



HEATHFIELD SCHOOL

Fire Safety Policy

Policy Area:	Health and Safety
Relevant Statutory Regulations:	ISSR 2014 Part 3 NMS Part E Health and Safety, Standards 9 and 10 Part II of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 Fire Safety Act 2021 Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999 Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002
Key Contact Personnel in School	
Nominated Member of Leadership Staff Responsible for the policy:	Bursar
Version:	2024.01
Date updated:	01 September 2024
Date of next review:	01 September 2025

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, and/or following any concerns and/or updates to national and local guidance or procedures.

Introduction

Heathfield School (“the School”) is committed to ensuring, so far as reasonably practicable, that all staff, pupils, contractors and visitors are protected from the risks of fire whilst on the premises. This policy explains how the School complies with this and its legal requirements under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (“RRO”) to ensure that, where possible, fire is prevented and that any fire risks are adequately controlled. This policy has regard to the RRO and is written as an extension to the School’s “Health and Safety Policy”.

Fire safety is everyone’s responsibility. All staff, (and their families who live within the boarding areas), pupils, contractors and visitors are expected to follow established safety procedures to ensure the safe use of electrical/gas appliances, the safe use, storage and disposal of hazardous/combustible materials, and compliance with the requirements of the School’s policy on smoking (No Smoking Policy - Staff and Visitors).

Policy

It is the policy of the School to ensure that all staff, (and their families who live within the boarding areas), pupils, contractors and visitors are protected from the risks of fire. With this aim, appropriate fire prevention/precaution measures shall be taken. Also, appropriate evacuation procedures shall be developed, implemented and periodically tested. All people shall be provided with sufficient and appropriate fire awareness training and instruction. All premises shall comply with relevant fire safety legislation and recognised good practice.

Legislation

This policy sets out the approach that the school has to securing fire safety and is based on the following legislation and guidance:

- Part II of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999
- Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Department of Communities and Local Government “Fire Safety Risk Assessment- Educational Premises”

Guidance

The School has in place procedures for:

- carrying out fire risk assessment;
- preventing fires;
- evacuation in the event of a fire;
- maintaining and checking all fire detection, alarm and fighting systems;
- responsibilities of personnel.

Bombs and Hoaxes

Postal bombs are unlikely to be in large parcels, rather in flat packages. Staff should be on their guard for:

- The post mark – especially unusual, and any name/address of sender;
- The writing – especially of foreign style unknown to staff and pupils at the School;
- Stains – these could be sweating explosives;
- The smell – usually an aroma of marzipan or almonds indicate an explosive;
- The sound – if the parcel rattles, ticks, etc.

Telephone Calls: These are more of a common occurrence than parcels. All members of staff should be aware of the necessary procedures should they receive such a call:

- Alert security/police immediately;
- Above all, be calm, listen carefully, and report exactly what is said.

DSEAR - The Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002

Areas and activities which come under DSEAR must be risk assessed in accordance with the current legislation.

Emergency Evacuation Plan / Fire Drill

The aim of the fire drill practices is to familiarise pupils and staff (including the families of staff who live within the boarding areas), with evacuation procedures.

There must be adequate means of escape for all occupants of the School premises. These means of escape are clearly signed with pictograms. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure they familiarise themselves with the evacuation route for each zone they visit or use.

Fire guidance notices are posted throughout the School and can be found on exit routes normally adjacent to fire alarm call points or portable fire equipment.

Fire Drills are carried out at least twice a term, once during school hours and once during boarding hours. The School will vary the time during boarding hours, so that pupils are able to respond when they are likely to be fully asleep. The School's Fire Drill and Evacuation Procedures are detailed in Appendix 1 of this policy.

Written procedures have been produced detailing:

- Action to be taken by the person discovering a fire;
- How the Fire Brigade is called and who is responsible;
- Fire warning system (description of bells/sirens/voice) and location of panels;
- Evacuation procedures (procedures to be followed);
- Key escape routes (how access can be gained, details of unusual routes);
- Assembly points;
- Duties and identities of employees with specific responsibilities (Fire Officer, Fire Wardens etc);
- Firefighting equipment provided (fixed) location and details.

Emergency Lighting

Emergency lighting is installed in the School where lighting would continue to be required in the event of a mains power failure, e.g. stairs, passageways and emergency exits.

All emergency lighting systems should be regularly tested and properly maintained to an appropriate standard. Most existing systems will need to be manually tested.

Typically testing would include:

- A daily visual check;
- A monthly function test for a maximum of one quarter of the rated duration of the lighting;
- An annual full discharge test (for units over three years old).

Where emergency lighting is generator powered, the lighting is tested monthly by way of simulated mains failure. A maintenance and servicing programme for the generator is arranged by the Facilities and Estates Manager.

Battery operated emergency lighting will be tested monthly, quarterly or annually depending on the risk assessment for that building (charge & illumination) and an annual full discharge test by a competent contractor.

Records of testing and servicing of emergency lights are maintained by the Facilities Manager.

Evacuation Procedures for Disabled People

The aim of a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (“PEEP”) is to provide people with any form of disability, who cannot be adequately protected by the standard fire safety provisions within a premises, with a similar level of safety from the effects of fire as all other occupants.

PEEPs are required by:

- Anyone who could have a problem escaping in an emergency;
- People with temporary impairments, i.e. pregnancy, injuries, broken leg etc; and/or
- People with long term impairments, i.e. hearing, sight, ambulatory, cognitive.

The above includes situations where some people may have difficulty in evacuation situations that they would not normally have e.g. people who have asthma may be affected in smoky conditions caused by fire, or people may be affected by the stress of an emergency situation.

Where a PEEP is required, it will be produced in conjunction with the Health and Safety Committee and/or Nursing Staff and will be specific to the needs and abilities of the individual in question.

It is essential that wherever possible the School is aware of staff, pupils or visitors who have specific emergency evacuation needs.

Responsibilities

The **Headmistress** and/or **Bursar** will identify persons who may need additional help in evacuating from the School in the event of an emergency and ensure that those persons are offered suitable practical assistance. However, the aim will be to facilitate independent escape wherever possible.

For pupils, staff, contractors and regular visitors, once it has been identified that a person will require assistance in the event of a fire, the Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan Questionnaire contained in Appendices 2 and 3 must be completed, and the individual’s needs determined from the information supplied i.e. the number of assistants (including deputies) and methods used. Where necessary, these assistants will be given specialist training.

The responsible person preparing the PEEP will not make assumptions about the abilities of the disabled person who will likely know what they can achieve. The School considers it important that the disabled person does not feel pressured to do more physically than they would generally be able to achieve.

Pupils

When a child is enrolled in the School, their PEEP will be developed as part of the admission process. The School will ensure that all disabled children are provided with a PEEP if they need one.

Pupils with learning difficulties may need to practise their routes for escape more regularly than termly. If so, this will be written into their PEEP.

PEEPs involving pupils require practice. However, to avoid unnecessary distress or risk to some pupils, the School considers that simulated escape may be more appropriate as a means of practice.

Staff

Existing staff identified requiring a PEEP must prepare one in consultation with the School without delay when there is a change in their ability to make their way out of the building (temporary or permanent). For all new staff this forms part of the induction process. PEEP’s and their preparation are treated in confidence, and it should be made clear that if they need help, it will be provided.

Visitors

In the event of a school play, parents evening or other School events, unknown visitors may enter the School and it may be more difficult to gather the information prior to the need to escape. In addition, it may be impossible to know how many disabled people are present at any one time or their level of disability. In these instances, a system of standard PEEPs is used and advertised.

Disabled visitors will be able to make their own way into the School grounds and may have assistance from friends or family. It is assumed that with this assistance they will be able to evacuate from the building without additional support.

A dynamic risk assessment approach is used to assess the suitability of venue within the School being accessed or location of seating that should be provided e.g. ground floor by the exit in the St Mary's Theatre.

The appropriate time required to make the disabled person's escape will be identified. Disabled people are not automatically required to wait for the main flow of escape, but if they are likely to cause obstruction for other people, or there might be a risk of injury to themselves or others, they may be required, in the interests of safety, to follow the main flow of people.

Wheelchair users with mobility impairment

The wheelchair user must notify their tutor/manager of the details of their PEEP. If, due to the nature of the illness/injury, the individual cannot be removed from their wheelchair without risk of serious injury, the Health and Safety Committee MUST be advised immediately.

Deaf and Hearing-Impaired People

There are no visual fire signals within the School. Deaf people working alongside hearing colleagues/pupils may not require special equipment and the School may determine that a buddy system is the most appropriate method for alerting them of the operation of a fire alarm. Providing they have been made aware of what to do in the event of a fire, they will be able to see and understand the behaviour of those around them.

Blind and Visually Impaired People

Blind and visually impaired people will be advised to locate evacuation and assembly points and will be advised on the fire evacuation routes from that building. Immediately on arrival at the School, staff, visitors and pupils will be accompanied by designated staff to assist with evacuation and orientation training may also be given if considered necessary.

Assistance for the person and their dog

Where a person uses a guide dog, they may prefer the dog to assist and only need escape routes pointed out to them. Others may request a human assistant and, in such cases, a buddy will be allocated. Where necessary the School will also provide a person to look after the dog. This may be provided in a formal or informal manner.

Assistance with opening doors

Some people may need assistance with opening doors e.g. upper limb disorders. A formal or informal arrangement will be made here, and the potential for lone working will also be considered.

People with cognitive disabilities

People with cognitive disabilities, including dyslexia, dyspraxia and autism often have problems comprehending what is happening in escape conditions, or may not have the same perceptions of risk as non-disabled people. Provision of good orientation facilities and measures within the School is essential. There may be a reluctance by some to take an unknown route. The PEEP will be used to give them an opportunity to understand the possible need for choice and change of direction during an escape.

Fire Alarm

Each of the School premises has an adequate means of raising the alarm in the event of fire.

The fire alarm system in each location is tested as part of the fire drill procedure.

The fire alarm system is tested at least once a week using a different call point for each successive test. The duration of the test needs will be sufficient to check that the system operates satisfactorily. Any defects will receive immediate attention. A record of tests is kept in the Fire Log Book, maintained by the Facilities and Estates Manager.

The fire alarm system is serviced annually by a competent contractor (e.g. ISO 9001 / BAFE). Records of these tests and servicing are maintained in a fire log book held by the Facilities and Estates Manager.

If at any time the fire system fails or is found to be defective, especially while the School is occupied, the School Fire Officer or their Deputy will make alternative arrangements such as maintaining a Fire Watch.

Fire Detection

Each of the School premises has adequate means of fire detection. The detection equipment is maintained and regularly checked by competent persons.

Automatic heat and smoke detectors are tested in the manner and at the intervals recommended by the manufacturers of the equipment.

Fire Fighting Equipment

The fire risk assessments will determine the minimum level of firefighting equipment which must be present in the School premises.

Fire Extinguishers: Fire extinguishers, wet and dry risers and/or other fire suppressant systems are serviced by a competent accredited contractor annually and the service date recorded on each extinguisher /system.

Any faults are reported to the Facilities and Estates Manager so that extinguishers can be serviced immediately. Any maintenance required is carried out by a person who is qualified to British Approvals for Fire Equipment (BAFE) standards.

Each fire extinguisher is examined by competent School facilities staff regularly to ensure that:

- it is in the correct position;
- it is fully charged;
- the accidental discharge mechanism is intact; and
- appropriate fire extinguisher identification and usage signage is in place.

The School meets BS 5423, Specification for Portable Fire Extinguishers, which recommends that all fire extinguishers should be red with an additional colour coding to indicate the extinguishing medium:

- Red = Water
- Cream = Foam

- Blue = Dry Powder
- Black = Carbon Dioxide (CO₂)

The table below describes the type of fire extinguisher required to deal with the various classes of fire.

Class of Fire	Water	Foam	CO ₂	Dry Powder
Wood, paper, cloth, etc.	Most suitable	Only suitable on small surface fires	Only suitable on small surface fires	Only suitable on small surface fires
Liquids, fats, petrol, oil, etc.	Unsuitable	Most suitable, especially for fats	Suitable where contamination must be avoided	Most suitable
Electrical	Unsuitable and dangerous	Unsuitable and dangerous	Suitable	Suitable

Portable fire-fighting equipment, where practicable, is securely fixed to a wall with the carrying handles approximately 1m from floor level.

Persons who need to use a fire extinguisher do not have to travel more than 30m in any direction to locate one.

Fire Blankets: Fire blankets are used for smothering small fires, which involve cooking fat or other flammable liquids, and for smothering flames on people whose clothing has caught fire.

Fire blankets are kept in suitable containers, which are fixed to the wall open end downwards. Blankets are positioned adjacent to the fire extinguishers in every kitchen, science laboratory and ceramics room.

Buckets of Sand: Buckets of sand are recommended for use in laboratories, as they can be used to contain spillages of flammable or other heavy liquids, thus preventing the spread of fire. One bucket of sand is placed by the portable fire-fighting equipment in each laboratory. Rubbish is not allowed to accumulate in these buckets.

Fire Prevention Measures

The School takes all reasonable precautions to prevent a fire from breaking out and recognises that for a fire to take place oxygen, flammable materials and a source of ignition must all be present. The processes of prevention are aimed at preventing one or more of these elements being together.

The School has the following fire prevention measures in place:

Escape Routes and Emergency Exits

- There is at least one escape route from every part of all buildings;
- Fire notices and evacuation signs are displayed at every call point, corridor and stairwell;
- Fires extinguishers of the appropriate type and smoke/heat detectors are located in every building. Fire Alarms can be manually activated by breaking a glass panel and are automatically activated when smoke/heat builds up;
- All stairs, passages and emergency exits are illuminated by emergency lighting;
- Automatic door closures that are activated by the fire alarms are fitted on doors leading onto escape routes;

- The master panel for the alarm system shows the location of a fire;
- Alarms sound in all parts of the building where they are fitted;
- Fire routes and exits are kept clear at all times. The Facilities team check that escape routes are not obstructed and that the emergency lights work, and for reporting defects. They also confirm on a weekly basis that all fire routes and exits are clear. Records are kept by the Facilities and Estates Manager;
- Curtains and sofas are treated with fire retardant spray;
- There should be no storage of bikes, equipment or other items in stairwells designated as escape routes.

Electrical Safety

- The School has current electrical test certificates for all its buildings. It uses NICEIC qualified Electrical Engineers to inspect and maintain its electrical installations all of which are RCB protected and meet the requirements of BS7671 IEE wiring regulations;
- Portable appliance testing (PAT) takes place on an annual basis;
- Records of all tests are kept by the Facilities and Estates Manager;
- The Science Technicians check that all Scientific equipment is switched off at the end of every School day.

Lightning Protection

- All lightning protection and earthing conforms to BS 6651-1999. It is tested annually by a specialist contractor. Records of all tests are kept by the Facilities and Estates Manager.

Gas Safety

- All gas appliances (boilers, kitchen equipment, etc) are regularly maintained and serviced by Gas Safe Registered Engineers. Records of all tests are kept by the Facilities and Estates Manager;
- All kitchen equipment is switched off at the end of service;
- All laboratories are checked daily to ensure that the central gas supply is turned off.

Safe Storage

- All flammable materials used in teaching or maintenance are locked in purpose-made, flame-proof containers at the end of every day.

Rubbish and Combustible Materials

- Flammable rubbish is stored away from buildings in the secured rubbish compound;
- Combustible materials used in teaching, catering, maintenance and grounds are stored in flame proof cupboards.

Fire Risk Assessment

The aim of the fire risk assessment is to:

- identify the hazards and reduce the risks of those hazards causing harm to as low a level as reasonably practicable; and
- decide what physical and management policies are necessary to ensure the safety of people in the School if a fire does start.

Six monthly Fire Risk Assessments for the School are undertaken by the Fire Safety Advisor.

The Fire Risk Assessment pays particular attention to those at special risk, i.e. disabled and those with special needs, and will include consideration of any dangerous substance liable to be on the premises.

All staff identified in the Fire Drill Procedures who have a supervisory role in the event of fire are given details of

the Fire Risk Assessment.

A risk is defined as the chance, high, normal or low, of harm occurring.

A hazard is defined as anything with the potential to cause harm.

Any identified fire hazards are eliminated or the risk reduced to the minimum level practicable by implementing control measures and safe systems of work.

Regular assessments are made by staff, to ensure that the walkways are kept clear of obstruction and tripping hazards.

Fire Risk Prevention

Fire risk prevention is promoted through the following: a no smoking policy within the School and its grounds; prohibiting use of candles and joss sticks by pupils; prohibiting pupils from bringing lighters and matches to the School; applying disciplinary measures in cases where pupils have been found smoking or using lighters/matches on site; ensuring all hazardous activities are risk assessed and control measures put in place before the activity commences; ensuring there is a culture of safety awareness amongst the staff and pupils.

Fire Safety Precautions

Fire doors must be kept closed at all times (unless they are doors which automatically close when the alarm is sounded) to maintain compartmentalisation of the building and to prevent the spread of the fire and/or toxic smoke.

Corridors, stairways, landings and escape routes must be kept clear at all times of anything that is likely to cause a fire or accident or to impede evacuation in an emergency. Everyday objects such as boxes of paper left on an escape corridor pose serious obstacles during an emergency evacuation.

Hazardous materials must be stored, used and disposed of in accordance with all legal requirements and safe working practices.

All firefighting equipment must be kept free from obstruction and be readily available for use in an emergency. Portable firefighting equipment must not be removed or repositioned without authority from the Health and Safety Committee.

Any obvious or suspected damage to, or misuse of, a fire alarm or firefighting equipment must be reported immediately to the Facilities and Estates Manager or Bursar.

Fire Safety Records

All records relating to Fire Safety are maintained by the Facilities and Estates Manager and held in their office. They are reviewed with the Health & Safety Committee on an annual basis.

The following records are maintained:

- The Fire Policy & Procedures;
- The Fire Risk Assessment;
- Training Records of staff (including Fire Wardens);
- The Fire drill log;
- Certificates for the installation & maintenance of firefighting systems & equipment.

Fire Log Record

A dedicated Fire Log Record is kept and maintained. It is available for inspection by the Fire Authority at any time.

The Fire Log Record includes:

- The fire emergency plan for these premises;
- A list of responsible persons;
- Details of routine staff training;
- A record of fire drills;
- A record of fire alarm tests;
- A record of emergency lighting tests; and
- A record of inspections of means of escape.

Details of servicing, maintenance sheets and other related paperwork are not filed in the Fire Log Record.

Hot Works

For any planned hot works on or in the School, the School will require the contractor to provide the School's Facilities and Estates Manager with a written scheme of work that includes the safety precautions for the intended work, at least five days in advance. Hot work will not be permitted to start until the Facilities and Estates manager has agreed, in writing, that the contractor's safety precautions are sufficient. In the absence of the Facilities and Estates Manager being available, then written agreement will be sought from the Bursar.

Hot works includes hot bitumen roof repair or laying, welding, gas flame metal cutting.

For emergency work/repairs contractors and maintenance staff will always check with the Facilities and Estates Manager (if not available then the Bursar) for agreement of hot work precautions.

Means of escape routine inspection

The following is checked:

Weekly:

- all exit doors and gates are capable of being opened quickly and easily in the event of a fire;
- any chains or other removable fastenings should be removed from exit doors;
- all emergency fastenings must work efficiently;
- any doors, gates or shutters that are required to be locked in the open position are so locked;
- all escape routes and exit doors are clear of any obstructions, including shutters or sliding doors; and
- fire doors are not held open.

Six Monthly:

Fire doors are checked to ensure that:

- intumescent strips and smoke seals are undamaged;
- door leaves are not structurally damaged or excessively deformed;
- gaps between door leaf and door liner are not so small as likely to bind, or so large as to prevent them from being effectively fire and smoke stopping; and
- the hanging devices, securing devices, self-closing devices and automatic release mechanisms are operating correctly.

New Buildings/Alterations

When new buildings or alterations are being planned, the Bursar and the relevant project manager will ensure that the requirements of relevant fire safety legislation/recognised standards are considered and that the proposed building/facilities meet the requirements.

Prevention of Arson

People who are attracted to arson in schools often start their first fires by chance. This chance element can make it appear that arson is the hardest of all the security risks to control. With the number of arson attacks on schools rising rapidly and the number of large fires also rising, some credence is given to this view. But the fact that the action of most arsonists is either unplanned or badly planned does give the School a good chance of preventing these fires.

School fires tend to come in cycles. Larger scale attacks – a serious attempt to burn a whole school down – normally comes after the smaller-scale events. Some arson is aimed at hiding the details of another crime, although this is rare in schools.

Arsonists do not usually bring the method of starting the fire into a school – they are reliant on finding accelerants in a school to start the fire. There are few instances of arsonists seemingly tearing up books etc. The School policy on arson prevention is therefore:

- As far as is practicable inflammable materials are locked away;
- All waste bins are emptied regularly; and
- The Facilities and Estates Manager make occasional unannounced checks that the procedure is being adhered to.

On campus security is provided by night security patrols throughout the year.

Reporting and Investigation of Incidents

Staff who become aware of a fire-related incident are required to report it as soon as possible to the Bursar. A fire-related incident includes actual fires (no matter how small), false alarms and misuse and vandalism of fire or fire related equipment.

When appropriate, the Bursar will carry out an investigation and make recommendations in accordance with Health and Safety Policy.

Data provided by completed incident forms and subsequent investigations shall be analysed periodically by the Health and Safety Committee to identify trends and make recommendations.

Responsibility

Ultimate responsibility falls to the Governing Body. The Governing Body is the designated “responsible person” for fire safety as outlined in legislation. Their responsibility is to:

- Consider and agree financial resources for any fire precautionary measures outlined in legislation and British Standards;
- Approve the “Fire Safety Policy” and any reviews; and
- Ensure a Fire Risk Assessment has been undertaken and is regularly reviewed.

The **School** is responsible for ensuring all pupils and staff receive suitable Fire Safety induction training.

The **Bursar** has responsibility for ensuring that arrangements for managing Fire Safety are in place and regularly monitored. Responsibility cannot be delegated, although the functions related to that responsibility may be delegated.

The Bursar is also responsible for promulgating, monitoring and auditing the School's Fire Safety Policy and Procedures.

The Bursar is responsible for acting upon the recommendations and requirements of fire risk assessments and fire safety linked to a particular process or procedure under their control, and for ensuring that all persons are trained and given adequate instruction in the case of fire. The Bursar is also required to appoint suitable responsible persons to undertake all necessary fire arrangements and procedures.

The Bursar is responsible for appointing a **Fire Safety Officer**. Currently the Facilities and Estates Manager holds that position.

The Fire Safety Officer helps the Bursar provide an infrastructure for the review and implementation of fire safety and emergency evacuation procedures within the School. This network of staff receives appropriate training guidance and support from the School.

The main duties and responsibilities of the Fire Safety Officer are:

- Fire Warden provision;
- Evacuation procedures review;
- Disabled persons personal evacuation planning;
- Fire awareness training;
- Fire safety inspections;
- Fire drill register maintenance;
- Advise School Health and Safety Committee; and
- Liaise with the School Health and Safety Advisor.

The Fire Safety Officer co-ordinates and advises other duty holders in relation to fire safety but will not be responsible for delivering training.

Fire Wardens are appointed by the Fire Safety Officer to assist in the safe evacuation of all staff and pupils from the relevant building. The School has implemented a system whereby Fire Wardens have been trained to assist staff and pupils to evacuate the relevant building when the fire alarm sounds. Fire Wardens are not trained to be fire fighters. Their main function is to assist the progress of the evacuation and to report its progress to the Fire Officer or Bursar.

Personnel with management responsibility shall ensure that all local precautions and procedures are followed and that persons under their responsibility are trained and given adequate instruction in the case of fire.

Boarding staff are responsible for:

- Inducting new boarding staff and pupils in the fire procedures; and
- Arranging for a termly fire drill to be undertaken during boarding time and documenting and actioning any findings of.

All staff have the following responsibilities:

- Take responsibility for any pupils and pupils in their charge at the time of any fire or emergency and ensure they are safely guided out to the pre-designated assembly point;
- Keep all fire exit routes clear and free from obstacles and waste materials;

- Not to restrict access to or reduce vision of any mounted fire extinguishers;
- Not to prop fire doors open, unless fitted with an automatic closer device linked to the fire alarm;
- Fully co-operate in any evacuation drills;
- Store all flammable substances and materials in appropriate locations after use;
- Not to create fire hazards by overloading plug sockets and using multiple extension leads (daisy chaining);
- Ensure any visitors and contractors in their charge are made aware of fire safety procedures (instructions provided in writing at Reception when they sign in);
- Ensure any visitors or contractors under their charge at the time of any fire or emergency are safely guided out to a pre-designated assembly point;
- Ensure family members of staff who live within the boarding areas follow established safety procedures (including full co-operation in any evacuation drills);
- Take note and comply with all signs posted around the premises;
- Maintain vigilance for any potential fire hazards and to report them at the earliest opportunity to the Facilities team;
- To ensure safe access and egress to and from the premises;
- To comply with all instructions given to them in regard to fire safety and any other fire procedures as required by supplementary codes of practice;
- To ensure that they are familiar with the alternative means of escape in case of fire by walking the routes from the area in which they are employed; and
- To ensure that, where the member of staff and their family live in a domestic dwelling on the school premises/grounds, they understand that they are required to raise the alarm in the event of a fire in their dwelling.

Pupils and visitors must comply with all instructions given to them with regard to fire safety and any other fire procedures as required by supplementary codes of practice.

Contractors working on behalf of the School must comply with the Fire Safety Policy and obey all instructions given to them with regard to fire safety by authorised School personnel. They must also ensure that all personnel for whom they are responsible are adequately trained and instructed in fire safety procedures and arrangements.

Smoking

Smoking can be a major source of fires. Smoking on the School's premises is prohibited for staff, pupils and visitors with the exception in the designated area for staff use only. Please refer to the School's No Smoking Policy – Staff and Visitors and Anti-Smoking and Nicotine Policy.

Suspected Gas Leak

Anyone who smells gas or believes that there is a gas leak on the premises, or in the near vicinity, is required to report this fact immediately to the Facilities and Estates Manager (the School Fire officer).

Staff training includes the following guidance:

Do (if safe to do so):

- extinguish all naked flames;
- turn off all gas appliances and sources; and
- open all windows.

Do not:

- operate any electrical switches or mobile phones; and
- use a naked flame to search.

The Facilities and Estates Manager, if safe to do so, will shut off the gas supply at the incoming meter.

Training, Instruction and Information

All staff and pupils receive training about what to do in the event of fire or other emergency. Training in the safe and speedy emergency evacuation procedures is given to all staff and pupils through regular fire drills.

All staff complete an annual on-line training course in Fire Awareness.

All staff are made aware that their primary duty under health and safety legislation is the safe evacuation of themselves, pupils and other employees. They also have a duty to visitors, parent helpers and contractors.

All new members of staff, as part of their staff induction training, will receive instructions on the School's fire evacuation procedures.

Staff are informed in relation to:

- action to take if they discover a fire, including how to activate the fire alarm;
- action to take on hearing the alarm, including location and use of exits and escape routes;
- action to take in the event of an incident occurring; and
- areas of greater risk of fire on the campus.

The Fire Officer ensures that Fire Wardens have been appointed and trained. All staff with additional fire safety duties e.g. Fire Wardens, are given additional training on their appointment and refreshed every two years. All Fire wardens are given training in regards to operation of fire panels and the use of fire extinguishers.

Fire safety training records are maintained by the HR department.

Pupils are informed of exits and escape routes. Pupils are advised of the relevant precautions and procedures for their specific residence and are made aware of the dangers and penalties associated with tampering with fire safety equipment.

The Evacuation Procedures and the Assembly Points are displayed on Fire Action Notices located at strategic points throughout the School buildings.

Related Policies

- Anti-Smoking and Nicotine Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- No Smoking Policy - Staff and Visitors Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy

Appendix 1 - Fire Drill and Evacuation Procedures

On discovering a Fire:

- Raise the alarm immediately and call 999;
- Leave the building, quickly and calmly, via the nearest emergency exit;
- Close doors behind you;
- Proceed to the Assembly Point.

On hearing the alarm:

- Leave the building quickly and calmly by the nearest exit;
- Close doors behind you;
- Go to the Assembly Point.

The Assembly Point for the School is the Lacrosse field, in front of the St Mary's Theatre.

When the alarm is raised:

- Do not use lifts;
- Do not stop to collect belongings;
- Do not return to the building for any reason.

General

Any member of staff or pupil who discovers a fire should immediately raise the alarm so that evacuation procedures can commence.

The fire alarm can be triggered by pressing the black button at any of the red box alarm points around the School. These are well defined and clearly visible.

The fire alarm is a continuous pulsating siren which can be heard throughout the School and its outbuildings.

Nominated staff will have certain responsibilities for fire procedures depending on the time of day or night when the alarm is sounded.

No attempt should be made to close windows, but doors should be closed by the last person leaving a room.

The safe evacuation of everyone - staff and pupils alike, is the School's priority. Protecting property comes second. No one should attempt to fight a fire at the expense of their own, or anyone else's safety. No one should attempt to use a fire extinguisher before they have been trained in its use. Regardless, fire extinguishers should only be used when the fire is in its early stages and does not constitute too large a risk to the individual.

Procedures and Staff Responsibilities

A summary table of roles and responsibilities is found at the end of this policy.

The **Facilities team** are on site from 08.00 to 16.30 hours Monday to Friday to assist in carrying out these procedures.

The Headmistress will have overall responsibility for fire procedures and evacuation of staff and pupils from the school building in the event of a fire. Duties will include:

- Responsibility for behaviour of all staff and pupils at the Assembly Point;
- Ensuring that there is an effective method of defining which pupils and staff might be absent at the Assembly Point at any given time. This may include the checking of teaching and support staff against registers and pupils against Swimming Pool, Medical Centre, School Trips & Fixtures, Examination and Form lists;
- Ensuring that a 'buddy' system is in operation for any pupil who may not hear the alarm bell due to a hearing or visual impairment, and that staff are aware of it;
- Any subsequent action, including phoning the Fire Brigade, in the event of an actual fire. It is essential that the Headmistress takes her school mobile phone with her to the Assembly Point;
- Appointing a Fire Officer and Deputy Fire Officer or persons with similar duties;
- Ensuring that all pupils and staff, including external examination invigilators, contractors and visitors, know what they must do in the event of a fire alarm.

Whilst the Headmistress has responsibility for ensuring the above are in place, she may wish to delegate some or all of these responsibilities to a designated representative, ("the Lead"), who will take active control during an evacuation.

Staff, visitors and pupils use Sign In App to register in and out of the School site each day. This is used to produce the Daily Fire Register File (also known as the Evacuation Report).

The **Lead** will:

- Be the Fire Officer during all fire drills and evacuations;
- Take overall charge at the Assembly Point for pupils and staff, including directing operations as appropriate;
- Ensure that all records or lists of pupils are available in order to determine if there are any who might be missing. These will include Health Centre Form and Trips lists;
- Liaise with the Deputy Lead on duty at the fire panel;
- Stand the staff and pupils down in the event of a false alarm;
- Advise the Bursar of any recommendations they feel will help the efficiency of the fire drill or associated procedures;
- Ensure that no unauthorised persons enter the School during a fire alarm, until instructed that it is clear to do so.

The **Deputy Lead** will:

- Ascertain where the fire may be, establish whether it is a real or a false alarm, and be in contact with the Lead at the Assembly Point;
- Silence the alarm in the event of a false alarm, and then communicate findings to the Lead at the Assembly Point;
- Phone the Fire Brigade in the event of a real fire, communicate findings to the Lead at the Assembly Point. It is essential that the Deputy Lead takes a mobile phone with them to the fire panel;
- Contact the Headmistress or Bursar in the event of a real fire.

Teaching staff will:

- Help implement evacuation procedures;
- Help pupils evacuate the building;
- Ensure that silence is maintained by the pupils and staff during a fire alarm procedure;
- Ensure that they make lists of any pupils and staff who are either on trips, in examinations, in the swimming pool, or on any other School activity for which they have a responsibility;
- Be prepared to help the Lead at the Assembly Point, if requested to do so;

- Gather in silence on the lacrosse pitch. No staff are to stand on the driveway.

All Staff not actively involved in the fire drill , during the period of their normal working day, will:

- Line up alphabetically, in first name order, in silence on the grassed area outside the Bursar's office, overlooking the lacrosse pitch.

The **Bursar** (or their nominated delegate) is responsible for collating staff registers via the Sign In App, reporting any missing staff to the Lead.

Nursing Staff will go directly to the Assembly Point and make available to the Lead the names of any pupils absent from School due to sickness. In the case of there being any really sick children in the Health Centre, the nurse on duty will accompany the sick pupils to a safe area near the Assembly Point, so as not to leave them alone in the Health Centre. The Senior Nurse will advise Teaching Staff of any pupil with a hearing impairment, so that a 'buddy system' can be arranged in advance of any fire alarm procedure.

Pupils should:

- Exit the building via the nearest escape route, following the 'green man' directional signs to the Assembly Point;
- Line up alphabetically, in Form order, at the Assembly Point as instructed;
- Maintain silence throughout the entire proceedings until roll calls have been taken and they have been instructed that it is safe to re-enter the building.

Any pupils or staff in the swimming pool building will be alerted of the fire alarm by a member of the Senior Leadership Team ("SLT"), who has taken instruction from the Lead at the Assembly Point. The pool staff will assemble the pupils inside the pool building and take a register. The register will then be handed to the **Lead**, or their delegated appointee, at the Assembly Point. Pupils will remain in the pool building unless required to evacuate.

All **visitors** and any pupils not in a classroom must make their way to the Assembly Point via the nearest escape route.

During public examination periods, **Invigilators** will remind the candidates that they must stop writing, leave their papers and scripts as they are, and remain silent subject to Examination Regulations. Also, invigilators will advise candidates that they will incur the usual penalties if they communicate with each other or anyone else in any way, except for safety reasons in case of extreme danger. Invigilators will collect the attendance register before vacating the examination room, and will note the time the interruption lasts in order to permit candidates the full time allowed for the exam on their return to the exam room. Finally, invigilators will make a full report of the incident and the action taken, which will be sent to the awarding body.

Examination candidates must evacuate examination rooms in accordance with the School's fire procedure and should line up in alphabetical order, separate from the rest of the School. They will be registered by a member of staff appointed by the Headmistress, at the Assembly Point.

Once the "All Clear" signal has been given, staff can return to their posts and the pupils can be dismissed by year groups and quietly return to their normal programme.

The fire log is updated on Teams immediately after the fire drill/alarm activation by the Lead. All missing pupils and staff are recorded. Subsequently, all paperwork relating to fire registers is handed to the Facilities and Estates Manager for filing purposes.

The Facilities and Estates Manager, or their delegated representative, will:

- Be the Deputy Lead during the normal School operating day between 08:00 and 16:00 hrs Monday to Friday, being the link between the fire panel and the Lead at the Assembly Point. This will also involve directing Facilities staff (at least two) to investigate whether the fire is real or not;
- Phone the Fire Brigade in the event of a real fire, communicate findings to the Lead at the Assembly Point. Open the automatic gates on London Road and stand in a prominent position at the front of the School to brief the Fire Brigade on their arrival. It is essential that the Facilities and Estates Manager takes their mobile phone with them to the fire panel;
- Silence the alarm in the event of a false alarm, and then communicate findings to the most senior person on duty at the Assembly Point;
- Advise the Bursar of any recommendations they feel will help the efficiency of the fire drill or associated procedures.

The **Fire Brigade** have ultimate authority on all fire related matters once they are on site. No staff or pupils will be permitted to move from the Assembly Point until the Brigade Officer has given the authorisation for them to do so.

Sixth Form Centre and Wyatt House

These buildings have stand-alone fire systems which are linked to the main school system. At all times an alarm triggered in the main school will also trigger these buildings and vice versa. The Houseparent(s) on duty in the Sixth Form Centre and/or Wyatt House will take responsibility for evacuating the pupils.

ROLE	LEAD	DEPUTY LEAD	TUTORS / HOUSEPARENTS (“HP”)	SENIOR ON DUTY (HoY)	SLT ON DUTY (Not Overnight)	STAFF
WHO	<p>Mon-Fri 0800 – 1600: CW is the Lead (AV when CW is off-site)</p> <p>Mon-Fri 1600 - 0800 and weekends: HPs are the Lead per the Boarding rota</p>	<p>Mon-Fri 0800 – 1600: PB</p> <p>Mon-Fri 1600 – 0800 and weekends: HPs are the Deputy Lead per the Boarding rota</p>	<p>Mon-Fri 0800 – 1600: Tutors (with HPs present and covering)</p> <p>Mon-Fri 1600 – 0800 and weekends: HPs (Tutors present if onsite)</p>	<p>If Senior on Duty is offsite the HoYs accept this responsibility collectively</p>	<p>Only when on active duty</p>	<p>When appropriate</p>
RESPONSIBILITIES	<p>Times evacuation, fills in Fire Log, maintains Fire Box</p>	<p>Times evacuation, steps up to Lead if needed</p>	<p>Registers pupils</p>	<p>Register staff</p>		
ACTIONS	<p>Get phone (and sweep through if appropriate)</p>	<p>Get phone (and sweep through if appropriate)</p>	<p>Get phone (and sweep through if appropriate)</p>	<p>Get necessary paperwork and head to Assembly Point</p>	<p>Head to Assembly Point</p>	<p>Evacuate all pupils/staff from your classroom/office/area</p>
	<p>Go to Fire Box (code 2222), put on High Viz and hand out registers</p>	<p>Go to Fire Panel and note area/call point/fault</p>	<p>Go to Fire Box to collect register</p>	<p>Register all staff</p>	<p>If Lead not present hand out registers from Fire Box (code 2222)</p>	<p>Head to Assembly Point</p>

	Monitor registration from top of steps at assembly point	Once everyone has exited the buildings silence and reset the alarm	Register pupils	Be ready to assist Lead	Be on LAX Field assisting in control of pupils, maintaining a quiet, serious atmosphere.	Be ready to assist Lead
	Once registers are complete help Tutors/HPs to identify missing pupils and get Tutors/HPs to call them	Wait for 1 minute. If alarm does not go off report this to Lead and investigate.	Report to Lead and follow up any missing pupils		Be ready to assist Lead	
	Respond to Deputy Lead ("DL")'s report	If alarm goes off again, note area/call point/fault. Only investigate if safe to do so.	Continue monitoring pupils and be ready to assist Lead			
	If DL reports smoke/heat in a certain area call 999 IMMEDIATELY – keep everyone away from building	IF AT ANY TIME YOU SMELL OR SEE SMOKE OR FEEL HEAT BEHIND DOORS YOU ARE ABOUT TO ENTER THEN LEAVE THE BUILDING IMMEDIATELY AND REPORT TO LEAD				

	If DL reports non-resetting sensor/call point/fault BUT NO SMOKE/FIRE then call Emergency Number for Maintenance - allow pupils back into building	Once smoke sensor or call point has been identified silence alarm and report to Lead and then assist Lead				
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Appendix 2 – Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan for Pupils

A completed form should be held:

- In the pupil’s personal records;
- By the Health Centre;
- By the Bursar;
- By the Fire Officer;
- By the pupil’s Tutor; and
- By the Housemistress.

Note: This plan must be reviewed on an annual basis (at least) and when a significant change in circumstances (of the building or pupil) is anticipated or identified.

Pupil’s Name:			
Bedroom Number or Name:			
Location of bedroom in building:			
Tutor’s Name:		Tel: Ext No:	
Date Completed:			

Name of Person who Completed this Form:	
Date Completed:	

Date of Next Review:	
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Points to consider: In preparation for completing details in this form, consider the following; discuss with the parents/guardian and, if appropriate, the pupil.

Question	Answer	Comments
Does the pupil change classrooms during the course of the day, which takes them to more than one location within the building and other buildings?	Yes No	
Do they have difficulties reading and identifying signs that mark the emergency exits and evacuation routes to emergency exits?	Yes No	
Does the pupil have any difficulties hearing the fire alarm?	Yes No	
Are they likely to experience problems independently travelling to the nearest emergency exit?	Yes No	
Does the pupil find stairs difficult to use?	Yes No	
Are they dependent on a wheelchair or other walking aid for mobility?	Yes No	
If the pupil uses a wheelchair would they have problems transferring from the wheelchair without assistance?	Yes No	
Does the pupil have behaviour issues, e.g. noise sensitivity, fleeing, aggression?	Yes No	
Does the pupil have any medical concerns that could affect their evacuation of the building e.g. Epilepsy etc?	Yes No	

METHODS OF ASSISTANCE:

(e.g.: Transfer procedures, methods of guidance, etc.)

EQUIPMENT PROVIDED (including means of communication):

EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

(A step by step account beginning from the first alarm)

SAFE ROUTE(S):

	Yes	No	N/A
Have the route(s) been travelled by the pupil and responsible person?			
Has a copy of the exit route on plan been attached?			
Has the equipment detailed above been tried and tested?			
Have all issues been completed to full satisfaction?			
Has a copy of this form been sent to the person responsible for the fire evacuation?			
Has the fire safety competent person informed all relevant staff of these arrangements? e.g. Class teacher.			

Record the length of time of practice evacuation: minutes

If No to any of the above please explain:

Pupil's Signature:		Date	
Headmistress Signature:		Date:	

List of people who have received a copy of this completed document:

Appendix 3 – Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan for Staff

A completed form should be held:

- In the Staff members personnel records;
- By the Headmistress;
- By the Bursar;
- By the Fire Officer.

Note: This plan must be reviewed on an annual basis (at least) and when a significant change in circumstances (of the building or staff member) is anticipated or identified.

Staff Name:	
Teaching or working area	
Location of working areas:	

Name of Person who Completed this Form:	
Date Completed:	

Date of Next Review:	
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Question	Answer	Comments
Does the staff member change classrooms during the course of the day, which takes them to more than one location within the building and other buildings?	Yes No	
Do they have difficulties reading and identifying signs that mark the emergency exits and evacuation routes to emergency exits?	Yes No	
Does the staff member have any difficulties hearing the fire alarm?	Yes No	
Are they likely to experience problems independently travelling to the nearest emergency exit?	Yes No	
Does the staff member find stairs difficult to use?	Yes No	
Are they dependent on a wheelchair or other walking aid for mobility?	Yes No	
If the staff member uses a wheelchair would they have problems transferring from the wheelchair without assistance?	Yes No	
Does the staff member have any medical concerns that could affect their evacuation of the building e.g. Epilepsy etc.	Yes No	

METHODS OF ASSISTANCE:

(e.g.: Transfer procedures, methods of guidance, etc.)

EQUIPMENT PROVIDED (including means of communication):

EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

(A step by step account beginning from the first alarm)

SAFE ROUTE(S):

	Yes	No	N/A
Have the route(s) been travelled by the staff member and responsible person?			
Has a copy of the exit route on plan been attached?			
Has the equipment detailed above been tried and tested?			
Have all issues been completed to full satisfaction?			
Has a copy of this form been sent to the person responsible for the fire evacuation?			
Has the fire safety competent person informed all relevant staff of these arrangements?			

Record the length of time of practice evacuation:minutes

If No to any of the above please explain:

Staff member Signature:		Date	
Headmistress Signature:		Date:	

List of people who have received a copy of this completed document: