

# Gifts and Hospitality Policy

Barn Croft Primary School



<b>Approved by:</b>	Tracey Griffiths	<b>Date:</b> 1.9.2021
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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 its funding agreements with the Government and local authority
- 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
- 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

There is not statutory guidance or requirement for maintained schools to have a Gifts & Hospitality Policy but Barn Croft deems it important for staff to be clear of what constitutes a reasonable gift and feels it is important for staff to be clear in order to keep themselves safe from any accusations of bribery or unfairness.

## 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.

Donations to the School Fund are not classed as gifts for the purpose of this policy because monies in the School Fund are spent on resources that benefit all the children. The School Fund account is audited annually.

## 4. Roles and responsibilities

### 4.1 Staff

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 over £25 on the gifts and hospitality register (see appendix 1) within 7 working days, even if declined
- Must consult the Headteacher before accepting or offering any gifts or hospitality with a value of over £25

## 4.2 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 to those outside the organisation.

They will also ensure, alongside the Governing Body, that decisions on whether individuals or the school can accept or offer gifts or hospitality with a value of over £25 are in line with this policy.

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

## 4.3 Parents

Staff appreciate all gifts that are given to them by parents. We do not want to discourage the giving of gifts because we know that parents want to show their appreciation for the hard work and care of the staff.

However, in order to keep staff safe from any accusations of bribery and so that parents do not feel any pressure to give gifts it is important that everyone knows what restrictions the school has decided to put on the giving of gifts.

Any gift or gift token which is over the value of £25 must be declared by the member of staff and it must be recorded on the Gifts & Hospitality Register. This register is only seen by the headteacher and the Governing Body in accordance with monitoring procedures.

If a gift is a joint gift from more than one parent then it will be recorded as such on the register.

Staff are advised to speak to the headteacher in the case of feeling uncomfortable about a gift if they feel it is excessive.

When parents make a monetary gift to the school of over £25 it will be recorded on the Gifts & Hospitality Register. Parents make these donations on the understanding that these monies will be spent on resources that will benefit the whole school and not just their child's class.

The school would like to draw parents' attention to the section "Offers of Gifts & Hospitality Given" below which reassures parents that school budget funds are never spent on gifts for staff because this is public money.

# 5. Acceptable gifts and hospitality

## 5.1 Offer of gifts and hospitality received

Staff can accept gifts and hospitality that have a value of up to £25. 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, staff must consult the 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 headteacher.

Any gifts or hospitality offered with a value of over £25 must be recorded on the gifts and hospitality register within 7 working days, even if declined. Any member of staff who is offered such gifts or hospitality must consult the 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 governors and record the offer on the gifts and hospitality register.

If parents donate money to the school it is collected through ParentMail and becomes part of the School Fund. Any amount over £25 will be recorded on the Gifts & 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.

## **5.2 Offer of gifts and hospitality given**

Any gifts or hospitality provided by the school, such as a working lunch for visitors, must not be extravagant. A maximum value of £25 should be used as a guideline.

Alcohol must not be purchased out of the school budget.

Expense claims should be made to the School Business Manager/Finance Officer and receipts must always be enclosed. All expenses should be agreed with by the headteacher beforehand.

Staff donate an annual amount to a Staff Gift Fund and so all gifts to staff who are leaving or are sick or who have a baby are paid for from this fund. Gifts to staff should never be paid for from school budget funds.

The headteacher must be consulted about any proposal to provide gifts or hospitality with a value of over £25.

## **6. Unacceptable gifts and hospitality**

The following must never be offered or accepted:

- Monetary gifts
- Gifts or hospitality offered to family members, partners or close friends of 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 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. The headteacher 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 school 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 headteacher and the Governing Body.

This policy will be reviewed every year by the headteacher and approved by the Governing Body.

## **9. Links with other policies**

This gifts and hospitality policy is linked to the:

- Staff code of conduct
- Staff disciplinary procedures
- Financial Regulations

