

Fire Safety Policy and Procedures

Applies to:

- The whole school, along with all activities provided by the school, including those outside of the normal school hours.
- All school pupils, staff, governors and visitors.

Availability:

- This policy is made available to parents, staff and pupils via the school website, and on request a copy may be obtained from reception.
- The Fire Safety Policy and Evacuation Procedures (available to staff on MS365 All Staff Teams), along with relevant procedural documents, are provided either in hard copy or electronically to all new employees before commencing work at the school.
- All staff are required to state that they have read and understood such documents and confirm this via the BOB HRIS system.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy is subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal, in consultation with the Director of Operations.
- The Principal undertakes a formal annual review of this policy.

Signed:



Amy Cavilla
Principal
September 2024

Introduction

The Board of Governors is acutely aware of the importance of fire safety. For this reason, the Fire Safety Policy has been formulated to be compliant with legal obligations to pupils, staff and visitors under the 'Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005'. These include the provision of a safe place of work where fire safety risks are minimised and are subject to annual, independent verification.

The school has established a Fire Safety Policy and (separate) detailed Fire Evacuation Procedures, which are designed to protect pupils, staff, visitors and school assets. The effectiveness of these policies and procedures depends not only on physical precautions designed to prevent the occurrence and spread of fire, but also on the co-operation of every member of staff, pupil and visitor.

Objectives

- To ensure that risks from fire are identified and that arrangements are in place to control those risks.
- To enable the school to comply with its duties under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and other education-specific guidance.

Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for the safety of staff, pupils and visitors is delegated to the Principal by the Board of Governors. Responsibility for the management of fire safety is delegated to the Director of Operations.

Fire Risk Assessment

A Fire Risk Assessment of the school premises, carried out by an external contractor, is arranged annually by the Director of Operations and is updated in the event of a significant change to part of the building or its usage.

A copy of the Fire Risk Assessment is available from the Director of Operations. Employees are notified of hazards identified in the Fire Risk Assessment by the Director of Operations or Premises Manager as appropriate.

Fire hazards identified in the risk assessment are eliminated, or the risk reduced to the minimum level practical, by implementing control measures and safe systems of work.

Routine assessments of fire safety are carried out on a regular basis by the Premises Manager, and by the Director of Operations and Premises Manager, during half-termly health and safety inspections.

Fire Detection and Alarms

Appropriate fire detection equipment is installed in each area of the school building, with signage clearly identifying call points. Routine testing and maintenance are carried out by the Premises Manager and equipment is inspected twice annually by an external contractor.

A fire alarm system covering the whole site provides adequate means of raising the alarm in the event of a fire. The fire panel is located in the school reception.

The fire alarm system is tested on a weekly basis by the Premises Manager, with a different call point activated each week. This is recorded and available for inspection by the Director of Operations and fire alarm company.

The fire alarm system is serviced twice annually by an external contractor.

Records of testing and maintenance of the fire alarm system are maintained by the Premises Manager.

Fire-Fighting Equipment

The Fire Risk Assessment determines the appropriate level of fire-fighting equipment which must be present on the school premises.

Fire-fighting equipment and associated signage are supplied, then surveyed and tested annually by a suitably qualified external contractor.

Emergency Lighting

Emergency lighting has been installed throughout the building to ensure lighting is provided to areas such as corridors, stairways and evacuation routes in the event of a mains power failure.

Monthly tests of emergency lighting equipment are carried out by the Premises Manager or his team in addition to an annual three-hour test. Records of tests completed are maintained by the Premises Manager.

Emergency Procedures

Upon activation of the fire alarm, all occupants of the school premises should evacuate the building through designated fire escapes on to Cross Deep and congregate at the fire assembly point in Radnor Gardens. An alternative escape route from the rear of the building to Radnor Gardens through a neighbouring property is available in the event of the principle fire escapes being inaccessible. The fire brigade will be notified of the activation and attend the site. Further guidelines for liaison with emergency services are detailed in the school's Critical Incident Management Plan.

Notices and signage displayed throughout the building illustrate the designated evacuation route from each part of the premises.

Evacuation routes are monitored by the Premises Team on a continuous basis to ensure they are kept clear of obstructions and tripping hazards.

Teaching staff are responsible for escorting their pupils safely out of the building in silence and in an orderly fashion. Staff should check the room or area they have been using is clear of pupils and visitors before evacuating to the fire assembly point. All drinks and personal belongings must be left in the building to ensure there are no additional trip or slip hazards that could slow down an evacuation.

A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan is prepared for any disabled persons temporary or permanent, with reduced mobility using the premises and enacted in the event of a fire alarm activation.

Fire Marshals are documented in the detailed Fire Evacuation Procedures.

Once at Radnor Gardens, staff must notify the Head of any pupils, staff or visitors not accounted for. Once all persons are safely registered and accounted for, and the premises have been declared safe to return to, either by the Premises Manager or the Fire Brigade, the Head will dismiss pupils and staff from the assembly point. Once dismissed, pupils and staff should return to the building in a quiet and orderly fashion.

Fire drills are carried out once per school term, with additional drills arranged for school holidays, or as deemed appropriate.

Records of fire drills and evacuations, including the time taken to evacuate the building and account for all persons on the premises, are maintained by the Premises Manager.

Fire Training

Staff

Staff are required to read the Fire Safety Policy and separate Fire Evacuation Procedures every year and sign a declaration confirming their understanding of, and adherence to, them via the school's BOB HRIS system.

All staff are provided with basic fire safety training in the form of an online course during their induction process, which is refreshed every three years, or if their role changes significantly and they take on additional responsibilities.

Pupils

Pupils are made aware of fire exits and escape routes, and encouraged to give their feedback following a fire drill.

Visitors and Contractors

Visitors are given basic fire safety information on the reverse of their visitor passes upon entry to the building. Other key information is also included there.

For events with large numbers of attendees, an announcement is made at the start of the event informing visitors of evacuation procedures.

Fire Prevention

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 effectiveness of the school's fire safety procedures depends on the full co-operation of every member of staff, without exception. Co-operation is expected from everyone and complying with the fire safety procedures is regarded as a basic duty for all staff.

Staff comply at all times with relevant regulations on the storage, transportation, handling and disposal of flammable materials. Staff are encouraged to seek advice from the Director of Operations or Premises Manager if they are unsure about flammable materials before purchase.

Routine inspections of the building are carried out by the Premises Team on a continuous basis to monitor housekeeping of combustible materials and ensure potential sources of ignition are managed appropriately. The Director of Operations and Premises Manager conduct a termly safety inspection of the site which includes scrutiny of fire safety.

Waste disposal services are reviewed periodically to ensure that collections are sufficient to prevent a build-up of refuse that might increase the risk of arson.

Smoking is prohibited on the school premises.

PAT testing is arranged for all small electrical appliances on an annual basis. Staff are reminded not to bring electrical items from home without first having them PAT tested by the Premises Manager.