



GIFT & HOSPITALITY POLICY

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Further Information/Guidance	<a href="mailto:finance@rhat.org.uk">finance@rhat.org.uk</a>

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This Policy is the legal responsibility of Redhill Academy Trust, who is the employer of all staff. The content of this policy is applicable to all staff, trustees and governors and compliance is a mandatory requirement. Where local policies exist in Academies, their content must not contradict the requirements of this policy.
- 1.2 The Redhill Academy Trust is committed to the highest level of integrity, honesty and accountability in all its business dealings. All staff, 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 representing the Trust.
- 1.3 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, trustees, and governors must take extreme care that none of their dealings, directly or indirectly, could be deemed as a reward of benefit, in line with the UK Bribery Act 2010. This Act makes it an 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 and reward doing so.

- 1.4 The Trust and each Academy will hold a Gifts and Hospitality Register. All gifts/hospitality received over the value of £30 must be recorded in the register. The register must be submitted to the finance department on an annual basis at year end to form part of the evidence portfolio to demonstrate compliance with the Academies Financial Handbook. An example of a Gifts and Hospitality Register can be found in appendix 1.

## **2. Definitions**

- 2.1 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 judgement or integrity of the recipient.
- 2.2 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.

## **3. Dealing with offers of Gifts and Hospitality**

- 3.1 The Trust expects staff, trustees and governors to exercise the utmost discretion in giving and accepting gifts and hospitality when on Trust or academy business. Particular care must be taken about a gift from a person or organisation that has, or is hoping to have, a contract with our organisation. In any case of doubt advice must be sought from the Trust Finance Director.
- 3.2 Staff, trustees and governors must not make use of their official position to further their private interests or those of others.

- 3.3 Staff, trustees and governors must not accept gifts, hospitality or benefits of any kind from a third party where it may be perceived that their personal integrity is being compromised, or that the Trust/academy might be placed under an obligation.
- 3.4 Gifts of low intrinsic value such as promotional items, or items of gratitude, can be accepted. If there is any doubt as to whether the acceptance of such an item is appropriate, individuals must decline the gift or refer the matter to their Operations Manager or the Trust Finance Director.
- 3.5 It is common for appreciative parents and students to register their thanks for the work of staff in the form of a small personal gift. If these are valued less than £30 these are acceptable without reference to senior members of staff and do not need recording in the register. Where gifts are perceived to be valued at more than £30 these must be recorded in the register. If the value is in doubt, these items must be recorded in the register.
- 3.6 Where a more valuable gift, benefit or service is offered which is to the good of the Academy or Trust, rather than an individual, it must be referred to the Trust Finance Director for approval within their discretion; if acceptable, these items must be recorded in the register.
- 3.7 Hospitality outside of the workplace such as working lunches and refreshments are acceptable where it is appropriate to receive these in support of good relationships with 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 do not need to be added to the register. Offers of hospitality above this level must be approved in advance by the academy Operations Manager or the Trust's Finance Director and added to the register.
- 3.8 If a member of staff, 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 Trust/academy (other than light refreshments) it is their responsibility to discuss this with the Trust Finance Director immediately.
- 3.9 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 must be accepted. The matter must then be brought to the attention of the Trust Finance Director as soon as possible who may decide to return the gift, or may donate it to a school raffle/ fair or a charitable cause.
- 3.10 Examples of gifts or hospitality that must not be accepted are cash or monetary gifts; 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, 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, trustee or governor attending a sponsored event, the attendance must be formally approved and registered by the Trust Finance Director).
- 3.11 Where a gift is received on behalf of the academy, the gift remains the property of the academy. The gift may be required for departmental display or it may, with the Head

Teacher's approval, remain in the care of the recipient. Unless otherwise agreed, the gift must be returned to the Department on or before the recipient's last working day.

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

#### **4. Giving Gifts and Hospitality**

- 4.1 The Trust and its academies will not give gifts to other individuals or organisations beyond promotional items or giving of flowers or equivalent at a public event. In such cases the value of the gift must not exceed £25 and must be approved by the Head Teacher or Executive Principal. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes donations to charity from public funds. Charitable donations from student and staff fund raising activities are allowed, but should not be included in the academy finances. This does not apply to the awards of gifts, prizes etc. related to the achievement of students.

- 4.2 Student rewards must be appropriate to the circumstance and should generally have an educational element to them, for example, books, calculators, art equipment, etc. Rewards can be in the form of vouchers however, careful consideration must be given to the individual value and appropriateness of the retailer. Certificates or badges are the preferred type of student reward where appropriate.

- 4.3 Where hospitality is provided by the Trust or its academies this must be approved in advance by the Finance Director or local Operations Manager. In approving hospitality the Finance Director / Operations Manager should ensure it is not in breach of the UK Bribery Act 2010 and also that the costs are appropriate for a publically funded organisation. Hospitality such as working lunches, refreshments and modest hospitality in the form of meals, etc. are perfectly acceptable where it is appropriate to offer these in support of good relationships with a visitor.

- 4.4 Under no circumstances must alcohol be purchased to give as gifts.

#### **5. Providing Gifts to Staff**

- 5.1 Other than within the specific circumstances noted below any staff gifts must be at personal cost and must not be funded by the academy or the Trust. For the avoidance of doubt these items would be classified as a gift:

- Rewards outside of normal pay, for example, confectionary, and other physical gifts
- Vouchers or the cash equivalent
- Items already purchased for academy use out of public funds – such as cameras, iPod, IT equipment etc.

- 5.2 The purchase of up to £25 on an appropriate gift from the Academy/Trust in the capacity of employer relating to a retirement, a leaver with long service, birth of a child, long term serious illness, bereavement or public acknowledgement of involvement in an event is excluded from this rule. Any other reasons for the giving of a gift to staff can only be done with the written permission of the Trust Principal, Finance Director or Head Teacher.

## **6. Providing Hospitality to Staff**

- 6.1 The Academy can provide modest on-site hospitality to staff where there is a valid business reason. This occurs as:
- Tea and coffee can be provided to all staff in the staff room throughout the day
  - The provision of tea, coffee and biscuits for business meetings should be organised and provided from staff room resources. In very exceptional circumstances, for meetings involving external visitors, this may be provided by the Academy catering team, when approved by the Head Teacher or the Operations Manager.
  - Lunches may be provided to staff during the provision of a lunchtime duty.
  - In exceptional circumstances (i.e. celebrating a retirement) as determined by the Head Teacher, buffets may be provided, but must be made available to all staff. Where available, these should be provided by the academy catering service and not external catering providers.
  - On inset days the provision of a snack/refreshment at lunch or break time may be provided for all staff. Where available, this should be provided by the academy catering service only and not external catering providers.

Examples of inappropriate staff hospitality are the subsidising of staff parties, meals and provision of external buffets.

## **7. Providing Gifts/Hospitality to Students**

- 7.1 All gifts/hospitality from staff to students must be at personal cost and will not be funded by the Academy. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes food, sweets or drink during tutor or lesson times that is not associated with good curriculum delivery. Any gifts to students must be carefully considered for appropriateness i.e. given to all students in a class rather than individual students.

## **8. Non Compliance**

- 8.1 In the case where it is believed a member of staff, trustee or governor has not declared a gift or hospitality then a formal investigation will be instigated by the Trust Director of Operations / Finance Director. If misconduct is indicated, this may take the form of disciplinary procedures in the case of employees.
- 8.2 Staff, trustees or governors who believe there that non-compliance has occurred within the organisation should follow the Trust's Whistle Blowing Policy, which is available on the Trust's website policies section.

**Appendix 1 – Example Gifts and Hospitality Register**

Date received	Recipient (Name and role)	Received from (Name, role and Organisation)	Description of Gift/ Hospitality received	Value £ (Estimate if unknown)	Reason for the Gift/ Hospitality