Lincolnshire ITT Fitness to Train and Fitness to Practise Policy

Policy Code:	ITT5
Policy Start Date:	September 2026
Policy Review Date:	September 2029

Please read this policy in conjunction with the policies listed below:

- HR12 Staff Disciplinary Policy
- HR18 Staff Sickness Absence Policy
- HR24 Allegations of Abuse Made Against Adults Policy
- HR42 Low-Level Concerns Policy
- ITT1 Lincolnshire ITT Complaints Policy
- ITT2 Lincolnshire ITT Application and Academic Appeals Policy
- ITT3 Lincolnshire ITT Recruitment and Selection Policy
- ITT4 Lincolnshire ITT Attendance and Absence Policy
- SW5 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SW17 Safeguarding Adults Policy

1 Policy Statement

1.1 The policy outlines the principles, expectations and processes for managing concerns relating to the Fitness to Train and Fitness to Practise of trainees enrolled on a Lincolnshire ITT programme.

1.2 Lincolnshire ITT has a duty to ensure that all trainees are suitable to enter and remain within the teaching profession. This includes ensuring that trainees demonstrate the professional conduct, health, integrity, resilience, behaviours and attitudes required to work safely and effectively with children and young people and to meet the Teachers' Standards.

1.3 Lincolnshire ITT is committed to supporting trainees to achieve Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and recognises that concerns relating to health, wellbeing, attendance, professional conduct or professional suitability may arise during training. Where concerns are identified, Lincolnshire ITT will seek to provide appropriate support and intervention before considering formal action wherever possible.

1.3 References within this policy to Lincolnshire ITT include all accredited ITT provision delivered directly by Lincolnshire ITT (as part of The Priory Federation of Academies Trust) and through its approved Training Partner Schools.

1.4 This policy does not form part of any member of staff's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

1.5 Lincolnshire ITT considers Fitness to Teach to be a combination of a trainee's Fitness to Train and Fitness to Practise. Trainees must demonstrate both the capacity to engage successfully with the programme and the professional suitability required to work with children and young people in order to be recommended for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

2 Roles, Responsibilities and Implementation

2.1 The Education & Standards Committee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. This committee delegates day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the Director of Professional Learning.

2.2 This policy is approved by the Education & Standards Committee before being ratified at the next available Trust Board meeting. Approval and ratification is minuted, with records kept by the Clerk to Trustees.

2.3 Leaders and Managers have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all staff are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.

2.4 Lincolnshire ITT has overall responsibility for:

- monitoring trainee professional conduct and suitability;
- ensuring compliance with DfE requirements and ITT Criteria;
- considering referrals relating to Fitness to Train and Fitness to Practise;
- implementing support and intervention processes;
- convening Fitness to Teach Panels where required;
- ensuring that any safeguarding concerns with regards to a trainee's behaviour are reported in line with the Trust's safeguarding procedures; and
- ensuring appropriate records are maintained.

The Fitness to Teach Panel will normally comprise:

- Director of Professional Learning (Chair)
- Lincolnshire ITT Lead
- Training Partner Representative; and
- a member of the Trust's HR Team (normally the Head of HR).

2.5 Training Partners and Partnership Schools will:

- monitor trainee progress, attendance, punctuality, wellbeing and professional conduct;
- identify concerns at the earliest opportunity;
- implement and review support and intervention strategies;
- report safeguarding concerns in line with their setting's policy;
- provide evidence to support Fitness to Train/Practise reviews where required; and
- notify the Lincolnshire ITT Leadership Team where concerns arise regarding a trainee's progress, wellbeing or professional suitability

2.6 Trainees are responsible for:

- complying with the Teachers' Standards (because of the nature of the ITT training programmes this means complying with the expectations set out in Part Two of the Teachers' Standards and meeting the Lincolnshire ITT Curriculum milestones related to these);
- complying with Lincolnshire ITT and placement school policies;
- maintaining professional standards of conduct and behaviour;
- engaging with support and intervention processes;

- disclosing any relevant change in circumstances, including criminal investigations, cautions, convictions or DBS status; and
- acting in a manner that maintains public trust and confidence in the teaching profession.

2.7 Lead Mentors are responsible for:

- monitoring trainee progress, attendance, punctuality and professional conduct;
- identifying and implementing interventions where concerns arise;
- supporting trainee wellbeing and signposting appropriate support;
- reporting safeguarding concerns in line with their setting's policy;
- contributing evidence to Fitness to Train/Practise reviews; and
- working collaboratively with Lincolnshire ITT and Placement Schools to support trainee success.

3 Aims

3.1 To ensure that all trainees are supported to meet the professional standards required for recommendation for Qualified Teacher Status.

3.2 To provide a fair, transparent and consistent framework for managing concerns relating to Fitness to Train and Fitness to Practise.

3.3 To ensure concerns are identified and addressed at the earliest opportunity.

3.4 To ensure Lincolnshire ITT fulfils its statutory and regulatory responsibilities.

4 Fitness to Teach

4.1 Lincolnshire ITT considers Fitness to Teach to be the overarching judgement of a trainee's suitability to successfully complete Initial Teacher Training and enter the teaching profession. This judgement is informed by both a trainee's Fitness to Train and Fitness to Practise.

4.2 Fitness to Practise refers to a trainee's professional suitability to work with children and young people and their ability to demonstrate the behaviours, attitudes, conduct and safeguarding responsibilities expected of a teacher, including the expectations set out in Part Two of the Teachers' Standards.

4.3 Concerns relating to Fitness to Teach may arise through a trainee's Fitness to Train, Fitness to Practise, or a combination of both. Such concerns may be identified through routine assessment processes, attendance monitoring, mentoring reviews, Inclusion Support Plans, Progress Support Plans, Cause

for Concern Plans, safeguarding processes, wellbeing support processes, referrals or any other aspect of the Lincolnshire ITT programme.

4.5 Lincolnshire ITT is committed to early intervention and support. Where concerns arise regarding a trainee's Fitness to Teach, these will normally be addressed through the staged support processes outlined within the Lincolnshire ITT Progress and Cause for Concern Support Process before formal Fitness to Teach procedures are considered, unless the nature of the concern requires immediate escalation due to safeguarding, professional conduct or other serious concerns.

5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

5.1 Lincolnshire ITT is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and creating an inclusive training environment. Please see HR8A Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy for further information.

5.2 Any Fitness to Train or Fitness to Practise concern will be considered on a case-by-case basis taking account of:

- individual circumstances;
- available evidence;
- reasonable adjustments;
- Equality Act 2010 duties; and
- the requirements of the programme.

5.3 Reasonable adjustments will be considered and implemented where appropriate to support trainee participation and progression.

6 Circumstances Giving Rise to a Concern

6.1 Concerns may include, but are not limited to:
*Please see 6.2 and 6.3 for any points marked with an **

- conduct that is incompatible with the Teachers' Standards;
- breaches of safeguarding procedures*;
- inappropriate relationships and/or blurring of professional boundaries*;
- dishonesty or academic misconduct;
- inappropriate use of social media;
- frequent failure to submit work in line with the course requirements and/or a sudden deterioration in engagement which adversely impacts progress on the course;
- conduct that brings Lincolnshire ITT, a placement school or the profession into disrepute;

- failure to disclose relevant criminal matters, including behaviour leading to a Police report made to Lincolnshire ITT*;
- a health condition that significantly affects a trainee's ability to train or practise safely despite support and reasonable adjustments; and/or
- concerns arising from attendance, capability or wellbeing processes, including persistent attendance concerns, failure to follow absence reporting procedures, or a lack of engagement with programme expectations and support arrangements.

6.2 In the event that a low-level concern or an allegation of harm is made against a trainee the process in this policy will be suspended and the Trust's HR42 Low-Level Concern Policy or HR24 Allegations of Abuse Made Against Adults Policy will be followed, as appropriate. This may lead to disciplinary action, which will be managed in line with HR12 Staff Disciplinary Policy.

6.3 In the event that it is suspected or proven that a trainee's actions amount to criminal behaviour, this will be referred to the Police. This may lead to disciplinary action, which will be managed in line with HR12 Staff Disciplinary Policy.

6.4 In line with HR24 Allegations of Abuse Made Against Adults Policy, the Trust may suspend a trainee whilst an allegation is investigated/resolved.

6.5 As outlined in HR18 Staff Sickness Policy, the Trust may use medical suspension where appropriate whilst medical advice is sought.

7 Early Intervention and Support

7.1 Lincolnshire ITT, Training Partners and Placement Schools are committed to identifying concerns at the earliest opportunity and implementing timely interventions, modifications and support arrangements to enable trainees to make successful progress towards QTS.

7.2 Support measures may include:

- mentoring support;
- wellbeing support;
- attendance review arrangements;
- support plans;
- occupational health referral;
- reasonable adjustments;
- additional professional development;
- a pause in training; and/or
- enhanced monitoring arrangements.

7.3 Where concerns are successfully addressed through support and intervention, no further action may be required.

8 Formal Review

8.1 Where concerns remain unresolved, are repeated, or are sufficiently serious, Lincolnshire ITT may undertake a formal Fitness to Train and Fitness to Practise review.

8.2 The review will consider:

- evidence from placement schools;
- evidence from mentors and programme staff;
- attendance and engagement records;
- Progress Review documentation and assessment evidence;
- safeguarding information;
- any support provided; and
- the trainee's response to concerns raised.

8.3 The trainee will be informed of the concerns and provided with an opportunity to respond.

9 Outcomes

9.1 Following review, Lincolnshire ITT may determine that one or more of the following outcomes are appropriate:

- no further action;
- guidance and support, e.g., a formal Inclusion Support Plan;
- a formal Academic Support Plan;
- a Cause for Concern Plan;
- additional monitoring;
- deferral of training;
- withdrawal from the programme with the opportunity to reapply; or
- permanent withdrawal from the programme.

9.2 Any decision will be made on a case-by-case basis and will consider:

- the nature and seriousness of the concern;
- safeguarding considerations;
- the support already provided;
- Equality Act 2010 considerations; and/or
- the trainee's ability to meet the Teachers' Standards and successfully achieve QTS.

9.3 The trainee will be notified of the outcome of the formal review in writing within five working days of the review meeting being concluded. Where exceptional circumstances prevent this timescale from being met, the trainee will be informed of the reason for the delay and advised of the revised date by which the outcome will be communicated.

9.4 In the event that a trainee is able to rejoin the programme but there is an outstanding concern Lincolnshire ITT will manage the concern(s) in line with this policy.

10 Appeals

10.1 Trainees may appeal a formal Fitness to Train or Fitness to Practise decision in accordance with the Trust's ITT2 Lincolnshire ITT Application and Academic Appeals Policy.

10.2 Appeals will normally only be considered where:

- procedural irregularity has occurred;
- new evidence has become available; and/or
- the decision is considered unreasonable considering the evidence available.

11 Record Keeping and Confidentiality

11.1 Lincolnshire ITT will maintain accurate and confidential records relating to concerns, Support Plans, reviews and outcomes.

11.2 Records will be retained and managed in accordance with the Trust's HR33 Records Management Policy.

12 Policy Change

12.1 This policy may only be amended or withdrawn by the Priory Federation of Academies Trust.