



Nexus Education Schools Trust

Working Together: Shared Expectations for Parents, Carers and Visitors

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1. Introduction

This code applies to all families with parental responsibility for pupils on roll at a Nexus Education Schools Trust School and visitors to any Trust school. The Trust reserves the right to amend this policy at any time.

Nexus Education Schools Trust (NEST) is a multi-academy trust committed *to providing excellence and opportunity for all, to enable lives to be transformed*. We value and nurture every individual, provide excellent education outcomes enabling our pupils to succeed and ultimately transform the life opportunities and aspirations of our pupils, allowing them to be fulfilled individuals within an ever-changing world.

The Trust and its schools value the strong relationships it builds with families and members of our communities. Together this helps us achieve the very best for children in a mutually supportive partnership between parents, guardians, teachers and the wider school community.

The Trust requires high standards of conduct from all its schools' community members, including visitors.

This code of conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected of parents, carers and visitors when they are on school premises, attending school-related events or communicating with the Trust or one of its schools. It also outlines how any inappropriate conduct will be addressed.

We work in a spirit of partnership, allowing relationships to flourish, progress and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

This Code is not intended to prevent parents and carers from raising legitimate questions, concerns or complaints. We welcome constructive communication and ask that concerns are raised through the appropriate school or Trust procedure. The code complements the Trust's 'Complaints Policy' which is designed to handle parental concerns or complaints in a sensitive and mutually supportive manner. It also sits alongside the Trust's Online Safety Policy.

2. Purpose and scope

At Nexus Education Schools Trust and all of its partner schools, we believe it's important to:

- support positive relationships between schools, families and the wider community;
- maintain safe, respectful and inclusive school environments;
- protect pupils, staff, parents, carers and visitors from unacceptable behaviour;
- provide clear and consistent expectations for communication and conduct; and
- explain how the Trust may respond when these expectations are not met.

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 pupils (through our Behaviour Policy).

The Code applies when parents, carers and visitors:

- are on school or Trust premises;
- attend school-related activities or events, including those held away from school;
- communicate with pupils, staff, other families or Trust representatives about school-related matters; or
- use online platforms in a way that directly affects the safety or operation of a Trust school.

This code of conduct aims to help the school work together with parents, carers and visitors by setting guidelines on appropriate behaviour.

3. Terminology

In this Code:

- **parent or carer** means anyone with parental responsibility for a pupil or anyone who has responsibility for the care of a pupil, including a family member or childminder; and
- **visitor** means any other person visiting a Trust school or attending a school-related event, including contractors, volunteers, professionals and members of the public.

References to “the school” include the relevant Trust school and, where appropriate, Nexus Education Schools Trust.

4. Trust Principles

In line with the NEST Behaviour Policy, all members of the school community are expected to support the following principles:

4.1 Relationships First

Positive relationships are at the heart of our schools. We work together respectfully and constructively in the best interests of children.

4.2 Clear and Consistent Expectations

Everyone has a responsibility to communicate and behave respectfully. Expectations are applied consistently and fairly.

4.3 Calm, Safe and Predictable Environments

All members of the school community contribute to environments where children feel safe, secure and ready to learn.

4.4 Inclusive and Respectful Practice

We value diversity and difference. Discrimination, prejudice and harassment have no place within our schools.

4.5 Restorative Approaches

Where difficulties arise, we will seek constructive solutions that support understanding, accountability and positive future relationships.

5. Expected Conduct

We expect parents, carers and other visitors to:

- treat all members of the school community with dignity, courtesy and respect.
- respect the professional responsibilities of staff.
- support the school's values, ethos and policies.
- Work in partnership with staff to support children's education, behaviour and wellbeing.
- recognise that people may hold different views, beliefs and experiences
- raise concerns through appropriate school procedures.
- allow staff reasonable time to investigate concerns and provide responses.
- follow visitor sign-in, safeguarding, identification and security procedures.
- follow school health and safety requirements.
- respect confidentiality and the privacy of pupils, families and staff.
- model respectful behaviour and language in front of children.
- follow staff instructions when visiting school premises.
- support the school's Behaviour Policy and work positively with staff where concerns arise.

- work together with us to promote the school positively and avoid defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the Trust, the school, pupils, parents, carers, staff or members of the wider school community, including on social media and other online platforms.
- member at the school on Facebook or other social media platforms (section 7).
- treat school buildings, grounds and property with care and respect
- drive and park responsibly near the school to keep our children and young people safe
- ensure that we keep all our children safe by not taking photographs with phones or other devices on school premises without permission from the Headteacher.
- follow the Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy whilst on site

At NEST we aim to be open and honest in our day to day lives. We encourage parents to follow this approach when visiting our schools. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it.

6. Communication Expectations

We recognise that concerns and disagreements may occur. Where this happens, we ask all parents, carers and visitors to:

- seek a peaceful solution to all issues and clarification before reaching conclusions.
- communicate directly with the appropriate member of staff.
- approach concerns constructively and respectfully.
- allow staff reasonable time to investigate and respond.
- avoid confrontational behaviour at school entrances, playgrounds or school events.
- work collaboratively with the school to find solutions.

Emails, letters, telephone calls and online communications must remain respectful and professional at all times.

Concerns and complaints should be raised through the Trust's Complaints Policy and associated school procedures.

The Trust reserves the right to restrict communication methods where communication becomes excessive, unreasonable, abusive, threatening or inappropriate.

7. Behaviour that will not be tolerated

The following behaviours are unacceptable and may lead to formal action.

Aggressive or Abusive Conduct

- Shouting at staff, pupils, parents or visitors.
- Swearing or using offensive language.
- Intimidating, threatening or harassing behaviour.
- Aggressive gestures or conduct.
- Physical aggression or assault.
- Behaviour intended to cause alarm, distress or fear.

Discriminatory Behaviour

- Racist behaviour or language.
- Disability-related harassment.
- Religious discrimination.
- Homophobic, biphobic or transphobic comments.
- Sexist, misogynistic or misandrist behaviour.
- Any behaviour that breaches the Equality Act 2010.

Disruptive Behaviour

- Disrupting school activities, events or operations.
- Refusing to follow reasonable instructions from staff.
- Entering restricted areas without permission.
- Encouraging others to behave inappropriately.
- Interfering with the education or welfare of pupils.

Safeguarding Concerns

- Attempting to discipline another person's child.
- Confronting pupils regarding school matters.
- Sharing information that could compromise safeguarding.
- Behaviour that places children or adults at risk.

Criminal or Dangerous Conduct

- Theft.
- Criminal damage.
- Possession or use of illegal substances.
- Attending school premises whilst under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Smoking or vaping on school premises (except where explicitly authorised at a specific event).

Malicious Allegations

- Making knowingly false, malicious or vexatious allegations about pupils, staff, governors, volunteers or members of the wider school community.

8. Online Conduct and Social Media

The same standards of behaviour expected in person also apply online. The Trust recognises that social media and digital communication can help strengthen school communities; however, their misuse can have a significant impact on pupils, families, staff and the wider school community.

This code sets out clear procedures for how parents, carers and visitors are expected to use social media, messaging platforms and online forums responsibly and respectfully at all times.

8.1 Expectations for Online Behaviour

Parents, carers and visitors must:

- communicate respectfully and professionally.
- use appropriate school channels to raise concerns or complaints.
- respect the privacy and confidentiality of pupils, families and staff.
- share information responsibly and accurately.
- support a positive online environment for the school community.

8.2 Unacceptable Online Conduct

Parents, carers and visitors must not:

- post abusive, threatening, discriminatory or defamatory comments.
- harass, bully or intimidate members of the school community.
- make malicious, vexatious or knowingly false allegations.
- publish confidential information relating to pupils, families or staff.
- share photographs, recordings or personal information without appropriate consent.
- encourage others to engage in inappropriate behaviour.
- use social media to organise campaigns or activity that may adversely affect the wellbeing, safety or reputation of members of the school community.
- share content that may damage the reputation, welfare or safety of members of the school community.

8.3 AI-Generated and Manipulated Content

Parents, carers and visitors must not create, share or distribute manipulated, synthetic or AI-generated content intended to:

- harass, threaten or humiliate another person;
- impersonate a member of the school community;
- misrepresent events or individuals; or
- cause harm to the wellbeing, reputation or safety of others.

This includes deepfake images, videos and audio recordings, image-based abuse and other forms of digital manipulation.

8.4 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 or pupils.

The Department for Education/Government and Local Committee members of NEST Schools consider the use of social media websites being used in this way as unacceptable. Any concerns you may have about the school, or your child/children must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, the Head Teacher or the Chair of Local Committee, where they will be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

The Headteacher can, with the permission of the parent, view messages sent between members of the parental body in order to deal with problems quickly and effectively.

The Headteacher can request that 'group chats' are closed down should any problems continue between parents or parental bodies.

8.5 Libelous or Defamatory posts

In the event, that, any pupil or parent/carer of a child/children at a NEST school is found to be posting libelous 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 contact or activity which breaches this. The school will also expect that any parent/carer or pupil removes such comments immediately.

8.6 Cyber Bullying

We take very seriously the use of cyber bullying 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.

The school will also consider its **legal options** to deal with any such misuse on social networking and other sites.

8.7 Responding to Concerns

Where online conduct affects the safety, wellbeing or effective operation of the school, the Trust may take appropriate action. This may include requesting the removal of content, restricting communication methods, involving Trust leaders, referring concerns to external agencies or reporting matters to the police where appropriate. Parents, carers and visitors should raise concerns through the school's normal procedures, including the Trust Complaints Procedure, rather than through social media platforms.

By accepting a place at a Nexus Education School's Trust School, parents confirm that they understand their obligations under this code and agree to comply fully with them for the duration of their child's attendance.

9. Photography, Recording and Smart Technology

In line with the NEST Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy, parents, carers and visitors are expected to use technology responsibly and in a way that supports safeguarding and privacy.

Parents, carers and visitors:

- must follow school instructions regarding mobile phones and smart technology.
- must not photograph, film or record pupils, staff or visitors without permission.
- must not record meetings, conversations or interactions unless previously agreed or required as a reasonable adjustment.
- must respect requests from staff regarding the use of devices on school premises.

Images or recordings taken at school events are for personal use unless explicit consent has been provided for wider publication.

These expectations support the Trust's Mobile Phones and Smart Technology Policy and the Department for Education's statutory Mobile Phones in Schools guidance.

10. Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Schools and parents share a collective responsibility to keep children safe.

Parents, carers and visitors are expected to:

- follow school safeguarding procedures.
- report concerns regarding the welfare or safety of a child appropriately.
- cooperate with safeguarding investigations where required.
- respect confidentiality where safeguarding concerns arise.
- support school measures designed to keep children safe.
- any conduct that raises concerns regarding the safety or wellbeing of children may be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and, where required, to external agencies.

This includes concerns relating to:

- child-on-child abuse.
- bullying and cyberbullying.
- online abuse.
- harassment.
- harmful sexual behaviour.
- child exploitation.
- sharing of inappropriate images.
- AI-generated intimate images.
- deepfake images, audio or video.
- online impersonation.
- image-based abuse.

11. Breaching the code of conduct

Thank you for abiding by this policy in our schools. Together we create a positive and supportive environment for children and for all those who work in or visit our schools.

Where the above expectations are not upheld, the initial response will involve a conversation with the parent/carers or visitor. Generally, we expect a conversation to be sufficient to reinforce our expectations. However, where this is not sufficient to resolve the issue, the school may need to consider further action. We are keen to avoid this.

Responses may include:

Informal Resolution

- Verbal reminder.
- Informal discussion.
- Clarification of expectations.
- Restorative conversation.

Formal Action

- Written warning.
- Meeting with senior leaders.
- Requirement for communication to take place through nominated staff.
- Restriction of communication methods.
- Formal recording of incidents.

Serious Concerns

- Involvement of Trust leaders.
- Referral to external agencies.
- Police involvement where appropriate.
- Legal action.
- Withdrawal of permission to enter school premises (see Controlling Access to School Premises below).

The school will always respond to an incident in a proportional manner. The final decision for how to respond to breaches of the code of conduct rests with the headteacher. The Headteacher will determine the most appropriate response according to the nature, severity and impact of the concern.

12. Controlling Access to School Premises

Schools have a duty to maintain safe environments for pupils, staff and visitors.

The public has no automatic right of entry to our schools. Where behaviour causes concern, the school may withdraw that permission in accordance with Department for Education guidance on controlling access to school premises. If the behaviour of a parent, carer or visitor gives rise to concern, a school can ask him/her to leave the premises. In serious cases, the Headteacher, Senior leader or the Trust can notify them in writing that the implied agreement to be on school premises, has been temporarily revoked subject to any representations that the parent may wish to make to the Headteacher.

Any decision to restrict access will:

- Be proportionate.
- Be communicated in writing.
- Include reasons for the decision.
- Include an opportunity for representations to be made.
- Be reviewed within a reasonable timescale.

Individuals will normally be given an opportunity to present their views before any longer-term restriction is confirmed, unless immediate action is required to protect the safety of pupils, staff or visitors.

Appropriate arrangements will be made to ensure pupils can continue to attend school safely.

During the barring period all contact should go through the school office and/or a named member of staff either by email or telephone.

The Headteacher's decision to bar will be reviewed by the Education team. They should take into account any representations made by the individual and decide whether to either confirm or lift the bar. If the decision is confirmed, the individual should be notified in writing, explaining:

- How long the bar will be in place *
- When the decision will be reviewed

Any ban should be reviewed at the end of the agreed timescale.

* In a small minority of cases the banning action occurs with immediate effect due to the severity of the action/ activities and external agencies becoming involved e.g., Police or Social Services. In these cases, an agreed time scale may not be possible at the banning stage. A review of the ban will be completed by the Chair of the Local Committee and an outcome letter issued.

13. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

NEST is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity, fostering good relations and eliminating discrimination.

All members of the school community are expected to:

- Respect protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
- Support an inclusive culture.
- Promote mutual understanding and respect.
- Challenge discrimination appropriately.
- Contribute to positive relationships across the school community.

Discriminatory behaviour will be treated seriously and may result in formal action.

14. The requirements that apply to this policy

This policy complies with the DfE policy on controlling access to school premises:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/controlling-access-to-school-premises>

15. Monitoring arrangements

The Trust will monitor the effectiveness of the Working Together: Shared Expectations for Parents, Carers and Visitors code regularly.

16. Related Policies

This code should be read alongside:

- NEST Behaviour Policy
- NEST Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- NEST Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy
- NEST Online Safety Policy
- NEST Complaints Procedure
- NEST Data Protection Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives