



The purpose of the policy is to define a framework of expectations in relation to the prevention of corruption and bribery. The policy sets clear definitions for employees and persons engaged in the governance of the school and outlines the actions resulting from breach of the requirements set herein.

Date approved:

Signed:

(Headteacher)

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(Chair of committee)

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Contents

Changes to this edition	1
ANTI-CORRUPTION AND BRIBERY POLICY	2
Definitions	2
Bribery	2
Corruption	2
Fraud	2
Theft.....	3
Context	3
School strategy	4
School practice.....	4
Receipts of gifts, hospitality, entertainment and other services	5
Expenditure on entertainment, gifts, hospitality and promotional expenditure	6
Private use	6
School community.....	6

Changes to this edition

Change in terminology in line with the Academies Financial Handbook – register of pecuniary interest is changed to business interest.

ANTI-CORRUPTION AND BRIBERY POLICY

This policy should be read in conjunction with the register of business interests, the fraud policy and the whistleblowing policy.

Definitions

Associated persons

An associated person is someone who provides goods or services to, or on behalf of, the school and could include contractors or suppliers.

Bribery

The Bribery Act 2010 defines bribery as giving someone a financial or other advantage to encourage that person to perform their function or activities improperly or to reward that person for already having done so.

It is important to note that the Bribery Act makes it an offence for schools to fail to prevent employees and other associated persons from giving or receiving bribes. However, if a school can prove that it has adequate procedures in place to prevent bribery, it will have a defence against this offence. Any individuals who are convicted of a bribery offence can face up to ten years' imprisonment. Any school in which bribery is found to have taken place may receive an unlimited fine and be excluded from tendering for public contracts. It is also probable that its reputation will be irreparably damaged.

Corruption

Corruption is the offering, giving, soliciting or acceptance of an inducement or reward which may influence actions being taken. The areas of school activity which are most susceptible to corruption include:

- Tenders
- Contracts.
- Disposal of assets
- Licences and planning

Fraud

Fraud is deceit, trickery, sharp practice or breach of confidence, perpetrated for profit or to gain some unfair or dishonest advantage. In the broadest sense, a fraud is an intentional deception made for personal gain or to damage another individual. It is also false representation, failure to disclose information when there is a legal duty to do so and abuse of position. Fraud is both a crime and a civil law violation. Defrauding people or entities of money or valuables is a common purpose of fraud, but there have also been fraudulent 'discoveries', e.g. in science, to gain prestige rather than immediate monetary gain.

A hoax also involves deception, but without the intention of gain or of damaging or depriving the victim.

A contextual example of fraud is the intentional distortion of financial statements or other records by persons internal or external to the school which is carried out to conceal the misappropriation of assets or otherwise for gain.

Specific examples of fraud that schools may be at risk of include:

- Falsifying or altering accounting records or other documents.
- Suppressing or omitting the effects of transactions from records or documents.
- Adding records of transactions which have no substance.
- Wilful misrepresentation of transactions or other school affairs.
- Accepting payment for securing a place for a child at a school.
- Accepting an invitation to an event from a parent or supplier who intends to gain an improper advantage.
- Accepting expensive gifts from a parent or child which were given with the intention of one pupil being favoured over others.

Theft

The 1968 Theft Act states that a person shall be guilty of theft if she/he dishonestly appropriates property belonging to another with the intention of permanently depriving the other of it.

Context

The Trust recognise that:

- Whether large or small, schools are complex organisations.
- An unequivocal commitment to effectively discharging our responsibility to safeguard public and private funds is a pre-requisite for demonstrating the highest standards of integrity.

Consequently, the Trust, in consultation with the headteacher and senior leaders, has agreed proportionate procedures to prevent and detect fraud, corruption and bribery.

To this end we aim to create, embed, develop and maintain an anti-fraud, anti-corruption and anti-bribery culture across all aspects of the school's activity.

This culture will support an ethos which deters, prevents and detects corruption, fraud and bribery.

A framework for:

- Investigating and facilitating recovery of losses.
 - Invoking employees and disciplinary proceedings.
 - Applying sanctions against people who commit fraud or bribery offences including referral to the police.
 - Seeking redress for fraud, overpayment and losses.
 - Monitoring, publishing and updating our policy and procedures.
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- Evaluating the impact of policy and procedures on performance.
- The showing of appreciation to employees through small gifts from parents and pupils is not affected by this policy because such gifts are not bribes.

School strategy

- The headteacher will identify a lead professional to take day-to-day responsibility for the oversight of the school anti-corruption and bribery policy (ACBP) who will perform the following activities;
- risk assess corruption and bribery risks across the schools operating procedures.
- implement and strictly enforce the school's ACBP.
- provide advice, guidance and support to employees regarding acceptable and unacceptable offers of gifts, hospitality, benefits and donations.
- maintain a register of gifts and donations received by the school/ employees with a value in excess of £25.
- ensure no gifts are provided for public officials.
- carry out due diligence on potential business partners before the school enters into any business relationship or project with them.
- advise on financial/business links with parents.
- actively support leadership and governance in communicating zero tolerance of corruption and/or bribery.
- update all associated school policies and practices to include, where relevant, references to procedures for investigating any allegations of corruption and/or bribery and in the case of the school whistleblowing policy, to include directions for reporting corruption and/or bribery.
- review how we work to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities in relation to fraud.
- encourage and enable all employees to raise serious concerns.
- report regularly to the headteacher on the efficacy of school arrangements and at least annually to the Internal Audit committee and governing body.

School practice

Employees of the school are required to adhere to the ACBP. Failure to comply with any aspect of the ACBP will be a breach of conduct and possibly a criminal offence and will be investigated.

Where there is suggestion of a breach of the ACBP, the school will fully investigate. Employees may be suspended while the investigation is being carried out. The school will invoke its disciplinary procedures where any employee is suspected of being in breach of its ACBP. This may result in a finding of gross misconduct and dismissal.

To ensure all our practices are beyond reproach we require all employees to support and co-operate with the lead professional responsible for our ACBP.

We expect and encourage all employees to raise any concerns they may have relating to fraud and corruption. Care, however, must always be taken to ensure such concerns are raised in good faith. In the first instance, concerns can be raised with the individual's line manager, or anti-corruption and bribery officer (Business Manager). If told not to raise or pursue any concern, employees should not agree to remain silent. The attention of all employees is drawn to our whistleblowing policy.

All employees are required to attend designated training, in line with our ACBP and to sign to confirm they have read relevant information produced, from time-to-time, as guidance documents.

All employees are required to conform to guidance which is issued by the school, including what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in terms of gifts, hospitality and the acceptance of donations.

All employees dealing with finance must undertake training to ensure the highest standards of accounting are maintained.

All employees involved in recruitment and appointment must adhere to the school's rigorous safer recruitment procedures. It is also recommended that steps are taken during the recruitment process to ensure that all potential employees have a good record in terms of their integrity and propriety.

Receipts of gifts, hospitality, entertainment and other services

The school depends on its employees and associated persons to ensure that the highest standards of ethical conduct are maintained in its business dealings.

Employees should report any incidents of suspected bribery to the ACBO/Business Manager at the earliest possible time that a concern is identified. These may include:

- Suspected or actual attempts at bribery for the employee.
- Concerns that other employees or associated persons may be being bribed.
- Concerns that other employees or associated persons may be bribing third parties.

The school will immediately carry out a thorough investigation and take appropriate action if the allegations are proven, including reporting any matter to the relevant authorities.

Governors and employees involved in making buying decisions may not accept excessive, frequent or regular gifts, hospitality, entertainment or other services from existing or prospective suppliers. When considering whether to accept such offers, they must consider whether they could affect their independence or cause concern that they might affect their independence and report the offer to the school's anti-corruption and bribery officer before acceptance. The school maintains a register of

gifts and favours offered with a value in excess of £25 and, whether these were accepted or rejected.

Expenditure on entertainment, gifts, hospitality and promotional expenditure

The school allows expenditure on entertainment, gifts, hospitality and promotional expenditure provided that it is:

- Arranged in good faith.
- Not offered, promised or accepted to secure an advantage for the school or any of its employees or associated persons or to influence the impartiality of the recipient.

Employees and associated persons should submit requests for such expenditure to the ACBO/Business Manager detailing:

- The objective of the proposed expenditure.
- The identity of those who will be attending, in the case of an event.
- Details and the rationale of the proposed activity.

Expenditure will only be authorised where it is considered that:

- No conflict of interest may arise.
- It could not be perceived that undue influence or a business benefit was being sought.

Such expenditure is reported to the full governing body and the school maintains a register of expenditure incurred.

Private use

The school does not obtain goods or services for the private use of governors and employees. Governors and employees may not:

- Hold any interest in any equipment or property held or used for the school.
- Acquire any interest in the disposal of school equipment or property at the end of any contract between the school and any third party.

School community

This policy does not attempt to cover every aspect of theft, fraud corruption and bribery. It is intended to promote a framework whereby all members of the school community may work constructively together for the good of the school and all who work and learn here.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and contributions from all categories of employees will be sought and welcomed.

The most important aspect of our policy and practice is to demonstrate that our operations are of the highest standards of integrity.
