



MAT CHARGING AND APPEALS POLICY 2022-2026

MAT Board Approval:

May 2022

Next Review:

Summer 2026

Member of Staff Responsible:

Mrs Claire Davies

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).



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

- 1.1. This policy sets out the approach taken by the Diocese of Worcester Multi Academy Trust (DoWMAT) in respect of the above and will apply to all schools in the Trust as at 1st March 2018 and all those that join the Trust after this date.
- 1.2. An appeals mechanism is described within this policy document for academies that may feel they have been treated unfairly by the funding allocation process.

2. TRUST FUNDING FROM SCHOOLS

- 2.1. Each year the Trust will retain 5% of the GAG funding for each constituent school. For clarity, this **excludes** the funding each school receives in respect of:
 - Pupil Premium funding
 - PE Sport grants
 - Nursery funding
 - Funding for Universal Infant Free School Meals
 - Summer School Funding
 - Other Non-GAG Government funding
 - Top-up funding for special education needs (SEN) or additional education need (AEN) in mainstream academies
 - Other income generated by individual schools
- 2.2. The Trust will give consideration to the funding needs and allocation of each constituent school during the budget setting process.
- 2.3. A statement will be issued to each DoWMAT academy no later than 31st August for the next financial year, detailing the annual agreed budget for the school and any funds to be retained by the Trust. The academies will have a period of 10 working days to appeal, should there be any disagreement or should the academy feel unfairly treated. Please see section 7 of this policy.
- 2.4. The cost of conversion to academy status is covered by the conversion grant but if this figure is exceeded, the additional cost will be covered by the school.

3. USE OF CENTRAL FUNDS

- 3.1. The 5% retained by the Trust will be used to fund the following expenditure on behalf of the schools within DoWMAT:
 - Provision of Trust Members for the DOWMAT
 - Provision of Directors/Trustees for the DOWMAT

- Trust salaries including CEO (Accounting Officer), Finance Director (Chief Financial Officer – CFO), Operations Director, Data Protection Officer, Central Finance Team, Academy Improvement Lead, Company Secretary and Central Administration
- Basic telephone and e-mail advice and support as required
- Annual DoWMAT Headteacher conference or equivalent
- Facilitated academy to academy collaborative networks
- Access to and information on education resources via electronic mailings and the DoWMAT website
- Access to new Headteacher Induction / mentoring support
- Strong Trust relationships with the LA, Department for Education (DfE), Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) at a strategic DoWMAT level
- Strong Trust relationships with the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) and Diocesan Board of Education (DBE)
- Succession planning / talent management
- Risk management at a Trust level
- Support through the Ofsted process
- Crisis Management Support / Bereavement Support
- Support with negotiations with the Local Authority (LA) on all individual academy matters
- Negotiations with the LA on academy matters at a strategic DoWMAT level
- Provision of Company Secretary

3.2. School Improvement

- Support and challenge through half termly academy effectiveness visits
- Headteacher's Performance Management undertaken by the CEO and Academy Improvement Lead
- Build capacity within individual academies and between academies
- Develop self-sustaining academy improvement
- Facilitate system leadership
- Develop strategies for succession planning and talent management
- Work in partnership with existing centres of educational excellence
- Share best practice, research and evidence
- Provide quality assured professionals to act as trusted partners
- Undertake Academy Improvement Reviews, as required
- 3.2 Finance
- Strategic finance support from a central finance function
- Support for all financial, back office and business functions
- Provision of financial handbook, policy setting and liaison with the ESFA
- Bespoke financial package
- Annual finance software licence for the first year
- Training and support for all academy Business managers
- Advice with regard to budget setting
- Support for 1 – 3 year budget preparation and management
- Budget monitoring / bi-annual budget meetings with the Headteacher and DoWMAT Finance Director

- Procurement, best value and contract negotiation
- Support with applications for additional grants and funding opportunities
- Management of all month end procedures and submissions e.g. VAT returns
- Support with the preparation of monthly management accounts
- Administration of the Teachers' Pension Scheme and Local Government Pension Scheme including annual certificates and audit administration
- Preparation and audit of annual accounts
- Regularity audit
- Preparation and submission of the SORP - charity accounts
- Completion and submission of all reports required by DfE and EFA
- Ensure compliance to the academies handbook and accounts direction
- School business management forum

3.3. Human Resources / Staffing / Payroll

- Strategic HR advice
- Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher recruitment (led by the Trust)
- CEO attendance at Headteacher's Performance Management
- Negotiations with Unions
- CPD/training opportunities for Local Academy Board members and staff
- Review of HR practice and disseminating best practice
- Advice and support to Headteachers and Local Academy Boards so they can carry out their responsibilities
- Access to specialist HR legal advisers
- Support with day to day HR queries
- Payroll and pension queries
- Staff contracts
- Support with any necessary staff re-structuring
- Support with staffing recruitment processes including attendance at interviews, if desired
- Staff performance management / professional reviews
- Guidance on maternity / paternity leave
- Supporting return to work initiatives
- Allegations against staff
- Whistleblowing
- Managing disputes / capability / redundancies

3.4. Safeguarding

- A model Safeguarding / Child Protection policy which is updated at least annually in line with current legislation
- Regular trust-led safeguarding checks
- Advice and guidance on the Single Central Register
- Access to a subsidised Safeguarding SLA through the LA
- Advice with managing personnel records

3.5. Health and Safety

- Up to date policy documentation through the development and co-ordination of common policy and the sharing of best practice
- Advice on occupational health
- Advice on welfare and security
- Educational visit training, as appropriate
- Regular H&S updates
- Coordination of annual visits which will include checks to ensure the academy school's testing regime is up to date
- Trust-led compliance / maintenance tracker

3.6. Operations

- Model policies and guidance
- Compliance checks – guidance on operational policies and compliance audit visits on request; covering areas such as site security and risk assessments, Safeguarding, personnel records
- Insurance queries – DoWMAT arranges insurance for Trust academies through the RPA, and provides advice regarding insurance queries and policy cover
- Legal support and advice – access to an expert legal team covering the full range of possible issues
- Health & Safety - a package of support enabling our academies to have robust systems in place for accident reporting, risk assessments, fire risk assessments, water management and asbestos. We can also provide advice regarding specific issues.
- Crisis Management – The DoWMAT team are available to provide emergency advice and support and, in the event of a crisis, can provide operational and media support, as appropriate.
- Premises Support – support and advice on a wide range of premises matters
- Contracts and procurement – exploring opportunities to achieve best value through the joint procurement of key services
- Data Protection – overseeing data compliance for the Trust and each DoWMAT academy

3.7. Governance

- Support and advice for Local Academy Boards (LABs)
- Training and continued support of the LAB
- CPD/training opportunities for LAB members
- NGA membership
- Processing LGB appointments
- Regular Chair of LAB meetings with CEO
- Provision of the Scheme of Delegated Authority
- Recruiting developing and training for effective governance
- Telephone support and advice
- Maintenance of governor database
- Support with skills audits

- Attendance at LGB meetings as required, and at least once a year

3.8. Premises and Capital Projects

- Support for a strategic approach to estates management and premises development
- Negotiation and set-up of insurance premiums, including land and buildings
- Arrangement of RPA insurance for each academy
- Advice on insurances and insurance liaison
- Procurement of all legally required insurance covers
- Emergency planning and implementation
- Advice on catering and cleaning contracts
- Procurement of utilities
- Advice on community use of facilities / lettings
- Writing, submission and tendering of all condition improvements fund bids and other capital projects
- Tendering for capital projects
- Project management for capital building projects to include CIF and Section 8 projects

3.9. Data and IT Services

- Annual website compliance checks
- Registering with the ICO
- A Trust Data Protection Officer
- Advice / support with GDPR
- SUITE OF Trust GDPR policies
- Support with DoWMAT MIS / assessment programs

3.10. Communications

- DoWMAT website
- Half termly Headteacher meetings
- Annual Headteacher Conference
- Half termly meetings for the Chairs of the LABs
- Support for recruitment and retention, as required

3.11. Admissions

- Production of a model admissions policy
- Advice on admissions consultations
- Advice and support for admissions
- Strategic response to changing admissions needs
- Access to an Admissions Appeals Panel (charged at cost)

3.12. Diocesan Education Team support for Church Schools within DoWMAT

- Places at governor specific training events listed in the Diocesan training programme
- Administration and support with foundation governor appointments
- A Diocesan partnership meeting - an annual meeting with a member of the Diocesan Education Team to discuss aspects of the school's deeply Christian character, as defined by the SIAMS Evaluation Schedule
- Administration of SIAMS support and telephone or email advice pre and post inspection
- Attendance at Ofsted feedback by the DDE or her representative
- Access to and information on education resources via electronic mailings and the Diocesan website
- Regular information from the Diocesan Education Team
- Basic telephone and email advice and support as required
- Pastoral support, including in times of crisis
- Invitations to all training opportunities and events (N.B. costs to attend will be higher for schools which do not belong to the SLA scheme)
- Attendance and support through Headteacher appointment processes (interviews and preparation meetings) and an initial visit to a newly appointed Headteacher
- Attendance at a training course at the Old Palace for newly appointed Headteachers
- Advice on legal issues related to church school property, site ownership and trust deeds
- Support with school buildings issues
- School organisation advice and support (academies, collaborations etc)
- Advice, training and resources (e.g. prayer days, BREATHE) from the Worcester Diocese Youth Officer and Children's Officer
- Chaplaincy advice and development with local clergy links from the Worcester Diocese Youth Officer
- Monthly 'drop-in' term time surgeries, where members of the Diocesan Education Team available to meet face to face or via telephone for all senior leaders, teaching staff and governors
- Access to all training courses set out in the Training Events Programme for an unlimited
- Number of members of the academy staff and/or Local Academy Board
- Attendance by up to two school leaders at the annual Diocesan Headteacher and School Leader Conference
- In addition, schools are entitled to 15 hours of support, offered in a variety of categories, as detailed in the Diocesan Board of Education Service Level Agreement (updated annually)

4. WHAT IS NOT COVERED BY THE DoWMAT OFFER

- 4.1. The 5% management fee will cover all central services but will not cover all the management and support services necessary to run a successful academy.

Currently, the following are not included within the DoWMAT SLA:

- Insurance (RPA)
- Broadband

- MIS – Arbor
- FFT
- Cost of admissions panels
- Cost of independent person on panels
- CPD
- Apprenticeship Levy
- Grounds maintenance
- School website design / costs
- LA moderation costs
- Union facilities fees
- Budget setting software after the first year
- MIA costs (sourced by DoWMAT through Worcestershire SLA at preferential rates)
- Any conversion costs over and above the £25,000
- School maintenance costs
- Cleaning costs
- Any costs for EVOLVE or external Educational Visits providers
- Measuring the distances for new intake Reception children (LA)
- Safeguarding SLA (sourced by DoWMAT through Worcestershire SLA at preferential rates)
- FFT pupil tracking (sourced by DoWMAT through FFT SLA at preferential rates)
- FFT Aspire (It is still more cost effective for schools to buy this through the Worcestershire LA agreement)
- SEND support (sourced by DoWMAT through Chadsgrove SLA at preferential rates)

5. CENTRAL RESERVES

5.1. The Trust's overall surpluses or deficits (reserves) at the end of the year are carried over to the following year. It is the responsibility of the Trust Board to ensure that the central services budget is agreed in line with school budgets each year. Any agreement to spend money from the central reserves must be approved in line with 4.10 of the DoWMAT Financial Handbook.

6. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

6.1. The Trust expects each academy to set a budget for school improvement which is in accordance with the costs of the activities included in their school improvement plan.

6.2. Where an academy requires additional school improvement support above that provided by the SLA and as agreed with the CEO / Headteacher, the academy may be required to meet this cost.

7. APPEALS

- 7.1. As required by the ESFA Academies financial handbook, DoWMAT academies have the right to appeal if they believe they have been unfairly treated in connection with central funds. Within DoWMAT, constituent schools have 10 working days from the confirmation of an agreed budget plan, formalised by the Trust Board in which to appeal. Appeals should be made in writing direct to the CEO.
- 7.2. The CEO will refer the appeal to the Chair of the Board of Directors who will convene a panel to consider the appeal. The school will be informed of their decision within 10 working days of receipt of the written appeal.
- 7.3. If the schools wish to appeal the decision of the CEO and Directors, then a second appeals board will be convened. Appeals need to be received in writing to the Chair of the Trust Board within 5 working days of the previous decision. This board will consist of 3 new Directors. The school will be notified of their decision within 10 working days of to the meeting of the appeals board.
- 7.4. In the event that these does not resolve the school's grievance then the school has the right to appeal to the Secretary of State via the ESFA, whose decision will be final.

Approved 13.05.2022 by DoWMAT Trust Board.