

Anti Bribery and Receipt of Gifts Policy

Date approved:	23 October 2024
Review cycle/date:	Every 3 years; December 2027
Party responsible:	Staffing, Finance & Premises Committee
Linked policies:	Whistle-blowing Policy

Purpose

The Swanage School values its reputation and is committed to maintaining the highest level of ethical standards in the conduct of its affairs. The actions and conduct of The Swanage School staff and Governors are key to maintaining these standards.

The purpose of this document is to set out The Swanage School policy in relation to bribery and corruption. The policy applies strictly to all employees, governors, consultants, contractors and to any other people or bodies associated with The Swanage School.

Acts of bribery or corruption are designed to influence an individual in the performance of their duty and incline them to act in a way that a reasonable person would consider to be dishonest in the circumstances.

Bribery can be defined as offering, promising or giving a financial (or other) advantage to another person with the intention of inducing or rewarding that person to act or for having acted in a way which a reasonable person would consider improper in the circumstances. Corruption is any form of abuse of entrusted power for private gain and may include, but is not limited to, bribery.

Bribes are not always a matter of handing over cash. Gifts, hospitality and entertainment can be bribes if they are intended to influence a decision.

Policy

The Swanage School will not tolerate bribery or corruption in any form.

It is prohibited to offer, give, solicit or accept any bribe or corrupt inducement, whether in cash or in any other form:

- to or from any person or company wherever located, whether a public official or public body, or a private person or company;
- by any individual employee, governor, agent, consultant, contractor or other person or body acting on The Swanage School's behalf;

- in order to gain any commercial, contractual, or regulatory advantage for The Swanage School in any way which is unethical or to gain any personal advantage, pecuniary or otherwise, for the individual or anyone connected with the individual.

This policy is not intended to prohibit the following practices provided they are appropriate, proportionate and are properly recorded:

- normal hospitality
- fast tracking a process which is available to all on the payment of a fee; and/or
- providing resources to assist a person or body to make a decision more efficiently, provided that it is for this purpose only.

All gifts above the value of £25 will be recorded the School's register of gifts. All such gifts will be reported to the Business Manager, who maintains the register which is available for the information of all the Swanage School Governors. All gifts above £100 will be refused unless, prior to receipt, acceptance of the gift has been approved by the Full Governing Body.

It may not always be a simple matter to determine whether a possible course of action is appropriate. If you are in any doubt as to whether a possible act might be in breach of this policy or the law, the matter should be referred to the Business Manager.

The Swanage School will investigate thoroughly any actual or suspected breach of this policy, or the spirit of this policy. Employees found to be in breach of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action which may ultimately result in their dismissal.

Key Risk Areas

Bribery can be a risk in many areas of the school. Below are the key areas you should be aware of in particular:

- **Excessive gifts, entertainment and hospitality:** can be used to exert improper influence on decision makers.
- **Facilitation payments:** are used by businesses or individuals to secure or expedite the performance of a routine or necessary action to which the payer has an entitlement as of right. The Swanage School will not tolerate or excuse such payments being made.
- **Reciprocal agreements:** or any other form of 'quid pro quo' are never acceptable unless they are legitimate business arrangements which are properly documented and approved by the Full Governing Body
- **Actions by third parties for which The Swanage School may be held responsible:** can include a range of people i.e. agents, contractors and consultants, acting on The Swanage School's behalf. Appropriate due diligence should be undertaken before a third party is engaged. Third parties should only be engaged where there is a clear rationale for doing so, with an appropriate contract. Any payments to third parties should be properly authorised and recorded.

- **Record keeping:** can be exploited to conceal bribes or corrupt practices. Robust controls will be maintained so that records are accurate and transparent.

Employee responsibility and how to raise a concern

The prevention, detection and reporting of bribery or corruption is the responsibility of all governors and employees throughout the school. If you become aware or suspect that an activity or conduct which is proposed or has taken place is a bribe or corrupt, then you have a duty to report this.

Any such incidents should be reported in accordance the school's Whistle-blowing Policy.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

This policy will be reviewed every three years.