



Gifts & Hospitality Policy

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(Appendix 1 - Gifts & Hospitality Register)

Trust Mission Statement

We are a partnership of Catholic schools.

Our aim is to provide the very best Catholic education for all in our community and so improve life chances through spiritual, academic and social development.

By placing the person and teachings of Jesus Christ at the centre of all that we do, we will:

- Follow the example of Our Lady of Lourdes by nurturing everyone in a spirit of compassion, service and healing
- Working together so that we can all achieve our full potential, deepen our faith and realise our God given talents
- Make the world a better place, especially for the most vulnerable in our society, by doing '**little things with great love**' St Therese of Lisieux

Titus 1:8 ESV

But hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined

1 Introduction

1.1 The intention of the policy is to ensure that The Trust can demonstrate that no undue influence has been applied or could be said to have been applied by any supplier or anyone else dealing with The Trust. The Trust should be able to show that all decisions are reached on the basis of value for money and for no other reason. Any consideration of whether the principles of this Policy have been breached will be determined by reference to this provision.

1.2 This policy will be circulated to all staff, directors and governors immediately after approval and will form part of the induction pack for staff, directors and governors new to the Trust. Any breach of this Policy could lead to disciplinary action and may constitute gross misconduct.

1.3 Policies and procedures implemented by the Trust are there to control the organisation's exposure to risks in line with the Risk Policy and those identified within the risk register. All staff should be made aware of this and all policies of the Trust and the procedures in place including any updates issued from time to time. Should staff have any queries relating to this or any other policy or procedure they should write to the Trust's Governance Manager who will ensure adequate training and guidance is provided.

2 General Principles

2.1 As a general guideline, business gifts and hospitality should not be accepted by any member of staff, except as provided for below.

2.2 The Trust and all academies will be open and transparent in declaring all offers of gifts and hospitality whether accepted or not. A full record will be made in the Gifts and Hospitality Register. See Appendix 1 for a suggested template.

3 Related Policies

The Gifts and hospitality policy must be considered alongside the following policies which collectively set out the Trust's approach to reducing bribery risks:

- Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy
- Anti-Fraud Policy
- Code of Conduct for staff
- Code of Conduct for Governors
- Contract Procedure Rules and Regulations and Procurement Regulations

4 Definitions

4.1 A Gift is any item or service, award, prize or any other benefit which is received free of charge; or personally offered at a discounted rate or on terms not available to the general public or which might be seen to compromise the personal judgment or integrity of the recipient.

4.2 Hospitality is the offer of food, drink, accommodation or entertainment or the opportunity to attend any cultural or sporting event not available to the general public.

5 Dealing with Gifts and Hospitality

5.1 The Trust expects staff, directors and governors to exercise the utmost discretion in giving

and accepting gifts and hospitality when on Trust or academy business. Particular care should be taken about a gift from a person or organisation that has, or is hoping to have, a contract with our organisation. In any case of doubt advice should be sought from the Headteacher or Trust Chief Operating Officer.

5.2 Staff, directors and governors must not make use of their official position to further their private interests or those of others.

6 Receiving Gifts & Hospitality

6.1 Staff, directors and governors must not accept gifts, hospitality or benefits of any kind from a third party where it might be perceived that their personal integrity is being compromised, or that the Trust / academy might be placed under an obligation.

6.2 Gifts of low intrinsic value (not more than £10) such as promotional calendars, stationary, or diaries, or small tokens of gratitude, can be accepted. If there is any doubt as to whether the acceptance of such an item is appropriate, individuals should decline the gift or refer the matter to the Trust Chief Operating Officer.

6.3 It is common for appreciative parents and pupils to register their thanks for the work of staff in the form of a small personal gift. If these are valued at less than £30 these are perfectly acceptable without reference to senior members of staff. These will not need to be recorded in the register. Where gifts valued over £30 are accepted, these should be recorded in the register.

6.4 Where a more valuable gift, benefit or service is offered which is to the good of the academy, rather than an individual, it must be referred to the Headteacher or to the Trust Chief Operating Officer for approval within their discretion; if acceptable, these items must be recorded in the register.

6.5 Hospitality such as working lunches, coffees etc are perfectly acceptable where it is appropriate to offer or receive these in support of good relationships with visiting staff or business colleagues. Modest hospitality, provided it is reasonable in the circumstances, should be similar to the scale of hospitality which the Trust as an employer would be likely to offer. These would not be added to the register. Hospitality received above this level should be recorded in the register.

6.6 If a member of staff, director or governor is offered a gift or hospitality whilst involved in the procurement of goods and services, tenders for work or when liaising with anyone conducting business with The Trust (other than light refreshments) it is their responsibility to discuss this with the Trust Chief Operating Officer immediately.

6.7 If not accepting a gift would be regarded as causing offence (such as a sudden and unexpected gift or one where refusal could cause cultural offence) the item should be accepted. The matter should then be brought to the attention of the Trust Chief Operating Officer as soon as possible who may decide to return the gift or may donate it to a Trust raffle/ fair or a charitable cause.

6.8 Examples of gifts or hospitality that should not be accepted are:

- cash or monetary gifts;
- gifts or hospitality offers to a member of your family;
- gifts or hospitality from a potential supplier or tenderer in the immediate period before tenders are invited or during the tender process;
- staff, director or governor attendance at sporting and cultural events at the invitation of suppliers, potential suppliers or consultants. (Where it is considered that there is a benefit to the Trust or one of its academies in a member of staff, trustee or governor attending a sponsored event, the attendance must be formally approved and registered by the Trust Chief Operating Officer).

6.9 Where a gift is received on behalf of The Trust, the gift remains the property of The Trust.

The gift may be required for display, it may, with the Headteacher's approval, remain in the care of the recipient. Unless otherwise agreed, the gift should be returned to The Trust on or before the recipient's last working day.

6.10 Where gifts in the form of sponsorship of a Trust event are made then full details must be entered in the Gifts and Hospitality Register.

6.11 Gifts are sometimes offered by suppliers with the purchase of items. All such special offer gifts are the property of The Trust and must be used accordingly.

7 Giving Gifts and Hospitality

7.1 The Trust and its academies will not normally give gifts to other individuals or organisations. If gifts are given, prior approval must be given by the Chief Operating Officer and staff must ensure that the decision is fully documented in the Gift and Hospitality Register and has regard to the propriety and regularity of the use of public funds.

7.2 For clarity, this does not apply to:

- the award of gifts, prizes etc related to the achievement of pupils e.g. attainment or merit awards.
- Purchase of flowers, either to staff or an appropriate external party, as a one-off gesture to recognise circumstances such as illness or as a 'thank you'

Such gifts as described above are allowable when appropriate, not excessive, and approved by the Headteacher and Chief Operating Officer.

For clarity, the use of Trust funds is **not permitted** in the following circumstances:

- As a gift for life-events such as resignation, retirement or maternity, although staff may choose to purchase a gift by collecting their own personal funds.
- For the purchase of **alcohol**.

7.3 Where hospitality is provided by the Trust or its academies this should be approved in advance by the Chief Operating Officer or Headteacher. In approving hospitality, the Chief Operating Officer or Headteacher should ensure it is not in breach of the UK Bribery Act 2010 and that the costs are appropriate for a publicly funded organisation. Hospitality such as working lunches, coffees etc and modest hospitality in the form of meals etc are acceptable where it is appropriate to offer or receive these in support of good relationships with visiting staff or business colleagues (but not for their family or friends). These would not be added to the register. Hospitality provided above this level should be recorded in the register.

7.4 Gifts provided by the Trust or its academies outside of those covered above (e.g. gifts to clergy, the Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocese and charitable donations) must be provided for out of general fund raising and not from public funds. Full records will be maintained of these gifts and donations in the Gifts and Hospitality Register.

8 Non-Compliance

8.1 In the case where it is believed a member of staff, director or governor has not declared a gift or hospitality then a formal investigation will be instigated by the Chair of the Trust / Finance Director. If misconduct is indicated, this may take the form of disciplinary procedures in the case of employees.

Supporting Documents

Academies Trust Handbook: [ATH 2022 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

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