



## **Removal of a trainee from the PLS programme**

### **1 Professional behaviour and responsibilities of trainees**

#### **1.1 General expectations**

As trainees of PLS, the professional behaviour and responsibilities of trainees are governed, primarily, by the (Employee) Code of Conduct to be found in the policies section of the placement A and placement B schools.

#### **1.2 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 code of conduct agreement that all trainees sign.

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 a professional appearance and bearing.

The agreement states clearly that trainees 'are expected to establish and maintain appropriate professional relationships with PLS tutors, subject mentor, PLS and partnership staff, teachers, 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. In these circumstances, PLS cannot guarantee to find you an alternative placement and the PLS Strategic Board may decide that you have failed the programme of Initial Teacher Training.

### **2 Initial Concerns about Professional Relationships**

#### **2.1 Concerns raised by PLS**

The Support Action Plan and Cause for Concern Procedures outlines the appropriate procedures for dealing with this situation:

#### **2.2 Concerns raised by the School**

The Support Action Plan and Cause for Concern Procedures outline the appropriate procedures for dealing with this situation:

Where initial concerns about a trainee's professional relationships have emerged through the School, the School Subject Mentor or, if appropriate, the PCM should contact the PLS Tutors and Directors with details of the concern(s). At this stage, the trainee's attention should be drawn to these concerns and Cause for Concern Procedures should be implemented. See CFC procedures.



### **3 Removal from the programme related to Professional Relationships**

The clear expectations for professional behaviour and responsibility form the backbone of 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/partship school and/or the PLS Tutor/Director feel that a trainee is failing to meet the expectations identified in teaching standards and Trainee code of conduct Agreement contact should be made through the procedures for initial concerns about professional relationships

b) if the problems persist, or if the issues are sufficiently serious, the Professional Co-ordinating Mentor in the school and/or the PLS Tutor should contact the PLS Directors and indicate a desire on the part of the School that the placement be terminated. At this stage, the School will be asked to provide the Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic board with the detailed evidence which has led colleagues at the School to have a serious concern about the trainee. The evidence provided by the School will need to show a clear and documented audit trail which identifies the nature of the problem(s), records meetings between school colleagues and the trainee, and indicates action points which have been set up so as to enable the trainee to deal with the identified problems. Evidence from appropriate sections of the Professional Development File or tutor visits will also likely to be relevant, as will evidence from the trainee's PLS Tutor. Additional evidence is likely to include the relevant Progress Reports since these reports require schools to comment on the Professional Standards related to Qualified Teaching Status (QTS). In the circumstances outlined above, it is very likely that the reports will indicate a 'failing' profile from the School. If the board deems the trainee as failing despite the interventions of the Cause for Concern Procedure the trainee will be removed from the PLS Programme.

c) as a result of this contact, selected members of the Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic board will arrange to meet with the trainee to discuss the situation. Given the serious nature of the School concerns, the Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic board will tell the trainee that their place on the programme will be withdrawn immediately. It will be the trainee's responsibility to ensure that all pupil work, school property etc. is returned to the School as quickly as possible, so that pupil progress is not hampered;

d) at the meeting with the trainee, the Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic board will present the trainee with the details of the serious professional relationship concerns that have been identified and inform the trainee that the board has recommended that their place on the programme be withdrawn. Where possible, the PLS tutor and mentor will be invited to attend this meeting. The trainee will be given the opportunity in advance of this meeting of presenting evidence to the Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic board in support of their position. The trainee will also be given the opportunity at this meeting of presenting and talking to the evidence which they wish to put forward in support of their position;

e) if the evidence does not indicate a CFC stage 3 'failing' profile, the Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic board will then look at the evidence from both PLS and the trainee and decide whether the decision to withdraw their place on the course is justified.

If the decision of the Strategic board representative is in favour of the trainee, the Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic board representative will still need to inform the trainee that, given the nature of the Partnership arrangement with schools and the evident breakdown in relationship between the trainee and colleagues in the School, a return to the original School will not be possible. In this situation, a procedure for securing an alternative School placement will be



put into operation: Details in the evidence will be anonymised and will be sent to the Professional Co-ordinating Mentors of three potential alternative Schools, with the additional proviso that any contact with a potential alternative School will indicate that, in the opinion of the Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic board the issues which led to the original School expressing serious professional concerns about the trainee were unjustified. In the period between the meeting with the Strategic board representative and the recommencing of the trainee's placement in a new School, the trainee will be suspended from the Programme;

f) if the decision of the Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic board is that the grounds for concern regarding the trainee thought to be of a very serious nature, fall short of a 'failing' profile on the CFC, were justified, the trainee will be given the option of appealing against this decision and, pending a decision by the trainee regarding an appeal, the trainee will be suspended from the Programme;

g) the trainee will be given a period of one month from the date of their meeting with the Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic board. Any appeal must be made in writing to the Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic board. The trainee should follow the published Appeals Procedure.

h) if the trainee's appeal is successful, the process of securing an alternative School placement for them will begin and they will be allowed to resume their studies on the Programme once an alternative School placement has been secured. The Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic board will seek advice from the PLS directors as to possible placement schools. The Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic board will then write to the Professional Co-ordinating Mentor of three possible alternative Schools, anonymising the details and indicating that there had been an issue regarding the trainee which had resulted in the trainee being removed from their original School but being allowed, after appeal, to continue on the Programme. If this situation arises during Placement A part 1 the requirement will be that at least two schools will need to agree to place the trainee, as at that stage in the Programme they will need a placement in two schools. If the successful appeal occurs during placement A part 2, then it will be sufficient for one school to agree to offer a placement. An agreed timeline for the placement will be determined by PLS and the School(s) and communicated to the trainee. The Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic board is unable to guarantee that a placement will be found or, if one is found, the precise timing of any renewed placement. If the appropriate number of schools has been approached and a placement has not been found, the Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic board will inform the trainee of the situation and advise that the trainee ought to explore the possibility of finding a placement themselves. If this is done, the Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic board will need to approve the school. The Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic board will also inform any School found by the trainee that the trainee had successfully appealed against a decision by a school to remove them from a placement, but that the renewal of the placement in their original school(s) or in an alternative School found by PLS had not been possible. Trainees in this position of having to embark on an alternative placement will need to be aware that contextual factors could mean that the renewal of a placement may overrun into a new academic year; and,

i) if the trainee's appeal is unsuccessful, or if the trainee decides not to appeal, then it will be considered that the trainee has failed the programme.

#### **4 Removal from the programme related to Practice of Teaching**

The Support Action Plan and Cause for Concern Procedures outline the appropriate procedures for dealing with this situation:

Where initial concerns about a trainee's practice of teaching have emerged through the School, the Mentor or, if appropriate, the PCM, PLS Tutor should contact the PLS Directors with details



of the concern(s). At this stage, the trainee's attention should be drawn to these concerns, the Support Action Plan and Cause for Concern Procedures should be implemented.

Should the outcomes of the Cause for Concern Procedures not be successful the matter will be referred to the PLS Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic Board.

If, given the evidence presented the PLS Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic Board deems that progress made by the trainee during the Cause for Concern procedures is unsatisfactory members of the Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic Board will meet with the trainee teacher to discuss and assess whether the trainee is in a position to address the areas of concern that led to this judgement.

The Fitness to Teach Committee/Strategic Board may conclude at this point that it would be in the best interests if the placement school, its students and PLS to ask the trainee teacher to leave the course. The trainee teacher would be informed in writing,

Salaried trainee teacher who are deemed unsatisfactory will be subject to placement school procedures.