



## FIRE PREVENTION POLICY

*This policy applies to the entire setting, including EYFS.*

<b>Date of Policy</b>	September 2023
<b>Member of staff responsible</b>	Tom Hay / Nobby Clark
<b>Role</b>	School Business Manager / Site Manager

<b>Last Review</b>	Significant changes (most recent updates in red)

## 1. Statement of Intent

The risk that fire presents to staff, pupil and visitor safety in the Wishford Schools<sup>1</sup> Group as well as the risk it represents to each school's properties and business continuity is recognised. Fire management arrangements for a group of schools require strategic planning and financial decisions to be made at the highest level within the organisation. The group is committed to maintaining the highest of standards in fire safety in order to protect its employees, pupils and visitors who may be affected by its activities. The group will take precautions to reduce the risk of fire by eliminating and reducing those risks where reasonably practicable, then managing and controlling the remaining residual risks. The group seeks to reduce fire risk by providing suitable and sufficient information, instructions and training to its staff and pupils. It is the groups policy, so far as is reasonably practicable to:

- Provide and maintain places of work, accommodation and recreation that have adequate structural protection and adequate means of escape for any building occupants in the event of a fire.
- Provide, test and maintain suitable and sufficient monitoring and alarm systems in the above places that ensure that building occupants receive adequate early warning of any fire related event.
- Provide and maintain suitable and sufficient information and communication systems that ensure timely and efficient response by the school staff and that provide adequate details to the emergency fire services.
- Provide suitable and sufficient information and instruction on fire safety to school staff, pupils and visitors.
- Provide management arrangements for identifying and controlling fire risks.
- Provide effective management procedures to respond to and deal with the aftermath of a fire.

## 2. Policy Scope

Every school in the Wishford Schools Group is committed to providing a safe environment for its staff, pupils, visitors and contractors. It is each school's responsibility to provide and manage fire safety systems and procedures. All members of each school, their visitors and contractors have a statutory responsibility in ensuring compliance with the law and complying with the fire safety provisions defined within this policy. Fire is recognised as a major threat to the activities of the school. An outbreak of even a small fire creates risk to both life and property, damage to the environment and may compromise normal business activities. The school will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the risk associated with fire will be managed in compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, and any other relevant legislation that may impact upon it. The aim of this policy is, therefore, to provide a robust fire safety framework which will be implemented to secure the safety and wellbeing of everyone within the Wishford Schools Group and to protect its assets. Any action which contravenes this policy or a school's fire procedures could be deemed a disciplinary and, potentially, criminal offence.

This policy is applicable to all premises under the control of the Group and details the approach to the control of risk from fire. The principal objectives of this policy are:

- To enable our schools to comply with their duties under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and other education specific guidance.
- To ensure that risks from fire are identified and that control measures are in place.
- To safeguard all people who may be affected by the outbreak of fire at any of our premises.
- To safeguard the physical assets of the schools.
- To reduce the incidence of fires.
- To minimise the potential for fire to disrupt the work of our schools.
- To minimise the incidence of unwanted fire alarm signals and malicious false alarms.
- To protect the environment.
- To minimise the possibility of arson.

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'school(s)' relates to all organisations within the Wishford group including camps and day nurseries.

### 3. Responsibility

Executive responsibility for fire safety lies with the Executive Chairman Mr Sam Antrobus, who is deemed as the principal 'Responsible Person' for the group, as identified in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. These duties are further delegated to the Group Operations Manager and the Heads of our schools. Each Head is responsible for nominating their site's Fire Officer/'Responsible Person' (which could be themselves or another senior leader).

The Fire Officer/'Responsible Person' must ensure that:

- They maintain a sound, current understanding of the level of fire risk in relation to the buildings and the activities operating within them.
- All fire prevention measures listed in this policy are in place, monitored, tested and maintained.
- All staff have a firm understanding of the measures within this policy, their site's fire procedures and key personnel, their own responsibilities (both in the event of a fire and in relation to reporting fire risk) and their legal duty to adhere to all of the above.
- All contractors, visitors, volunteers and pupils are made aware of their role, responsibilities and the procedure in the event of a fire and their obligation to ensure their action does not undermine this policy or the site's fire procedures.
- An appropriate number of Fire Wardens are in place (at least one per separate building and/or boarding house) and all are aware of their roles and responsibilities in the event of a fire.
- All staff receive regular training in relation to their role and this is recorded centrally.
- They communicate with the emergency services in the event of a fire and to seek external support and advice whenever necessary.
- Relevant staff comply at all times with regulations on the storage, transportation, handling and disposal of flammable materials, including storage and use of dangerous substances (DSEAR & COSHH)
- Site teams regularly inspect all the areas where there are potential sources of ignition and ensure that no flammable materials are stored close by.
- Portable appliance testing is carried out as necessary and that a record of these tests is logged.
- Fire prevention and evacuation procedures are included during the induction process for all new starters.
- They pay close attention to the activities of contractors as appropriate.

### 4. Fire Prevention measures

#### The Fire Procedure

Each Wishford school must have a fire procedure (**appendix 1**) in place which covers the following as a minimum:

- The names, roles and responsibilities of key personnel including the fire officer and fire wardens.
- The roles and responsibilities of other staff following an alarm.
- Any site-specific measures in place to prevent fires.
- Evacuation procedures in the event of a fire (N.B. There maybe a variety of guidance depending on the time of day/year)

#### Fire Risk Assessment

All premises will be subject to a fire risk assessment. This may be conducted by an external consultant or other competent person. The person undertaking the assessment should liaise closely with the fire officer.

- The fire risk assessment will be reviewed annually or in the event of significant changes to the buildings or their usage.
- A copy of the fire risk assessment will be made available on SharePoint and made available to staff.

- Fire hazards will be eliminated or the risk reduced to the minimum level practicable by implementing control measures and safe systems of work.
- Regular assessments will be made by staff, to ensure that the walkways are kept clear of obstruction and tripping hazards. All staff are responsible for reporting and (when appropriate) clearing hazards.

### **Fire Detection**

Each of the School premises has adequate means of fire detection. The detection equipment will be maintained and regularly checked by competent persons (site managers/competent contractor).

- 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 to be tested weekly with the date and time made known. This will be managed by the school site manager/compliance officer. The alarm will be activated using a different call point each week, where this is practicable and recorded in the fire logbook.
- The fire alarm system will be serviced six-monthly by a competent contractor.
- Records of these tests and servicing are to be kept by the site manager.

### **Fire Fighting Equipment**

The fire risk assessment will determine the minimum level of firefighting equipment which must be present in the School premises. Fire extinguishers, wet and dry risers and/or other fire suppressant systems will be serviced by a competent contractor annually and the service date recorded on each extinguisher/system. The Fire Officer will maintain a log of all servicing and testing.

### **Emergency Lighting**

Emergency lighting must be installed in any area where lighting would continue to be required in the event of a mains power failure, eg stairs, passageways and emergency exits. Records of testing and servicing of emergency lights will be maintained by the site manager/compliance officer. Testing of the system will be carried out by a competent contractor on a three-monthly basis. The Fire Officer will maintain a log of all servicing and testing.

### **Emergency Procedures**

Information must be displayed throughout each separate building detailing the action to take in the event of a fire, including exit routes and the evacuation assembly point. There must be adequate means of escape for all occupants of each school premises. These means of escape will be clearly signed with pictograms. The means of escape and evacuation signage will be regularly inspected by the site manager/team to ensure they are kept clear of obstructions and tripping hazards. Where disabled persons use the premises, specific arrangements will be made to ensure they can escape in an emergency. For staff and pupils, there will be a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) in place.

### **Summoning the fire brigade**

There are to be standing instructions in the form of fire notices in every building which have the emergency contact numbers and the instructions to direct the emergency services to the scene of the incident. All staff are made aware of these on their initial workplace induction and should familiarise themselves with the ones in their workplace. All staff are made aware that they are responsible for alerting the emergency services in the event of a fire occurring this is to be done by dialling 999 and giving the information on evacuation notices.

### **Fire Drills**

Every building on-site must be subject to at least one fire drill per term. Written records of fire / evacuation drills will be maintained by the fire officer.

## **Fire Prevention Training**

All staff will undergo an induction of their workplace in regards to fire risks within their specific building and the site in general. Staff will be 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.
- areas of greater risk of fire on the school site.

Fire Wardens will be trained in:

- emergency evacuation procedures;
- use of fire extinguishers; emergency procedures
- how to spot fire hazards.

Pupils will be informed of exits and escape routes

## **Visitors and contractors**

Upon arrival on any site, ALL visitors and contractors will be made aware of the procedures and assembly points in the event of an evacuation. For events with large numbers of attendees, such as open days/events an announcement will be made at the beginning of the event regarding evacuation arrangements.

## **Fire Records**

Records must be kept of training; inspections; evacuations and maintenance of systems and equipment. These will be maintained by the fire officer.

## Appendix 1: St Faith's Prep School Fire Procedures

Protection of life is the primary concern in the event of a fire. The procedure detailed below provides for immediate action in the event of fire. Secondary concern is for property.

### Action on Discovering a Fire

- Raise the alarm by use of the nearest fire alarm call point.
- Evacuate all children and adults, including visitors and contractors, via the nearest fire exit (see below)
- Only attempt to tackle the fire if it is obvious that it can be put out quickly and without risk, fire equipment should only be used if appropriate training has been received.
- Obey Fire Safety instructions.

### Action on Hearing a Fire Alarm

- Evacuate all children and adults, including visitors and contractors, via the nearest fire exit. Follow one of the designated escape routes (see route map in each room) and assemble in lines by class along the hedge on the east/left side of the playground, starting at the bottom near the gate to the Nature Garden.
- Assist any person who needs help.
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings.
- Do not shout or run - this may cause panic.

### Your responsibilities

- You must know how to find the escape routes provided.
- You must know how to operate the fire alarm call points.
- Be aware of where fire-fighting equipment is but remember the priority is evacuation.
- The School Secretary (or whoever is covering the Office) will ensure that the Fire Lists are delivered to the staff. Teachers should then call the register to ensure all children are present. The School Secretary (or whoever is covering the Office) should also take the visitors signing in book and check that all visitors, contractors and staff are present.
- The Head/Deputy Head (Academic), in their role as Responsible Person, should ensure that there is no panic during the evacuation, that all classes are present and located at the far end of the playground and that registers have been called.
- The Site Manager/Assistant Site Manager, in their role as Fire Manager/Deputy, shall ensure that all children's toilets, halls, kitchen etc, have been fully evacuated.
- The trained Fire Wardens, shall ensure that all classroom blocks have been fully evacuated.
- The Head/Deputy Head (Academic) should be advised of any missing persons.

### Actions for Groves Hall

- If the fire alarm has been activated in the main school, the Responsible Person will ensure that the alarm is manually activated in Groves Hall and it is evacuated as above.
- If the fire alarm is activated in Groves Hall, evacuation is to follow the process above and a message sent to the School Office (via radio, mobile telephone or in person).
- For any activation of the fire alarm in Groves Hall, the Responsible Person will assess whether a whole school evacuation is needed and ensure that the alarm is activated accordingly.

### Calling the Fire Brigade

- The School Secretary, School Business Manager or Site Manager are responsible for calling the Fire Brigade immediately the fire alarm sounds.
- Dial 999 and when requested tell the operator the full address:  
St Faith's Prep School, 5 The Street, Ash, Canterbury, Kent CT3 2HH
- Don't forget to give the postcode and telephone number 01304 813409.
- Do not hang up until instructed to do so by the fire service operator.

Further Action - the Head or Deputy should

- Ensure that the Fire Service has been contacted.
- Report to the Evacuation area.
- Ensure that all children and adults are accounted for.
- Consider the situation and take action, if applicable, with respect to:
  - i. Organising search parties
  - ii. Fire fighting
  - iii. Further Evacuation

Where it is not possible to return to the school the children will be taken to St Nicholas Church. Parents will be informed of this decision so that they can collect their children.