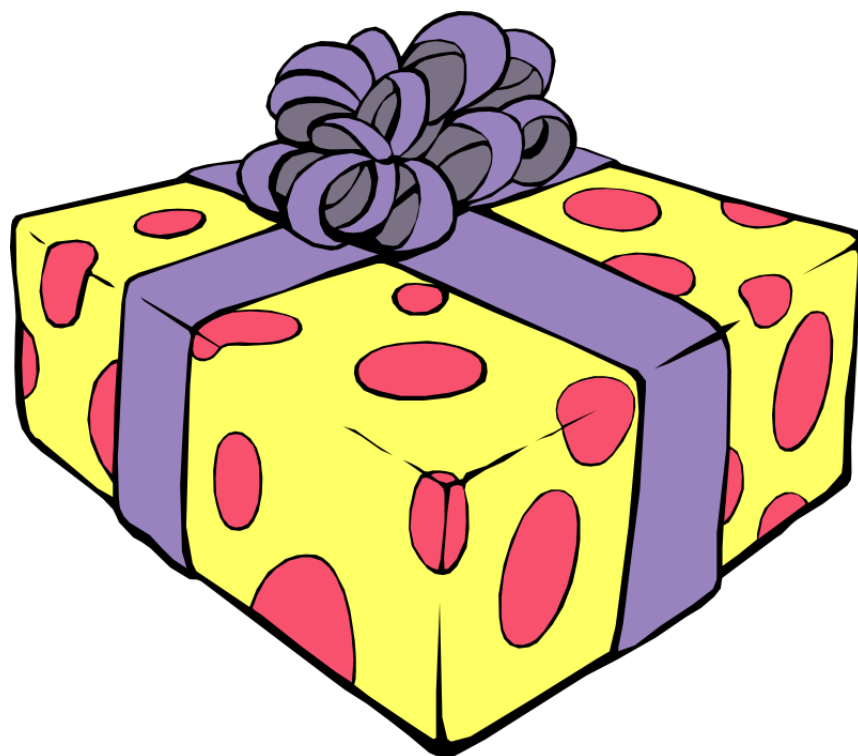


Spring 2024+ - Version 3

# Business Interests, Gifts and Hospitality Policy



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# Business Interests, Gifts and Hospitality Policy

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|---------------|--------------------------|
| Author        | Sarah Abdulla            |
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| Reviewed by   | Sarah Abdulla            |
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| Next Review   | May 2026                 |

## Declaration and Register of Business Interests

### Policy Statement

The Governing Body is committed to the principles of probity and accountability in its duty to protect the public purse. Furthermore it takes very seriously its responsibility to meet the statutory duty to ensure that it has in place a current register of business interests for all staff and governors involved in purchasing and procurement decisions. The register will be open for inspection by all stakeholders to the school on written request.

### Statutory Requirement

This policy is written in accordance with paragraph 2.16 of the Scheme for Financing Schools.

*"The governing body of each school must hold a register which lists for each member of the governing body and the headteacher, any business interests they, or any member of their immediate family, may have. This register must be kept up to date through notification of changes and through annual review of entries. The register must be available for inspection by governors, staff, parents and NCC"*

Furthermore, the Financial Management Standard in Schools (FMSiS) requires that the school has in place *"an up to date register of business interests that is compliant with best practice guidance."*

## Declaration of Interest

The school's employee code of conduct also states that employees *"must notify the Chair of Governors (via the Clerk to Governors) of any financial interest in any contract"* and *"must award orders and contracts on merit by fair competition against other tenders or quotations and not show special favour to businesses run by friends, partners or relatives."*

Any person who is present at a meeting of the governing body should declare a business interest, whether direct or indirect. This relates to any contract, proposed contract or other matter that is being considered. The person must disclose the fact as soon as is practical and take no part in consideration or discussion of the contract or matter concerned. The person must withdraw from the meeting during consideration or discussion unless the Governing Body allows otherwise. In addition, the person cannot vote on any question with respect to the contract or matter.

## Direct Business Interests

The following are examples of a direct business interest:

Any payment of salary, allowance or other expenses to a member of staff from the school budget

Any appointment where the candidate is a governor

A governor or member of staff runs their own business and has been or could be paid for work done or services received from the school budget or any other school funds.

Land owned by a governor or member of staff where its value might be affected by proposals about the school's land or buildings.

## Indirect Business Interests

The following are examples of an indirect business interest:

A governor or member of staff own shares or is a member of a company or another body which has a direct business interest.

A governor or member of staff is a business partner of a person or company who has a direct business interest.

A governor or member of staff is employed by a person or company which has a direct business interest.

A governor or member of staff has a spouse or is living with another person who has an interest in the contract or matter being discussed, including an appointment of staff of the school

The contract or matter relates to an appointment at the school which could result in another vacancy for which the governor or member of staff could be a candidate.

### **Non Business Interests**

The following are examples of matters which are not considered as creating a business interest:

Being a councillor on a local authority

Being a rate payer or council tax payer in the area of the school

For members of school staff, having an interest that is no greater than the interest of the generality of staff in the matter.

having interests that are non-business (e.g. voluntary interests)

Having an interest that is so remote or insignificant that it cannot reasonably be regarded as likely to influence a governor or member of staff.

## Duty to Declare

Governors, Head teachers and members of staff are bound by financial regulations and therefore must declare in the Register any business interest they have in a personal capacity in any contract relating to the school. The declaration must be in writing and be recorded in the Register.

In addition to any written declaration in the register, a governor or any other person attending the meeting of the governing body or one of its committees must declare orally their business interest in any matter and take no further part in discussion or decision on that matter.

Observance of these rules is the responsibility of the individual governor, head teacher or member of staff.

## The Register

The Governing Body will arrange for a register to be kept at the school. The register will be kept by the Clerk to Governors in a loose leaf binder.

The Register must be open to public inspection on request, free of charge during reasonable school office hours.

The Governing Body will make arrangements for the register to be kept up to date on an annual basis or on any change of governor or staff member.

## Gifts and Hospitality Policy

### Purpose:

This outlines the school's policy with regard to the declaration of business interests and receipt of gifts and hospitality by its staff from any third parties arising from duties undertaken on behalf of Teagues Bridge Primary School.

The school promotes the highest standards in safeguarding and directs staff to adopt safe working practices.

The school is committed to ensuring that the governance conducted in accordance with the highest standards of integrity, probity and openness.

### General Rules

#### Gifts/ Hospitality for School Staff:

Teagues Bridge Primary School staff must not receive gifts, hospitality or benefits of any kind from a third party which might be seen to compromise their personal judgement or integrity. Staff are asked to immediately report any offer or receipt of such gifts to the headteacher to be recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

Governors and staff may accept the following gifts/ hospitality without the need to seek the approval of the Teagues Bridge Primary School or formally register receipt:

- courtesy hospitality at business lunches/dinners or attendance in an official capacity at a public function;
- incidental promotional gifts such as calendars, diaries or pens;
- receipt of small items from parents, children, suppliers or contractors as expressions of gratitude such as boxes of chocolate or individual bottles of drink (at a value of less than £25)

NB: Care must always be taken to ensure that whenever such gifts/hospitality are accepted no obligation to the person or organisation in question is accepted. In cases of doubt members should consult the headteacher

The following examples of gifts/hospitality require approval and to be formally recorded by the headteacher in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality:

- Attendance as a non-paying guest of a commercial organisation or individual at a non-work related cultural or sporting event (at a value of more than £25)
- Gifts in excess of £25
- Offers of gifts/ hospitality not falling into any of the above categories

### Unacceptable Gifts/ Hospitality

The following are examples of offers of gifts/ hospitality which should be refused by staff:

- Gifts of money (not including donations to Teagues Bridge Primary School)
- Free membership or subscriptions eg. Sports club
- Foreign travel unless a specific element of a business, academic or research approved by the headteacher
- Free goods, services or equipment which are normally provided by a supplier to Teagues Bridge Primary School at a charge
- Invitations to children's/ parents parties unless the invitation is from a family member or personal friend. This is maintain a professional working relationship rather than being seen a friend.

Any offers of gifts falling into any of the above categories should be reported immediately to the headteacher.

### Gifts/ Hospitality for Pupils

Generally gifts should only be given to pupils as part of the agreed rewards system: at Teagues Bridge Primary School this would include small value items such as stickers and certificates.

Staff are not permitted to give the pupils birthday cards/ presents unless the child is a family member or related to a close personal friend. This is to maintain a professional distance and to avoid any accusations of favouritism.

Small gifts may be presented to children at the end of term, providing this is universal to the whole class. This should be in line with our healthy eating policy.

Staff should not invite children/ parents to their own social events, unless the family is related or a close personal friend.

### Giving of gifts:

At Teagues Bridge we arrange collections for any staff that are leaving, in order to fund farewell gift. Any donations are from our own funds and not from school budget or school fund account.

### Role of the Headteacher

To ensure that any offer or receipts of gifts, hospitality or donations is recorded in the register of gifts/ hospitality. The register is kept in the school office.

To report any possible conflict of interests arising from the offer or receipt of gifts or hospitality.

The policy will be included in the revised staff handbook.

| Date | Nature of Gift and Approx. value | Given by: | Received By: | Authorised by Headteacher |
|------|----------------------------------|-----------|--------------|---------------------------|
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Approval by Governing Body

| Level of Approval | Title | Print Name | Sign Name | Approval Date |
|-------------------|-------|------------|-----------|---------------|
| Reviewer          |       |            |           |               |
| Committee         |       |            |           |               |
| Governing Body    |       |            |           |               |