



**DISCOVERY**  
EDUCATIONAL TRUST

## **Parent/Carer Code of Conduct**

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## **1. Purpose and Scope**

Discovery Educational Trust (DET) and its Schools are fortunate to have a supportive and friendly parent/carer body. Its parents and carers recognise that educating children is a process that involves partnership between parents/carers, School staff and the whole Trust/School community. This partnership relies on good working relationships. DET and its Schools, therefore, believe that it is important to:

- Create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for pupils, staff and parents/carers;
- Model appropriate behaviour for all pupils at all times.

To help the Trust and its Schools to do this, they set clear expectations and guidelines on behaviour for all members of their communities. This includes staff (through the DET Staff Code of Conduct) and pupils (through each School's Behaviour Policy).

This Code of Conduct aims to help DET and its Schools work together with parents/carers by setting guidelines on appropriate behaviour.

## **2. Expectations of Parents/Carers**

Parents/carers and other visitors are expected to:

- Respect the ethos, vision and values of DET and its Schools;
- Work together with staff in the best interests of pupils;
- Treat all members of the Trust/School community with respect and dignity – setting a good example with speech and behaviour, especially in front of children;
- Respect and cooperate with the Trust's and the School's policies, processes and procedures;
- Approach DET and its Schools in a proportionate and measured way in order to seek a peaceful and swift solution to all issues;
- Correct their own child's behaviour (or those in their care), particularly in public, where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggressive behaviour or unsafe conduct;
- Approach the right member of School staff to help resolve any issues or concerns;
- Avoid using School staff as threats to criticise children's behaviour.

## **3. Behaviour that is not Tolerated**

The below applies to personal interaction and also to telephone, email, text, letter or social media communications (refer also to Section 4. Inappropriate Use of Social Media).

- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt or interfere with the normal business of the School (including events on the School grounds and sports team matches);
- Violence or the threat of violence;
- Swearing, or using offensive language, including that which breaches DET/its Schools' commitment to Equality and Diversity, for example, racist, sexist or homophobic language;

- Spitting;
- Displaying a temper, or shouting at members of staff, pupils or other parents/carers;
- Threatening another member of the School community;
- Damaging DET/School property;
- Sending abusive messages to another member of the School community, including via text, email or social media;
- Posting, on social media platforms, defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about DET and its Schools, their staff or any member of their communities;
- Use of physical intimidation, aggression and violence against any child while on School premises;
- Any aggressive behaviour (including verbally or in writing) towards another child or adult;
- Disciplining another person's child – behaviour incidents should be brought to the attention of a member of School staff;
- Wearing revealing or offensive clothing, for example, that which displays political, discriminatory or offensive material, to drop off or collect their child from School, or to visit the School;
- Smoking (including the use of electronic cigarettes or e-cigarettes, Personal Vaporizers (PVs) and Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDSs) battery-operated devices that mimic tobacco smoking) or drinking alcohol on School premises (unless the consumption of alcohol has been approved for a specific event);
- Possessing or taking drugs (including legal highs) on School premises;
- Bringing dogs onto School premises (other than guide/service dogs).

#### **4. Inappropriate Use of Social Media**

Social media is being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against Multi Academy Trusts and their Schools, Headteachers, School staff, and, in some cases, other parents/carers or pupils.

The Trust Board (TB) considers social media being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole Trust/School community.

Any concerns must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking directly to the School or by following the DET Complaints Policy and Procedure, so that those concerns can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively.

In the event that any pupil or parent/carer of a child/ren being educated in a DET School is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on social media, they are reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the social media site.

All social media sites have clear rules about the what content can be posted, and they provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity, which breaches this.

DET and its Schools also expect that any parent/carer or pupil removes such comments immediately. In serious cases, DET and its Schools also consider their legal options to deal with any such misuse of social media and other sites.

The issue of cyber bullying and the use by one child or a parent/carer to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social media posts is also taken extremely seriously by DET and its Schools.

## **5. Breaching the Code of Conduct**

If DET and its Schools suspect, or become aware, that a parent/carer has breached this Code of Conduct, DET and its Schools collate information from those involved, and speak to the parent/carer about the incident.

Depending on the nature of the incident, DET and its Schools may:

- Send a warning letter to the parent/carer;
- Invite the parent/carer into School to meet with a senior member of staff or the Headteacher (HT);
- Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour);
- Seek advice from the Trust's lawyers regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libellous or slanderous);
- Restrict communication between the School and the parent/carer to written communication only;
- Ban the parent/carer from the School site.

DET and its Schools always respond to an incident in a proportional way. The final decision on how to respond to breaches of this Code of Conduct rests with the HT.

The HT consults with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Chair of the Local School Committee (LSC) before banning a parent/carer from the School site.