

Murtoa College

GIFTS, BENEFITS AND HOSPITALITY POLICY



Rationale

The community expects high standards of integrity and impartiality from school staff and school councillors. These individuals must not accept gifts, benefits or hospitality from people seeking to influence their decisions unfairly. Whenever school staff or school councillors accept gifts, they must always act fairly and objectively and maintain public trust by being honest, open and transparent.

Aim

To guide all school staff and school councillors as to what they need to do when considering whether to accept gifts, benefits and hospitality.

Implementation

1. Definitions

- a. Gifts are 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, examples are works of art or a box of chocolates.
- b. Benefits are the privileged treatment, privileged access, favours or advantage offered to an individual, examples are invitations to sporting events, access to discounts or loyalty programs.
- c. Hospitality is the friendly reception and treatment of guests, for example light refreshments or sponsored travel.
- d. Reportable gifts are those that must be recorded because they exceed a nominal value.
- e. Nominal value refers to the value of the gift offer.

2. Minimum requirements

The minimum requirements apply to all employees and school councillors. They are that individuals:

- a. Do not solicit gifts, benefits or hospitality
- b. Refuse all offers of gifts, benefits or hospitality from people or organisations about which they are likely to make decisions
- c. Refuse all offers of money or items easily converted to money
- d. Refuse bribes and report bribery attempts to the Principal
- e. Seek advice from the Principal if unsure about how to respond to the offer of a gift

3. Records

- a. The Principal will keep a record of accepted gifts of more than nominal value.
- b. The record will be checked annually by school council

4. Accepting Gifts

Individuals must exercise care in accepting gifts, benefits or hospitality if:

- a. The donor person, company or organisation is involved in a tender process or contractual relationship with the Department or school
- b. The employee or school counsellor has been offered gifts of any kind more than once by the same donor
- c. Gifts of any value must never be accepted if:

- i. The donor would perceive that an obligation has been created
- ii. The gift is likely to influence the employee or school counsellor in the course of their duties
- iii. The organisation's primary purpose is to lobby Ministers, Members of Parliament or agencies
- iv. The gift is an offer of money
- v. The organisation or individual has a connection with a tender process or decision over which the Department or school could be perceived to have influence

5. *Keeping Gifts*

- a. Employees and school counsellors may keep gifts of nominal value
- b. Gifts of between \$100 and \$500 may be kept subject to approval of school council
- c. Gifts of more than \$500 must be surrendered to the school or Department

This policy should be read in conjunction with the *Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy and Guidelines* from DET.

Evaluation

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

March 2020