



## **Protocol for the Worcester Diocese Academies Trust (WDAT) in monitoring the performance of Church of England academies in multi academy trusts**

### **Introduction**

1. WDAT is an umbrella trust which has a responsibility to monitor educational standards and the Christian ethos of all Church of England academies within the Diocese of Worcester.
2. WDAT is a corporate Member of multi academy trusts (MATs), within which there is a CofE academy.
3. In addition, WDAT appoints not exceeding 25% of the Members of MATs which consist of community schools and former voluntary controlled (VC) schools, and the majority of Members of MATs with voluntary aided (VA) governance arrangements.
4. WDAT appoints 25% of the Trustees of MATs which have a former VC school and the majority of Trustees in MATs with a former VA school.
5. In line with the Memorandum of Understanding between the National Society and the Department for Education (April 2016), in order that Church of England academies have appropriate governance and strategic direction, the Diocese of Worcester requires all multi academy trusts containing a Church of England academy to enter into a Members' Agreement (Appendix I) to safeguard the religious character and ethos of the school.

### **Members**

6. WDAT has the responsibility to protect the Christian ethos of CofE academies within a MAT. All WDAT representatives have a responsibility to represent the corporate interests and values of WDAT in line with the Church of England's vision for education, *Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good* (Church of England Education Office, 2016).
7. Members will appoint Trustees, uphold and monitor the vision and values of the MAT, and receive the annual accounts.
8. WDAT will hold an annual gathering, to which all WDAT representatives are invited, to develop and share a commonality of approach across the various MATs.

### **Trustees**

9. Trustees appointed by WDAT are accountable to WDAT for the academic standards and Christian ethos of each CofE academy.
10. Trustees appointed by WDAT must make decisions in the best interests of *all* academies in the MAT, not just the CofE academies, and they represent their own views and opinions.



11. Trustees appointed by WDAT are expected to contribute to decision making in a manner which is aligned with the Church of England's vision for education and to express views which reflect this vision.
12. Trustees appointed by WDAT are asked to maintain close contact with WDAT and to report on decisions taken by the MAT Board, seeking advice and support when appropriate.
13. In turn, WDAT will maintain regular communication with the Trustees whom it has appointed. For example, WDAT will hold an annual gathering to which all WDAT appointed Trustees are invited and will request school data on an annual basis.
14. As a last resort, Trustees appointed by WDAT can be removed by WDAT.

### **The Diocesan Board of Education and Diocesan Education Team**

15. Following conversion, and as a condition of the Diocesan Board of Education's (DBE) consent to convert, all Church of England academies in the Diocese of Worcester are expected to maintain a relationship with WDAT, the DBE, and the Diocesan Education Team.
16. This relationship is based on a shared commitment to the development of the academy's Christian ethos, the provision of an effective Christian education, and the expectation of high academic standards within the academy.

### **Christian Ethos and SIAMS**

17. On conversion to academy status, the governance arrangements of the new academy are expected to reflect those of the former maintained school. This is a condition of the DBE's consent to convert. Part of this is the inclusion of foundation governors on an academy's local governing body or equivalent.
18. The academy will sustain its relationship with the Church of England partly through remaining part of the Training and Support Service Level Agreement (SLA), which is offered by the Diocesan Education Team and which has a focus on training and support in relation to the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Church (SIAMS) agenda.
19. In addition to the services available through the Training and Support SLA, and in order to enable the academy to develop its Christian ethos, the DBE, through the Diocesan Education Team, provides all Church of England academies with the following *at no cost to the academy*:
  - i. ongoing advice and support related to church school governance, admissions, and school organisation
  - ii. regular information and resources from the education team via electronic mailings and the Diocesan website.
  - iii. regular regional headteacher and governor meetings
  - iv. places at Governor specific training events listed in the Diocesan Training and support SLA Training schedule.



- v. a Diocesan keeping in touch meeting - an annual meeting with a member of the education team to discuss your school's current context and priorities.
  - vi. telephone or support advice pre and post SIAMS and Ofsted inspection.
  - vii. conversation with SIAMS or Ofsted Inspector during visit.
  - viii. attendance at SIAMS and Ofsted feedback by a member of the education team.
  - ix. on-going pastoral support
  - x. attendance of an adviser at, and support with, headteacher recruitment
  - xi. an initial pastoral visit and induction for all new headteachers
  - xii. attendance at the two-day induction programme at the Diocesan Offices for newly appointed headteachers
  - xiii. advice on legal issues related to church school property, site ownership, and trust deeds
  - xiv. advice, training, and resources from the Diocesan Youth Worker
  - xv. representation with the Regional Director and Regional Ofsted Lead
20. There is an expectation that the academy will be judged by SIAMS as being at least a 'Good' (SIAMS Schedule 2018) or 'Judgement One' (SIAMS Framework 2023) Church of England academy. As part of an academy's SIAMS inspection, the inspector will have a discussion with a representative of the Diocesan Education Team. This will usually be with the Diocesan Director of Education (DDE) or the Deputy DDE and will form part of the evidence base for the inspection.
21. Any concerns shared with the DDE, Diocesan Education Team, DBE, or WDAT by parents, members of the parish, or local community with regard to the school's Christian ethos will be shared with the WDAT appointed Trustee/s.
22. The academy headteacher and governors will have an annual Keeping in Touch (KiT) meeting with a member of the Diocesan Education Team at which the academy's development as a church school will be discussed, usually within the context of the SIAMS agenda and criteria.

### **Monitoring of Academic Standards**

23. As a Church of England school/academy, there is an expectation that appropriate Church oversight of academic performance is undertaken.
24. In line with the DBE's expectations of maintained church schools, once a year, during the summer term, WDAT will contact each CofE academy head and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) with a request for school data. The data return form will include information on academic standards, school development priorities, attendance and exclusions, financial information, and leadership and staffing changes/priorities. This information will enable the WDAT Board to carry out its responsibility to monitor standards and to prioritise the support which it offers to CofE academies.
25. The Education Team, on behalf of WDAT will undertake a number of Teaching and Learning reviews in a range of Trusts each year, these will be published at the beginning of each academic year.



26. Following the annual Keeping in Touch meeting and WDAT's scrutiny of the data return, a representative of the WDAT Board or the Diocesan Education Team will make contact with the academy leaders to share findings and to arrange to meet, if appropriate.
27. WDAT will offer the academy support to address any areas of concern which have been identified.

### **Concerns and Support**

28. Where concerns continue, including concerns relating to governance, and/or support offered through the SLA and the Keeping in Touch meeting not being accepted, and/or appropriate bespoke support not being sourced, for example, from the Diocesan Education Team, the WDAT appointed Trustee/s will be asked to meet with WDAT to discuss the situation.
29. All attempts will be made by WDAT, through the actions outlined above and through discussions with those involved at Trustee and Member level of the Trust, to ensure that the academy retains and develops its Christian ethos.
30. Should the attempts to ensure an ongoing relationship with the DBE and/or WDAT persist without success, and/or the academy fail to be judged at least as a 'Good' or 'Judgment One' CofE academy by SIAMS, the Members will be approached once more about steps which need to be taken to safeguard the academy's Christian ethos. The outcome of this meeting will be recorded and shared with the Members, the Bishop of Worcester, the Chair of the DBE, the Diocesan Director of Education, the Regional Schools Director, and the Chief Education Officer for the Church of England.
31. In the event that all other avenues have been exhausted and co-operation by the Trust not be forthcoming resulting in a failure to uphold the academy's Christian ethos, as a last resort, WDAT will recommend to the DBE that the Members' Agreement is actioned in order to allow remedial action to be taken.

Tim Reid

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