Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy 2013

Authorisation: By the Armadale Primary School Council on the 20 May 2013
Recommended: By the Finance Sub Committee
Review Date: It is recommended that this policy is reviewed by the Finance Sub Committee in December 2013

1. PURPOSE
1.1. To provide procedures for Armadale Primary School, staff and School Councillors with regards to offers of Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality in accordance with DEECD guidelines (see Appendix A).

2. DEFINITION OF TERMS
2.1. Gifts are the free or heavily discounted items, intangible benefits or hospitality exceeding common courtesy that are offered to employees or school councillors in association with their duties and responsibilities. They may be enduring, such as a work of art, or consumables, such as a box of chocolates. They can range in value from nominal to significant and be given for different reasons.
2.2. Benefits are the privilege treatment, privileged access, favours or other advantage offered to an individual. They include invitations to sporting, cultural or social events, access to discounts and loyalty programs, and promises of a new job.
2.3. Hospitality is the friendly reception and treatment of guests. It is hospitable to offer light refreshments in the course of a business meeting or as part of a conference program. Hospitality can range from offers of light refreshments at a business meeting to restaurant meals and sponsored travel and accommodation.
2.4. Reportable Gifts are those that must be recorded, typically on a gift declaration form and/or gift register. At a minimum, reportable gifts include accepted gifts, benefits and hospitality that exceed a nominal value. They could also include gift offers of any value, whether they are accepted or not. The gifts may have been offered to an employee or school councillor directly, or extended to them as a guest of their partner or other close relation.
2.5. Nominal value refers to the value of the gift offer. It is used to determine whether an offer, if accepted, is a reportable gift and therefore recorded on the gift register.

3. OBJECTIVES
3.1. To ensure high standards of integrity and impartiality from Victorian public sector employees and school councillors.
3.2. DEECD employees and school councillors must not accept gifts, benefits or hospitality from people seeking to influence their decisions unfairly.
3.3. Whenever Department employees, school council employees or school councillors do accept gifts, they must always act fairly and objectively and maintain public trust by being honest, open and transparent.

4. IMPLEMENTATION
4.1. Accountability: minimum requirements
   4.1.1. for all employees and school councillors accepting gifts are that they:
     ▪ do not solicit gifts, benefits or hospitality
     ▪ seek advice from their manager/principal or other appropriate delegate if unsure about how to respond to an offer of a gift, benefit or hospitality of more than nominal value.
     ▪ refuse all offers of gifts, benefits or hospitality from people or organisations that may influence the school’s decision making processes, i.e. tender processes, procurement, licensing or regulation, etc.
     ▪ refuse all offers of money or items easily converted to money, such as shares
     ▪ refuse bribes and report bribery attempts to their manager/principal
   4.1.2. for all employees and school councillors providing gifts are that they:
     ▪ ensure that any gift or hospitality is provided for a business purpose in that it furthers of official business or other legitimate organisational goals, or promotes and supports government policy objectives and priorities
     ▪ ensure that any costs are proportionate to the benefits obtained for the State, and would be considered reasonable in terms of community expectations; and
     ▪ ensure that when hospitality is provided, individuals demonstrate professionalism in their conduct and uphold their obligation to extend a duty of care to other participants.
4.2. Endorsement of this document at School Council.
4.3. Institute a gift register.
4.4. Publish policy and appendix via school website.

5. EVALUATION
   3.1. Review policy at the Finance Committee on an annual basis
   3.2. Ratify the review at School Council

APPENDIX A

DEECD Booklet:

Gifts, Benefits, and Hospitality Policy and Guidelines Revised March 2013
for Department Employees in Public Service and Teaching Service, School Council Employees and School Councillors.