



# **Parent/Carer Code of Conduct**

## **Statement of intent**

At Forward Education Trust, our Headteachers and staff work hard to build a strong relationship with parents to help create a stimulating learning environment that continues from school to home, providing all pupils with the opportunity to achieve to the best of their ability. We proactively encourage parents and carers to be involved in their child's education, school life and the wider whole school community. As partners, our parents and carers understand the importance of a good working relationship with school, to ensure their child makes the best possible progress

We understand that everyday frustrations can cause misunderstandings and have a negative impact on our relationships. Establishing where this happens, so that we remain committed to resolving difficulties in a constructive manner through open positive dialogue is, however, essential. In this way we can continue to support all our pupils to flourish and progress to achieve, in an atmosphere of mutual understanding. Our Trust already has a Code of Conduct for all our employees, but this code is aimed at the wider school community so that all can see and understand the expectations on the behaviour of all visitors or those connected with the school. The policy aims to clarify the types of behaviour that will not be tolerated. By choosing a Forward Education Trust school for your child, we assume your acceptance of this policy and its terms. The policy also sets out the actions the school can take should this code be ignored or where breaches occur.

We use the terms 'parents' and 'carers' to refer to:

- Anyone with parental responsibility for a pupil
- Anyone caring for a child (such as grandparents or child-minders)
- Any other family member who has a connection with the child.

### **Legal framework**

This document has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 2011
- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 2004

This document has due regard to statutory and best practice guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2024) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (any updates subsequent to the confirmation of this policy)
- DfE (27<sup>th</sup> November 2018) 'Controlling access to the school premises' (and any updates which may occur).

This document operates in conjunction with all school and Trust-wide policies and in particular the:

- Complaints Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Acceptable Use of ICT Policy for staff

- Home/School Agreement

### **Guidance**

As well as the guidance set out in the Home/School Agreement, the Headteacher, Local Academy Council and Trust expect parents, carers and visitors to:

- Respect the ethos, vision and values of our school and our Trust
- Work together with staff in the best interests of our pupils
- Demonstrate that all members of the school community should be treated with respect and, therefore, set a good example in their own speech and behaviour (including when using home to school transport, bringing children to or collecting children from school, whether on foot or by car)
- Work together with school staff to proactively resolve any issues of concern
- Approach the right member of school staff to help resolve any issues of concern

### **Behaviour that will not be tolerated**

In order to support a peaceful and safe school environment the Trust and our schools will not tolerate parents, carers, other family members and visitors exhibiting the following:

- Disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with the operation of the school, classroom, main reception area or any other area of the school grounds, including outside of the main school building.
- Using loud or offensive language, verbally threatening staff and/or pupils, swearing, cursing, using profane language or displaying temper, including while on the telephone
- Threatening another member of the school community
- Use of physical punishment against your child whilst on school premises
- Any aggressive behaviour (including verbally or in writing) towards another child or adult
- Disciplining another person's child – please bring any behaviour incidents to a member of staff's attention
- Smoking (of any kind) or drinking alcohol on the school premises
- Possessing or taking drugs (including legal highs)

### **Breaching the code of conduct**

If a school suspects, or becomes aware, that a parent has breached the code of conduct, the school will gather information from those involved and speak to the parent about the incident.

Depending on the nature of the incident, the school may then:

- Send a warning letter to the parent
- Invite the parent into school to meet with a senior member of staff or the headteacher
- Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour)
- Seek advice from the trust's legal team regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libellous or slanderous)
- Ban the parent from the school site, which if enacted any breach would amount to trespass.

The school will always respond to an incident in a proportional way. The final decision for how to respond to breaches of the code of conduct rests with the headteacher.

Should any of the above behaviour occur the school may feel it is necessary to contact the appropriate authorities and if necessary, ban the offending adult from entering the school grounds. All schools are classed as private property and Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 makes it clear that it is a criminal offence for a person who is on school premises, without lawful authority, to cause or permit a nuisance or disturbance.

The headteacher will consult the Local Academy Council Chair and Chief Executive Officer before banning a parent from the school site.

### **Inappropriate use of Social Network Sites**

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Headteachers, school staff, and in some cases other parents/pupils. We consider the use of social media websites being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole school community.

In the event that any pupil or parent of a child being educated at any Forward Education Trust school is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site. All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on the site, and they provide robust mechanisms to report content or activity which breaches this. The school will also expect that any parent or pupil removes such comments immediately.

In serious cases the school will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, is the issue of cyber bullying and the use by one child or a parent to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social network entry. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of school bullying. Thankfully such incidents are extremely rare.

Any concerns that you have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, the leadership team or the Headteacher, so that they can be dealt with fairly and effectively for all concerned.

The Trust will not hesitate, where appropriate, to obtain legal advice with regard to offences which breach the Malicious Communications Act 1988 or the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.