



COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES POLICY

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. The Department of Education and Training encourages members of the community and education groups to use school facilities for appropriate purposes, when they are available. This is a way of sharing a significant resource, and strengthening the partnership between schools and local communities. Community use should not interfere with a school's provision of quality learning programs for its students. It should not be supported by Department of Education and Training funds (e.g. by incurring additional cleaning, maintenance or utilities cost).

The Department of Education and Training, including its schools, has an obligation to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and to ensure that responsibilities for child protection and welfare are upheld. Principals are required to confirm that community users are aware of their responsibilities and are carefully assessed prior to an agreement being made for the use of school facilities where children and young people are involved or will be present.

Community Use Agreements may be negotiated between schools and community groups following consultation between the Principal, the School Council (if one exists), the Parents and Citizens Association, and, if necessary, the School Education Director. Generally the terms of the Agreement run for a term of three to twelve months.

PROHIBITED USE

Schools must not permit their facilities to be used for activities that interfere with student learning or which are considered by the principal to be inconsistent with the values of Public Education or the school's purpose and goals.

This includes activities that:

- infringe on the delivery of school programs;
- are likely to cause damage or risk to students, school buildings or property;
- create excessive noise or pose a nuisance to nearby residents;
- may involve the use of firearms;
- involve games of chance or gambling, unless a written authorisation or licence has been obtained from the appropriate regulatory authority; or
- are illegal

Organisations which are proscribed by the Commonwealth Government for national security purposes as terrorist organisations are not to be given access to school students or facilities. Smoking is strictly prohibited on all school premises at all times. Activities that involve the consumption of alcohol require a licence and must be approved by the school principal.