




'Christ at the centre, children at the heart'

Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic MAT Company No:

08444133

Registered Office: Fordham Road, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 7AA

Approved by the Trust Board:	April 2024
Signed by Trust CEO:	
Review Date:	April 2027

ANTI-CORRUPTION, FRAUD and BRIBERY POLICY

OLW CMAT (THE MAT) ANTI-CORRUPTION, FRAUD and BRIBERY POLICY

This policy must be read in conjunction with the following policies Whistleblowing policy, Finance and Internal Procedures policy, Staff Code of Conduct policy and Safer Recruitment procedures.

Context

Whether small or large we recognise that:

- MATs & Academies are complex organisations, and an unequivocal commitment to discharging, effectively, our responsibility to safeguard public and private funds is a pre-requisite for demonstrating the highest standards of integrity, and that this commitment is the implicit responsibility of all members of the Academy & MAT community.

Consequently, the Directors, in consultation with the CEO, Headteachers, Chairs of LGBs and senior leaders, have agreed on proportionate procedures to prevent and detect fraud and corruption. To this end we are intent on creating, embedding, developing and maintaining an anti-fraud and anti-corruption culture across all aspects of each Academy's activity.

This culture will support:

- an ethos for:
 - Deterring corruption, fraud and bribery
 - Preventing corruption, fraud and bribery
 - Detecting corruption, fraud and bribery
- a framework for:
 - Investigating and facilitating recovery of losses
 - Invoking staff disciplinary proceedings
 - Applying sanctions against people who commit fraud or bribery offences including referral to the police
 - Seeking redress for fraud, overpayment and losses.
 - Monitoring, publishing, and updating our policy and procedures.
 - Evaluating the impact of policy and procedures on performance.
 - Implementing robust internal financial controls.

Academy Strategy

The Resources and Audit Committee on behalf of the Directors is responsible for the oversight and review of the MAT's anti-corruption policy. The CEO is the Accounting Officer (AO) whose role includes taking day-to-day responsibility for the implementation of the MAT anti-Corruption, Fraud and Bribery policy (ACP). However, it is the responsibility of all members of staff to report fraud. The following processes will be put in place to support this aim:

The Resources and Audit Committee will be made aware of the MAT policy on anti-corruption.

A risk assessment covering bribery/corruption of risks across all MAT operating procedures will be undertaken during the financial year.

The Accounting Officer will implement and strictly enforce the MAT's anti-corruption policy.

The Accounting Officer will provide advice, support, and/or training on what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in terms of gifts, hospitality, and acceptance of donations.

The School Business Manager or Finance lead will maintain a register of gifts and donations made by each Academy/member of staff above an annually agreed threshold (currently £25), and the reasons for such provision.

Academy leaders with responsibility for procurement will carry out due diligence on potential business partners before an Academy enters any business relationship or project with them. This may include checking references and company registration.

All members of the Directors and members of the Academy's communities with budgetary responsibilities will complete a register of business interests. This will be completed at least annually and will be maintained by the School Business Manager or Finance lead.

The Accounting Officer will actively support leadership and governance in communicating zero tolerance of bribery and/or corruption.

The Accounting Officer will work with the Academy Leaders responsible for staff development to identify the training needs of different categories of Academy staff and provide regular tailored CPD to meet those training needs.

The MAT whistle-blowing policy will be available to all staff. (It is in the policy folder on the MAT website and is displayed in each staff room).

Work patterns will be reviewed to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities in relation to fraud.

The CEO and Directors of the MAT will encourage and enable all staff to raise serious concerns.

The Accounting Officer will report regularly on the efficacy of each Academy of arrangements and at least annually to the Audit Committee of the Directors.

Gifts received by the CEO (above an individual limit of £25 for any one gift) must be reported to the Chair of the Resources and Audit Committee and the Chair of Directors.

Definitions

For clarity and transparency, the following definitions are used:

Theft

The 1968 Theft Act states that 'A person shall be guilty of theft if s/he dishonestly appropriates property belonging to another with the intention of permanently depriving the other of it.

Fraud

Fraud is: 'deceit, trickery, sharp practice, or breach of confidence, perpetrated for profit or to gain some unfair or dishonest advantage'. In the broadest sense, a fraud is an intentional deception made for personal gain or to damage another individual. Fraud is both a crime, and also a civil law violation. Defrauding people or entities of money or valuables is a common purpose of fraud, but there has also been fraudulent 'discoveries', e.g. in science, to gain prestige rather than immediate monetary gain.

In essence, fraud is false representation; failure to disclose information when there is a legal duty to do so; abuse of position.

A contextual example of fraud is the intentional distortion of financial statements or other records by persons internal or external to the Academy which is carried out to conceal the misappropriation of assets or otherwise for gain.

Specific examples of fraud include:

- Falsifying or altering accounting records or other documents
- Suppressing or omitting the effects of transactions from records or documents
- Adding records of transactions which have no substance
- Willful misrepresentation of transactions or other Academy affairs

Corruption

Corruption is the offering, giving, soliciting, or acceptance of an inducement or reward which may influence actions being taken.

The areas of Academy activity which are most susceptible to corruption include:

- Tenders
- Contracts
- Disposal of assets
- Licenses and planning

Bribery

The Bribery Act 2010 defines bribery as giving someone a financial or other advantage to encourage that person to perform their function or activities improperly or to reward that person for already having done so.

Academy Practice

Everyone employed by the MAT is required to adhere to the Anti-Corruption, Fraud, and Bribery Policy. Failure to comply with any aspect of the ACP will be a breach of conduct and possibly a criminal offence and will be investigated and addressed in line with MAT disciplinary procedures.

To ensure all our practices are beyond reproach, we require all staff members to support and cooperate with the Accounting Officer responsible for our Anti-Corruption, Fraud and Bribery Policy (ACP).

We expect and encourage all staff members to raise any concerns they may have relating to fraud and corruption. Care, however, must always be taken to ensure such concerns are raised in good faith. In the first instance, concerns can be raised with the individual's Line Manager, or the CEO (Accounting Officer), Headteacher or other member of the Academy Leadership team. The attention of all staff is drawn to our Whistle Blowing Policy.

All staff members are required to attend designated training, in line with our ACP, and to sign to confirm they have read relevant information produced as guidance documents.

All staff members are required to conform to guidance which is issued by Academy including what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in terms of gifts, hospitality and acceptance of donations.

All staff members are required to be aware of the limit above which gifts and donations received by the Academy/members of staff must be declared and recorded.

All staff dealing with finance must undertake training to ensure the highest standards of accounting are maintained.

All staff involved in recruitment and appointment must adhere to the Academy's rigorous safer recruitment procedures.

Each Academy is required to submit to the Trust CFO annually to their gift register.

MAT Community

This policy does not attempt to cover every aspect of theft, fraud, corruption, and bribery. It is intended to promote a framework whereby all members of the MAT community may work constructively together for the good of the Academy and all who work and learn here.

[Associated MAT Documentation](#)

Finance and Internal procedures policy

Register of Business and Pecuniary Interests policy Safer Recruitment procedures

Staff Code of Conduct policy Whistleblowing policy

The most important aspect of our policy and practice is to demonstrate the highest standards of integrity in all we do.

References

- <http://www.public-standards.org.uk>
- <http://www.justice.gov.uk>