

The Federation of Boldmere Schools

Cofield Road · Sutton Coldfield · B73 5SD

Our Vision: The Federation of Boldmere Schools empowers all children to embrace learning; achieve their personal best; and build their social, emotional and physical wellbeing.

Gifts and Hospitality Policy

Official and Unofficial Funds

Official funds are defined as any fund, provided by the Local Authority or other body to meet the Local Authority requirements to provide education. Examples of such funds include:

- School Budget Share
- Devolved Capital
- Educational Visits
- Music Tuition

Official Funds may also include other monies received by schools for specific projects which are required, as conditions of the funds, to be dealt with through the school's official accounting system.

Unofficial funds are defined as funds operated, wholly or in part, by any employee of the school because of his/her employment, for which the Local Authority does not have a statutory requirement to provide the resources for which the fund is being used. Example of such funds include:

- School Funds
- PTA Funds

Gifts and Hospitality

Official and unofficial funds must not be used for buying gifts for school staff or other people who may assist the school in a voluntary capacity.

Official or unofficial funds should not be used for providing hospitality or meals for staff. All staff in school must provide their own refreshments and official or unofficial funds must not be used to pay for personal consumption (The only exemption to this is where the Teachers or Teaching Assistants are assisting children during the lunch break.)

A pool of refreshments such as tea, coffee, milk and sugar for consumption by visitors to the school is permitted and the purchase of these items can be made through school budget using a hospitality cost centre.

Alcohol

Under no circumstance should alcohol be purchased using official or unofficial funds.

Food and Beverages

It is reasonable to provide refreshments and light meal on school premises at staff training days or is part of a development activity. Food such occasions is usually provided via the school kitchen but if not available alternative arrangements can be made but will require Governing Body approval.

Residential

Where school staff are on residential training courses, personal expenditure incurred during an overnight stay such as mini bar, newspapers, private telephone calls etc is the responsibility of the individual and this must be paid for in full before leaving the venue.

Why do we have guidance on gifts and hospitality?

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.

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 small gestures and have a value of £30 or less, without the approval of the Executive Head Teacher. Gifts and hospitality of this nature do not need to be recorded in the school's Gifts and Hospitality Register.

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 Executive Headteacher or Chair of Governors?

Any gift or hospitality from an individual which is more than just a token, defined as a having a value of more than £30, should be politely refused or returned. You must have the prior written approval of the Executive Head Teacher if you decide to accept something which has more than this value. This should only be in exceptional circumstances. If you or your Executive Head Teacher 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.

Please note that should the value exceed the above amount, but it is from a group of parents/pupils, then the amount will be pro-rated

What gifts or hospitality should never be accepted?

You must never accept;

- cash or monetary gifts. (Gift cards are acceptable as long as they are within limits/approved)
- 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.
- 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 without warning?

If you estimate that the gift is more than just a token you should politely and courteously decline the gift. If you feel that it would not be appropriate to do this, you should refer the matter to your Executive Head Teacher as soon as possible and let the Executive Head Teacher decide what you should do with the gift. Your Executive Head Teacher may decide to return the gift, may 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 a value of more than £30 are recorded in the school's Gifts and Hospitality Register, which is kept in the school office.

Do I need to record offers that I decline?

Yes – all offers of gifts or hospitality, which have a value of more than £30, must be recorded in the school's register, even if you don't accept within 7 days of the offer of the gift or hospitality. The register should be presented to the Governing Body on a termly basis even if there is a nil return. Failure to record the receipt of any gifts or hospitality will be deemed as a disciplinary matter.

What should I do if I am in doubt?

If in doubt, always speak to the Executive Head Teacher. 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.

Signed ...  Date ...27/09/2023..... (Chair of Governors)

Signed ...  Date ...27/09/2023..... (Executive Headteacher)