



Little Way Catholic
Educational Trust

Gifts, Hospitality & Anti-Bribery Policy

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Statement of Intent

Little Way Catholic Educational Trust (LWCET) is committed to the highest ethical standards and acting with integrity in all business activities. This policy details LWCET's position in relation to both accepting hospitality or gifts and preventing and prohibiting bribery.

There will be occasions when pupils, parents or members of the community want to show their appreciation by giving small gifts or hospitality to an individual member of staff or school. It is important that staff are aware of when it is permissible to accept gifts and/or hospitality and when these should be registered with LWCET.

Bribery by, or of, a member of staff, agents or consultants, or any person acting on behalf of LWCET will not be tolerated. LWCET is committed to implementing effective measures to prevent, monitor and eliminate bribery.

Bribery and corruption by individuals are punishable by up to 10 years imprisonment and LWCET could face an unlimited fine and serious damage to its reputation. Therefore, LWCET takes its legal responsibilities very seriously.

Purpose & Scope

This policy applies to all staff working in LWCET's schools and the central team (whether paid or unpaid, permanent, fixed-term or temporary) and includes local governors, Directors, Members, contractors and volunteers. It also applies to any person or body, acting on its behalf and any third party.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Establish roles and responsibilities of staff in observing and upholding the LWCET's position on accepting gifts as well as bribery and corruption.
- Provide information and guidance to those working for the LWCET on accepting gifts and hospitality and reporting concerns of bribery and corruption.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Bribery Act 2010
- ESFA Academy Trust Handbook (2023)

Roles and responsibilities

The CEO, Headteacher or line manager will be responsible for:

- Working with the CFO and/or SBM, approving the offering, giving or accepting of gifts and hospitality in the necessary circumstances, including where they are being offered to staff from pupils and/or parents.

The SBM or CFO (in the case of central executive team), will be responsible for:

- Working with the Headteacher or CEO, approving the offering, giving or accepting of gifts and hospitality in the necessary circumstances, including where they are being offered to or accepted from government officials and representatives.
- Approving charitable donations offered or made in LWCET or a school's name.

All staff will be responsible for:

- Following the procedures set out in this policy.
- Considering whether gifts and hospitality offered, given or received are appropriate to the circumstances, and reflecting on the intention behind them.
- Seeking approval from the Headteacher, their line manager and/or CFO/SBM, as appropriate, to offer, give or accept gifts or hospitality in the necessary circumstances.
- Reporting instances of known or suspected bribery to the Headteacher, the CFO or CEO at the earliest opportunity.

The Bribery Act 2010

The Bribery Act 2010 came into force on 1st July 2011. It covers bribery and corruption in business activities in the UK and overseas. Under the Bribery Act 2010, a bribe is a financial or other type of advantage offered with the intention of inducing or rewarding improper performance of a function or activity, or knowledge or belief that accepting such a reward would constitute the improper performance of such a function or activity.

A criminal offence will be committed under the Act if:

- An employee or associated person acting for, or on behalf of, LWCET or one of its schools offers, promises, gives, requests, receives or agrees to receive bribes.
- An employee or associated person acting for, or on behalf of, LWCET or one of its schools, offers, promises or gives a bribe to a public official with the intention of influencing that official in the performance of their duties.
- And, in either case, LWCET does not have the defence that it has adequate procedures in place to prevent bribery.

Unacceptable Practice

It is not acceptable for LWCET staff (or someone acting on LWCET's behalf) to:

- Give, promise to give, or offer, a payment, gift or hospitality with the expectation or hope that an advantage will be received, or to reward an advantage already given.
- Give, promise to give, or offer, a payment, gift or hospitality to a government official, agent or representative to facilitate or expedite a routine procedure.
- Accept payment from a third party if they know or suspect that it is offered with an expectation of a business advantage in return.
- Threaten or retaliate against another member of staff who has refused to commit a bribery offence or who has raised concerns under this policy.
- Engage in any activity that might lead to a breach of this policy.

Acceptable Practice

This policy does not prohibit normal and appropriate hospitality (both given or received) if the following requirements are met:

- It is not made with the intention of influencing a third party to obtain or retain business or a business advantage, or to reward the provision or retention of business or a business advantage, or in exchange for favours or benefits.
- It is given in the name of the school or LWCET, not the individual's name.
- It complies with local law
- It does not include cash
- It is appropriate in the circumstances (such as the giving of small gifts at Christmas time or end of term)
- The type and value of the gift is reasonable given the reason the gift is offered
- It is given openly, not secretly
- Gifts should not be offered to, or accepted from, government officials or representatives, or politicians or political parties.

The advice of LWCET is to, in all circumstances, consider whether the gift or hospitality is reasonable and justified and to consider the intention behind the gift.

Charitable Donations

LWCET and its schools only make charitable donations that are considered to be part of LWCET's wider purpose.

LWCET only makes charitable donations that are legal and ethical under UK Law.

No donation must be offered or made in the name of LWCET or its schools without the prior approval of the Headteacher, Chief Finance Officer or Chief Executive Officer.

Gifts and Hospitality from Parents and Pupils

It is permissible for staff to accept gifts from parents and pupils (at times such as Christmas and at the end of term/year).

Gifts of a value of £30.00 or less can be accepted from parents and pupils without approval from the Headteacher (providing that these gifts do not satisfy the conditions outlined below). These gifts do not need to be recorded in the Gifts and Hospitality Register.

Staff are permitted to accept gifts from groups of pupils or parents up to the value of £50.00 without approval from the Headteacher (providing that these gifts do not satisfy the conditions outlined below). These gifts do not need to be recorded in the Gifts and Hospitality Register.

Staff will not accept:

- Cash or monetary gifts, including tokens and store gift receipts
- Gifts or hospitality offered to their spouse, partner, family member or friend
- Gifts or hospitality from a potential supplier or tenderer
- Lavish or extravagant gifts or hospitality.

Staff will consider the following before accepting gifts or hospitality:

- Whether there is any benefit to LWCET or its schools in them accepting the scale, amount, frequency and source of the offer
- The timing of the offer in relation to forthcoming decisions
- Whether accepting the offer could be misinterpreted as a sign of their, or LWCET and its schools, support or favour.

Where staff believe the offer satisfies one of the conditions above or is above the values outlined in this policy, staff will seek prior approval from the Headteacher or CFO before accepting the offer.

In accordance with the requirements of this policy, details of the offer will be recorded as outlined in this policy.

Staff will not accept any gifts that they believe to be excessive or more than simply a token gift of gratitude at an acceptable time of year (such as Christmas or end of term/year).

If a gift is received without warning, staff will politely decline the gift. Or, if they feel it would be more appropriate to do this, they will refer the matter to the Headteacher (or CFO in the case of the central executive team) as soon as possible to allow a decision to be made on the course of action.

In accordance with the requirements of this policy, it may be decided to return the gift, in which case the issue should be referred to the Headteacher (or CFO in the case of Central staff or gifts received by the Headteacher) or donate the gift to a charity or other local cause.

If staff are unsure whether to accept a gift in any situation, they will speak to the Headteacher (or the CFO in the case of the central executive team).

Parents and pupils will be informed of the LWCET's policy regarding gifts and hospitality and will be encouraged to speak to the Headteacher if they want to give a staff member a gift which is of high value or may satisfy any of the conditions outlined in this policy

Gifts to Staff from LWCET or its schools

The school or LWCET may, at the Headteacher's or CEO's discretion, provide staff with token gifts to reward efforts beyond their duties such as significant contributions towards extra-curricular activities. These gifts must be non-monetary, non-alcoholic and cost less than £30.00 unless permission has been gained from the CFO.

When giving gifts to staff, LWCET will ensure:

- The value of the gift is reasonable
- The gift is within its scheme of delegation
- The decision to give the gift is documented
- The gift achieves propriety and regularity in the use of public funds

The purchasing of excessive or alcoholic gifts is regarded as irregular expenditure; as such, the school or LWCET will not provide staff with gifts meeting these conditions.

Reporting Suspected Bribery

Employees are encouraged to raise concerns about any suspicion of bribery or corruption at the earliest opportunity in accordance with the LWCET's Whistleblowing Policy. Issues that should be reported include:

- Any suspected or actual attempts at bribery
- Any concerns that an employee may be in receipt of bribes
- Any concerns that an employee may be offering or delivering bribes.

If the employee is unsure whether a particular act constitutes bribery, this should be raised with the Headteacher or CFO, who will notify the LWCET's Chief Executive Officer, or the Chair of the Board if the suspected bribery relates to the CEO.

All reports of bribery will be thoroughly investigated, in a timely manner and in the strictest confidence.

Staff who raise concerns in good faith will be supported by LWCET, who will ensure that they are not subjected to any detrimental treatment (such as dismissal, threats or other unfavourable treatment) as a consequence of their report. Any instances of detrimental treatment against a member of staff for reporting a suspicion will be treated as a disciplinary offence.

Following Investigation

LWCET will invoke disciplinary procedures where any employee is found guilty of bribery and this may result in a finding of gross misconduct and immediate dismissal. LWCET may terminate the contracts of any associated persons, including consultants or other workers acting for, or on behalf of LWCET or its schools, who are found to have breached this policy.

Record Keeping

LWCET keeps financial records and has appropriate internal controls to provide evidence for the business reasons of making payments to third parties.

Employees will make the Headteacher (or the CFO in the case of the central executive team aware of all hospitality or gifts received or offered over the value of £30.00, or £50.00 if received from multiple contributors. These gifts and hospitality will be subject to managerial review.

The Register of Gifts and Hospitality Register (appendix 1) is used to record gifts or hospitality that need to be recorded. The following information will be recorded:

- The nature of the gift or hospitality
- The date the gift or hospitality was offered
- Who the gift or hospitality was offered by
- Name of the employee the gift or hospitality was offered to
- Value of the gift or hospitality
- Action taken – such as whether the gift or hospitality was refused or accepted.

Staff expenses claims relating to gifts, hospitality or expenses incurred to third parties are submitted in accordance with the relevant LWCET Policy and specifically record the reason for the expenditure.

All invoices, accounts and related documents should be prepared and maintained with the highest accuracy and completeness.

No accounts may be kept “off-book”.

In line with its duties under the Academy Trust Handbook, and irrespective of whether ESFA approval is required, LWCET will disclose aggregate figures for transactions of

any amount, and separate disclosure for individual transactions above £5,000, in its audited accounts for gifts from LWCET.

Related Policies

This policy operates in conjunction with the following LWCET and school policies and documents and is intended to apply to all staff employed by LWCET including the executive team:

- Gifts and Hospitality Register
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- Director/Governor Code of Conduct Policy

Appendix I: Record of Gifts and Hospitality

Name of gift/hospitality	Description	Date gift/hospitality received	Date of hospitality (if applicable)	Who offered the gift/hospitality?	Recipient	Value of gift/hospitality	Was the gift/hospitality accepted? Why?
<i>Gift voucher</i>	<i>Gift voucher for department store</i>	<i>01.02.2024</i>	<i>NA</i>	<i>Parent</i>	<i>Mr Jones</i>	<i>£100</i>	<i>Rejected in line with the Gifts, Hospitality and Anti-bribery Policy.</i>