

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

1. INTRODUCTION

It is the Trust's policy to ensure that any spend of Public money regardless of value is carried out in a transparent and non-discriminatory way and in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations and Bribery Act.

The Trust Scheme of Delegated Authority outlines who has authority to select contractors and award contracts and/or raise orders. Failure to comply with either this Procurement Policy, the Trust Financial Handbook or Scheme of Delegated Authority may result in withdrawal of authority and / or disciplinary action.

As a publicly funded organisation, the Trust and its academies are 'Contracting Authorities'. Subsequently any procurement activity is regulated by the UK Public Contracts Regulations and EU procurement law. In particular, any procurement activity has to be carried out in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner.

This policy sets out how the Trust will manage procurement to ensure compliance with relevant legislation. Failure to comply with this policy and/or follow guidance could result in a breach of legislation, fines and litigation, claims for damages and loss of reputation.

2. WHAT IS PROCUREMENT?

Procurement is the process whereby goods, services and works are acquired. The procurement process spans a life cycle from identification of need and resources, through selection of suppliers, purchasing, contract management and disposal. Purchasing is the transactional process of buying the goods/services and is just one part of procurement.

Procurement or purchasing may be undertaken by Trust and Academy staff **only** in accordance with the Scheme of Delegated Authority and thresholds referred to in this Policy.

3. PURPOSE OF THE PROCUREMENT POLICY

The purpose of this document is to make Trust procurement and purchasing clear and signpost staff undertaking procurement activity to appropriate procedural guidance.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- The Trust's Financial Handbook
- The Scheme of Delegated Authority
- The Academies Financial Handbook

The Trust Procurement Policy is applicable to all purchasing activity regardless of value and should be followed by all staff involved in purchasing whether centrally or academy based.

All procurement within the Trust and academies shall be carried out in such a way to ensure compliance with legal requirements, including, the 2015 Public Contracts Regulations, EU Procurement legislation, Trust financial regulations and Scheme of Delegated Authority and any other requirements of the DfE or ESFA.

This policy is intended to reflect and support the aims of the Trust by working with staff and suppliers to optimise value for money in the procurement of works, goods and services. It aims to balance efficiency against risk factors in achieving value for money whilst promoting compliance and sustainability.

The Director of Operations and Director of Finance will work with academies and other members of the Central Team by providing professional support in obtaining works, goods and/or services which are best suited to any application in a manner which is compliant with current legislation and best practice. Alternatively, where academies are making independent purchases the Director of Operations and Director of Finance will provide a framework and procurement guides which academy staff must follow. The Procurement Policy and associated procurement procedure guides/templates will be reviewed at least every three years or whenever required by a change in legislation.

There is a duty on all staff who may be involved in any stage of the procurement process to apply the key principles of best practice procurement to achieve appropriate governance, Value for Money and suitable quality of goods and services to meet our business needs.

4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

When purchasing and contracting for goods and services, the Trust and its academies must demonstrate compliance with procurement legislation and the proper and effective use of public funds at all times. Procedures should also ensure that the goods, services and works procured are for the correct quantity and quality, arrive on time and achieve best value. The following general principles must therefore be adhered to:

- Transparency and Non-Discrimination, in all purchasing activity the Trust must ensure that all contractors, suppliers and service providers are treated equally and without discrimination and must act in a transparent and proportionate manner. Procurement procedures must not be undertaken in a manner which artificially narrows competition, favours or disadvantages any contractor, supplier or service provider.
- Probity; it must be demonstrable that all parties are dealt with on a fair and equitable basis and that there is no private gain, favouritism or corruption involved in any dealings of the Trust.
- Accountability; the Trust is publicly accountable for its expenditure and for the conduct of its affairs.
- Value for Money; the achievement of value for money underpins the appropriate use of all public funds, therefore as well as striving to achieve the best price possible for all purchases,

consideration should also be given to other factors such as quality, suitability, availability, reliability of the supplier, terms available etc.

- General Data Protection Regulations; all procurement must be in line with guidance set out in the Information Governance Policy, particularly in relation to data processing and data sharing. Any proposed activity involving data processing and data sharing must be referred to the Trust Data Protection Officer via a Data Protection Impact Assessment prior to procurement.

5. VALUE FOR MONEY/AGGREGATION

Value for money is the optimum combination of whole life cost and quality (or fitness for purpose) to meet the user's requirement. This is rarely possible with the lowest price alone. To ensure that all purchases obtain optimum Value for Money, a range of procurement procedure guides and templates outlining the steps to be taken for varying levels of procurement are available. All purchases must be made in accordance with these guides, except in exceptional circumstances where a dispensation may be granted.

Purchases over £20,000 will require pre-approval from the Director of Operations or Director of Finance and must be reviewed by the Central Team before an official order is raised to the supplier. In these cases, early involvement is recommended to ensure expectations are clear and timelines are achievable.

Unless below the threshold for obtaining multiple quotations or tenders, all procurement of goods, works, services or consultancy should be acquired by effective competition. Competition promotes efficiency and effectiveness in expenditure. Awarding contracts on the basis of value for money following competition contributes to the competitiveness of supplies.

The Trust has a duty to comply with the requirements of EU Procurement Legislation and Academy Funding Agreements. In order to do so the Central Team will review all proposed purchases over £10,000 in the context of total Trust expenditure to come to a decision whether the potential requirement to aggregate is complementary or contrary to the requirement to show Value for Money.

The Director of Operations and Director of Finance will review Academy budgets and Improvement plans and where appropriate will consult with Academies on the potential to develop a range of Trust wide or regional contracts in order to comply with the requirements around aggregation and value for money.

6. FINANCIAL AUTHORITY TO COMMIT EXPENDITURE

Any process which involves committing the Trust or an Academy to expenditure must be approved in accordance with the scheme of delegation and authorisation limits as detailed in the Trust Financial Handbook.

Any member of staff placing a purchase order on behalf of the Trust or an Academy must be sure that they have the correct level of authority to do so in accordance with the scheme of delegation and where required must obtain approval from a more senior member of staff with a higher approval limit if necessary.

The Trust operates a system of devolved financial authority under which Headteachers are responsible for the decision making process and planning of certain purchasing decisions. In accordance with this Procurement Policy, for purchases below £10,000 the Director of Operations and Director of Finance may provide technical and professional support if requested. However where the value of purchases exceed £50,000, the Director of Operations and Director of Finance will manage the process on behalf of an Academy. In these cases, an Academy is still responsible for specifying requirements, evaluation criteria and committing funding.

No member of staff may approve purchases unless they have been given authority within the scheme of delegation or authority limits as detailed in the Trust Financial Handbook..

No employee is authorised to commit the Trust or an Academy to expenditure without first ensuring that there is adequate budget provision.

Schemes of work should not be artificially broken down into smaller orders to phase the issue of purchase orders and thereby circumvent either authorisation levels or the requirement to obtain further quotes/tenders.

7. PURCHASING THRESHOLDS

There are two types of threshold governing the procurement for the Trust and Academies. Firstly; authority to commit expenditure, which is covered in the scheme of delegation and, secondly, the procurement process which is governed by the anticipated lifecycle cost of the procurement.

- Below £2,500 – ensure that purchase is in line with Best Value
- £2,500 - £49,999 – three written quotations from suitable suppliers/contractors
- £50,000 - £181,302 – advertise on contracts finder website and invite a minimum of three tenders following advertisement unless an appropriate framework may be used
- Over £181,302 EU compliant tender procedure or use of EU compliant framework

Where the Central Team are managing a procurement process on behalf of an Academy, orders will not be raised without approval from the budget holder in accordance with the scheme of delegation.

Occasionally, there may be a recommendation to award a contract to or place an order with an organisation which has not submitted the lowest priced bid. If this is the case because the scheme has

been evaluated using the Most Economically Advantageous method (MEAT), then this is acceptable without further action, provided that the evaluation scores are recorded and retained on file. However, if this is for any other reason approval must be sought before confirming award or raising an order in accordance with the scheme of delegation.

8. DISPENSATIONS

In limited circumstances, a dispensation from the requirement to obtain alternative quotes may be granted. This may include authority to solicit a single quotation, to award a contract or place an order without having obtained the requisite number of tenders or quotations or to directly award a contract.

All dispensations require prior approval from the Director of Operations and Director of Finance before progressing and must not result in a breach of procurement legislation or be contrary to the Trust Scheme of Delegation.

All dispensation requests, whether approved or rejected will be reported to the Trust Finance and Audit Committee. Staff may be called upon to attend the committee meeting to explain the reasons for requesting a dispensation.

Dispensations from the requirement for competitive quotations / tenders must not be used to avoid competition, or for administrative convenience, or to award fresh / further work to a supplier originally appointed through a competitive procedure.

All dispensations will be subject to obtaining and documenting appropriate evidence for single quotation / tender action, obtaining authorisation for such action in accordance with the approved Scheme of Delegation and never breaching current Public Contract Regulations or the relevant OJEU thresholds.

Subject to approval as outlined in the Trust scheme of delegation, dispensations may be granted for the following reasons:

- Unforeseen emergency requirement
- The goods or services are only available from one source and there is no possibility of the Trust's requirements being met in any other way
- An extension is required to a current contract in order to allow sufficient time to complete a competitive tendering exercise (but failure to have planned the re-procurement would not be justification for a single tender)
- Where the seeking of tenders and subsequent contract award could cause significant operational difficulties and where any potential savings would be outweighed by those operational issues (which along with a VFM analysis must be documented) and only for use in

circumstances to be approved in accordance with the scheme of delegation, under the specific advice of the Operations Director in terms of compliance with the EU and UK legislation and subject to approval by the Chief Executive and subsequently reported to the Trust Finance and Audit Committee.

9. RAISING ORDERS

All orders must be raised using the Trust finance system in accordance with the rules and procedures stated in the Trust Financial Handbook.

No orders shall be placed, or contracts altered or extended, with the intention of avoiding the relevant thresholds applicable within these Financial Regulations. In the event that the terms of any purchase order or contract have to be amended, an official variation order must be approved in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation and issued by the Academy Finance Team/Central Team as appropriate.

10. PURCHASING CARDS

The Trust recognises the benefits of purchasing cards as an alternative means of paying for goods and services. The advantages include reduced paperwork, reduced administration time and costs, opportunity to make online purchases and seek discounts from suppliers on the basis that they receive immediate payment.

Purchasing cards are particularly suitable for high volume, low value purchases, booking off site visits and for site staff to order building materials etc.

Use of these cards must be as set out in the Trust Financial Handbook.

11. CONTRACTING NEW SYSTEMS AND SERVICES

When the need for a new system and/or service is identified, either by an academy or centrally, the following must apply:

- A clearly defined rationale for commissioning a new system or service is shared with the Director of Operations – includes proposal, estimated cost, benefit and desired outcomes.
- If the new system or service involves the sharing, processing or storage of data then a Data Protection Impact Assessment is completed and submitted to the Trust's Data Protection Officer and Director of Operations.
- If the decision is to proceed with the procurement, the Central Team will conduct the process in line with this policy and Scheme of Delegated Authority.

- As part of due diligence, a Request for Quotation will be available to prospective bidders setting out the specification, timeline, evaluation criteria and conditions of the award. The Request for Quotation also includes a requirement for bidders to submit policies and procedures relating to Data Protection and Health and Safety, method statements on data security, data sharing and data processing, and a Freedom of Information Disclosure Notice.
- Any contract that involves the sharing and/or processing of data will only be let on the receipt of a Data Sharing and/or Data Processing Agreement.

Any agreement, contract or lease with a supplier must be authorised by either the Chief Executive Officer, Director of Operations and Director of Finance. This does not include general orders for goods and services.

All IT purchases must involve the Director of Operations.

A signature on an agreement or contract, or even an email response indicates that the Trust or Academy accepts the suppliers Terms and Conditions which may not be favourable and/or in line with this policy.

12. PAYMENT AND PAYMENT TERMS

Unless a Purchasing card has been used to make a payment, all invoices from suppliers should be entered on to the Trust finance system once approved and then paid by BACS. All other forms of payment are excluded.

The Trusts standard payment terms are 30 days following receipt of a correct invoice, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed at purchase order stage.

Where purchases are made using established frameworks, the payment and other terms and conditions are likely to be those of the framework. Before purchasing from any framework, it should be confirmed that it is permissible for the Trust or an Academy to use the framework and where required an appropriate access agreement has been approved by the Director of Operations and Director of Finance

Payment should only be made on receipt of goods. Where services are being procured then payment for work in progress or agreed interim stages may be appropriate in accordance with the approved guidance.

13. AGGREGATION

EU legislation sets out how and when multiple orders and contract values for the same type of work should be added together for the purposes of deciding what procurement process is applicable.

As Academies manage their own budgets and certain purchasing independently, you must seek advice and support of the Director of Operations and Director of Finance on the procurement of goods and services in order to avoid aggregation of expenditure across the Trust.

The Director of Finance will monitor expenditure on goods and services centrally to ensure that aggregation within a twelve-month cycle is avoided or a central procurement process is initiated.

In appropriate circumstances the Director of Operations and Director of Finance may identify opportunities to establish regional or corporate contracts on behalf of Academies.

14. TENDERS

Any expenditure over £50,000 must be subject to tendering in accordance with the Trust Financial Handbook and UK Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and if the anticipated value is over the current threshold then also in accordance with EU procurement legislation.

All tendering must be undertaken in conjunction with the Central Team.

They will select and manage the most appropriate procurement process in accordance with the anticipated value, any potential aggregation and Trust tendering guidelines which are compliant with current procurement legislation and General Data Protection Regulations.

Tendering procedures may take up to six months depending on lifecycle cost and compliance with legislation, failure to programme sufficient time for procurement will not be a reason to grant a dispensation.

All current and future tenders are advertised using the Trust website or alternative more appropriate means if necessary or legally required. It is the responsibility of the Central Team to carry out tenders for Goods, Services and Works on behalf of the Trust and Academies.

Any post tender bid clarification with suppliers will be led by the Central Team.

Any communication with the suppliers involved in the tender process will be facilitated by the Central Team.

15. STANDARDS OF BUSINESS CONDUCT

In limited circumstances, with the approval of the Chief Executive Officer, the Director of Operations or Director of Finance may directly award certain contracts without the need to conduct a competitive process, provided that all such instances are compliant with EU and UK procurement legislation and the circumstances are subsequently reported to the Trust Finance and Audit Committee or Trust Board with a record of the justification for the direct award.

16. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

For contracts above £20,000 (excluding VAT) the decision and criteria should be reported to the Trust Finance and Audit Committee.

For all contracts in excess of £20,000 (excluding VAT) a report shall be prepared for the Board of Trustees, highlighting the relevant issues and recommending a decision.

All contracts whose value is over £20,000 (excluding VAT) must be authorised by the Board of Trustees. In cases where, due to the timing of the Board meetings, this would not be practicable and any undue delay would cause significant operational issues, the Chief Executive Officer acting jointly with the Chair or Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees may accept a tender in excess of £20,000 but this must be reported to the next meeting of the Board of Trustees.

The Central Team is required to complete a tender report for all tenders in accordance with EU procurement legislation.

17. CONTRACTS REGISTER

The Central Team will maintain a contracts register detailing all procurement activity undertaken, which records all related documentation, details of the successful bidder, price, duration of contract and the procurement process followed.

18. EQUAL TREATMENT OF SUPPLIERS

One of the key principles of procurement legislation is that all suppliers are treated equally in any competitive process regardless of value. They should have the same availability of access to specifications, plans, Trust staff time, facilities etc.

Evaluation criteria should be decided in advance and made available in full to suppliers via the Pre Tender Questionnaire to show they will be treated fairly.

All bidders are entitled to be debriefed at the end of a process and informed of the successful bidder.

Any discussions and or correspondence prior to the conclusion of procurements should be on a “without commitment” basis and this phrase should be clearly stated on any such correspondence. The contract offer or purchase order should be the only point at which commitment is made.

19. THE BRIBERY ACT 2010

All staff should also be aware of The Bribery Act 2010, which came into force in April 2011. The Trust, its employees and contractors/bidders are all covered by the Act.

20. INFORMATION SECURITY

All procurement and purchasing that requires a supplier or third party to access to the Trust or Academy information systems as part of the service they provide must be referred to the Trust Data Protection Officer at the requisition stage.

Academies commissioning maintenance and support contracts where access is required must ensure that prior the contracts are referred to the Trust Data Protection Officer for signature.

In the event of the contract being transferred or terminated appropriate provisions must be in place to ensure the continued security to information and systems. Suppliers and third parties will be asked where appropriate to demonstrate their compliance with the policies.

21. LEASES

The Trust cannot enter into a finance lease as this is classed as a form of borrowing and in contravention of the requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook.

All operating leases must be referred to the Director of Operations and Director of Finance in relation to IT procurement, and authorised by the Chief Executive Officer.

22. HEALTH AND SAFETY

When procuring any goods, services or works employees must ensure that checks are made to confirm that suppliers are suitably experienced and qualified to undertake the work required.

Where building or maintenance works is planned, suitable risk assessments and/or method statements must be in place and if required Trust approval must be sought

All services, supply and works procured by the Trust must comply with the relevant UK and European health and safety legislation in force at the time the items are procured.

Where required by legislation, products (including used or refurbished products) must comply with the relevant UK and European Laws on the design, supply and operation of products.

23. SEPARATION OF DUTIES

There are a number of processes in purchasing goods and services etc. There must be adequate separation of duties to ensure that the process of ordering goods, services and works, checking receipt/completion and authorising payment is not the responsibility of one person. In some smaller academies this may be difficult; however, in all cases the appropriate guidance must be followed.

Where the Central Team undertake tendering exercises, either on behalf of an Academy or for the Trust, the receipt and custody of tenders prior to opening must be separated from the specification, selection and evaluation. Contract awards subject to tendering will be subject to approval of the procurement procedure undertaken and in accordance with the scheme of delegation.

24. TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

All travel and accommodation should be purchased in accordance with the Trust Expenses Policy and the cost claimed back through the staff expenses procedure.

25. DISPOSAL OF REDUNDANT EQUIPMENT

Wherever possible where equipment is no longer required by an Academy or the Trust, alternative internal uses should be sought, however where this is not possible or there is no interest then it is permissible to dispose of by sale to suppliers or the general public.

In all cases where disposal is proposed this must be carried out with the approval of either the Director of Operations and Director of Finance.

Any proposed disposal/sale must comply with the current Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations.

26. MONITORING AND AUDIT

The Trust and Academies are subject to scrutiny by internal and external auditors as well as the EFA and other government departments/organisations. It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the purchasing process to ensure that they compliant with current policies, procedures, guidance and legislation.

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