



COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES POLICY

Presented to:

Governors: Finance and Administration Committee
Tuesday 6 December 2016

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COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES POLICY

1.0 BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

There has been continued growth in recent years in commercial activity targeted at schools. Well thought out commercial activities are of benefit to the school and business.

1.1 They add value to school life and the taught curriculum - and provide welcome additional resources.

1.2 Given the growth of such activity, it is important that there is a framework within which the school and business ("Company") can work together towards best practice.

1.3 These best practice principles provide that framework.

2.0 THE PRINCIPLES

2.1 Educational Value and Content

- Activities should be relevant, ethical and add educational value to teaching and learning.
- Materials should not encourage unhealthy, unsafe or unlawful activities.
- The Company should give a broad statement covering its purpose in providing the resource/activity.
- The Company should ensure that all information supplied is accurate and current - materials should be dated, especially where the information or resource is time-sensitive.
- Expressions of opinion should be distinguished from statements of fact.
- Any specialist resources required by the school to utilise or demonstrate the activity must be highlighted from the outset.
- Materials should respect diversity of gender, race, disability and cultural issues and reflect contemporary UK society.

2.2 Branding

- The level of branding should be appropriate to the activity.

2.3 Consultation and Testing

- Activities should be developed in partnership with teachers, pupils, parents (word 'parent' refers to parent or carer or guardian within this policy) and educationalists at the school and piloted where possible. Research and testing should reflect variations in the education system in all parts of the UK.

2.4 Distribution of Material

- The Company must seek permission before forwarding materials to the school.
- The resource should be carefully labelled and should specify both source and target audience.
- The Company should not impose any restrictions on the school in return for the distribution of the materials/provision of resources eg data collection of pupils; restricted use of suppliers.

3.0 COLLECTOR SCHEMES

- 3.1 Collector schemes are schemes in which people can collect points, vouchers or tokens by purchasing a company's products. Schools can then exchange the points, vouchers or tokens for items such as books, computers, or for other benefits.
- 3.2 Unlike other commercial activities, collector schemes may require direct participation by schools, pupils and parents. Financial or other costs will be incurred. The key question is:
- 3.3 Do the educational benefits of the scheme outweigh the potential drawbacks?
- 3.4 Any proposed financial contribution; benefit in kind, sponsorship, donation or commercial agreement must not compromise the school's budget management or fiscal control procedures or processes.
- 3.5 When assessing a commercial activity for the school and business the checklists attached as Appendix 1 will provide assistance in the evaluation of the proposal/scheme.
- 3.6 For the school's current lettings of premises, please refer to Lettings Policy and Procedures. If the school is approached with regards to financial sponsorship or joint collaboration then a review of this policy may be required to be extended for a new venture. Each case would be judged on its own merits and considered by the Senior Management Team if required. It may also be referred to the Governing Body for final approval.

4.0 Review

The Governing Body (or responsible committee) will review this policy in line with the procedure for policy review

Date for review:

If no other reason for review (see policy review procedure) this policy will be reviewed in December 2019.

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APPENDIX 1

CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOLS

When your school is assessing a commercial activity, ask yourself ...

- Does the activity add educational value to the curriculum?
- Is it free of incentives to children to engage in unhealthy, unsafe or unlawful activities?
- Has the business clearly stated its purpose in producing the activity?
- Is the activity based on accurate and current information?
- Are any expressions of opinion clearly distinguished from statements of fact?
- Is the activity as free as possible of explicit sales messages?
- If the activity requires specialist resources, was this made clear to you from the outset?
- Does the activity respect diversity of gender, race, disability and cultural issues and reflect contemporary UK society?
- Is the level of branding and logo use appropriate to the activity?
- Has the activity been developed with educators and piloted for school use with teachers and pupils?
- Is the activity relevant to your region and school?
- Has the business sought permission, where possible, before forwarding the materials to the school?
- Is it clear who the sponsor and target audience are?
- Can your school engage in the activity free from unreasonable restrictions or conditions?

Some extra questions for collector schemes...

- Do the overall benefits of the collector scheme outweigh the costs to your school, pupils and parents?
- Are the terms and conditions of the collector scheme available to you before registration?
- Is the product involved one which you are content for pupils or parents to use?

How do you decide?

If you answered YES to all of these questions, the commercial activity probably meets our best practice principles and could form the basis of a worthwhile partnership between your school and business.

If you answered NO to the majority of these questions you should probably reject the proposed commercial activity.

If your answers were a mixture of YES and NO, you should discuss the proposed activity with your colleagues, weighing it against our checklist and your whole school policy.

Remember: schools and businesses working in partnership share the risks and rewards. The key question is –

Do the educational benefits of the partnership outweigh the potential drawbacks?

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CHECKLIST FOR BUSINESS

When you are planning or assessing your commercial activity ask yourself...

- Are the resources relevant to the curriculum and of educational value? Details on the UK curricula are available on:
www.nc.uk.net
www.accac.org.uk
www.sqa.org.uk
- Are the resources free of incentives to children to engage in unhealthy, unsafe or unlawful activities?
- Is the company's purpose in developing the activity clear to the school? Is further information available on request?
- Is the company's purpose in developing the activity clear to the school? Is further information available on request?
- Is the activity based on accurate and current information rather than opinion?
- Have explicit sales messages been avoided where possible?
- Have any specialist resources needed by schools to utilise the activity been highlighted?
- Does the activity respect diversity of gender, race, disability and cultural issues – and reflect contemporary UK society?
- Is the level of branding appropriate to the activity? Branding is acceptable, but should not be excessive.
- Have the resources been researched, tested and where possible piloted with target groups?
- Has the company sought permission, where possible, before forwarding the materials to the school? Lists of head teachers are available from the relevant Local Education Authority or specialist list brokers.
- Are the materials labelled carefully to ensure that they reach their target audience?
- Can the school engage in the activity free from unreasonable restrictions or conditions?
- Are the terms and conditions governing the activity available to stakeholders?
- Does the resource comply with the British Codes of Advertising and Sales Promotion and relevant legislation?
- Is there a method of updating the resource to ensure continuing compliance with the British Codes of Advertising and Sales Promotion and legal requirements?

How do you decide?

If you answered YES to all of these questions, the commercial activity probably meets our best practice principles.

If you answered NO to some or all of these questions you should revisit the principles and seek further advice from industry professionals if necessary.

Remember: schools and businesses working in partnership share the risks and rewards. The key question is –

Do the educational benefits of the partnership outweigh the potential disbenefits?

Support and further information is available from the Trade Bodies in the Marketing Industry.

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