

Our Gift Acceptance Policy

Villiers Park Educational Trust has a Gift Acceptance Policy to ensure transparency and clarity in accepting donations. The policy highlights the importance of fundraising to support the trust's charitable mission and the need to consider the best interests of the charity and its stakeholders. Villiers Park complies with the Code of Fundraising Practice and is registered with the Fundraising Regulator.

The policy outlines that Villiers Park receives support from various sources, including philanthropic individuals, charitable foundations, companies, universities, and public funding bodies. A dedicated Fundraising Team is responsible for planning, delivering, and evaluating fundraising activities, overseen by the Senior Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees.

Trustees hold the responsibility for accepting donations, guided by relevant legislation such as the Charities Act, the Bribery Act, and others. The board assumes that donations will generally be accepted, but there may be exceptional circumstances where refusing a donation is deemed to be in the best interests of the charity. Refusing a donation may occur if it is unlawful, detrimental to the organization's purposes, entirely anonymous with unknown provenance, or if there are reasonable grounds to believe a supporter lacks capacity.

Villiers Park reserves the right to decline a donation if it poses risks to the trust's reputation, funding from other sources, or if the cost of receiving and stewarding the donation outweighs its value. Anonymous donations above £25,000 with unknown provenance are reported as serious incidents to the Charity Commission.

Returning a donation is possible only in specific circumstances, such as when the terms and conditions of the gift allow it, or when the law explicitly permits it. The board may need to seek the views or order from the Charity Commission to sanction their decision on returning a donation.

Due diligence is a crucial part of the gift acceptance process, aimed at mitigating ethical, reputational, and legal risks. Villiers Park conducts research on prospective donors through publicly available sources, with enhanced due diligence checks for gifts or pledges of £100,000 and more. Concerns related to donors or potential contraventions of the policy can be raised by any member of the Villiers Park community and will be assessed by the Chief Executive. The board's decision on refusing or returning a donation is binding.

The Gift Acceptance Policy was approved by the Board of Trustees in January 2023 and is effective from that date. Implementation is delegated to the Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team. A summary of the policy will be made publicly available on Villiers Park's website, and the policy is scheduled for review in 2026.