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*'Every child is unique and at the heart of everything we do'*

## THORNHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

### POLICY FOR THE LETTING OF SCHOOL PREMISES

#### 1. Adoption

The Governing Body at their meeting on 26/3/19 adopted the lettings policy set out below.

#### 2. Introduction

The Governing Body regards the school buildings and grounds (which are owned by Central Bedfordshire Council) as a community asset and will make every reasonable effort to enable them to be used as much as possible.

However, the overriding aim of the Governing Body is to support the school in providing the best possible education for its pupils, the promotion of equality of opportunity and the community cohesion of the local area. Any lettings of the premises to outside organisations will be considered with this in mind.

#### 3. Definition of a letting

A letting may be defined as:

“Any use of the school buildings and ground by parties other than the school and its partners. This may be a community group (such as a local Beavers and Scouts group, music group or football team), or a commercial organisation (such as the local branch of ‘Weight Watchers’).”

The following activities fall within the corporate life of the school. These activities are not considered to be lettings and costs arising from these uses are therefore a legitimate charge against the school’s delegated budget.

- Governing body meetings
- activities for pupils organised by the school
- School performances
- Family learning
- Parents’ meetings
- Meetings of the PTA
- PTA organised events
- Services provided by partner organisations such as Extended Schools

The Governing Body is mindful of the needs in the local area and has carried out an assessment of local needs. This information has been used to assess the priorities for lettings.

The following lettings are especially encouraged:

- Lettings to ethnic minority groups such as mother tongue or supplementary schools
- Educational activities open to school pupils and their families
- Recreational activities open to school pupils and their families
- Activities organised by local community groups for the benefit of the local community
- Lettings to parents attached to the school
- Lettings to people living in the school's local community
- Lettings to voluntary organisations
- Lettings to parent support groups
- Lettings to self-help groups
- Faith groups
- Lettings to women's groups
- Lettings to people with a disability
- Lettings to low income groups
- Lettings to children's groups
- Lettings youth groups

The following activities are not considered to be appropriate for lettings as they are either well provided for in the local area; are not deemed to be compatible with the ethos of the school or are not able to be accommodated within the school's facilities.

- Commercial activities with little potential to generate income or support for the school
- Events selling alcohol
- Activities promoting gambling

## **5. Types of Lettings**

The Governing Body has agreed to define lettings under the following categories:

- School Lettings for activities for pupils or their parents and carers that provide educational benefit to pupils, which the school wishes to subsidise
- Community Lettings for other community activities which should be made on the basis of full cost recovery
- Commercial lettings will be charged on a cost plus an income margin for the school.

## **6. Charges**

The Governing Body is responsible for setting charges for the letting of the school premises. These are set out in the Schedule of Charges for Community Use.

The scale of charges will be reviewed annually by the Governing body for implementation from the beginning of the next financial year, with effect from 1st April of that year. Details of current charges will be provided in advance of any letting being agreed.

For the purpose of charging, the Head Teacher and Business Manager are empowered to determine to which group any particular individual or organisation belongs. They are also able to offer any discounts or agree a subsidy for any lettings, as they deem appropriate. The basis of charging will be determined by the purpose for which a letting is arranged.

The school is constrained by law to apply value added tax to all transactions where this is appropriate. The letting of rooms for non-sporting activities is exempt of VAT, whereas sports lettings are subject to VAT.

The minimum hire period will be one hour. The school reserves the right to require a deposit over and above the hiring charge as a surety against damage to the premises (including any equipment) or the premises being left in an unacceptable condition necessitating their incurring additional cost for cleaning, caretaking or other expenses.

The school will seek to recover any cost incurred by the school that are unavoidable and result directly from the cancellation of a letting. The timescale and charges for cancellations are set out in the Terms and Conditions of use

## **7. Letting times, available facilities and equipment**

The times, facilities and equipment available are determined by the management of the school.

Variations to these facilities and times will be subject to the approval of the Head Teacher in consultation with the Site Agent.

## **8. Conduct of users**

This is set out in the Hiring of School Premises Regulations for use of school premises (attached).

## **9. Security**

The Head Teacher has delegated authority to determine the security risk for each letting and will be responsible for allocating a continuous security presence or other control measure.

## **10. Management of lettings**

The Governing Body has delegated day-to-day responsibility for lettings to the Head Teacher in accordance with the Governing Body's policy. Where appropriate, the Head Teacher may delegate all or part of this responsibility, such as security, child protection to other members of staff, whilst still retaining overall responsibility for the lettings process.

If the Head Teacher has any concern about whether a particular request for a letting is appropriate or not, she will consult with the Chair of the Governors.

An annual report on lettings will be made to The Governing Body in the Head Teacher's report in the spring term; and will include information on users, finances, incidents and accidents, and any lettings refused.

## **11. Considering applications for lettings**

Organisations seeking to hire the school premises should approach the Business Manager. Details of charges and conditions of use should be given or referred to.

An Initial Request Form, a copy of which is attached to this policy, should be completed at this stage. A record of all enquiries should be kept on file.

The Head Teacher will decide on the application with consideration to:

- the priorities for lettings agreed by Governors and set out in the school's lettings policy
- the availability of the facilities and staff
- the school's equal opportunities, health and safety, child protection policies
- the health and safety considerations such as numbers of users, type of activity, qualifications of instructors etc.

## **12. Issuing a Lettings Contract**

Once a letting has been approved, a letter of confirmation will be sent to the hirer, enclosing a copy of the terms and conditions and the Lettings Contract.

The Lettings Contract should then be signed and returned to the school. The school shall be in receipt of these signed copies before a letting takes place.

The person applying to hire the premises will be invoiced for the cost of the letting, in accordance with the Governing Body's current scale of charges. We will seek payment in advance in order to reduce any possible bad debts and or a deposit to cover damage. A guarantee card should support cheques wherever possible.

An official receipt will be issued for all payments received. All lettings fees received will be paid into the school's budget bank account. The income and expenditure relating to lettings should be clearly recorded by the school and reported under the guidelines for Consistent Financial Reporting.

The Head Teacher on behalf of the Governing Body has the right to refuse an application, and no letting should be regarded as "booked" until approval has been given in writing and payment received in full. The reason for refusals should be recorded on the bottom of the application for lettings form and fully explained to the enquirer.

## **13. Safeguarding Policy**

The school's Safeguarding policy must be consulted and followed when dealing with external organisations that work with children or young people.

All hirers must state the purpose of the hire. The purpose of each application of hire will be checked and any concerns over the nature of the letting or gathering will be reported to the Head Teacher before approval is given. The school will contact the Access and Referral Hub if they suspect that the letting or gathering has been used for political purposes, not previously authorised by the Head Teacher, the dissemination of inappropriate material or other purposes which could be reportable under the new statutory Prevent duties or which contravene current legislation in any way.

Considering applications for letting the Head Teacher, or delegated officer, will decide on the approval of the application with consideration to:

- Interference with school activities – priority at all times should be given to school functions.
- The availability of facilities.
- The availability of staff to open and close the premises.
- The school's safeguarding policy.
- Health and Safety considerations in relation to the number of users, type of activity, qualifications of instructors, etc.
- Type of activity and our duty with regard to the prevention of terrorism and radicalisation.
- Adequacy of management procedures in place during the hire.
- Appropriateness of the letting and whether it is deemed compatible with the ethos of the school.

**Agreed by Governors:**

**Reviewed: March 2021**

