



RICKMANSWORTH SCHOOL

Gift & Hospitality Policy

With Guidance on the Avoidance of Bribery

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OVERVIEW

Purpose

This policy sets out the procedure staff must follow when giving or receiving gifts and hospitality.

A reference copy of this document is kept on the shared drive and it will be brought to the attention of all members of staff.

Review Process

This document will be reviewed in accordance with our policy review process every three years or on the introduction of new or amended relevant legislation. .



Tony Walker
CHAIR OF GOVERNORS



Matthew Fletcher
HEADTEACHER

PART 1. OVERVIEW

1. Intent

Rickmansworth School is committed to the highest level of integrity, honesty and accountability in all its business dealings. The aim of the Gifts and Hospitality policy is to protect employees and Governors from accusations of corruption, bribery, favouritism, impropriety and unfairness and to give guidelines as to when gifts may be accepted or need to be declined.

2. 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.

PART 2. POLICY

3. Principles

- 3.1. Employees and Governors should only accept gifts of a minor nature offered in the course of normal business practices.
- 3.2. Nothing should ever be accepted which could be interpreted as a gift which seeks to influence a decision or be seen as an inducement.
- 3.3. Teachers may accept small gifts from pupils or parents given as a token of thanks typically given at the end of term.
- 3.4. Employees and Governors can accept hospitality offered as part of a prearranged business meeting or course providing it is not lavish and could be in any way interpreted as an inducement.
- 3.5. All gifts and hospitality other than of a trivial nature both accepted and declined should be recorded in the Gifts and Hospitality Register maintained by the Finance Office.

4. Receiving Gifts

- 4.1. Gifts of a trivial nature such as calendars, diaries, pens and stationery with a low monetary value below £5 may be accepted and do not need to be recorded. If there is any doubt as to whether the acceptance of such an item is appropriate, individuals should decline the gift or refer the matter to the Headteacher.
- 4.2. Gifts to teachers from parents or pupils with a low monetary value below £20 can be accepted and only need to be recorded when not given at the end of term (Christmas, Easter etc) or when not received as one of several gifts from different parents or pupils. Where a gift of over £20 is accepted from multiple people or entities, the gift must be recorded in the register if the estimated average gift per person is above £20.
- 4.3. Any gift to an individual with a high monetary value over £20 should normally be declined unless to do so is likely to cause extreme offence. In such situations the gift should be brought to the attention of the Headteacher who can decide whether the gift can be retained by the individual or used for the benefit of the whole school, or auctioned or used as a raffle prize by the PTA or Foundation. The donor will normally be informed of this action and that this is the school's normal policy and the gift must also be recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.

- 4.4. Gifts to the Headteacher above £20 are subject to the same policy but will be arbitrated by the Chair of Governors or Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee.
- 4.5. Gifts of money should never be accepted by an individual apart from gift tokens with a value of £20 or less.
- 4.6. Gifts given by colleagues to an employee as a leaving gift, wedding present, birth of a baby, during sickness etc can be accepted and do not need to be recorded.

5. Hospitality

- 5.1. All hospitality received should be recorded in the Gifts and Hospitality register and be appropriate to the meeting or event.
- 5.2. Examples of appropriate hospitality are:
 - Refreshments appropriate to the time of day given during a business meeting.
 - Functions such as dinners, conferences, opening ceremonies and trade shows where the recipient is officially representing the school.
- 5.3. Inappropriate hospitality that must not be accepted would include:
 - Holidays, hotel accommodation or use of a company flat or house
 - Invitations to prestige sports, cultural or social events not directly relevant to the school
 - Anything of a lavish nature which could be perceived as an inducement.

- 5.4. Teaching staff may be invited to sporting events which link to their work with sports governing bodies. Such invitations should always be discussed and approved by the Headteacher before accepting and recorded in the Gifts and Hospitality register.

6. Offering Hospitality

- 6.1. Any hospitality offered by the school must be appropriate to the meeting or event and should be of an appropriate scale and value and be reasonable. Hospitality will usually be refreshments provided in-house appropriate to the occasion.

7. Stewardship and Accountability

- 7.1. The school must always act as a good steward of public funds and avoid giving hospitality that could be considered to be lavish, extravagant or expensive. The Headteacher will be accountable for all hospitality given.
- 7.2. A summarised report on gifts and hospitality received and given shall be presented annually to the Finance and Audit Committee.

8. Non-compliance

- 8.1. In the case where it is believed a member of staff or a governor has not declared a gift or hospitality, a formal investigation will be instigated by the Headteacher or Director of Finance & Business Operations. If misconduct is indicated, this may take the form of disciplinary procedures.

Annex 1 - Rickmansworth School Gifts and Hospitality Register

<u>Recipient</u>	<u>Nature of Gift/Hospitality</u>	<u>Donor</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Estimated value</u> £	<u>Accepted/Rejected</u>	<u>Comments</u>