
Title of Policy/Procedure Gifts and Hospitality Policy

Reviewer(s): Chief Finance Officer
Head of HR

To be read in conjunction with the following policies: N/A

Consultation Process A consultation has taken place with the
Headteachers of Catherine Wayte and William
Morris Primary School.

Policy Date: February 2022

Review Date: February 2025

This policy has been ratified by: • Finance Committee

Background

The Blue Kite Academy Trust is committed to the highest level of integrity, honesty and accountability in all its business dealings. All staff, members, trustees and governors are expected to maintain high standards of propriety and professionalism in all their dealings, ensuring they are free from any conflict of interest through their business in the name of the Academy Trust.

The guiding principle of the policy is that:

“The public is entitled to demand of a local government officer conduct of the highest standard and public confidence and his or her integrity would be shaken were the least suspicion to arise that s/he could in any way be influenced by improper motives”.

In order to protect all individuals associated with the Trust, and the reputation of the Trust and its academies, from accusations of bribery or corruption staff, members, trustees, and governors must take extreme care that none of their dealings, directly or indirectly, could be deemed as a reward or benefit, in line with the Prevention of Fraud and Bribery Act 2010. This Act makes it a criminal offence to:

- offer, promise or give a bribe
- request, agree to or accept a bribe
- (by an organisation) fail to prevent bribery by those acting on its behalf (associated persons) to obtain or retain business or a business advantage for the organisation.

Under this Act, a bribe is ‘a financial or other advantage’ offered, promised or given to induce a person to perform a relevant function or activity improperly, or reward them for doing so.

The Trust and each school will hold a Gifts and Hospitality Register. Staff, members, trustees and governors must complete a Gifts and Hospitality Form for all gifts and hospitality over the value of £30. This includes gifts and hospitality over the value of £30 that have been offered but not accepted. Please see Appendix I.

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

Any breach of this policy could lead to disciplinary action.

Definition

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.

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.

Dealing with Gifts and Hospitality

The Trust expects staff, members, trustees and governors to exercise the utmost discretion in giving and accepting gifts and hospitality when on Trust or school business. Care should be taken when making use of services or goods from firms who are actively engaged in

business with the Trust. This is particularly relevant where the goods or services are substantial in value or where the provider normally deals with a commercial market rather than a domestic one.

Under no circumstances must an employee solicit gifts or hospitality of any kind or allow the receipt of any gift to influence them in the conduct of their duties.

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

Staff, members, trustees 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/school might be placed under an obligation.

Gifts of low intrinsic value such as promotional calendars or diaries, 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 Chief Finance Officer or Trust Directors.

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. Staff must not accept cash regardless of the amount, under any circumstances. If staff are unsure on whether or not they should accept a gift, they must first speak to the Headteacher who will decide on a course of action. If the Headteacher or CEO receives a gift, the above conditions apply. If the Headteacher or CEO thinks the gift may breach any part of this policy, they must seek approval from the Chair of Trustees.

Where a gift of over £30 is received from parents but it is known that a number of parents have donated towards it of no more than £30 then this can be accepted and does not have to be recorded on the register.

Where a more valuable gift, benefit or service is offered which is to the good of the school, rather than an individual, it must be referred to the Chief Finance Officer, or if in the case of the Chief Finance Officer, to the Chief Operations Officer for approval within their discretion; if acceptable, then these terms must be recorded in the register.

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.

If a member of staff, member, trustee 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 school (other than light refreshments) it is their responsibility to discuss this with the Chief Finance Officer.

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 Chief Finance Officer as soon as possible, who may decide to return the gift, or may donate it to the school raffle/fair or a charitable cause.

Examples of gifts or hospitality that should not be accepted are cash (however gift vouchers can be accepted); 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, member, trustee 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, member, trustee or governor attending a sponsored event, the attendance must be formally approved and registered by the Chief Finance Officer).

Where a gift is received on behalf of the school, the gift remains the property of the school. The gift may be required for departmental display, or it may, with the Headteacher's approval, remain in the care of the recipient. Unless otherwise agreed, the gift should be returned to the department on or before the recipient's last working day.

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

Giving Gifts and Hospitality

The Trust and its academies will not normally give gifts to other individuals or organisations. If gifts are given, 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. This does not apply to the award of gifts, prizes etc related to the achievement of pupils e.g. attainment or merit awards.

Where hospitality is provided by the Trust or its academies this should be approved in advance by the Business Manager. In approving hospitality, the Finance Officer/Business Manager should ensure it is not in breach of the UK Bribery Act 2010 and also 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 perfectly 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.

Non-Compliance

In the case where it is believed a member of staff, members, trustees, and governors has not declared a gift or hospitality then a formal investigation will be instigated by the Trust Executive. If misconduct is indicated, this may take the form of disciplinary procedures in the case of employees.

Appendix I



Record of Gifts and Hospitality (Accepted / Refused)

Name of staff/member/trustee/governor	Position held
Individual, company or organisation offering gift or hospitality	
Date, time and venue	Description of gift/hospitality
Accepted / Decline (please delete as appropriate)	
Approximate value of gift/hospitality	
If accepted, has the gift been retained for personal use or for school use?	
If accepted, reason for accepting gift/hospitality	

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Approved by: _____ Role: _____

Please return this completed form to the school office for retention on the Gifts and Hospitality Register

Office use: Please email a copy of this declaration to haywardj@bluekitetrust.org.uk for recording on the central Trust register

Appendix II



Gifts/Hospitality Provided by the Trust

Date	Name	Details of Gift/Hospitality	Notes (reason for providing, cost etc)