



Christ Centred, Child Centred, Catholic Educational Excellence

THE DIOCESE OF WESTMINSTER ACADEMY TRUST

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

2025-26

VISION STATEMENT

The schools in the Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust, each according to their unique charism, are part of the mission of the Catholic Church “to preach the Gospel to all nations: to enrich all people with the light of the Good News, which, by its essence, is aimed at transforming the human person and setting him or her on the path that leads to salvation” (Cardinal Grocholewski, *The Catholic School According to the Code of Canon Law*).

With Christ at the centre of our hearts and of our schools, we are committed to the flourishing of our children and young people, so that they might grow in excellence and learn how to use their skills and knowledge for the common good, for the sake of their sisters and brothers in the world, especially the poor and marginalized.

We believe that every pupil is made in the image of God, with God-given gifts and God-given dignity: a divine origin and an eternal destiny. We believe that no pupil’s background or start in life should determine their future. We commit ourselves to a preferential option for the poor, so that our disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils enjoy as much opportunity and academic success as their peers. Our school communities will be distinguished by an atmosphere “permeated with the Gospel spirit of freedom and love” (*The Catholic School*, 55). Our pupils will experience their dignity in the way that they are loved, encouraged, accompanied and celebrated on their journey through school.

As a trust of Catholic schools, we are committed to working together in a trusting and collaborative manner, with integrity and transparency. We will model the leadership in the trust and in our schools on the example of our Teacher, Jesus Christ, “who came into the world to give witness to the truth, to save and not to judge, to serve and not to be served.” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 3).

We will encourage a commitment in our schools to the stewardship of the earth, our common home and invite our pupils to be good citizens, agents of positive change in the world, helping to build up God’s kingdom of peace and justice.

INTRODUCTION

We believe it is good practice to have a code of conduct for all staff. Teaching staff are subject to the Teachers' Standards. All adults are expected to actively follow and live out our mission statement as a Trust to support our schools in providing outstanding Catholic Education for their pupils. As a Catholic educating community, the Trust strives to offer students every opportunity to develop their talents to the full through their academic work, spiritual worship and extracurricular activities.

All communication and interaction between - staff, children, parents, carers and visitors must reflect our mission statement. Staff are expected to be conscientious and loyal to the aims and objectives of the Trust. In addition, staff are required to develop and maintain the Catholic character of the Trust. Staff are to have regard to the Catholic character of the Trust and not do anything in any way detrimental or prejudicial to the interests of the same at any time, at work or at home.

All staff employed under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards 2012' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards Personal and Professional Conduct.

1. PURPOSE, SCOPE AND PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 A Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all Trust staff are expected to observe, and the Trust schools should notify staff of this code and its expectations. Trust staff are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that models the highest possible standards for all the pupils within the Trust schools. As a member of the Trust school community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain professional conduct and be aware that failure to do so may affect the reputation of the Trust school, whether inside or outside working hours.
- 1.2 DoWAT is guided by the gospel values of the Beatitudes. In particular,
 - Kindness
 - Peace
 - Courage
- 1.3 The experience of the children and young people in our schools are at the heart of our decision making and our policies reflect this. Our schools should be safe places for young people to thrive and adults should set the example and be responsible for their own conduct. All employees should know how to raise concerns and DoWAT is committed to responding to concerns. The Trust's Whistleblowing Policy, Safeguarding Statement and Equality and Diversity Policy are displayed on its website.



2. SETTING AN EXAMPLE

- 2.1 Personal standards of behaviour must be high in dealing with other staff, volunteers, governors, parents and children.

Staff should not:

- Take drugs or drink alcohol while at work/on duty, or drink at social events within or outside working hours to the extent that their work could be affected.
- Threaten, fight or assault anyone on the school premises, or persist in verbal or non-verbal behaviour, which would intimidate anyone. It should be noted that this also means any such action outside the school premises which could potentially bring the school into disrepute.
- Steal, take without authority, or deliberately damage things that belong to the school.
- Use their position within the school inappropriately to advance the interests of any other person or organisation with which they are associated, or show favouritism.

- 2.2 Staff mobile phones are permitted in schools, however, excessive use of mobile phones for personal calls should be avoided. Mobile phones should only be used in classrooms or public areas in line with the school's policies. Staff should not engage in inappropriate use of social media sites, either inside or outside of working hours, which may bring themselves, their school or DoWAT into disrepute. Staff should not have contact with any pupil through social media (unless the pupils are family members) and should exercise caution when posting photographs and/or comments so that professional standards are maintained, and staff do not compromise themselves or the school. They should follow their school's policies.

- 2.3 Staff should dress professionally for working in the classroom and appropriately for PE lessons.

- 2.4 There is a general expectation of the trust that staff will:

- Be polite to members of the public at all times.
- Give/provide their name when speaking or writing to parents/carers and other members of the public or school community when speaking or writing on behalf of the school or trust.
- Ensure that any information provided to third parties is in line with the Data Protection Act (1998).
- Respect confidential information provided to them in the course of their work.
- Demonstrate consistently high standards of professional conduct.
- Ensure that any significant concerns or complaints expressed to them by parents, carers or the general public are passed on to the senior management.



2.5 All staff must:

- Treat others with respect.
- Not discriminate unlawfully against any person and treat others equally regardless of ability, gender, age, race, position in school or any other protected characteristic.
- Treat other members of staff and colleagues professionally. Staff must not single out another for treatment where they feel threatened, humiliated or patronised. This type of behaviour could be seen as harassment or, in serious cases, bullying.

2.6 All staff are accountable to the trust for their actions. They must also respect and adhere to the management structure of their workplace, ensuring that reasonable management instructions are followed. Leaders and managers have a responsibility to hold staff accountable for agreed actions and to themselves be accountable to the staff they manage.

2.7 All staff must, at all times, act in accordance with the trust that the employer is entitled to place in them. Similarly, the employer is expected to act in accordance with the trust that the employee is entitled to place on the employer.

2.8 Low-level concerns. If a member of staff has a concern about the conduct of others, they should report such conduct to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher via the proforma outlined in **Appendix One**.

3. SAFEGUARDING PUPILS

3.1 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to ensure all children have the best outcomes.

Child Protection is also part of safeguarding and promoting welfare and refers to activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm. These aspects of safeguarding and promoting welfare all contribute to the five outcomes for improving the wellbeing of children set out in the Children Act 2004, namely:

- Physical and mental health and emotional well-being.



- Protection from harm and neglect.
- Education, training and recreation.
- Making a positive contribution to society.
- Social and economic wellbeing.

3.2 Every DoWAT employee shares an objective to help keep children and young people safe. All staff play an important part in safeguarding children from abuse and neglect by early identification of children who may be vulnerable or at risk of harm, and by educating children about managing risks and improving their resilience through the curriculum. All staff have three main areas of responsibility:

- Understanding procedures and protocols for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children.
- Providing a safe environment in which children and young people can learn.
- Identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in the education setting.

3.3 The overriding principle of these policies is that the welfare of the child is paramount.

3.4 The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil/student to the Trust school's Designated Senior Leaders (DSL) for Child Protection, Ciara Nicholson.

3.5 The school's Designated Senior Leaders are named at each Trust school site.

3.6 Staff will read the most up to date Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 annually, the Trust school's Child Protection Policy, and the Trust Whistleblowing Procedure and staff must be familiar with these documents. Copies of these are available at each school site of the Trust.

3.7 Staff must treat pupils, parents and carers and colleagues with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing professional boundaries.

3.8 Staff must take the upmost care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

3.9 Staff must sign in and out of the school site using the locally agreed procedures. Staff are expected to be on site for a reasonable period before and after the school day, in accordance with requirements as set out in each school's handbook.



4. PUPIL/STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 Staff must comply with Trust school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils.
- 4.2 Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils.
- 4.3 Staff must follow reasonable contractual instructions that support the development of pupils.

5. HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

- 5.1 Staff must maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.
- 5.2 All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer to the Trust school's Whistleblowing procedures.
- 5.3 Gifts from suppliers or associates of the Trust schools, with the exception of low-cost promotional items, must be declared to the Headteacher, or to the Local Chair of Governors if the Headteacher is the recipient, with the exception of "one off" token gifts from students or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.

6. CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK

- 6.1 Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the Trust or Trust school or the reputation of other members of the school community. Any such conduct could lead to dismissal.
- 6.2 In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable and could lead to dismissal.
- 6.3 Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Staff must not use personal social media accounts e.g. Facebook with pupils or former pupils. Staff should follow any school specific policies on the use of social media with pupils, former pupils and families. It is advisable to use professional networks and maintain a professional persona.
- 6.4 Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the Trust or school and is not to a level which may contravene the working time



regulations or affect an individual's work performance. Staff should notify from their headteacher or line manager.

- 6.5 All members of staff must declare any business interests outside of the Trust school that may be connected either to the supply of goods/services to the Trust or school or be rewarded through association with the Trust or school.
- 6.6 Staff should not discuss confidential Trust or school-related issues with parents out of school.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 7.1 Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil/student.
- 7.2 All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a pupil is bullied by another pupil (or by a member of staff), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate Trust school procedure.
- 7.3 However, staff have an obligation to share with their manager or one of the school's Designated Senior Leaders any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil/student. Staff must never promise a pupil/student that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil.

8. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- 8.1 All staff need to recognise that failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal as defined in the Trust's disciplinary policy.

LINKS

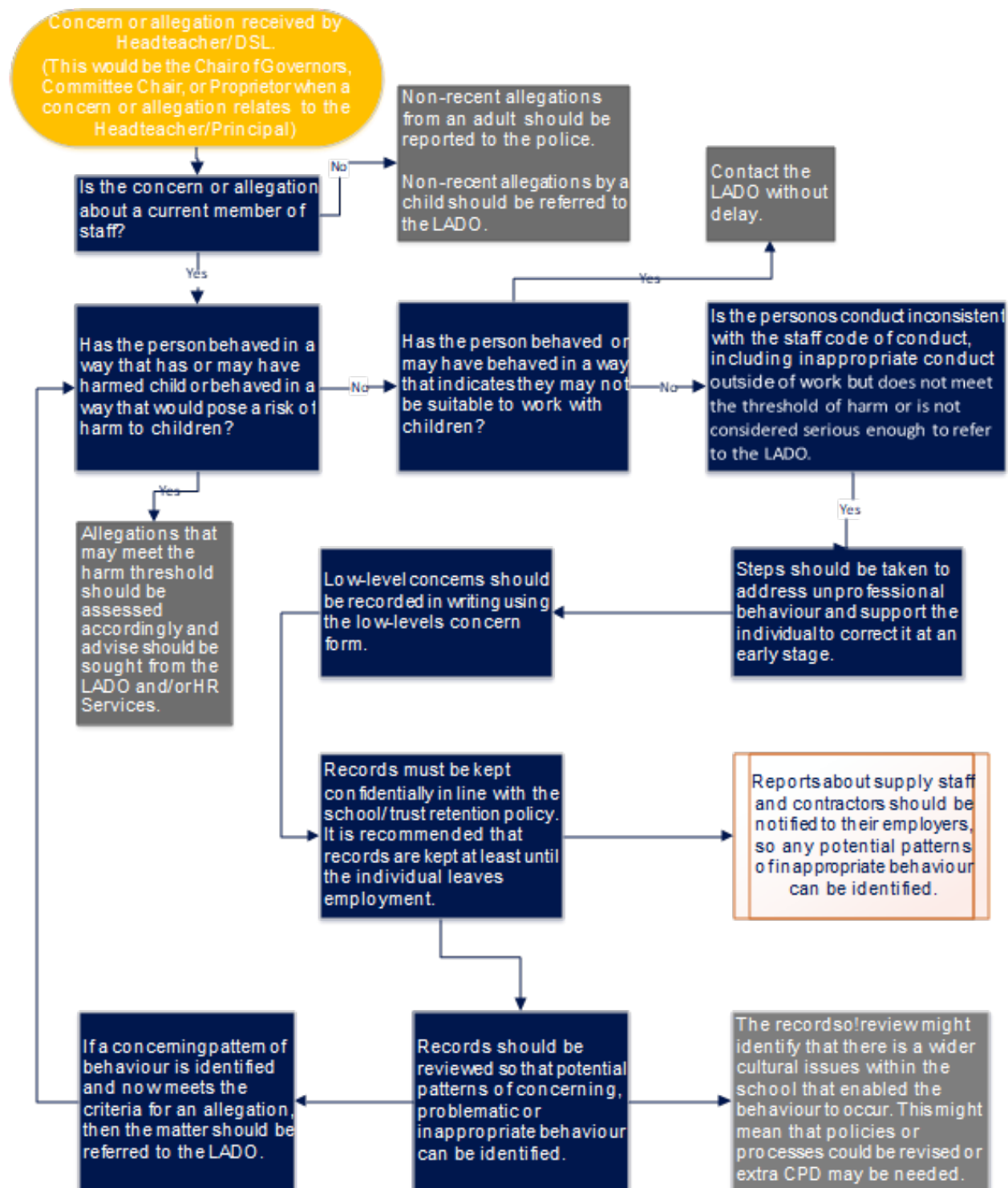
[Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#)

[Whistleblowing Policy](#)

[Teachers' Standards](#)



9. APPENDIX ONE



LOW-LEVEL CONCERN FORM

It may be possible that a member of staff, supply staff, volunteer or contractor, acts in a way that does not cause risk to children but is inappropriate. A member of staff who has a concern about another member of staff should use this low-level concern form to share any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ – that an adult may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work.
- Is a cause for concern but does not meet the threshold of harm or is not considered serious enough to refer to the LADO.

You should provide a concise record – including brief context in which the low-level concern arose, and details which are chronological, and as precise and accurate as possible.

Name of staff member:	
Role:	
Details of concern:	
Signed:	
Date and time:	



Action taken (Specify):	
Signed:	
Date and time:	

