

Gifts and hospitality policy

Ewelme C.E. (A) Primary School



Approved by: Full Governing Board

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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

The School's funds are used only in accordance with the law and the latest Financial Handbook

The School and those associated with it operate in a way that commands broad public support

The School has due regard to propriety and regularity, and ensures value for money, in the use of public funds

Governors fulfil their fiduciary duties and wider responsibilities.

Governors 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

This policy is based on the Scheme for Financing Schools, which advises that schools should have a policy and register on the acceptance of gifts, hospitality, awards, prizes or any other benefit which might be seen to compromise the personal judgement or integrity of governors, staff and/or any other representative of the school.

3. Definitions

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.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Governors and staff

Governors 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 school 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 or the school with a value of £75 on the gifts and hospitality register (see appendix 1) within 7 working days, even if declined

Must consult the School Business Manager or Headteacher before accepting or offering any gifts or hospitality with a value of £75 or more.

4.2 Governors

Governors will ensure that the school'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 school can accept or offer gifts or hospitality with a value of £75 or more are in line with this policy.

4.4 The School Business Manager

The School Business Manager will ensure that:

- The school maintains a gifts and hospitality register

- Figures for transactions relating to gifts made by the school are disclosed in the SAP accounts

- The governors 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 school can accept or offer gifts or hospitality with a value of over £75 are in line with this policy.

The School Business Manager is responsible for maintaining the gifts and hospitality register on a day-to-day basis.

5. Acceptable gifts and hospitality

5.1 Offers of gifts and hospitality received

Governors and staff can accept gifts and hospitality that have a value of up to £75. These do not have to be pre-approved or recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.

Generally, gifts of nominal value, such as small tokens of appreciation, may be accepted. If in any doubt, governors and staff must consult the School Business Manager or Headteacher.

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. If in doubt, guidance must be sought from the School Business Manager or Headteacher.

Any gifts or hospitality offered by an individual, business or organisation with a value of over £75 must be recorded on the gifts and hospitality register within 7 working days, even if declined. Any governor or member of staff who is offered such gifts or hospitality must consult the School Business Manager or Headteacher before accepting.

If the Headteacher is the recipient, or intended recipient, of **any** offer of gifts or hospitality, they must inform the chair of the governors and record the offer on the gifts and hospitality register.

Failure to declare any offer of gifts or hospitality on the register in line with this policy will be treated as a staff disciplinary matter.

On occasion, groups of parents/carers may offer 'joint gifts' for members of staff, for instance as a 'thank you' at the end of term, whereby a number of parents/carers contribute a sum of money each towards a voucher or present. These need only be entered on the gifts and hospitality register if the total value of the gift suggests that at least one of the contributors to the gift contributed £75 or more (for example, if the cost of the gift or voucher, divided by the number of contributors, exceeds, or is close to, £75). If the total value of a 'joint gift' exceeds £75, staff must inform the School Business Manager or Head Teacher before accepting.

5.2 Offers of gifts and hospitality given

Any gifts or hospitality provided by the school, such as a working lunch for visitors, must not be extravagant. Flowers or gifts for staff as leaving presents or when staff are ill and in hospital may also be given in agreement with the Headteacher.

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

The School Business Manager or Headteacher must be consulted about any proposal to provide gifts or hospitality with a value over £30.

6. Unacceptable gifts and hospitality

The following must never be offered or accepted:

Gifts of cash (including cheques or bank transfer)

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

If they feel it would not be appropriate for them to decline, they should refer the matter to the Headteacher or School Business Manager. The Headteacher or School Business Manager may decline the offer, or donate the gift or hospitality to a worthy cause, and must also record the offer on the gifts and hospitality register.

Disciplinary action will be taken against anyone who fails to decline gifts or hospitality the governors 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 and Headteacher.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Resources Committee and approved by the Full Governing Body.

9. Links with other policies

This gifts and hospitality policy is linked to the:

Staff code of conduct

Staff disciplinary procedures

School Financial Standards policy

Appendix 1: gifts and hospitality register

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