

Schools as community hubs

Fact Sheet 1 of 3 | July 2010

The Victorian Government's commitment to promoting schools as community hubs

The *Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development* (2008) (the Blueprint) articulates the Government's commitment to promote schools and children's centres as community hubs, through the co-location and integration of services and increased community use of school facilities.

Building the Education Revolution's (BER) Guidelines

The Commonwealth Government's BER Guidelines outline that facilities funded as part of the Primary Schools for the 21st Century (P21) program must be made available for community use at no or low cost. This includes reasonable access by any community or not-for-profit groups in the local community.

Schools that have facilities funded under the P21 program which are not appropriate for community use, are required to make their existing infrastructure available under the same conditions.

The BER requirement for community use complements the Victorian Government's commitment to promoting schools as community hubs. Sharing facilities provides schools with an opportunity to strengthen relationships with local community organisations.

Benefits for both schools and the broader community generated from the sharing of school facilities

Many Victorian schools already benefit from sharing their facilities with the local community. The educational, economic and broader community advantages that flow from sharing school facilities include:

- Increased access to quality facilities for a range of purposes in one location
- Stronger social networks and community involvement in school activities and student learning
- Enhanced reputation of schools within the community and a shared sense of pride in local schools
- Improved school security as a result of increased use of school premises outside of school hours.
- Reinforcing the local council's objectives for community wellbeing.

