



LOCATION: SCHOOL HANDBOOK, SECTION I, DOCUMENT 21

CHARGING AND LETTINGS POLICY

Date policy first adopted: June 1997

Date reviewed: July 2025

Reviewed By: Vicky Aspin

Date ratified by Governing Body:

Date of next review: July 2026

1. The very special needs of the children who attend Abbey Court School mean that a very wide range of educational activities are provided. Some of these will be educational journeys and outings, which could incur additional costs which are beyond the school's usual cash resources.
2. In those cases where educational journeys, outings, or activities require additional funding, it is appropriate to ask parents to make a voluntary contribution towards all or part of those costs. However, it must be emphasised that a parental inability to contribute will not result in a child being excluded from an activity.
3. In the event of a parental contribution not being available, the additional necessary funds will be sought from the Pupil Premium Grant. If a failure to obtain such funds threatens the viability of the activity, then the activity may have to be cancelled.
4. Parents must always receive written information about a proposed activity, and a request for a voluntary contribution must be worded as follows:

“This school journey is being organised for educational and social reasons and incurs costs which we cannot meet out of our school budget. We hope that the costs will be met as a result of a parental contribution of £--- per pupil, but no pupil will be excluded because of a parental inability to contribute. Parental contributions should be made via ParentMail. Please contact the school as soon as possible if this proposed financial contribution presents you with difficulty. If insufficient voluntary contributions are received this may result in a cancellation of the visit or activity.”
5. When determining the additional costs of any educational activity it is appropriate to include the cost of necessary staff participation and to include this in any proposal for a voluntary contribution from parents, or a subsidy from any other source. It is important to ensure that staff do not incur personal expenditure as a result of carrying out duties, particularly when staff already contribute so much of their own time to enable such activities.

LETTINGS

6. Abbey Court School hires out premises to third parties (community, voluntary, public and private organisations) in strict accordance with the Lettings Procedures and Guidance issued by Kent County Council (and still utilised within Medway Council).

The school buildings may be hired out to private users, subject to the availability of the Site Manager/Caretaker. Because of the difficulties of security within the building and the large amount of expensive equipment in classrooms, the Governors have directed that the Site Manager or Caretaker should be on-site at all times during the letting.

A nominal fee shall be charged at the rate of £200 for the hire of all areas, including the hydrotherapy pool. Longer-term hiring arrangements may be negotiated at an hourly rate of £75-£82.50 per hour, depending on the day of the week (Prices as at 2025/26). Additional costs include: staff salaries (for non-contractual hours), administration fees and utility charges (after the first 4 hours of hire). The fees will be revised on an annual basis. Booking forms must be completed for all periods of hire.

The school hydrotherapy pool will only be hired if evidence is given of insurance cover and necessary personnel being present, holding appropriate life-saving qualifications, etc. This is in line with Abbey Court Schools Swimming Pool Operation and Control policy, which can be accessed from the school website, or is available on request to the school.

In all circumstances, the hirer must accept that the school always has priority over the use of the facilities and that the school may cancel a particular booking for this reason, or other reason outside of the school's control, without incurring any penalty or charge whatsoever.

Where the school agrees to 'free' use of its facilities and the third party requires cover by the Local Authority's insurance policy, it is essential that the third party completes a booking form and specifies a nominal sum (say £1). This will be needed to substantiate any insurance claim that may subsequently be made.

School Minibus

The Governors have agreed that, at this current time, the hiring of the minibuses is inappropriate.