



TEENAGE KICKS

Engagement • Progress • Outcomes

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Approved by:	James Docherty
Last reviewed on:	29 August 2026
Next review due by:	29 August 2027

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Aims

At Teenage Kicks, we aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly learning environment in which all pupils can improve their life chances and maximise their potential. This includes encouraging open discussion about differences between people, challenging prejudice and celebrating diversity. We recognise our responsibility to understand the community we serve and to respond to identified concerns, including by proactively teaching pupils about threats to their health and safety. We take a contextual approach to bullying and child-on-child abuse, working with families and outside agencies where appropriate. We expect pupils to behave safely and to feel safe in school. Pupils should understand the different forms bullying can take and feel confident seeking support if they or others feel unsafe. Parents and carers should feel confident that their children are cared for and safe, and that incidents are dealt with promptly and effectively. In meeting our duties under the Equality Act 2010, we will consider whether a pupil has protected characteristics and ensure that any action taken reflects the pupil's needs and does not place them at greater risk of harm.

Legislation and statutory requirements

Teenage Kicks is an independent school in England. The Independent School Standards require the proprietor to ensure that bullying is prevented, so far as reasonably practicable, through the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy. This policy also takes account of the Department for Education's guidance on preventing and tackling bullying and the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010.

- Department for Education: Preventing and tackling bullying (current guidance page updated July 2026)
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989
- Education and Inspections Act 2006, where applicable
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Communications Act 2003
- Public Order Act 1986
- Department for Education: Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying

Definition

The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace. <http://www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/about-us.aspx>

Developing a whole school approach

At Teenage Kicks, we include the views of staff, pupils, parents and carers, the Proprietor and the wider community in the development and review of this policy.

We believe that:

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- To be able to learn, our students must feel safe and secure in the learning environment
 - All bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Teenage Kicks

- Students must feel confident that any reported incidents will be dealt with effectively by all staff
- We must investigate all incidents of bullying and support the victim and the bully
- Pupils who display bullying behaviour will be supported to reflect on their behaviour and be given the opportunity to repair the harm done.
- Everybody in our school community has the responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to bullying
- All reported incidents must be taken seriously
- We will share relevant bullying concerns with parents and carers and deal promptly with complaints.
- Some students may need referrals to external agencies or support networks. We will liaise closely with students along with parents/carers if this is deemed necessary.

Identifying and supporting vulnerable children

We work closely as a school to identify particularly vulnerable groups. Staff provide additional support where necessary and are aware of the social, emotional and mental health difficulties that some of our most vulnerable pupils may face. Staff implement strategies from Education, Health and Care Plans and follow advice from professionals working with the young person. We collaborate with parents, carers and relevant external agencies to support these pupils and address the challenges they may face.

Who may be bullied?

Anybody could be subject to bullying at any time in their life. It is not only something that affects children and young people. A person is bullied when, either as an individual or part of a group, she or he suffers in any way from the direct result of intentional and persistent harassment and/or victimisation by another individual or group. A person who has been bullied may commonly find it difficult to combat victim behaviour or report their experiences to those who may be able to help them.

Specific types of bullying

Prejudice-related bullying

Under the Equality Act 2010, protected characteristics include:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race

Religion or belief

Sex

Sexual orientation

These are called protected characteristics. Schools must challenge derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour, including racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist language or behaviour. We will record prejudice-related bullying and discriminatory incidents, including one-off incidents where appropriate.

Other vulnerable groups

Other groups that may be particularly vulnerable to bullying include:

- young carers
- looked after children

- bullying related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to appearance or health

Although these circumstances are not all protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, bullying for these reasons is taken just as seriously. The school will provide appropriate support and ensure pupils know where to seek help.

There is no hierarchy of bullying - all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Prejudice-related language

Racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disabilist language includes terms of abuse used towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer, sibling, or friend who is; because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language is generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are perceived to be different in some way or their friends, family members or their parents/carers are perceived to be different. Dismissing such language as banter is not helpful as it is being used to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the use of prejudice related language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any intent. Persistent use of prejudice related language and/or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

Hate crime and bullying

There is no legal definition of a hate crime. However, the police and the CPS (Crown Prosecution Service) have an agreed definition of hate crime as: "Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's race or perceived race; religion or perceived religion; sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation; disability or perceived disability and any crime motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender." There is a distinction between a hate crime and a hate incident. "A hate incident is any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender." However, a hate incident does not necessarily break the law. Where a hate incident amounts to a criminal offence, and is based on one of the five protected characteristics, it is known as a hate crime. The type of conduct which will be considered as a hate incident is wide ranging and includes the following:

- verbal abuse;
- harassment;
- bullying or intimidation;
- physical attacks;
- threats of violence;
- hoax calls, abusive phone or text messages, hate mail;
- online abuse;
- displaying or circulating discriminatory literature or posters;
- graffiti;
- arson;
- throwing rubbish in a garden; and
- malicious complaints.

Any concerns about hate incidents or hate crimes should be discussed with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Hate crime can be reported through True Vision. Young people can also access confidential information and reporting support through Fearless.

Baiting

Baiting can be used in bullying both on and offline. It can be used to bully someone to get 'a rise' out of them and it can be used to antagonise those who might be bullying others to get them to

bully. Sometimes baiting is used secretly to try and get a person to explode in a rage or react negatively/loudly so that they get into trouble.

Banter

The dictionary describes banter as “the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks”. Bullying is sometimes dismissed as “just banter”. It may start as banter, but behaviour that causes harm or humiliation must be challenged. Examples include:

- Friendly banter – there is no intention to hurt and everyone understands the limits.
- Ignorant banter – crosses a line without an intention to hurt; the person will often apologise when challenged.
- Malicious banter – intended to humiliate or hurt a person, often in public.

Child-on-child abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying);
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

We will challenge and respond to concerns relating to child-on-child abuse. Concerns that may amount to abuse or a safeguarding risk must be handled in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, including referral to the DSL where appropriate.

Sexist and sexual bullying

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online or offline. It may violate a child’s dignity or create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or sexualised environment. Sexual harassment and sexual violence must not be dismissed as banter or an inevitable part of growing up. Where conduct may amount to abuse or create a safeguarding risk, staff must follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy immediately.

Bullying can take place between:

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- young people
 - young people and staff
 - staff members
 - individuals or groups

Methods of bullying

There are a number of methods of bullying which can be summarised as:

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- Physical aggression – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting or pinching.
 - Verbal – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing or belittling.
 - Non-verbal – staring, body language or gestures.
 - Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding belongings, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidation, exclusion, manipulation or coercion.
 - Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, sexual harassment or exposure to inappropriate material.
 - Online/cyber – abusive or threatening messages, posts or images, impersonation, exclusion, harassment or other harmful conduct using digital platforms.
 - Indirect – including false friendships, social exclusion, manipulation, coercion or the exploitation of an individual. Bullying may occur in the presence of others who become bystanders or participants.

Some bullying behaviour may amount to a criminal offence. Where this may be the case, the school will consider whether the police or another appropriate agency should be contacted.

Where bullying can take place

Bullying is not confined to school premises. It may occur in the local community, on journeys to and from school, online, or in other settings. Where bullying outside school affects pupils' safety, wellbeing or behaviour in school, Teenage Kicks will offer appropriate support and take reasonable action.

Cyberbullying

Digital technology can provide intrusive ways for bullying to continue beyond the school day. Online bullying may start in school and continue online, or start online and affect behaviour in school. Teenage Kicks will treat cyberbullying with the same seriousness as other forms of bullying and will support pupils and parents/carers where incidents affect the school community. Cyberbullying may include:

- hacking into someone's accounts/sites
- Posting prejudice /hate messages
- Impersonating someone online
- Public posting of images
- Exclusion
- Threats and manipulation
- Stalking

Pupils will be taught safe and responsible online behaviour in line with the Online Safety Policy.

Bullying outside of Teenage Kicks

Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated, whether it takes place inside or outside of school. Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 direct that a school's disciplinary powers can be used to address pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the school to regulate pupils' behaviour in those circumstances. Bullying can take place on the way to and from school, before or after school hours, at the weekends or during the holidays, or in the wider community. Staff, parents and carers, and students must be vigilant to bullying outside of school and report and respond according to their responsibilities as outlined in this policy.

Signs and symptoms of bullying

All staff must remain alert to signs that a pupil may be experiencing bullying. These may include:

- Unexplained injuries

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- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewellery
 - Frequent complaints to staff with symptoms such as headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
 - Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating. Kids may come home from school hungry because they did not eat lunch.
 - Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
 - Declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to go to school
 - Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
 - Feelings of helplessness or reduced self-esteem
 - Self-harming behaviour, running away, or talking about suicide or hopelessness
 - Choosing the company of adults

The role of staff

All staff are responsible for promoting respectful relationships and helping to provide an inclusive environment. Staff must take all forms of bullying seriously and do their utmost to prevent bullying from taking place.

To prevent incidents of bullying, staff should:

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- Praise and promote positive relationships built on mutual respect
 - Use consistent and proportionate sanctions when necessary
 - Act as positive role models
 - Ensure that all pupils are appropriately supervised during lessons and during social times
 - Report all cases of bullying to the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team without delay.
 - Make students aware of the school's policy
 - Ensure pupils understand that, if they have been bullied or witnessed bullying, they should tell a trusted adult or another person who can help.
 - Promote anti-bullying education through the curriculum, particularly through Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE).
 - Raise awareness of the negative impact of bullying.
 - Support pupils to access appropriate pastoral or counselling support where available.
 - Provide support to pupils who have displayed bullying behaviour to help them understand and change their behaviour.

Training

Bullying awareness will be included in staff training so that staff understand this policy, know their responsibilities and understand what support is available. Pupils can also access pastoral and therapeutic support where appropriate.

Procedures

Staff must act promptly and appropriately if they witness bullying or if a pupil reports a bullying concern. Concerns must be addressed without delay and in line with the following procedures.

- Minor incidents of unkind or inappropriate behaviour should be challenged promptly by staff.

- Where an incident causes concern, staff should make a clear record of what happened and the names of those involved. Pupils and witnesses should be spoken to appropriately and, where written accounts are required, these should reflect the person's own words. If a pupil requires a scribe, the scribe must record what the pupil says without adding or rephrasing information.

The concern and actions taken should be recorded on CPOMS, with the Headteacher or relevant senior leader linked as appropriate.

- The Headteacher or a senior leader will oversee the investigation and decide what further action or support is required.
- Parents/carers will be informed where appropriate if their child has been involved in a bullying incident.
- If the incident is serious or may present a safeguarding risk, the DSL and a senior leader must be informed immediately.
- Persistent bullying will be monitored and addressed by the Headteacher or another senior leader.
- The pupil who has experienced bullying and the pupil who has displayed bullying behaviour will both be offered appropriate support, and the impact of interventions will be reviewed.
- Appropriate sanctions will be applied in accordance with the Improving Behaviour Policy and will be proportionate to the seriousness of the incident.
- Following up - We will keep in touch with the person who reported the situation, which may be parents/carers or other adults. We have a clear complaints procedure for parents who are not satisfied with the school's actions. This is available online or from the school office
- We will use a range of responses and support appropriate to the situation. These may include solution-focused approaches, restorative approach, circle of friends, individual work with victim, perpetrator and bystanders or referral to outside agencies if appropriate.

Teenage Kicks applies proportionate sanctions for bullying in line with the Improving Behaviour Policy. Before deciding on a sanction, staff will establish the relevant facts and consider the age, needs and circumstances of the pupils involved. Parents/carers will be informed where appropriate. Serious or persistent bullying may result in stronger sanctions. Where an incident may amount to a criminal offence, safeguarding concern or other significant risk, the school will refer to the police, children's social care or another appropriate agency as required. Any search of a pupil or electronic device will only take place in accordance with the Searching Policy and relevant safeguarding procedures. Staff will also work with pupils who have displayed bullying behaviour to help them understand the impact of their actions and make positive changes.

Recording and reporting

Bullying and behaviour incidents will be recorded by the member of staff dealing with the incident and stored on CPOMS. Incidents identified as bullying will be reported to the Headteacher or a relevant senior leader.

Records will be used to ensure individual incidents are followed up, identify patterns or trends, and inform preventative work and policy development. Information will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Policy and UK data protection law. This policy will be reviewed annually.

Evaluation and Monitoring

This policy will be monitored by the Proprietor and reviewed annually. Pupil voice and other evidence will be used to evaluate pupils' experience of the school's anti-bullying arrangements, including whether pupils feel:

- Being able to report bullying and get help
- Being heard
- Being aware of how they can provide peer support

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- Being confident in the school's ability to deal with the bullying
 - Being aware that steps are taken to help them feel safe again
 - Being helped to rebuild confidence and resilience

Links to other policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Improving Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy

Organisations that can offer support

CEOP Safety Centre – report concerns about online sexual abuse or harmful online contact:

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre>

Childline – confidential support for children and young people; 0800 1111:

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

NSPCC Helpline – advice for adults concerned about a child; 0808 800 5000:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk>

Anti-Bullying Alliance – guidance and resources on preventing and responding to bullying:

<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>

Kidscape – bullying advice and support for children, families and professionals:

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

Family Lives – parenting and family support; 0808 800 2222:

<https://www.familylives.org.uk>

UK Safer Internet Centre – online safety support and resources. Professionals Online Safety Helpline: 0344 381 4772:

<https://saferinternet.org.uk>