

GIRRAWEEEN PUBLIC SCHOOL

Community Use of School Facilities Policy

RATIONALE:

In this policy schools are encouraged to make their facilities available for use by their community outside of school hours for appropriate purposes, provided this does not interfere with the school's provision of quality learning programs for its students.

1. Objectives - Policy statement

1.1 Girraween Public School is a valuable community asset which should be available for community use when not required for school purposes.

1.2 Girraween Public School must not permit facilities to be used for activities that interfere with teaching and student learning.

1.3 Girraween Public School must not permit facilities to be used for activities which are inconsistent with the values of Public Education or the school's purpose and goals.

1.4 Before a community use application is approved the school will undertake a risk assessment to ensure that the facilities are fit for the intended purpose, the proposed use is legal and appropriate, the applicant is suitable and that risk and child protection issues are addressed.

1.5 The sharing of facilities between schools and the community must be formalised in a written agreement to ensure that the rights and responsibilities of both parties are understood and documented.

1.6 Consultation between the School Principal, other departmental officers, the community applicant and other key stakeholders will be conducted, as necessary, prior to any agreement being signed.

1.7 As indicated in the Implementation Procedures accompanying this policy, certain groups and organisations will have priority in their claim on community use of school facilities.

1.8 With the exception of certain groups and organisations identified in the Implementation Procedures accompanying this policy whose use of school facilities will not attract a fee, schools will, at least, recover costs associated with community use of school facilities such that the funds provided to schools for the provision of education will not subsidise community use activities.

1.9 While the majority of applications for community use of school facilities can be approved by the School Principal, certain classes of community use activities, which involve a major commitment of department and other resources over an extended period of time, will require consultation and approval at regional and state office level. These are described in the Implementation Procedures accompanying this policy.

1.10 All community use agreements will be subject to suspension or termination in circumstances of emergent school and department requirements for the facility.

2. Audience and applicability

2.1 This policy applies to all schools.

2.2 The policy relates to the broad range of community use of school facilities including both commercial and not-for-profit uses.

3. Context

3.1 Schools are valuable facilities which belong to the community. While their prime function is to serve as places of learning for young people, there are many times when the buildings and grounds are not in use.

3.2 The Department of Education and Training encourages members of the community and education groups to use school facilities when they are available. This is a way of sharing a significant resource, and strengthening the partnership between schools and local communities.

3.3 Community use of school facilities provides benefits to both schools and their communities through:

- enhanced co-operation and goodwill between the school and the community;
- the provision of additional extra-curricula learning opportunities;
- better access for communities and schools to state-of-the-art facilities;
- opportunities for the community to become better informed about and participate in the school's operation and activities;
- more effective use of valuable school facilities;
- opportunities for the community to play a positive role in school security through out-of-hours use of the facilities; and
- increased revenue for schools to use on improvements to premises and school resources.

4. Responsibilities and delegations

4.1 Regional Directors

4.1.1 Regional Directors are responsible for planning and promoting the mutually beneficial community use of school facilities within the region.

4.1.2 Regional Directors are responsible for ensuring implementation is consistent with policy and implementation procedures.

4.2 School Education Directors

4.2.1 School Education Directors are responsible for liaising with the school and the community and resolving issues regarding the availability or management of community use of school facilities.

4.2.2 School Education Directors are responsible for monitoring the effective implementation of policy and procedures relating to community use of school facilities.

4.3 School Principals

4.3.1 School Principals are responsible for managing community use of school facilities to the mutual benefit of the school and the community.

4.3.2 School Principals are responsible for receiving applications for community use, liaising with applicants, ensuring that the facilities are fit for the intended purpose, the proposed use is legal and appropriate, the applicant is suitable and that risk and child protection issues are addressed.

4.3.3 School Principals are responsible for approving applications for community use, and signing community use agreements consistent with their delegation.

4.3.4 School Principals will endorse and refer to Asset Management Directorate community use agreements of greater than twelve months duration for approval by a delegated officer.

4.3.5 At Girraween Public School the Principal will approve applications for use of the hall.

4.4 Regional Asset Management Units

4.4.1 Regional Asset Management Units will provide schools and School Education Directors with support and advice on proposals to enter into community use arrangements.

4.4.2 Regional Asset Management Units will assist the school and School Education Director in the development, review, approval and termination of community use agreements.

4.4.3 Regional Asset Management Units will review architectural plans for the upgrade of facilities required by the community user and ensure that the project has the approval of the Minister.

4.5 Asset Management Directorate

4.5.1 The Asset Management Directorate will approve all community use agreements which have a term which is greater than twelve months, and all proposals by schools or community partners to terminate Joint Use and Development arrangements before the end of the agreement.

4.5.2 The Asset Management Directorate will note details of all approved community use arrangements which are greater than twelve months in duration on the Asset Management System.

4.6 Director, School and Regional Policy, Office of Schools

4.6.1 The Director, School and Regional Policy is responsible for developing and maintaining policies, procedures and associated documentation relating to community use of school facilities.

4.7 Legal Services Directorate

4.7.1 Legal Services Directorate officers will provide schools and regional staff with support and advice relating to the legal implications of particular community use arrangements and assist with the drafting of complex agreements, licences and leases relating to community use of school facilities.

5. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements

5.1 Girraween Public School in consultation with other stakeholders, will monitor the implementation and management of this policy and will review its effectiveness annually.

6. Contact

Policy issues relating to community use of school facilities should be directed to the Director, School and Regional Policy on (02) 9561 8514.

Operational and implementation issues should be directed to the Regional Asset Management Unit on 132 779.