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Gifts and Hospitality Policy

Our mission is “to deliver excellence in education and to transform lives through learning”, bringing to life our core values of empowerment, enterprise, connectedness, and transformation. We work hard to ignite confidence, expand opportunities, energise the community, and generate prosperity.

These values are further supported by [our learning philosophy](#), rooted in the dynamics between the brain, motivation and our emotions.

Policy Statement

This policy sets out expectations regarding acceptance of gifts and hospitality.

This policy is linked to:

- Staff code of conduct

- Staff disciplinary procedures

- Accounting policy

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- › The academy trust's funds are used only in accordance with the law, its articles of association, its funding agreement, and the latest Academy Trust 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 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 Academy Trust 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 compromise their personal judgement or integrity. This should include members, trustees, staff and/or any other representative of the trust. The handbook states that the trust should ensure that all staff are aware of this policy.

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, and staff

Members, trustees, 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 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 on the gifts and hospitality register (see appendix 1) within 7 working days, even if declined.
- › Must consult a member of the Leadership Group (trust executive) and Head of Governance and Compliance clerk@alet.org.uk before accepting or offering any gifts or hospitality with a value of over £50.

4.2 Academy trustees

Academy 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 Executive Leadership Group

The Executive Leadership Group is responsible for ensuring that staff are aware of and understand this policy, and that it is being implemented consistently.

The Executive Leadership Group 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 the school and trust and to those outside the organisation.

They will also ensure, alongside the Chief Financial Officer, 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.

The Executive Leadership Group is responsible for communicating the school/trust's rules and expectations about gift-giving to parents.

4.4 The chief financial officer

The chief financial officer (CFO) will ensure that:

- › The trust maintains a gifts and hospitality register.
- › Figures for transactions relating to gifts made by the trust are disclosed in the trust's audited accounts, in accordance with the Academy Trust Handbook.
- › The academy trustees and Executive Leadership Group are provided with information on gifts and hospitality received and given, as appropriate.

They will also ensure, alongside the Executive Leadership Group, 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 The Head of Governance and Compliance

The Head of Governance and Compliance is responsible for maintaining the gifts and hospitality register on a day-to-day basis clerk@alet.org.uk

4.6 Stakeholders, including parents, guardians, and the wider community.

ALET values the relationships we build with our stakeholders, including parents, guardians, and the wider community. We understand that tokens of appreciation are customary ways of expressing gratitude.

Whilst we do not wish to discourage the gesture of gift-giving. Small tokens of gratitude, such as handmade notes, homemade items, or modest presents are always appreciated. It is essential for parents and stakeholders to understand that gift-giving is entirely voluntary and not a requirement. Parents are not expected to purchase gifts for class teachers or any other school or Trust staff members. The emphasis should always be on collaboration and respectful relationships.

To maintain transparency and uphold ethical standards, this policy provides guidance and restrictions on the acceptance of gifts exceeding £50.

5. Acceptable gifts and hospitality

5.1 Offer of gifts and hospitality received.

Members, trustees, 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 the gifts and hospitality register.

Generally, gifts of nominal value, such as small tokens of appreciation, may be accepted. If in any doubt, members, trustees, and staff must consult the CFO or member of the Executive Leadership Group.

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 CFO or members of the Executive Leadership Group.

Any gifts or hospitality offered with a value of over £50 must be recorded on the gifts and hospitality register within 7 working days, even if declined. Any member, trustee or member of staff who is offered such gifts or hospitality must consult the CFO or member of the Leadership Group before accepting.

If the CEO or CFO 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 gifts and hospitality 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 Offer 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 £25 per head/other value set by the trust should be used as a guideline.

Alcohol must not be purchased out of the school and/or trust budget.

Expense claims should be made via the Expense Policy and receipts must always be enclosed.

The CFO or Member of the Executive Leadership Group must be consulted about any proposal to provide gifts or hospitality with a value of over £25/other value set by the trust.

6. Unacceptable gifts and hospitality

The following must never be offered or accepted:

- Monetary gifts
- Gifts or hospitality offered to family members, partners or close friends of members, trustees, 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 members, trustee 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 a member of the Executive Leadership Group or CFO. The Executive Leadership Group or CFO may decline the offer or donate the gift or hospitality to a worthy cause and must also record the offer on the gifts and hospitality register.

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 the gifts and hospitality register, in line with this policy, will be dealt with as a staff disciplinary matter.

8. Monitoring arrangements

The gifts and hospitality register is monitored regularly by the Head of Governance and Compliance

This policy will be reviewed every five years by the Head of Governance and Compliance and approved by the Trust Board.

9. Links with other policies

This gifts and hospitality policy is linked to the:

- Staff code of conduct
- Staff disciplinary procedures
- Accounting policy
- Expenditure Policy

Appendix 1: Gifts and Hospitality Register

DATE	NAME	DESCRIPTION OF GIFT/HOSPITALITY AND APPROXIMATE VALUE	PARTY OFFERING GIFT/HOSPITALITY	ACCEPTED /REJECTED	APPROVED BY

