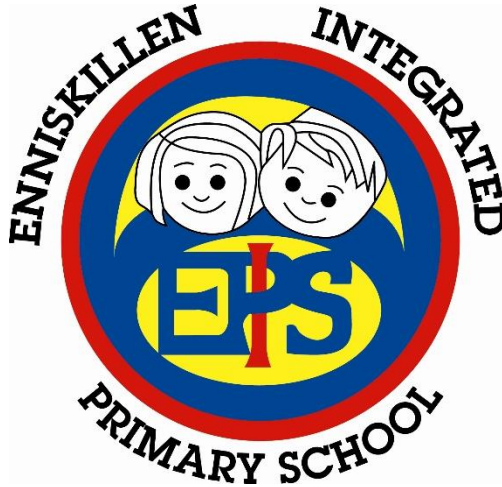


# Enniskillen Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit



## Hospitality Policy

Ratified by Board of Governors:  
As per statement on Website

# Enniskillen Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit

## HOSPITALITY POLICY

The Board of Governors have adopted the following policy as a response to Department of Education requirements.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 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.

1.2 Therefore the Department, as Funding Authority for voluntary grammar and grantmaintained integrated schools, requires each school to agree a policy for hospitality and related areas eg, floral tributes, small gifts and other tokens of appreciation. Such Propriety<sup>1</sup> demands that in all cases expenditure on hospitality and related areas must be necessary, appropriate to the occasion, represent effective use of school funds and be of a reasonable amount.

1.3 This general policy is being provided as a guide to schools on the provision of hospitality in connection with official school business and other activities that promote the school to the public. It may, however, be adopted in full to meet the Department's requirements. It is intended to help schools ensure that expenditure on hospitality complies with government standards on propriety and is consistent with the mission of the school.

1.4 The Board of Governors should, therefore, 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.

### 2.0 GUIDELINES ON ALLOWABLE EXPENSES AND OCCASIONS

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

2.2 When determining whether such expenditure will produce a benefit for the school, 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.

2.3 Hospitality in this context includes meals, snacks, refreshments and beverages such as tea or coffee. Staff should not be provided with hospitality 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.

**2.4** Tea/coffee and biscuits may be provided at meetings with visitors to the school eg, parents, staff from other schools, inspectors, and other officials.

**2.5** Public funds may not be used to provide hospitality, 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.

**2.6** In exceptional circumstances a school 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<sup>2</sup>. 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.

**2.7** The school 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 school.

### **3.0 TIMESCALE**

**3.1** The guidelines are effective from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2004. They will be reviewed after a period of twelve months and amended accordingly. EIPS will review this policy at the beginning of each school year.

**3.2** The guidelines may be updated in line with revised departmental policy.

### **4.0 AUTHORITY**

**4.1** The Board of Governors is responsible for regulating and controlling funds provided by the Department of Education in accordance with the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989. EIPS must comply with the financial regulations and systems determined by The Department of Education.

**4.2** The Nolan Committee<sup>3</sup> sets out 'core principals of public life' which have been endorsed by Parliament. The central themes in relation to propriety are:

- The avoidance of bias through conflict of interest
- The avoidance of personal gain from public funds
- Openness and accountability

## 5.0 CONTACT OFFICER

5.1 Any queries about the guidelines should be directed in the first instance to:

Mr Neil Jardine  
Chair of Board of Governors  
Enniskillen Integrated Primary School  
Enniskillen  
Co Fermanagh  
BT74 4FW

Telephone: 028 6632 6799

## 6.0 DEFINITIONS

<sup>1</sup>**Propriety** - Government Accounting defines propriety as the requirement that expenditure and receipts should be dealt with in accordance with Parliament's intentions and the principles of Parliamentary control.

<sup>2</sup>**Civil Service Subsistence** - Current applicable rates are available from WELB Accounts Section. (Phone 028 8241 1411)

<sup>3</sup>**Nolan Committee** - 'Committee on Standards in Public Life, First Report' available from The Stationary Office. (ISBN 0 10 128502 7)