



Gifts and Hospitality Policy

(Statutory)

Approved: Summer 2024
Date of Next Review: Summer 2026

Equality Impact Assessment - Policy Review

In reviewing this policy, we have tried to make a positive impact on equality by considering and reducing or removing inequalities and barriers which already existed. We have ensured that this policy does not impact negatively on the dimensions of equality.

Background

The Roseland Multi Academy Trust (Trust) is committed to the highest level of integrity, honesty and accountability in all its business dealings. All Staff and Trustees 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 in the name of The Roseland Multi Academy Trust.

In order to protect all individuals associated with the Trust, and the reputation of the Trust from accusations of bribery or corruption, staff and Trustees must take extreme care that none of their dealings, directly or indirectly, could be deemed as a reward or benefit, in line with the Prevention of Fraud and Bribery Act 2010. This Act makes it a criminal 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, or reward them for doing so.

Each Academy within the Trust will hold a Gifts and Hospitality Register. All gifts/hospitality over the value of £30 must be recorded in the Gifts and Hospitality Register.

Definition

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 judgment or integrity of the recipient.

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.

Dealing with Gifts and Hospitality

The Trust expects staff and Trustees to exercise the utmost discretion in giving and accepting gifts and hospitality when on Trust or Academy business. Particular care should 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 should be sought from the Chief Financial Officer.

Staff and Trustees must not make use of their official position to further their private interests or those of others.

Staff and Trustees must not accept gifts, hospitality or benefits of any kind from a third party where it might be perceived that their personal integrity is being compromised, or that the Trust/an Academy within the Trust might be placed under an obligation.

Gifts of low intrinsic value such as promotional calendars or diaries, or small tokens of gratitude, can be accepted. 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 Chief Financial Officer.

It is common for appreciative parents/carers and students to register their thanks for the work of staff in the form of a small personal gift. If these are valued at less than £30 these are perfectly acceptable without reference to senior members of staff. These will not need to be recorded in the register. Where gifts valued over £30 are accepted, these should be recorded in the register.

Where a more valuable gift, benefit or service is offered which is to the good of the Trust/Academy within the Trust, rather than an individual, it must be referred to the Chief Financial Officer, or if in the case of the Chief Financial Officer to the Chief Executive Officer for approval; if acceptable, then these terms must be recorded in

the register. Should the value of the gift exceed £100, the matter should be referred to the Trust Board's Business & Finance Committee for their consideration.

Hospitality such as working lunches, coffees etc are perfectly acceptable where it is appropriate to offer or receive these in support of good relationships with visiting staff or 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 would not be added to the register. Hospitality received above this level should be recorded in the register.

If a member of staff or Trustee are 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 (other than light refreshments or branded promotional items) it is their responsibility to bring the matter to the attention of the Chief Financial Officer immediately.

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 should be accepted. The matter should then be brought to the attention of the Chief Financial Officer as soon as possible, who may decide to return the gift, donate it to the Trust raffle/fair or a charitable cause, or refer the matter to the Trust Board for their consideration.

Examples of gifts or hospitality that should 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 or Trustee 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 an Academy within the Trust a member of staff or Trustee attending a sponsored event, the attendance must be formally approved and registered by the Chief Financial Officer or Chief Executive Officer, with the knowledge and agreement of the Trust Board's Business & Finance Committee.

Where a gift is received on behalf of the Trust/an Academy within the Trust, the gift remains the property of the Trust. The gift may be required for departmental display or it may, with the Headteacher/Chief Executive Officer approval, remain in the care of the recipient. Unless otherwise agreed, the gift should be returned to the department on or before the recipient's last working day.

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

Giving Gifts and Hospitality

The Trust and academies within the Trust will not normally give gifts to other individuals or organisations. If gifts are given to those outside the Trust, staff must ensure that the matter is raised with the Chief Financial Officer, the decision must be fully documented with written approval in advance provided by the CFO, and an entry included in the Gift and Hospitality Register. The giving of gifts must have regard to the propriety and regularity of the use of public funds. This does not apply to the award of gifts, prizes etc related to the achievement of students eg attainment or merit awards.

Gifts should not be provided to staff by way of Trust funds, and instead should be funded through voluntary collections or contributions.

Where hospitality is provided by the Trust or an Academy within the Trust this should be approved in advance by the Chief Financial Officer. In approving hospitality, the Chief Financial Officer 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, coffees etc and modest hospitality in the form of meals etc are perfectly acceptable where it is appropriate to offer or receive these in support of good relationships with visiting staff or business colleagues (but not for their family or friends). These would not be added to the register. Hospitality provided above this level should be recorded in the register.

Non-Compliance

In the case where it is believed a member of staff or Trustee has not declared a gift or hospitality then a formal investigation will be instigated by the Trust/Chief Executive Officer. If misconduct is indicated, this may take the form of disciplinary procedures in the case of employee.

