Doncaster Council - Schools

**Guidance for Employee Declarations of Interests**

A declaration of interest must be completed under the following circumstances:

* **When a new employee starts** – so that their interests can be documented and considered to ensure that both they and the school are protected;
* **When an individual changes posts** – this is so that their interests can be considered against their roles and responsibilities in their new post. What conflicts with one job role and requires managing may not conflict with a different post / role. Because of this a new declaration is required whenever an employee changes post.
* **Whenever a new interest arises that could cause a conflict with the school or Council** – this is a requirement for all employees and employees must declare any new interests within 28 days.
* **Annually, even if there have been no changes to their interests.** This is best practice and ensures that no interests can be forgotten or overlooked.

**Employees should declare any financial or non-financial interests that may cause any conflict with the School’s or Doncaster Council’s interests.**

When considering whether there may be a conflict of interest an employee shall apply the test “Would a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts, think the employee might be influenced?” If the answer is “yes”, then the interest should be declared. If in doubt declare the interest. Assistance can be sought from your Headteacher/Responsible Officer if any clarification is required.

Interests will include, for example, land ownership, and involvement in contractual or employment relationships. Interests will also include indirect interests, where known, i.e. interests of your close relatives. An interest is one, which has the potential for making you, your school or your relative or friend gain a financial or other advantage or avoid losing one.

The Code of Conduct which you are required to follow, includes the requirement to complete declarations of interest and to not do so negligently or deliberately is a serious breach of the Code of Conduct and any breach will render an employee liable to disciplinary action, the consequences of which may include dismissal.

Declarations of interest need to be kept on an employee’s file for the duration of their contract of employment. This ensures that should there be a requirement to investigate breaches or potential frauds, that these declarations are available. All forms must be kept securely in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act / General Data Protection Regulations.

**Specific Question Guidance**

**1 Other Employment**

You must detail here any other jobs you hold whether they are paid or voluntary. This needs to include any jobs, even relief / casual jobs or zero hour contracts. It must also include any other roles you hold at the school or Doncaster Council. You need to include full details of the job, employer, hours, working times and the role you undertake as directed by the form.

Where there are multiple other employments, you may expand the form or continue on a separate sheet.

In question 1b, the total hours per week you work on roles OTHER THAN the job that this declaration is for need to be recorded. Where this is not straight forward, average these across the last month or last three months.

The school has a responsibility to ensure the health and safety of yourself, other employees, pupils, visitors and any other connected parties on school premises. Your school needs this information to monitor the number of hours you are working and ensure that Working Time Directives are being adhered to and that other employments are not conflicting with the school or increasing health and safety risks.

**2 Other business carried out by you or someone with which you have a close personal relationship**

Close personal relationships are defined on the form itself. This question is asking you to declare any businesses run by yourself or someone within the definition of a close personal relationship. These could be self-employed persons or limited companies or any company owned or managed by yourself or a close personal individual**.** Whilst most business will not conflict with the interests of the school, some may bid for school work or may deliver services that are purchased by schools or MAY be purchased by schools. It is important to declare any interest so that it is clear and so that both the school and you are protected from accusations of fraud or wrong doing.

Under this section, please give as much detail as you can including the name of the company / sole trader, the position of the individual within it and the nature of the business. This assists the manager / responsible officer in determining whether there could be a conflict or perceived conflict of interest between your role and the schools interests.

**3 Any involvement in companies / organisations by you and/or a close relative.**

Close personal relationships are defined on the form itself. This question is asking you to declare any other companies or organisations that you are involved in. You are not required to restate any that are listed in questions 1 or 2. These include posts such as treasurer or other position of a local football league / charity / community enterprise / not for profit organisation.

If you are in doubt whether to declare an interest here, it is best to state it anyway.

**4. Involvement in contracts or in any business that trades, or may seek to trade, with the Council or school by you and/or a close relative.**

This question is related in some part to questions 2 and 3. If any of the business or organisations that you are involved in in any way, are involved in contracts with the school or Doncaster Council or are likely to bid for any work with the school or Doncaster Council, then these please detail these here. This is important that your managers understand any potential involvement you have with any business or organisation that already trades or is likely to trade with the school or council, this way both the school and yourself can be protected from accusations of fraud or of wrong doing in procurement matters. These declarations will help your manager put in place steps to ensure that neither you nor the business are able to influence or be accused of influencing any procurement activities.

**5. Any Governor/Trusteeship posts you hold in an educational establishment. Please state organisation and post held.**

You should enter all details of any governor or trustee activities you undertake in any other educational establishment. Whilst these are unlikely to conflict with the interests of the either school, it is important that your managers know should and are able to effectively manage any relationships.

**6. Any relationship with any other employee in the school or Doncaster Council or Elected Member.**

When managing conflicts of interest, it is important that your line manager understands any link you have with other employees, with the council or local politicians. This is so that they can ensure that both you and the school are protected from accusations of wrong doing. Whilst most relationships with other employees and council employees will have no effect, it is important to be aware of them and manage them as in some circumstances, un-managed interests like these can leave the school open to accusations of fraud and wrong doing.

**7. Beneficial interest in land or property or the intention to bid for any land or property in the Doncaster area.**

If you own, control or are buying any property in Doncaster we need you to declare the details of your interest and where the land or property is. You do not need to declare the home you live in. This information is required to manage any potential issues regarding boundaries, school expansion or works which may affect or benefit other property owners.

**8. Membership of any secret society**

This one may seem odd but these societies have their own agenda and goals and these may conflict with those of the school. It is important to declare them so that individuals and the school are not accused of wrong doing should those agendas conflict.

**9. Gifts and hospitality**

Declaring any gifts or hospitality is important. Whether you have been offered it and rejected it or offered it and accepted it, a declaration is still required here. These are gifts and hospitality you have been offered from a relationship related to your work. For example, if a friend not related to your work at the school or with the school invites you for a meal this does not need to be declared. If a supplier or other party does the same then this needs to be declared. You should also say whether you accepted the gift.

This declaration is for any gift or hospitality and can include (but is not limited to):

* Meals
* Event or sports tickets
* Gift baskets / gift cards at Christmas or other time
* Use of someone else’s property for free or at reduced rates
* Chocolates / flowers or similar “gift”

You do not need to declare advertising materials like pens or general refreshments such as tea / coffee / biscuits during meetings etc.

The purpose of these declarations is to ensure that there is a clear documentation of anything offered or accepted so that the relationships can be managed and the school can ensure that decisions and the individual are free from undue influence or cannot be accused of influencing things like contracts, procurements, and decisions in favour of another party.

If you have been offered any gifts or hospitality that would be valued over £20 these need to be declared as soon as they are encountered and should be declared in full on a Gifts and Hospitality form.