

Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy

“Every child matters and no child is ever left behind...”

"Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them;
for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs."
Luke 18:15-17

Policy Reviewed and Adopted by Board of Directors: 10 December 2025

Version: 9

Date of Next Review: Annual

Responsible Officer: CEO

Contents:

Statement of intent

1. Vision Statement
2. Legal framework
3. Definitions
4. Roles and responsibilities
5. Indicators for potential fraud
6. Creating an ethical culture
7. Preventing fraud
8. Record keeping
9. Gifts and hospitality
10. Reporting concerns and making allegations
11. Investigating reports
12. Reporting to the ESFA
13. Following an investigation
14. Cybercrime and cybersecurity
15. Confidentiality
16. Annual accounts
17. Monitoring and review

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Indicators for potential fraud

Statement of intent

The Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Learning Trust is committed to operating with the highest ethical standards and acting with integrity in all activities.

This policy sets out our responsibilities regarding the prevention of fraud and corruption, and the promotion of an ethical culture. The policy also sets out the procedures that will be followed where fraud or corruption are discovered or suspected.

1. Vision Statement

“Every child matters and no child is ever left behind”

Let the children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.

Luke +

At the DNDLT we believe everyone in our Trust is a child of God, adults and children alike. Every individual and every school matters, all are valued and celebrated, and no one should be left behind.

As a Diocesan Trust of the Dioceses of Newcastle and Durham we are here to serve children, and schools of all faiths and none. We welcome both Church of England and Community Schools to join us to serve our communities in the North East of England as part of our Trust family whilst remaining unique and distinct within their local context.

The Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Learning Trust is a place where we strive for the best outcomes for our children and staff. We work hard to achieve equity and flourishing for everyone. We want our staff and children to feel valued and celebrated given the opportunity to innovate and reach their full potential. We want our schools to be at the heart of their communities serving them in the way they know best, knowing they will be supported, encouraged and affirmed by a dedicated and specialist team.

2. Legal framework

2.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Bribery Act 2010
- Fraud Act 2006
- Companies Act 2006
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Charities Act 2011
- Proceeds of Crime Act 2002

- Terrorism Act 2000
- 'Academy trust handbook 2025' (ATH)
- DfE (2025) 'Reducing fraud in the education sector'

2.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Finance Policy
- Gifts, Hospitality and Anti-bribery and corruption Policy (both within Staff Handbook)
- Conflicts of Interests Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure (within Staff Handbook)
- Staff Code of Conduct (within Staff Handbook)
- Governance Council Code of Conduct
- Staff Expenses Policy
- Information security policy (within the Staff Handbook)

3. Definitions

3.1. **Fraud** is a criminal offence, which is defined in the Fraud Act 2006 as:

- Deceiving through false representation.
- Failing to disclose information where there is a legal duty to do so.
- Abusing a position of trust.

Other offences under the Fraud Act include the possession of, and the making or supplying of, articles for use in fraud. Articles would include lists of other people's credit card details or software used for producing blank utility bills or for generating credit card numbers.

3.2. **Corruption** is the offering, giving, soliciting or accepting of any inducement or reward which may influence the actions taken by the body, its members or officers. This is the abuse of entrusted power or position for private gain.

3.3. **Theft** is dishonestly appropriating property belonging to another with the intention of permanently depriving the other of it.

3.4. **Bribery** is defined by the Bribery Act 2010 as inducement for an action which is illegal, unethical or a breach of trust. Inducements can take the form of gifts, loans, fees, rewards or other advantages.

3.5. In this policy, 'fraud' will be used to refer to all the definitions outlined above. Fraud can be committed in three ways according to the Fraud Act 2006:-

3.5.1. By false representation

3.5.2. By failing to disclose information

3.5.3. By abusing a position in which a person is expected to safeguard financial interests of another person.

3.6. Examples of what could constitute fraud include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Theft of cash
- Substitution of personal cheques for cash
- Travelling and subsistence claims for non-existent journeys or events, or inflating claims
- Manipulating documentation to increase salaries
- Payment of invoices for goods received by an individual rather than the Trust
- Unauthorised borrowing of equipment
- Failure to declare a conflict of interest
- Concealing a generous gift or reward
- Creation of false documentation

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1. The Trust must take appropriate action where fraud, theft or irregularity is suspected or identified.

4.2. The board of trustees will appoint, in writing, a senior executive leader (the CEO), who may be appointed as a trustee. Overall responsibility for dealing with fraud lies with the accounting officer (the CEO of the Trust).

4.3. The trust will ensure that the senior executive leader is named as the appointed accounting officer. The roles of senior executive leader and accounting officer will not rotate. The trust will not appoint the CFO as the accounting officer.

4.4. Responsibilities of the accounting officer include:

- Overseeing the development and implementation of a system of internal controls that aim to minimise the risk of fraud.
- Overseeing the development and implementation of effective financial regulations, policies and procedures.
- Ensuring resources are being managed in an ethical, efficient and economical manner.
- Ensuring that rigorous investigations of potential fraud are carried out promptly.
- Ensuring the appropriate legal and/or disciplinary action is taken where fraud is proven.
- Ensuring that appropriate action is taken to recover assets and minimise loss.

- Keeping full and accurate accounting records and producing the Trust's annual accounts and a statement on regularity, propriety and compliance.
 - Assuring the board of trustees that the Trust is complying with the funding agreement and Academy Trust Handbook.
 - Advising the board of trustees in writing if action it is considering is incompatible with the Articles of Association, funding agreement or Academy Trust Handbook.
 - Notifying the DfE if the board proceeds with action considered to be in breach of the above.
- 4.5. The external auditor will be responsible for certifying whether the Trust's annual accounts present a true and fair view of the its financial performance and position.
- 4.6. The chief finance officer will be responsible for:
- Assessing the areas of the Trust that are most vulnerable to fraud, in conjunction with the headteachers and Accounting Officer.
 - Conducting an initial investigation where a report of fraud is made, in conjunction with the headteachers.
 - Contacting the DfE to request prior approval for any transactions beyond the Trust's delegation limits and transactions which are novel, contentious or repercussive.
- 4.7. The chair of trustees will be responsible for:-
- receiving reports of fraud that involve any headteacher.
 - Ensuring the DfE is notified as soon as possible in relation to instances of fraud, theft and irregularity, exceeding £5000 individually, or £5000 cumulatively in any financial year in line with [2](#) of this policy. Unusual or systemic fraud, regardless of value **must** also be reported.
- 4.8. The headteachers will be responsible for:
- Assessing the areas of the school that are most vulnerable to fraud, in conjunction with the CFO, central team and school business manager.
 - Receiving reports of fraud.
 - Conducting an initial investigation where a report is made, in conjunction with the chief finance officer.
 - Approving gifts and hospitality in line with the Gifts, Hospitality and Anti-bribery Policy (in the Staff Handbook).
 - Ensuring employees are provided with appropriate anti-fraud training.
 - Maintaining the Conflicts of Interests Register and Gifts and Hospitality Register.
- 4.9. The Trust board have appointed a finance, audit and risk committee which is responsible for overseeing and approving the Trust's programme of internal scrutiny, ensuring that risks are being addressed appropriately. The board will identify and demonstrate sufficient financial knowledge to hold the Trusts's executives to account.

4.10. The Local Academy Council will be responsible for reviewing each school's internal controls and for conducting a full investigation of reports and determining what the next steps will be including possible referral to the Trust finance, audit and risk committee.

4.11. All employees (including volunteers and temporary staff) and third parties that work with the Trust will be responsible for:

- Demonstrating the highest standards of honesty, probity, openness and integrity in the discharge of their duties.
- Complying with the provisions outlined in this policy.
- Being vigilant to the risks and indicators of fraud.
- Promoting an ethical, anti-fraud culture.
- Reporting their concerns in relation to fraud to the headteacher or chair of Local Academy Council, or in the case of the central team to the CFO, Accounting Officer or Chair of the Trust.
- Reporting any breach of this policy to the headteacher or accounting officer.
- Providing information about any conflicts of interest and direct or indirect pecuniary interests to the headteacher, or in the case of the central team to the CFO, Accounting Officer or Chair of the Trust.
- Maintaining the academy trust's estate in a safe working condition.

Management accounts which set out the trust's financial performance and position are prepared every month and shared with the chair of trustees every month. The trust board will consider management accounts when it meets.

Appropriate and timely action will be ensured by the board to maintain financial viability including addressing variances between the budget and actual income and expenditure.

5. Indicators for potential fraud

5.1. Some actions and behaviours may give cause for concern, arouse suspicion and possibly indicate fraudulent activity. These are outlined in Appendix 1.

5.2. The list provided in Appendix 1 is not exhaustive; fraud can take many different forms.

5.3. All employees, academy councillors and Trustees will be vigilant to the indicators of fraud.

5.4. Clarification will be sought from the headteacher or chief finance officer if there are any questions over whether something could be considered an indicator of fraud.

5.5. The presence of any of these indicators may not be a cause for concern; however, they will always be investigated appropriately in accordance with section 10 of this policy.

6. Creating an ethical culture

- 6.1. An ethical, anti-fraud culture will underpin all the work done by the Trust to counter fraud.
- 6.2. All employees and third parties that work with the Trust will be expected to act with high levels of integrity and to adhere with the rules outlined in this policy. Anti-fraud awareness training will be held for employees on a regular basis. Role specific training will also be provided to employees with responsibility for the Trust's internal controls or financial procedures.
- 6.3. Employees will be encouraged to report any concerns, and clear reporting mechanisms will be implemented and communicated.
- 6.4. Victimisation or harassment of anyone who has made a report will not be tolerated.

7. Preventing fraud

- 7.1. The headteacher with the support of the Chief Financial Officer and school business manager will assess the areas of the school that are most vulnerable to fraud risks on a termly basis.
- 7.2. Fraud risks will be identified for all areas and processes of the school and will be assessed in terms of impact and likelihood.
- 7.3. Both monetary and non-monetary impacts will be considered, such as the impact on the school's reputation.
- 7.4. Robust internal controls will be put in place to manage the risk of fraud – these will cover areas including the following:
 - Process of authorising transactions
 - Access restrictions and transaction controls
 - Account reconciliations
 - Physical security of assets
 - Segregation of responsibilities
 - Pre-employment checks
- 7.5. All employees that are involved in the implementation of these controls will be provided with relevant training.
- 7.6. Internal controls will be reviewed on a termly basis by the Local Academy Council in conjunction with the headteacher, to ensure they remain effective and are being consistently applied.
- 7.7. All employees will follow the Staff Code of Conduct (contained within the Staff Handbook).
- 7.8. All employees and volunteers (including academy councillors and Trustees) will be required to declare any business or pecuniary interests, or other conflicts of interest, to the headteacher or Trust board as appropriate.

7.9. Following a case of fraud, the risk management strategy will be reviewed to ensure it considers all relevant risks and that the internal controls are effective.

8. Record keeping

8.1. Financial records will be kept, along with evidence for the business reasons for making payments to third parties.

8.2. All invoices, accounts and related documents will be prepared and maintained with the highest accuracy and completeness.

8.3. No accounts will be kept "off-book".

8.4. Any reports of fraud, and subsequent investigations, will be recorded.

8.5. The Trust will submit an 'Academies budget forecast return' to the DfE by the end of August.

9. Gifts and hospitality

9.1. All employees will act in line with the Gifts, Hospitality and Ant-bribery Policy within the Staff Handbook.

9.2. It is not acceptable for employees to:

- Give, promise or offer payment, gifts or hospitality, with the expectation or hope that an advantage for the school will be received or to reward an advantage already received.
- Give, promise or offer a payment, gift or hospitality to a government official, agent or representative to facilitate or expedite a routine procedure.
- Accept payment from a third party if they know or suspect that it is offered with an expectation of a business advantage in return.
- For the avoidance of any doubt Trust funds must not be spent on alcohol or on excessive gifts and any such spending will be treated by Trust auditors as 'irregular expenditure'
- Threaten or retaliate against another employee who has refused to commit a bribery offence or who has raised concerns regarding bribery.
- Engage in any activity that may lead to a breach of the Gifts, Hospitality and Ant-bribery Policy.

9.3. The Trust will not prohibit normal and appropriate hospitality or gifts (both given and received) if the following requirements are met:

- It is not made with the intention of influencing a third party to obtain or retain business or business advantage, or to reward the provision or retention of business or business advantage, or in exchange for favours or benefits.
- It is given in the school's name, not the individual's name.
- It complies with the law.

- It does not include cash or a cash equivalent, e.g. vouchers or gift certificates.
 - It does not include alcohol
 - It is appropriate in the circumstances, e.g. the giving of small gifts at Christmas.
 - The type and value of the gift is reasonable given the reason the gift is offered.
 - It is given openly, not secretly.
- 9.4. Employees will be required to make the headteacher aware of all gifts or hospitality received or offered over the value of £25; these will be subject to review.
- 9.5. Employees' expenses claims relating to gifts, hospitality or expenses incurred to third parties will be submitted in accordance with the Trust expenses claim form.
- 9.6. Gifts should not be offered to, or accepted from, government officials or representatives without the prior approval of the headteacher.
- 9.7. In all circumstances, employees should consider whether the gift or hospitality is reasonable and justified and consider the intention behind the gift.
- 9.8. Any gifts and hospitality given or received will be recorded on the School's Gifts and Hospitality Register.

10. Reporting concerns and making allegations

- 10.1. Any allegations or concerns of suspected fraud will be reported to the headteacher if related to a school.
- 10.2. Allegations involving the headteacher will be reported to the chair of the academy council.
- 10.3. Allegations involving governors or trustees will be made to the accounting officer and allegations involving the accounting officer will be reported to the Chair of the Trust.
- 10.4. Third parties will report any concerns to the headteacher or the chair of the academy council or board of trustees, depending on what the allegation involves.
- 10.5. Any person with a concern or allegation will not investigate the matter themselves.
- 10.6. Procedures outlined in the Whistleblowing Policy can also be followed to report concerns.
- 10.7. Employees, volunteers and third parties will be made aware that reports can also be made directly to the DfE using an online [enquiry form](#).

11. Investigating reports

- 11.1. Reports will be initially investigated by the headteacher with the support of the chief finance officer, who will ascertain the facts of the report, seeking HR and legal advice as necessary.

- 11.2. The headteacher will notify the chair of academy council and the chief financial officer of any serious financial irregularities at the first opportunity following the completion of an initial investigation.
- 11.3. Following the initial investigation, the matter will be reported to the local academy council who will undertake the management of the investigation (in any case involving the central team the CFO will undertake the management of the investigation).
- 11.4. When a report has been escalated to the academy council (or CFO), the individual(s) the allegation has been made against will be informed of the investigation. They will not be informed of who made the allegation.
- 11.5. In undertaking an investigation of a report, the academy council (or CFO) will:
- Inform the Trust finance, audit and risk committee via the Chief Financial Officer and obtain advice and support
 - Conduct an investigation to gather factual information and reach an initial view as to whether further action is required.
 - Collect relevant evidence, interview all relevant people and analyse any related documentation.
 - Decide if the evidence suggests that the allegation or concern is proven.
 - Recommend any changes to the internal controls in light of the findings.
 - Determine whether the findings, conclusions and any recommendations arising from the investigation should be reported to the chair of trustees.
 - If further investigations are required, determine which outside agencies should be involved, e.g. auditors or the police.
- 11.6. The academy council will, where possible, quantify any potential or actual financial loss and ensure steps are taken at an early stage to prevent further loss occurring.
- 11.7. The academy council will, with the support of the Chief Financial Officer, notify the Trust's finance, audit and risk committee and the external auditor of any cases it is investigating, and of the outcome of these cases.
- 11.8. All concerns and reports will be taken seriously and investigated in line with the process outlined above.
- 11.9. Reporters will be asked to provide any evidence they have to support their allegations.
- 11.10. Any person who makes a report will be reassured that they will not suffer recrimination as a result of raising any reasonably held suspicion.
- 11.11. Reports will be investigated objectively; the facts will be considered as they appear, based on the information to hand.
- 11.12. Individuals about which a report is made will not be accused or approached directly prior to an investigation.

12. Reporting to the DfE

- 12.1. The Chair of Trustees will report any instances of fraud, theft and/or irregularity exceeding £5,000 individually, or £5,000 cumulatively in any academy financial year, to the DfE as soon as possible.
- 12.2. When making a report to the DfE, the Chair of Trustees will provide the following information:
- Full details of the event(s) with dates
 - The financial value of the loss
 - Measures that have been taken to prevent recurrence
 - Whether the matter was referred to the police, and, if not, the reasoning behind not making a referral
 - Whether insurance or the risk protection arrangement (RPA) have offset any loss
- 12.3. Following a report, the DfE may conduct or commission its own investigation into actual or potential fraud, theft or irregularity in the Trust, either as a result of a notification from the Trust or from other information the DfE has received. Other authorities, including the police, may be involved in the investigation.
- 12.4. The trust will obtain the DfE's prior approval, using DfE's related party online form, for the supply of goods or services to the trust agreed on or after 1 September where a contract or other agreement exceeds £40,000 in the same financial year ending on 31 August. This approval process will not apply when contracts or agreements for goods or services are arranged between the trust and the following establishments:
- Colleges, universities and schools that are sponsors of the Trust (this does not apply to transactions which are a subsidiary of such a related party)
 - State-funded schools and colleges, including academies (this does not apply to transactions which are a subsidiary of such a related party)
 - The provision of services to a trust with schools with a religious designation (e.g. Church of England schools) for essential functions to the trust's religious character and ethos which can only be provided by their religious authority
- 12.5. For the purposes of reporting to and approval by DfE, contracts and agreements with related parties do not include salaries and other payments made by the trust to a person under a contract of employment through the trust's payroll.

13. Following an investigation

- 13.1. Following an investigation, appropriate criminal, civil and disciplinary sanctions may be given in all cases of proven fraud and corruption.
- 13.2. Where fraud involving an employee is proven, this constitutes as gross misconduct and cases will be dealt with accordingly in line with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure (in the Staff Handbook).

- 13.3. Disciplinary action may be taken against employees that make malicious reports of fraud.
- 13.4. The Trust may terminate the contracts of any third party or other associated person acting on behalf of the Trust where they are found to have breached this policy.
- 13.5. Where appropriate, cases will be referred to the police in order for them to consider taking criminal action.
- 13.6. Following any incident of fraud, a 'lessons learned' exercise will be conducted. All individuals involved in the investigation of the case will be involved in the activity, which will aim to identify areas of internal controls or other procedures that should be improved to prevent further cases occurring.

14. Cybercrime and cybersecurity

- 14.1. The Trust will be vigilant to cybercrime and clear cybersecurity measures will be implemented. The Trust will not pay any cyber ransom demands.
- 14.2. The following measures will be implemented specifically relating to addressing the risk of fraud:
- Taking appropriate action to meet [DfE's cyber security standards](#)
 - Firewalls, anti-virus software and strong passwords will be used
 - Data will be routinely and securely backed up
 - A restricted number of devices will be used to access financial or other sensitive data
 - Staff will receive training to ensure they:
 - Check the sender of an email is genuine before, for example, sending payment, data or passwords.
 - Make direct contact with the sender where an email requests a payment – this will be done in person where possible, but at a minimum staff must use another method other than the direct reply function, such as a phone call.
 - Understand the risks of using public WiFi.
 - Understand the risks of not following payment checks and measures.
- 14.3. Any suspected incidents of fraud relating to cybersecurity will be reported and investigated as outlined in [10](#) and [1](#) of this policy.

15. Money laundering

- 15.1 "Money laundering" describes offences concerning the possession, concealment, conversion, transfer or making of arrangements relating to the proceeds of crime. This is not limited to money or cash.

15.2 Trustees and Local Academy Councillors will take appropriate and reasonable steps to ascertain where funds received by the trust come from. This includes:-

- Identifying who they are dealing with.
- Verifying identities, where appropriate, and there are high risks.
- Checking the nature of the organisation's or individual's business to be assured that this is appropriate for the trust to be involved with.
- Watching out for unusual, complex or suspicious activities, conducts or requests.
- Ensuring that any conditions attached to receiving the funds are appropriate and can be accepted and there is reasonable assurance that the funds are not from any illegal or inappropriate source.

15.3 All decisions by trustees or Local Academy Councillors to accept or refuse donations will be recorded in writing in order to demonstrate that decisions were taken responsibly, with due consideration given to any risks.

15.4 Payments by cash will only be accepted by the school up to a value of £500 from known individuals and organisations.

15.5 Any concerns held by staff relating to money laundering will be raised with the accounting officer. Where the trust knows or suspects that an individual or organisation is engaged in money laundering or dealing in criminal property, the accounting officer will submit a suspicious activity report (SAR) to the NCA. The individual or organisation the report concerns will not be informed of the suspicion. Careful consideration will be given to the trust's relationship with the individual or organisation once the report has been submitted.

16. Confidentiality

- 16.1. The Trust understands that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make.
- 16.2. Victimisation or harassment of anyone who has made a report will not be tolerated.
- 16.3. Where possible, the identity of the person who made the report will be kept confidential; their identity will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.
- 16.4. The identity of the individual(s) about whom an allegation is made will be also be kept confidential, and only shared on a need-to-know basis. Where an allegation is proven to be unfounded or malicious, the individual about whom the allegation was made will be provided with appropriate support.
- 16.5. Concerns raised will be handled in accordance with the Whistleblowing policy. Whistleblowers will be permitted to request confidentiality and must say

straight away if they do not want anyone else to know it was them who raised the concern. In such cases every effort will be taken to protect the identity of the whistleblower.

- 16.6. Whistleblowers will be kept informed about the action being taken to deal with their concern, however the level of detail may be limited if the confidence of other people needs to be maintained.

17. Annual accounts

- 17.1. The accounting officer will submit the Trust's annual accounts return to the DfE each year. These accounts will include the accounting officer's statement on regularity, propriety and compliance.
- 17.2. The accounting officer will include any identified cases of fraud in the statement.
- 17.3. The annual audited accounts will be:
- Submitted to the DfE by 31 December each year.
 - Published on the Trust's's website by 31 January.
 - Filed with Companies House in accordance with company law requirements, usually by 31 May.
 - Provided to anyone who requests a copy.
- 17.4. The external auditor will certify whether the annual accounts present a true and fair view of the Trust's's financial performance and position.

18. Monitoring and review

- 18.1. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the chief operating officer and chief finance officer.

Appendix 1: Indicators for potential fraud

[This list is not exhaustive and is a guide only. Due to the nature of fraud, indicators may not be exclusive to just one area.]

Personal motives for fraud

- Personnel believe they receive inadequate compensation and/or rewards, e.g. recognition, job security, holidays or promotions
- Expensive life style, e.g. cars and holidays
- Personal problems, e.g. gambling, alcohol, drugs or debt
- Unusually high degree of competition or peer pressure
- Related party transactions (business activities with personal friends, relatives or their companies)
- Conflicts of interest
- Disgruntled employee, e.g. being recently demoted or reprimanded
- Recent failure associated with specific individual

- Personal animosity or professional jealousy

Organisational motives for fraud

- Organisation experiencing financial difficulty
- Commercial arm experiencing financial difficulty
- Tight or unusually tight time deadlines to achieve level of outputs
- Organisational governance lacks clarity, direction or substance
- Organisation closely identified with, or dominated by, one individual
- Organisation under pressure to show results, e.g. budgetary matters or exam results
- Organisation recently suffered disappointment or consequences of bad decisions
- Organisation wants to expand its scope or obtain additional funding
- Funding award or contract for services is up for renewal or continuation
- Organisation due for a site visit by auditors, Ofsted or others
- Organisation has a for-profit component
- Organisation recently affected by new and/or changing conditions, e.g. regulatory, economic or environmental
- Organisation faces pressure to use or lose funds to sustain future funding levels
- Record of previous failure(s) by one or more organisational areas, associated business or key personnel
- Sudden change in organisation practice or pattern of behaviour

Weakness in internal controls

- There is a general lack of transparency about how the organisation works, and its procedures and controls
- Management demonstrates a lack of attention to ethical values – including a lack of communication regarding the importance of integrity and ethics, a lack of concern about the presence of temptations and inducements to commit fraud, a lack of concern regarding instances of fraud, and no clear fraud response plan or investigation policy
- Management fails to specify and/or require appropriate levels of qualifications, experience or competence for employees
- Management displays a penchant for taking risks
- Lack of an appropriate organisational and governance structure with defined lines of authority and reporting responsibilities
- Organisation lacks policies and communication relating to individual accountability and best practice, e.g. related to procurement, expenses, use of alcohol and declarations of interest
- Lack of personnel policies and recruitment practices
- Organisation lacks personnel performance appraisal measures or practices
- Management displays a lack of commitment towards the identification and management of risks relevant to the preparation of financial statements
- There is inadequate comparison of budgets with actual performance and costs, forecasts and prior performance – there is also no regular reconciliation of control records and a lack of proper reporting to the governing board

- Management of information systems is inadequate, e.g. no policy on ICT security, computer use, verification of data accuracy, or completeness or authorisation of transactions
- There is insufficient physical security over facilities, assets, records, computers, data files and cash
- Failure to compare existing assets with related records at reasonable intervals
- There is inadequate or inappropriate segregation of duties regarding initiation, authorisation and recording of transactions, maintaining custody of assets and alike
- Accounting systems are inadequate, i.e. they have an ineffective method for identifying and recording transactions, no tracking of time periods during which transactions occur, insufficient description of transactions and to which account they should be allocated to, no easy way to know the status of funds on a timely basis, no adequate procedure to prevent duplicate payments or missing payment dates
- Purchasing systems and/or procedures are inadequate, e.g. poor or incomplete documentation to support procedure, purchase, payment or receipt of goods or services
- Subcontractor records and/or systems reflect inadequate internal controls
- There is a lack of internal, ongoing monitoring of controls which are in place and/or failure to take any necessary corrective actions
- Management is unaware of or displays a lack of concern regarding applicable laws, e.g. Companies Act, Charities Act
- Specific problems and/or reportable conditions identified by prior audits or other means of oversight have not been corrected
- No mechanism to exist to inform management, directors, trustees or governors of possible fraud
- General lack of management oversight

Transactional indicators

- Related party transactions with inadequate, inaccurate, or incomplete documentation or internal controls, e.g. business activities with friends
- Not-for-profit entity has for-profit counterpart with linked infrastructure, e.g. shared board of trustees, governors or other shared functions and personnel
- Specific transactions that typically receive minimal oversight
- Previous audits with findings of questioned costs, evidence of non-compliance with applicable laws or regulations, weak internal controls, a qualified audit opinion, or an inadequate management response to any of these issues
- Transactions and/or accounts which are difficult to audit and/or subject to management judgement and estimates
- Multiple sources of funding with inadequate, incomplete or poor tracking, failure to segregate funds, or existence of pooled funds
- Unusual, complex or new transactions, particularly if they occur at year end or end of reporting period
- Transactions and accounts operating under time constraints
- Cost sharing, matching or leveraging arrangements where industry money or other donation has been put into a foundation without adequate controls to determine if money or equipment has been spent/used and whether it has gone to allowable costs and at appropriate and accurate valuations

- Outside entity provided limited access to documentation
- Travel accounts with inadequate, inaccurate or incomplete documentation or poor internal controls, variances between budgeted amounts and actual costs, claims in excess of actual expenses, reimbursement for personal expenses, claims for non-existent travel, or collecting duplicate payments
- Credit card accounts with inadequate, inaccurate or incomplete documentation or internal controls such as appropriate authorisation and review
- Accounts in which activities, transactions or events involve handling of cash or wire transfers
- Presence of high cash deposits maintained with banks
- Assets which are of a nature easily converted to cash (e.g. small size, high value, high marketability or lack of ownership identification) or easily diverted to personal use (e.g. cars or houses)
- Accounts with large or frequent shifting of budgeted costs from one cost centre to another without adequate justification
- Payroll (including fringe benefits) system has inadequate controls to prevent an individual being paid twice or paid for non-delivery or non-existence
- Payroll (including fringe benefits) system is outsourced but there is poor oversight of starters, leavers and payments
- Consultant and subcontract agreements which are vague regarding the work, time period covered, rate of pay or product expected
- There is a lack of proof that a product or service was actually delivered by a consultant or subcontractor
- Sudden and/or rapid growth of newly contracted or existing education providers, e.g. significant increase in pupil numbers for newly contracted providers

Methods used to commit and/or conceal fraud

Employee indicators such as:

- Eagerness to work unusual hours
- Access to or use of computers at unusual hours
- Reluctance to take leave or seek support
- Insistence on doing their job alone
- Refusal of promotion or reluctance to change their job

Auditor/employee issues such as:

- Refusal or reluctance to provide information or hand over documents
- Unreasonable explanations
- Annoyance or aggressive responses to questions or requests, in an attempt to deter auditors
- Trying to control the audit process
- Employee blames a mistake on a lack of experience with financial requirements or regulations governing funding
- Promises of cooperation followed by subsequent excuses to limit or truncate cooperation
- Subtle resistance
- Answering a question that was not asked

- Offering more information than asked
- Providing a lot of information in some areas and little to none in others
- Explaining a problem by saying “we’ve always done it that way”, “someone from the government told us to do it that way” or “Mr X told us to do it that way”
- A tendency to avoid personal responsibility, e.g. overuse of “we” and “our” rather than “I”
- Blaming someone else
- Too much forgetfulness
- Trying to rush the audit process
- Uncharacteristic willingness to settle questioned costs in an attempt to deter further investigation or analysis

General indicators such as:

- A general lack of transparency about how the organisation works and its procedures and controls
- Fabricated explanations to support inability or unwillingness to evidence transactions or assets, such as stated loss of electronic data or theft of business records

Record keeping, banking and other

- Documents that are missing, copied, written in pencil, altered, or that contain false signatures, the incorrect signature or no authorisation where it would be expected
- Deviation from standard procedures, e.g. all files but one handled in a particular way
- Excessive and/or poorly evidenced journal entries, unable to provide explanation for journal entries
- Transfer to or via any type of holding or suspension account
- Inter-fund company loans to other linked organisations
- Records maintained are inadequate, not updated or not reconciled
- Use of several different banks or frequent bank changes
- Use of several different bank accounts
- Failure to disclose unusual accounting practices or transactions
- Unusual accounting practices or transactions, including:
 - Uncharacteristic willingness to settle questioned costs
 - Non-serial-numbered transactions or out-of-sequence invoices or other documents
 - Creation of fictitious accounts, transactions, employees or charges
 - Writing large cheques to cash or repeatedly to a particular individual
 - Excessive or large cash transactions
 - Payroll cheques with unusual or questionable endorsements
 - Payees have similar names or addresses
 - Non-payroll cheques written to an employee
- Defining delivery needs in ways that can only be met by one source or individual
- Continued reliance on person or entity despite poor performance
- Treating non-business and/or personal goods or services as business transactions in financial records
- Misuse of directors loan account facility, e.g. deliberate miscoding of transactions in directors loan account to gain personal advantage

- Materials, goods and or services fictitiously erroneously reported as purchased, and evidence has been fabricated to support the claim. This could potentially be evidenced by:
 - Repeated purchases of the same items
 - Identical items purchased in different quantities within a short time period
 - Invoices and statements used to evidence purchase facilitating duplicate transactions or payments
 - Anomalies in the format of purchase invoices
 - Goods or equipment are not used as promised, or they do not work or exist
- Legitimate business assets put to non-business or private use