



COMMUNITY USE and LETTINGS POLICY

Dormers Wells Learning Trust

Reviewed	December 2024
Review Date	December 2026

Community Use and Lettings Policy

Introduction

The Trust is keen to promote the community use of schools. Making schools accessible to the local community helps to raise students' motivation, improves security for the school site, reduces vandalism, and improves links with the

community. Successive government Education Acts have specifically required governing bodies to have regard to the desirability of school premises being made available for community use.

Many schools make additional income from lettings, but care needs to be taken that the expenses for the site manager, heating and lighting do not exceed the letting fee. Damage is another factor. In most cases, the governors are free to organise lettings as they wish.

The law is clear about the opening of school premises to non-school use or using them for out-of-school-hours study support. The governing body of every school has control of the occupation and use of school premises both during and outside school hours. The exceptions are where legally binding commitments have been or are made, such as through some PFI arrangements or through a trust deed, a transfer of control agreement or a Local Authority direction.

A core element of the design brief for the Dormers Wells High School and Dormers Wells Primary School buildings has been to enable them to be at the heart of its local community and in particular, to provide facilities for community activities. This policy sets out how the schools intend to fulfil their wider role as a community resource for local people.

Dormers Wells High School and Dormers Wells Primary School always operate a fair and inclusive policy.

Aims

- To ensure that the schools plays a full part in the life of its local community
- To help students appreciate their wider responsibilities as part of the local community in Southall
- To facilitate staff and students working in partnership with local organisations
- To generate income for the schools through the letting of facilities.

Dual Use Schemes

'Dual use' or 'transfer of control' agreements allow the school to share, or totally devolve, the management of a sports hall, for example, to another body with a view to allowing community use when not needed by the school.

Charges and Range of Use

The Trust will actively seek to make its facilities available to community groups such as charities, educational organisations, local faith groups and groups recognised by the Local Authority, local secondary schools and primary partner schools including Allenby Primary School. Hirers are expected to uphold the school's values of mutual respect, individual liberty, democracy and the rule of law. The facilities mainly available for community use are the main hall, dining hall, classrooms, business centre, the field and the MUGA (please note that community use is arranged by Everyone Active, who operate the Leisure Centre)

In regard to the field, the hirer agrees that the facilities staff decision on the fitness of ground for play will be final.

The school can charge different rates to take account of the nature of the letting (but cannot subsidise a letting from its annual maintenance grant).

Such lettings include, but are not limited to:

- adult education;
- youth groups (scouts, air cadet corps, etc.);
- church groups for services;
- wedding receptions;
- birthday parties
- holiday activities clubs
- field activities e.g. football, cricket, running etc.
- supplementary schools
- outside conferences, courses and training events (where these facilities exist); and

- before and after school clubs

Generally, there are two broad categories of activity that take place outside of normal school hours and which the Headteacher and the governing body can arrange. These comprise of those that are normally organised by the school for the benefit of their own students, such as study support activities (e.g. additional languages, music practice, chess club etc). There are then those which are usually run by outside groups for the wider community who rent or lease part of the school premises; these include activities such as childcare, sport, performing arts and social events. Some activities target specific needs or groups in an area; for example, supplementary schools run during evenings and weekends for minority ethnic communities.

The use of specified pianos by competent and authorised hirer users may be permitted at the discretion of the school and/or the facilities staff (to be discussed and specified at the time of booking)

Booking

The school advertises availability for lettings via word of mouth, advertising banners and on the school website. Lettings are co-ordinated through the Finance Assistant who can be reached on 020 8566 6446 and approved by the Headteacher. Any person or organisation wishing to hire the school must complete an application form and sign the terms and conditions of hire. The terms and conditions of hire include all requirements stipulated by the school that the hirer must complete and sign before any confirmation of booking is taken (appendix 1). There are three separate applications formats depending on the nature of the hire (Private Hire (appendix 2), Charitable Organisations (appendix 3) and Educational Establishments/Conference (appendix 4). However, the terms and conditions of hire remain the same.

Catering

Use of the kitchen and kitchen equipment is not permitted.

Public Use

The governing body must allow the school to be used for polling (when the school may or may not need to be closed). In all these cases, the governing body has responsibility for Health and Safety measures. In addition, the governing body is addressing all requirements of the school access plan.

Smoking

The school adheres to new government legislation and is a smoking free environment. The smoking of cigarettes, e-cigarettes, pipes, cigars or any other matter on the school premises is strictly prohibited.

Insurance

The hirer must have Public Liability Insurance of at least £2,500,000. A copy of the certificate must be presented to the school before the let takes place and renewed accordingly.

The school must ensure that its own insurance cover is at a level to cope with accidents, etc. arising from out of hours use.

Safeguarding

Organisations hiring the facility should ensure children and young people are supervised at all times by a responsible adult. At time of application hirers will confirm their members have enhanced DBS certificates. Appropriate records will be kept in line with Safeguarding and Child Protection practice by the hirer

Payment

The DWHS governing body has delegated authority to the Finance Committee to determine letting rates. A record of all lettings and income generated shall be maintained by the finance team and credited to the school's main account. Once booking has been accepted the hirer will be invoiced and make payment via bank transfer.

Failure to pay a hire charge and/or any additional payment requests may result in the school forfeiting without compensation all or any (present or future) of the bookings.

If the hirer is disputing any sums of the additional payment requested, in good faith, even if the sums are overdue, the school has the right to suspend the use of the facilities or even terminate the contract having given the hirer notice of its intended action without being prejudice.

Cancellation and Refunds

All cancellations notice should be given in writing at least 7 days before event.

Dormers Wells High School and Dormers Wells Primary School reserve the right to cancel any lettings without reason at any time. In such cases, a full refund or alternative date will be offered except in extreme circumstances.

Termination of Contract

Dormers Wells High School and Dormers Wells Primary School reserve the right to terminate a contract:

- When the hirer cancels more than 25% of the block booking sessions.
- Commits a serious breach of any of its obligations under the terms and conditions of use.
- Becomes bankrupt or goes into administration.
- In the event of termination by the school for the reasons set out above and where the school acting reasonably, is unable to obtain an alternative user for the remaining regular hire sessions, the hirer shall be liable to pay the school a sum equivalent to the hire charge costs of the regular hire sessions

Hirers

The terms and conditions of hire (appendix 1) stipulate all the regulatory and school requirements that the hirer must complete, which includes the designated person in their group acting as Fire Warden and designated First Aider.

All hirers will be asked to sign a contract when the booking arrangement is agreed, as well as sign to confirm that they will comply with all the terms and conditions of hire.

All hirers should notify the lettings team on site immediately of any occurrences such as injuries or illnesses, incidents or near misses, property loss or damage, environmental and building damage or theft.

Abusive behaviour by hirers towards facilities staff and other users of the facilities will result in immediate termination of the booking.

Noise must be kept within reasonable limits and hirers must comply with the instructions of the facilities staff and ensure no disruption is caused to the school.

First Aid & Emergency Situations

The hirer should arrange for first aid qualified personnel to attend medical emergencies during the hire period. For tournaments, competitions or other large events, the hirer may contact the British Red Cross or St Johns Ambulance to always have a qualified person in attendance during the hire period.

The hirer acknowledges that the school does not provide first aid qualified personnel, however, the facilities staff may be able to provide first aid equipment or contact the emergency services. The hirer must familiarise themselves with the 'BREAK GLASS' point nearest to their immediate location. On discovery of an emergency – fire – push 'BREAK GLASS' point, a siren will sound, and the facilities management team will be informed of the location of the emergency.

On hearing the alarm, the hirer must ensure that all users cease using the facility and proceed to the nearest exit and assemble in the designated assembly area at the back of the school.

It is the hirers responsibility to take a register of all their users at the beginning of their hire periods to act as a fire register.

The school must be informed by the hirer in advance of any bookings that may require assistance in the event of an emergency.

Unauthorised individuals should not re-enter the building until the first responders clear the site.

Force Majeure

Neither party shall incur any liability to the other in the event it is prevented from, hindered or delayed in the performance of its obligations under the contract by an Event of Force Majeure.

Car Park

All hirers must comply with the provisions of any relevant and applicable vehicle management procedures applied or notified by the school. Hirers shall not obstruct any emergency vehicle routes, entrance or exit of the school premises. Disabled bays are for hirers who own a valid and proper displayed disability blue badge. The school cannot be held responsible for any damage or theft to cars using the car park. Hirers should always be considerate towards the school neighbours and the public and should not block any driveway

Accessibility and Opening Hours

The school will be available for community use at the following times:

	Internal areas Dormers Wells High School	Internal areas Dormers Wells Primary School	External areas Dormers Wells High School	External areas Dormers Wells Primary School
Monday – Friday during term time	6.00pm-10.00pm	6.00pm – 10.00pm	6.00pm-9.30pm	6.00pm – 10.00pm
Weekends / School Holidays	8.00am-10.00pm	8.00am – 10.00pm	8.00am-9.30pm	8.00am – 10.00pm

Pedestrian access is from the Allenby Road entrance and vehicle access from Dormers Wells Lane.

Entry to the building is via the main reception, where members of the public are met by the site caretakers. Visitors are then escorted to the relevant area being let, where the escape routes, alarms and other rules of use are explained. Where agreed with the school, restricted access cards are issued to a pre nominated person within the letting, which will grant entry only to the areas that have been hired. Site staff will sign these out to the pre nominated person and then sign the access cards back in to school at the end of the hire. This ensures that the hirer is only allowing people into their letting that they know are part of their group/organisation.

Site caretakers are in attendance within the building at all times during the let at Dormers Wells High School and Dormers Wells Primary School.

Reviews and Operation of this Policy

The Community Use and Lettings Policy was reviewed with the Headteachers in October 2024 and DWP Governing Body in December 2024.

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the operation of this non statutory policy and it will be reviewed every two years.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

CEO: Róisín Walsh

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