Removal of Trainees from School Placements Procedure

Approved / Reviewed By:	**Strategic Committee**
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Contents

1	About this Policy ……..	3
2	Professional Behaviour and Responsibilities …….	3
3	Concerns about Professional Relationships …….....	3
4	Removal from Placement School……	4
5	Publishing Policy ……..……..	6
6	Review Date ……...	6

1. About this Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines and procedures for the removal of trainees from school place whether through concerns raised or resulting from inadequate support available to the trainee in post.

2. Professional Behaviour and Responsibilities

2.1 General Expectations

As students of EAST SCITT, the professional behaviour and responsibilities of trainees are governed, primarily, by the (EAST Employee) Code of Conduct Policy to be found in the policies section of the EAST website.

2.2 ITT Programme Expectations

In addition, the ITT programme is underpinned by a set of clear expectations about the professional behaviour and responsibilities of trainees. These are embodied in the trainee agreement that all trainees sign before starting the programme.

These expectations cover a range of personal qualities and attributes expected of professional people working together and relate to consideration for others, courtesy, conscientiousness, confidentiality, patience, punctuality, mutual tolerance and respect, and professional appearance.

The agreement states, clearly, that trainees are expected to establish and maintain appropriate professional relationships with EAST SCITT tutors, teachers, other trainee teachers, pupils, and other persons that they are in contact with during the course. Failure in this area may result in your school placement being suspended and your place on the course being terminated.

In these circumstances, EAST SCITT cannot guarantee to find you an alternative placement and the Assessment Board may decide that you have failed the programme.

3. Concerns about Professional Relationships

3.1 Concerns raised by EAST SCITT

Where initial concerns about the trainee’s professional behaviours have been identified by the SCITT tutor or central team, the school mentor and professional tutor will be consulted. This will help establish in more detail the specific concern(s) and whether this is consistent with what has been observed on placement.

At this stage, the trainee's attention should be drawn to these concerns and should be managed following the EAST SCITT Code of Conduct.

3.2 Concerns raised by the school

Where initial concerns about a trainee's professional behaviours have emerged through the school, the school mentor or, if appropriate, the school professional tutor should contact the EAST SCITT tutor with details of the concern(s).

At this stage, the trainee's attention should be drawn to these concerns and should be managed following the EAST SCITT Code of Conduct.

4. Removal from Placement School

4.1 Fraudulent Information

If it is found that fraudulent information has been provided at the application, selection or induction stages this will be managed under the EAST SCITT Fitness to Practice Policy.

4.2 Professional Relationships

Establishing clear and high standards for professional conduct and responsibility is fundamental to our programme. Where there is evidence that these expectations are not being met, the following process should be initiated:

a) If colleagues at the placement school and/or the EAST SCITT tutor believe that a trainee is failing to meet the expectations outlined in the EAST SCITT Code of Conduct policy, they should follow the procedures for initial concerns regarding professional behaviour (see section 2).

b) If the issues persist, or if the concerns are sufficiently serious, the professional tutor/headteacher at the school and/or the EAST SCITT tutor should contact the EAST SCITT Director to express the school's desire to terminate the placement.

   At this stage, the school will be required to provide the EAST SCITT Director with detailed evidence supporting their serious concerns about the trainee. This evidence must include a clear and documented audit trail outlining the nature of the problems, records of meetings between school colleagues and the trainee, and any action points established to address the identified issues. Evidence from the mentor meeting minutes or SCITT Tutor visits will also likely be relevant. If the issues arise towards the end of either Placement A or Placement B, additional evidence may include the relevant mentor reviews.

   If it is established that the evidence provided confirms the concerns raised by the school and the trainee has been supported sufficiently to meet the expected standards, but no/little improvement has been observed, the EAST SCITT Director will approve the request for the placement to be terminated.

c) Following this contact, the EAST SCITT Director will schedule a meeting with the trainee to discuss the situation. Given the serious nature of the school's concerns, the EAST SCITT Director will instruct the trainee to cease their attendance at the school immediately. It will then be the trainee's responsibility to ensure the prompt return of all pupil work, school property, etc., to avoid hindering pupil progress.

d) At the meeting with the trainee, the EAST SCITT Director will present the details of the serious concerns raised regarding their professional behaviour and inform the trainee that the school has requested the termination of the placement. Where possible, the EAST SCITT tutor will be invited to attend this meeting.

   The trainee will have a right to appropriate representation (e.g. a union representative or family member). In advance of the meeting, the trainee will have the opportunity to submit evidence in

support of their position to the EAST SCITT Director. The trainee will also be given the opportunity during the meeting to present and discuss their evidence.

e) The EAST SCITT Director will review the evidence from both the school and the trainee to determine if the school's decision to terminate the placement is justified.

   If the EAST SCITT Director's decision favours the trainee, the Director will still inform the trainee that, due to the nature of the partnership with schools and the evident breakdown in the relationship, returning to the original school is not possible.

   A procedure to secure an alternative school placement will be initiated. Details in the evidence will be anonymised and sent to the professional tutor of three potential alternative schools, with the additional proviso that any contact with a potential alternative school will indicate that the EAST SCITT Director considers the original school's concerns unjustified.

   During the interim period between the meeting with the EAST SCITT Director and the trainee's recommencing at a new school, the trainee will be suspended from the programme.

f) If the EAST SCITT Director determines that the serious nature of the school's concerns was justified, the Fitness to Practice policy would be implemented.

4.2 DBS information

a) When offered a ‘Conditional Place’ all successful applicants are asked to complete a suitability declaration in which they are asked a range of questions relating to their criminal convictions, cautions, disciplinary action etc.

   If the suitability declaration is clear, an offer of a place on the programme will be made to the successful applicant.

   If successful applicants answer 'yes' to any questions on the suitability declaration, the nature of the declaration is taken into account in making a decision about whether it can be considered satisfactory and the applicant can be allowed to enrol.

   If, as a result of these initial deliberations, the issue disclosed is one that is regarded as sufficiently serious as to warrant consultation with school colleagues, a letter is sent to the professional tutors/Headteachers of three potential placement schools, anonymising the conviction details provided and asking whether the school would be prepared to accept on placement a trainee with that specific conviction profile.

   If the feedback from the majority of the schools asked is positive, then EAST SCITT will proceed with making the applicant an offer.

b) If the responses from the partnership schools approached before the start of the programme are negative, indicating that schools would not be willing to offer a placement to an applicant with that conviction profile, the EAST SCITT Director will write to the applicant explaining the situation and rejecting them from the programme.

c) All successful applicants are asked to begin the process of obtaining a DBS Disclosure if possible, at least three months before the start of the programme. It may, however, be some time before the

relevant DBS Disclosure is seen by EAST SCITT and the trainee's school placement might already have begun.

Once the DBS documentation is seen by EAST SCITT, it will be checked against the information provided by the trainee on the suitability declaration. If there is evidence of information about convictions having been withheld, the professional tutor/headteacher at the school will be informed by the EAST SCITT Director and the trainee's placement on the programme will be terminated on the basis of the trainee having withheld information related to criminal convictions.

d) The vast majority of DBS Disclosures are seen by EAST SCITT before the start of the programme. In those cases where the disclosure has not been seen before the trainees' first day in school, the EAST SCITT Director checks the names of those whose forms have not been received against the barred list.

e) In the event of this check indicating that a successful applicant has been convicted of a crime that would place him or her on the barred list their enrolment onto the programme will be terminated.

The EAST SCITT Director will inform both the applicant and the placement school of this decision.

f) If the individual does not appear on the barred list, the EAST SCITT Director will send a letter to the professional tutor/headteacher at the school informing them of the situation.

It is the school's decision as to whether the trainee will be allowed to go into the school on the basis that they will be accompanied and supervised whilst on school premises by a member of staff who has been successfully DBS checked.

Once the DBS documentation has been received by EAST SCITT the school will be informed by the EAST SCITT Director if there are any issues emerging.

4.3 School being placed on 'special measures' following OfSTED Inspection

a) Where a placement school undergoes an OfSTED inspection that results in it being placed under 'special measures', the guidelines from the Department for Education indicate that the placement can continue where the EAST SCITT Director and senior colleagues from the placement school (headteacher and/or professional tutor) are in agreement that trainees can receive the degree of support that they require to meet their professional needs during the placement.

b) Where the EAST SCITT Director feels that trainees on placement in a school under 'special measures' will not receive the degree of professional support required, the EAST SCITT Director will contact the headteacher of the school and indicate that EAST SCITT wishes the placement to terminate.

In those circumstances, the EAST SCITT Director will initiate the procedures for finding alternative placement(s) for the trainee(s) involved. Alternative placement schools will be informed by the EAST SCITT Director that the reason for trainees being moved is unrelated to their performance on the programme.

c) Where the headteacher from the 'special measures' school indicates that the school is unable to provide the trainee/trainees with the degree of professional support required at that stage in the programme, the school will withdraw the placement offer.

In those circumstances, the EAST SCITT Director will initiate the procedures for finding alternative placement(s) for the trainee(s) involved. Alternative placement schools will be informed by the EAST SCITT Director that the reason for trainees being moved is unrelated to their performance on the programme.

5. Publishing policy

This policy will be available through the EAST SCITT website and our documentation. A copy is available from the SCITT office.

6. Review date for the policy

This policy will be reviewed and agreed by the Strategic Committee on a biannual basis.