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Gifts and Hospitality Policy

This policy is underpinned by our school motto and our core values, so that pupils become wise, courageous learners, as well as dignified people of integrity.

"Just and firm of purpose"

The motto of Archbishop Edward Ilsley, and the motto of our school

Our Core Values

Wisdom • Courage • Dignity • Integrity

From November 2026

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Archbishop Ilsley Catholic School expects the highest standards of honesty, integrity and transparency in the giving and receiving of gifts and hospitality. This policy sets out expectations for the use of school funds and the declaration, consideration and recording of gifts and hospitality.

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to set out the school's approach to gifts and hospitality given or received, and the use of official and unofficial school funds. It applies to all employees and, where relevant, governors and others acting on behalf of the school.

Our Principles

Everyone covered by this policy is expected to:

1. Act with honesty, integrity and transparency when offering or accepting gifts and hospitality.
2. Avoid situations that could compromise, or appear to compromise, impartiality or professional judgement.
3. Declare offers and accepted gifts or hospitality in line with this policy, and seek advice whenever uncertain.

Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone has a responsibility to uphold this policy and ensure decisions about gifts and hospitality are open, justifiable and properly recorded.

Role	Responsibilities
Governing Body	Approves the policy and, where required, gives advance approval for hospitality expenditure beyond light refreshments.
Principal / Headteacher	Considers declarations and requests for approval. Leads by example and maintains high standards of integrity.
Chair of Governors	Considers offers made to the Headteacher and provides an appropriate point of oversight.
Strategic Business Manager	Maintains the Gifts and Hospitality Register and supports the annual return process.
All Staff	Consider the propriety of offers, decline where appropriate, seek advice when uncertain and declare gifts or hospitality as required.
Budget Holders	Ensure expenditure from official or unofficial funds complies with this policy and has a clear audit trail.

Official and Unofficial Funds

Official funds are funds provided by the DfE or another body to meet education requirements. Examples in the original policy include the School Budget Share, Devolved Capital, Educational Visits and Music Tuition. Official funds may also include project monies which, under the conditions of funding, must be processed through the school's official accounting system

Unofficial Funds

Unofficial funds are funds operated wholly or partly by an employee because of their employment, where the Local Authority has no statutory requirement to provide the resources for the purpose. Examples in the original policy include school funds, tuck funds and vending machine funds.

Gifts and Hospitality Given

Official or unofficial funds must not be used to buy gifts for school staff or other people who assist the school in a voluntary capacity.

Official or unofficial funds should not be used to provide hospitality or meals for staff. Staff must provide their own refreshments, and funds must not be used to pay for personal consumption. The original policy identifies an exception for a member of staff undertaking lunchtime supervision duties.

A supply of tea, coffee, milk and sugar for visitors is permitted and may be purchased from the school budget. A separate hospitality cost centre is recommended to provide a clear audit trail.

Where a meeting with visitors extends through lunchtime, sandwiches or a finger buffet and non-alcoholic drinks may usually be provided from the school budget.

Where more than light refreshments are required for visitors, the original policy requires advance agreement from the Governing Body, with the reasons for approval recorded.

Alcohol must not be purchased using official or unofficial funds.

Official or unofficial funds must not be used to purchase food or beverages at restaurants or hotels for school staff and/or their families.

Refreshments and a light meal may be provided on school premises during staff training days or development activities. The original policy says food should normally be provided through the school kitchen; alternative arrangements require Governing Body approval.

The original policy states that the notional value of meals provided should be reported to the Local Authority at financial year-end because a tax liability may arise. It refers to Section 14 of the Payroll and Pensions chapter.

Gifts and Hospitality Received

Staff should consider whether accepting a gift or hospitality could be viewed by a third party as compromising or likely to compromise their impartiality or integrity. If in doubt, the offer should be politely declined.

Particular caution is required where an offer comes from a person or organisation seeking to do business with the school. Staff should consult the Headteacher; where the offer is made to the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors should be consulted.

A modest promotional item distributed widely and not offered uniquely to one individual—such as a calendar, diary or pen—may be acceptable without prior approval or entry in the register. The source policy refers to these as ‘trivial gifts’.

A modest working lunch may be acceptable where it allows a business discussion to continue. Frequent working lunches with the same organisation require particular caution and any such hospitality must be recorded.

The source policy states that holidays, weekends away, theatre or entertainment tickets, use of company flats or hotel suites, and hospitality boxes at sporting or other events are not acceptable.

Accepted gifts and hospitality must be entered in the Gifts and Hospitality Register within seven days of the offer being made. The register should be presented to the Governing Body termly. The source policy states that failure to record gifts or hospitality may be treated as a disciplinary matter. Hospitality at an official City Council function is identified in the source policy as not requiring declaration.

If there is any doubt about an offer, staff should seek advice from the Headteacher or other appropriate authority. The source policy notes that corruption and bribery are criminal offences.

Residential Training

Where staff attend residential training courses, personal expenditure during an overnight stay—such as minibar items, newspapers and private telephone calls—is the employee’s responsibility and must be paid in full before leaving the hotel or venue.

Gifts and Hospitality Register

Gifts and hospitality should be discussed with the Headteacher or Chair of Governors, as appropriate. If acceptance is agreed, the details should be entered in the register. A nominated officer will maintain the register, which the original policy states should be available for inspection by governors, staff, parents and Local Authority representatives.

Tax and National Insurance

The original policy advises that gifts or rewards provided to employees may create an income tax or National Insurance liability. It states that cash gifts and cash-equivalent vouchers are subject to deductions of Income Tax and National Insurance Contributions. It also states that non-cash vouchers redeemable for goods or services must be reported on Forms P11D and may be liable to National Insurance Contributions.

The source policy describes ‘trivial gifts’ as potentially including seasonal gifts such as a small box of chocolates or biscuits, a diary or a key ring. It notes there is no legal definition in the source text and advises caution because a tax liability may arise. Staff should seek current payroll advice where uncertain.

Long Service Awards

The source policy states that long service awards may be exempt from tax where all qualifying conditions are met:

1. The award marks at least 20 years’ service.
2. No other long service award has been made in the preceding 10 years.
3. The chargeable amount does not exceed £50 per year of service.
4. The award is not money or a cash voucher.

Equality and Inclusion

This policy will be applied fairly and consistently. Decisions about gifts and hospitality will be made objectively and without discrimination on the basis of a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

Where an individual requires reasonable adjustments to access the declaration or approval process, the school will consider appropriate support.

Monitoring and Review

The Gifts and Hospitality Register should be maintained by the nominated officer and presented to Governors termly, as stated in the source policy. The original policy records November 2027 as its next review date and therefore requires review.

Related Policies and Further Reading

1. No related polices

Our Aim

Our aim is to ensure that gifts and hospitality are handled openly, consistently and with integrity, and that school funds are used appropriately. All staff should follow this policy, declare offers where required and seek advice whenever they are unsure.

Appendix A: Gifts and Hospitality Register

Date offered / received	Person / organisation offering	Details of gift / hospitality	Estimated / actual value	Reason for acceptance / decision