



# **GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY POLICY**

**September 2022**

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## 1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- The academy trust's funds are used only in accordance with the law, its articles of association, its funding agreement and the latest Academy Trust Handbook
- The trust and those associated with it operate in a way that commands broad public support
- The trust has due regard to propriety and regularity, and ensures value for money, in the use of public funds
- Trustees fulfil their fiduciary duties and wider responsibilities as charitable trustees and company directors
- Members, trustees and staff are aware of what constitutes acceptable gifts and hospitality, and the process that must be followed if they are presented with any of the same

## 2. Legislation and guidance

### 2.1 Gifts and Hospitality

This policy is based on the [Academy Trust Handbook](#) which states that academy trusts should have a policy and register on the acceptance of gifts, hospitality, awards, prizes or other benefits that might compromise their judgement or integrity and should ensure all staff are aware of it. When making gifts, the trust **must** ensure the value is reasonable, is within its scheme of delegation, the decision is documented, and achieves propriety and regularity in the use of public funds.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

### 2.2 Anti-Bribery and Corruption

The School's policy is to conduct all of its business in an honest and ethical manner. The School takes a zero-tolerance approach to bribery and corruption and is committed to acting professionally, fairly and with integrity in all business dealings and relationships wherever it operates and implementing and enforcing effective systems to counter bribery. The School will comply with the Bribery Act 2010 in respect of its conduct.

## 3. Definitions

**Bribery** is an inducement or reward offered, promised or provided in order to gain any business or personal advantage.

**Gifts** are any items, cash, awards, prizes, goods or services, offered without expectation of payment or benefit. Gifts also include goods or services offered at a discounted rate, or on terms not available to the general public.

**Hospitality** is defined as food, drink, accommodation or entertainment (such as cultural or sporting events) provided free of charge, heavily discounted or on terms not generally available to the general public.

**Third Party** means any individual or organisation that staff come into contact with during the course of their work and includes actual and prospective pupils and parents, suppliers, business contacts, agents, advisers and government and public bodies.

## **4. Roles and responsibilities**

### **4.1 Members, trustees and staff**

Members, trustees and staff:

- Must not give or accept gifts or hospitality to or from a third party where it might be perceived that their personal integrity has the potential to be compromised, or that the trust might be placed under any obligation as a result of acceptance
- Must not use their official position to further their private interests or the interests of others
- Must not solicit gifts or hospitality
- Must record any gifts or hospitality offered to them even if declined
- Must consult the Headteacher before accepting or offering any gifts or hospitality.

### **4.2 Academy trustees**

Academy trustees will ensure that the trust's funds are used in a way that commands broad public support, pays due regard to propriety and regularity, and provides value for money.

### **4.3 The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that staff are aware of and understand this policy, and that it is being implemented consistently.

The Headteacher will act with the utmost integrity on all matters relating to gifts and hospitality, ensuring that they set a good example to the rest of the school and trust and to those outside the organisation.

They will also ensure, alongside the School Business Manager, that decisions on whether individuals or the trust can accept or offer gifts or hospitality are in line with this policy.

### **4.4 The School Business Manager**

The School Business Manager will ensure that:

- The trust maintains a gifts and hospitality register
- Figures for transactions relating to gifts made by the trust are disclosed in the trust's audited accounts, in accordance with the Academy Trust Handbook
- The academy trustees and Headteacher are provided with information on gifts and hospitality received and given, as appropriate

They will also ensure, alongside the Headteacher, that decisions on whether individuals or the trust can accept or offer gifts or hospitality with a value of are in line with this policy.

All accounts, invoices, memoranda and other documents and records relating to dealings with third parties, such as clients, suppliers and business contacts, should be prepared

and maintained with strict accuracy and completeness. No accounts must be kept "off-book" to facilitate or conceal improper payments.

## **5. Acceptable gifts and hospitality**

### **5.1 Offers of gifts and hospitality received**

Generally, gifts of nominal value, such as small tokens of appreciation may be accepted, such as thank you gifts received from pupils and parents. Any gifts received over £150 must be recorded using the school's electronic system (CPOMs)

Similarly, hospitality such as working lunches may be accepted in order to maintain good relationships with key contacts, provided the hospitality is reasonable in the circumstances.

Any gifts or hospitality provided by the trust, such as a working lunch for visitors, must not be extravagant. Alcohol must not be purchased out of the school budget.

Expense claims should be made to the School Business Manager and receipts must always be enclosed.

## **6. Unacceptable gifts and hospitality**

The following must never be offered or accepted:

- Monetary gifts.
- Gifts or hospitality offered to family members, partners or close friends of members, trustees or staff.
- Gifts or hospitality from a potential supplier or tenderer in the immediate period before tenders are invited or during the tendering process.
- Lavish or extravagant gifts or hospitality, even if they relate to activities the recipient undertakes in their own time.
- This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

## **7. Declining gifts and hospitality**

Any members, trustee or staff member who is offered any of the unacceptable gifts or hospitality outlined in section 6 above should politely decline the offer.

Disciplinary action will be taken against anyone who fails to decline gifts or hospitality the trust has deemed unacceptable.

Failure to declare any gifts or hospitality offered on the gifts and hospitality register, in line with this policy, will be dealt with as a staff disciplinary matter.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

The gifts and hospitality register is monitored regularly by the School Business Manager.

## **9. How to raise a concern**

Members of staff are encouraged to raise concerns about any issue or suspicion of malpractice at the earliest possible stage. Concerns should be reported by following the procedure set out in our Whistleblowing Policy.

Members of staff who refuse to accept or offer a bribe, or those who raise concerns or report another's wrongdoing, are sometimes worried about possible repercussions. The School aims to encourage openness and will support anyone who raises genuine concerns in good faith under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken. The School is committed to ensuring no one suffers any detrimental treatment as a result of refusing to take part in bribery or corruption, or because of reporting in good faith their suspicion that an actual or potential bribery or other corruption offence has taken place, or may take place in the future.

Detrimental treatment includes dismissal, disciplinary action, threats or other unfavourable treatment connected with raising a concern. If a member of staff believes that he/she has suffered any such treatment, he/she should use the School's Grievance Procedure.

The School will fully investigate any instances of alleged or suspected bribery. Staff suspected of bribery may be suspended from their duties while the investigation is being carried out. The School will invoke its disciplinary procedures where any member of staff is suspected of bribery, and proven allegations may result in a finding of gross misconduct and immediate dismissal.

The School may terminate the contracts of any associated persons, including consultants or other workers who act for, or on behalf of, the School who are found to have breached this policy. The School may also report any matter to the relevant authorities and the police.

**Appendix 1: Gifts and Hospitality Register**

Date	Name	Description of gift/hospitality and approximate value	Party offering gift/hospitality	Accepted/ rejected	Approved by