



TWO RIVERS
HIGH SCHOOL



Anti-Fraud Policy

Endeavour Multi Academy Trust

Review date: Autumn Term 2021
Trust Finance Committee

Next Review: Autumn Term 2022

Summary

This policy defines the expected conduct of all staff engaged at Endeavour Multi Academy Trust, whether in paid or voluntary employment, in relation to deterring and/or detecting fraud and corruption, and who to report it to.

Also, reference is made to other Trust/School policies where appropriate.

Introduction:

Endeavour Multi Academy Trust is committed to ensuring that it acts with integrity and has high standards of personal conduct. Everyone involved with the Trust/School has a responsibility in respect of preventing and detecting fraud. All staff, trustees and local governors have a role to play. The Trust also recognises the role of others in alerting them to areas where there is suspicion of fraud.

Recognising a potential fraud and being able to report it is just as important as the measures to prevent and detect.

It is the duty of all employees, Trustees and Local Governors at Endeavour Multi Academy Trust to take reasonable steps to limit the possibility of corrupt practices, and it is the responsibility of the Responsible Officer(s) and Auditors to review the adequacy of the measures taken by the Trust to test compliance and to draw attention to any weaknesses or omissions.

Any investigation carried out in relation to alleged irregularities will be carried out in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy.

Definitions:

Fraud

Fraud is a general term covering theft, deliberate misuse or misappropriation of assets or anything that leads to a financial advantage to the perpetrator or others upon whose behalf he or she acts, even if these "others" are in ignorance of the fraud. Fraud is in fact intentional deceit and for this reason it cannot include negligence.

Fraud incorporates theft, larceny, embezzlement, fraudulent conversion, false pretences, forgery, corrupt practices and falsification of accounts.

Corruption

The term 'corrupt practices' is defined for the purpose of this Policy as the offering, giving, soliciting or acceptance of an inducement or reward which may influence the actions taken by the Endeavour Multi Academy Trust, its staff, Trustees or Local Governors.

Irregularities fall within the following broad categories, the first three of which are criminal offences –

- Theft - the dishonest taking of property belonging to another person with the intention of depriving the owner permanently of its possession.

- Fraud - the intentional distortion of financial statements or other records by persons internal and external to the Trust/School, which is carried out to conceal the misappropriation of assets or otherwise for gain.
- Bribery and corruption - involves the offering or the acceptance of a reward, for performing an act, or for failing to perform an act, which leads to gain for the person offering the inducement.
- Failure to observe, or breaches of, the Scheme of Delegation and Financial Regulations and Trust/School's procedures which in some circumstances can constitute an irregularity, with potentially significant financial consequences.

Examples of what could constitute fraud and corruption are –

- theft of cash.
- non-receipt of income.
- substitution of personal cheques for cash.
- travelling and subsistence claims for non-existent journeys/events.
- travelling and subsistence claims inflated.
- manipulating documentation to increase salaries/wages received, e.g. false overtime claims.
- payment of invoices for goods received by an individual rather than the Trust/School.
- failure to observe, or breaches of, regulations and/or other associated legislation laid down by the Trust.
- unauthorised borrowing of equipment.
- breaches of confidentiality regarding information.
- failure to declare a direct pecuniary or otherwise conflicting interest.
- concealing a generous gift or reward.
- unfairly influencing the award of a contract.
- creation of false documents.
- Deception.
- using position for personal reward.

The above list is not exhaustive and fraud and corruption can take many different paths. If in any doubt about whether a matter is an irregularity or not, clarification must be sought from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Similarly, if there is concern or doubt about any aspect of a matter which involves an irregularity, or an ongoing investigation into a suspected irregularity, the best approach is to seek advice from the Chief Finance Officer (CFO).

Policy Statement:

This policy and procedure defines anti-fraud and offers guidance for all staff in the Trust.

The Trust aims to be an honest and ethical institution. As such, it is opposed to fraud and seeks to eliminate fraud by the way it conducts Trust business. This document

sets out the Trust's policy and procedures for dealing with the risk of significant fraud or corruption. In order to minimise the risk and impact of fraud, the Trust's objectives are, firstly, to create a culture which deters fraudulent activity, encourages its prevention and promotes its detection and reporting and, secondly, to identify and document its response to cases of fraud and corrupt practices.

This policy, in line with the Trust's corporate values of integrity, consistency, impartiality, fairness and best practice, provides both staff and management with mutually understood guidelines for the administration of this procedure.

The scope of this procedure extends to all Trust employees, permanent, voluntary and fixed term.

Time limits specified in this document may be extended by mutual agreement.

If requested, employees may be accompanied by a recognised trade union representative or work colleague, not involved in any part of the process, at any interviews.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Staff and Local Governors

Endeavour Multi Academy Trust has adopted the following measures to demonstrate its commitment to anti-fraud and corruption:

1. Finance and Audit & Risk Committees meet regularly.
2. Finance Committee regularly reviews expenditure.
3. A requirement for all staff and local governors to declare prejudicial interests and not contribute to business related to that interest.
4. A requirement for staff and local governors to disclose personal interests.
5. All staff and local governors are made aware of the understanding on the acceptance of gifts and hospitality.
6. Clear scheme of delegation is in place.
7. Clear recruitment policies and procedures.

Staff and local governors also have a duty to report another member of staff or local governor whose conduct is reasonably believed to represent a failure to comply with the above.

Responsible Officer (Headteachers of the schools in the MAT)

The Responsible Officers have a specific responsibility for overseeing the financial arrangements on behalf of the local governors.

The main duties of the Responsible Officer are to provide the local governors with on-going independent assurance that:

1. The financial responsibilities of the local governors are being properly discharged.
2. The resources are being managed in an efficient, economical and effective manner.
3. Sound systems of financial control are being maintained.
4. Financial considerations are fully taken into account in reaching decisions.

Chief Finance Officer (Headteachers and Bursars in the MAT schools)

They have a responsibility for ensuring that effective systems of internal controls are maintained and will safeguard the resources of the Endeavour Multi Academy Trust.

In respect of fraud it is therefore the responsibility of them to ensure internal controls prevent and detect any frauds promptly. This includes:

1. Proper procedures and financial systems.
2. Effective management of financial records.
3. Management of the Trust's and individual school's financial position.

The Finance Committee has a responsibility for ensuring that all allegations of suspected fraud are investigated and dealt with appropriately, and that the systems of internal controls are robust enough to safeguard the resources of the Trust Schools.

External Audit

The Trust's Annual Report and Financial Statements include an Independent Auditors' Report. This report includes a view as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and whether proper accounting records have been kept by the Trust throughout the financial year. In addition, it reports on compliance with the accounting requirements of the relevant Companies Act and confirms compliance with the financial reporting and annual accounting requirements issued by the Department for Education.

Reporting a Suspected Fraud:

All allegations of suspected fraud and irregularities must be brought to the attention of the CFO and also referred to the CEO, unless these individuals are involved in the irregularity in which case the Chair of the Finance Committee or Trustees should be informed.

Please refer to the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy for further guidance.