

Parent/Carer Code of Conduct

Forest Skies Federation



Approved by:	COG	Date: September 2026
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1. Purpose and scope

- 1.1** The Forest Skies Federation is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers, to keeping our schools safe, respectful and inclusive places for pupils, staff, governors, volunteers and visitors, and to modelling for our pupils the standards of behaviour we teach them.
- 1.2** We therefore set clear behaviour expectations for every group in our community: for pupils through the Behaviour Policy, for staff through the Staff Code of Conduct, and for parents and carers through this Code of Conduct.
- 1.3** This Code is not a set of rules imposed on parents. It is a shared statement of how the adults in our children's lives will treat one another, and it places obligations on the Federation as well as on families. Section 3 sets out what you can expect from us.
- 1.4** This Code applies:
- on school premises, including the car park, gates and grounds
 - at all school events, on and off site, including trips, residentials, sporting fixtures, performances and parents' evenings
 - in all communication with the Federation and its schools, whether in person, by telephone, in writing, by email or through school communication platforms
 - on social media and other online platforms
 - to conduct away from school where it affects the safety or wellbeing of a pupil, member of staff or governor, or the reputation of the Federation
- 1.5** Throughout this Code, "parent" is used to mean:
- anyone with parental responsibility for a pupil
 - anyone caring for a pupil, for example a grandparent, step-parent, childminder or family friend
 - any adult or child accompanying a parent or carer on site or at a school event
- 1.6** This Code should be read alongside the Federation's Behaviour Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Complaints Procedure, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Online Safety Policy and Privacy Notices for parents.

2. Key principles

- 2.1** The following principles govern how this Code is applied.
- The partnership between home and school is fundamental to the success and wellbeing of every child. This Code exists to protect that partnership, not to police it.
 - No child will be disadvantaged because of their parent's conduct. The education and welfare of the child will not be compromised in any way by the application of this Code.
 - Our response will always be proportionate to what has happened, and we will always try to resolve matters at the earliest and lowest level possible.
 - Decisions will be explained. Any formal decision will be confirmed in writing, with clear reasons.

- Parents have the right to make representations about any decision taken under this Code.
- Any restriction imposed will be time-limited, proportionate in extent, and subject to review.
- We will apply this Code with regard to our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and will make reasonable adjustments where a disability or communication need affects how a parent is able to communicate with us.
- Nothing in this Code restricts a parent's ability to raise a safeguarding concern, to make a complaint, or to contact the school in an emergency.

3. What you can expect from us

- 3.1** In return for the expectations set out in this Code, all parents and carers can expect that Federation staff and governors will:
- treat you and your family with courtesy, respect and honesty
 - listen properly to concerns and take them seriously
 - acknowledge communications within two school days and provide a substantive reply within five school days, telling you if more time is needed
 - explain the reasons for decisions affecting your child
 - be open when something has gone wrong, and put it right where we can
 - keep you informed about your child's progress, welfare and behaviour
 - make sure you know how to raise a concern, and make sure that raising one never results in less favourable treatment of you or your child
- 3.2** Federation staff are held to the Staff Code of Conduct. If you believe a member of staff has fallen short of it, please tell us, using the route set out in section 9. Concerns about staff conduct are taken seriously and handled through the Federation's own procedures.

4. What we ask of parents and carers

- 4.1** We ask all parents and carers to:
- act in accordance with this Code at all times
 - respect the ethos, vision and values of the school and of the Federation
 - work together with staff in the best interests of all our pupils, not only your own child
 - treat every member of the school community with respect — in person, on the telephone, in writing and online
 - set the example you want your child to follow: children copy the way adults speak to one another far more reliably than they follow instructions
 - raise concerns early, calmly, and with the right person, and seek a peaceful resolution to any disagreement
 - correct the behaviour of your own child, or a child in your care, while on site or at a school event — particularly where it could lead to conflict or is unsafe — without using physical punishment
 - supervise younger siblings and other children in your care at all times while on the premises

- follow the school's arrangements for arrival, collection and parking
- dress in a way that is appropriate to a school setting when on the premises or attending a school event, bearing in mind that adults on site are role models for our pupils
- keep the school informed of changes to contact details, parental responsibility, court orders affecting your child, and medical or dietary needs

5. Arrival, collection and parking

- 5.1** Traffic at the school gate is the single most likely place for a child to be seriously hurt, and the single most common source of friction with our neighbours. We ask for particular care here.
- 5.2** Drop off and collect only where road markings and the school's arrangements allow. Do not stop, wait, park, drop off or pick up on the school zig-zags, across a dropped kerb, on a pavement, or in any other prohibited area.
- 5.3** Never block a resident's driveway, even briefly and even where the driver remains in the vehicle. Drive slowly and considerately, and cause the least possible disturbance to residents.
- 5.4** Switch off your engine whenever your vehicle is stationary and not in traffic. Exhaust emissions are concentrated at child height and are particularly harmful to young lungs.
- 5.5** Follow the directions of any member of staff or traffic marshal on duty. They are there to keep children safe and their instructions should be followed without argument.
- 5.6** Make sure every child is properly restrained in line with the law on seat belts and child car seats, that children get in and out of vehicles on the pavement side, and that they use designated crossing points.
- 5.7** In severe weather or poor light, allow extra time and drive with additional caution.
- 5.8** Collect your child on time. If you are delayed, contact the school office as soon as possible and arrange for a named authorised adult to collect on your behalf. Repeated late collection will be followed up with you and, if it continues, may be treated as a welfare concern.
- 5.9** Smoking and vaping are not permitted anywhere on the school site, including the car park and at the gates.
- 5.10** Only assistance dogs may be brought onto the school site, unless the school has specifically agreed otherwise for a planned activity. Dogs must not be left tied up unattended at the school gates.

6. Conduct that will not be tolerated

- 6.1** The following conduct is unacceptable, whether directed at a member of staff, a governor, a volunteer, a pupil, another parent or any other visitor, and whether it takes place in person, by telephone, in writing or online:
 - aggressive, intimidating, threatening or abusive behaviour of any kind
 - physical violence, or the threat of physical violence
 - shouting at, or raising your voice aggressively towards, staff, pupils or other parents

- swearing or using offensive language
- aggressive gestures, including raised fists or offensive hand signals
- harassment, bullying, victimisation, or conduct that causes alarm or distress
- discriminatory conduct or language, including that which is racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic or disablist, or which targets a person's religion, belief, age or pregnancy
- deliberately false, malicious or vexatious allegations
- abusive, defamatory or derogatory comments about the Federation, its schools, staff, governors, volunteers, pupils or families, whether posted on social media or communicated in any other way
- persistent, excessive or unreasonable contact that prevents staff from carrying out their duties
- disrupting, or threatening to disrupt, the school day or any school event on or off site
- approaching, questioning, reprimanding or disciplining another person's child — always bring the matter to a member of staff instead
- using physical punishment against your own child on school premises
- entering the premises without permission, or entering an area you have not been authorised to access
- breaching site security arrangements, for example by propping open a door or gate, admitting another person, or following someone through a secure door
- causing intentional damage to school property
- bringing alcohol onto site or drinking alcohol on site, other than at an event where the school has expressly permitted it, and attending the site or a school event under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- possessing, using or supplying illegal drugs or psychoactive substances on site
- smoking or vaping on site
- encouraging or inciting any other person to do any of the above

Where conduct crosses a line

Any behaviour or communication that threatens the safety or wellbeing of a child or a member of staff will be treated as a serious matter and acted on immediately. Where conduct may amount to a criminal offence we will report it to the police. Where it raises a concern about a child's welfare, it will be managed under the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

7. Photography, filming and recording

Photographs and film at school events

- 7.1** At most events we are pleased for parents to take photographs and video of their own child for personal use. Where we are unable to permit this, we will say so in advance and explain why.

- 7.2** Where photography is permitted, images that include other people's children must not be posted on social media or shared online. Some of our pupils cannot be photographed for safeguarding reasons, and it is not possible for you to know which ones.

Recording meetings and telephone calls

- 7.3** We ask that meetings and telephone calls with staff, governors and volunteers are not recorded unless this has been agreed in advance by everyone taking part.
- 7.4** If you would find a record of a meeting helpful, please tell us beforehand. We will normally agree to the meeting being recorded, or will offer an alternative such as an agreed written note of the meeting, a copy of the minutes, or a second member of staff present to take notes. We would far rather agree this openly than discover it afterwards.
- 7.5** Where a disability, communication need or the involvement of an advocate or interpreter means that a recording is necessary, we will make that reasonable adjustment.
- 7.6** Recording a meeting without agreement damages the trust between home and school. Where this happens, a member of staff may pause or end the meeting, will report it to a senior leader, and we will normally discuss a clear communication arrangement with you before further meetings take place.
- 7.7** Filming or photographing pupils, staff or other families on the school site outside a permitted event is not acceptable. Where images or recordings are shared publicly, or used to harass or intimidate an individual, we may report the matter to the police and take advice on further action.

8. Social media and online conduct

- 8.1** Please bring concerns to us directly and, where necessary, through the Complaints Procedure. Social media cannot resolve a concern about your child, and posts about the school reach our pupils, who read far more than adults assume.
- 8.2** Comments posted about the Federation, its schools or named individuals can damage the reputation of the school and the professional standing of its staff, and are frequently counter-productive to the education of the very children involved. Depending on their content, such comments may be defamatory, may amount to harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, or may constitute a criminal offence under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003 or the Online Safety Act 2023.
- 8.3** There is a specific legal restriction that parents are often unaware of. Where a pupil at a school alleges that a teacher at that school has committed a criminal offence, it is a criminal offence to publish any material likely to identify that teacher, until such time as they are charged or the Secretary of State publishes information about the teacher in connection with disciplinary proceedings (section 141F of the Education Act 2002, inserted by the Education Act 2011). This applies to social media posts and to messages in group chats, and can result in prosecution and a fine.
- 8.4** Where the Federation becomes aware that social media is being used to target a school, its staff, its governors or its families, we may:

- contact the author or page owner and ask for the post to be edited or removed
- report the post to the platform
- agree or impose a communication arrangement under section 11
- report the matter to the police
- take legal advice, including on defamation proceedings or an injunction

8.5 Class and year group chat groups are not official school channels. The Federation does not monitor them and cannot act on something posted in one. If something happens in a group chat that the school needs to know about, please report it to us directly.

9. Raising a concern the right way

9.1 Almost every concern is resolved quickly when it is raised early with the right person. The route is:

Class teacher ► Year Group Lead ► Headteacher ► Formal complaint to the Governing Body

9.2 Start with your child's class teacher. Contact the school office to arrange a convenient time. Please avoid raising a concern at the classroom door at the start or end of the day, when staff are responsible for supervising children and cannot give you their full attention.

9.3 If the matter is not resolved, or is too serious for the class teacher, contact your child's Year Group Lead.

9.4 If the matter is still unresolved, contact the Headteacher.

9.5 If you remain dissatisfied, the Federation's Complaints Procedure sets out the formal route, including the stages, timescales and the point at which a complaint is heard by governors. It is available on the website and from the school office.

9.6 Concerns about the conduct or safety of a child are dealt with under the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, not this Code, and should be raised immediately with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

9.7 You will not be treated less favourably, and your child will not be disadvantaged, because you have raised a concern or made a complaint.

10. Responding to a breach of this Code

10.1 Where the school becomes aware, or suspects, that a parent or an accompanying adult has breached this Code, it will gather information from those involved and speak to the parent about the incident before deciding what to do.

10.2 Where you are concerned about the conduct of another parent, raise it with your child's class teacher or the Headteacher. Please do not approach the other parent yourself.

10.3 Our response will be proportionate to what has happened and will use the lowest effective step. Depending on the nature and seriousness of the incident, we may:

- have an informal conversation and remind you of this Code

- write to you setting out our concerns
- invite you to meet a senior leader or the Headteacher
- issue a formal written warning
- agree or impose a restricted communication plan (section 11)
- withdraw permission for you to be on the school premises, in whole or in part (section 11)
- report the matter to the police, where the conduct may be criminal
- take legal advice, including on defamation, harassment or an injunction

10.4 Any child protection or safeguarding concern arising from a parent's conduct will be addressed in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. An allegation against a member of staff will be handled under Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education, including referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer where the threshold is met.

10.5 The decision on how to respond to a breach of this Code rests with the Headteacher. For the measures in section 11, the Headteacher will consult the Chair of Governors before a decision is taken.

11. Formal measures

11.1 Where a parent commits a serious breach of this Code, or repeated breaches, the Federation may apply one or more of the measures below. These are the exception, not the norm; in most years, no parent will be subject to any of them.

A. Restricted communication plan

11.2 A restricted communication plan sets out how communication between a parent and the school will be managed. It may include:

- a single named point of contact at the school
- communication in a particular form only, for example in writing or by email
- a single email address for all correspondence
- telephone contact restricted to specified days and times
- a limit on the frequency of contact, or a requirement to make an appointment rather than attend at the school office

11.3 A plan will be confirmed to you in writing, with the reasons for it, what it requires, how long it will last and when it will be reviewed. It will also state the timescale within which the school will respond to you: a communication plan places obligations on the school as well as on the parent.

11.4 A communication plan will never restrict your ability to contact the school in an emergency, to report a safeguarding concern, or to receive urgent information about your child.

B. Withdrawal of permission to be on the school premises

11.5 A parent who is not an employee or a governor is on the school site under an implied licence. That licence can be restricted or withdrawn for a specified period where it is necessary to keep the school community safe.

- 11.6** Conduct that may lead to this includes aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language that presents a risk to staff or pupils, behaviour that makes staff or pupils feel threatened, persistent unacceptable behaviour on site, or a single incident of a sufficiently serious nature.
- 11.7** Except where immediate action is needed to keep people safe, we will tell you that we are considering withdrawing permission and invite your representations before deciding. Where immediate action is necessary, we may impose a temporary withdrawal and then invite your representations.
- 11.8** The Headteacher will write to you setting out:
- the reasons for the decision, and the conduct it relates to
 - whether the withdrawal is temporary pending your representations, or is proposed
 - its extent — whether it applies to the whole site or to specified areas, times or events
 - how long it will last and when it will be reviewed
 - the alternative arrangements that will be put in place (see 11.9)
 - your right to make written representations to the Chair of Governors within ten school days
- 11.9** Alternative arrangements will always be made so that neither your child's education nor your rights as a parent are affected. These will cover how your child will be brought to and collected from school, how you will receive information about their progress, and how you will take part in meetings. In particular, arrangements will always be made — by telephone, remotely, or at an alternative venue — to enable you to take part in:
- meetings about your child's special educational needs, including an EHC plan annual review
 - a governors' meeting or independent review panel concerning a suspension or permanent exclusion
 - an admission appeal or a complaint hearing
 - any meeting that forms part of a safeguarding or child protection process
- 11.10** The Chair of Governors will consider any representations you make and decide whether to confirm, vary or lift the decision. You will be notified of the outcome in writing, with reasons, including how long any restriction will remain in place and when it will next be reviewed.
- 11.11** Restrictions are reviewed at the end of the agreed period. Following review, a restriction may be lifted, reduced, or — where there are continuing grounds for concern — extended, with written reasons.
- 11.12** Entering the school site in breach of a withdrawal of permission, and causing a nuisance or disturbance, is a criminal offence under section 547 of the Education Act 1996. A parent in breach may be removed from the premises by the police or by an authorised member of staff.
- 11.13** Once the internal process is complete, a parent who remains dissatisfied may seek independent legal advice and may pursue the matter through the civil courts. A parent who believes the Federation has not followed its own published procedure may also raise the matter with the Department for Education.

C. Injunction and civil action

- 11.14** In the most serious or persistent cases, the Governing Body may take legal advice and apply to the court for an injunction under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 requiring a parent to stop the conduct in question, or pursue other civil remedies including in defamation.

12. Monitoring, review and records

- 12.1** This Code will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body. Any changes will be communicated to staff, who will in turn communicate the updated Code to parents and carers.
- 12.2** This Code is published on the Federation website. A copy is provided to all parents and carers when their child joins the school, and parents are asked to acknowledge that they have read it (Appendix A). Failure to return the acknowledgement does not exempt a parent from the Code.
- 12.3** A record will be kept of any correspondence, action or decision taken under this Code for a minimum of twelve months, and thereafter in line with the Federation's data retention schedule.
- 12.4** Records will be held securely and treated as confidential, except where:
- access is requested by the Secretary of State
 - disclosure is required in the course of a school inspection
 - an individual exercises their right of access to their own personal data
 - disclosure is required under other legal authority
- 12.5** Personal data is processed in accordance with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. Further information is set out in the Federation's Privacy Notice for parents.

Appendix A — Parent and carer acknowledgement

Please complete and return this slip to the school office.

I confirm that I have read the Forest Skies Federation Parent and Carer Code of Conduct.

I understand what the Federation asks of me, and what I can expect from the Federation in return. I understand that the Code applies on the school site, at school events, in my communication with the school and online.

Pupil's name:

Class:

Name of parent or carer:

Signature:

Date:
