



# GIFTS & HOSPITALITY POLICY

**Approved by:** Finance, Audit & Risk Committee      **Date:** 25<sup>th</sup> November 2019

**Last reviewed on:** Monday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2019

**Next review due by:** November 2021

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## 1. Aims

This Policy aims to ensure that:

- Greensand Multi-Academy Trust (the Trust) funds are used only in accordance with the law, its Articles of Association, its Funding Agreement and the latest Academies Financial Handbook;
- the Trust and those associated with it operate in a way that commands broad public support;
- the Trust has due regard to propriety and regularity, and ensures value for money, in the use of public funds;
- Trustees fulfil their fiduciary duties and wider responsibilities as charitable trustees and company directors;
- Members, Trustees, Governors and 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

This Policy is based on the [Academies Financial Handbook](#), which states that academy trusts should have a policy and register on the acceptance of gifts, hospitality, awards, prizes or any other benefit which might be seen to compromise the personal judgement or integrity of Members, Trustees, Governors or staff and/or any other representative of the Trust.

This Policy also complies with our Funding Agreement and Articles of Association.

## 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.

## 4. Roles and responsibilities

### 4.1 Members, Trustees, Governors and staff

Members, Trustees, Governors and 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 a school within the Trust, or the Trust 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 Trust with a value of over £50, including any collective class gift with a value exceeding £50, on the appropriate gifts and hospitality register (see Appendix 1) within 7 school days, even if declined;
- Must consult the Executive Principal or Business Director if a Member, a Trustee or Headteacher, or the appropriate Headteacher if a Governor or member of staff before accepting or offering any gifts or hospitality with a value of over £50.

## 4.2 Trustees

The Trustees will ensure that the Trust's funds are used in a way that commands broad public support, pays due regard to propriety and regularity, and provides value for money.

## 4.3 The Headteachers

The Headteacher of each member school within the Trust is responsible for ensuring that staff are aware of and understand this Policy, and that it is being implemented consistently.

The Headteachers within the Trust 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 their school and the Trust and to those outside the organisation.

Each Headteacher must ensure that there is a gift and hospitality register in place for their school and that this is regularly monitored and maintained.

They will also ensure, alongside the Executive Principal & Business Director, that decisions on whether individuals or the Trust can accept or offer gifts or hospitality with a value of over £50 are in line with this Policy.

## 4.4 The Business Director

The Trust's Business Director will ensure that:

- The Trust maintains a Gifts & Hospitality Register;
- Figures for transactions relating to gifts made by the Trust are disclosed in the Trust's audited accounts, in accordance with the Academies Financial Handbook;
- The Trustees and Headteachers are provided with information on gifts and hospitality received and given, as appropriate.

They will also ensure, alongside the Headteachers, that decisions on whether individuals or the Trust can accept or offer gifts or hospitality with a value of over £50 are in line with this Policy.

## 4.5 Maintenance of the Gifts & Hospitality Registers

**School level:** Each School Business Manager (SBM) is responsible for maintaining their individual school's gifts and hospitality register on a day-to-day basis. The SBM must ensure that any gifts or hospitality offered to their staff or Governors with a value of over £50 is recorded on their individual school's gifts and hospitality register within 7 school days, even if declined.

**Trust level:** The Clerk to the Trust is responsible for maintaining the Trust's Gifts & Hospitality Register on a day-to-day basis. The Clerk must ensure that any gifts or hospitality offered to the Executive Principal, the Business Director, Members or Trustees with a value of over £50 is recorded on the Trust's Gifts and Hospitality Register within 7 school days, even if declined.

# 5. Acceptable gifts and hospitality

## 5.1 Offers of gifts and hospitality received

Members, Trustees, Governors and staff can accept gifts and hospitality that have a value of up to £50. These **do not** have to be pre-approved or recorded on a gifts and hospitality register.

Generally, gifts of nominal value, such as small tokens of appreciation, may be accepted. If in any doubt, Members, Trustees, Governors and staff must consult the Executive Principal/Business Director, or Headteacher, as appropriate.

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 Executive Principal/Business Director, or Headteacher, as appropriate.

Any gifts or hospitality offered with a value of over £50 must be recorded as follows:

- **School level: Governors & members of staff – to be recorded on their individual school’s gifts and hospitality register, and signed off as approved by the Headteacher;**
- **Trust level: Executive Principal, Business Director, Members & Trustees – to be recorded on the Trust’s Gifts and Hospitality Register, and signed off as approved by the Executive Principal, or Chair of Trustees as appropriate.**

All register entries must be recorded within 7 school days of the offer of any gifts or hospitality, even if declined.

Any Member, Trustee, Governor or member of staff who is offered such gifts or hospitality must consult the Executive Principal/Business Director, or Headteacher, as appropriate before accepting.

If a Headteacher, the Executive Principal or the Business Director is the recipient, or intended recipient, of **any** offer of gifts or hospitality, they must inform the Chair of the Board of Trustees and record the offer on the Trust’s Gifts and Hospitality Register and, for Headteachers, also on their own school’s 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 Offers of gifts and hospitality given**

Any gifts or hospitality provided by the Trust, such as a working lunch for visitors, must not be extravagant. A maximum value of £15 per head should be used as a guideline.

Alcohol must not be purchased out of the school budget.

Expense claims should be made to the SBM or Business Director, as appropriate, and receipts must always be attached.

The Executive Principal/ Business Director, or Headteacher, as appropriate, must be consulted about any proposal to provide gifts or hospitality with a value of over £50.

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

The following must never be offered or accepted:

- Monetary gifts (excluding gift cards);
- Gifts or hospitality offered to family members, partners or close friends of Members, Trustees, Governors or 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 Member, Trustee, Governor or 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 Executive Principal/Business Director or Headteacher, as appropriate. The Executive Principal/Business Director or Headteacher may decline the offer, or donate the gift or hospitality to a worthy cause, and must also record the offer on the Trust's Gifts & Hospitality Register or the individual school's gifts and hospitality register, as appropriate.

Disciplinary action will be taken against anyone who fails to decline gifts or hospitality the Trust has deemed unacceptable.

Failure to declare any gifts or hospitality offered on an individual school's gifts and hospitality register, or on the Trust's Gifts & Hospitality Register, in line with this Policy, will be dealt with as a staff disciplinary matter.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

The member schools' individual gifts and hospitality registers will be monitored regularly by the SBM at their school. A paper copy of the register must be kept and available for inspection at all times.

Each SBM is required to provide an up-to-date scanned copy of their school's gift and hospitality register to the Clerk to the Trust at the beginning of each term so that registers can be regularly monitored and reviewed by the Trust's Finance, Audit & Risk Committee (FARC).

**This Policy will be reviewed every two years by the FARC and approved by the FARC.**

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

This Gifts and Hospitality Policy is linked to the:

- Staff code of conduct of the Trust member schools;
- Staff disciplinary procedures of the Trust member schools;
- Accounting Policy for the Greensand MAT.

