



**Discovery Schools**  
Academy Trust

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## **GIFTS & HOSPITALITY POLICY**

## INTRODUCTION

This Policy sets out Discovery Schools Academies Trust (DSAT) expectations for the acceptance of gifts and hospitality within individual academies and within the corporate office. The Policy takes into account the guidance set out in the Academies Financial Handbook.

DST reserves the right to review, revise, amend, withdraw or replace the contents of this policy at any time subject to the approval of the Trust Board.

## APPROACH

To accept gifts should be the exception. Small 'thank you' gifts of token value, such as a diary, a coffee mug or bunch of flowers, not over £25 in value may be accepted. All gifts should be recorded in individual Academy Registers of Gifts and Hospitality. The School Business Manager should be notified of any gift over the £25 value for either refusal of acceptance and entry in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

Gifts should be refused if it is believed the giver has an ulterior motive such as the receipt of a more prompt service or preferential treatment.

Gifts or hospitality should never be accepted from anyone who is, or may be in the foreseeable future, tendering for any contract with the academy, seeking employment with the academy or is in dispute with the academy, even if you are not directly involved in that service area.

Where items purchased for the academy include a 'free gift', such a gift should either be used for academy business or handed to the School Business Manager to be used for charity raffles.

If there is any doubt about the acceptability of any gift or offer of hospitality the Head teacher or School Business Manager must be consulted

A gauge of what is acceptable in terms of hospitality is whether Discovery Schools Academies Trust Academies would offer a similar level of hospitality in similar circumstances.

- Occasional working lunches with customers, providers or partners are generally acceptable as a way of doing business provided they are not to an unreasonable level or cost.
- Invitations to corporate hospitality events must each be judged on their merit. Provided the general rules have been taken into account, it may be acceptable to join other company/organisation guests at:
  - a. sponsored cultural and sporting events, or other public performances, as a representative of the school;

b. special events or celebrations.

But, consider the number of these events, and always take into consideration what public perception is likely to be if they knew you were attending.

- Acceptability depends on the appropriateness of the invitations, in terms of the level of hospitality, the frequency and the status of the invited employee. In all such cases the Head Teacher or School Business Manager must be consulted, or in the case of the Head teacher, with the Chair of Governors.
- Paid holidays or concessionary travel rates are not acceptable. Neither are offers of hotel accommodation nor the use of company villas/apartments.
- Staff visiting a company to view equipment that the school is considering buying, should ensure that expenses of the trip are paid by the school. Acceptance of refreshments and/or a working lunch may be acceptable, but care must be taken to ensure that the school's purchasing and/or tender procedures are not compromised.
- Acceptance of sponsored hospitality that is built into the official programme of conferences and seminars related to work are acceptable.
- Offers to speak at corporate dinners and social gatherings, or events organised by, for example, a professional body, where there is a genuine need to impart information or represent the school must be agreed in advance with a Head teacher or in the case of the Head teacher with the Chair of Governors. Where a spouse or partner is included in the invitation, and approval has been given to attend, it will be acceptable for a spouse or partner to attend as well, but if expenses are incurred, these must be met personally.
- Any invitation accepted should be made in a professional/working capacity as a representative of the school.

Any change in policy requires the approval of the DSAT Board.