

ANTI BULLYING HELPLINE AND STRATEGY

Background

Research amongst young people has consistently indicated high level of concern regarding bullying issues re: 'Big Day Out'; 'Wight 2 B Heard'.

Whilst Ofsted reports of schools inspected indicate schools to be well ordered and issues regarding bullying addressed appropriately, this does not reflect feedback from students and reports from parents.

In response to a perceived local need the police in Newport ran a pilot helpline over a number of months to deal with particular issues and, in the interests of developing this work collaboratively the local authority and the police together with representation from Safer Communities and the voluntary sector, joined together to develop this work.

Helpline System

A number of options were considered in developing a helpline. Of paramount importance was providing a helpline 'out of hours' ideally 24/7.

In response to this an informal survey was undertaken with young people to ascertain their view on a system that they would use.

Two key themes emerged (i) a freephone number, (ii) a text messaging system. Analysis of responses indicated that, generally, children and young people would use these systems mutually exclusively rather than interchangeably.

As a consequence, a twin track system has been developed – see *Appendix A* (flowchart).

The provision for the freephone contact is being contracted through Wightcare, with a dedicated freephone number on a dedicated phone line.

Process

The important feature in any process of this nature is to ensure that either parents or pupils can have, as far as is reasonably possible, their concerns listened to and responded to. It is for this reason that Education Welfare Officers are identified as key personnel in delivering support in their broader welfare role. Education Welfare Officers are also key since they are well aware of the impact of bullying on self-esteem, mental health and non-attendance issues.

Technologically the text messaging system leads the enquirer through a series of responses in order to arrive at a solution, be it an alternative advice line or the contact for a member of staff (*see Appendix B*).

The freephone helpline will route all non-emergency calls through Thompson House in order that these can be followed through by the Education Welfare Officer. Calls received will be responded to on the next working day – with feedback to Thompson House, that contact face to face or telephone has been made, within 24 hours.

Record Keeping and Evaluation

The data system at Thompson House will note all referrals – response times and feedback.

Individual officers will maintain case records as is current professional practice.

Evaluations will be undertaken periodically with parents and young people through use of surveys and focussed questionnaires.

Training Requirements

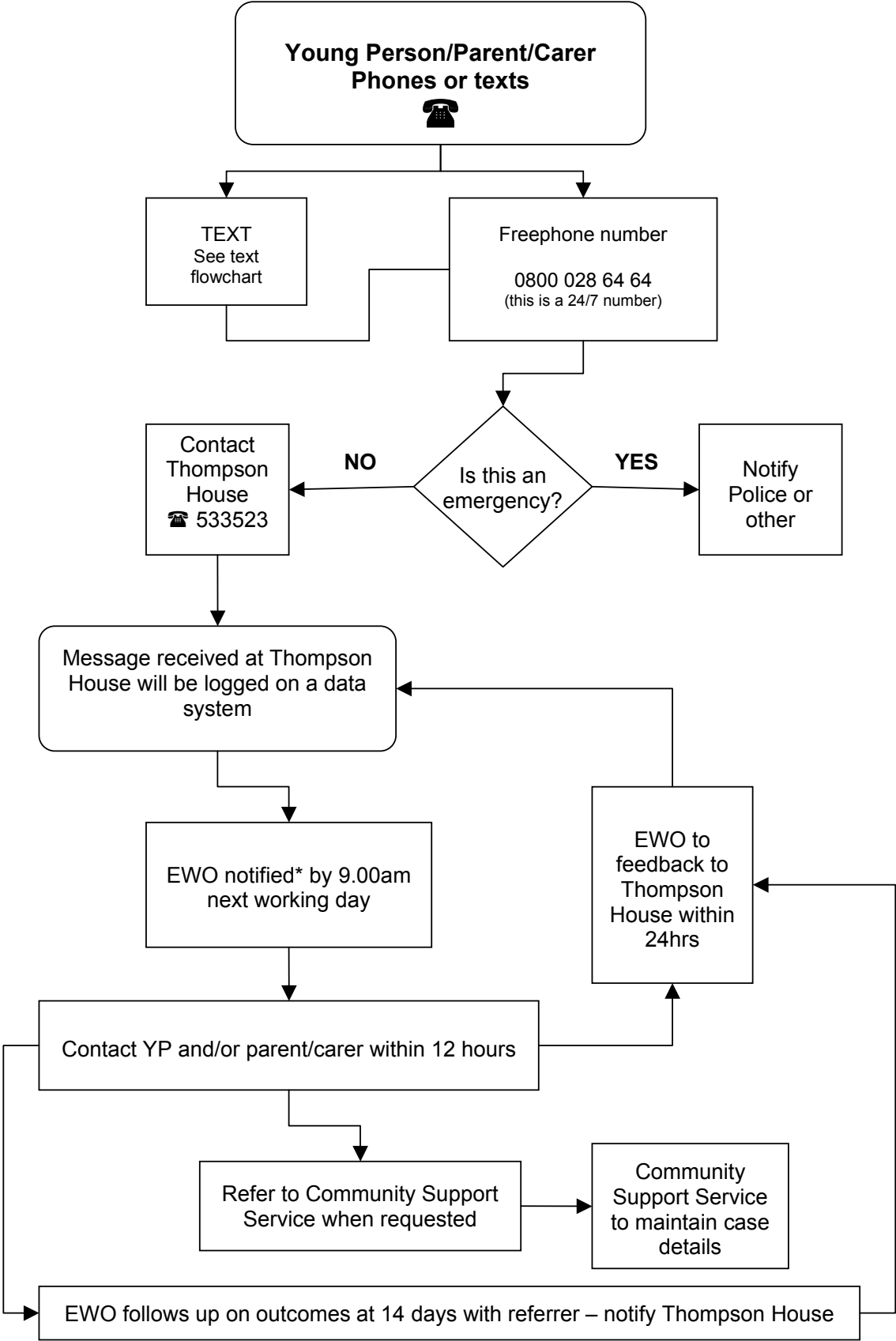
There is a recognition that training in this area of work is an ongoing requirement. Protective Behaviours training has contributed significantly to the skills base of staff.

Further specific training needs will be addressed on an Authority wide basis and through individual professional development plans.

Training for school staff and developing 'whole school' responses to bullying issues will also be developed through 2005/6 academic year.

Rob Faulkner
July 2005

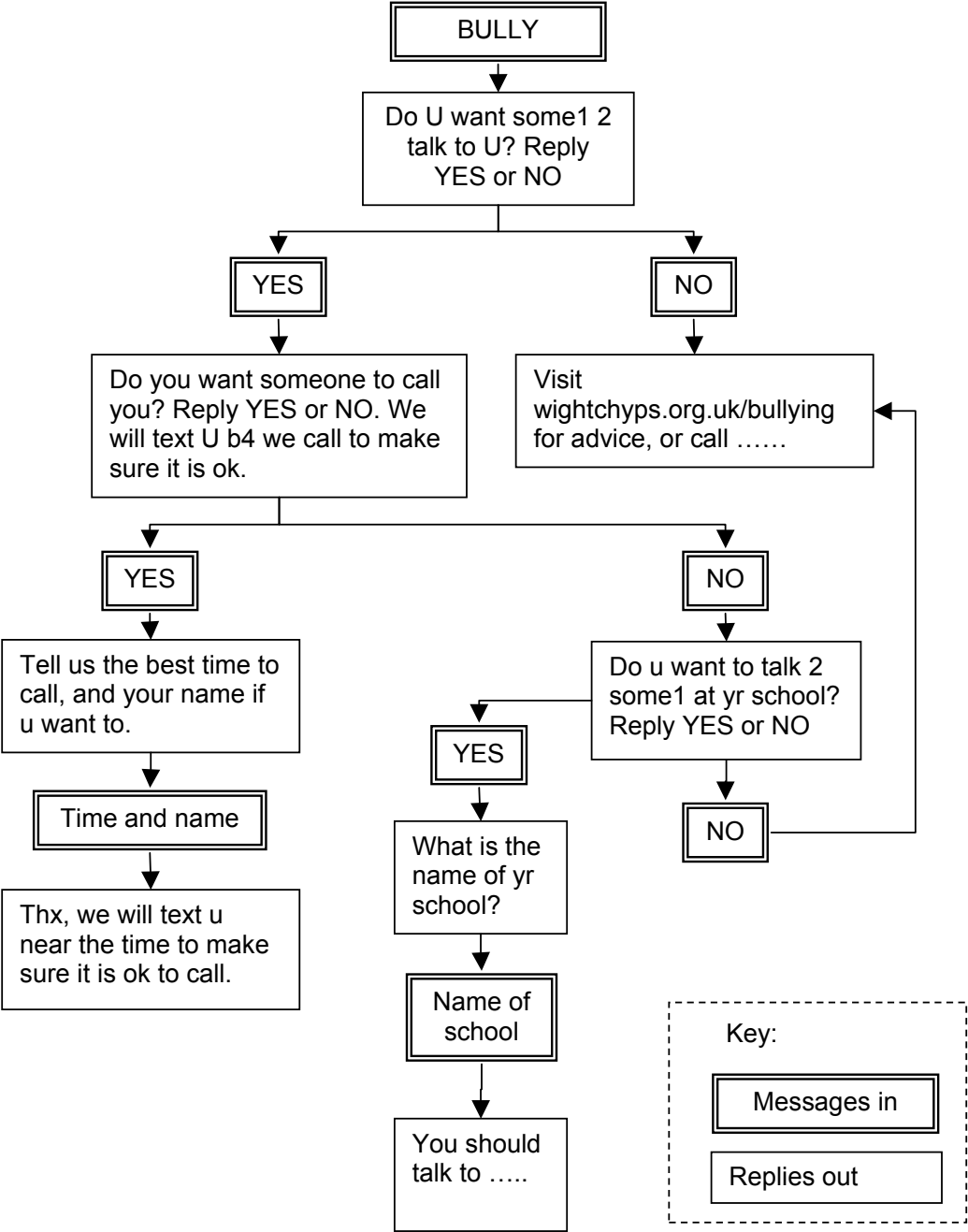
ANTI-BULLYING LINE FLOWCHART



* During holiday periods a 'duty system' of EW0s will be set up.

Bullying Helpline Text System

Proposed message routes:



Timetable of events

Completion Date

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| ■ Development of Anti-Bullying Helpline | July 2005 |
| ■ Launch of helpline | September 2005 |
| ■ Anti-Bullying Conference | October 2005 |
| ■ 'No Blame Approach' training | December 2005 |
| ■ Follow up training in schools | January – July 2006 |
| ■ Review of Anti-Bullying Helpline | July/August 2006 |
| ■ Gaining the views of young people about bullying | October/December 2006 |