



Bright Futures

EDUCATIONAL TRUST

The best *for* everyone, the best *from* everyone

Working together to get the best for all children and young people: Code of Conduct for Parents and Carers

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This is a Trust-Wide Policy that can be adapted for local circumstances and contexts

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CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Bright Futures Educational Trust's Strategy <https://www.bright-futures.co.uk/about-us/our-strategy/> underpins all aspects of this Code of Conduct and the way in which it will be applied.

The specific elements of the strategy are:

- Our vision '**the best for everyone, the best from everyone**'
- Our six values; **Leadership**: We take ownership of our responsibilities and find the leader in all of us. **Integrity**: We do the right things for the right reasons, always being courageously true to our mission. **Passion**: We love what we do and feel the power of possible through innovation and creativity. **Community**: We work in collaboration with communities and wider partners celebrating diversity as our strength. **Equality**: We nurture, value, respect and empower all, understanding that equity sits at the heart of all opportunities. **Resilience**: We prioritise our wellbeing whilst embracing challenge, adapting flexibly and learning as we grow.
- Our commitments: **Children at the heart of decision making, Collaboration and strong relationships, Professional support, challenge and learning, Champion social justice and equity for all, Strong Governance & accountability, Ensuring efficiency and best use of resources for impact.**

What is the Code of Conduct for?

Each school within the Trust undertakes to provide a safe and friendly environment in which children and young people are supported to achieve their potential, both academically and socially.

At the heart of our vision 'the best *for* everyone, the best *from* everyone' is to enable all children and young people in the Trust to have exceptional opportunities for learning. Our pupils, staff, parents and carers are part of a community working together to achieve this.

This Code of Conduct sets out clearly how we can work together in a positive way to achieve a happy, safe environment to support our children's learning and fulfils the Trust's mission, vision and values which align with those of our schools.

Who is the Code of Conduct for?

This is a code of conduct for parents and carers. Pupils and staff also have a clear code of conduct.

Across the Trust, we are fortunate to have supportive and welcoming parent and carer communities. Our parents and carers understand that educating children and young people is a collaborative process that involves a strong partnership between families, school staff, and the wider school communities. As part of this partnership, parents and carers recognise the importance of fostering positive working relationships to help equip children and young people with the skills they need for adulthood. For these reasons, we actively encourage and appreciate their full involvement in the life of our schools.

We value and wish to maintain our excellent relations with our parent communities whilst ensuring a safe environment for our students, staff and school communities. We show respect to all members of our school communities and ask that they do the same. We will deal with any issues in a friendly, courteous and professional manner and the same is expected of parents and carers.

The aim of this Code of Conduct is to remind all parents, carers and visitors of the expected standards of behaviour, ensuring that our school communities can continue to thrive, progress and achieve in an environment of mutual respect and understanding.

We expect that parents and carers make all persons responsible for collecting students or visiting Trust or school sites on behalf of parents and carers to be aware of this Code of Conduct.

Purpose and Scope

We believe it is important to:

- Work in partnership with parents and carers to support their child's learning;
- Create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for students, staff, parents and carers;
- Model appropriate behaviour for our students at all times.

To help us do this, we set clear expectations and guidelines on behaviour for all members of our community. This includes staff (through the Staff Code of Conduct) and students (through school 'Behaviour Policies').

General Principles

When everything is working well the relationship between home and school takes care of itself. We know and accept that sometimes things go wrong and parents/carers who are rightly protective of their children can be upset or angry.

We always try to resolve difficulties with honesty, integrity, respect and good communication. We also have a complaints policy if parents and carers are dissatisfied with some aspect of our work.

We realise that the majority of parents and carers are always positive and supportive and even when they have concerns they raise them reasonably and give the school an opportunity to find out the facts and, where necessary, to put things right.

Our expectations of parents, carers and visitors:

- Respect the ethos, vision and values of the Trust and its schools.
- Be tolerant of each other's views, beliefs and opinions and to accept that everyone is different.
- Understand that staff, parents and carers need to work together for both the benefit and in the best interests of our children and young people.
- Demonstrate that all members of our school communities are treated with respect and therefore set a good example in your own speech and behaviour.
- Approach the right member of staff to help resolve any issues of concern.
- Seek a positive, constructive solution to any issue involving your child, having sought clarification of your child's version of events with the school.
- Ensure that when children are with you on the school site that they behave safely and courteously, just as they are expected to do in class.

Behaviour that should be avoided:

If our children seem hurt or upset about something that's happened or we're angry about a decision made by the school it's easy to end up responding in temper. This can make things worse. Whilst we understand that people sometimes respond emotionally to situations:

- Don't act aggressively including using threats or intimidating language.
- Don't make complaints personal – what we know at the beginning of a concern being raised may well be different as we look into it.
- Don't demand to speak to the Principal - there may be other leaders who are better placed to support you. Also, by not getting involved immediately, the Principal can review your concern objectively at a later stage if you feel staff have not handled it appropriately.

Please be aware that:

1. We may return any correspondence that is deliberately offensive or contains threats.
2. Staff may end phone calls and meetings (online or in person) for the same reasons.
3. We are unable to engage with anonymous or collective correspondence.

Unacceptable behaviour

Thankfully, behaviours that are completely unacceptable whatever the circumstances, are very rare. We have a duty to ensure the safety and welfare of our staff as well as the whole school community. Members of staff who are dealing with concerns and complaints have a right to feel safe, free from verbally or physically threatening or intimidating behaviour.

Behaviour that will not be tolerated includes:

- Swearing or using rude, abusive, derogatory or otherwise offensive language, including racial or homophobic language (verbal or in written form).
- Threatening or deliberately intimidating others, including shouting at members of staff, students or other parents and carers.
- Sending abusive messages to another member of the school community, including via text, email or social media.
- Posting defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the school, its staff or any member of its community, on social media platforms.
- Use of physical punishment against your child while on school premises.
- Disciplining another person's child – please bring any behaviour incidents to a member of staff's attention.
- Disrupting or threatening to disrupt school operations.
- Being on Trust or school premises without permission.
- Taking photographs, videos, or recordings on Trust or school premises without permission.
- Driving unsafely on Trust or school premises.
- Smoking or drinking alcohol on the school premises (unless alcohol has been allowed at a specific event).
- Possessing or taking drugs (including legal highs).
- Bringing dogs onto school premises (other than guide dogs).

Unacceptable behaviour may result in the police being informed of the incident if we consider a crime has been committed or if there is a risk of crime.

Social media use by parents and carers

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, social media refers to any interactive platform including but not limited to social networks, internet forums and blogs.

Social media is being used increasingly for the positive promotion of good causes. However it is sometimes used to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools. Sometimes individual staff members, parents, carers or even students are targeted. This is always unacceptable and not in the best interests of our children and young people or school communities. Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels. Please refer to our 'Complaints Policy'.

Posting allegations, complaints, making defamatory comments or threatening others online makes everything worse. It does not help us to put things right and rebuild relationships.

In the event that any parent or carer is found to be posting inappropriate comments on social media, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the site. All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on social media sites, and they provide robust mechanisms to report content or activity which breaches this. We also expect that any parent or carer removes such comments immediately. The police may be contacted if we consider a crime has been committed.

Breaching the Code of Conduct

If one of our schools becomes aware that a parent or carer has breached the Code of Conduct, we will gather information from those involved and speak to the parent or carer about the incident. Our aim is always to try and work with people and to restore a positive relationship in the interests of children and young people. We will make every effort to achieve that and bring the matter to a conclusion that is acceptable to all.

If a positive resolution isn't possible we may:

- Send a warning letter to the parent or carer;
- Invite the parent or carer into the school to meet with a senior member of staff or the Principal;
- Request that future contact is restricted to a particular form (for example, letter only);
- Require contact to take place with a named member of staff only;
- Ask the complainant to enter into a specific agreement about their conduct;
- Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour);
- Seek legal advice regarding further action;
- Restrict access to the school site and/or to the staff for those who seriously or persistently breach the Code of Conduct.

We will always respond to an incident in a proportionate way. We will always try to resolve an issue positively. The final decision for how to respond to breaches of the Code of Conduct at a school rests with the Principal.

Barring from Trust and school premises

Please refer to our 'Complaints Policy'.

Links with other policies and documents

Complaints Policy

(School) Behaviour Policy

E-Safety Policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

DfE Guidance on Controlling Access to School Premises