



SEAX Multi-Academy Trust

Gifts and Hospitality Policy

1st September 2017

Effective Date of Adoption:	1 st September 2017
It was ratified by the SEAX Trust Board of Trustees on :	13 th September 2017

1. General

This is SEAX Trust's approved Code of Conduct relating to the offer and/or acceptance by staff, Local Academy members, Trustees and Members of gifts and hospitality of whatever nature from outside individuals or organisations.

Within the terms of the Code, everyone is expected to exercise common sense. If they are in any doubt they must consult the Headteacher/Chair of Academy Committee or Chair of Trust, and in every case declare the acceptance of a gift or hospitality in the register kept by the individual location, using SEAX Trust's 'Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality' form.

A nil return should be made in the register at the end of each academic year (ie at the first meeting of the new academic year, and signed by the relevant Chair, if no gifts have been received.

The process set out is designed to safeguard Academy Committee members, Trustees, Members and staff from any misunderstanding or criticism.

The general principles which govern gifts and hospitality are:

- 1.1 Offers of hospitality should only be accepted if there is a genuine need to represent the School.
- 1.2 Gifts should only be accepted in **exceptional** circumstances.
- 1.3 This Code of Conduct applies to all Academy Committee members, Trustees, Members and staff of SEAX Trust Schools.
- 1.4 To determine whether a gift or hospitality is acceptable, the 'PROVEIT' test should be applied by each individual and referred to the Headteacher/appropriate Chair if in doubt. See Appendix A.
- 1.5 Registers are accessible for viewing by the following appropriate officers: Headteacher, Academy Committee members, School Business Managers, External Auditors, and Responsible Officer/Internal Controls Evaluators.
- 1.6 Any request by a member of the public to view the Register of Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality will be referred to the Headteacher. In considering any

request, the requirement for the School to be open and transparent will be balanced against the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

2. Hospitality

The following principles should be followed in deciding whether or not to accept hospitality:

- 2.1 Staff, Academy Committee members, Trustees, Members should ask themselves whether members of the public, knowing the facts of the situation, could reasonably think that they might be influenced by the hospitality offered. If the answer is yes, the hospitality should be declined. In making judgements, relevant facts to take into account include the person or organisation offering the hospitality, its scale and nature, and its timing in relation to decisions to be made by the School/Trust.
- 2.2 Care should be taken to avoid situations in which an individual Academy Committee member, Trustee, Member or member of staff is the sole person invited to partake of hospitality or where it creates a pattern of receiving hospitality from that organisation.
- 2.3 Examples of when it may be proper to accept hospitality (always depending upon the particular circumstances) are as follows:
 - 2.3.1 attendance at conferences, events and demonstrations of equipment organised by outside bodies where there is a service interest;
 - 2.3.2 attendance at events or functions where there is a demonstrable need for the School to be represented to either give or to receive information or to participate as part of the School's/Trust's corporate image;
 - 2.3.3 attendance at events or functions which are part of the civic, cultural or sporting life of the School/Trust;
 - 2.3.4 working lunches where this is an appropriate and effective way of conducting business and the refreshments provided are on a reasonable level;

2.3.5 overnight hospitality linked to any of the above should not be accepted.

3. Gifts

All personal gifts should be refused or donated to charity unless they come within the categories set out in 3.1 or 3.2 below:

3.1 Gifts of the following type may be accepted:

3.1.1 modest gifts of a promotional character, eg calendars, diaries and other similar articles. See also point 4;

3.1.2 gifts on the conclusion of any courtesy visit to an outside organisation of a sort normally given by that organisation;

3.1.3 gifts up to **£100** in value.

3.2 Gifts which are intended for the School as a corporate body or intended for the School can be accepted but must not be retained by the individual who receives them. Such gifts should be passed to the School as appropriate.

4. Registration of Gifts and Hospitality

Staff, Academy Committee members, Trustees, Members must, within 28 days of accepting any gift or hospitality with an estimated value in excess of £100, provide written notification to the Headteacher using the 'Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality' form (Appendix B). All offers accepted should be recorded in case of any queries, in particular through FOI requests.

The Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality form must be completed in full, setting out full details of the offer or the gift or hospitality received as well as:

- estimated or actual value;
- an indication from the Headteacher as to why acceptance of the offer is authorised;
- the employee's/ Academy Committee member's, Trustee's, Member's printed full name (not typed) and signature; and
- the Headteacher's/Chair's printed full name (not typed) and signature.

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5. Monitoring

The School maintains a register of gifts and hospitality accepted.

If there are no declarations of gift/hospitality in an academic year, a nil return should be made in the Register. The pro-forma (see Appendix B) detailing the individual declarations, should be kept in the Register. Copies of these forms should be attached to the annual declaration that confirms that the Register is up to date.

The Schools monitor the Register annually and report the outcomes to the Local Academy Committee. An annual report should be made to the SEAX Trust Resources and Audit Committee at the end of each academic year. Any concerns/issues identified should be noted and an action plan put in place. This should be recorded in the minutes of each meeting.

6. Penalties for Breaching the Code

The School's disciplinary procedures may be applied where it is found that breaches of the Code have occurred.

7. Monitoring the Code

As part of its role in promoting high standards of conduct, SEAX Trust Resources and Audit Committee will receive annual reports on the monitoring of the Code.

8. Gifts to Staff from School

It is the policy of SEAX Trust Schools to make small gifts up to a value of £25 to staff who are absent for significant periods due to illness or maternity leave, or who are leaving employment after a significant period of service to SEAX Trust Schools. This is at the discretion of the Principal/Head of School/Head of College.

9. Retention of Documentation

Documentation in the Register will be kept for seven years.

MANAGING THE RECEIPT OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

The **PROVEIT** test

Whether or not the offer is acceptable:

Purpose	Token, thanks or seeking a favour? (token or thanks: yes; favour: no)
Rules	What are they? Does this situation conform?
Openness	Is the offer transparent?
Value	Expensive or inexpensive?
Ethics	Does the offer fit with school ethics? Is this an exceptional circumstance?
Identity	Who has made the offer?
Timing	Are you about to make a decision affecting the giver?

APPENDIX B - DECLARATION OF GIFTS OR HOSPITALITY RECEIVED

NAME:		
Description of gift or hospitality provided		
Value/Estimated value of gift or hospitality		
Person or body offering/providing the gift or hospitality		
Person or body receiving the gift or hospitality (other than/as well as you)		
Any relationship (including potential future relationship) which you or the Agency has with the person or body offering the gift or hospitality.		
Why accepting it was in the school interests		
<p>For gifts (including items such as tickets and vouchers):</p> <p>Do you seek permission to retain/use it yourself, or will you pass/have you passed it to the Headteacher or other appropriate person to be passed on to charity or deal with it in some way?</p>		
<p>For hospitality or gifts already enjoyed, used or consumed:</p> <p>Why was prior approval not sought?</p>		
Signed:		Date:
Signed:	Headteacher	Date:
Reason for refusal/approval		