



RTA Kids

Behaviour Policy & Complaints Procedure

Organisation: Rom Theatre Arts Kids (RTA Kids)

Premises: The Arts Centre Dunmow, 1 Haslers Lane, Great Dunmow, CM6 1XF

Children and young people: Ages 2–18

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mikki Rom

Health & Safety Officer: Mikki Rom

Email: hello@rtakids.co.uk

Policy period: 2026–2027

Last reviewed: August 2026

Next review: August 2027, or sooner where required

PART 1 – BEHAVIOUR POLICY

1. Purpose

RTA Kids is committed to providing a welcoming, inclusive, safe and positive environment where every child and young person can learn, develop confidence and enjoy performing arts.

We recognise that children and young people aged 2–18 have different developmental, emotional and behavioural needs. Expectations and responses will therefore be **age-appropriate, proportionate and supportive**.

Our approach is based on the principle that positive behaviour is encouraged through clear expectations, positive relationships, consistency, appropriate boundaries and early intervention.

RTA Kids does not tolerate behaviour that places another child, staff member, volunteer or visitor at risk of harm.

2. Our Behaviour Principles

RTA Kids expects everyone within our community to:

- Treat others with kindness, dignity and respect.
- Listen to staff and follow reasonable instructions.
- Allow others to learn and participate without disruption.
- Respect differences and individual needs.

- Use appropriate language.
- Respect the studios, equipment, costumes and property of others.
- Behave safely.
- Follow RTA Kids' safeguarding and health and safety procedures.
- Raise concerns appropriately rather than through confrontation, intimidation or social media.

We aim to create a culture where children feel **safe to speak, safe to learn and safe to make mistakes**.

This is consistent with the wider safeguarding approach in the 2026 *Working Together to Safeguard Children* guidance, which places emphasis on inclusive, anti-discriminatory practice and creating cultures where children are protected and supported.

3. Expected Behaviour – Students

Students are expected to:

Respect others

- Speak respectfully to staff and other students.
- Not bully, intimidate, threaten or deliberately upset others.
- Respect personal boundaries.
- Respect differences in race, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, culture or background.

Participate appropriately

- Listen when teachers are speaking.
- Follow instructions.
- Participate to the best of their ability.
- Avoid deliberately disrupting lessons.
- Allow other students to have their opportunity to participate.

Stay safe

- Follow safety instructions.
- Use equipment correctly.
- Never deliberately put another person at risk.
- Tell a member of staff if they or another child is hurt or feels unsafe.

Look after property

Students should respect:

- RTA Kids property.
- The Arts Centre Dunmow.
- Other venues.
- Costumes.
- Props.
- Equipment.
- Other people's belongings.

4. Age-Appropriate Behaviour

RTA Kids recognises that a two-year-old cannot reasonably be expected to meet exactly the same behavioural expectations as an eighteen-year-old.

Staff will consider:

- Age.
- Developmental stage.
- Communication needs.
- Additional needs or disabilities.
- Emotional wellbeing.
- Medical needs.
- Individual circumstances.
- Whether the behaviour may indicate an underlying safeguarding or welfare concern.

For younger children, staff may use distraction, redirection, reassurance, repetition and support rather than formal consequences.

For older students, staff may use increasingly formal conversations and consequences where appropriate.

5. Positive Behaviour

RTA Kids will actively promote positive behaviour rather than focusing solely on poor behaviour.

Staff may use:

- Verbal praise.
- Positive reinforcement.
- Recognition of achievement.
- Encouragement.
- Clear explanations of expectations.
- Individual conversations.
- Opportunities to reflect.
- Support from parents/carers where appropriate.

We believe children respond best when they understand **what is expected of them and why**.

6. Unacceptable Behaviour

Examples of unacceptable behaviour include, but are not limited to:

- Bullying.
- Cyberbullying.
- Physical aggression.
- Fighting.

- Deliberately hurting another person.
- Threatening behaviour.
- Intimidation.
- Harassment.
- Discriminatory or racist language.
- Homophobic, biphobic or transphobic abuse.
- Sexual harassment or inappropriate sexualised behaviour.
- Deliberately damaging property.
- Stealing.
- Persistent disruption.
- Swearing directed at another person.
- Deliberately refusing reasonable safety instructions.
- Bringing dangerous items into RTA Kids.
- Recording or photographing others without appropriate permission.
- Sharing inappropriate images or content.
- Using social media to harass, threaten or target another student or member of staff.

Some behaviour may also constitute a **safeguarding concern** or potentially a criminal offence. Such matters will be dealt with under the relevant safeguarding or other appropriate procedure rather than solely under this Behaviour Policy.

7. Bullying

RTA Kids has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying.

Bullying may include:

- Physical bullying.
- Verbal bullying.
- Emotional bullying.
- Social exclusion.
- Online bullying.
- Repeated intimidation.
- Deliberate humiliation.
- Discriminatory bullying.

A single serious incident may also require intervention even if it does not meet the definition of repeated bullying.

All reports of bullying will be taken seriously.

Students should report bullying to:

- Their teacher.
- A member of the RTA Kids administration team.
- The DSL where appropriate.
- Their parent/carer, who can then contact RTA Kids.

8. Online Behaviour & Social Media

RTA Kids expects students and parents/carers to behave respectfully online.

Students must not use:

- TikTok.
- Instagram.
- Snapchat.
- WhatsApp.
- Facebook.
- Group chats.
- Other social media or messaging platforms

to bully, threaten, intimidate, harass or deliberately target another RTA Kids student or member of staff.

RTA Kids may take appropriate action where online behaviour has a direct impact on the safety, wellbeing or functioning of the RTA Kids community.

Staff must follow the separate safeguarding and staff professional-boundaries procedures when communicating with students.

9. Behaviour Linked to Additional Needs

RTA Kids recognises that behaviour can sometimes be connected to:

- SEND.
- Communication difficulties.
- Neurodiversity.
- Medical conditions.
- Emotional distress.
- Anxiety.
- Trauma.
- Other individual circumstances.

Where appropriate, RTA Kids will consider whether reasonable adjustments or additional support are required.

This does not mean that harmful behaviour will simply be ignored. Instead, RTA Kids will seek to understand the underlying need while maintaining appropriate boundaries and protecting other students.

10. Responding to Poor Behaviour

Where behaviour is inappropriate, staff will generally seek to:

1. Calmly identify the behaviour.
2. Remind the student of the expected behaviour.
3. Give the student an opportunity to correct their behaviour.
4. Consider the child's age and circumstances.
5. Provide appropriate support.
6. Escalate to a senior member of staff if necessary.
7. Contact parents/carers where appropriate.

8. Record significant or repeated incidents.
Staff should avoid humiliating, shouting at or unnecessarily embarrassing a child.

11. Consequences

Where appropriate, consequences may include:

- Verbal reminder.
- Change of activity.
- Temporary removal from an activity.
- Conversation with a senior member of staff.
- Parent/carer contact.
- Behaviour support plan.
- Formal warning.
- Temporary suspension from RTA Kids.
- Termination of enrolment in serious or persistent cases.

Any consequence will be proportionate to the behaviour and circumstances.

RTA Kids will never use corporal punishment or physical punishment.

Physical intervention will only be used where lawful, necessary and proportionate to protect a child or another person from immediate harm, and must be reported and recorded appropriately.

12. Serious Incidents

Serious incidents may include:

- Serious physical violence.
- Threats of serious violence.
- Sexual harassment or sexualised behaviour.
- Serious bullying.
- Deliberate significant damage.
- Possession of dangerous items.
- Serious discriminatory abuse.
- Behaviour presenting a significant safeguarding concern.

Such incidents will be escalated to senior management and may involve parents/carers and, where appropriate, external agencies.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, RTA Kids will follow its **Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy**.

13. Safeguarding Takes Priority

Behaviour should never be viewed in isolation where there may be a safeguarding concern.

Staff should consider whether a significant or sudden change in behaviour may indicate:

- Abuse.
- Neglect.
- Exploitation.
- Bullying.
- Domestic abuse.
- Mental health difficulties.
- Harm outside the home.
- Online harm.
- Another welfare concern.

RTA Kids follows the principle that **"it could happen here"**.

Any safeguarding concern must be reported to the DSL in accordance with the RTA Kids Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

The 2026 *Working Together to Safeguard Children* guidance strengthens expectations around identifying multiple and overlapping harms, online harms and exploitation, and emphasises that safeguarding applies to all children.

14. Staff Behaviour

All staff and volunteers are expected to:

- Model appropriate behaviour.
- Treat children with dignity and respect.
- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Avoid shouting at or humiliating children.
- Follow safeguarding procedures.
- Report concerns.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Follow RTA Kids' Staff Code of Conduct.

Staff must never use their position to intimidate, threaten, embarrass or deliberately humiliate a child.

Concerns regarding staff behaviour will be handled through the appropriate management, safeguarding, disciplinary or complaints process.

15. Parent & Carer Behaviour

RTA Kids expects parents and carers to model respectful behaviour.

Parents/carers must not:

- Shout at staff or children.
- Threaten or intimidate staff.
- Use abusive or discriminatory language.
- Confront another child or parent about an incident.
- Attempt to discipline another person's child.

- Publish abusive or defamatory comments about RTA Kids or its staff online.
- Disrupt classes or rehearsals.
- Enter restricted areas without permission.
- Photograph or film children without appropriate consent.

Where a parent/carer's behaviour is inappropriate, RTA Kids may ask them to leave the premises.

Serious or persistent behaviour may result in restrictions being placed on their access to RTA Kids premises or activities.

PART 2 – COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

16. Purpose

RTA Kids values feedback and recognises that parents, carers, students and other stakeholders may occasionally have concerns.

We aim to resolve concerns:

- Quickly.
- Fairly.
- Respectfully.
- Transparently.
- At the earliest appropriate stage.

A complaint will not affect a child's access to RTA Kids or the quality of their teaching.

17. Informal Concerns – Stage 1

Where possible, parents/carers should initially raise a concern with the relevant teacher or RTA Kids administration team.

Concerns can be submitted by:

Email: hello@rtakids.co.uk

We will seek to understand:

- What happened.
- When it happened.
- Who was involved.
- What outcome the parent/carer is seeking.

Many concerns can be resolved quickly through discussion.

18. Formal Complaint – Stage 2

If the concern cannot be resolved informally, or the parent/carer wishes to make a formal complaint, it should be submitted in writing to:

RTA Kids Director

Email: hello@rtakids.co.uk

The complaint should include:

- Name of the person making the complaint.
- Student's name.
- Date(s) of the incident.
- Details of the concern.
- Relevant evidence where available.
- Names of relevant people involved.
- The outcome being requested.

RTA Kids will acknowledge the complaint and determine the appropriate person to investigate it.

Where possible, someone who was not directly involved in the matter will investigate.

19. Investigation

The investigation may involve:

- Reviewing records.
- Speaking to staff.
- Speaking to relevant witnesses.
- Reviewing emails or other correspondence.
- Speaking to parents/carers.
- Considering the child's views where appropriate to their age and understanding.
- Reviewing relevant policies or procedures.

Confidentiality will be maintained as far as reasonably possible.

Information will only be shared with those who need it for the purpose of investigating and resolving the complaint or where there is a legal or safeguarding reason to share it.

20. Response to a Formal Complaint

RTA Kids will aim to provide a written response within **30 working days** of receiving a formal complaint.

Where a full investigation cannot reasonably be completed within this period, RTA Kids will explain the reason for the delay and provide an expected timescale.

The response will explain:

- The outcome of the investigation.
- The reasons for the decision.
- Any action RTA Kids intends to take.

- Any improvements or changes where appropriate.

21. Appeal – Stage 3

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may request an internal review.

The request should be made in writing within **10 working days** of receiving the Stage 2 response.

The review will, where reasonably possible, be undertaken by a senior person who was not directly responsible for the original decision.

The review will consider whether:

- The original complaint was investigated appropriately.
- Relevant evidence was considered.
- The procedure was followed.
- The outcome was reasonable and proportionate.

The outcome of the review will be provided in writing.

22. Safeguarding Complaints

Complaints involving safeguarding concerns, allegations of abuse, neglect or harm to a child will **not necessarily follow the ordinary complaints procedure**.

They will be referred immediately to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** and managed in accordance with RTA Kids' Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

Where appropriate, concerns may be referred to:

- Children's Social Care.
- The Police.
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Other relevant safeguarding partners.

The 2026 safeguarding guidance makes clear that organisations working with children should have clear safeguarding procedures, escalation arrangements and mechanisms through which children and families can raise concerns.

23. Complaints About the DSL

If a complaint or safeguarding concern relates to the DSL, it should be reported to another senior member of RTA Kids management where available.

The DSL must not investigate a safeguarding allegation made against themselves.

Where an allegation concerns a member of staff and meets the relevant threshold, RTA Kids will follow its safeguarding procedures and seek advice from the appropriate local authority safeguarding arrangements/LADO.

24. Complaints About a Child's Behaviour

Where a parent/carer wishes to complain about another child's behaviour, they should **not approach or confront the child or their parent directly**.

The concern should be reported to RTA Kids.

RTA Kids will investigate appropriately while maintaining confidentiality.

We cannot disclose confidential information about another child, including disciplinary action taken against them.

25. Complaints From Children & Young People

RTA Kids recognises that children and young people have the right to express concerns about their experiences.

Children may:

- Speak to their teacher.
- Speak to a member of the administration team.
- Speak to the DSL.
- Ask a parent/carer to contact RTA Kids.
- Raise a concern directly with a trusted adult.

Staff should listen to children and take their views seriously, taking account of their age, understanding and communication needs.

Where a complaint raises a safeguarding concern, it will be managed under the safeguarding procedure.

26. Anonymous Complaints

RTA Kids will consider anonymous complaints where sufficient information is provided to allow an appropriate investigation.

However, it may not be possible to provide a response to an anonymous complainant.

27. Unreasonable or Abusive Complaints

RTA Kids has a responsibility to protect staff and volunteers from abusive, threatening or unreasonable behaviour.

Examples may include:

- Repeated complaints about the same matter after it has been fully investigated.
- Threatening staff.
- Abusive language.
- Harassment.
- Excessive or unreasonable correspondence.
- Repeatedly contacting multiple members of staff about the same issue in an attempt to obtain a different answer.
- Making demands that are disproportionate or unreasonable.

RTA Kids may reasonably:

- Limit communication to a nominated staff member.
- Require communication to be in writing.
- Limit the frequency of correspondence.
- Set reasonable boundaries around contact.
- Take appropriate action where behaviour becomes threatening or abusive.

This will not prevent legitimate safeguarding or welfare concerns from being raised.

28. Confidentiality

All complaints will be handled sensitively.

RTA Kids will not discuss complaints publicly or disclose confidential information about students, families or staff.

Parents/carers should not publish confidential correspondence, images or personal information about children or staff online.

29. Records

RTA Kids will maintain appropriate records of:

- Formal complaints.
- Investigations.
- Responses.
- Appeals.
- Actions taken.
- Relevant correspondence.

Records will be stored securely and handled in accordance with RTA Kids' **Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy**.

30. No Retaliation

No child or family will be disadvantaged because they have raised a genuine concern or complaint.

RTA Kids will not tolerate retaliation, intimidation or victimisation against a person who raises a concern in good faith.

31. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and sooner where:

- Legislation changes.
- Safeguarding guidance changes.
- RTA Kids' activities change.
- An incident indicates that amendments are required.
- Feedback identifies a need for improvement.

Policy period: 2026–2027

Last reviewed: August 2026

Next review: August 2027

RTA Kids Administration: hello@rtakids.co.uk

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mikki Rom

Health & Safety Officer: Mikki Rom