



Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School

Gifts and Hospitality Policy

December 2019



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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/actions or lead anyone to think that you have been influenced (or influenced others) 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 or provide 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 guidance applies to all staff and governors on gifts and hospitality.

Gifts and Hospitality Given

The giving of gifts should not be a matter of routine practice. The appropriateness of giving of gifts will be a matter of judgement and should only occur within the bounds of protocol, accepted business practice, custom or culture. Official (LA funding, Pupil Premium, etc.) or unofficial funds may only be used for buying gifts for school staff, or other people who assist the school in a voluntary capacity, where the costs and the reasons for giving gifts are justifiable and can stand up to public scrutiny. Such gifts should be nominal (**no more than £30**) and subject to the approval of the Governing Body. They should not be of a 'private' nature (e.g. birthdays, anniversaries, farewells) unless due to bereavement or condolences. Larger gifts given for farewells after an exceptionally long time of service may be acceptable, at the governor's discretion. Official or unofficial funds should not be used for providing general hospitality or meals for staff.

Notes: Exemptions to this include where a member of staff is undertaking specific work or supervision duties outside their normal working day (E.g. lunchtime supervision, attendance at meetings or as part of training requirements). 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 the school budget. Schools are advised to account for 'Hospitality' in their financial package so that there is a clear audit trail for expenditure of this type. A pool of refreshments such as tea, coffee, milk and sugar for consumption by staff is also permitted subject to budget constraints and specific approval from the governing body.

If meetings with visitors to the school extend through the lunch period it is usually acceptable to provide sandwiches or a finger buffet and non-alcoholic drinks, all of which may be purchased through the school budget. Expenditure of this nature should be agreed, in advance, with the Governing Body and setting out the reasons for granting approval.

Alcohol should not be purchased using official funds, unless for valid marketing purposes, such as Open Events. Official or unofficial funds must not be used for the purchase of food or beverages at restaurants or hotels for school staff unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this provides for efficient use of the school budget and has the approval of the Governing Body.

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It may be reasonable to provide refreshments and a light meal for staff training days or as part of a development activity. Food for such occasions is usually provided via the school kitchen but should this be unavailable alternative arrangements can be made but will require Governing Body approval. Where school staff are on residential training courses, personal expenditure incurred during an overnight stay such as mini bar, newspapers, private telephone calls etc. are the responsibility of the individual employee and must be paid for in full before leaving the hotel/venue.

Gifts and Hospitality Received

Section 10 (Rewards and gifts) of the Staff Code of Conduct states:

Staff should not give individual gifts or rewards to students outside the school's normal rewards processes, and should avoid displaying any favouritism towards particular students. Doing so may be misconstrued as grooming by the student or by others.

Once again, should there be exceptional circumstances which appear to justify the giving of a personal gift, a member of SLT should be consulted and informed.

Staff should not offer or accept individual gifts, hospitality or services which could or might appear to imply an improper obligation.

It is understood staff may receive presents from students or parents but these should be within reason, without obligation and not exceeding £25 per student, without declaration to the headteacher.