



Parent and Visitor Code of Conduct

Audience:	Parents, Trust staff, visitors and volunteers
Reviewed:	January 2026 (DoE)
Approved:	February 2026 (Board)
Effective From:	February 2026
Other related policies / procedures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children Protection and Safeguarding policy• Anti- bullying and Harassment policy• School conduct/ behaviour policy• PREVENT Strategy - HM Gov• Keeping Children Safe in Education• Staff, Visitor and Volunteer Code of Conduct• Whistleblowing policy• Communication Charter
Owner:	Director of Education
Policy / procedure model:	Trust and school policy: all Crofty schools use this policy
Date of Next Review:	February 2028

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1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 This guidance is issued by Crofty Education Trust and is adopted in full by all Crofty schools.

1.2 The purpose of this guidance is to:

- 1.2.1 Set out the expectations of parental behaviours and communications, through any and all channels.
- 1.2.2 Define what constitutes unreasonable or vexatious behaviour.
- 1.2.3 Establish clear and fair procedures for responding to and managing such behaviour.
- 1.2.4 Ensure that school staff can carry out their duties efficiently and effectively, whilst protecting them from undue harassment, abuse, intimidation, distraction, unreasonable or excessive demands.

1.3 The term parents is used throughout this guidance to refer to:

- 1.3.1 anyone with parental responsibility for a child; and
- 1.3.2 anyone caring for a child, such as grandparents, foster carers or step parents – so long as they provide day to day care and live with the child

1.4 Crofty Education Trust has a duty of care to ensure the safety, wellbeing and dignity of children, staff, parents, visitors and volunteers across all our schools. Our schools are places where children, their parents and staff are entitled to feel safe and free from harm or abuse. Relationships between staff and parents should demonstrate mutual respect and reflect the shared responsibility for pupils' wellbeing.

1.5 In most cases, pupils, parents and visitors demonstrate positive behaviour. However, on rare occasions, individuals behave in a way which is unacceptable and causes physical harm, fear and/or stress or anxiety for school staff. This can include aggressive behaviour, verbal or physical abuse, vexatious complaints, unreasonable/unmanageable communication, or harassment towards members of staff or the wider school community.

1.6 The Trust will not tolerate behaviour by parents or visitors that is unacceptable or that has a detrimental effect on the safety of staff or pupils, or effective operation of its schools.

1.7 Unacceptable behaviour also includes an unacceptable level of communication by email or other written methods, such as excessive frequency or volume of correspondence. Social media campaigns and comments may be taken into account, and defamatory comments may be recorded and used as evidence if necessary.

1.8 This guidance applies to conduct:

- 1.8.1 on school premises;
- 1.8.2 by telephone or email to the school;
- 1.8.3 on social media where the school or its community is referenced; and
- 1.8.4 in other settings which in the reasonable opinion of the Headteacher or the Trust, negatively impact staff, pupils, or the reasonable running of the school.

2. Expectations of Parents' and Visitors' Behaviour

2.1 Parents and visitors are expected to:

- 2.1.1 respect the ethos, vision and values of the Trust and schools;
- 2.1.2 work collaboratively with staff in the best interests of children;
- 2.1.3 treat all members of the school community with mutual respect, setting a positive example through speech and behaviour;
- 2.1.4 seek peaceful and constructive solutions to concerns or complaints;

- 2.1.5 manage their own child's behaviour (or that of a child in their care), particularly in public, where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggression or unsafe conduct;
- 2.1.6 raise concerns calmly and appropriately by approaching a member of school staff or senior leadership for support if required.

3. Unacceptable Behaviour

- 3.1 Unacceptable behaviour includes, but is not limited to, the following and will not be tolerated by the Trust or any Crofty school:
 - 3.1.1 disrupting, or threatening to disrupt, school operations, including events on school premises or sports fixtures;
 - 3.1.2 shouting at members of staff, children or other parents and visitors, whether in person or over the telephone;
 - 3.1.3 swearing, name-calling, or using offensive or abusive language;
 - 3.1.4 threatening, intimidating or aggressive behaviour, including behaviour that causes distress, humiliation or fear;
 - 3.1.5 threatening violence or acting violently, including pushing, spitting, damage to property or injury to individuals;
 - 3.1.6 physically intimidating a member of staff or the school community, including invading personal space, aggressive hand gestures or other actions intended to intimidate;
 - 3.1.7 sending abusive, harassing or threatening communications, including by email, text or social media;
 - 3.1.8 posting defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the school, its staff or members of the school community, including through social media, image or video manipulation;
 - 3.1.9 making false, malicious, vexatious or damaging complaints, claims, and allegations, whether in person, in writing or online;
 - 3.1.10 engaging in unduly frequent, unwarranted or excessive correspondence, including the use of AI-generated communications, that unreasonably takes up staff time or hinders the effective running of the school;
 - 3.1.11 racist, sexist, homophobic or otherwise discriminatory conduct;
 - 3.1.12 aggressive or disruptive behaviour, verbally or in writing, towards any child or adult;
 - 3.1.13 disciplining another person's child on the school site or at a school event (this may be offsite), rather than reporting concerns to a member of staff;
 - 3.1.14 using physical punishment against a child while on school premises;
 - 3.1.15 breaching school security procedures, this includes but is not limited to entering the site without permission whilst banned from site, or outside school opening hours;
 - 3.1.16 smoking or drinking alcohol on school premises (unless alcohol is permitted at a specific event);
 - 3.1.17 possessing or taking drugs, including so-called legal highs;
 - 3.1.18 bringing dogs onto school premises, other than guide/therapy dogs, or by express permission;
 - 3.1.19 inciting or encouraging others to engage in any of the behaviours listed above.

3.2 This list is not exhaustive. The impact of behaviour on children, staff and the wider school community will always be considered.

- 3.3 Depending on the nature of the incident, the Trust or Headteacher may then:
 - 3.3.1 Invite the parent or visitors into school to meet with a senior member of staff or the headteacher to seek a resolution.
 - 3.3.2 Send a warning letter to the parent or visitor
 - 3.3.3 Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour).
 - 3.3.4 Discuss the matter and seek advice from the Director of Education.
 - 3.3.5 Seek advice from our legal team regarding further action.

3.3.6 Ban the parent or visitors from the school site; revoke their licence to attend the premises (see Section 5).

3.4 The final decision for how to respond to breaches of the code of conduct rests with the Headteacher and/or the Director of Education. A parent or visitor will not be banned from site without consultation with the Director of Education and the parent will have the opportunity to respond

4. Managing Unreasonable and Vexatious Communication

4.1 This section sets out the Trust and schools' approach to managing communication or behaviour from individuals that is considered unreasonable, vexatious, or disproportionately demanding of school time and resources.

4.2 The purpose of this approach is to:

- 4.2.1 ensure that staff are able to carry out their professional duties effectively and without undue disruption;
- 4.2.2 protect staff from abusive, intimidating or excessive communication;
- 4.2.3 provide clarity about what constitutes unreasonable or vexatious conduct;
- 4.2.4 establish fair, transparent and proportionate procedures for managing such conduct;
- 4.2.5 ensure that legitimate concerns, including those relating to safeguarding, welfare or education, continue to be addressed appropriately.

4.3 Unreasonable or vexatious actions are defined as any behaviour that, because of its frequency, persistence, demand, or nature, significantly hinders the school's operations, interferes with staff duties, or causes distress to staff members.

4.4 This includes, but is not limited to:

4.5 Communication and Correspondence

- 4.5.1 Excessive communication by sending a disproportionate number of emails, letters, or making excessive phone calls, or where the volume of communication itself constitutes harassment. This maybe over a short or prolonged period.
- 4.5.2 Insistence on unreasonable outcomes by persisting in the pursuit of an issue after due process has been completed and the matter has been fully and properly addressed, and where no new evidence has been provided.
- 4.5.3 Lengthy or AI-generated content, sending communications that are excessively long, often generated using AI tools, making it unreasonably time-consuming for staff to read, summarise, and respond which takes away from the staff resource available for the benefit of the pupils.
- 4.5.4 Making groundless complaints and/or trying to reopen issues that have already been addressed.
- 4.5.5 Using threats of legal action, reporting to Ofsted, the Local Authority or other agencies with the intention of that threat being to intimidate staff.
- 4.5.6 Demands for unreasonable timescales, or of school resources, such as a high volume of meetings or meetings with specific staff where this is not necessary or appropriate, seeking access to information beyond what is required by law or reasonable policy i.e. the personal details of staff or other parents – third party data to which they have no right of access.

4.5.7 Abusive or Threatening Language such as using profane, abusive, insulting, intimidating, or derogatory language towards any member of the school community.

4.6 Behaviour and Actions

4.6.1 Recording staff (audio or video) without prior consent, unless otherwise agreed upon by the Headteacher or permitted by law.

4.6.2 Harassing, bullying, or intimidating staff, pupils, or other parents or visitors.

4.6.3 Failing to observe the school's policies (e.g., safeguarding).

4.7 Procedures for Managing Unreasonable and/or Vexatious Actions

School staff should report any behaviour they deem to be unreasonable and/or vexatious to the Headteacher or Director of Education. This approach is applied only where reasonable attempts to manage communication have been unsuccessful and does not prevent the Trust or its schools from responding to matters relating to a child's safety, wellbeing or education.

4.7.1 Step 1: Initial Review and Warning

The Headteacher will review the reported behaviour and, if they deem it unreasonable and/or vexatious, will take steps to address it which may include the issue of a Formal Written Warning, unless the matter is so serious as to require immediate action such as banning from site. Any issued warning will clearly define why the behaviour is considered unreasonable and/or vexatious, refer to this guidance, and state the consequences of continuation. The warning will also outline the reasonable level of future contact the school will maintain (examples of this may include limiting responses to once per week, implementing a single point of contact, holding meetings online or telephone, communicating by email rather than telephone etc)).

4.7.2 Implementation of Management Strategy

If the unreasonable and/or vexatious behaviour continues after the formal written warning, the Headteacher, in consultation with the Director of Education, may implement a Management Strategy. This may include:

- **Single Point of Contact (SPOC).** This will limit all future communication to a single, named member of staff (e.g., the Deputy Head or Headteacher's PA) and/or designated email inbox. All other staff will be instructed not to respond.
- **Specific Communication Method.** Designate a specific communication process, e.g. an online form, holding meetings online or telephone.
- **Restricting Contact.** Restricting the method of contact (e.g., only via postal letter, or a single weekly/monthly email).
- **Non-Engagement with Specific Communications.** Informing the parent or visitors that the school will no longer reply to lengthy, AI-generated, or repeated correspondence that seeks to reopen matters already concluded through the appropriate channels such as the complaints process.
- **Suspension of Access.** Suspending the individual's right to attend non-essential school events (e.g., assemblies, fetes) if their behaviour risks disrupting the school environment or poses a safety risk. In certain circumstances this may include all 'in person' events and require parents' evening to be conducted online.
- **Legal Action.** In cases of severe abuse or harassment, the school may seek a restraining order and/or refer the matter to the police and any other safeguarding agency such as prevent/social care.

4.7.3 Notification and Review

- The parent or visitor will be formally notified in writing of the Management Strategy being applied and the duration (if applicable).
- The strategy will be reviewed by the Headteacher (and/or Director of Education and CoG) at appropriate intervals to determine if the restrictions can be safely lifted.

5. Ban from school sites

5.1 Where all procedures have been exhausted and aggression or intimidation continues, or where there is an act of violence or serious aggression, a parent or visitor may be banned from school premises or all Trust premises for a period of time, subject to review.

5.2 In imposing a ban, the following steps will be taken:

- 5.2.1 the parent or visitor will be informed in writing of the ban, its review arrangements, and the consequences of breach;
- 5.2.2 The parent will have the opportunity to respond regarding the ban and any mitigating factors they believe should be taken into account;
- 5.2.3 where relevant, confirmation of whether the matter has been reported to the local authority or police will be included;
- 5.2.4 the Board of Trustees and the school's LGC will be informed;
- 5.2.5 arrangements for pupil collection and delivery will be clarified where appropriate.

5.3 If a parent or visitor attends school premises while a ban is in place, the school may call the police to remove the individual under section 547 of the Education Act 1996.

6. Ensuring Access and Fairness

6.1 Headteachers are responsible for applying this Trust guidance proportionately and consistently. If a Headteacher suspects, or becomes aware, that a parent or visitor has breached the code of conduct, the headteacher, or those with delegated responsibility, will gather information from the parties involved. This may involve them speaking with or communicating by other means such as email to the parent or visitor about the incident.

6.2 Applying this guidance does not mean the Trust or the school will refuse to address legitimate concerns or complaints. These will be dealt with in accordance with our policies.

6.3 The school will always ensure essential communication about a pupil's welfare, academic progress, or safeguarding remains accessible, albeit within the defined limits of the Management Strategy.

7. Review

7.1 The Trust reserves the right to review decisions made under this section through appropriate governance arrangements.

7.2 This section may be revised as necessary.

7.3 This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Director of Education and Board of Trustees.

Appendix 1

Crofty Communication Charter

Good communication is vital to ensuring effective, productive relationships between our school and our pupils, their parents and visitors are maintained. This is also essential for the wellbeing of all parties.

This charter sets out how communication will be managed to make sure that good communication is achieved.

In addition to parents' evenings and other school events, there may be occasions when parents or visitors wish to communicate with the school directly with questions or information related to their child.

To make sure that this is effective these principles will be applied.

If an emergency situation arises, it is important that parents or visitors contact the school as soon as possible and explain what has or is happening.

Our commitment as a school

We will:

- Ensure that there is regular, proactive communication about your child's achievement and well-being.
- Respond to emails, phone calls or requests for meetings usually within three working days.
- If there is an urgent matter, the school receptionist/administrator will ask an appropriate member of staff to deal with the issue as soon as possible.
- Display polite, professional conduct at all times.

Our expectations of parents and visitors

You will:

- Ensure that all communications with the school, through all mediums, is polite and respectful.
- Make use of information channels in place, eg. the school website, newsletters etc., for keeping up to date with routine information.
- Give an outline of what the issue is, to make sure the query is directed to the right person.
- Use the school mailbox or main reception telephone number as first point of contact (the school will forward your request to the appropriate staff member).
- Ensure your emails are brief and clear.
- Refrain from sending multiple emails regarding the same query.
- Limit the number of people you send an email about a query.
- Understand that a teacher or member of staff may be unable to respond on the same day on which a query is made and that a response within three working days is acceptable.
- Understand that teachers or other school staff will not respond outside of school hours, i.e., evenings or weekends

If there is an in-person meeting, everyone must show mutual respect. The meeting will focus on resolving the issues that are relevant to that family or pupil.

No offensive language, insults or personal attacks on school staff will be tolerated. If any such incidents occur, the meeting or call can be terminated with immediate effect.

Unless express permission from all parties is agreed, parent, visitors or pupils will not record a meeting or conversation with school staff or on the school grounds.

The constraints on school resources make it essential that parents and visitors use authorised school procedures in order to avoid diverting time and attention that must be invested directly in pupils' learning and wellbeing.

Please note that unreasonable, excessive, abusive or offensive communication is unacceptable, and the school reserves the right to address any such problems as they feel are appropriate.

This can include restricting correspondence to a specified email address, using a single person or mailbox as a point of contact or using hard copy post and/or by placing restrictions on phone calls.

Parents and visitors have an implied licence to enter a school site. In cases where behaviour is inappropriate, threatening or argumentative, this licence can be revoked.

If a response has been given to a query, unless matters change, further responses will not be sent.

Our aim is to ensure that all communications and discussions about pupils and their families are positive and move matters forward in a mutually respectful manner.

Appendix 2

Reporting incidents

Schools must report and record incidents using CPOMS

Including:

- Date and Time
- Name of individuals
- Incident location
- Incident details, including what was written (copy of emails), said, and/or done and by whom.

All incidents should be recorded on CPOMS and reported in person to the headteacher as soon as reasonably possible.

Records of incidents may be shared with designated leaders, the Trust's solicitors, and the police if deemed necessary.