NO BULLYING POLICY

A caring, friendly and safe environment for everyone

ORGANISATION	SKAPE North East Ltd	POLICY REFERENCE	P04
UPDATED	09 November 2026	NEXT SCHEDULED REVIEW	09 November 2027
POLICY OWNER	Centre Manager	RELATED POLICIES	Equality and Diversity; Behaviour; Safeguarding

01 INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF INTENT

At SKAPE, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all members of our community where everyone has a right to work and learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at SKAPE. If bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a relevant member of staff.

02 SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to students, staff, volunteers and visitors during SKAPE activities, including off-site activities and online behaviour that affects the safety or wellbeing of members of the SKAPE community. It should be read alongside the Equality and Diversity, Behaviour, Safeguarding, Online Safety and Exclusion policies.

The Centre Manager oversees this policy and coordinates responses with the registered school or commissioner. All staff and volunteers must challenge bullying safely, report concerns and support those affected. The DSL leads safeguarding action where bullying raises concerns about abuse or harm. Students and parents or carers should report concerns to a trusted member of staff; staff will offer communication support where needed.

03 WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is behaviour intended to hurt another person, physically or emotionally. Bullying results in pain and distress to the person affected. It is typically repeated and often involves an imbalance of power. Staff must still respond to a one-off harmful incident; safeguarding action must not depend on proving repetition or obtaining an admission of intent.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional: Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding belongings, threatening gestures).
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments, including sexual harassment.
- Homophobic: because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality.
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- Cyber: misuse of the internet, email, messaging, social media, online games and other online spaces.
- Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology, including camera and video facilities.
- Other prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying, including bullying relating to disability, religion or belief, sex or gender reassignment.

Bullying can relate to a real or perceived characteristic, or someone's association with another person. Harmful online behaviour can include making or sharing nude or semi-nude images, including AI-generated images; staff

must follow the Online Safety and Safeguarding policies and must not copy or forward such images. Abusive behaviour must not be dismissed as banter, a joke or a normal part of growing up.

04 WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO RESPOND TO BULLYING?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. SKAPE has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

05 OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY

- All staff, volunteers, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All staff and volunteers should know what SKAPE's policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All students and parents should know what SKAPE's policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- At SKAPE we take bullying seriously. Students, parents and staff should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

06 SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and explore concerns if a child:

- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school or SKAPE
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what is wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet, telephone or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated. Staff must not assume that changes in behaviour are explained by SEND or a medical condition. Threats of suicide, self-harm or immediate danger require an urgent safeguarding response and appropriate emergency assistance.

07 PROCEDURES

1. If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.

2. All incidents should be taken seriously. Staff will listen calmly, reassure the student and explain what will happen next. They must not promise confidentiality.

3. Ensure that the person affected feels safe. Reassure them and make sure they are not feeling foolish or inadequate. Consider immediate protection, supervision, first aid and communication support as needed.

4. Talk to all who may have been involved, separately where appropriate and without pressuring a student to meet the person alleged to have harmed them. Where abuse is suspected, report to the DSL and follow the Safeguarding Policy rather than carrying out an independent safeguarding investigation.

5. Report the incident promptly to the Centre Manager and relevant registered school or commissioner, and record it on the incident report form and LearnTrek where appropriate. Parents or carers will be informed promptly unless doing so could increase risk; the DSL will advise. Racial and other discriminatory incidents must also be recorded and addressed under the Equality and Diversity Policy. Safeguarding concerns must be referred to the DSL without delay.

6. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly. The Centre Manager and DSL will coordinate the response where safeguarding is involved.

7. SKAPE staff may choose to talk to the people involved, including sharing feelings and responsibility, where safe and appropriate. Participation in any restorative discussion must be voluntary and must not pressure the person affected to reconcile.

8. Identify any trigger factors and take steps to prevent further incidents.

9. Make it clear that bullying has consequences that will be dealt with under the Behaviour Policy and that serious incidents will be considered on an individual basis. All consequences will be explained carefully to those involved. Decisions must be fair and proportionate, taking account of individual needs, reasonable adjustments, the support provided and the impact on others.

10. SKAPE staff will continue to monitor the situation, check that the person affected feels safe and supported, and record further concerns and actions.

11. If there are further incidents, the Centre Manager will inform the head or deputy of the registered school, or relevant commissioning contact. In serious cases parents or carers will be asked to attend a meeting where safe and appropriate. Serious incidents and safeguarding concerns must be shared promptly; staff must not wait for bullying to recur before escalating concerns.

SKAPE will follow its own Safeguarding Policy alongside the relevant commissioner's policy and agreed reporting arrangements. The commissioning school retains its overarching safeguarding responsibility; this does not replace SKAPE's responsibility for students in its care. The DSL will liaise with the commissioner's DSL or local authority safeguarding contact about concerns, serious incidents and patterns of risk. Necessary protective action or referrals must not wait for the commissioner's response.

Students and adults who report bullying or support someone else's report must be protected from retaliation. Concerns about staff conduct must follow the appropriate staff safeguarding or employment procedure, with the Complaints or Whistleblowing Policy used as appropriate.

08 OUTCOMES

- The student who has bullied may be asked to genuinely apologise, where appropriate. An apology must not be forced or made a condition of receiving support.
- If safe and appropriate, those involved may be supported to reconcile. The person affected must not be pressured to agree.
- Further incidents will be recorded and rigorously monitored.
- The Centre Manager will work with the registered school or commissioner to develop a Behaviour Support Plan.
- All incidents will be taken seriously, investigated and dealt with; each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Support will be considered for the person affected, the student alleged to have caused harm and other students affected. Serious violence, credible threats or other serious incidents will trigger an immediate placement review under the Behaviour Policy. Persistent bullying despite appropriate support and interventions may also lead to a

placement review and exclusion or the placement ending under the Exclusion Policy. Safeguarding action will continue alongside any behaviour consequence.

09 PREVENTION

SKAPE places particular emphasis on providing a secure learning, caring environment in which the confidence, physical and social skills of each student can be developed. We promote a positive approach to behaviour at SKAPE. To support this we have the following in place:

- Behaviour Policy
- Centre expectations and agreed boundaries
- No Bullying Policy

Staff will model respectful relationships, challenge discriminatory language and help students practise safe ways to seek help, including online. Reporting routes and teaching will be adapted to students' ages, understanding and communication needs. The Centre Manager will review recorded incidents and feedback to identify patterns and improve prevention and support.

10 GUIDANCE RELATED POLICIES AND REVIEW

This policy reflects Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, particularly child-on-child abuse, and relevant DfE Preventing and tackling bullying guidance. It supports the Equality Act duties applicable to SKAPE as set out in the Equality and Diversity Policy. As a non-school alternative provision, SKAPE applies relevant safeguarding principles and commissioning arrangements; this policy does not confer school-specific statutory powers.

Read alongside the Equality and Diversity, Safeguarding, Behaviour, Exclusion, Online Safety, Positive Handling, Confidentiality, GDPR, Employee Code of Conduct, Complaints and Whistleblowing policies. These provide the detailed arrangements for safeguarding, online concerns, information sharing and staff conduct.

The Centre Manager will review this policy annually, or sooner following significant incidents or changes in guidance or provision. Current DfE guidance: www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2 and www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-bullying.

11 DOCUMENT REVISION HISTORY

DATE	CHANGE	APPROVAL	REV.
31/01/2023	Initial policy	K. Watson	01
12/02/2024	Annual Policy Review	K. Watson	02
02/02/2025	Annual Policy Review	K. Watson	03
03/03/2026	Annual Policy Review	K. Watson	04
09/11/2026	SKAPE rebranding and format updated; signed-off objectives and core approach retained, with targeted KCSIE 2026 safeguarding and related-policy alignment updates.	For approval	05