



WELLINGTON COLLEGE BELFAST

Hospitality Policy

Reviewed by The Board of Governors December 2019

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SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Permanent Secretary, as the Department's Accounting Officer, is responsible to the Northern Ireland Assembly for the propriety and regularity of the use of all resources for educational and related purposes, and ensuring that value for money is obtained from these resources. In this context, assurance is required that effective management systems, including financial monitoring and control procedures exist within all grant-aided schools, including those which the Department funds directly. Therefore, the Department, as Funding Authority, requires each school to agree a policy for hospitality and related areas eg, floral tributes, small gifts and other tokens of appreciation. Such expenditure must be necessary, appropriate to the occasion, represent effective use of school funds and be of a reasonable amount.

1.2 RATIONALE

The Board of Governors will ensure that there are robust management control arrangements in place and that satisfactory systems are operating within the school in order to safeguard public funds.

It is intended this policy will ensure that expenditure on hospitality complies with government standards on propriety and is consistent with the aims of the College.

SECTION 2: PROCEDURES

2.1 GENERAL

Expenditure on hospitality and related areas must be directly related to, or associated with, the active conduct of official College business. When the College spends public money on hospitality or related areas, the occasion must, in the best judgement of the Governors, produce a clear benefit for the College with no personal benefit for Staff or Governors.

When determining whether such expenditure will produce a benefit for the College, the Governors must evaluate the importance of the event in terms of the costs involved, the availability of funds and any alternatives that would effectively serve the same purpose.

2.2 FOOD AND DRINK

Hospitality includes meals, snacks, refreshments and beverages such as tea or coffee. Staff should not be provided with hospitality from public funds except when work sessions extend over meal times or beyond normal working hours. The Principal's discretion and due regard for economy will be the guide on such occasions and in ensuring that hospitality is not offered to close colleagues working together on a regular basis.

Tea/coffee and biscuits may be provided at meetings with visitors to the College eg, parents, staff from other schools, inspectors, and other officials. Similarly appropriate refreshments may be provided at College events.

2.3 GIFTS

Public funds may not be used to provide floral tributes, small gifts or other tokens of appreciation for events such as birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, retirement or farewell gatherings, except where specific approval from the Department is obtained.

2.4 SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS

In exceptional circumstances the College may wish to mark long service or exemplary performance. Hospitality may be provided to the main guest, the official host (Principal or Chairperson of the Board of Governors), to Governors and visiting dignitaries. Hospitality at such events shall not be extravagant and should normally be provided on school premises, using the in-house services whenever possible. If in-house facilities are not appropriate then, as a general rule, expenditure per head should not exceed the current rates of Civil Service subsistence. Except in the case of the principal guest, parents, spouses or partners should not be provided with hospitality. Public funds may not be used to provide floral tributes, gifts or other tokens of appreciation at such events.

2.6 USE OF NON-PUBLIC FUNDS

The College may choose to use non-public funds rather than public monies for hospitality. The Governors must ensure that in the case of non-public funds, such use is permissible having regard to the purposes for which the funds were provided to the College. In such cases principles of transparency will apply.