



# **Victoria Primary School**

## **Community Use of School Premises Policy**

**2021**

### **Vision Statement**

*An inclusive, imaginative and inspiring Learning Community  
where everyone can be safe, healthy, happy and successful  
together.*



## INTRODUCTION

Victoria Primary School is set in the heart of the local community and aims to equip the children for their future role in society. The school seeks to create partnerships with the community which can include educational, economic and broader community benefits.

The potential benefits could include:

- Improved learning and achievement
- Improved access to specialist support services
- A more positive attitude to learning
- Partnership working across statutory and voluntary bodies
- Greater parental involvement in children's learning and development
- Access to parenting programmes
- Opportunities for adult education and family learning
- Improved access to sports and arts
- Stronger social networks between schools and their communities
- Healthier and fitter communities
- More positive perception of schools and their communities



When considering making a partnership for the community use of school facilities, the school will ensure that the sharing of facilities will:

- Meet an identified need in the community
- Offer benefits to both the school and the community
- Make the most of the school and community resources
- Strengthen relationships between the school and the community



The Board of Governors is responsible for the management of the school and the community use of the school. The Board of Governors cannot use the schools' LMS budget to subsidise the hiring of any of its school premises. They will follow best practice for the hiring of school premises as advised by the Department for Education.

The following list is an example of the uses for which Victoria Primary School may be hired.

- Arts and cultural activities
- Lifelong learning and skills programmes
- Access to sports
- Multi-agency support for children and families
- Signposting to services and activities e.g. child care providers, health advice, adult education classes



The Board of Governors will determine the pricing structure and will charge on the basis of full cost recovery, following the best practice guidelines. It is important to remember that when the school's premises are being hired, the inescapable running costs should be covered, in full.

Charges will include the following:



- Payment for the Caretaker
- Cost of cleaning
- Cost of energy
- Wear and Tear
- Administration



Application forms for the hire of school premises are available from the school office. Application forms must be completed, at least, 28 working days in advance of the required date. As much information as possible should be included on the application form to enable the Principal and Senior Leadership Team to discuss requirements.

For occasional or single sessional use, the Principal can authorise approval for the hire and, if approved, will then send the completed application forms to the Education Authority for processing.

For arrangements that fall outside occasional or sessional use, the Board of Governors will seek advice from the Education Authority to ensure a tenancy situation does not arise.

Any arrangement relating to the use of school premises to facilitate after school groups, playgroups or child care organisations requires the approval of the Education Authority.

There are some restrictions on the use of school premises.

- a. The title to the school property may place restrictions on use (where covenants on use bar certain activities) or limit the use of the property to educational use
- b. The school is not permitted in law, to be used for political purposes save and except as polling stations
- c. Alcohol must not be consumed on school premises
- d. The school meals premises are not controlled by the Board of Governors and as such, approval and charging for the use of this element of the premises must come from the Education Authority.



In any arrangement permitting community use of schools, responsibility for the management, control and supervision of the activities being conducted will rest firmly with the user groups. In order to protect the interest of the user group and the school in respect of public liability claims, it is normal practice to expect user groups to hold commercial insurance in relation to public liability risks.

The school will ensure that all user groups provide evidence that public liability insurance is held to cover the third party use of the school premises. If such evidence is not provided, the Principal will seek advice from the relevant body before approving any hire.

A condition of the hiring will be that the user leaves the premises clean, tidy and fit for purpose.

The school caretaker is responsible for opening, securing and checking that the premises are fit for purpose in relation to hiring outside of normal school hours. Any remuneration made to the caretaker or administrative staff in respect of facilitating community use of school premises will adhere to Public Sector Pay Policy.

The school is not permitted to give community users keys to the school premises. The key holders are the caretaker and the Principal. This is for insurance purposes.

The school reserves the right to insist upon a continuous caretaking presence for security reasons.

### COMPLAINTS

Any complaints about the school from someone hiring the school will be dealt with by following the school's complaints procedures.

Due to financial constraints, Victoria Primary School will not permit the use of any equipment other than chairs.

### AVAILABILITY

The school hall is available for use after 5pm on weekdays and from 8am-12 noon on Saturdays (depending on the availability of the caretaker). The maximum capacity for the school hall is 180 people. Heating requires 8 hours to warm up and therefore the school hall is only offered without heating. Hire of the school hall does not include hire of the kitchen facilities or any other equipment. Access is strictly restricted to the hall and the toilet facilities.

A full copy of the terms and conditions of hire will be issued along with the application form at the beginning of the proceedings of any hire agreement.

This document is freely available to the entire school community and is available on the school website. It will be reviewed on an annual basis.

**Signed – Chair of Governors:**



**Signed – Principal:**



**Date: 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021**