

ARMADALE PRIMARY SCHOOL POLICY

SCHOOL No. 2634

Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy 2015

Authorisation: By the Armadale Primary School Council on the 15th June 2015

Recommended: By the Finance Sub Committee

Review Date: It is recommended that this policy is reviewed by the Finance Sub Committee in March 2016

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 DET 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. DET 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;
- refuse all offers of gifts, benefits or hospitality that could be reasonably perceived as undermining the integrity and impartiality of their organisation or themselves;
- refuse all offers of gifts, benefits or hospitality from people or organisations about which they are likely to make decisions, i.e. tender processes, procurement, licensing or regulation, etc.
- refuse all offers of money or items easily converted to money, such as shares; and
- refuse bribes and report bribery attempts to their manager/principal.
- 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.

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 the conduct of official business or other legitimate organisational goals, or promotes and supports government policy objectives and priorities;

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- 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.

4.1.3. for the Department's executive officers, executive class and principal class employees in the Teaching Service (excluding assistant principals) are that they:

- establish and regularly review policies and processes to respond to offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality, including multiple offers from the same source;
- establish and regularly review policies and processes to provide guidance on the provision of gifts or hospitality, both internally to staff and externally to business partners and other stakeholders;
- promulgate and establish awareness and compliance with gifts, benefits, and hospitality policies with all employees and school councillors;
- reinforce to all employees and school councillors that a breach of gifts, benefits and hospitality procedures could constitute a breach of binding codes of conduct and result in possible disciplinary action;
- ensure records are kept of accepted gifts, benefits and hospitality of more than nominal value and that such records are subject to regular scrutiny, including review by the Department's Audit Committee; and
- ensure that hospitality expenditure is recorded and reported in accordance with whole of government financial management, accountability and reporting requirements

4.2. Endorsement of this document at School Council.

4.3. Maintain a gift register.

4.4. Publish the policy and appendix via school website.

5. EVALUATION

5.1. Review policy at the Finance Committee on a bi-annual basis

5.2. Ratify the review at School Council

APPENDIX A

DEECD Booklet:

Gifts, Benefits, and Hospitality Policy and Guidelines

for Department Employees in Public Service and Teaching Service, School Council Employees and School Councillors.

Revised February 2015