



GIFTS & HOSPITALITY POLICY

1. Policy Statement

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

The Policy aims to lay down guidelines which will enable the school to meet the aims and core values of the Trust and to protect individuals from misunderstanding or criticism.

The Trust should be able to show that all decisions are reached on the basis of value for money and 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. Any consideration of whether or not the principles of this Policy have been breached will be determined by reference to this provision. Any breach of this Policy could lead to disciplinary action and may constitute gross misconduct.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Trust's internal Financial Regulations and Procedures Manual and the Anti Bribery Policy.

2. Gifts

Members of staff must not accept cash, or personal gifts with a significant monetary value, under any circumstances, although items of nominal value, (i.e. approximately £25.00 or below) or free promotional pens, calendars, diaries and similar items, may be accepted.

Personal gifts may not be solicited under any circumstances.

When staff have to decline a gift, staff should be courteous but firm, and draw the attention of the person making the offer to the existence of this policy.

All gifts received must be recorded in RCAT's gifts register, which will be maintained by the Trust's Chief Finance Officer.

3. Hospitality

Staff should never accept lavish hospitality that could be interpreted as a way of exerting an improper influence over the way you carry out your duties. Nor should staff offer such hospitality to others on behalf of the Trust. The timing of hospitality in relation to procurement or purchasing decisions that the Trust may be taking is especially sensitive. Above all, staff must never solicit hospitality. As a general rule, staff should not accept hospitality that the Trust would not reciprocate in similar circumstances.

When staff have to decline hospitality, staff should be courteous but firm, and draw the attention of the person making the offer to the existence of this policy. If necessary, staff should pay a share of any costs, and claim these in the ordinary way.

4. Acceptable Hospitality

Staff may accept modest working meals and light refreshments without making any declaration.

Other hospitality may be accepted, for instance where:-

- There is a genuine need to impart information or represent the Trust in the community including annual start of school year inset day meeting.
- An event is clearly part of the life of the community or where the Trust should be seen to be represented.

- The hospitality concerns attendance at a relevant conference or course where it is clear the hospitality is corporate rather than personal.

Before accepting any hospitality, approval should be sought from either the Executive Head Teacher, Chair of Directors Resources Committee or the Headteacher, in respect of employees. In exceptional circumstances retrospective approval may be obtained. All hospitality received must be recorded in the Trust's hospitality register with the exception of working meals, receptions etc.

5. Sponsorship

Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor or is seeking to sponsor the activity of the Trust, whether by invitation, tender or negotiation, or voluntarily, the basic conventions concerning the award of contracts, and acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply.

6. Hospitality Register

The Chief Finance Officer will maintain a Hospitality Register for the Trust and for senior leadership team. It will be the responsibility of individuals to ensure that the Chief Finance Officer is notified of all hospitality given or received.

7. Expense Claims

Where hospitality is to be provided by the Trust this should be approved in advance by the Executive Head Teacher, Chair of Directors or Chair of Directors Resources Committee or the Headteacher in respect of employees. In exceptional circumstances retrospective approval may be obtained. All hospitality provided must be recorded in Trust's hospitality register.

Any hospitality should not be extravagant and a maximum figure of £25 per head should be used as a guideline. This figure may be increased by the Executive Head Teacher, Chair of Directors or Chair of Directors Resources Committee if it is deemed appropriate.

Claims for reimbursement of expenses should be made on the relevant Expense Claim Form and submitted to the person responsible for finance within the school or Trust. Receipts should always be enclosed and authorisation sought in accordance with the Trust's Financial Management Policy.

Wherever possible hospitality for school activities including inset day meetings should be funded through unrestricted funds.

Signed: **Dated:**
Chair, Board of Directors