



**WEST LAKES**  
MULTI ACADEMY  
TRUST

**BRIBERY  
POLICY**

## DOCUMENT CONTROL

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## **INTRODUCTION**

West Lakes Multi Academy Trust (the Trust) is committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and integrity in its business activities in the UK. This policy outlines the Trust's position on preventing and prohibiting bribery, in accordance with the Bribery Act 2010. The Trust will not tolerate any form of bribery by, or of, its employees, agents or consultants or any person or body acting on its behalf. The Trustees are committed to implementing effective measures to prevent, monitor and eliminate bribery.

## **SCOPE OF THIS POLICY**

This policy applies to all employees and officers of the Trust, and to temporary workers, consultants, contractors, agents and subsidiaries acting for, or on behalf of, the Trust ("associated persons") within the UK and overseas. Every employee and associated person acting for, or on behalf of, the Trust is responsible for maintaining the highest standards of business conduct. Any breach of this policy is likely to constitute a serious disciplinary, contractual and criminal matter for the individual concerned and may cause serious damage to the reputation and standing of the Trust.

The Trust may also face criminal liability for unlawful actions taken by its employees or associated persons under the Bribery Act 2010. All employees and associated persons are required to familiarise themselves and comply with this policy, including any future updates that may be issued from time to time by the Trust.

The Bribery Act 2010 has been in force since 1 July 2011. This policy covers:

- the main areas of liability under the Bribery Act 2010;
- the responsibilities of employees and associated persons acting for, or on behalf of the Trust; and
- the consequences of any breaches of this policy.

## **BRIBERY ACT 2010**

The Trust is committed to complying with the Bribery Act 2010 in its business activities in the UK and overseas.

Under the Bribery Act 2010, a bribe is a financial or other type of advantage that is offered or requested with the:

- intention of inducing or rewarding improper performance of a function or activity; or
- knowledge or belief that accepting such a reward would constitute the improper performance of such a function or activity.

A relevant function or activity includes public, state or business activities or any activity performed in the course of a person's employment, or on behalf of another organisation, or individual, where the person performing that activity is expected to perform it in good faith, impartially, or in accordance with a position of trust.

A criminal offence will be committed under the Bribery Act 2010 if:

- an employee or associated person acting for, or on behalf of, the Trust offers, promises, gives, requests, receives or agrees to receive bribes; or
- an employee or associated person acting for, or on behalf of, the Trust offers, promises or gives a bribe to a foreign public official with the intention of influencing that official in the performance of his/her duties (where local law does not permit or require such influence); and
- the Trust does not have the defence that it has adequate procedures in place to prevent bribery by its employees or associated persons.

All employees and associated persons are required to comply with this policy, in accordance with the Bribery Act 2010.

### **WHAT IS PROHIBITED?**

The Trust prohibits employees or associated persons from offering, promising, giving, soliciting or accepting any bribe. The bribe might be cash, a gift or other inducement to, or from, any person business or organisation, whether a public or government official, official of a state-controlled industry, political party or a private person, regardless of whether the employee or associated person is situated in the UK or overseas. The bribe might be made to ensure that a person or business or organisation improperly performs duties or functions (for example, by not acting impartially or in good faith or in accordance with their position of trust) to gain any commercial, contractual or regulatory advantage for the Trust in either obtaining or maintaining Trust business, or to gain any personal advantage, financial or otherwise, for the individual or anyone connected with the individual.

This prohibition also applies to indirect contributions, payments or gifts made in any manner as an inducement or reward for improper performance, for example through consultants, contractors or sub-contractors, agents or sub-agents, sponsors or sub-sponsors, joint-venture partners, advisors, customers, suppliers or other third parties.

### **RECORDS**

Employees and, where applicable, associated persons, are required to take particular care to ensure that all Trust records are accurately maintained in relation to any contracts or business activities, including financial invoices and all payment transactions with clients, suppliers and public officials.

Due diligence should be undertaken by employees and associated persons prior to entering into any contract, arrangement or relationship with a potential supplier of services, agent, consultant or representative.

Employees and associated persons are required to keep accurate, detailed and up-to-date records of all corporate hospitality, entertainment or gifts accepted or offered.

## **FACILITATION PAYMENTS**

### Principle

The Trust prohibits its employees, or associated persons, from making or accepting any facilitation payments. These are payments made to government officials for carrying out or speeding up routine procedures. They are more common overseas. Facilitation payments are distinct from an official, publicly available fast-track process. Facilitation payments, or offers of such payments, will constitute a criminal offence by both the individual concerned and the Trust under the Bribery Act 2010, even where such payments are made or requested overseas. Employees and associated persons are required to act with greater vigilance when dealing with government procedures overseas.

### Procedure

Where a public official has requested a payment, employees or associated persons should ask for further details of the purpose and nature of the payment in writing. If the public official refuses to give these, this should be reported immediately to the appropriate Academy Leadership team.

If the public official provides written details, the Chief Operating Officer will consider the nature of the payment. Legal advice may be sought by the Trust.

If it is concluded that the payment is a legitimate fee, for example part of a genuine fast-track process, or is permitted locally, the Trust will authorise the employee to make the payment.

Where the Chief Operating Officer considers that the request is for a facilitation payment, the employee or associated person will be instructed to refuse to make the payment and notify the public official that the employee or associated person is required to report the matter to the Trust and the UK authorities.

The Trust will seek the assistance of the relevant employee in its investigation and may determine that the matter should be referred to the prosecution authorities.

If an employee or associated person has any other concerns about the nature of a request for payment, he/she should report it to the Chief Executive Officer using the reporting procedure set out in this policy and in accordance with the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy.

## **CORPORATE ENTERTAINMENT, GIFTS, HOSPITALITY AND PROMOTIONAL EXPENDITURE**

### Principle

The Trust permits corporate entertainment, gifts, hospitality and promotional expenditure that is undertaken:

- for the purpose of establishing or maintaining good business relationships;
- to improve the image and reputation of the Trust; or
- to present the Trust effectively;

provided that it is:

- arranged in good faith, and

- not offered, promised or accepted to secure an advantage for the Trust or any of its employees or associated persons or to influence the impartiality of the recipient.

The Trust will authorise only reasonable, appropriate and proportionate entertainment and promotional expenditure.

This principle applies to employees and associated persons.

### Procedure

Employees and, where relevant, associated persons should submit requests for proposed hospitality and promotional expenditure well in advance of proposed dates to the Chief Operating Officer.

Employees are required to set out in writing:

- the objective of the proposed client entertainment or expenditure;
- the identity of those who will be attending;
- the organisation that they represent; and
- details and rationale of the proposed activity.

The Trust will approve business entertainment proposals only if they demonstrate a clear business objective and are appropriate for the nature of the business relationship. The Trust will not approve business entertainment where it considers that a conflict of interest may arise or where it could be perceived that undue influence or a particular business benefit was being sought (for example, prior to a tendering exercise).

Any gifts, rewards or entertainment received or offered from clients, public officials, suppliers or other business contacts should be reported immediately to a member of the Academy Leadership. In certain circumstances, it may not be appropriate to retain such gifts or be provided with the entertainment and employees and associated persons may be asked to return the gifts to the sender or refuse the entertainment, for example, where there could be a real or perceived conflict of interest. As a general rule, small tokens of appreciation, such as flowers or a low value gift, may be retained by employees. The Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality Policy should be read in conjunction with this guidance and must be adhered to.

If an employee or associated person wishes to provide gifts to suppliers, clients or other business contacts, prior written approval from the Chief Operating Officer is required, together with details of the intended recipients, reasons for the gift and business objective. These will be authorised only in limited circumstances.

Employees and, where applicable, associated persons must supply records and receipts.

### Charitable and political donations

The Trust considers that charitable giving can form part of its wider commitment and responsibility to the community. The Trust supports a number of charities that are selected in accordance with objective criteria, following a risk assessment. The Trust may also support fundraising events involving employees.

### What practices are permitted?

This policy does not prohibit:

- normal and appropriate hospitality and entertainment with clients (please see the Trust's Staff Benefits and Expenses Policy); and
- the use of any recognised fast-track process that is publicly available on payment of a fee.

Any such practices must be proportionate, reasonable and made in good faith. Clear records must be kept.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

### Principle

The Trust has established detailed risk management procedures to prevent, detect and prohibit bribery. The Trust will conduct risk assessments for each of its key business activities on a regular basis and, where relevant, will identify employees or officers of the Trust who are in positions where they may be exposed to bribery.

### Procedure

The Trust will identify high-risk areas, for example tenders for work and those working on high-value projects. The Trust will:

- regularly monitor "at risk" employees and associated persons;
- regularly communicate with "at risk" employees and associated persons;
- undertake extensive due diligence of third parties and associated persons; and
- communicate its zero-tolerance approach to bribery to third parties, including actual and prospective customers, suppliers and joint-venture partners.

## **REPORTING SUSPECTED BRIBERY**

### Principle

The Trust depends on its employees and associated persons to ensure that the highest standards of ethical conduct are maintained in all its business dealings. Employees and associated persons are requested to assist the Trust and to remain vigilant in preventing, detecting and reporting bribery.

Employees and associated persons are encouraged to report any concerns that they may have to the Chief Operating Officer as soon as possible. Issues that should be reported include:

- any suspected or actual attempts at bribery;
- concerns that other employees or associated persons may be being bribed; or
- concerns that other employees or associated persons may be bribing third parties, such as clients or government officials.

### Procedure

Any incidents of suspected bribery should be reported as soon as possible in writing to the Chief Operating Officer. Any such reports will be thoroughly and promptly investigated by a senior member of staff appointed by the Chief Executive Officer in the strictest confidence.

Employees and associated persons will be required to assist in any investigation into possible or suspected bribery.

Employees are also required to comply with the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy.

Employees or associated persons who report instances of bribery in good faith will be supported by the Trust. The Trust will ensure that the individual is not subjected to detrimental treatment as a consequence of his/her report. Any instances of detrimental treatment by a fellow employee because an employee has made a report will be treated as a disciplinary offence. An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, employees and associated persons should not agree to remain silent. They should report the matter to their line manager in the first instance

### **ACTION BY WEST LAKES MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**

The Trust will fully investigate any instances of alleged or suspected bribery. Employees suspected of bribery may be suspended from their duties while the investigation is being carried out. The Trust will invoke its disciplinary procedures where any employee is suspected of bribery, and proven allegations may result in a finding of gross misconduct and immediate dismissal. The Trust may terminate the contracts of any associated persons, including consultants or other workers who act for, or on behalf of, the Trust who are found to have breached this policy.

The Trust may also report any matter to the relevant authorities, including the Director of Public Prosecutions, Serious Fraud Office, Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office and the police. The Trust will provide all necessary assistance to the relevant authorities in any subsequent prosecution.

### **REVIEW OF PROCEDURES AND TRAINING**

The Trust will regularly communicate its anti-bribery measures to employees and associated persons. The Trust will set up training sessions where applicable. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

The Chief Operating Officer will monitor and review the implementation of this policy and related procedures on a regular basis, including reviews of internal financial systems, expenses, corporate hospitality, gifts and entertainment policies.

Employees and those working for, or on behalf of, the Trust are encouraged to contact Academy Leadership with any suggestions, comments or feedback that they may have on how these procedures may be improved.

The Trust reserves the right to amend and update this policy as required. For the avoidance of doubt, this policy does not form part of employees' contracts of employment.

### **LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES**

Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality Policy  
Staff Code of Conduct  
Trustee, Governor and Employee Benefits and Expenses Policy  
Whistle Blowing Policy