



Linlithgow Academy



Anti-Bullying Strategy

October 2024

Linlithgow Academy **TOGETHER WE THRIVE** Linlithgow Academy

OUR CORE VALUES	OUR CORE PURPOSE	OUR CORE EXPECTATIONS
<p>We encourage...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kindness Curiosity Perseverance Fairness	<p>Our learning...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connects us Sustains us Empowers us Inspires us	<p>We are...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ready Responsible Respectful Safe

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Introduction

Linlithgow Academy's Anti-bullying Strategy supports the West Lothian Anti-Bullying Policy and Respect for All: national approach to anti-bullying (Scottish Government 2017).

It is important to ensure that the ethos of anti-bullying is embedded in day-to-day practices that are in step with Respect for All. The message that bullying is never acceptable is always prevalent and continuously and consistently reinforced.

(Respect for All, 2017)

Linlithgow Academy is committed to providing a safe, supportive environment that has a respectful, equitable and inclusive culture and for all members of the school community.

Our Anti-bullying Strategy aims to make clear our understanding of what bullying behaviour is, our expectations of everyone in our school community, how we will work to prevent it and how we deal with bullying behaviour.

The UNCRC, article 19 states:

“Children have the right to protection from all forms of violence (physical or mental). They must be kept safe from harm and they must be given proper care by those looking after them.”

What is bullying?

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online.

(Anti-Bullying Alliance)

Bullying is both behaviour and impact; what someone does and the impact it has on the other person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. We call this their sense of 'agency'. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships. It is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out and it can happen face to face and online.

(Respect Me 2015)

Impact of bullying behaviour

Bullying can affect people in different ways. Our response should focus on identifying how someone feels and helping them to cope with and respond to those feelings. Young people may act out of character when they are being bullied and changes in behaviour can be signals that something is wrong. We need to focus on what has happened and the impact it had.

Possible signs of young people experiencing/displaying bullying behaviour

Emotional signs of bullying

- ✚ Isolating themselves and not talking to the family
- ✚ Feeling withdrawn and spending more time alone
- ✚ Changes in eating habits
- ✚ Changes in behaviour such as feeling more angry than usual
- ✚ Avoiding social media
- ✚ Not seeing their friends after school or at weekends
- ✚ Anxiety and nervousness that wasn't displayed previously

Physical signs of bullying

- ✚ Bruises, cuts and marks that cannot be explained
- ✚ Issues with their sleep
- ✚ Complaining of headaches or stomach aches
- ✚ Bedwetting

Changes at school

- ✚ Suddenly doing less well at school
- ✚ Anxious about going to school and saying they are feeling unwell more than usual
- ✚ Items that are stolen that cannot be easily explained
- ✚ Missing money that could have been stolen
- ✚ Damaged possessions such as bags, uniforms, etc.
- ✚ Not taking part in after school clubs

Children and young people who have experienced bullying are more likely to:

- ✚ Face barriers to learning
- ✚ Avoid school
- ✚ Self-harm and experience anxiety or depression
- ✚ Have impaired wellbeing

Forms of Bullying

Bullying behaviour can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the actual behaviour might not be repeated, the threat that it might can be sustained over time, typically by actions: looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions, or the fear of these. This behaviour can include:

Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting - for example, threatening gestures, having belongings taken or damaged.
Physical	Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence. Physical violence may be considered as assault, according to severity.
Verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
Cyber	This type of bullying changes the geography of bullying, however the behaviours are the same and must be addressed as if happening in the physical environment. Online bullying includes all areas of internet, such as email and social media misuse; mobile threats by text messaging/ calls; misuse of associated technology such as camera/video facilities and online gaming platforms.
Racial	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, deliberate physical attacks. It can be identified by the fact that victims are singled out because of the colour of their skin, the way they speak, ethnic grouping or religious or cultural practices. Sectarianism may also be included here.
Gender based	Unwanted physical contact, which may be considered as assault, or sexually abusive/suggestive comments. Gender stereotyping is an aspect to be considered here.
Homophobic/ Transphobic/ Biphobic	<p>Being targeted because of who you are, or who you are perceived to be. Hurtful behaviour and attitudes which focus on the issue of sexuality.</p> <p><u>Homophobic bullying</u> is prejudice or negative attitudes about lesbians or gay people. For example, a boy might be called gay because he doesn't want to play football, or a girl might be called a lesbian for holding hands with another girl.</p> <p><u>Biphobic bullying</u> is prejudice or negative attitudes about bi people. For example, a bi child or young person might be called 'greedy' for being attracted to more than one gender, asked probing and unkind questions such as 'can't you make your mind up?', or be told 'it's just a phase'.</p> <p><u>Transphobic bullying</u> is prejudice or negative attitudes about trans people. For example, a trans child or young person might be called 'tranny', 'it' or 'he-she'; asked probing or unkind questions about their body or appearance; or have a peer intentionally use their old name or incorrect pronouns.</p> <p>Any of these can be a particular problem for young people who do not conform to gender stereotypes or may be unsure about their own developing sexuality.</p>

Prejudice-based bullying

Bullying behaviour may be a result of prejudice that relates to perceived or actual differences. This can lead to prejudice and discriminatory language or behaviour, including racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia or transphobia.

'Prejudice-based bullying is when bullying behaviour is motivated by prejudice based on an individual's actual or perceived identity; it can be based on characteristics unique to a child or young person's identity or circumstance.'

Respect for All 2017

To address the years of unfavourable treatment experienced by some groups, **The Equality Act 2010** makes it unlawful to discriminate against people with a '**protected characteristic**'. These are:

- ✚ Age
- ✚ Disability
- ✚ Gender reassignment
- ✚ Pregnancy and maternity
- ✚ Marriage and civil partnership
- ✚ Race
- ✚ Sex
- ✚ Religion or belief
- ✚ Sexual orientation

Prejudice-based bullying includes the protected characteristics, however, prejudice can and does extend beyond these and can lead to bullying for many other reasons such as:

- ✚ Additional support needs
- ✚ Asylum Seekers and Refugees
- ✚ Body image and physical appearance
- ✚ Gypsy/Travellers
- ✚ Intersectionality
- ✚ Care Experienced children and young people
- ✚ Sectarianism
- ✚ Gender identity and transphobia
- ✚ Young Carers
- ✚ Socio-economic prejudice

Hate Crime

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."

A hate crime can take a number of forms that are potentially criminal and should be treated as such. Adults, children and young people can seek appropriate advice and guidance from Police Scotland if they feel a hate crime may have taken place.

Prevention of bullying

Throughout the school year we endeavour to undertake a range of activities which contribute to our Anti-bullying strategy:

- ✚ Our Anti-bullying pledge has a central focus in all areas of the school and this is displayed prominently for all to see in classrooms.
- ✚ Pupils are represented across the school as part of the Anti-bullying group who form a committee within the school Pupil Parliament. This group were instrumental in reviewing the previous strategy, drafting the current strategy and pledge and discussing issues regarding anti-bullying across the year.
- ✚ Senior pupils are trained each year as Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) and deliver key sessions across all years in PSE to empower pupils to safely speak out against all forms of violence from rape and sexual harassment to bullying and abusive behaviour. Key to the training and delivery of sessions is to discourage the bystander effect and promote our school “Speak up and Report” approach.
- ✚ Senior pupils are encouraged to actively contribute to our supportive ethos by being buddies to S1 pupils, prefects and coaching for improvement mentors. These positions of responsibility strengthen relationship building and provide opportunities for mediation.
- ✚ The PSE curriculum offers learners opportunities to explore relationship issues. This is through the Personal Safety block in term two and includes raising awareness of bullying behaviours, forms of bullying and reflection on the effects bullying can have.
- ✚ Annually, we participate in National Anti-bullying week. Assemblies allow an opportunity to raise the issues around bullying behaviour which are then explored further in PSE and through whole-school activities across the week.
- ✚ Weekly positive shout outs, advertised on our screens within the social areas of the school. This enhances our anti-bullying culture by celebrating kindness and positive messages across the school on a weekly basis. Pupils and staff have the opportunity to contribute through a QR code or Microsoft Form which are then uploaded weekly via a PowerPoint presentation.
- ✚ Inset training to ensure all staff are aware of their role and responsibilities in supporting the anti-bullying strategy.

In addition, we will consistently strive to:

- ✚ Promote positive behaviour through our Behaviour Blueprint
- ✚ Challenge inappropriate behaviour
- ✚ Deal with all forms of discrimination
- ✚ Support to improve pupils’ self-esteem and resilience
- ✚ Ensure that pupils have the opportunity to raise and discuss worries
- ✚ Ensure staff are visible and approachable to any concerns
- ✚ Encourage pupils to resolve personal animosities and tensions through conflict resolution, mediation, and restorative practice
- ✚ Create safe spaces within the school environment

Advice for pupils - I am being bullied – What should I do?

It doesn't matter what colour hair you have; what trainers you are wearing; how you speak; how you walk; how you talk – it is not your fault if you get bullied. We are all different in some way and that's what makes us amazing.

No matter who you are, bullying makes you feel rubbish and it is okay to be upset about it. **The important thing is that you tell someone about it.**

- ✚ If you feel you can, talk to a teacher you trust or a family member. If you don't want to do that you can always call Childline 0800 11 11 or visit www.childline.org.uk
- ✚ Talk to someone in school. In the first instance, this would be your Pupil Support Teacher/House Head. This will be recorded by the school, investigated and reviewed in line with our Anti-bullying action plan, detailed on page 10.
- ✚ If you don't want to tell someone in the first instance, complete an online anti-bullying self-referral form: <http://www.linlithgowacademy.org/article/73526/Anti-Bullying-Self-Referral-Form>
- ✚ Write down what happened, when it happened, and who was involved. If the bullying is online, keep the evidence – save or copy any photos, videos, texts, e-mails or posts.
- ✚ It can be tempting if you are being bullied to take revenge – for example to send a horrible message back to someone; to try and embarrass and hurt the other person, or to fight back. This is not a good idea – you might end up getting in trouble or get yourself even more hurt.
- ✚ Think about other ways you can respond to bullying. For example, practice saying 'I don't like it when you say that/do that – Stop.' Think about other people who can help you if you are being bullied – this could be other classmates, or a teacher.
- ✚ Only spend time with people who make you feel good about yourself. If someone constantly puts you down they are not a real friend/ boyfriend/ girlfriend and not worth your time.
- ✚ Be kind to yourself, and do things that make you feel good, relax and make new friends. You might make music; write lyrics; draw cartoons; dance; act or join a sports club. This is your life so make sure it's the best life possible – don't let anyone bring you down.
- ✚ Remember to respect other people! Just because someone is different to you and your friends – that doesn't mean you are better than them or have a right to make them feel bad. If you mess up, say sorry. You don't have to be friends with everyone – but you should always make it clear that you don't like it when people bully others, and stick up for people who are having a hard time.

Advice for parents/carers - My Child is being bullied – What can I do?

No single sign will indicate for certain that your child is being bullied, but watch out for:

- ✚ belongings getting 'lost' or damaged
- ✚ physical injuries, such as unexplained bruises
- ✚ being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school
- ✚ not doing as well at school
- ✚ asking for, or stealing, money (to give to whoever's bullying them)
- ✚ being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- ✚ problems with eating or sleeping
- ✚ bullying others

You might experience a huge range of emotions if you discover your child is being bullied. Here is some advice to support:

Talk to them about bullying and cyberbullying. Explain what bullying is, ask if anything like that has happened to them. Keep calm and listen carefully to what they say. Reassure about the next steps – they may feel scared, embarrassed or ashamed. Continue to check in and offer to listen.

Let them know who to ask for help. This could be a trusted adult, a teacher or a family member.

Speak to the school. In the first instance, this would be the Pupil Support Teacher/House Head. This will be recorded by the school, investigated and reviewed in line with our Anti-bullying action plan, detailed on page 10. You could encourage your child to complete an online anti-bullying self-referral form: <http://www.linlithgowacademy.org/article/73526/Anti-Bullying-Self-Referral-Form>

Help them relax and take time out. Bullying can reduce confidence. Provide opportunities to make them feel good and build confidence. Reassure at all points.

Report bullying on social media and online gaming. Don't stop them from using their phone or social media – this could feel like a punishment and the child has not done anything wrong. Support to block and report.
<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/Concerned-about-your-child/>

Report bullying videos shared online. Get in contact with the site the video is shared on as soon as possible. If a report is made and depending on the sites terms and conditions, they may be able to remove this.

Report hate crime to the Police.

Our response to bullying behaviour

As a school community we are committed to ensure a welcoming and inclusive ethos where we share an understanding of Anti-bullying behaviour.

We have consulted with pupils to agree the following anti-bullying pledge (Appendix 1), centred firmly around our positive behaviour blueprint ethos of respect, ready, responsible:

We acknowledge that within our school, pupils and staff have a collective responsibility for challenging bullying behaviour:



Through this we aim to:

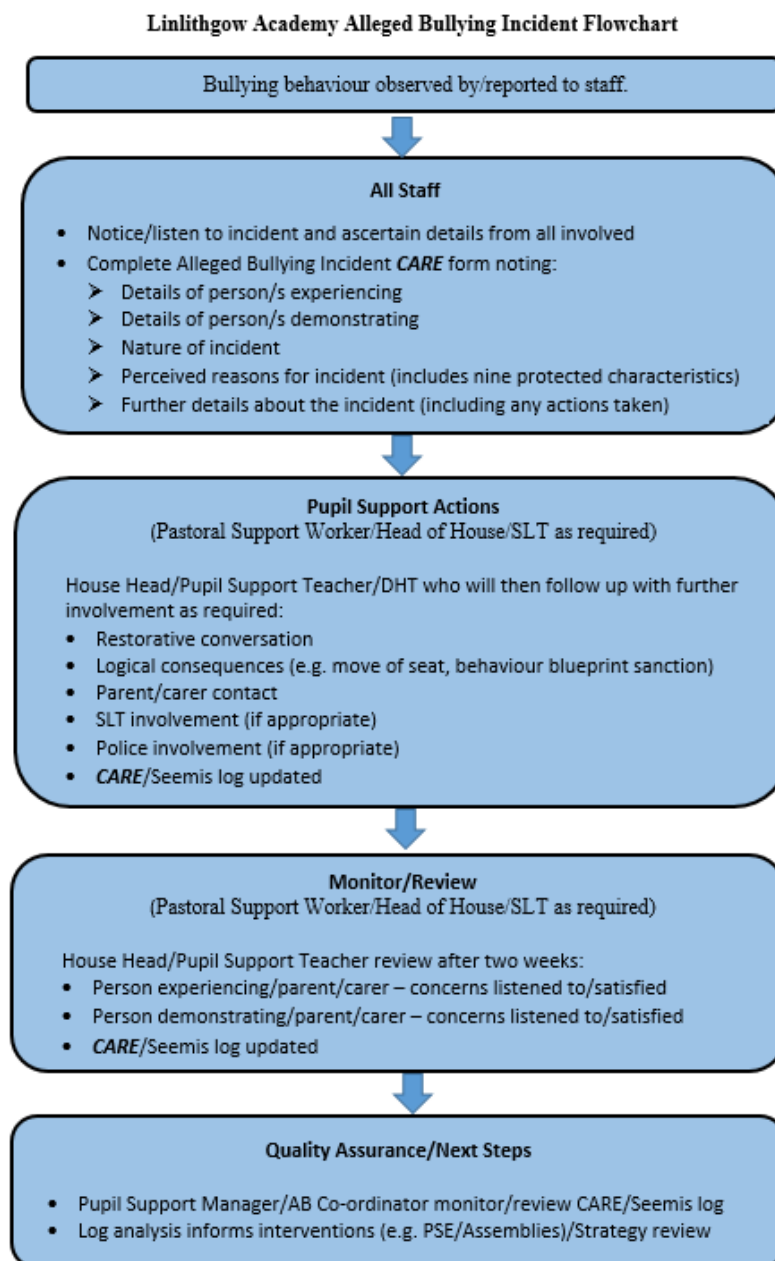
- ✚ Acknowledge that bullying behaviour happens in our community.
- ✚ Give assurance to pupils, parents and carers that reports of bullying incidents will be:
 - Taken seriously
 - Investigated promptly
 - Fully dealt with appropriately and feedback given to all involved as required
 - Support will be offered, where appropriate, for all involved
- ✚ Work together to develop an Anti-Bullying strategy that is consistent with West Lothian Council's vision and national best practice and is accepted by the whole community
- ✚ Advise how pupils who have been involved in bullying behaviour will be supported
- ✚ Review our strategy regularly

How will we respond to bullying behaviour?

The following diagram (Appendix 2) is part of our anti-bullying pledge and identifies the roles, responsibilities and procedures where bullying behaviour is observed or reported, with an *Alleged Bullying Incident Form* (Appendices 3 & 4) completed.

From transition in S1, pupils, parents/carers are made aware of our house structure and the roles and responsibilities of the House Head, Pupil Support Teacher, Pupil Support Manager and Well-being Office staff. This ensures our school community knows who to speak to if they are concerned about bullying behaviour.

It is important that pupils, parents/carers and staff are confident in reporting any bullying concerns that they may have. Equally, we encourage a “Speak up and Report” approach where we challenge any bullying behaviour observed or are aware of, and report this.



Where bullying behaviour is observed by or reported to a member of staff, they will:

- ✚ Take it seriously
- ✚ Provide a safe space to talk and listen
- ✚ Reassure about the situation
- ✚ Ask further questions to gain more information
- ✚ Consider support to deal with the situation
- ✚ Ask the young person what they wish to happen
- ✚ Restorative conversation
- ✚ Logical consequences (e.g. move of seat, behaviour blueprint sanction)
- ✚ Complete the Alleged Bullying Incident Form Page 1 (Appendix 3)

The Alleged Bullying Incident *CARE* Form is then passed to the House Head/Pupil Support Teacher/DHT who will then follow up with further involvement as required:

- ✚ Restorative conversation
- ✚ Logical consequences (e.g. move of seat, behaviour blueprint sanction)
- ✚ Parent/carer contact
- ✚ SLT involvement (if appropriate)
- ✚ Police involvement (if appropriate)
- ✚ Complete the Alleged Bullying Incident Form Page 2 (Appendix 4)

A follow-up of the event will then be monitored and reviewed by the Pupil Support Teacher, with check-ins for all pupils involved and recorded by the Pupil Support Manager.

It is important that those demonstrating the bullying behaviour are also supported to understand the impact of their behaviour on others and to avoid any future behaviour. They may need support to:

- ✚ Identify the feelings that cause them to act this way
- ✚ Develop alternative ways of responding to these feelings
- ✚ Repair relationships

With this in mind we will:

- ✚ Listen
- ✚ Explain the behaviour demonstrated and why this was wrong
- ✚ Explain the consequences
- ✚ Be clear about behaviour that needs to change
- ✚ Discuss any prejudices that might be apparent in the behaviour

Consequences/Sanctions to bullying behaviour may involve:

- ✚ Logical consequences – loss of break/lunch, change of seat, alternate changing for PE, behaviour blueprint sanction
- ✚ Restorative conversation – mediation with victim, supported by member of staff
- ✚ Parental involvement – phone call, meeting to discuss behaviour further
- ✚ SLT involvement – verbal warning, formal disciplinary warning, exclusion
- ✚ Police involvement - Hate crime, Telecommunications Act, Malicious Communications Act

Reporting, Recording, Monitoring & Quality Assurance

Reporting

Bullying allegations are reported by staff on a **CARE** (Concerns About Relationships and Education) Microsoft form. Staff are asked to detail the incident based on a range of details:

- ✚ Details of person/s experiencing
- ✚ Details of person/s demonstrating
- ✚ Nature of incident
- ✚ Perceived reasons for incident (includes nine protected characteristics)
- ✚ Further details about the incident (including any actions taken)

Investigating

Following the submission of a **CARE** form, the House Team/s (Pastoral Support Worker//Head of House) of the pupils involved (experiencing and demonstrating), in addition to the Pupil Support Manager (with an overview of all incidents for consistency) are informed via email and investigations commence. Parents/carers of pupils involved will be informed of the alleged incident, investigations, actions taken and next steps, for their child only. This is further discussed at a weekly House Team Meeting attended by the Pupil Support Manager, Head of House and Pastoral Support Worker.

Monitoring/Review

Regardless of an alleged incident being founded or unfounded, it will be monitored for the following two weeks and reviewed thereafter, again with parents/carers informed of the outcome. Throughout the process, the alleged incident, investigation, actions and review will be recorded within the **CARE** log and as part of the Seemis Equalities and Bullying log.

Quality Assurance/Next Steps

Throughout the session, bullying behaviour is monitored through **CARE** forms/Seemis reports analysis and this then informs/supports further action required such as inputs in PSE lessons and specific focus at assemblies. Our Anti-Bullying Pupil Parliament Committee and Mentors in Violence Prevention also use this data as part of their annual Improvement Planning.

Further sources of help and advice

Further help and advice for parents and students can be found through the following organisations:

<http://www.respectme.org.uk/>

<http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

<http://www.bullying.co.uk/>

<https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>

<http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

<http://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/>

<http://www.childline.org.uk/>

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/coping-with-life/bullying/>

<http://www.cyberbullying.org/>

<http://www.kidscape.org.uk/>

<https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland/guidance-advice/bullying/>

<http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk/>

<https://www.samaritans.org/>

Concerns/Complaints Procedure

If pupils or parents have complaints regarding the service they are receiving, these can be addressed by contacting the Head Teacher in the first instance. Should they remain dissatisfied, the Head Teacher will advise them of the next steps available to them. Or they can contact:

Customer Care,

Education Services West Lothian

Civic Centre

Howden South Road

Livingston

EH54 6FF

Email: customer.service@westlothian.gov.uk

Telephone: 01506 775000

TOGETHER WE THRIVE – ANTI-BULLYING PLEDGE

WE ARE KIND

WE SPEAK UP

WE REACH OUT

OUR
PLEDGE

OUR
AIMS

- Promote positive and challenge negative behaviour
- Raise worries with confidence
- Support self-esteem and resilience
- Use restorative practices
- Create safe spaces

OUR COLLECTIVE ROLE

STOP
BULLYING
.....
SEE IT - SAY IT - STOP IT

KINDNESS

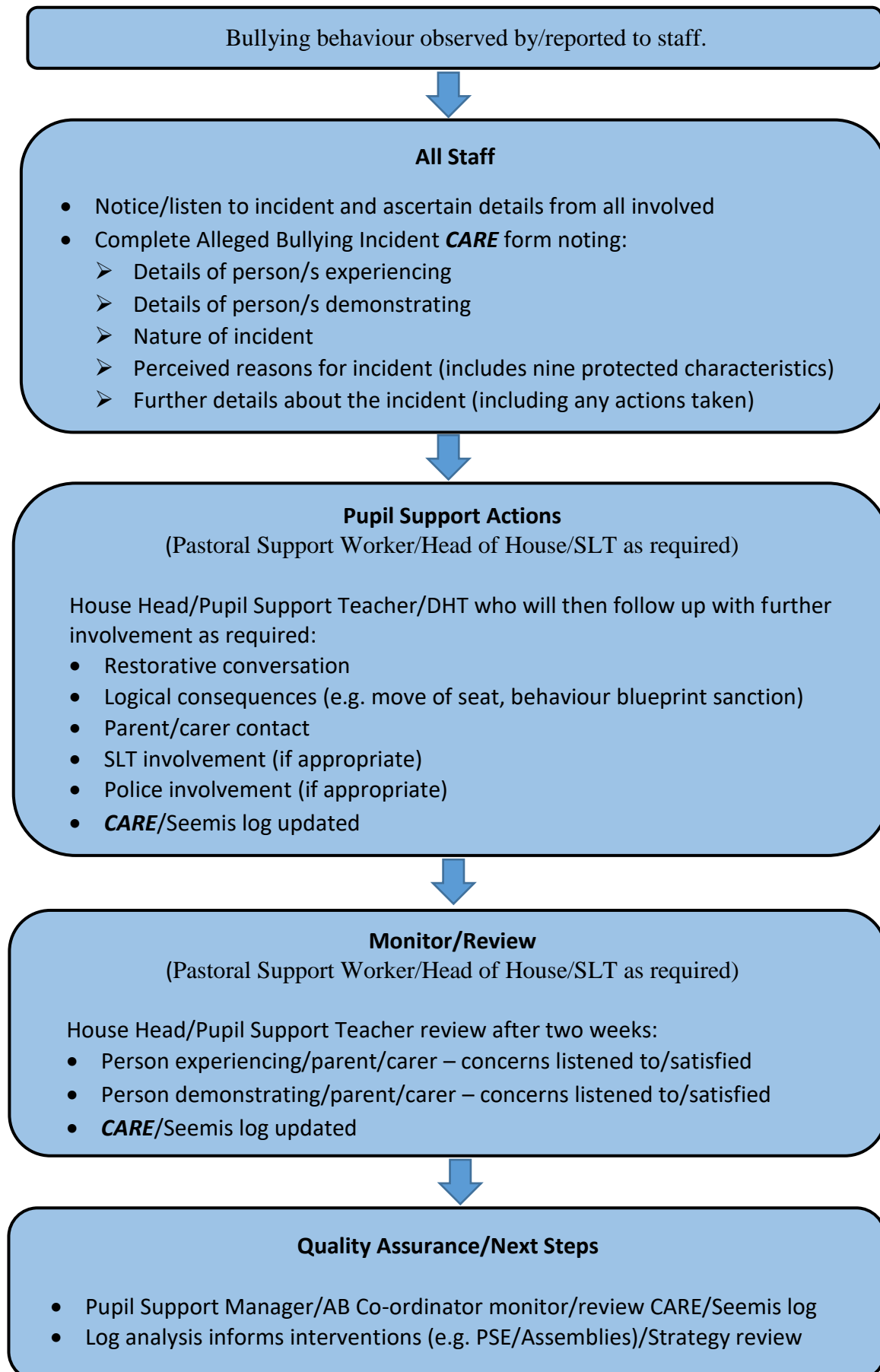
CURIOSITY

PERSEVERANCE

FAIRNESS



Appendix 2 – Linlithgow Academy Alleged Bullying Incident Flowchart



Appendix 3 – Linlithgow Academy Alleged Bullying Incident CARE Form (Completed by member of staff observing or receiving report)



Linlithgow Academy Alleged Bullying Incident Form

Report of incident

1. Details of person(s) experiencing and registration class: *

Enter your answer

2. House (person(s) experiencing) *

Bell

Kelvin

Watt

3. Details of person(s) displaying and registration class: *

Enter your answer

4. House (person(s) displaying) *

Bell

Kelvin

Watt

5. Nature of incident/situation/concern. Please tick as appropriate: *

Name calling

Abusive messages - phone / social media / gaming / online

Hit, tripped, pushed or kicked

Being ignored

Belongings taken or damaged

Targeted because of who they are perceived to be

Gender based violence

Racism or Racist incident

Spreading rumours

Other

Appendix 3 – Linlithgow Academy Allege Bullying Incident CARE Form (Completed by member of staff observing or receiving report) (Continued)

6. Perceived reason(s) for incident (protected characteristic). Please tick as appropriate: *

- Actual or perceived sexual orientation
- Additional Support Needs
- Asylum seekers or refugee status
- Body image / physical appearance
- Disability
- Gender identity / sexism and gender
- Marriage / Civil Partnership of parents / carers or other family members
- Mental Health
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race and Racism including culture
- Religion or belief / Sectarianism
- Socio economic prejudice
- Care Experienced
- Gypsy / Travellers
- Other
- Not known

7. Brief detail of incident *

Enter your answer

Appendix 4 – Linlithgow Academy Alleged Bullying Incident CARE Form – Actions/Monitoring/Review (Completed by member of Pupil Support Staff investigating (Head of House/Pastoral Support Worker) and shared with Pupil Support Manager for Seemis Equalities and Bullying log)

Actions

Action Procedures (initial and date) - completed by House Team							
Alleged person(s) experiencing spoken to	Alleged person(s) displaying spoken to	Parent/carer of alleged person experiencing contacted	Parent/carer of alleged person displaying contacted	Restorative meeting	GIF referral for support	School disciplinary procedures followed	Referred to police

Conclusion

Incident Conclusion - completed by HoH/KW	
Being Addressed	Incident resolved
	Not resolved
	Unfounded

Monitoring/Review (over a period of 2 weeks)

Incident Monitor/Review for 2 weeks following incident - completed by HoH/KW						
(Experiencing) Do they feel concerns were listened to?	(Experiencing) Do they feel satisfied with outcome?	(Experiencing) Is parent/carer satisfied with outcome?	(Displaying) Do they feel concerns were listened to?	(Displaying) Do they feel satisfied with outcome?	(Displaying) Is parent/carer satisfied with outcome?	Reviewer - name and date