



Inspiring Educational Excellence for Everyone
ARDEN*forest*
C of E Multi Academy Trust

COUGHTON CofE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Premises Lettings and Community Use Policy

Date June 2026

Review Date June 2028

1. Purpose

For Church of England Schools

Arden Forest C of E Multi Academy Trust ("the Trust") recognises that its schools are important centres within their local communities and is committed to making their premises available for appropriate educational, charitable, recreational and community activities wherever this can be achieved safely and without compromising the Trust's primary purpose of providing high-quality education.

The Trust encourages responsible community use of its premises outside normal school hours where such use supports learning, health and wellbeing, community engagement and wider public benefit.

As a Church of England Multi Academy Trust, the Trust is committed to ensuring that all activities taking place on its premises are consistent with its charitable objects, Christian vision and values and, where applicable, the religious character of the individual school.

The safety and welfare of pupils, staff, visitors and members of the public remains the Trust's overriding priority.

This policy establishes a consistent framework for the approval, management and monitoring of the use of Trust premises. It should be read alongside the Trust's Articles of Association, Funding Agreement and Scheme of Delegation. Nothing within this policy overrides the responsibilities of the Trust Board, Members or any other body where responsibilities are prescribed by legislation or the Trust's constitutional documents.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all schools, buildings, land and facilities owned, occupied or managed by Arden Forest C of E Multi Academy Trust.

It applies to all requests for the use of Trust premises outside normal educational activities, whether on a one-off, occasional or recurring basis, including (but not limited to):

- community organisations;
- charities and voluntary groups;
- sports clubs;
- performing arts, music and dance groups;
- wraparound childcare providers;
- holiday clubs;
- educational and tuition providers;
- faith groups;
- parent and teacher associations;
- commercial organisations;
- public sector organisations; and
- any other organisation or individual requesting the use of Trust premises.

This policy should be read alongside the Trust's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Fire Safety arrangements, Data Protection Policy, Scheme of Delegation and any relevant school procedures.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

Hiring Organisation means the organisation or individual entering into an agreement with the Trust to use its premises.

Responsible Person means the individual nominated by the Hiring Organisation who is responsible for the safe management of the activity throughout the period of use.

Trust Premises means any building, room, sports facility, external area, land or other property owned, leased or occupied by the Trust.

Regular Hire means a recurring booking under a single agreement.

Higher-Risk Activity means any activity which, in the opinion of the Trust, requires additional consideration because of its safeguarding, health and safety, operational or reputational implications.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The safe use of Trust premises is a shared responsibility.

Trust Board

The Trust Board is responsible for:

- approving this policy;
- ensuring appropriate governance arrangements are in place;
- ensuring appropriate systems of internal control and risk management are maintained; and
- receiving assurance that this policy is being implemented effectively.

Executive Leadership Team

Acting within the Trust's Scheme of Delegation, the Executive Leadership Team is responsible for:

- supporting schools in implementing this policy;
- determining applications reserved to the Trust;
- advising on higher-risk or complex applications;
- ensuring appropriate insurance, governance and risk management arrangements are maintained; and
- reviewing significant incidents arising from the use of Trust premises.

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- determining applications within delegated authority;
- ensuring appropriate safeguarding, health and safety and security arrangements are in place;
- ensuring proposed activities are compatible with the vision, values and ethos of the school;
- refusing applications where risks cannot be adequately controlled; and
- referring applications to the Executive Leadership Team where required by the Scheme of Delegation or where further advice is considered necessary.

School Administration Team

The School Administration Team is responsible for:

- administering bookings;
- obtaining supporting documentation;
- issuing booking confirmations and invoices;
- maintaining booking records; and
- retaining documentation in accordance with the Trust's records management arrangements.

Site Manager or Designated Representative

The Site Manager or designated representative is responsible for preparing the premises where required, facilitating access, reporting defects and security concerns and ensuring the premises are secured following use.

Hiring Organisation

The Hiring Organisation is responsible for complying with this policy, maintaining appropriate insurance, providing accurate information, completing any required risk assessments, complying with safeguarding requirements and ensuring the premises are left clean, secure and in good order.

Responsible Person

The Responsible Person must remain present throughout the activity and is responsible for supervising participants, implementing emergency procedures, reporting incidents and acting as the principal point of contact with the Trust during the period of use.

Delegated Authority

Nothing within this policy removes or amends the delegated responsibilities set out within the Trust's Scheme of Delegation. All decisions relating to the use of Trust premises shall be made in accordance with the levels of authority contained within that document.

5. Decision-Making Criteria

Schools will adopt a proportionate approach when considering applications for the use of Trust premises, acting in accordance with this policy and the Trust's Scheme of Delegation.

Each application will be assessed on its own merits, taking account of the nature of the activity, those attending, the facilities requested and the level of risk involved.

When determining an application, the Headteacher may consider:

- compatibility with the vision, values and ethos of the school;
- safeguarding arrangements;
- health and safety risks;
- security implications;
- insurance arrangements;
- operational impact on the school;
- suitability of the premises;
- previous experience of the Hiring Organisation;
- potential reputational impact; and
- any other relevant operational or legal considerations.

The Trust reserves the right to request any additional information reasonably required before determining an application.

Approval of one application shall not create any expectation that future applications will automatically be approved.

6. Categories of Use

The Trust recognises that different activities present different levels of operational and safeguarding risk.

Examples include:

- community meetings;
- sports and recreational activities;
- educational activities;
- performing arts;
- wraparound childcare;
- holiday clubs;
- faith and community activities;
- commercial activities;
- public performances; and
- other activities approved by the Trust.

Certain activities may require additional documentation, supervision or approval before permission is granted.

7. Risk Classification

To ensure an appropriate level of governance, applications may be classified according to their level of risk.

In determining the level of risk, the Trust may take account of:

- safeguarding considerations;
- health and safety risks;
- security arrangements;
- expected attendance;

- operational complexity;
- licensing requirements;
- financial implications;
- reputational considerations; and
- any other relevant factor.

The level of approval required shall be determined in accordance with the Trust's Scheme of Delegation.

Schools should adopt a proportionate approach to assessing the level of risk associated with each application. Where an application falls outside the school's delegated authority, or the Headteacher considers additional advice is required, the application should be referred to the Executive Leadership Team.

8. Prohibited Uses

Schools should not approve applications that:

- conflict with the vision, values or ethos of the school;
- are unlawful;
- present an unacceptable safeguarding or health and safety risk;
- are likely to damage the Trust's reputation;
- involve discrimination, harassment or hate speech;
- are prohibited by the Trust's insurers;
- compromise the safety or security of pupils, staff or visitors; or
- are otherwise considered incompatible with the Trust's charitable objects.

9. Booking Procedure

Before approving an application, the school should consider what information is reasonably required to determine the application, taking account of the nature of the activity and the level of risk. This will normally include:

- a completed Premises Booking Application Form (PLF-01);
- evidence of Public Liability Insurance, where required;
- a completed Provider Safeguarding Assurance (PLF-02), where the provider will have responsibility for children or vulnerable adults;
- any additional information considered proportionate to the activity or level of risk, which may include:
 - a suitable and sufficient risk assessment;
 - evidence of relevant licences or qualifications;
 - emergency contact details; or
 - any other information reasonably required.

10. Safeguarding

The safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is paramount. Schools must be satisfied that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place before permitting the use of Trust premises for any activity involving children or vulnerable adults.

All Hiring Organisations providing activities involving children or vulnerable adults must comply with current safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), where applicable.

Where children or vulnerable adults are involved, the school may require the Hiring Organisation to provide evidence of appropriate safeguarding arrangements before approving an application. This may include, but is not limited to:

- a completed Provider Safeguarding Assurance;
- confirmation of safeguarding policies and procedures;
- details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- confirmation that appropriate recruitment and vetting checks have been undertaken where required;
- evidence of suitable supervision arrangements;
- appropriate risk assessments; and
- confirmation of suitable first aid arrangements.

The Hiring Organisation remains responsible for safeguarding participants throughout the period of use and must report any safeguarding concern arising during the activity immediately to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead or, where this is not possible, in accordance with local safeguarding procedures.

Schools reserve the right to refuse or terminate any booking where they are not satisfied that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place.

11. Equality, Diversity and Accessibility

Arden Forest C of E Multi Academy Trust is committed to providing inclusive, welcoming and accessible environments for all users of its premises.

Schools will consider applications fairly and without unlawful discrimination in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and will consider reasonable adjustments, where appropriate, to enable disabled people to access Trust premises and activities.

Hiring Organisations are expected to ensure that their activities promote equality, dignity and respect and are delivered in a manner that is inclusive of all participants. Activities that are discriminatory, offensive or inconsistent with the vision, values and ethos of the school will not normally be approved.

Where reasonable adjustments are required, Hiring Organisations should discuss these with the school as early as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be considered.

12. Health and Safety

Schools have a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that Trust premises are safe for those using them. Hiring Organisations also have a responsibility to conduct their activities safely and in accordance with relevant health and safety legislation.

Before approving a booking, schools may require evidence that suitable health and safety arrangements are in place, including risk assessments where appropriate.

Hiring Organisations must:

- comply with all reasonable health and safety instructions issued by the school;
- undertake suitable and sufficient risk assessments where appropriate;
- ensure activities are appropriately supervised by competent persons;
- maintain safe access and egress at all times;
- ensure participants are appropriately briefed on any relevant safety arrangements;
- report accidents, incidents, near misses and hazards promptly; and
- leave the premises in a safe condition following use.

Schools reserve the right to suspend or terminate activities where health and safety arrangements are considered inadequate.

13. Emergency Procedures

Schools will provide Hiring Organisations with appropriate site-specific emergency information before activities commence.

The Responsible Person must familiarise themselves with the emergency procedures applicable to the premises being used and, where appropriate, brief participants before activities begin.

This includes an understanding of:

- evacuation procedures;
- invacuation and lockdown arrangements;
- assembly points;
- emergency contact arrangements;
- the location of first aid equipment and Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), where available; and
- procedures for summoning the emergency services.

In the event of an emergency, the Responsible Person is responsible for the immediate supervision and welfare of participants until relieved by the emergency services or an authorised representative of the school.

All emergencies, accidents and significant incidents must be reported to the school as soon as reasonably practicable.

14. Security and Information Management

Maintaining the security of pupils, staff, visitors and Trust premises is a shared responsibility.

Hiring Organisations must:

- use only those areas included within the approved booking;
- prevent unauthorised access to the premises;
- ensure emergency access routes remain unobstructed;
- comply with school security arrangements;
- report security concerns immediately; and
- vacate the premises promptly at the end of the agreed period of use.

Keys, access codes and security information must not be shared without the school's written permission.

Hiring Organisations remain responsible for complying with UK data protection legislation in relation to any personal information collected or processed during activities on Trust premises.

Where photographs, video recordings or other images are taken, the Hiring Organisation must ensure that appropriate consent has been obtained and that images are used, stored and shared lawfully.

Schools may operate CCTV systems for safeguarding, security and crime prevention. Hiring Organisations must not interfere with or obstruct these systems.

15. Insurance

Hiring Organisations are responsible for maintaining insurance appropriate to the activities they undertake.

Schools will normally require evidence of Public Liability Insurance before approving a booking and may request evidence of any additional insurance or licences considered necessary for the proposed activity.

The Trust's own insurance arrangements do not remove the Hiring Organisation's responsibility for maintaining suitable insurance cover.

16. Charges

Charges will be determined in accordance with the school's Schedule of Charges, approved under the Trust's Scheme of Delegation.

17. Operational Requirements

Schools expect Hiring Organisations to use Trust premises responsibly and to conduct activities safely, professionally and with due regard for pupils, staff, neighbouring residents and other users of the site.

The Responsible Person must ensure that all participants comply with the following requirements throughout the period of use.

Bookings include any time required for setting up and clearing away. The Hiring Organisation must not access or occupy the premises outside the agreed booking period unless agreed in advance.

Where the activity requires licences, consents or permissions (for example, music, performances, copyright or the sale of alcohol), these remain the responsibility of the Hiring Organisation unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Use of Premises

Only those facilities included within the approved booking may be used.

The agreed maximum occupancy of each area must not be exceeded.

Activities must only be undertaken for the purpose approved by the school.

Food and Refreshments

Schools do not ordinarily permit the use of catering kitchens by external Hiring Organisations.

Where refreshments are provided, the Hiring Organisation remains responsible for complying with all relevant food hygiene, food safety and allergen legislation and guidance.

Food brought onto site must be managed safely to minimise the risk of cross-contamination and allergic reactions.

Smoking, Vaping, Alcohol and Illegal Substances

Smoking, including vaping, is prohibited anywhere on Trust premises.

Alcohol may only be brought onto or consumed on Trust premises where expressly authorised in writing by the school and where all relevant licensing and insurance requirements have been satisfied.

Illegal substances are prohibited at all times.

Animals

Animals are not permitted on Trust premises unless:

- they are registered assistance dogs;
- they form part of an activity specifically approved by the school; or
- prior written permission has been granted.

Environmental Responsibility

Hiring Organisations should use Trust premises responsibly, minimise waste, reduce unnecessary energy consumption and leave facilities in a clean and environmentally responsible condition.

Damage, Cleanliness and Waste

Hiring Organisations are responsible for leaving the premises clean, tidy and secure.

Damage, defects or accidents must be reported immediately.

The Hiring Organisation may be required to reimburse the Trust for any loss or damage resulting from negligence or misuse.

The Trust accepts no responsibility for the loss of or damage to personal property or equipment brought onto the premises by the Hiring Organisation or participants.

Respect for Neighbours

Activities should be conducted in a manner that minimises unnecessary disturbance to neighbouring residents and other users of the site.

Participants should arrive and leave quietly, particularly during evening lettings.

18. Cancellation, Termination and Review

Schools reserve the right to refuse, cancel or terminate a booking where:

- information provided is inaccurate or misleading;
- required documentation has not been provided;
- charges remain unpaid;
- safeguarding or health and safety concerns arise;
- the activity differs materially from that approved;
- emergency circumstances require the premises for school purposes; or
- continued use is considered contrary to the interests of the school or the Trust.

Where reasonably practicable, notice of cancellation will be provided. The Trust accepts no liability for any consequential loss arising from the cancellation of a booking.

Headteachers are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented within their school.

The Executive Leadership Team will monitor the operation of this policy across the Trust and recommend amendments where legislative, operational or governance changes require them.

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner where necessary.