



# LOCAL ACADEMY BOARD CODE OF CONDUCT

2023-2024

## Our Vision

'To Love, To Learn, To Serve' sums up the DoWMAT's vision for those who come together to create the MAT, enabling all to flourish both as individuals and in community with each other; living life in all its fullness (John 10:10).

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## Our Values

### To Love

The New Testament sums up the entire law as a call to “love your neighbour as yourself” (Galatians 5:14). The Bible teaches that we are only able to love because God first loved us (1 John 4:10). This love is expected to characterise the way in which the DoWMAT operates, makes decisions, builds relationships, and carries out its day-to-day business: each person putting the needs of others before their own, with a commitment to the flourishing of all. The exposition of love in 1 Corinthians 13 reminds us that love is patient, kind, forgiving, generous, humble, trusting, respectful, hopeful, resilient and enduring. Those who learn and work in the DoWMAT, and all who come into contact with it, can expect to experience that love in the way that they are treated.



### To Learn



The DoWMAT is a Christian learning community that is committed to enabling all to live a life of freedom and transformation as a result of the hope and wisdom that learning brings. Learning is at the heart of the Church of England’s vision for and commitment to education. Growing in wisdom is celebrated in the Bible and all are exhorted to listen, to seek guidance, to acquire knowledge and to learn discretion (Proverbs 1: 1-6), largely through human relationships and interactions. Jesus’ teaching, as summed up in the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-10), describes human beings who are learning to live a life that is characterised by humility, compassion, mercy, righteousness and peace. The learning that takes place within the DoWMAT is expected to be recognisably rooted in these godly characteristics and focused upon enabling the holistic development of people who are made in the image of God.

### To Serve

Service and servant leadership, was a striking feature of the way in which Jesus lived his life. The example he gave to his disciples in washing their feet (John 13:1-17) provides us with a role model for the way in which we should seek to live in community with others. Putting the needs of others before our own, supporting people in their growth and development as holistic human beings, enabling people’s gifts and talents to come to the fore as a result of our service to them are all defining characteristics of the way in which the DoWMAT operates. In serving others and meeting their needs through generosity of spirit, we manifest God’s grace and love for others (1 Peter 4:8-11).



These core values underpin all aspects of our Trust as we strive to make a positive difference to the lives of all DoWMAT pupils whilst they are at school and in later life. Through these values, we can be sure our community is one of hope; a place of transformation and trust, where all are treated with respect and dignity.

**OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONALS | COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS | STRONG SYSTEMS | CONFIDENT LEARNERS**

## STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Diocese of Worcester Multi Academy Trust (DoWMAT) Board is, ultimately, the Trust's accountable body. However, the DoWMAT remains committed to the principle of local governance by local people; recognising and valuing the effort taken by members of the Local Academy Boards (LABs) who support our academies in three key areas:

1. **Guardian of the Vision and Values:** Our DoWMAT Local Academy Boards have an important role to play in upholding the Christian distinctiveness of their academy by ensuring our Christian vision and values underpins all aspects of academy life. In this way, we can be assured that our pupils grow and learn in schools where their individual qualities are nurtured to instil fulfilment, self-worth, the skills to contribute to society and confidence in the future.
2. **Supporting the drive for school improvement:** Our DoWMAT Local Academy Boards play a crucial role in enabling our academies to deliver on their moral purpose; delivering the very best in educational provision for their pupils. By creating safe and stimulating environments, full of engaging learning opportunities, our academy teams will empower all pupils to develop a love of learning and achieve of their best.
3. **A critical friend for financial decisions:** Our DoWMAT Local Academy Boards hold a wealth of knowledge on good financial practice and the importance of making sound, cost effective operational decisions. Our Headteachers value the input and oversight these members are able to offer as they navigate through a challenging financial landscape in the pursuit of high quality, sustainable provision.

This support from our Local Academy Boards makes all the difference to our academy leaders and greatly contributes to ensuring that all DoWMAT pupils attend a successful academy which is providing a good education whilst supporting their holistic well-being.

This Code of Conduct sets out the expectations on, and commitment required, from Local Academy Board members in order for the LAB to make a full contribution to the academy, the Multi Academy Trust and the community. This Code of Conduct will be reviewed by the DoWMAT Board of Directors on a regular basis and should be signed by the Local Academy Board on behalf of its' members at the first meeting of the Autumn term. It is a requirement that each Local Academy Board member fully complies with each of the expectations in this Code of Conduct.

## Roles and Responsibilities

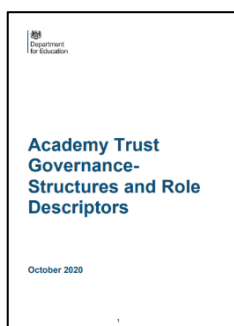
1. **The Local Academy Board is a corporate body, which means:**
  - No Local Academy Board member can act on her/his own without proper authority from the full LAB.
  - All Local Academy Board members carry equal responsibility for decisions made.
  - Although appointed through different routes (i.e. parents, staff, community or foundation), the over-riding concern of all Local Academy Board members has to be the welfare of the academy as a whole.

## 2. The Local Academy Board:

- Works with the Multi Academy Trust to set the visions, ethos and strategic direction of the academy.
- Challenges and supports the academy by monitoring, reviewing and evaluating progress against targets and ensuring good financial management of academy funds.
- Ensures accountability of the Headteacher, and/or the Executive Headteacher if appointed, and staff to the Local Academy Board members and the Multi Academy Trust. In turn, the Local Academy Board is accountable to the staff, parents, local community and the Multi Academy Trust by ensuring they are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate.
- Is responsible for determining, monitoring and keeping under review their own academy policies, plans and procedures within which the academy operates.
- All members of the Local Academy Board will be required to make themselves familiar with academy policies and procedures and with policies adopted by the Trust Board on behalf of all the DoWMAT academies, including the following:
  - Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
  - Health and Safety Policy
  - Whistleblowing Policy
  - Data Protection Policies
  - Disciplinary Procedures
  - Complaints Policy
  - Financial Handbook

Further information on the role of Local Academy Boards can be found on page 22 of *Academy Trust Governance – Structures and Role Descriptors*, which states the following;

*The Academy Trustees will decide what, if any, governance functions they will delegate to LABs. They may set up LABs as wholly advisory bodies. Academy Trustees may choose to vary the extent of delegation over time, for example to reflect a change in capacity at local level. LABs are a full and formal part of the trust governance structure and can:*



- *support the effective operation of the Trust and its policies*
- *provide support and challenge to the local (school level) executive (although trusts must be careful to make sure accountability is clear and not muddled through local reporting to the LAB and CEO)*
- *provide a vehicle for trust board engagement with the school, its parents and local community, to help ensure that the Academy Trustees stay connected. Trusts may choose to bring in people to sit on LABs who provide links to the local community, in addition to parents.*
- *bring issues and risks to the attention of the Trust board. It is important that the board listens and responds to concerns the LABs may raise.*

- *provide constructive feedback to the board where a policy may not be effective in the local context, and suggest alternative approaches*
- *help ensure the trust works as one entity, in the interests of all its schools equally*

*In addition, in academies with a religious character, the members of the LAB will also be required to preserve and develop religious character of their academy*

#### **Actions to be completed by the Local Academy Board on an annual basis:**

- Ensure the Committee structure follows the DoWMAT expectations, as set out in the Composition of the Local Academy Board document for the academy.
- Forward copies of the minutes of each LAB and sub-committee meeting to the Trust Operations team: [Vicky.Rudge@dowmat.education](mailto:Vicky.Rudge@dowmat.education)
- Ensure an appropriate LAB monitoring schedule is put in place and implemented each year.
- Ensure the LAB follows the Terms of Reference as set out by DoWMAT for the academy.
- Ensure academy policies are up to date and that all policies, including the Trust ones followed by the academy are available for parents.
- Ensure academy website is up to date.
- Ensure Governance information on the academy website is up to date.
- Ensure new Local Academy Board members are provided with appropriate training opportunities and suitable induction procedures.
- Monitor the performance of the LAB by reviewing the Key Performance Indicators at the end of each academic year.

**As a member of the Local Academy Board, I accept the following principles and procedures:**

#### **General**

- ✓ I understand the purpose of the Local Academy Board, as set out above.
- ✓ I am aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life: see Appendix. 1.
- ✓ I will work to ensure that Christian distinctiveness is embedded throughout the academy and that my words and behaviour, at all times, reflects the Christian ethos and values of the academy and the Trust.
- ✓ I accept I have no legal authority to act individually and therefore will only speak on behalf of the Local Academy Board when I have been specifically authorised to do so.
- ✓ I have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice and, in so far as I have responsibility for staff, I will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- ✓ I will encourage open government and will act appropriately.

- ✓ I accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Local Academy Board or its delegated agents. This means that I will not speak against majority decisions outside the Local Academy Board meeting.
- ✓ I will not enter into dialogue or express my views on the Trust or any Trust academy on social media, even if not acting in the capacity of a Local Academy Board member of the academy.
- ✓ I will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools and the Multi Academy Trust.
- ✓ I will always be mindful of my responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our academy, and that of the Multi Academy Trust. My actions within the academy and the local community will reflect this.
- ✓ In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the academy, I will follow the procedures established by the Multi Academy Trust.
- ✓ I understand the Governance Structure of the Diocese of Worcester Multi Academy Trust (Appendix 2) and am aware of the functions delegated to the Local Academy Board as outlined in the Trust Scheme of Delegated Authority.

### Commitment

- ✓ I acknowledge that accepting office as a Local Academy Board member involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- ✓ I will each involve myself actively in the work of the Local Academy Board, and accept my fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- ✓ I will ensure I take steps to remain up to date on all my responsibilities as a LAB member; reading relevant DfE / DoWMAT documents on academy governance.
- ✓ I will ensure I take the time to read all Board documents prior to the meeting and to be 'present' during meetings in order to undertake my role effectively and responsibly.
- ✓ If acting as a Local Academy Board member, I will not go beyond my duties or act outside of the powers of authority conveyed on me, and acknowledge that were I to do so, I could be held liable to the academy and/or third parties.
- ✓ I will make full efforts to attend all meetings and, where I cannot attend, explain in advance in full why I am unable to.
- ✓ I will get to know the academy well, participate in the academy community and respond to opportunities to involve myself in activities at the academy.
- ✓ My visits to the academy will be arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the Local Academy Board and agreed with the Headteacher.
- ✓ I will consider seriously my individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- ✓ I am committed to actively supporting and challenging the Headteacher, in a manner which upholds the DoWMAT / academy vision and values.

- ✓ I am committed to working with the Multi Academy Trust to support the academy
- ✓ I accept that in the interests of open government my full name, date of appointment, term of office, roles on the LAB, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interest, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing me will be published on the academy's website
- ✓ In the interests of transparency, I accept that the information relating to Local Academy Board members will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (Edubase).

### Relationships

- ✓ I will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted
- ✓ I will take particular care to ensure that my working relationship with the Headteacher and senior leaders is constructive, supportive and fully reflecting of the academy and Trust's Christian principles
- ✓ I will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other Local Academy Board members
- ✓ I will support the Chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times
- ✓ I am prepared to answer queries from other Local Academy Board members in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed, and I will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved
- ✓ I recognise that the roles of Local Academy Board members, staff members and volunteers in an academy are different. Where I am also a staff member and/or volunteer in school I will maintain the separation of my roles.
- ✓ I will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Headteacher, staff, parents, the Multi Academy Trust, Local Authority and other relevant agencies and the community

### Confidentiality

- ✓ I will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside the academy
- ✓ I will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding academy business arise outside a LAB meeting
- ✓ I will not reveal the details of any LAB vote outside of the Local Academy Board

### Conflicts of Interest

- ✓ I will record any pecuniary or other business interest that I have in connection with the Local Academy Board's business in the Register of Business Interests. I accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the academy's website.
- ✓ I will declare any interests of those related or closely connected to myself on the Register of Pecuniary Interests

- ✓ I will declare any pecuniary interest - or a personal interest which could be perceived as a conflict of interest - in a matter under discussion at a meeting and offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time
- ✓ I will act in the best interests of the academy as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to another Local Academy Board.

### **Breaching the Code of Conduct**

If any Local Academy Board member believes this code has been breached, they must raise the issue with the Chair of the LAB. The Chair will investigate the issue raised and seek to resolve any difficulties or disputes constructively.

Should it be the Chair that we believe has breached this code, the concern will be referred to the Diocese of Worcester Multi Academy Trust for investigation

Where the Chair of the LAB is unable to resolve any difficulties or disputes the matter should be referred to the Diocese of Worcester Multi Academy Trust for investigation. If necessary, a panel consisting of two governors and a representative of the Diocese of Worcester Multi Academy Trust should be convened to review the concerns raised.

The aim of the hearing, which needs to be held in private, will always be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation. However, where the breach of this code of practice is deemed to be of a serious nature or injurious to the reputation of the academy and/or the Trust, discussions may lead to consideration of suspension or in some circumstances a recommendation from the Board of Directors for removal from the LAB.



**Local Academy Board Agreement – to be reviewed at the first full LAB meeting of the Autumn term.**

The Local Academy Board of \_\_\_\_\_academy adopted this code of practice on \_\_\_\_\_ *date*. (It is recommended that Local Academy Board members review and adopt the Code of Conduct at the first Local Academy Board meeting of each academy year).

Undertaking: As a member of the Local Academy Board:

- ✓ I will always have the well-being of the children and the reputation of the academy at heart.
- ✓ I will do all I can to be an ambassador for the academy, publicly supporting its aims, values and Christian ethos.
- ✓ I will never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the academy, the local academy board, the Multi Academy Trust, the Headteacher or staff.

Signed ..... (Chair of the Local Academy Board)

Printed name .....

Date: .....

## Appendix 1

### The Seven Principles of Public Life

(Originally published by the Nolan Committee: The Committee on Standards in Public Life, to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life)

**Selflessness:** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

**Integrity:** Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

**Objectivity:** In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

**Accountability:** Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

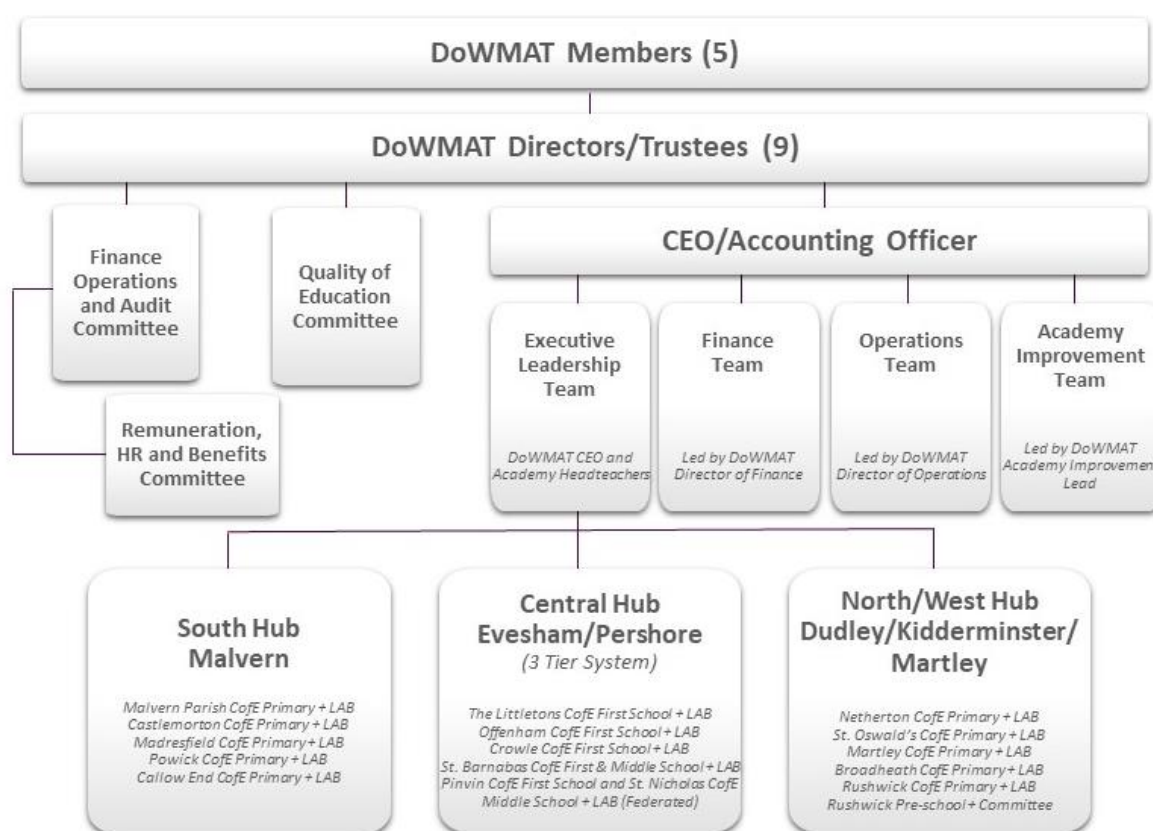
**Openness:** Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

**Honesty:** Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

**Leadership:** Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

## Appendix 2

### DoWMAT Governance from September 2023



### DoWMAT Members

1. Worcester Diocesan Academy Trust (Corporate member)
2. Bryan Allbut
3. Hugh Richards (Chair of the Directors / Trustees)
4. Margaret James
5. Rev Ruth Walker

### Board of Directors/Trustees

1. Hugh Richards (Chair)
2. Phil Mitchell (Vice Chair)
3. Tim Reid
4. Claire Davies (CEO)
5. Alan Soper
6. Sam Porter
7. Chris Stephens
8. Nigel Petrie
9. Vacancy

Ref: CD/September 2023