



Initial approval:	May 2017
Review frequency:	Every three years
Date(s) reviewed:	July 2019, April 2022

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Policy Objectives

Maiden Erlegh Trust is the accountable body for all premises decisions in relation to the schools within the Trust, and adopts the following principles in terms of letting of its school premises:

- a) School premises represent a significant capital investment and should be fully utilised;
- b) School premises are a valuable community resource;
- c) Use of school premises that derives an educational benefit constitutes a natural priority;
- d) A profit margin will be derived from private or commercial usage
- e) All lettings will finish before 11.00pm, unless written permission is obtained from the Headteacher or School Business Manager. (separate conditions apply to outside facilities)

Use of school facilities to host private parties will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. The final decision on whether to agree a private party rests with the Headteacher.

- f) Alcohol will not be available for purchase by the general public at any letting.

Priority Usage

The Trust has adopted the following categories of user:

Statutory users

Usage laid down by statute will not be frequent but must be accommodated at a rate to recover costs.

Statutory usage is defined as the following:

- Use of premises for polling stations or political meetings when a local or parliamentary election has been declared
- Official meetings of the parish or parochial councils
- Any other statutory purpose which may arise
- Use of premises by the Local Authority

Designated Users

Designated Users should be given a priority of access, except where a clash with statutory usage cannot be avoided. The Trust commits to offering use of facilities to Designated Users at a significant discount, and the level of this discount is at the discretion of the Director of Operations but shall at no time be less than 25%. The order of priority of access to extended use of the school site is as follows:

- The school's own activities e.g., governor, staff or PTA meetings, curriculum activities such as plays and concerts, fund-raising activities for school funds. Activities falling under this section do not incur a letting fee.
- Community Education activities as organised by the school.

- Other community activities - specifically for the local community and not run for profit.
- Any other activities as agreed by the Headteacher.

Private Users

Those who are not defined as statutory or designated users are defined as private users. The Trust has agreed it will not hire out the premises for parties or other large-scale celebrations, such as weddings, unless agreed in writing by the Director of Operations upon recommendation by the Headteacher of the school. All hirers will need to agree to have due regard to the neighbouring residents in terms of noise and disruption.

Applications for Designated User Status

The Trust has delegated their power to determine designated status to the Director of Operations who will exercise discretion on their behalf and determine applications.

Application for hire

The Trust has delegated the authority to accept applications for hire to the Headteacher who may further delegate to the School Business Manager.

Lettings Documentation

All formal hiring of school's premises, including those for which no charge is made, shall be properly documented. All hirers **must** complete a 'Hirer Agreement' form and will receive a copy of the conditions of hire. The hirer agreement is a contract which the Trust may enforce at law. All hirers must agree to abide by the H&S and safeguarding policies of the school and must also sign the schools letting agreement form. All hirers must agree to conform to safeguarding procedures, where lettings involve children and vulnerable adults. The Trust reserves the right to decline a letting if it is not satisfied with the safeguarding arrangements.

Scale of Charges

The scale of charges will be reviewed annually by the Director of Finance in the summer term and any increase will be put in place for the following September. Lettings rates will increase by the RPI over the last 12 months to May each year. The scale of charges can be obtained from the school.

Discounts

Discounts are at the discretion of the Director of Finance but must not result in a loss to the school. Reasons for the discount will be recorded and will take account of the overall commercial position of the letting.

Value Added Tax

VAT will be applied to any transactions where this is appropriate.

Insurance

External hirers must either carry sufficient Insurance (for public liability, fire and property) or receive a surcharge to cover the costs.

Minimum charges and deposits

The Trust 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.

Multiple lettings by different users

Where a school facility is being used by more than one hirer at the same time, no reduction will be made, unless either of the letting falls within the designated user entity. In this case, the designated user will only be required to pay for additional costs incurred as a result of the additional letting.

Cancellations

The Trust will seek to recover any costs incurred by the school which are unavoidable and result directly from the cancellation of a letting.

Payment methods

Payment terms for regular lettings will generally be monthly in arrears unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Director of Finance.

Security and child protection

All lettings require a member of the site team to be on continuous duty, except for some school events where the decision will be made by the Headteacher. All private users will be required to sign to state they have necessary DBS and other checks in place to ensure safeguarding of children, where the letting involves children. The school reserves the right to ask to see DBS documentation.

Health and Safety

All users must agree to abide by the H&S policy of the school. All hirers will need to sign a H&S agreement form and must familiarise themselves with the emergency evacuation plans.

Review of Policy

The Trust will review the policy every 3 years.