



# **Gifts & Hospitality Policy**

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### **What does this policy cover?**

This policy covers both the receiving and the giving of gifts and hospitality in relation to your role as a member of staff, governor, director or member of the Trust.

### **Why do we have a policy on gifts and hospitality?**

Your conduct as a member of staff or a governor/director/member should never lead anyone to question your integrity, or lead anyone to think that you have been influenced by receiving gifts and hospitality nor that you have sought to influence others in this way. This is important because your own personal reputation and that of the Trust could be seriously affected if you inappropriately accept, or offer a gift or hospitality. It is a criminal offence to demand or accept a gift or reward in return for allowing yourself to be influenced as a part of the Trust. Similarly, it is an offence to offer such an inducement to others. This is why the Trust has this policy, which applies to all staff and governors/directors/members on gifts and hospitality.

### **What is a gift?**

A gift is any item or service that you receive free of charge. It also includes any goods or services which are offered at a discounted rate or on terms not available to the general public.

### **What is hospitality?**

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

## **Receiving Gifts and Hospitality**

### **What things should I think about before I decide what to do?**

You should treat with caution any offer of gift or hospitality made to you personally. In particular, think about whether there is a benefit to the Trust or School in you accepting, the scale, amount, frequency and source of the offer, the timing of the offer in relation to forthcoming decisions and whether accepting could be misinterpreted as a sign of your, or the Trust's, support or favour.

### **What gifts or hospitality can be accepted without any approval?**

You can accept gifts and hospitality, which are small gestures and have a value of £50 or less, this is a total annual value per member of staff per donor for the period April – March each year, without the approval of the Headteacher or CEO. However, you should only accept them if you are satisfied that they will not be seen by others as a means to influence you in the performance of your role. If you have any doubt regarding the perception of such a gift, you **MUST** speak to your Headteacher/CEO. Gifts and hospitality of this nature do not need to be recorded in the Gifts and Hospitality Register.

### **What gifts or hospitality need approval from the Headteacher/CEO or Chair of Governors/Chair of the Board of Directors?**

Any gift or hospitality, defined as having a value of £50 or more, should be politely refused or returned. You must have the prior written approval of the Headteacher/CEO if you decide to accept something which has a value of more £50. This should only be in circumstances where you are not involved in decisions regarding contracts awarded or goods purchased. If you or your Headteacher/CEO has any concerns or doubts about the public perception that might be attached to accepting any gift or hospitality, then you must refer it to the CEO of the Trust.

### What gifts or hospitality should never be accepted?

You must never accept;

- cash or monetary gifts (except in the case of retail gift vouchers which cannot be exchanged for cash and these must always be disclosed to the Headteacher regardless of value)
- gifts or hospitality offered to your husband, wife, partner, family member or friend by virtue of their relationship to you and your role in the Trust.
- gifts or hospitality from a potential supplier or tenderer in the immediate period before tenders are invited or during the tender process.
- Lavish or extravagant gifts or hospitality, even if they relate to activities in your own time.

### What should I do if I am offered a gift or hospitality?

Gifts or hospitality below the value of £50 (in any one tax year) may be accepted without recording. However, you should only accept them if you are satisfied that they will not be seen by others as a means to influence you in the performance of your role as a member of staff, or governor. You must make sure that **all** offers you receive which have a value of more than £50 (whether you accept them or not) are recorded in the Gifts and Hospitality Register.

### Do I need to record offers that I decline?

Yes – *all* offers of gifts or hospitality, which have a value of more than £50, must be recorded in the School's/Trust's register, even if you don't accept.

### What should I do if I am in doubt?

If in doubt, always speak to the Headteacher/CEO. It is your responsibility to follow this policy on gifts and hospitality and to justify why you chose to accept a gift or hospitality offered to you.

### What would happen to me if I didn't follow the guidance?

The Trust will take disciplinary action against you if you failed to follow the guidance. As well as being unethical, it is also a criminal offence, as per The Bribery Act 2010, to demand or accept a gift or reward in return for allowing yourself to be influenced as a part of the Trust. This means you could be prosecuted by the Police.

## Giving Gifts or Hospitality

### *What is the concern about the giving of gifts or hospitality?*

The Trust is funded with public money and the Headteacher/CEO is responsible for ensuring that it is spent in a proper manner, for the purposes for which it was intended. If the Trust were (or were seen to be) offering gifts and hospitality as a way of gaining undue influence with any outside party (e.g. a supplier, Ofsted, the Local Authority, etc.), that would be an improper use of public money.

### What Forms of Gifts or Hospitality Might it be Appropriate for the Trust to Offer?

Any offer must be made in an open and transparent manner. Examples of acceptable offers of Gifts or Hospitality are:

- If someone is visiting in an official capacity, the provision of refreshments appropriate to the time of day and duration of the visit, for consumption on Trust premises.
- If someone has had a long-standing relationship with the Trust and has gone beyond the basic requirements of their office in the performance of their duties, it might be appropriate to offer a small gift as a token of appreciation to mark the end of their association with the Trust.
- Gifts (such as staff leaving presents) that are paid for by voluntary donations from members of staff, or governors (i.e. not paid from School funds).

### **What Forms of Gifts or Hospitality Would it NOT be Appropriate for the Trust to Offer?**

It would not be appropriate to offer anything which might influence (or be thought to influence) the recipient to behave in a dishonest way, or in a way that gave the Trust an unfair advantage, compared to other schools/trusts.

Examples that would not be appropriate are:

- Meals or entertainment that are received away from Trust premises
- Meals or entertainment offered to other members of the recipient's family, or friends, who have no personal connection with the Trust.
- Cash, or items which could be exchanged for cash.

- **THE DO's and DON'T's**

DO	DON'T
➤ Read and follow the guidance on gifts and hospitality	Accept any gifts or hospitality which have a value of more than £50 without the approval of the Headteacher, or the Chair of Governors/Chair of the Board of Directors as necessary
➤ Seek advice from the Headteacher or Chair of Governors/Chair of the Board of Directors if you are in doubt	Accept gifts or hospitality in the immediate period before tenders are invited or during the tender process.
Record all offers of gifts and hospitality which have a value of more than £50 in the School's register, whether accepted or not	Accept cash or monetary gifts
Treat with caution any gifts or hospitality offered to you and think very carefully before accepting anything	Accept a gift or hospitality as an inducement or reward
Take into account what the public's perception would be in deciding whether or not to accept a gift or hospitality	Accept gifts or hospitality offered to your husband, wife, partner, family member or friend
Consider whether the offer is proportionate in deciding whether or not to accept hospitality from an outside body	Accept a gift or hospitality which you or a member of the public would think is lavish, extravagant or excessive, even if the hospitality is taken in your own time
Err on the side of caution when deciding whether to accept a gift or hospitality. If the thought of the acceptance makes you uncomfortable, do not accept	

**Kingsbridge Educational Trust**

**RECORD OF GIFTS & HOSPITALITY (accepted\*/refused\*)**

\*Delete as appropriate

This form must be completed by any member of staff or governor/director/member receiving or declining a gift or hospitality, which relates to their position in the Trust and has a value of more than £50. If the individual is concerned about the likely “level” of any gift or hospitality that he or she may receive, agreement from the Headteacher/CEO or Chair of Governors/Chair of the Board of Directors must be obtained in accordance with the Trust’s guidance.

<b>Name of staff/governor/director/member:</b>	<b>Position held:</b>
<b>Individual, company or organisation offering gift or hospitality:</b>	
<b>Date, time and venue:</b>	<b>Gift/Hospitality:</b>  Accepted*/Declined*
<b>Nature and approximate value of hospitality/gift:</b>  If accepted, has the gift been retained for personal use or for Trust use?	
<b>If accepted, reason for accepting hospitality/gift:</b>	
Signed:	Date
Approved By: (Headteacher/CEO/Chair of Governors/Chair of the Board of Directors signature)	