

Gifts & Hospitality Policy

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Responsible Committee:	Finance & Resources Committee

Gifts & Hospitality Policy

1. Introduction

Haileybury Academy Trust is committed to ensuring that positive steps are taken to provide a working environment for all staff colleagues which is safe, supportive and treats everybody in a way which is fair, open and transparent.

The receipt of gifts, money or excessive hospitality can damage the reputation of the school and the wider Trust and lead to possible prosecutions for corruption. Under the Bribery Act 2010 it is a criminal offence for employees in an official capacity to accept any gift or consideration as an inducement or reward for doing or not doing anything or showing favour or disfavour to any person.

This policy seeks to protect staff from suspicion of dishonesty and ensure they are free from any conflict of interest with respect to acceptance or provision of gifts, hospitality or any other inducement from or to suppliers of goods or services to the Trust.

2. Definitions

A gift is any item, cash, goods or benefit in kind given or offered for which no payment or service was given or received in return. Gifts also include goods or services offered at a discounted rate or on terms not available to the general public.

Hospitality can be defined as any food, drink, accommodation or entertainment provided free of charge or heavily discounted or on terms not available to the general public.

Staff is taken to mean all permanent and fixed term staff employed by the Trust and by any other contractors, consultants or other persons (including Governors) acting on behalf of the Trust.

3. Principles

Staff colleagues are expected to exercise the utmost discretion in giving and accepting gifts and hospitality when on Trust business. Particular care should be taken with regard to a person or organisation that has, or is hoping to have, a contract with the school or the wider Trust.

Staff colleagues must not accept gifts, hospitality or benefits in kind from a third party where it might be perceived that their personal integrity is being compromised or that of the school or wider Trust might be placed under an obligation.

No favour or preference which is not generally available should be sought, accepted or given.

Staff colleagues must not make use of their official position to further their private interests or those of others.

4. Gifts and Hospitality

The individual should consider carefully whether it is appropriate to accept or decline a gift or hospitality. If in doubt advice should be sought from the Principal or Business Manager who may in turn liaise with other members of the Trust's Senior Leadership team.

Gifts

5.31. Academy trusts should have a policy and register on the acceptance of gifts, hospitality, awards, prizes or other benefits that may 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.

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Gifts of low intrinsic value, under £5, such as promotional calendars or diaries or small tokens of gratitude can be accepted and do not need to be declared.

Any gift or hospitality over those of low intrinsic value must be recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality. This is held by the Business Manager.

It is each individual's responsibility to inform the Business Manager by e-mail of any gifts or hospitality that is offered.

5. Contracts with Suppliers

Staff must base all purchasing decisions and negotiations for contracts solely on achieving best value for money.

The Trust requires staff who have official dealings with contractors and other suppliers of goods and services to the Trust or any of its constituent schools to avoid conducting any private business with them by any means other than through normal commercial channels.

Staff colleagues should be aware of the Bribery Act 2010 which states that any money, gift or consideration received by an employee in public service, from a person or organisation holding, or seeking to obtain a contract, will be deemed by the courts to have been received corruptly unless the employee proves otherwise.

6. Gifts to and from Pupils/Students and/or their Families

Given the nature of the professional responsibilities of staff, they are strongly advised not to give or accept gifts/hospitality (exceeding £25 in value) from pupils/students or their families during their period of study.

Any gifts/hospitality from pupils/students or their families, exceeding £25 in value, must be entered in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

7. Register of Gifts

The Business Manager has responsibility for the ownership of the Policy and the Gift and Hospitality Register. Individual staff are personally responsible for reporting any gifts/hospitality offered and whether these have been accepted or declined.

This information will be recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality. Staff should provide details for the register as follow

- Staff name
- Name of the person/company offering the gift/hospitality
- Date the gift/hospitality offered
- Gift/ hospitality details
- Value £
- Is the gift accepted or rejected
- Note – any other relevant information

Both acceptance and rejection of a gift or hospitality offered to you by a person or company should be recorded in the Register of Gifts.

8. Rejection of Gifts or Hospitality

The following should not be offered or accepted

- Monetary gifts
- Gifts or hospitality offered to family members, partners, close friends or members, trustees or staff
- Gifts or hospitality from a potential supplier or tenderer in the immediate period prior to tenders being invited or during the tendering process.
- Lavish or excessive gifts or hospitality.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

The Trust should not make gifts of alcohol

Anyone who is offered an unacceptable gift as outlined above should politely reject the offer and register their rejection on the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

9. Failing to register a gift or hospitality

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.

If a member of staff is uncomfortable rejecting a gift or uncertain how to respond to an offer of a gift or hospitality they should seek assistance from the Business Manager.