

Dulwich Hamlet Educational Trust Staff Benefits and Expenses Policy and Procedure



Approved by Board: December 2015

Next review date: October 2017

1. Introduction and General Principles

- 1.1. All staff have a responsibility to ensure that financial and other resources are used to best effect in order to further the best interests and the purpose of the schools. This policy provides staff with detailed guidance on the procedures to follow when incurring/claiming expenses (e.g. travel and subsistence, course fees) which are required for the performance of their duties.
- 1.2. There is a fundamental requirement on all staff that they should not incur any personal financial benefit through their employment by Dulwich Hamlet Educational Trust ('the Trust') other than their agreed salary. Any breach of this requirement may lead to disciplinary procedures. Relevant staff are required to disclose any pecuniary or other links they may have with the Trust's suppliers by means of a completed entry in the Register of Interests.
- 1.3. The Trust recognises that there are situations where an employee may be entitled to benefits in addition to their salary. This policy sets out the provisions and criteria for additional benefits.
- 1.4. In order to protect the reputation of the Trust, the application of this policy, periodic reviews of the application of this policy will be undertaken by the Trust's Responsible Officer and external auditor.
- 1.5. The Executive Headteacher, as Accounting Officer is responsible for ensuring compliance with all Financial Regulations, Policies and Procedures.

2. Scope

2.1. Categories of Claimants

- 2.1.1. Staff – The Trust will reimburse staff for all reasonable expenses wholly, necessarily and exclusively incurred in the performance of their duties, such as travel, subsistence and accommodation. Consideration should always be given to using the most practical and cost effective method of travel.

3. Staff Benefits

There are a number of staff benefits which have been agreed by the Trustees may be made in addition to salary/pension. These include:-

- 3.1. Free tea and coffee in the staff room.
- 3.2. Free lunches for teaching staff on duty at lunch time
- 3.3. Light refreshments during inset days (e.g. biscuits)
- 3.4. Flowers in the event of serious illness/bereavement (maximum £40.00). Gifts for other life events (e.g. birth of baby, birthdays, etc.) are funded through staff collections

- 3.5. Free Christmas lunch
- 3.6. Social events for staff held externally (maximum cost of £20 per employee per annum)
- 3.7. Long service awards (20 years plus)
- 3.8. Thank you gifts for staff for contributions to school events, in recognition of significant additional unpaid work (e.g. residential trips, concerts, art exhibitions etc.). Maximum amount £10 per gift
- 3.9. Time given to non-teaching staff for extended working hours on residential trips.

4. Contributions towards Fees for Approved Qualifications and Related Study Leave

- 4.1. The Trust takes a positive view of staff wishing to further their qualifications. The Trust will, on the advice and at the discretion of the Executive Headteacher, make a contribution to the cost of a course of study, provided the course is directly relevant to the staff member's work at the school or will enable the staff member to make further valuable contributions towards his/her work at the school
- 4.2. Approval for such contributions will be at the discretion of the Executive Headteacher
- 4.3. Any study leave required for the course during ordinary hours must have prior approval from the Executive Headteacher and will be counted as unpaid leave.
- 4.4. Staff members will be required to sign an agreement that binds them to:-
 - 4.4.1. Repay in full any contribution to their course fees if they leave the Trust within a year of completing the course; or
 - 4.4.2. Repay half of any contribution towards their course fees if they leave the Trust within 1-2 years of completing the course.

5. Expenses

5.1. Authorisation, Responsibility & Procedures

- 5.1.1. All staff should submit their expense claims to the School Business Manager for approval normally within one month of the end of the month in which expenditure is incurred.
- 5.1.2. The Executive Headteacher will validate the claim and ensure that the amounts claimed are justifiable and represent Best Value, before being passed to the School Business Manager for recording and processing.
- 5.1.3. Receipts must accompany all claims. Credit card slips or statements will not be accepted as evidence of business expenditure. A VAT receipt must include the name and address of the retailer, the retailer's VAT registration number, the date of the purchase, details of what goods or services have been purchased and the VAT inclusive value of those goods or services in sterling. Where receipts are not

available, e.g. for toll charges or underground fares, the reason for their unavailability must be given

- 5.1.4. Staff must not use personal loyalty cards when incurring expenditure on behalf of the Trust
- 5.1.5. Reimbursement will normally be made on the next Bacs run, after submission of the approved claim.

5.2. Travel Considerations

- 5.2.1. When travelling, public transport should normally be used.
- 5.2.2. Home to School Travel: staff are responsible for the cost of all travel between their home and their normal primary place of work.
- 5.2.3. Journeys between Home and Temporary Place of Work: If staff can demonstrate that their journey from home to a temporary base (or vice versa) incurs excess travel costs, the excess costs will be reimbursed. Full details of the excess costs must be provided on the expense claim.
- 5.2.4. Private Cars - Staff may use their private cars for school purposes, including inter-site travel, and will be reimbursed at the appropriate rates set by the Trust.

5.3. Private Cars & Driving

- 5.3.1. Private cars may be used for journeys of less than a 200 mile round trip. It is generally more cost effective to use an alternate method for journeys greater than 200 miles. Where a journey of greater than a 200 mile round trip is to be undertaken in a private car, prior approval should be sought from the Executive Headteacher. Drivers undertaking long journeys must allow sufficient time for the journey, and make regular stops to ensure their well-being and alertness.
- 5.3.2. Any parking, Road Traffic Act fines, congestion fines or penalties incurred are the personal responsibility of the member of staff and will not be reimbursed by the Trust.
- 5.3.3. Drivers will be reimbursed for Congestion and Toll Charges incurred subject to production of receipts, where available. Congestion Charges will only be reimbursed at the daily rate, so the driver must ensure that payment is made before the deadline. No tolls or congestion charges can be claimed for travel between home and work.
- 5.3.4. Drivers must ensure that their private vehicle is adequately insured for appropriate business use, as the driver is personally liable for any incident. (Does the school have a policy to cover the use of personal cars for business use?).

- 5.3.5. Drivers must ensure the roadworthiness of their vehicle and that the vehicle meets all the requirements of the Road Traffic Act.
- 5.3.6. The use of a hand-held mobile phone while driving is illegal. The Trust policy is that staff are not to use mobile phones whilst driving on Trust business, even when using a hands-free set.
- 5.3.7. Mileage will be paid at the published HMRC rate. When travelling on business by car, directly from or to your home, you must deduct your usual home to work base mileage from your mileage claim. This is a requirement of HMRC. The 2015 rates are:

	Car	Motorcycle	Bike
Up to 10,000 miles	45p	24p	20p

5.4. Taxis

- 5.4.1. When travelling by taxi, a receipt must be obtained. Where possible, the claimant should obtain prior approval from the Business Manager before using a taxi. Travel by taxi should be kept to a minimum and normally only used under the following circumstances:
- heavy baggage or equipment is being transported;
 - no public transport is available;
 - a member of staff has a temporary or permanent mobility issue, or;
 - personal security is perceived to be an issue.

5.5. Rail

- 5.5.1. First class rail travel for is not permitted. The only exceptions are where it can be demonstrated that it is the cheapest ticketing option of all available tickets
- 5.5.2. Staff should make use of savings available for early bookings and seek the most cost effective option available.

5.6. Air

- 5.6.1. Wherever practicable, audio conference facilities and video conference facilities should be considered as an alternative to travelling. For travel within mainland UK and to/from Eurostar destinations, rail is the default mode of travel over air unless it is a more cost effective (including time cost) method of travel. Staff should travel economy class.
- 5.6.2. Travel should be booked via the School Business Manager when approval has been given by the Executive Headteacher. Significant savings can be obtained by specifying outward and/or return journeys at time of booking. Some airlines will also allow changes to fixed tickets for an additional charge and this may be cheaper than buying

a flexible ticket. Fully flexible tickets should only be requested when absolutely necessary.

5.7. Foreign Currency

- 5.7.1. Foreign currency required e.g. for school-organised educational and cultural visits abroad, should normally be purchased via the school office, who will obtain the best exchange rates available. If staff are required exceptionally to purchase currency using a personal credit/debit card, reimbursement will be made for the full out-of-pocket cost of the transaction including any bank or other charges incurred.

5.8. Subsistence

- 5.8.1. When staff are working away from the school and meals are not provided as part of the purpose for travelling (e.g. attendance at a conference), staff may claim the actual cost of relevant meals on presentation of receipts, up to the limits (including VAT and service) below. All claims must be supported by appropriate detailed VAT receipts or invoices. These limits take account of the fact that staff would normally incur a domestic cost for meals in any case:

Meal	Limit (incl. VAT & Service)
Breakfast	£6
Lunch	£6
Dinner	£16

- 5.8.2. If certain meals have been provided for you, such as breakfast included in the accommodation charge, only the meals that have been paid for personally may be claimed.
- 5.8.3. If one member of a team pays a bill on behalf of other members of staff, details of the reason and location and the names of staff must be shown on the expenses claim. Claims cannot exceed the number of staff multiplied by the relevant per head cost for the type of meal.

5.9. Overnight Accommodation

- 5.9.1. Overnight stays must be pre-approved by the Executive Headteacher. If you have to stay away overnight, the Trust will pay for the cost of a standard single room with bathroom facilities.
- 5.9.2. The cost of the room should not normally exceed the following limits. These limits will be the maximum claimable, with receipts, unless there has been prior approval of the Executive Headteacher after special consideration of the circumstances:

Overnight stay outside of London (and other similar lower cost destinations)	Cost per night (excl. VAT)	Cost per night (Incl. VAT)
Room Only	£75	£90
Bed and Breakfast	£85	£102

Overnight stay in London (and other similar high cost destinations)	Cost per night (excl. VAT)	Cost per night (Incl. VAT)
Room Only	£105	£126
Bed and Breakfast	£115	£138

5.10. Business phone calls

5.10.1. When you use your own home or mobile phone on Trust business, the cost of itemised business calls will be met on production of an itemised bill. The Trust is not able to pay rental charges (HM Revenue & Customs will only allow reimbursement of the business call costs).

5.10.2. The Trust will not meet the cost of phone cards for pay as you go mobiles.

5.10.3. The Trust will meet the cost of business calls from a callbox or hotel room, provided details of the call, including the length and to whom, are included on the expense claim.