



Southwark Diocesan  
**Board of Education**  
Multi-Academy Trust

# INTRODUCTION SEPT 2025

Part of the 2025/2026 Trust Operating Manual

## INTRODUCTION

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Our aim is to enable the mission of God by providing an outstanding education to all the children taught by us and lessons are consistently good or outstanding. All our policies (including HR) support that ambition.

1.2 This handbook contains the following policies:

POLICY	REF
HR POLICY HANDBOOK INTRODUCTION (THIS POLICY)	HRPH01
CAPABILITY	HRPH02
CODE OF CONDUCT	HRPH03
DISCIPLINARY	HRPH04
FAMILY LEAVE	HRPH05
FLEXIBLE WORKING	HRPH06
GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION	HRPH07
ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE	HRPH08
NON-SICKNESS ABSENCE	HRPH09
PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE (WHISTLEBLOWING)	HRPH10
SICKNESS ABSENCE	HRPH11
STAFF PENSIONS DISCRETIONS	HRPH12
STAFF RECRUITMENT AND EXIT	HRPH13
SUPPORT STAFF APPRAISAL & PAY	HRPH14
TEACHER APPRAISAL	HRPH15
TEACHER PAY	HRPH16
TRUST DEVELOPMENT RESPONSIBILITY	HRPH17
ANTI SLAVERY & HUMAN TRAFFICKING STATEMENT	HRPH18
STAFF EXPENSES	HRPH19
DEALING WITH ALLEGATION OF ABUSE AGAINST STAFF	HRPH20
DBS POLICY	HRPH21
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY	HRPH22
EMPLOYEES WORKING FOR OFSTED POLICY	HRPH23
MENOPAUSE POLICY	HRPH24

1.3 We delegate our authority in the manner set out in this document and it shall apply to all our schools.

1.4 The Schools' Local Governing Bodies are not required to approve the policies set out in the document and they do not have authority to amend any policy in this document. Amendments to these policies may only be made by our Board.

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1.5 There may be occasions where policies need to be modified to take account of the requirements of our Child Protection & Safeguarding policies e.g. by allowing the Local Authority Designated Officer to offer advice at appropriate stages.

1.6 In this document:

“**Executive Team**” means the Trust’s senior executives and includes our Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the Chief Operating Officer (COO).

“**Headteacher**” includes Principal or Head of School.

“**Working day**” means any day on which in your role you would ordinarily work if you were a full-time employee. In other words, it will be different for teaching and non-teaching staff but will be the same for full-time and part-time employees.

## 2. ATTENDEES AT FORMAL MEETINGS

2.1 For any process described as informal there is no right to be accompanied and we may proceed without you having a companion present.

2.2 Where a policy allows you to be accompanied by a companion at a formal meeting, the provisions of this paragraph 2 will apply.

2.3 “**Permitted Companion**” means a companion meeting the requirements of this paragraph 2 and shall be either a willing co-worker not involved in the substance of the issue under discussion at the meeting or a trade union representative.

2.4 You must let the relevant Manager know who your Permitted Companion will be at least one working day before the relevant meeting.

2.5 You do not have a right to legal representation at formal or informal meetings.

2.6 If you have any particular need, for example, a disability, you may also be accompanied by a suitable helper.

2.7 Your Permitted Companion can address the meeting in order to:

- (a) put your case;
- (b) sum up your case; and
- (c) respond on your behalf to any view expressed at the meeting.

2.8 Your Permitted Companion can also confer with you in private during the meeting.

2.9 Your Permitted Companion has no right to answer questions on your behalf, or to address the meeting if you do not wish it, or to prevent you from explaining your case.

2.10 Where you have identified your Permitted Companion to the relevant Manager and your companion has confirmed in writing to the relevant Manager that they cannot attend the date or time set for the meeting, the relevant Manager will postpone the meeting for no more than **five working days** from the date set by us to a date or time agreed with your companion provided that it is reasonable.

## 3. TIMING OF MEETINGS

Formal meetings under these policies will normally be held during the school day but exceptionally may be held after the end of the school day. Formal meetings shall not be held on days on which you would not ordinarily work.

## 4. RECORDING OF MEETINGS AND MINUTES

4.1 No one is allowed to make an audio or video recording of a formal or informal meeting or interview without the prior express written permission of all persons present.

4.2 We may have a note taker at any formal or informal meeting or interview to take the official note of the meeting.

4.3 The note taker should be someone not involved in the subject matter of the meeting.

4.4 Minutes will not be verbatim notes.

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4.5 Minutes will be shared with you and you will be asked to confirm if they are accurate.

4.6 No subsequent meeting, interview or decision will be delayed or postponed as a result of a dispute over minutes.

## 5. APPEAL MANAGER

5.1 A person is not prevented from hearing an appeal under the **Disciplinary, Capability and Sickness Absence** policies by virtue of having heard an appeal against any earlier decision in relation to you under that policy or any other policy.

## 6. UNION MEMBERSHIP

6.1 We encourage staff to join the appropriate union or professional association and arrangements are in place for the deductions of contributions at source.

## 7. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

7.1 The policies in this document are disclosable under the Freedom of Information Act.

## 8. REVIEW

8.1 This Handbook will be reviewed annually in **August**.

8.2 In drawing up this Handbook we have considered the following documents:

- (a) **The Burgundy Book and the Green Book;**
- (b) **Whistleblowing Arrangements Code of Practice;**
- (c) **The ACAS Code of Practice;**
- (d) **The ACAS Guide "Discipline and Grievances at Work;**
- (e) **Teachers' Standards;**
- (f) **Working Together to Safeguard Children;**
- (g) **The Whistleblowing Commission Code of Practice,**
- (h) **Independent Schools Standards;**
- (i) **Ofsted Schools Inspection Handbook;**
- (j) **Keeping Children Safe in Education;**
- (k) **ESFA Academies Financial Handbook; and**
- (l) **School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.**