TAKE 1 STUDIOS
Anti-Bullying Policy

Prevention, reporting, safeguarding and response • 2026/27

Policy owner	Headteachers / Designated Safeguarding Lead
Approved by	Governing Body / Proprietor
Effective from	1 September 2026
Review date	August 2027, or sooner following significant guidance or safeguarding change
Applies to	All pupils; all staff have responsibilities under this policy
Recording	CPOMS / safeguarding and behaviour records as appropriate
Linked pupil document	Anti-Bullying Statement for Pupils 2026/27

1. Policy statement

Take 1 is committed to a safe, inclusive and respectful learning environment in which bullying is not accepted. Reports will be listened to, taken seriously and responded to promptly, fairly and proportionately. Bullying may also be a safeguarding concern, and serious bullying can constitute emotional abuse.

Take 1 recognises that not every conflict, disagreement or one-off incident is bullying. However, a one-off incident may still be serious behaviour, harassment, discrimination, violence or child-on-child abuse and must be responded to under the appropriate safeguarding and behaviour procedures.

2. Legal and guidance framework

- Education and Inspections Act 2006, including the duty to encourage good behaviour and prevent bullying;
- Equality Act 2010, including duties relating to discrimination, harassment and protected characteristics;
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004;
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026, effective from 1 September 2026;
- DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying guidance, current publication page updated July 2026;
- DfE Behaviour in Schools guidance and associated statutory/departmental guidance;
- Online Safety Act 2023 where relevant to online services and harmful content; and
- Take 1 Safeguarding and Child Protection, Behaviour, Online Safety, Mobile Phone, SEND, Equality, Complaints and Attendance policies.

3. Aims

- Prevent bullying through a strong culture of respect, belonging and high expectations;
- Make it easy and safe for pupils to report concerns;
- Identify bullying early, including online and prejudice-related bullying;
- Protect and support the pupil experiencing bullying;
- Address the behaviour and needs of the pupil responsible;
- Recognise when conduct requires a safeguarding, police or other external-agency response;
- Work constructively with parents/carers and commissioners; and
- Monitor patterns so that repeated or systemic concerns are addressed.

4. What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group physically or emotionally. Bullying often involves an imbalance of power, whether real or perceived. Power can arise from physical strength, popularity, group size, access to information or images, social status, age, ability, technology or another factor.

- Physical – hitting, kicking, pushing, intimidation, taking or damaging belongings.
- Verbal – name-calling, threats, taunts, insults, humiliating comments or persistent teasing.
- Social/relational – exclusion, spreading rumours, manipulating friendships or encouraging others to isolate someone.
- Online/cyberbullying – abusive messages, posts, group chats, impersonation, sharing or threatening to share content, harassment through gaming or social platforms, or coordinated online targeting.
- Prejudice-related bullying – behaviour connected to race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment or another protected characteristic, as well as perceived characteristics or association with someone who has a protected characteristic.
- Bullying related to SEND, appearance, health, care experience, family circumstances, poverty or other difference.

Sexual harassment, sexual violence, misogynistic behaviour, harmful sexual behaviour, initiation/hazing, image-based abuse, sextortion or the creation/sharing of self-generated intimate images (including AI-generated or manipulated images) must not be reduced to 'bullying'. These concerns require the child-on-child abuse and safeguarding procedures in KCSIE 2026.

5. What may not be bullying?

A disagreement, friendship difficulty, argument or isolated unkind act is not automatically bullying. Staff must still intervene where behaviour is harmful or breaches school expectations. Repetition is not required before Take 1 acts, and a single serious incident can require immediate safeguarding action.

6. Protected characteristics and discriminatory bullying

Take 1 will not tolerate discriminatory, racist, religious, sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, disablist or other prejudice-related bullying. Staff must record the nature of discriminatory incidents accurately and consider safeguarding, behaviour and equality duties. Patterns will be reviewed by senior leaders and governors.

Support and protection will not depend on whether a pupil uses particular terminology about their identity. Staff will respond to the behaviour, the pupil's expressed experience and any safeguarding or equality implications.

7. Child-on-child abuse and safeguarding

All staff must maintain a safeguarding lens. Serious or persistent bullying, cyberbullying and discriminatory abuse may cause significant emotional harm and may be child-on-child abuse. Staff must never dismiss harmful behaviour as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'.

- Any immediate safety concern must be acted on at once.
- Safeguarding concerns must be reported to the DSL/deputy DSL in accordance with Take 1's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- The DSL will consider early help/Family Help, children's social care, police or other agency involvement where appropriate.
- Where sexual harassment or sexual violence is alleged, KCSIE child-on-child sexual violence and harassment procedures apply.
- Where online content is involved, staff should preserve relevant evidence without unnecessarily viewing, copying or forwarding harmful or intimate material.

8. Prevention

- Clear behavior expectations and consistent adult modelling;
- PSHE/RSHE, SMSC and curriculum teaching on respectful relationships, equality, online safety, Consent and reporting;
- Staff training on bullying, discrimination, child-on-child abuse and online harm;
- Safe opportunities for pupil voice and reporting;
- Appropriate supervision and identification of bullying hotspots or vulnerable times;
- Support for pupils with SEND and reasonable adjustments to reporting and intervention processes;
- Communication with parents/carers and commissioners;
- Take 1's practice of collecting pupil mobile phones at the start of the school day and returning them at the end of the day, subject to the Mobile Phone Policy; and
- Regular review of CPOMS, behaviour and pupil-voice information for patterns.

9. Reporting bullying

Pupils can report bullying to any member of staff, the safeguarding team or through any confidential reporting route made available by Take 1. Parents/carers and commissioners may report concerns to the school. Staff who witness or receive a report must act; they must not require the pupil to resolve the matter themselves. Anonymous information will be considered, although it may limit the action that can be taken. A pupil will not be sanctioned for making a genuine report in good faith.

10. Staff response to a report

- Ensure immediate safety and separate pupils where necessary;
- Listen calmly and avoid blaming, minimising or promising absolute confidentiality;
- Record the pupil's account in their own words where possible;
- Report safeguarding concerns promptly to the DSL/deputy DSL;
- Record the incident accurately on CPOMS and/or the appropriate behaviour system;
- Gather proportionate information from those involved and relevant witnesses, normally separately;
- Consider online evidence, discriminatory elements, SEND, vulnerability and any wider peer-group dynamics;
- Inform parents/carers where appropriate, unless doing so would increase risk or conflict with safeguarding/police advice;
- Agree support and protective measures with the pupil affected;
- Apply proportionate behaviour consequences and interventions where the allegation is substantiated; and set a follow-up date and monitor for recurrence or retaliation.

11. Fairness and terminology

Take 1 will distinguish between an allegation and a finding. During enquiries, staff should use neutral terms such as 'pupil who reported the concern' and 'pupil whose behaviour is being considered'. Labels such as 'bully' or 'victim' should not replace a fair assessment of the facts or become a fixed identity for a child.

12. Supporting the pupil experiencing bullying

- A trusted adult and safe way to seek help;
- Regular check-ins and wellbeing monitoring;
- Reasonable adjustments or temporary safety arrangements where needed;
- Support to restore confidence, attendance, engagement and peer relationships;
- Online-safety support, including advice about blocking/reporting and preserving evidence;
- Referral for pastoral, safeguarding or external support where appropriate; and
- Assurance that the burden of avoiding bullying will not simply be placed on the pupil who reported it.

13. Supporting and responding to the pupil responsible

Consequences will follow the Behaviour Policy and will be proportionate to seriousness, intent, impact, repetition, vulnerability, SEND and previous interventions. Safeguarding and SEND needs do not excuse harmful behaviour but may affect the support and response required.

- Clear explanation of the harm and expectations;
- Restorative work only where safe, appropriate and genuinely voluntary for the pupil harmed;
- Behaviour support, mentoring or targeted intervention;
- Parent/carer involvement;
- Review of SEND, communication, trauma or other unmet needs where relevant;
- Risk assessment or safety planning for serious/repeated concerns; and
- External agency referral where thresholds are met.

14. Restorative approaches

Restorative conversations can be helpful but are not mandatory and must not be used where they would place pressure on the pupil who has experienced harm, minimise abuse, compromise an investigation or create further risk. A pupil will not be required to meet, apologise to, or reconcile with another pupil as a condition of receiving support.

15. Online and off-site bullying

Take 1 may respond to bullying or harmful online behaviour outside school where it affects pupils' safety, wellbeing, education, relationships or the orderly running of the school. This includes behaviour travelling to/from school and online behaviour that has repercussions in school.

The school may involve parents/carers, commissioners, platform reporting routes, police or safeguarding agencies as appropriate. Take 1's collection of pupil mobile phones during the school day reduces access during school hours but does not remove the need to teach online safety or respond to online harm.

16. Criminal behaviour and police involvement

Some bullying behaviour may constitute a criminal offence, including threats, assault, stalking/harassment, hate crime, blackmail, malicious communications or offences involving intimate images. The DSL/Headteacher will consider police involvement based on the circumstances and safeguarding needs. Emergency services must be contacted where there is an immediate danger.

17. Parents/carers and commissioners

Take 1 will communicate with parents/carers of pupils involved where appropriate and safe to do so. Information about other pupils will be limited by confidentiality and data-protection requirements. Commissioners/referring schools will be informed where required by the placement agreement or where safeguarding, attendance, behaviour or placement planning makes this necessary.

18. Recording

Records must be factual, proportionate and sufficiently detailed to show the concern, immediate safety action, safeguarding decision, enquiries, outcome, support, behaviour response and follow-up.

- Date/time/location and type of incident;
- Pupils and witnesses involved;
- The pupil's own account and any relevant evidence;
- Whether prejudice/discrimination, online harm or child-on-child abuse is indicated;
- Parent/carer and professional communication;
- DSL decisions and referrals;
- Outcome and rationale;
- Support and behaviour actions; and
- Follow-up checks and recurrence.

19. Monitoring and governance

Senior leaders and the DSL will review bullying data for frequency, recurrence, locations, online patterns, discriminatory themes, pupils repeatedly harmed or responsible, SEND/disproportionality, attendance impact and effectiveness of interventions. Relevant themes will be reported to governors/proprietor in an appropriately anonymised form.

The previous DSL appendix required weekly review and RAG-rating of every bullying incident. The revised policy does not impose a standalone RAG system unless Take 1 chooses to retain one operationally; instead it requires timely DSL oversight and risk-based safeguarding decisions recorded on CPOMS.

20. Staff bullying and harassment

This pupil anti-bullying policy does not replace employment procedures for bullying or harassment involving staff. Concerns about staff-to-staff bullying or harassment should be managed under Take 1's HR, grievance, dignity-at-work, whistleblowing and safeguarding procedures as appropriate. Where a pupil or parent targets a staff member, leaders should also consider the DfE's July 2026 guidance on preventing and tackling bullying and harassment of school staff.

21. Complaints

Concerns about how a bullying report has been handled should first be raised with Take 1 so that the matter can be reviewed. Formal complaints will be managed under the school's Complaints Policy. Safeguarding concerns will continue to be managed through safeguarding procedures regardless of any complaint.

22. Linked policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety / Acceptable Use Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Equality Policy
- SEND Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Restrictive Intervention / Positive Handling Policy
- Information Sharing / Data Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct, Grievance and Whistleblowing procedures

Appendix 1 – Staff quick response

- 1. SAFE – Deal with immediate safety and stop harmful behaviour.
- 2. LISTEN – Take the report seriously; do not minimise or promise secrecy.
- 3. RECORD – Capture facts and the pupil's words accurately.
- 4. SAFEGUARD – Refer to the DSL where there is any safeguarding concern.
- 5. CHECK – Consider repetition, power imbalance, discrimination, online harm and child-on-child abuse.
- 6. SUPPORT – Agree immediate protection and support for the pupil affected.
- 7. RESPOND – Investigate fairly and use proportionate behaviour/support measures.
- 8. INFORM – Communicate with parents/carers and professionals as appropriate.
- 9. FOLLOW UP – Check that the behaviour has stopped and there is no retaliation.
- 10. REVIEW – Identify patterns and update plans/risk assessments where needed.

Appendix 2 – Key 2026/27 amendments

- Updated KCSIE 2025 references to KCSIE 2026.
- Updated the DfE bullying guidance reference to the current publication page updated July 2026.
- Added the recognised imbalance-of-power element to the definition of bullying.
- Clarified that one-off incidents may still be serious behaviour, harassment, discrimination or child-on-child abuse.
- Separated sexual violence/harassment and other harmful sexual behaviour from ordinary bullying terminology.
- Strengthened online harm provisions, including gaming platforms, sextortion and AI-generated/manipulated intimate imagery.
- Updated equality terminology and discriminatory-bullying recording.
- Made restorative approaches optional and safety-led rather than automatic.
- Strengthened off-site/online response and links to the school's mobile-phone arrangements.
- Replaced automatic parent contact in every case with safeguarding-sensitive communication.
- Removed the outdated August 2025 review date in the DSL appendix and integrated DSL requirements into the main policy.
- Added the July 2026 DfE staff bullying/harassment guidance as a linked employment consideration.