

The Online School UK



Behaviour Policy including Out of School Conduct 2026-2027

Date of This Review	August 2026
Reviewed By	Gemma Wheelwright- Rhodes and Effie Haywood
Date Approved by School Director	1st September 2026
Date of Next Review	July/ August 2027

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Scope
3. Student Expectations
4. Positive Behaviour and Recognition
5. Preventing Behaviour Problems
6. Unacceptable Behavior
7. Bullying
8. Child on Child Abuse (including harassment and violence)
9. Online and Digital Behaviour
10. Out of School Conduct
11. Our Response to Behaviour Concerns
12. Refund and Fees
13. Restorative Approaches
14. Supporting Students who have experienced harmful behaviour
15. Safeguarding and External Agencies
16. Recording and Monitoring
17. Parents and Carers
18. Staff Responsibilities
19. Equality, Inclusion and Reasonable Adjustments
20. Student Voice
21. Review
22. Related legislation and guidance

1. Introduction

At The Online School UK, keeping children safe, happy and able to learn is at the heart of everything we do. Here at The Online School UK we believe that every student has the right to:

- feel safe
- be treated with dignity and respect
- learn without being bullied or intimidated
- participate in a positive and supportive learning environment
- receive appropriate support when behaviour or safeguarding concerns arise

We will promote positive behaviour wherever possible, intervene early when concerns arise, respond firmly to bullying and harmful conduct, and use proportionate and appropriate consequences when behaviour falls below our expectations.

Keeping children safe, happy and able to succeed remains at the centre of our approach.

We encourage and promote:

- respect
- acceptance
- compassion
- kindness
- equality
- resilience
- politeness
- positive relationships
- a safe and inclusive learning environment.

Our approach to behaviour is based on our CARE values:

Compassion, Acceptance, Resilience and Equality.

We recognise that children and young people are still developing socially, emotionally and behaviourally. Students may sometimes become distracted, disengaged, frustrated or reluctant to participate. These behaviours do not, in themselves, constitute misconduct.

However, behaviour that is deliberately rude, intimidating, threatening, discriminatory, bullying, abusive, harmful or seriously disruptive is not acceptable.

We understand that behaviour can affect the wellbeing, safety and mental health of individual students and can have a wider impact on the classroom environment and the quality of learning.

We therefore aim to:

- promote positive behaviour proactively

- establish clear and consistent expectations
- recognise and reward positive behaviour
- address concerns early, before they become more serious
- respond to bullying and harmful behaviour swiftly
- protect students from harm, including online har
- take account of individual circumstances, including SEND and other barriers to learning
- work constructively with parents and carers
- ensure that consequences are fair, proportionate and consistently applied

Our approach reflects the expectation that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that children's welfare must remain central to decision-making.

2. Scope

This policy applies to student behaviour:

- during lessons
- before and after lessons where students are interacting through school systems
- on school-managed or school-provided platforms
- in school-related group chats and communication channels
- when communicating with other students, staff or members of the school community
- when participating in school activities or events
- outside school where behaviour has a direct or significant impact on another student, staff member, the safety or wellbeing of members of the school community, or the orderly operation of The Online School UK

As an online school, we recognise that the distinction between “school” and “out of school” can be less clear than in a traditional school environment.

Students may therefore be subject to school action where out-of-school behaviour:

- involves another student or member of the school community
- arises from or is connected to the school community
- takes place in a school-related online space
- causes harm, distress, intimidation or safeguarding concerns for another student
- threatens the safety or wellbeing of members of the school community
- has a significant adverse impact on the school environment

Government guidance confirms that schools can take action in relation to harmful online behaviour where it threatens or causes harm to another pupil or impacts the school environment.

3. Student Expectations

All students are expected to:

1. Treat other students and staff with respect and kindness
2. Listen when others are speaking
3. Follow reasonable instructions from teachers and other members of staff
4. Allow others to learn without unnecessary disruption
5. Communicate appropriately and respectfully
6. Avoid behaviour intended to embarrass, humiliate, intimidate, threaten or exclude another person
7. Respect differences between people
8. Avoid discriminatory or prejudicial language or behaviour
9. Use school platforms and technology appropriately
10. Report concerns about bullying, abuse, threats or other harmful behaviour to a trusted adult or member of school staff
11. Respect the privacy and personal information of others
12. Never share another student's images, personal information or communications inappropriately
13. Never impersonate another student or member of staff
14. Follow reasonable online safety expectations
15. Take responsibility for their behaviour and, where appropriate, participate in restorative action

Students are expected to maintain these standards whether communicating face-to-face, by voice, through written communication, in online classrooms, group chats, messaging applications or social media.

4. Positive Behaviour and Recognition

We believe that positive behaviour should be recognised and encouraged rather than focusing on sanctions.

Teachers are expected to use positive acknowledgement wherever appropriate, including:

- verbal praise
- recognition during lessons
- positive student reports
- stars or other agreed reward systems
- opportunities to celebrate progress

- positive communication with parents/carers

Our student report system may include positive recognition such as thumbs-up and stars.

Where a student's behaviour does not meet expectations, a teacher may record a thumbs-down or other behaviour indicator on the student's report.

The purpose of this system is to provide feedback and encourage reflection and improvement. It is not intended to label a child or replace professional judgement.

5. Preventing Behaviour Problems

Our teachers use positive relationships, enthusiasm, clear routines and proactive classroom management to create a positive learning environment.

Teachers will seek to identify and address low-level disruption early.

This may include:

- reminding the student of expectations
- redirecting the student
- changing the activity or approach
- giving the student an opportunity to reset
- speaking privately with the student
- reminding the student of the likely consequences of their choices
- contacting a parent/carer where appropriate
- seeking support from the Year Manager or school leadership

We recognise that behaviour may sometimes communicate an unmet need.

Where appropriate, staff will consider whether behaviour may be connected to:

- SEND
- additional learning needs
- communication difficulties
- emotional or social needs
- anxiety or distress
- safeguarding concerns
- family circumstances
- peer relationships
- online experiences
- previous trauma or adverse experiences
- other barriers to learning or wellbeing

Where such factors are identified, the school will consider appropriate support and reasonable adjustments in accordance with its duties and policies.

6. Unacceptable Behaviour

Unacceptable behaviour may include, but is not limited to:

- persistent disruption of lessons
- deliberately preventing others from learning
- abusive or seriously disrespectful language
- threatening behaviour
- intimidation
- bullying
- cyberbullying
- harassment
- discriminatory or prejudicial behaviour
- hate-related conduct
- sexual harassment
- sexualised or inappropriate communications
- sharing inappropriate or harmful material
- encouraging others to target or exclude another student
- deliberately humiliating another student
- impersonating staff or students
- making threats online or offline
- sharing another person's private information without permission
- deliberately damaging or interfering with school systems
- conduct that creates a safeguarding concern
- behaviour that presents a significant risk to the safety or wellbeing of another person

This list is not exhaustive.

The Online School UK will consider the context, seriousness, frequency, impact and circumstances of the behaviour when deciding how to respond.

7. Bullying

The Online School UK operates a strong zero tolerance approach to bullying.

Bullying may involve repeated behaviour, an imbalance of power or behaviour that is intended to cause harm, distress or intimidation. However, a single serious incident may still require safeguarding or disciplinary action even where it does not meet the definition of bullying.

Bullying can take place:

- during lessons
- through school platforms
- through messaging applications
- in group chats
- through social media
- through images, videos or memes
- through exclusion or manipulation
- through discriminatory behaviour
- through other forms of digital or face-to-face communication

Cyberbullying and other online behaviour can have a significant impact on the school environment and on children's wellbeing. Online safety therefore forms part of our wider safeguarding and behaviour approach.

Bullying, discriminatory behaviour, harassment, violence and other harmful behaviour will be addressed promptly and appropriately.

This section should be read alongside the schools [Anti-Bullying Policy](#)

8. Child on Child Abuse (including harassment and violence)

Staff should be aware that children can abuse other children.

Child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding concern and may include physical, sexual, emotional or online abuse, harassment, violence, bullying, exploitation and harmful sexual behaviour.

The school recognises that both the child who has experienced harm and the child alleged to have caused harm may have safeguarding needs. All reports will therefore be considered individually, with appropriate support, risk assessment and intervention provided.

Examples of Child on Child Abuse may include:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- physical abuse, which may also involve an online element that facilitates, threatens and/or encourages this abuse

- threats of violence;
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, touching and online sexual harassment aka. Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)
- sexual violence or assault, which may also involve an online element that facilitates, threatens and/or encourages this abuse
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent including viewing sexual material
- Image based abuse i.e. making or sharing nude images or semi nudes. Including AI images or Deep Fakes
- coercive or controlling behaviour
- intimidation
- harmful online behaviour
- threats or encouragement of self-harm
- grooming or exploitation between peers
- abuse in intimate relationships
- Upskirting (taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing)
- Initiation/hazing-type violence and rituals

Where behaviour may constitute a safeguarding concern, staff must follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and report the concern to the DSL without delay.

Behaviour management must never replace safeguarding procedures.

The school will take a child-centred approach and will consider the needs and safety of all children involved, including the child who has allegedly caused harm.

KCSIE 2026 reinforces that staff should act immediately when they have a safeguarding concern and report concerns to the DSL or deputy without delay. It also emphasises appropriate recording of concerns, actions, decisions, rationale and outcomes.

This section should be read alongside The Online School UK's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for further information on Child on Child Abuse.

9. Online and Digital Behaviour

As an online school, safe and responsible digital behaviour is an essential part of our expectations.

Students must not use school-related digital spaces to:

- bully or harass another student
- threaten another person

- encourage others to exclude someone
- create groups or chats for the purpose of mocking or targeting another student
- share harmful, explicit, violent or sexually inappropriate material
- Share or create sexual images or other intimate material, including those generated via AI and Deep Fakes
- share discriminatory or hateful content
- promote violence or extremist or hateful ideologies
- spread harmful misinformation or deliberately misleading material intended to cause harm
- impersonate staff or students
- attempt to compromise another person's account or online safety
- disclose another student's private information
- record, screenshot or distribute another person's communications without appropriate permission
- send inappropriate or threatening messages
- engage in any other conduct that creates a safeguarding or wellbeing concern

Students should understand that digital communications may leave a record and that concerns may be reported to the school.

Where appropriate and lawful, screenshots, messages, timestamps and other evidence may be considered as part of an investigation.

The school will handle information in accordance with its safeguarding, confidentiality and data protection procedures.

10. Out of School Conduct

Our expectations

We expect students to behave respectfully towards members of The Online School UK community outside formal lesson time.

This includes interactions through:

- messaging applications
- group chats
- social media
- online forums
- gaming platforms
- school-related online communities

- other digital or physical environments where students from our school community interact

Parents and carers retain the primary responsibility for supervising their child's behaviour outside school hours and for managing their child's personal devices, accounts and social media use.

However, The Online School UK may investigate and take appropriate action where out-of-school conduct has a sufficient connection to the school or has a significant impact on the safety, wellbeing or learning environment of our students or staff.

Examples may include:

- bullying or targeted harassment of another student
- cyberbullying
- threatening another student
- creating online groups to mock or exclude another student
- encouraging others to target a student
- sharing harmful or inappropriate material with members of the school community
- sharing sexual or graphic content
- sharing discriminatory or hateful content
- impersonating a student or member of staff
- conduct that presents a risk to another student's online safety
- conduct that causes significant distress or fear to another student
- conduct that has a significant impact on the school's ability to provide a safe learning environment

The school will consider each case individually.

Reporting out-of-school concerns

Any student, parent/carer or staff member who becomes aware of concerning behaviour involving a member of The Online School UK community should report it.

Concerns may be reported to:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) on: effie@theonlineschool.uk

Deputy DSL on: gemma@theonlineschool.uk

Concerns may also be reported to the student's Year Lead, who will consult with the DSL where appropriate.

Students are encouraged to speak to a trusted adult if they are worried about:

- bullying
- threats
- abuse
- harmful online behaviour
- inappropriate images or messages
- exploitation
- harassment
- anything else that makes them feel unsafe

Reports may be made anonymously. However, anonymous reports can limit the school's ability to investigate fully.

Where possible, reports should include relevant information such as:

- names
- dates
- times
- screenshots
- messages
- links
- usernames
- details of witnesses

Safeguarding concerns will be handled in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

11. Our Response to Behaviour Concerns

Our school's response will depend on:

- the seriousness of the behaviour
- the impact on others
- whether the behaviour is repeated
- whether the behaviour was intentional
- the student's age and developmental stage
- the student's individual circumstances
- whether SEND or other additional needs may be relevant
- whether there are safeguarding concerns
- whether the student understands the impact of their behaviour
- the risk of further harm
- any previous behaviour concerns

We will seek to respond consistently while recognising that consistency does not mean treating every student or incident identically.

Reasonable adjustments and adaptations will be considered where appropriate, particularly where a student has SEND or other barriers to learning or wellbeing.

Behaviour management during lessons

Where a student displays inappropriate behaviour during a lesson, the teacher or HMA may:

1. Give a verbal reminder
2. Redirect the student towards appropriate behaviour
3. Give the student an opportunity to reset
4. Record the behaviour on the student's report via the ALP- After Lesson Page
5. Temporarily restrict participation privileges where necessary
6. Contact the parent/carer
7. Refer the matter to the Year Lead, school leadership or DSL where it constitutes a safeguarding concern
8. Remove the student from the lesson where necessary to protect the learning environment or safety of others

Restrictions may include temporary removal of:

- microphone privileges
- chat privileges
- other interactive features

Such measures should be proportionate and used for the purpose of maintaining a safe and orderly learning environment.

Serious or persistent behaviour

Where behaviour is serious, repeated or presents a risk to others, the school may:

- contact the parent/carer
- arrange a meeting with the student and parent/carer
- issue a formal behaviour warning
- place the student on a behaviour support or monitoring plan
- require restorative action
- restrict access to particular school platforms or activities
- temporarily remove access to lessons where necessary

- require the student to agree to specific behavioural expectations
- require an appropriate written apology where this is considered safe and appropriate
- involve the DSL where safeguarding concerns exist
- involve other members of the school's leadership team
- take further disciplinary action, including withdrawal of the student's place.

The school will consider the circumstances and proportionality of any sanction before it is imposed.

Formal warnings and repeated behaviour

Where behaviour continues despite intervention, or where an incident is sufficiently serious, the school may issue a formal warning.

First formal warning

The school may:

- notify the student and parent/carer
- explain the behaviour concern
- record the incident securely
- agree expectations for future behaviour
- identify any appropriate support or intervention

Second formal warning

Where there is further serious or repeated misconduct, the school may:

- notify the student and parent/carer
- review previous interventions
- consider additional restrictions
- implement a behaviour support or monitoring plan
- consider whether further safeguarding action is required
- warn that continued serious misconduct may result in withdrawal of the student's place

Withdrawal or exclusion

In serious or persistent cases, The Online School UK reserves the right to withdraw or permanently exclude a student from the school's provision.

This may be considered where behaviour:

- poses a serious risk to another person's safety or wellbeing;
- involves serious bullying, harassment or abuse;
- involves serious or repeated threats;
- causes significant disruption to the learning environment;
- involves serious online misconduct;
- continues despite appropriate interventions and warnings; or
- otherwise makes continued attendance inappropriate or unsafe.

Any decision to withdraw a student's place will be made by the Headteacher alongside the DSL, supported by the CEO. This will be done in accordance with the school's procedures and the terms applicable to the student's enrolment.

Where a student is excluded or their place is withdrawn, the school will communicate the decision and, where applicable, the reasons and any relevant review or complaints route. This may include the Local Authority Attendance Team, Child Missing in Education Team (CME) or the Elective Home Education (EHE) Team.

This section should be read alongside our Exclusions Policy

12. Refunds and Fees

Where a student's place is withdrawn or the student is excluded because of serious or persistent misconduct, The Online School UK may withhold or decline to refund fees where permitted by the student's enrolment terms and applicable law.

Any decision relating to fees will be considered **separately** from safeguarding decisions.

13. Restorative Approaches

Where appropriate and safe, the school may use restorative approaches.

This may include:

- helping a student understand the impact of their behaviour
- encouraging them to take responsibility
- agreeing how harm can be repaired
- an appropriate apology
- agreeing boundaries for future contact
- agreeing practical steps to prevent repetition

Restorative approaches will not be used where doing so could place a child at further risk or where a safeguarding response is required.

The safety and wellbeing of the affected student will always take priority. We also recognise that all restorative approaches cannot be handled by The Online School UK internally and outside agency support may be needed as well as/ instead of.

14. Supporting students who have experienced harmful behaviour

The school will take concerns seriously and will seek to support students who experience bullying, harassment, abuse, maltreatment or other harmful behaviour.

Depending on the circumstances, support may include:

- a trusted adult
- the Year Lead
- the DSL
- pastoral support
- changes to online arrangements
- increased monitoring
- communication with parents/carers
- safety planning;
- referral to external agencies or specialist services where appropriate

The school will consider the needs of the affected child throughout any investigation or response.

15. Safeguarding and External Agencies

Where behaviour indicates that a child may be experiencing harm or is at risk of harm, the school will follow our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The school may make a referral to or work with:

- children's social care
- the police
- safeguarding partners
- health professionals
- other education providers
- other appropriate agencies

Where another school or organisation contacts The Online School UK with a safeguarding concern involving one of our students, the concern will be considered by the DSL and responded to in accordance with safeguarding and data protection requirements.

Where appropriate, the school will acknowledge concerns raised by another organisation and work cooperatively with that organisation.

Information will be shared on a lawful and proportionate basis where necessary to safeguard children.

KCSIE 2026 makes clear that data protection should not be treated as a barrier to appropriate information sharing where this is necessary to safeguard a child.

16. Recording and Monitoring

Behaviour and safeguarding incidents will be recorded appropriately.

Records should include, where relevant:

- the nature of the concern
- the date and time
- the students involved
- information provided by those involved
- evidence considered
- actions taken
- decisions made
- the rationale for decisions
- consequences or support provided
- outcomes or follow-up actions

Safeguarding records will be maintained securely and confidentially in accordance with the school's safeguarding and data protection procedures.

Confidentiality and information sharing

The school will respect the confidentiality of students and families.

However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where information needs to be shared to protect a child or another person from harm.

Safeguarding information will be shared appropriately in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and applicable data protection requirements.

Monitoring

The school will monitor behaviour patterns to identify:

- repeated incidents
- emerging bullying
- online risks
- groups or individuals requiring additional support
- possible safeguarding concerns
- whether current behaviour strategies are effective

Leaders will use this information to review and improve the school's approach.

17. Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are important partners in supporting positive behaviour.

We ask parents/carers to:

- discuss respectful behaviour with their child
- support the school's expectations
- monitor their child's use of messaging applications and social media
- take concerns raised by the school seriously
- inform the school of relevant concerns
- encourage their child to report worries
- support agreed behaviour interventions
- work constructively with staff when incidents occur

Parents/carers should contact the school if they become aware of bullying, threats, harmful online behaviour or other concerns involving students from The Online School UK.

The school will seek to work with families rather than simply impose sanctions wherever this is compatible with the safety and wellbeing of students.

18. Staff Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for contributing to a positive behaviour culture.

Staff should:

- model respectful behaviour

- establish clear expectations
- use positive behaviour strategies
- respond consistently and proportionately
- intervene appropriately when behaviour falls below expectations
- recognise potential safeguarding concerns
- report safeguarding concerns to the DSL without delay
- maintain appropriate records
- follow the school's safeguarding and behaviour procedures

Staff must not attempt to manage a safeguarding concern solely as a behaviour issue.

Where staff have concerns about the conduct of another adult, they must follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Staff Communication and Conduct Policy.

The role of the DSL

The DSL has responsibility for coordinating safeguarding responses where behaviour may indicate that a child is at risk of harm.

The DSL will:

- consider safeguarding concerns referred to them
- determine whether further safeguarding action is required
- liaise with appropriate staff and agencies
- ensure appropriate safeguarding records are maintained
- support staff in responding to concerns
- ensure that child-on-child abuse and online harms are appropriately considered
- work with parents/carers where appropriate
- ensure that safeguarding considerations are integrated into behaviour management

The DSL's responsibilities are set out in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

19. Equality, Inclusion and Reasonable Adjustments

The Online School UK is committed to an inclusive environment.

Behaviour expectations apply to all students. However, the school will consider whether a student's individual circumstances may affect their ability to meet those expectations.

This may include consideration of:

- SEND
- disability
- communication needs
- emotional or social needs
- mental health and wellbeing
- developmental needs
- disadvantage
- care experience
- family circumstances
- other barriers to learning or wellbeing

Where appropriate, the school will make reasonable adjustments or adaptations to behaviour strategies.

This does not mean that harmful behaviour is ignored. Rather, the school will seek to understand the behaviour, reduce barriers and protect all students while maintaining appropriate expectations.

20. Student Voice

Students should have appropriate opportunities to express their views about behaviour and safety and The Online School UK is committed to this.

Students may:

- report concerns
- ask for help
- contribute to discussions about behaviour expectations
- provide feedback about the learning environment
- participate in appropriate restorative processes

Students will be encouraged to understand their responsibilities towards others and the impact their behaviour can have on the wider school community.

Student Voice may be shared and collated during assemblies, end of term feedback forms,

21. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where necessary.

The review will consider:

- behaviour data
- bullying and safeguarding incidents
- complaints and concerns
- student and parent/carer feedback
- staff feedback
- the effectiveness of sanctions and interventions
- emerging online risks
- changes in legislation or statutory guidance
- safeguarding learning from incidents
- relevant Ofsted and Department for Education guidance

The policy will be updated where evidence or experience indicates that changes are necessary.

22. Related Legislation and Guidance

This policy should be read alongside the school's other policies and procedures, which can be found on our TOS Policies section on the website. Particularly the:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Online Safety Policy
- Staff Communication and Conduct Policy
- Complaints Policy
- SEND Policy and Accessibility Plan
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

The policy has been developed with regard to relevant statutory and non-statutory guidance, including:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026**, Department for Education;
- **Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff**, Department for Education;
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026**;
- relevant safeguarding and online safety guidance;
- the **Ofsted Education Inspection Framework** and applicable inspection toolkit; and
- applicable requirements relating to independent schools, where relevant.

KCSIE 2026 comes into force on 1 September 2026. Until 31 August 2026, schools are required to follow KCSIE 2025.

Ofsted's renewed inspection framework evaluates schools across areas including safeguarding, inclusion, attendance and behaviour, personal development and wellbeing, and leadership and governance. The inspection framework places particular emphasis on positive relationships, clear expectations, proportionate and consistently applied consequences, and environments where bullying, discrimination, harassment and abuse are not accepted.