Gifts & Hospitality Policy

Date	September 2026
Approved By	Full Governing Body
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Staff role responsible for review	Business Manager

This policy applies to all stakeholders within Ivel Valley School & College

Introduction and Aims

Your conduct as a member of staff or a governor should never lead anyone to question your interests, or lead anyone to think that you have been influenced by gifts and hospitality. This is important because your own personal reputation and that of the school could be seriously affected if you inappropriately accept a gift or hospitality. It is also a criminal offence to demand or accept a gift or reward in return for allowing you to be influenced as a part of the school. This is why the school has guidance which applies to all staff and governors on gifts and hospitality.

Definitions, Procedure and Responsibilities

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 you personally 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.

What gifts or hospitality can be accepted without any approval?

You can accept gifts and hospitality, which are token gestures and have a value of £20 or less, without the approval of the Headteacher or Senior Leadership Team. Gifts and hospitality of this nature do not need to be recorded in the school's gifts and hospitality register. This does not include cash or other monetary gifts e.g. vouchers, as these should never be accepted, even if they are less than £20.

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 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 school's, support or favour.

What gifts or hospitality need approval from the Headteacher or Chair of Governors?

Any gift or hospitality which is more than just a token of appreciation, defined as a having a value of more than £20, should be politely refused or returned. You must have the prior written approval of the Headteacher if you decide to accept something which has more than this value. This should only be in exceptional circumstances. If you or the Headteacher 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 chair of governors.

What gifts or hospitality should never be accepted?

You must never accept;

- cash or monetary gifts e.g. vouchers;
- gifts or hospitality offered to your husband, wife, partner, family member or friend;

- gifts or hospitality from a potential supplier or tenderer in the immediate period before tenders are invited or during the tender process; or
- lavish or extravagant gifts or hospitality, even if they relate to activities in your own time.

What should I do if I receive a gift or hospitality without warning?

If you estimate that the gift is more than just a token of appreciation you should politely and courteously decline the gift. You should inform the Business Manager so that this can be recorded on the Gifts & Hospitality register, even though it was declined.

If you feel that it would not be appropriate to decline the gift, you should refer the matter to the Senior Leadership Team as soon as possible and let them decide what you should do with the gift. They may decide to return the gift, ask the chair of governors for a view, or may donate the gift to a worthy local cause.

What should I do if I get offered a gift or hospitality?

You must make sure that all offers you receive which have an estimated value of more than £20 are recorded in the school's gifts and hospitality register, which is maintained by the Business Manager.

Do I need to record offers that I decline?

Yes – all offers of gifts or hospitality, which have a value of more than £20, must be recorded in the school's register, even if you don't accept.

What are parents and carers told about giving gifts?

We will regularly reminder parents/carers that:

- Gift-giving is not a requirement, and parents/carers are not expected to buy gifts for class teachers or other school staff
- We do not wish to discourage all gift-giving, and that small tokens of gratitude are always appreciated
- That cash and other monetary gifts e.g. vouchers, or items with a value of £20 will not be accepted

What should I do if I am in doubt?

If in doubt, always speak to the Senior Leadership Team. It is your responsibility to follow the school's guidance 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 school will take disciplinary action against you if you failed to follow the guidance. It is also a criminal offence to demand or accept a gift or reward in return for allowing you to be influenced as a part of the school. This means you could be prosecuted by the police.

What other policies or procedures are relevant to this policy?

This gifts and hospitality policy is linked to the:

- Staff code of conduct
- Staff disciplinary procedures
- Anti-fraud and corruption policy