

Community Use of School Sporting Facilities:

Information for Councils



Councils – did you know that there may be opportunities to partner with local schools for sharing school sport and recreation facilities?

Background

In many cases there are insufficient sports grounds and facilities to meet the demand of sporting clubs which puts pressure on local councils to service the needs of these clubs. However, many schools have extensive grounds and buildings which are ideally suited for community based sport and recreation activities. These facilities are often under-utilised outside of school hours and many schools do not have the resources to adequately maintain and upgrade the facilities.

How does it usually work?

- The agreement would typically involve council formally taking over the responsibility of the school ground(s) outside of school hours, including the booking process.
- Council would be responsible for upgrading and maintaining the school ground(s) and the school would retain access to the (improved) ground(s) during school hours.
- Once council has identified a need for additional sporting facilities to help meet club needs, discussion should occur between council and a suitable school as a starting point. Communities, Sport and Recreation (CSR) can facilitate this process if required.
- A more formal agreement (MOU) can then be developed between council and the school (see attached MOU template). Council would be required to enter into a long-term lease with the Department of Education (DoE) or private school and typically cover the costs of any required upgrade or development works.

Community Use of School Sporting Facilities:

Information for Councils

Benefits of a partnership agreement

- Assists in meeting facility needs of sporting clubs;
- Reduces the financial burden of providing new grounds;
- Increase usage of school facilities outside of school hours;
- Improved and better maintained facilities for school use;
- May build stronger social networks between the council, school, club and community
- Less opportunity for vandalism at the school through usage of facilities outside of school hours.
- Opportunities to encourage community involvement and increase participation at the club through events and initiatives involving school students and families.

Further information

For further information about this process or assistance in facilitating a partnership agreement, please contact Communities, Sport and Recreation (CSR). A copy of a MOU template is attached – this can be adapted to suit the agreed partnership arrangement.

Refer also to the [Community Use of School Facilities - club and school partnerships Information Sheet](#), which provides details on how clubs can also access school facilities directly from the school.

CASE STUDY:

Clarence High School

In November 2012, the DoE and Clarence City Council signed an agreement whereby council would take over the management and operation of sporting ovals at Clarence High and Geilston Bay High schools. The new partnership allows for the grounds to be made available to community based sporting clubs on the eastern shore such as local football, athletics and cricket clubs. Under this agreement council is responsible for upgrading and maintaining the ovals and will make them available to community and sporting groups outside of school hours while the school retains access to the oval during school hours.

The facilities at Clarence High School are now used by Clarence Little Athletics Club, Clarence Junior Football Club and Clarence junior cricket. As a result of the agreement council upgraded and developed the sports ground and surrounding areas to accommodate athletics, football and cricket. Construction of a multi-purpose change facility at the site occurred in 2014 which is shared by the relevant clubs and is also available for use by the school in school hours. The partnership provides a number of benefits to all those involved and allows council to adequately meet the demands of a number of local sporting clubs.



Communities, Sport and Recreation

phone: 1800 252 476

email: sportrec@dpac.tas.gov.au

web: www.sportandrecreation.tas.gov.au

EXAMPLE

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

between

<Department of Education/Private School name>

and

<insert council name> Council

1. Purpose and scope

The purpose of this MOU is to outline an in-principle agreement between the **<Tasmanian Department of Education /Private School>** and **<xxxx Council>** (council) with regards to the **<insert School name>** (school) oval (if more than oval, specify which oval eg. Top oval).

2. Background

The school has noted that their **<top oval>** is underutilised and the school has limited resources to effectively maintain it. The council has identified an under-supply of sports grounds in the **<insert Council area>** municipality and have indicated an interest in taking over responsibility of the oval outside of school hours and making the grounds available to a number of sporting clubs such as **<insert club names>**.

3. Council Responsibilities

- Council will take over responsibility of the school oval outside of school hours including bookings and any upgrade or development works.
- External (i.e. non-school) use of the oval is not to occur between 8.30 am to 4.30 pm on school days (unless specifically arranged with the school).
- Council will cover public liability and indemnity insurance for usage outside of school hours under council's standard cover for parks and reserves.
- Council is responsible for maintenance of the oval and determining the need for any closures (e.g. for rehabilitation). Access for maintenance during school hours can occur with prior arrangement with the school.

4. <Department of Education (if relevant)> and School Responsibilities

- **<Department of Education/Private School>** will establish a long-term lease with the council for the oval for a 'peppercorn' fee.
- School will retain exclusive rights to the oval between 8.30 am to 4.30 pm on school days and will continue to manage access during these times.

5. Effective Date and signature

This In-principle agreement shall be effective upon the signature of Council and the **<Department of Education/Private School>** authorised officials.

The **<Department of Education/Private School>** and Council indicate agreement with this MOU by their signatures.