



Richmond House

Social Care Services CIC

Anti-Bullying Procedure and Guidance,
advice for Parents and Staff bodies
2026 -2027

Anti-Bullying Procedure and Guidance

Advice for Parents, Carers, Staff and Professionals

2026 – 2027

Key Changes for 2026–2027

Section	Key Change
Legal Framework	Added Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 (effective 1 September 2026)
Legal Framework	Updated to reflect Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 (published 18 March 2026)
Legal Framework	Added Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
Legal Framework	Updated to reflect Ofsted SCCIF Refresh 2026 for Children's Homes
Legal Framework	Updated to reflect Regulation 40 notification requirements
Legal Framework	Added Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) Technical Guidance for Schools (2026)
Cyberbullying	New section on social media ban for under-16s (expected spring 2027)
Child-on-Child Abuse	Updated to reflect KCSIE 2026 recognition of misogyny as a safeguarding concern
Online Safety	Strengthened guidance on online harms, disinformation, and group-based exploitation
Anti-Racist Practice	New emphasis on anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice in line with Working Together 2026
Family Help	Updated to reflect new Family Help framework introduced in Working Together 2026
Harm Outside the Home	New emphasis on recognising extra-familial harms and contextual safeguarding
Notifications	Updated Regulation 40 notification requirements for Ofsted
Review Date	Updated to September 2027

1.0 Policy Statement

Richmond House Social Care Services CIC is committed to ensuring that all children and young people in our care are protected from harm, respected, and supported to develop in a safe, nurturing environment.

Bullying in any form will not be tolerated. This includes bullying between children, between staff and children, or any bullying by or towards parents/carers, staff, or external professionals.

We will work proactively with children, families, schools, and other agencies to prevent bullying, respond effectively to incidents, and promote positive relationships.

2.0 Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy is underpinned by the following legislation, regulations, and guidance:

Primary Legislation

- **The Children Act 1989** (as amended)
- **The Equality Act 2010** – including EHRC Technical Guidance for Schools (2026)
- **The Children and Families Act 2014** (SEND requirements)
- **The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026**

Children's Homes Regulations and Standards

- **Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015:**
 - Regulation 5 – Engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met
 - Regulation 10 – The Health and Well-being Standard
 - Regulation 11 – The Positive Relationships Standard
 - Regulation 12 – The Protection of Children Standard
 - Regulation 13 – The Leadership and Management Standard
 - Regulation 34(3) – Policies for the protection of children
 - Regulation 40 – Notification of a Serious Event

Statutory Guidance

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 – effective 1 September 2026
 - Annex A has been withdrawn; all staff are now expected to read at least Part One in full
 - The 'child-on-child abuse' section has been renamed to include "(including harassment and violence)"

- Misogyny is now expressly recognised as a safeguarding concern
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026** – published 18 March 2026
 - Replaces the 2023 version
 - Introduces Family Help as a distinct system of support
 - Stronger emphasis on anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice
 - Strengthened guidance on online harms and group-based exploitation
 - New paragraph addresses risks in residential settings
 - Reinforces that children may experience multiple harms simultaneously
 - Clarifies that safeguarding applies to all children, including those in residential settings

Ofsted and Inspection Framework

- **Ofsted Social Care Common Inspection Framework (SCCIF) Refresh 2026** – strengthened section on how inspectors assess children's experiences and progress
- **Ofsted Children's Homes Registration Policy** (updated 10 July 2026)

Department for Education Guidance

- **Preventing and Tackling Bullying** (DfE, 2017) – with new non-statutory guidance on preventing bullying and harassment of school staff (published July 2026)
- **Preventing Bullying** – guidance for headteachers, school staff, parents and carers on bullying and cyberbullying

3.0 Objectives

- **Protect** children and young people from harm
 - **Empower** children to recognise, report, and challenge bullying
 - **Ensure** staff are proactive in preventing, identifying, and responding to bullying
 - **Promote** a culture of mutual respect, dignity, and inclusion
 - **Work in partnership** with parents, carers, and agencies to ensure consistent safeguarding practices
 - **Champion anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice** in all aspects of our work
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4.0 Definition of Bullying

Bullying is:

"Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another

individual, physically or emotionally." (DfE, 2017)

Forms of Bullying Include (but are not limited to):

Type	Examples
Emotional	Intimidation, exclusion, humiliation
Physical	Hitting, pushing, spitting, damage to property
Verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, threats, spreading rumours
Racist / Religious	Racist comments, insults, gestures – see new Anti-Bullying Alliance Racist Bullying Guidance (2026)
Sexual / Sexist / Transphobic	Unwanted contact, derogatory remarks, harassment
Disability-related bullying	Bullying targeting children with SEND
Homophobic bullying	Bullying targeting LGBTQ+ children and young people
Cyberbullying	Via text, gaming, messaging apps, or social media
Prejudice-based bullying	Bullying based on any protected characteristic

Child-on-Child Abuse (Including Harassment and Violence)

As recognised in KCSIE 2026, child-on-child abuse involves an escalating pattern of harmful behaviours, ranging from harassment and harmful conduct through to more serious abuse and violence.

Richmond House recognises that:

- Misogyny is a safeguarding concern
- Harmful conduct must not be dismissed as harmless "banter", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys"
- Normalising such behaviours can contribute to a culture where abuse becomes embedded

5.0 Preventive Measures

Richmond House will:

- Complete individual risk assessments for all children, addressing vulnerability to bullying
- Promote a climate of openness where children feel safe to report concerns
- Embed anti-bullying themes into keywork sessions, house meetings, and educational support

Anti-Bullying Procedure and Guidance Policy

Reviewed on 01/09/2026 by J Al Karaki | Authorised on 01/09/2026 by H. Okasheh
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- Train staff in early identification, intervention, and recording of bullying, including recognition of misogynistic behaviour as a safeguarding concern
- Conduct environmental risk assessments to identify hotspots
- Involve children in developing house rules and behaviour expectations
- Provide positive role models and celebrate diversity, equality, and achievements
- Ensure anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice is embedded in all aspects of care
- Recognise that children may experience multiple harms simultaneously and respond accordingly
- Understand harm outside the home (extra-familial harm) including exploitation, criminality, and online abuse

6.0 Responding to Bullying

When bullying is reported or suspected:

1. The staff member who witnesses or is informed must respond immediately and ensure safety
2. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Registered Manager must be informed
3. Interviews will be carried out with all parties
4. Parents/carers and, if appropriate, the child's social worker will be informed
5. Support will be provided for the victim and intervention for the child displaying bullying behaviour
6. Where appropriate, referrals will be made to external agencies (police, social care, CAMHS, etc.)
7. Records must be kept in the daily log, incident report, and child's individual file

Recognition of Harmful Behaviours

Staff are expected to:

- Recognise and challenge abusive behaviours between children at an early stage
- Understand that child-on-child abuse involves an escalating pattern of harmful behaviours
- Be alert to signs of misogyny and sexist behaviour as safeguarding concerns
- Recognise online harms, including disinformation, misinformation, and conspiracy theories

7.0 Managing Bullying Incidents

- Focus on behaviour, not the individual, promoting restorative practice
- Encourage children to develop empathy and understand the impact of their actions
- Sanctions may be applied in line with behaviour management policies
- Continuous monitoring and follow-up to prevent reoccurrence
- Support access to therapeutic services if bullying has caused emotional harm
- Recognise that children who cause harm to others also require an appropriate safeguarding response

8.0 Cyberbullying and Online Safety

Cyberbullying Definition

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place **online or via digital technology**, including:

- Social media platforms
- Messaging apps
- Gaming platforms
- Email and text messages
- Video calls and live streaming

Preventive Measures

- Individual risk assessments will consider online risks and vulnerabilities
- Children and young people will be supported to understand online safety
- Staff will be trained to recognise signs of cyberbullying and online harm
- Filtering and monitoring systems will be reviewed at least once every academic year (in line with KCSIE 2026 requirements)

Social Media Ban for Under-16s

The UK Government has confirmed new restrictions on social media access for children under 16, expected to come into force from spring 2027. Richmond House will:

- Stay informed of implementation timelines
- Update policies and procedures accordingly
- Support children and families to understand and comply with new restrictions
- Continue to manage risks associated with social media, including grooming, criminal exploitation, cyberbullying, and inappropriate contact

Online Harms

In line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, Richmond House recognises:

- The link between online harm and harm experienced in person
- That digital environments shape risk and vulnerability
- The need for **clearer links** between online safety and safeguarding practice

9.0 Anti-Racist and Anti-Discriminatory Practice

In line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, Richmond House is committed to:

- Inclusive, anti-discriminatory cultures
- Challenging racism and discrimination
- Recognising how racism and past experiences influence relationships
- Anti-racist practice in all aspects of care

Racist Bullying

The Anti-Bullying Alliance has launched new guidance on preventing and responding to racist bullying (2026), produced in consultation with organisations including the NSPCC. Richmond House will:

- Follow this guidance in responding to racist incidents
- Ensure staff are trained to recognise and respond to racist bullying
- Support children who have been targeted by racist bullying

10.0 Partnership with Parents/Carers

- Parents/carers will be engaged in policy development and incident responses
- Richmond House will provide clear information and guidance on bullying and complaints procedures
- Parents/carers will be encouraged to reinforce positive behaviours at home
- Parents/carers will be informed about online safety and the upcoming social media ban for under-16s

11.0 Notifications and Escalation

Internal Recording

- All bullying incidents must be recorded
- Incidents will be logged and evaluated at the end of each month
- Trends will be identified and preventative measures implemented

External Notifications

Serious incidents (e.g., physical assault, persistent bullying, safeguarding concerns) must be reported to:

Agency	Requirement
Ofsted	Under Regulation 40 of the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 – notification of serious events
Placing Local Authority / Social Worker	As required by safeguarding and commissioning arrangements
Responsible Individual / Governing Body	As part of governance and accountability
Police	Where a criminal offence may have occurred

Regulation 40 Notification Categories Include:

- Death of a child
- Safeguarding referrals
- Known or suspected sexual exploitation
- Serious incidents requiring police involvement
- Allegations of abuse
- Child protection enquiries
- Self-harm and serious accidents

12.0 Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review

- The Registered Manager will review bullying incidents monthly
- The DSL will provide regular safeguarding reports to the Board
- Incidents will be analysed to identify trends and patterns
- Preventative measures will be implemented based on analysis
- The policy will be reviewed annually (next review: September 2027) or sooner following serious incidents or changes in legislation

13.0 Supporting Organisations and Resources

Organisation	Website	Telephone
Anti-Bullying Alliance	www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk	–
Childline	www.childline.org.uk	0800 1111
NSPCC	www.nspcc.org.uk	0808 800 5000
Young Minds	www.youngminds.org.uk	–
Kidscape	www.kidscape.org.uk	–
Restorative Justice Council	www.restorativejustice.org.uk	–
Family Lives	www.familylives.org.uk	–
SEND Code of Practice (0–25)	www.gov.uk	–

14.0 Parent and Carer Guidance

Our Commitment

At Richmond House, we believe every child has the right to feel safe, respected, and valued. We do not tolerate bullying in any form. Staff work closely with children, families, and schools to prevent bullying, deal with it quickly, and support everyone involved.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is when someone repeatedly hurts, threatens, or frightens another person on purpose. It can be:

- **Emotional** – ignoring, excluding, threatening, or intimidating
- **Physical** – pushing, hitting, kicking, damaging property
- **Verbal** – name-calling, teasing, spreading rumours
- **Racist or Religious** – comments or actions targeting someone's background or beliefs
- **Homophobic or Transphobic**
- **Disability-related bullying**
- **Online (Cyberbullying)** – using phones, messages, or social media to upset others

How We Prevent Bullying

- Every child has an individual risk assessment to help staff understand their needs
- Children are encouraged to talk openly about feelings and relationships
- Staff run activities and discussions to teach respect, kindness, and inclusion
- Bullying is always taken seriously and challenged quickly

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- We work with families to create a safe and supportive environment both in and outside the home
- We challenge misogyny and sexist behaviour as safeguarding concerns
- We promote anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice

If Bullying Happens

If bullying is reported or suspected, we will:

1. Act immediately to make sure your child is safe
2. Listen to the child being bullied and involve them in decisions
3. Speak to everyone involved to understand what happened
4. Inform parents/carers and social workers where appropriate
5. Provide support and monitoring to make sure it does not happen again
6. If needed, involve outside agencies such as the police, school, or local safeguarding teams

How Parents and Carers Can Help

- Encourage your child to speak up if they feel worried or unsafe
- Reassure them that it's not their fault if they are bullied
- Model kindness and respect at home and online
- Contact us straight away if you are worried about your child
- Work with us to agree on the best way to support your child

Complaints and Concerns

If you are not happy with how bullying has been handled, you can:

1. Speak to your child's Key Worker or the Registered Manager
2. Use our Complaints Procedure – available on request
3. Contact the placing local authority or Ofsted if you still have concerns

Useful Support Services

- **Childline** – 0800 1111 | www.childline.org.uk
- **NSPCC** – 0808 800 5000 | www.nspcc.org.uk
- **Young Minds** – www.youngminds.org.uk
- **Anti-Bullying Alliance** – www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- **Family Lives** – www.familylives.org.uk

15.0 Approval and Review

Version	Date	Summary of Changes	Authorised By
1.0	10/02/2022	Initial Policy Creation	Jay Al Karaki
2.0	05/01/2023	Policy Review	Jay Al Karaki
3.0	15/07/2024	General Review and Update	Hala Okasheh
4.0	19/09/2024	General Review and Update	Jay Al Karaki
5.0	20/10/2025	Alignment with 2025 regulations	Hala Okasheh, Pauline Bullement, Jay Al Karaki
6.0	September 2026	Updated for 2026–2027: KCSIE 2026, Working Together 2026, Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, social media ban, misogyny as safeguarding concern, anti-racist practice, Regulation 40 notifications, Family Help framework	Jay Al Karaki

Policy reviewed by: Hala Okasheh

Authorised by: Jay Al Karaki

Date: 01/09/2026

Next Review: September 2027

Signature: J. Al Karaki

Head of Services

Richmond House Social Care Services CIC is committed to continuous improvement and welcomes feedback on this policy.

Richmond House Social Care Services CIC

96 Main Street, North Frodingham, Drifffield, YO25 8LJ

Email: Admin@rhscs.org.uk

Website: www.rhscs.org.uk

Creating safe, respectful, and supportive care for every child

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