Denefield School
Lettings and Premises Hire Policy

Approved by Resources on	7 October 2026
Date of next review	October 2027
Review cycle	Annual
Policy control sheet updated	Yes
Type of policy	Non statutory
Policy owner	FBD / DOO
Location of policy	Website

Denefield School Lettings Policy

1. **Purpose**

The Trustees of Denefield School aim to maximise the school's facilities for use by the local community. In doing so, it recognises that the primary benefit of the school's premises and sports facilities is for the students and staff of Denefield School, and school events will always take priority over community use.

The aims of this policy are:

- To set out responsibilities in relation to lettings at Denefield
- To ensure that lettings are not in conflict with the fundamental purpose of the school.
- To promote and develop links between the school and the local community and to increase the commercial opportunity for lettings
- To charge for the use of the premises to cover the costs of hire and, where appropriate, raise additional funds for the school.
- To provide a professional service to users of the school's premises.
- To ensure safeguarding standards and the security of the Denefield site are maintained.

2. **Roles and Responsibilities**

<u>Resources Committee</u>

- Have oversight of lettings at Denefield
- Determine what is the appropriate use of school facilities
- Agree policies and other documentation associated with letting the premises
- Receive reports on lettings, including usage, income generation, pricing.

Director of Operations

- Making sure Denefield's facilities are available to the local community and are safe to use
- Operational management of lettings, including:
- Marketing of the facilities
- Ensuring there is a suitable system for bookings and bookings enquiries.
- Communication between all parties
- Making sure bookings are effectively managed, and customer booking requirements are met
- Accurate Records of bookings and payment are maintained
- A diary of lettings is available for all to see
- Cancellations are dealt with appropriately

Director of Finance

- Ensure income from lettings is properly accounted for
- Provide trustees and senior team financial information on lettings as required. Financial information on lettings will be fed into the school's financial reporting arrangements.
- With the DOO, determine hire fees and charges annually and report on the annual uplift to Resources Committee.
- Ensure enquiries about payments or refunds are dealt with promptly.

Facilities Manager

- Ensure Denefield facilities are kept to a high standard
- Ensure the site is staffed appropriately during lettings
- Report any issues to the DOO
- Act as point of contact for hirers and potential hirers
- Check documentation and agreements are in place before accepting any booking

Responsibilities of staff on duty during lettings:

- Opening and closing the school when lettings are taking place
- ensuring facilities are ready for use at the start of a hire and that they are left ready for school use at the end.
- providing a professional service to hirers and ensuring good customer care.

Denefield School places a high priority on maintaining and developing good relationships with hirers.

3. Use of facilities

The school's facilities will be available to all potential hirers, except where the school believes there is a conflict between the nature of the intended purpose of the letting or hirer and the beliefs, values and ethos of the school. Checks will be carried out on all new customers to prevent any such conflicts of interest.

The school will support all community activities where practicable, but the school will prioritise spaces required for school events and not let any hiring out of the premises interfere with the school's primary purpose of providing education to its pupils. Where facilities need to be closed to hirers because of school events, especially during exam and performance periods, we will communicate this to the hirers at the earliest opportunity.

All hirers must comply with the Terms and Conditions of Hire available on the booking website.

The Director of Operations decision to refuse a letting is final. Decisions to refuse a booking are made for a number of reasons, such as a clash with Denefield School events, the number of people on site at one time overwhelming our resources, or the belief that the hirer does not share Denefield's values.

4. Hire charges

Detailed information about hire charges, deposit terms, and payment arrangements can be found on the booking website (https://schoolhire.co.uk/reading/denefield) and in the terms and conditions of hire and other documents. Charges and documentation will be reviewed annually in the Spring ready for implementation on 1 September. The level of charges will be determined by with reference to Denefield's financial plan, the type of user, e.g. whether they have been a long-standing hirer at Denefield, the nature of the facility being hired and the market rate charged for similar facilities at other local and national venues.

Proposed annual inflation increases will be reported to the Resources committee prior to implementation. We reserve the right to vary charges for specific hirers (e.g. for longstanding users and in the interest of developing good community links).

Denefield School staff wishing to book the school's facilities for private use after 5pm will be offered a discount on the full cost. No discount will be available where the facilities are being used for a commercial activity.

5. Insurance

Hirers are required to have adequate Public Liability Insurance in place for use of the facilities and must produce up to date evidence of such insurance when requested. No booking will proceed without proof of this insurance. Hirers must ensure that they have informed their Insurer that they are hiring a school facility.

6. Process

Bookings will only be accepted via the booking website (https://schoolhire.co.uk/reading/denefield). All bookings are classed as pending until all relevant checks have been carried out, policies and agreements provided, and initial payment made.

Where possible, all booking payments should be made via debit or credit card on the booking website (https://schoolhire.co.uk/reading/denefield). Payment will be taken for the first booking immediately the booking is accepted. Long term booking agreements will have an automated schedule of payment dates to coincide with future bookings. Hirers will receive automated reminders of payment. Denefield will receive warnings of unpaid bookings prior to the booking so that a decision can be made about cancellation, or a discussion can be had with the hirer.

In exceptional circumstances, for long-term trusted hirers, alternative payment terms may be agreed.

Hirers and Denefield may cancel future bookings in line with the relevant section of the Terms and conditions of hire.

7. Security and Safety

A member of Denefield staff will be on site during lettings, except when alternative arrangements have been made on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the security and safety of the site.

Hirers are responsible for ensuring that adequate supervision is always available and that no unauthorised persons enter the venue. Prior to the commencement of any letting the premises team will explain the emergency evacuation procedures to be followed in the event of a fire, and hirers are expected to adhere to all security and fire precaution measures. If a fire is identified, it is the hirer's responsibility to evacuate the venue immediately in accordance with the procedures, and to alert all relevant emergency services.

8. Licencing

The hirer is responsible for obtaining all appropriate licences for the event they are organising and indemnifies the school against the consequences of their failure to do so. The consumption of alcohol at Denefield is not allowed without prior written permission. If permission is given, the hirer must comply with all licensing laws and, where appropriate, obtain A Temporary Event Notice (T.E.N.).

9. Child Protection and Safeguarding

Denefield School takes child protection and safeguarding extremely seriously. Until 5.00pm external hirers are subject to the School's Safeguarding policy and enhanced DBS requirements. After 5.00pm, hirers must have their own safeguarding arrangements in place. They must evidence that adequate and up to date child protection policies and procedures are in place and ensure that any persons likely to have contact with children and vulnerable adults have obtained enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service checks, prior to the event taking place. Please refer to the Lettings Safeguarding Policy for further details.

Hirers must not use the school's facilities for any purpose or event which does not uphold fundamental British Values, as defined within the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015.

10. Health & Safety

All lettings will be covered by the school's Health & Safety policy, and it is the responsibility of the hirer to comply with all relevant Health and Safety Regulations, including having in place an appropriate evacuation plan. Hirers are advised to complete a Risk Assessment for all activities and take all reasonable steps to prevent injury, loss or damage to any person or property for the duration of the hire.

Hirers are responsible for arranging any first aid provision for the members of their organisation, including having their own suitably trained first aid cover, and having a working, fully charged mobile phone to contact emergency services, next of kin or any other relevant persons or body.

11. Sale of Goods by Hirers

Hirers will not be allowed to use the school's premises for the auction, sale, trade, business or manufacture of goods without prior agreement.

12. Monitoring and review

We will review and update this policy annually or when the guidance on which it is based changes, or the policy otherwise stops being applicable. Any updates to this policy will be shared with the Resources Committee.

Links

Health & Safety Policy

Terms and conditions of Hire

Cancellation Policy

Lettings Safeguarding Policy