied:

- Do not keep bullying to yourself; it will be dealt with
- Tell your tutor, or any other adult in school you trust, if you, or someone you know, are being bullied
- Tell a parent/carer if you, or someone you know, are being bullied
- Tell them again if the bullying does not stop in school or if it continues outside school
- Try not to show you are upset, which, although difficult, will help discourage the bully; try to appear confident; just walk past if people call you unpleasant names; tell yourself you do not deserve to be bullied
- If you feel threatened, walk away
- Continue to inform adults at school or parents/carers at home if the bullying is continuing
- Ensure social networking sites are only accessible to invited friends; block individuals who upset you.

See Appendix A: Resolving it together flow chart for students, Appendix B: Anti-bullying procedures for students, staff and parents/carers

Parent/Carer guidelines:

What to do if you think your child is being bullied:

- Inform the student they are doing the right thing by reporting it
- Contact his or her tutor immediately
- Email the safeguarding email address at safeguarding@stanchester.co.uk
- Watch for signs – not wanting to go to school, minor illnesses, headaches, avoiding friends, coming home with bruises or torn clothing, possessions disappearing, becoming upset after using the internet or mobile phone
- Listen to what your child says, try to establish that the problem really is bullying and not something else
- Learn how your child uses information and communication technology and familiarise yourself with safe practice
- Help your child to deal with the problem by him or herself. Be tactful, but do not encourage retaliation-this rarely helps and may only make things worse for your child
- Keep asking about the bullying. If it has not stopped inform the school immediately.

See Appendix A: Resolving it together flow chart for students, Appendix B: Anti-bullying procedures for students, staff and parents/carers.

Staff responsibilities:

All staff have a responsibility to:

- Inform the student they are doing the right thing by reporting it
- Model appropriate behaviour in relationships with other staff and with students
- Confront bullying in any form
- As bullying is potentially a safeguarding issue and must be regarded as such, staff must take appropriate action including report all incidents to the head of year as soon as practicably possible
- Promote the use of a range of learning strategies which challenge bullying.

See Appendix A: Resolving it together flow chart for students, Appendix B: Anti-bullying procedures for students, staff and parents/carers.

Heads of Year (HoY) responsibilities:

The HoY have primary responsibility for dealing with bullying incidents in the following way:

- Listen to all parties involved
- Investigate incidents promptly and as fully as possible
- Follow the process detailed in Appendix B: Anti-bullying procedures for students, staff and parents/carers
- Complete the log of incidents for persistent bullying, including the 'form' of bullying (racist, sexist, homophobic etc.)
- Share with parents/carers of the victim and perpetrator all incidents of bullying
- Call upon the support of external agencies/police as appropriate
- Monitor the situation over a period with parents and students

See Appendix A: Resolving it together flow chart for students, Appendix B: Anti-bullying procedures for students, staff and parents/carers.

Senior Leadership Team responsibilities:

The Senior Leadership Team has a responsibility to:

- Promote open management styles which facilitate communication and consultation within the school and relevant outside agencies when appropriate.
- Promote the use of interventions which are least intrusive and most effective.
- Monitor types of bullying and instigate responses, as appropriate

See Appendix A: Resolving it together flow chart for students, Appendix B: Anti-bullying procedures for students, staff and parents/carers.

HoY procedures:

Upon receipt of a bullying report the HOY will:

- Follow the process in Appendix B: Anti-bullying procedures

Safeguarding team procedures (where HoY has judged a My Concern log is needed):

Each school day will:

- Check My Concern for new bullying concerns
- Check the safeguarding email inbox for concerns raised by parents
- Using My Concern, set tasks for the relevant Head of Year to deal with the issue. Tasks should include:
 - Take statements from victim, perpetrator and witnesses
 - Contact all parents on same day to inform them of the concern and proposed next steps.
 - Inform students involved of proposed next steps
- Check that tasks have been completed to an acceptable standard and chase staff where tasks are incomplete or not completed to an acceptable standard.
- Check that outcomes are logged on My Concern and chase staff where more detail is required.
- Set tasks to ensure that staff check in with students and parents to ensure that the bullying has stopped.
- Close the concern only when the DSL confirms that the bullying has been resolved to their satisfaction. Where this is not clear the DSL will task the relevant Head of Year with further actions. The concern should not be closed until it is clearly resolved.

As instructed by the DSL or Headteacher, the DDSL will review bullying concern data and submit it to SLT and Governors.

Bullying information, support and helplines:

Additional sources of guidance and information and outside agencies who can offer support are:

- Childline: 0800 1111
- NSPCC: 0808 800 5000
- Samaritans: 116 123
- childline.org.uk – contains tips and resources for victims.
- bullying.co.uk – help and advice for victims, parents and schools.
- nspcc.org.uk – help and advice for parents and families.
- Kidscape and standuptobullying.co.uk-advice for parents and children about dealing with bullying.

Useful reading:

- 'Bullying; Wise Guide' by Michele Elliott
- 'Don't Pick on Me: How to Handle Bullying' by Rosemary Stone
- 'Your child bullying' by J Alexander
- '101 Ways to deal with bullying' - a guide for parents by M Elliott

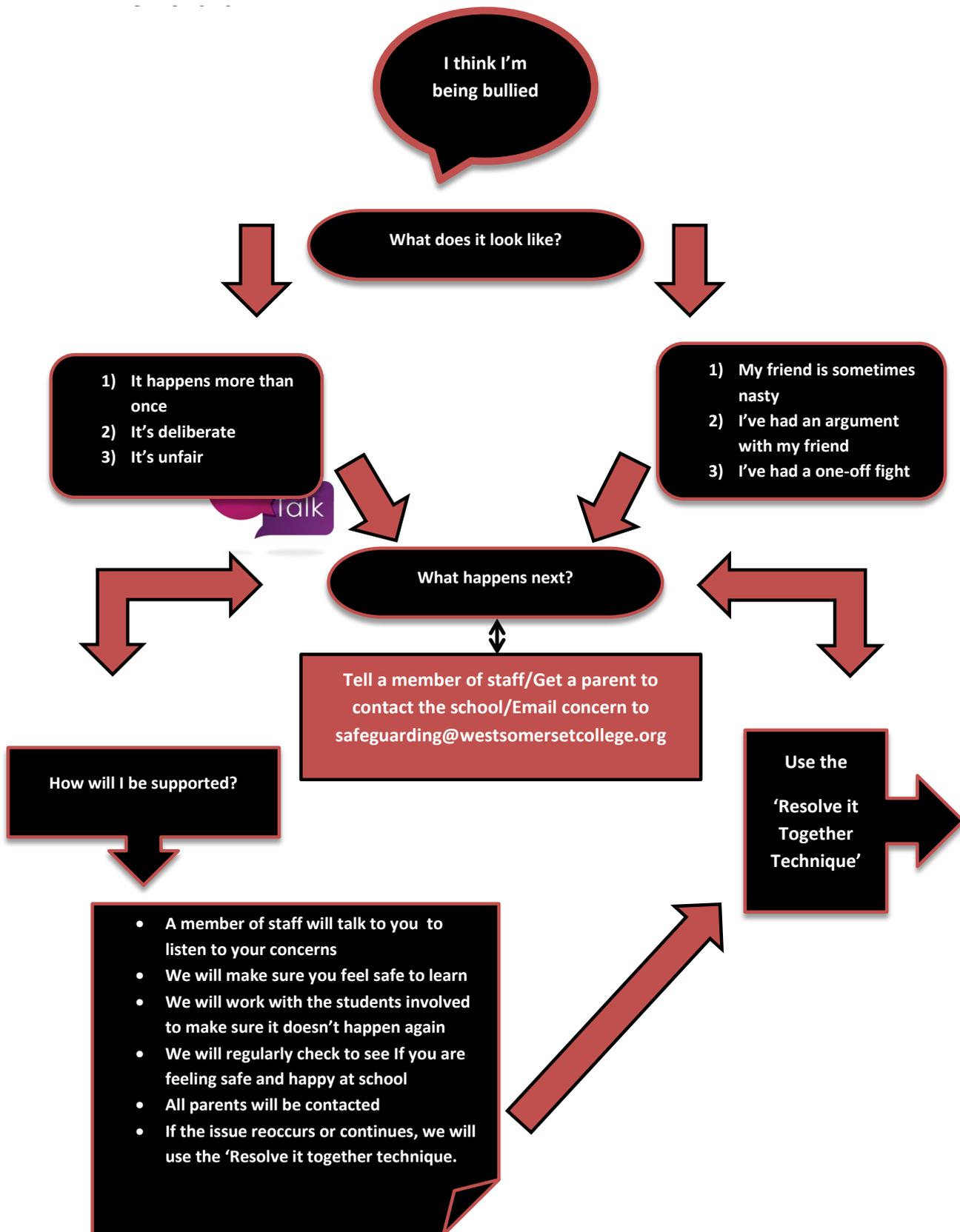
- ` Keeping Safe: A practical guide to talking with children by Kidscape
- ` Helping children cope with bullying' by S Lawson
- ` Confident children: a parents' guide to helping children feel good' by G Lindenfield
- ` Bullying and how to fight it: A Guide for families' by A Mellor
- ` Fighting, teasing, and bullying: Simple and effective ways to help your child' by J Pearce
- ` The bullying problem: How to deal with difficult children' by A Train

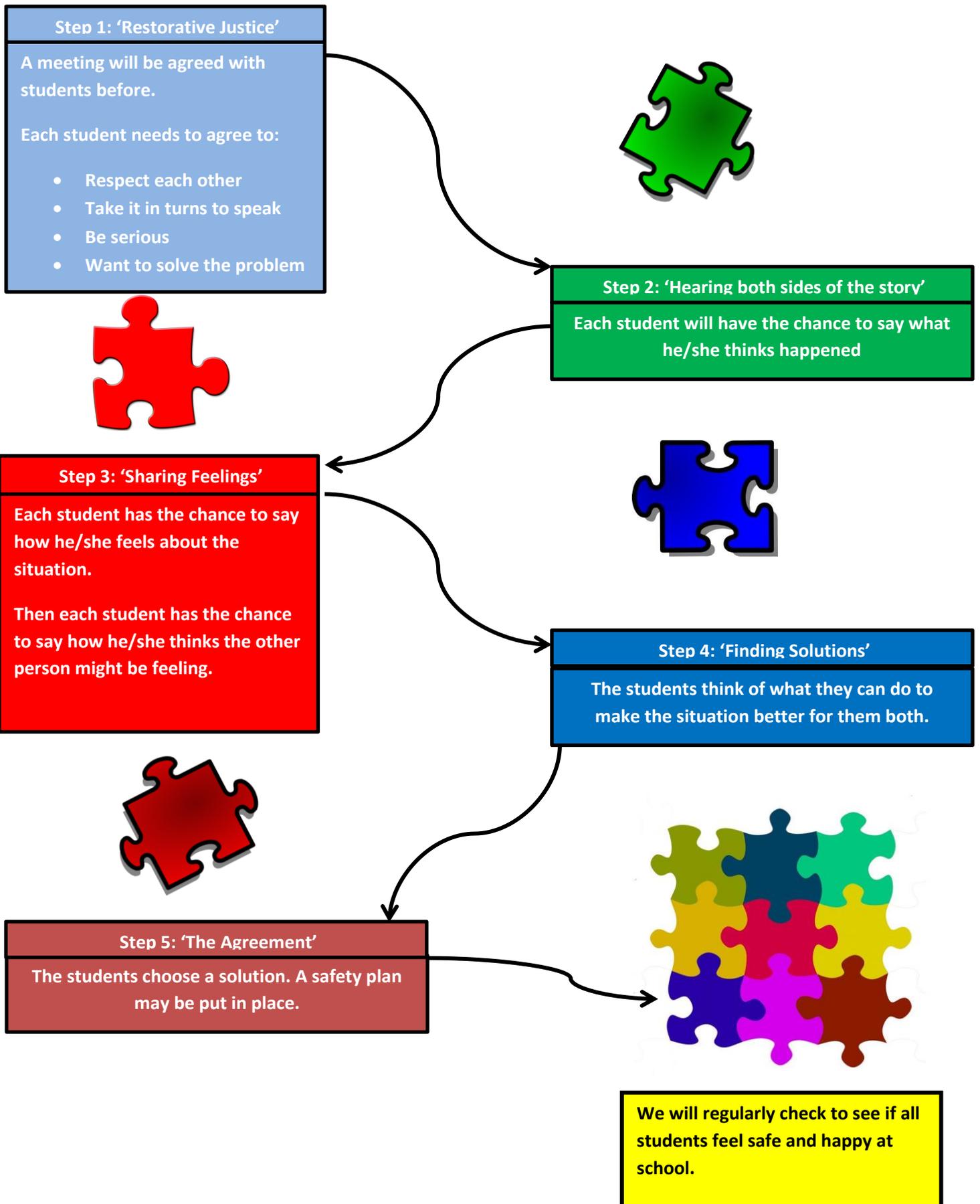
Limits of the Policy:

Where bullying occurs in or on school trips, this policy will be applied. If bullying takes place out of school but there is a school connection, the school will act if it deems it appropriate. If the bullying takes place out of school and there is no school connection, this policy cannot be invoked but the school may offer support where appropriate.

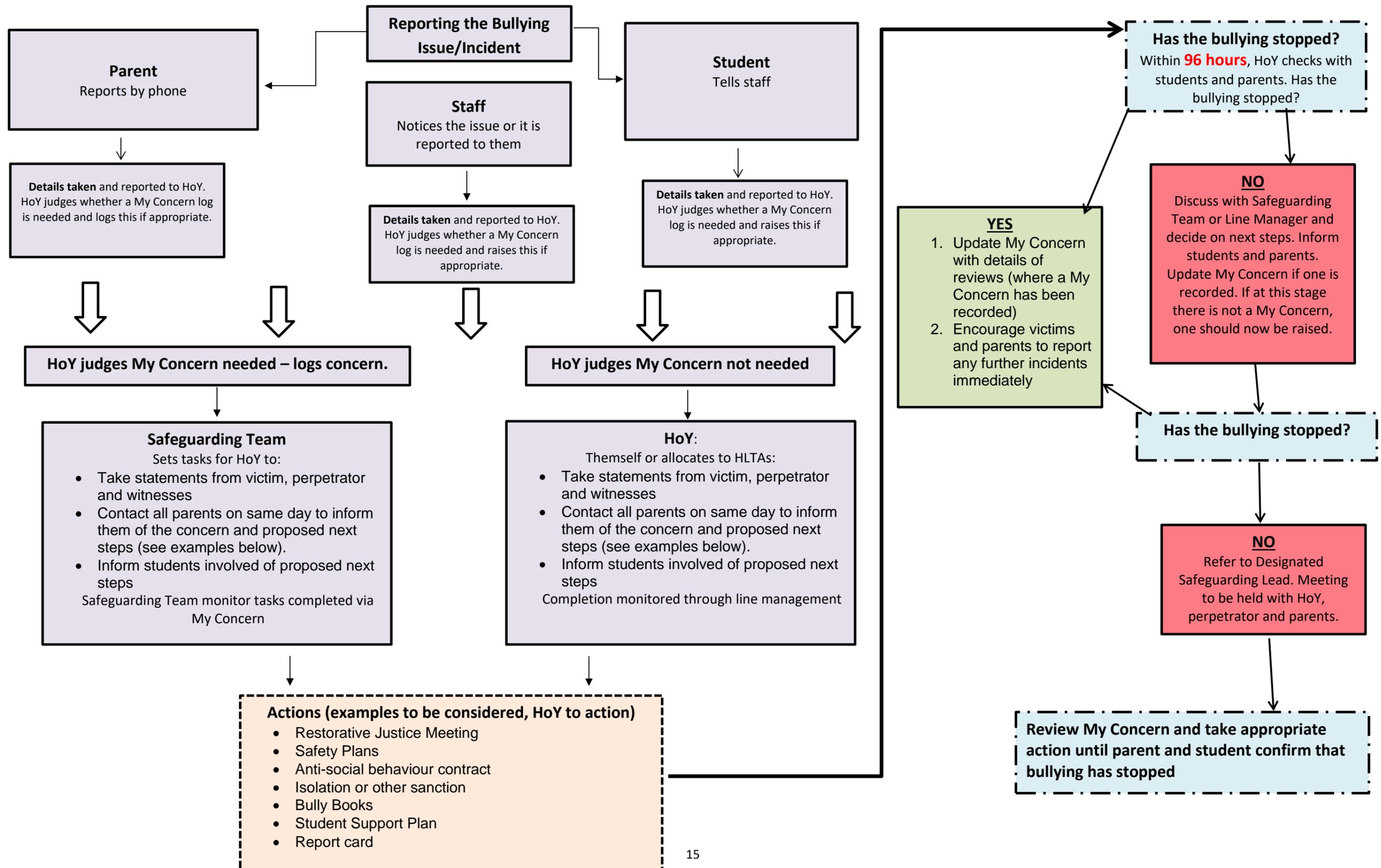
Appendix A: Resolving it together flow chart for students.

Appendix A: Resolving it together flow chart for students.





Appendix B: Anti-bullying procedures



Appendix C: Stanchester Academy Written Statement

Stanchester Academy Written Statement

Name:			
Year and Tutor Group			
Date of Statement:			
Time and Place of incident:			
Names of other students present:			
Describe what happened? Include all details, names, and location			
Statement:			
I am signing this statement as it is a true reflection of what happened during the incident.			
Name:		Signature:	
Date:			