



FIRE PREVENTION POLICY

September 2026

References

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, as amended
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Building Safety Act 2022, including amendments to the Fire Safety Order
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Department for Education – Fire Safety in New and Existing School Buildings
- Home Office – Fire Safety Risk Assessment: Educational Premises
- Building Bulletin 100: Design for Fire Safety in Schools, where applicable
- Southwark Council/ASSURE health and safety and fire safety guidance

Introduction

The prevention of fire is of vital importance. Most fires are caused by carelessness and ignorance. A high standard of fire consciousness will prevent this. It is the responsibility of all personnel to become conversant with these instructions.

Upon the outbreak of fire, the saving and preservation of life takes precedence over the salvaging of property. A member of staff's first and over-riding duty is of course to look after the children or persons under their charge and this will mean the evacuation of the building. No attempt should be made to fight fire until their safety is assured, and then without exposing any person to risk.

The school fire officer is the Premises Manager who is to be informed of all fires, no matter how small. A fire is not considered extinguished until such time as it has been inspected by the fire officer.

Responsible Person

Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (as amended), the Responsible Person is responsible for ensuring that appropriate fire safety arrangements are in place. For a maintained school, the employer/responsible body should be identified in accordance with the school's governance and employment arrangements. The Headteacher, School Business Manager and Premises Officer support the implementation and day-to-day management of the school's fire safety arrangements.

The school will ensure that any person appointed to undertake or assist with fire risk assessment and other specialist fire safety functions is competent, having sufficient training, knowledge and experience appropriate to the complexity of the premises and the task.

Fire risk assessments

Employers are responsible for ensuring appropriate fire precautions which include:

1. Appropriate fire detection and fire fighting equipment that is accessible and simple to use
2. Nominated employees to implement fire-fighting measures
3. Provision of adequate training and equipment for those appointed
4. Arrange for any necessary contacts with external emergency services
5. Provide adequate emergency escape facilities

In order to do this, employers should carry out risk assessments and revise them from time to time. It should identify any person especially at risk in a case of fire, i.e. a person who is deaf, blind or disabled etc.

The school's fire risk assessment will be recorded in full, together with the school's fire safety arrangements. Actions identified through the assessment will be recorded, allocated to an appropriate person and monitored through to completion.

The fire risk assessment will be reviewed regularly and whenever there is reason to believe it is no longer valid, including following significant alterations to the premises, significant changes in use or occupancy, changes affecting fire precautions, or following a fire or significant fire-related incident.

An emergency plan to evacuate the premises should be created providing for the calling of the fire brigade allocating individuals who are responsible for supervising, controlling and putting into effect the plan. Fire drills must be carried out in accordance with the emergency plan and modifications made. It is important that any actions arising from the fire risk assessment forms part of the overall health and safety policy for the school to ensure that the management of all health and safety risks are considered together.

There are no hard and fast rules about how the assessment should be carried out. The important thing is that it should both be practical and systematic to ensure that the whole of the workplace is examined, including every room or area, particularly any area not often in use.

Strategy for fire prevention

Management strategy for fire prevention may be classified as follows:

1. Everyday management and vigilance by staff to ensure that potential hazards are kept under control to prevent the occurrence of fire
2. Alarm, evacuation and emergency action backed up by notices, drills and practice to ensure that correct action is taken in the event of an outbreak of fire

A strategy should also include:

1. Planning for the actions to be taken in the event of fire:
 - Training of staff, including any specially delegated function
 - Provision of instruction to students
 - Display of appropriate fire instruction notices
2. Control of risks associated with activities or processes which may cause or adversely affect any outbreak of fire, e.g. process, storage, gas, electricity, contractors on site, vandalism
3. Check on existing structural precautions, and seeking further advice where there are thought to be deficiencies
4. Monitoring the effectiveness of precautions, e.g. analysis of evacuation drills, annual review, by checklist

Issue of general fire notice

The issue of general fire notices to staff will take place during induction. It is imperative that this document is issued and explained in detail to an employee in the same way as details of pay, work hours and holidays would be explained. This requirement applies to all staff.

Staff training

The fire officer is responsible for ensuring that all staff in the premises are trained in accordance with the requirements of the school. Every member of staff will receive

instruction in fire precautions during induction. This training will be recorded in the H&S Induction section of the Premises Folder, held by the Premises Officer.

After the initial instruction all members of staff will receive reminders in the annual H&S update session. Arrangements for fire training will be arranged by the Premises Officer and SBM.

Control of risks: Training of staff and instruction of students

Employees

1. The training of all employed persons forms an essential part of the school's fire precautions. The aim should be to ensure that all staff receive training in a basic appreciation of the risk of fire and the action to be taken in the event of fire, including instruction appropriate to their responsibilities in an emergency.
2. Instruction and training for all will include the following points:
 - a) the action to be taken upon discovering a fire
 - b) the action to be taken on hearing the fire alarm
 - c) the method of raising the alarm, including location of call points, use of internal telephone system and location of external telephone
 - d) the correct method of calling the fire brigade
 - e) the location and use of fire fighting equipment
 - f) knowledge of escape routes
 - g) evacuation method for the building, location of assembly point and method of accounting for persons
 - h) stopping machinery, activities and isolating power and fuel supplies where appropriate
 - i) appreciation of the importance of fire doors and the need to close all doors and windows at the time of a fire or on hearing the alarm

Students

Students should be instructed at the start of their attendance at the school to enable them to:

1. Identify the fire alarm
2. Know the action they should take on hearing the alarm
3. Know the location of the assembly points
4. Know what to do if not in a supervised group, in the event of fire

These points should be included on the fire notice, and reinforced during practice evacuations.

Fire drills

Fire drills will be carried out at least once in every term. The exercise will include a simulated evacuation drill with the assumption that one escape route is not available. Each exercise will be started by a predetermined signal, i.e. activating the fire alarm and the whole premises will be checked as if an emergency has arisen. This fire drill can be combined with the instruction given to staff. When a fire drill is held it will be recorded in the relevant section on CPOMS Staffsafe. All staff must participate in at least two drills per year.

Testing of fire alarm system

The fire alarm system will be tested weekly by the Premises Officer. A different call point for each test will be used and recorded in the relevant section of the Premises Folder.

Emergency lighting

The emergency lighting is to be examined weekly by the site manager. Any defects will be brought to the attention of the SBM immediately. This lighting will also be checked by an electrical contractor annually.

Emergency exits

All emergency exits are to be kept clear and free from obstruction at all times. It is the responsibility of the fire officer and the safety committee to ensure staff are fully aware of the contents of these instructions and know the location of all fire exits and the assembly point in the immediate vicinity.

Fire alarms

Types

1. Single stage electrical fire alarm - operated by breaking a glass release button

Alternative alarms

1. Should there be no official fire alarm in the vicinity, the person finding the fire is to raise the alarm by shouting, "Fire, fire, fire".
2. The fire alarm is to be raised no matter how small the fire.

Fire fighting equipment

Fire extinguishers

There should be the correct type of fire extinguisher at each 'Fire Point' dependant upon the location.

Fire blankets

Fire blankets held are classified as: light duty. Suitable for dealing with small fires in containers of cooking fat or oils and fires in clothing.

Fire instruction notices

Printed notices should be conspicuously displayed at all fire points stating concisely what staff and others should do if a fire is discovered or if they hear the alarm. The notices should be permanently fixed in position and suitably protected to prevent loss or defacement.

Fire prevention checks

Class teachers are to ensure that regular fire prevention checks are carried out for their areas.

Checks are to include:

1. Unnecessary lights/electrical appliances (TVs, videos, microwave ovens etc.) are to be switched off and where possible, unplugged.
2. Convactor heaters are to be inspected regularly.

A fire prevention check is to be carried out in all areas at the termination of the day's work prior to premises being vacated.

Housekeeping

Tidiness and cleanliness are essential fire prevention measures. The accumulation of rubbish and waste material is to be kept to a minimum; it is to be cleared away each day on the cessation of work and removed to a safe location outside and away from buildings for early disposal. Paint materials, used stencils, oily rags, oily overalls, etc. are subject to spontaneous ignition. Such items should be removed to a safe external location on cessation of work. If this is impractical they must be deposited in close-lidded, non-combustible containers, placed well away from stores and other combustible material. The storage or accumulation of combustible materials in roof voids, under stairs and similar spaces is forbidden.

Smoking

Smoking is one of the main causes of fire and for this reason it is prohibited in the school.

Refuse and rubbish

Refuse or rubbish must not be permitted to accumulate in or around the school. Disposal is to be undertaken at regular intervals at central collection points. Smouldering or burning refuse is not to be disposed of at refuse collection points.

Flammable materials

Flammable materials must be stored in secure fire proof cabinets.

Rubber is not to be stored with other flammable stores and is to be kept cool, dry and well ventilated.

Rubber is to be stored away from the rays of the sun.

Paints and solvents suitably marked are to be segregated in properly prepared stores, which are to be clearly signed.

The use of fire is strictly prohibited in all circumstances, except for controlled activities related to the teaching of the Great Fire of London, which may only take place with a completed and approved risk assessment.

Readily combustible materials such as paper, should be stored in designated areas where they will be secure against unauthorised entry. These areas must be free of sources of ignition, such as heaters and suspended lighting units.

Paper salvage collected for charity should not accumulate in areas open to vandalism.

Flammable liquids must be kept in purpose-built storerooms or cupboards provided with ventilation. All persons handling such material should be aware of the dangers.

Petrol storage

Petrol and other highly flammable liquids should not normally be stored within the school premises. Where their storage is necessary for operational purposes, quantities must be kept to the minimum reasonably practicable and stored in suitable approved containers and locations in accordance with current legislation, the fire risk assessment and COSHH requirements.

Electrical fires

Electrical fires are not to be used within the school unless they have been approved by the fire officer.

Electrical appliances

All electrical apparatus should be installed by an approved contractor, using the correctly rated fuse. If a fault occurs get it repaired before continuing. Electrical installations should be checked regularly as electrical faults are a major cause of accidental fires.

Electrical discharges from damaged or faulty appliances or wiring can ignite solid materials. This hazard can be minimised by good design, correctly sized equipment which is adequately protected for its working environment, and an effective inspection and maintenance programme.

The current running through electric wiring is a source of heat; and if a fault develops in the wiring that heat can become excessive and start a fire. Neglect and misuse of wiring and electrical appliances is one of the main causes of fire. Fuses or circuit breakers are incorporated in a system to protect against overloading in the event of defect

It may be permissible to run up to four items of equipment which draw low amounts of current, e.g. computer and monitor from a single socket outlet by a fixed plug connected to a purpose designed four socket outlet with an integral fuse. Careful location of the cable is essential. The unit should be removed when not in use.

When using electrical appliances, the following rules should be adhered to:

1. They are to be switched off and unplugged when not in use.
2. They are to be fitted with the correct plug for the socket provided. Plugs are to be undamaged.
3. Temporary wiring and extensions are not to be used.
4. Inspection lights are to be of an authorised pattern and fitted with a guard.
5. Electrical faults are to be reported immediately to the Premises Officer.
6. Fuses that have blown must only be replaced after establishing the cause for the blowing, with fuses of the correct rating.
7. A fuse should never be replaced with one of a higher rating.
8. Flexible cable to fittings should be as short as possible and should be inspected regularly and replaced if worn.
9. PAT testing will be undertaken yearly.
10. No personal electrical equipment should be used on the premises. If this is necessary, they must be PAT tested first.

Grass and undergrowth

Grass and undergrowth are to be kept cut well back from buildings.

Buildings used for entertainment

Premises are to have adequate means of escape in case of fire. These are to be clearly indicated and are to be unlocked and unobstructed. An adequate number of stewards or ushers are to be available.

Decorations are not to be put up without the advice of the fire officer; any decorations which increase the fire risk are prohibited.

Decorations are not to be pinned or wired to any form of electrical wiring.

Naked flame is not to be used as a means of illumination, however, if candles etc. are necessary for decor or stage productions they are to be fixed in candlesticks with a heavy

base and must not be so positioned as to present a fire hazard.

Any temporary staging is to be secure and is not to obstruct fire exits.

Supplementary wiring is only to be carried out by a qualified electrician and following consultation with the fire officer.

Special care is to be taken when tentage is used for entertainment or other exhibition purpose. Under no circumstances are tents or marquees to be directly attached to or sited within five metres of permanent buildings. If direct access from permanent buildings is required on an occasional basis, a covered walk way is to be provided. Particular care is to be taken in the provision of lighting and heating in tentage.

A sufficient number of fire appliances are to be available to deal with an outbreak of fire.

Adequate supervision of children's entertainment is essential. At parties and cinema shows sufficient personnel are to be available to act as marshals to control and evacuate the children to safety.

The fire officer is to be notified of any special occasions or celebrations involving extra decorations or any fire risks.

Kitchens

In order that losses by fire are kept to a minimum and that catering facilities are not jeopardised a high standard of fire precautions in kitchens is of paramount importance. Catering staff should be fire conscious and are to be trained in the action to be taken when a fire occurs.

The principal fire hazard in kitchens is the deep fryer and/or Bratt pan whether or not it is thermostatically controlled. Cooking oils and fats over-heating or boiling over, usually result in a fire which can rapidly involve the ceiling or fume extraction ducting. Fires in fryers and Bratt pans usually occur when they are left unattended or when used by unqualified persons. Catering staff are to adhere to the following fire precautions:

1. Deep fat fryers and Bratt pans are not to be left unattended when switched on. The appropriate fire precaution notice is to be prominently displayed.
2. After use and when oil has sufficiently cooled, deep fat fryers and Bratt pans should be drained and oil strained into a suitable container.
3. After repeated use of oil, a residue of food particles can build up and the danger of fire can become progressively higher.
4. Defects in cooking apparatus are to be reported immediately.
5. In the event of fire, electricity/gas supplies are to be switched off, preferably at the main switch or valve and appropriate action taken.

Putting out burning flammable liquid on clothes

If burning liquid is spilt on a person's clothes, he/she should immediately be made to lie down with the flames underneath and a fire blanket or convenient garment pressed on top.

Putting out gas fires

A fire extinguisher should not be used on a gas jet but only on residual fires which may be burning after the gas has ceased to flow.

Natural gas

If it is possible to approach, shut off the supply. The main gas cock may have to be used and it is clearly better if it is in the room.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)

The school will identify pupils, staff and regular visitors who may require assistance to evacuate safely in an emergency. Where necessary, an individual Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) will be prepared, communicated to the relevant staff and reviewed regularly and whenever the person's needs or circumstances change.

PEEPs will identify the assistance required, evacuation arrangements, appropriate escape routes and the persons responsible for providing assistance. Temporary needs, such as an injury affecting mobility, will also be considered.

Disabled persons

Special precautions may be required when disabled persons have access to a building. Where possible they should be located within a building so that they are able to evacuate with the minimum of assistance. This will normally mean location on the ground floor. However, consideration must be given to any steps or other changes of level which may need to be crossed.

Vandalism and damage limitation

Fire caused by vandals or persons breaking into a building intent on causing damage are a constant risk, and this type of fire is probably the greatest risk facing the school. Such fires are often started at night or during holidays, and result in extensive material damage, and disruption of students' education.

The opportunity for reducing such vandalism lies part in the long-term development of a good relationship with neighbours, and part in the security of the premises, by ensuring the windows and internal doors are properly secured when the building is unoccupied.

Combustible materials should not be left where they are immediately accessible to intruders, and flammable liquids, which may be used as accelerants should be stored securely.

Structural fire precautions incorporated to assist escape from buildings will also reduce the spread of fire. All fire and smoke doors should be closed when premises are vacated (closing of all doors and windows is recommended to limit spread of smoke damage).

Curtains, furnishings, art displays and decorations

Care should be taken when choosing curtains, furnishings and fittings. Inherent or tested fire-retardant materials should be used whenever possible.

Art displays and other decorations of a combustible nature can increase the spread of fire considerably.

Accordingly, the quantity and location of such displays is critical in reducing the fire loading.

1. Displays should not be placed on escape routes or block exits.
2. Sources of ignition, such as light bulbs should not be placed near the displays.
3. Expanded polystyrene and other plastics produce large amounts of toxic, black smoke and considerable heat. They should not be allowed on escape routes.
4. In corridors or on staircases, wall displays made from combustible material should be limited to 20 per cent of the available overall surface.

Fire Doors

Fire doors have at least one of two functions:

1. To protect escape routes from the effects of fire so that occupants can safely reach a final exit

2. To protect the contents and/or the structure of a building by limiting the spread of fire

Neither of the above functions will be satisfactorily undertaken unless the door is a good fit in the frame, the self-closing device is working efficiently and the door is not wedged or held open.

Even if a door is not a fire door it may reduce smoke and heat damage so at evenings and weekends all doors should be left in the closed position.

Visitors, contractors and out-of-hours users

Appropriate fire safety and evacuation information will be provided to visitors, contractors and organisations using the premises. Where the premises are let or used outside normal school hours, arrangements must ensure that those responsible for the activity understand the alarm, evacuation procedure, assembly point, means of calling the Fire and Rescue Service and arrangements for accounting for those present.

Building contractors bring a large number of ignition sources to the school. Tar boilers, blow lamps, welding equipment and liquefied petroleum gas bottles all give rise to a higher fire risk. Ensure that all contractors entering the premises are aware of the fire precaution measures and procedures, should a fire occur.

At the end of the day, no building materials should be left outside where vandals can use them to damage the premises.

The Premises Officer should be made aware when hot cutting work is to take place for both the safety of the students and the school.

Risk assessments will be undertaken and hot and cold work permits issued where necessary.

School grounds

- Access for emergency vehicles must be kept clear at all times.
- Combustible buildings must be sited away from the main building to avoid fire spread.

Cylinders of industrial and medical gases

Cylinders containing industrial and medical gases are to be treated as dangerous stores.

The most serious fire dangers presented by these gases are those of explosion and the rupturing and fragmentation of cylinders. Additionally, there is a danger to fire fighters of poisoning or asphyxiation from escaping gas.

Cylinders containing gases, whether flammable or non-flammable, are liable to rupture as a result of increased internal pressure and loss of tensile strength of the metal if the container and contents are heated. Oil and grease will ignite violently in the presence of oxygen, and if the latter is under pressure an explosion may result. Cylinders and fittings should be kept away from all sources of contamination such as oil etc.

Ignition of flammable gases can produce an explosive effect by the rapid expansion of heated gaseous products. Once a flammable concentration of gas and air has been reached a relatively small spark will be sufficient to cause ignition.

Where possible, compressed gas cylinders are to be stored in a separate detached building situated at least six metres from other buildings, roadways, footpaths etc. Such a structure should be sufficient to protect cylinders from the direct rays of the sun and should be

provided with adequate high and low level ventilation.

Where possible empty cylinders are to be kept separate from full ones. Notices are to be displayed denoting locations of empty or full cylinders.

When only a limited number of cylinders are in daily use (eg oxy-acetylene equipment on trolleys in workshops), the cylinders may be held within the building during non-working hours provided they are placed just inside a convenient door leading to open air and a suitable notice placed outside, in a prominent position near the approach to the floor to indicate "Warning - Industrial Gases Inside". The creation of this special hazard is to be discussed with the local fire officer and entered in the fire survey schedule of the risk, listing the building concerned.

Flammable gases are to be stored separately from oxygen, compressed air, nitrous oxide etc. They can be stored in the same building, separated by a non-combustible partition having a fire resistance of one hour. Acetylene cylinders are to be stored and secured in the upright position.

Smoking and the use of naked flame is to be prohibited within six metres of compressed gas stores – smoking is prohibited on the entire school site. Suitable warning notices are to be prominently displayed.

Cylinders associated with BCF, CO₂, dry powder, water (gas expelled) fire extinguishers are also to be classed as compressed gases liable to create a dangerous situation if heated in a fire and are to be stored accordingly.

Friction

Friction can start a fire in many ways. These include:

1. Overheating of bearings
2. Slipping drive belts
3. Overloading of machinery
4. The presence of any extraneous matter, particularly tramp metal, in fast moving machinery

Such causes can be minimised by using well-designed and correctly rated machinery and by attention to cleanliness, regular inspection, maintenance and adequate supervision.

Control methods

The quantity of high-risk fire risk material present in every part of the building should be known and controlled within stated limits. For this, accurate stock keeping, and maintenance of records are required.

Where necessary a system of sampling and quality control should be provided. This is particularly important where materials are heat sensitive or liable to deteriorate with time.

Housekeeping

Cleanliness and tidy working methods are essential in a building where high fire risk materials are kept. Cleaning schedules, preferably in writing, should be prepared for every part of the building and process. The schedule should identify who is to carry out the work, how often, the equipment they should use, the precautions they should observe and how waste material is disposed of.

The provision of clearly marked gangways, storage areas and waste containers immediately alongside places where scrap is produced will aid good housekeeping.

Arrangements should be made for the prompt removal and disposal of all defective or waste materials produced during plant operation. Waste containers provided should preferably be made of metal and have captive lids. Particular attention should be paid to the regular emptying of all such containers containing high fire risk materials. Safe storage arrangements should be made for keeping waste and recovered material for disposal. Maximum limits for the quantities to be kept should be stated.

All surfaces on which deposits can accumulate should be regularly cleaned. Particular attention should be paid to moving parts and hot surfaces. Systems of work should be provided for the safe cleaning of machinery, etc.

Monitoring and review

This policy was approved by the Governing Body in September 2026

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner following significant changes to the premises or its use, changes in legislation or guidance, a significant fire-related incident, or where the fire risk assessment identifies that changes are required.