

Fire Policy



Approved by:	Governing Body
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Introduction

Fire is potentially the greatest of all risks to personnel, business continuity and property. It can spread extremely quickly producing toxic, asphyxiating smoke. It is therefore essential to minimise the likelihood of a fire starting, to ensure the safe evacuation of people, and have appropriate measures for tackling fires. These are achieved through careful design of premises and stringent management procedures. However, the risk will always remain, and everyone must be vigilant at all times.

The design and fabric of Cornfields premises comply with building and fire safety regulations and standards. Fire safety signs must comply with relevant regulations and standards.

The Cornfields buildings are currently subject to fire risk assessments as required by the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations. These risk assessments address the fire hazards, the necessary controls, and the implementation and effectiveness of the controls. The fire hazards arise from structural features, the use to which the building is put, and the people occupying and using the building. The necessary controls include provision of fire alarm systems and fire escape routes, provision of portable fire-fighting equipment, good housekeeping supported by fire safety inspections, emergency response procedures linked to turn out of the Fire Brigade, and training of staff. The implementation and effectiveness of the controls are audited and reviewed to ensure that they fulfil their objectives of minimising the risk to people. Documentation of fire assessments, precautions, and the results of services and inspections are held at specific locations in the school office.

Aims

This policy will ensure Cornfields school is a fire safe environment for everybody and will provide clear and comprehensive instructions to ensure this safe environment is maintained in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Any concerns with regards to this policy or any matter relating to fire safety at Cornfields school must be raised immediately with the most senior member of staff on the school site and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead if safe to do so. This should not deter emergency services being called if a fire is discovered.

Responsibilities

Fire safety is the responsibility of everybody and any issues should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff on the school site and/or the Designated Safeguarding at the earliest opportunity notwithstanding the need to summon emergency services assistance if so required.

The **Head Teacher** assumes overall responsibility for all fire safety within the school and specific responsibility in the following areas:

- Keeping the fire risk assessments under review annually
- Ensuring an up to date Fire Emergency Plan is implemented to manage the fire risk in compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Additional risk assessments will be prepared for situations that fall within the requirement of The Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations
- Appointing and providing relevant training for Fire Marshals
- Informing staff, and others as applicable, of the fire safety arrangements in place when they join the school.
- Ensuring all fire instruction notices detail the arrangements for evacuation and the assembly points
- Ensuring all escape routes are regularly checked to be clear of obstructions
- Ensuring all designated fire exit doors are checked for safe operation
- Ensuring staff are made aware of the sound of the fire alarm
- Ensuring all equipment provided for fire detecting and fire-fighting is in position and access is not obstructed;
- Promotion of fire safety in the work setting.
- Informing contractors of the fire arrangements when working on site
- Ensuring staff are aware of the Evacuation Assembly points and have been trained in the evacuation procedure. Some nominated staff and teachers will receive special training where appropriate e.g. a staff or pupil personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) or closing down switching off gas, plant or equipment
- Arranging regular staff fire awareness training and at least two evacuation drill per year. The evacuation drill will include pupils and a record of the drill will be made and this will be subject to a documented evaluation. This will then be reviewed by the Governing Body
- Ensuring fire exits and escape routes are suitably signed, kept clear and maintained
- Ensuring smoking is not being undertaken on the premises
- Ensuring all heating and electrical appliances are positioned in a safe manner to avoid fire risks.
- Promoting and overseeing good housekeeping in respect of rubbish and waste accumulation is being implemented and managed.

- Ensuring the supply and storage of flammable liquids and gases is in accordance with the Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations guidance.
- Ensuring that fire risks are addressed as part of the risk assessments and inspections within their departments; their staff are instructed in how to respond in the event of a fire or fire alarm

The Executive Head Teacher may delegate day to day responsibilities to named individuals as appropriate. Any long term or regular delegation will be the subject of review and this policy will be amended accordingly.

The **Operations Manager** has specific responsibility in the following areas:

- Ensuring fire risk assessments are carried out; precautions including fire emergency response plans are specified; relevant fire certificates are obtained; appropriate fire safety training is provided, and audits of fire precautions are carried out
- ensures that fire detection and warning systems, emergency lighting, fire-fighting facilities, fire signage, and devices for limiting the spread of fire and smoke are maintained to the correct specifications
- Implementing the contractor arrangements for the annual maintenance and test of all fire extinguishers and the planned servicing testing of fire alarm, smoke alarm and emergency light systems and hold records of these systems on each premises.
- ensures that caretakers or any other nominated person complete the weekly tests of the fire detection, warning and fighting systems using the Fire Inspection Checklist (Appendix 3), and ensure that fire escape doors are unlocked while people are in the buildings
- ensuring a permit to work (see Permit to Work in this Section) is obtained prior to any operation that may increase the risk of fire, restrict or obstruct fire resisting doors or a fire escape route
- Reporting any breaches in fire safety or other concerns to the Head Teacher or senior member of staff on duty

The Operations manager may delegate certain day to day responsibilities to named individuals as appropriate. Any long term or regular delegation will be the subject of review and this policy will be amended accordingly.

The **Governing Body** will maintain an oversight of all fire policies and risk assessments. The **Governing Body** will additionally ensure that any modifications to buildings receive the necessary statutory approvals from appropriate authorities (eg Building Control) and that associated changes to fire detection and warning systems, emergency lighting, fire-fighting facilities, fire signage, and devices for limiting the spread of fire and smoke are installed to the correct specifications.

Workplace inspections

The **Operations Manager** and **Governing Body** will ensure that fire safety inspections are carried out for all their areas at least quarterly using the 'Fire inspection checklist'. Faults in fire detection, warning and fighting systems must be reported to the Operations Manager by email using the subject line, 'Fire Safety – Action Required'.

Fire detection and warning systems

The break glasses in each fire detection system are tested weekly and recorded in the Fire Log. A different break glass is tested each week. The test involves checking that the break glass activates the fire panel and the sounders.

Annual service and test of the full system by a competent engineer is organised by the Operations Manager. The school commissions and independent company 'Fire Action, Sidcup, Kent, DA145BH' to conduct bi-annual inspections of the school's fire detection and warning systems. They last inspected in July 2022.

Emergency lighting

Emergency lighting is fitted in the building and comes into action when the mains power to the unit is interrupted.

The Operations Manager or any other nominated person carry out monthly and 6-monthly checks of the emergency lighting by switching off power for a given period (monthly=10 minutes, 6-monthly=1 hour) and confirming that the lighting is still operating at the end of the period. Faults are reported to Operations Manager to resolve.

Servicing and testing of the emergency lighting is carried out at least annually by a competent engineer organised by the Operations Manager.

The school commissions and independent company 'Fire Action, Sidcup, Kent, DA145BH' to conduct bi-annual inspections of the school's fire detection and warning systems. They last inspected in July 2022.

Fire-fighting equipment

The seals on extinguishers are checked by the Operations Manager or any other nominated person during inspections of workplaces.

Extinguishers that have been discharged or had their seals broken should be replaced.

Servicing and testing of fire fighting equipment is carried out annually by competent personnel organised by the Operations Manager.

The school commissions and independent company 'Fire Action, Sidcup, Kent, DA145BH' to conduct inspections of the school's fire detection and warning systems. They last inspected in July 2022.

Fire signage and escape routes

All 'fire resisting' doors must fulfil their function of restricting the spread of fire and smoke in the event of fire. The Operations Manager checks that 'fire resisting' doors operate correctly as part of the weekly checks of the fire systems. The Operations Manager or any other nominated person will open fire exit doors weekly and check them for ease of operation.

The fire exit doors are well signed and illuminated and can be easily located in a blackout situation. The fire exit doors lead towards the best place that offers means of escape. The doors are readily openable.

Fire escape routes must be kept clear at all times and are checked during inspections of workplaces. The Operations Manager or any other nominated person ensure that common areas including corridors and stairwells are kept clear and that all fire escape doors are while people are in the buildings.

Anything that may restrict or obstruct a fire escape route requires a Permit to Work.

CCTV of external doors is also in place for all fire escape doors and is installed as an additional security measure.

Fire exits are maintained in line with the school's fire safety policy and emergency evacuation procedures.

Fire training

Staff are provided with general guidance on how to respond in the event of a fire as part of their health and safety induction to Cornfields school.

Fire drills

The effectiveness of fire emergency response arrangements is tested with fire drills. Fire drills are carried out once a term. Fire drills are organised by the Operations Manager or any other nominated person.

Fire drills should be held at least once, and preferably, twice, each year. Following the fire drills the fire marshal should identify problems or difficulties that were encountered. The problems and any remedial action taken to reduce their occurrence in the future should be recorded. Fire drills are important exercises and provide an opportunity for plans and procedures to be developed and modified if necessary.

In some premises where there is a risk of terrorist action directed towards the premises or to others in the vicinity, it may also be valuable to carry out a bomb drill occasionally, with the purpose of reminding staff of the actions that they should take. Again, a record of the exercise should be kept and procedures modified if necessary.

Particular consideration should be given to the actions taken in respect of a device thought to be in the street outside as well as those to be taken if a bomb were to be placed inside the building.

Fire emergency response

In the event of a fire, the aim is to clear the building and have Kent Fire and Rescue Service deal with the fire. The Office Administrator should take the signing in book with them to the assembly point.

Dos and Don'ts

Do

Make sure that you know the escape routes from buildings that you enter.

If you are a teacher, you also need to inform your classes of the fire escape routes and evacuation arrangements from their specific lecture or classroom.

You can improve fire safety by closing fire doors that you find open. Fire doors are there to prevent the spread of fire and smoke.

Don't

Don't lock yourself into a room: areas that are locked may not be checked during an evacuation.

Don't put yourself or others at risk when evacuating premises.

Appendix A

Fire Marshal Duties

The principal duties of the fire marshal are to:

- take appropriate and effective action if a fire occurs
- ensure that escape routes are available for use
- identify hazards in the workplace
- record and report their observations

If a fire is discovered, the fire marshal should:

- ensure that the alarm has been raised,
- check that manufacturing processes have been made safe,
- evacuate staff from the building or area involved,
- check that any staff or visitors with disabilities are assisted as planned,
- call the reporting centre and give details of the location, severity and cause of the fire, if known
- fight the fire if it is safe to do so,

When the evacuation signal is heard, the fire marshal should ensure that everyone leaves the area as quickly and orderly as possible, ensuring that security measures, such as closing fire-resistant safes, are undertaken, if this can be done without causing a significant delay in the evacuation procedure. Electrical equipment should also be turned off and windows shut if possible.

When the area for which the fire marshal is responsible has been evacuated, a rapid, methodical search should be undertaken to ensure that no-one remains in storerooms, toilets, and similar areas.

The marshal should then go to the assembly point and take part in the roll call procedure there. It will be the fire marshal's task to ensure that no-one re-enters before Kent Fire and Rescue Service gives permission.

All fire marshals have an important role to play in the fire risk assessment. Any changes to work practices or modifications to existing processes may introduce unforeseen problems. Similarly, changes in procedures may result in the introduction of additional sources of ignition or different types of combustible materials. Any hazards that may be perceived should be reported to the Operations Manager who should consider them, in the light of the fire risk assessment, at the earliest opportunity.

Appendix B

FIRE INSPECTION CHECKLIST

	Yes	No
Extinguishers		
1. Are all fire extinguishers present in their correct location?	[√]	[...]
2. Are all fire extinguishers hung or stand-mounted?	[√]	[...]
3. Do all fire extinguishers with pressure gauges show correct pressure?	[√]	[...]
4. Are all extinguishers free from signs of corrosion (incl. tap-test)?	[√]	[...]
5. Are all extinguishers within their annual inspection date?	[√]	[...]
6. Are all extinguishers unobscured, unobstructed and freely visible?	[√]	[...]
Escape routes and exits		
7. Are escape routes clear from stored materials and debris?	[√]	[...]
8. Are all internal fire doors closed (not wedged open)?	[√]	[...]
9. Are final exit doors clear and unobstructed on both sides?	[√]	[...]
10. Do final exit doors open easily?	[√]	[...]
11. Are external pathways from the exits away from the building clear?	[√]	[...]
Signs		
12. Are escape route signs clearly visible and legible?	[√]	[...]
13. Do signs indicate the nearest escape route from all workplaces?	[√]	[...]
14. Are internal fire doors labelled?	[√]	[...]
15. Do external fire doors have opening instructions shown?	[√]	[...]
Emergency lighting		
16. Are all emergency light indicators illuminated (if present)?	[√]	[...]
17. Are all covers, diffusers, etc. present and fitted?	[√]	[...]
18. Do emergency lights illuminate for a minimum of 10 minutes when the electricity supply is disconnected (must be done each month)?	[√]	[...]
Fire Alarm		
19. Is the alarm sounded weekly?	[√]	[...]
20. Do all break glass call points have covers / glass / plastic panel fitted?	[√]	[...]
21. Are all call points clearly visible and unobstructed?	[√]	[...]
22. Are signs present over each call point?	[√]	[...]

Comments / Action Required / Other fire safety items needing attention:

Signed:

Date:

Print Name.

Appendix C3

PERMIT TO WORK

Nature of work proposed:

Location of proposed work:

Type of work to be undertaken:

Details of any hot works:

The above location has been examined and the precautions listed on the attached form have been taken.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

Position:

Contractor (where applicable):

Agreement (To be completed by the Operations Manager or other nominated person)

This Permit is issued subject to the following conditions:

Time of issue of Permit:

Time of expiry of Permit*:

Additional conditions
required: _____

Signed:

Name:

Date:

Position:

Fire Watch

(To be completed by a member of staff or contractor responsible for the work before returning this permit to the Operations Manager.)

The work area and all adjacent areas to which sparks, and heat might have spread (such as floors below and above, and areas on other sides of walls) have been inspected and were found fire safe following completion of work.

Time Inspection Complete:

(This should be at least 1 hour after the work was completed)

Signed:	Name:
Date:	Position:

Contractor (where applicable):

*It is not desirable to issue permits for protracted periods. Fresh permits should be issued, for example, where work extends from morning to afternoon.

Please note:

Where work is being carried out by a contractor, the issuer of the permit should ensure that the contractor has complied with the requirements prior to the work being carried out and should be satisfied that the area is free of fire when the work is complete.

Appendix D

Fire Logbook

The Fire logbook should contain a copy of the Fire Risk Assessment and Fire Policy and should detail the following:

- Summary of checks and tests to be carried out by the occupier (local responsible person).
- Summary of checks and tests to be carried out by a competent person (e.g. service engineer).
- Forms for recording checks and tests carried out by the occupier
 - Fire alarm systems – Tests.
 - Unplanned activations of the fire alarm system.
 - Emergency lighting – Tests.
 - Fire extinguishers and hose reel inspections.
 - Emergency evacuations and drills
 - Staff fire training record
- Forms for recording checks and tests carried out by a competent person (e.g. service engineer)
 - Fire alarm system – Tests, repairs and servicing
 - Fire detection system – Tests, repairs and servicing
 - Emergency lighting tests and repairs
 - Fire extinguishers - record of tests, inspections, refills & repairs
 - Miscellaneous equipment – record of tests and repairs

The following checks will be undertaken. Full details will be recorded within the Fire Logbook which is overseen by the Operations Manager.

Fire Alarm System		
Alarm test	Weekly	<p>Operation of test switch and activation of system in accordance with manufacturers recommendations / instructions.</p> <p>Where call points (break glass) are installed, the alarm system should be tested each week by using a different call point in rotation (using test key).</p>

Emergency Lighting		
Emergency Lighting	Monthly	<p>Test the operation of the emergency light to ensure correct operation in accordance with manufacturers recommendations / guidance using the test key.</p>

Fire Fighting Equipment		
Fire extinguishers	Monthly	<p>Ensure extinguishers are in the correct location and that they have not been damaged or discharged.</p>

Fire Drills		
Fire drills	At least annually	<p>Full evacuation of the premises, in accordance with the building's local evacuation procedure. This may include evacuation to the outside or, where agreed, lateral evacuation within the building. In certain locations it is recommended that fire drills are undertaken at more regular intervals.</p> <p>We undertake drills that far exceed the statutory requirement.</p>

Fire training		
Training	Annually	<p>Employees should receive annual refresher training and/or instruction on what to do in the event of a fire.</p> <p>In addition, particular members of staff may require additional and more frequent training (e.g. those involved in Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans).</p>

Fire and Other Alarm Activations		
Fire	When identified	Must be recorded in this logbook and reported on the NCC Incident Report Form.
False alarms	When identified	Record in the logbook and arrange investigation.

Fire Alarm/Detection System		
Alarm system	Quarterly	Routine service.
	Annual	Annual service by engineer.
Call points (Break Glass)	Quarterly	25% per visit.
Heat detectors	Quarterly	Routine service.
	Annual	Annual service by engineer.
Smoke detectors	Quarterly	Routine service.
	Annual	Annual service by engineer.

Emergency Lighting		
Luminaires	6 monthly	Routine checks including alternating 1hr and 3 hr test.
Annual service	Annual	Annual service by engineer

Fire Fighting Equipment		
Fire extinguishers	Annual	Routine service by engineer.