



## FIRE SAFETY POLICY

### 1. Scope and Objectives

This guidance is applicable to all premises under the control of the School (“School premises”) and details the approach to the control of risk from fire. This is to ensure that risks from fire are identified and that arrangements are in place to control those risks, and to enable the School to comply with its duties under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and other education specific guidance.

### 2. General Statement

As far as reasonably practicable, all steps shall be taken by the School to prevent, or minimise the probability of, all causes of fire. The School acknowledges that despite these measures it cannot be assumed that fire will never break out. Systems are in place to deal with this eventuality, and these will be regularly scrutinised to ensure that they are adequate.

All staff shall be given suitable instruction in basic fire prevention measures. Any employees involved in processes or activities that give rise to special fire hazards shall be given appropriate training in avoidance of fire. Employees should report any concerns they have about fire hazards to a responsible person, so that the school can take the appropriate measures to eliminate the problem. The person responsible for the implementation of this policy is the School’s Fire Officer (currently the Facilities Manager).

In the event of fire, the safety of life shall override all other considerations, such as saving property and extinguishing the fire. If a fire is discovered, the alarm shall be raised immediately by the operation of a break glass. This should be the first action taken on discovery of any fire, however small. All employees are empowered to take this action if they believe there is a fire; no authority should be sought from any other person. It should be noted that the fire alarm system on the London Road sites has been programmed so that when activated a fire team is alerted immediately and the warning sirens will not activate for 3 minutes.

Responsibility for summoning the fire brigade is outlined in the procedures in this Fire Safety Policy. The School does not require persons to attempt to extinguish a fire, but extinguishing action may be taken if it is safe to do so.



### 3. Arrangements, Procedures and Controls

The School's management recognises its legal obligations to safeguard the safety of students, employees and visitors and from exposure to hazards associated with fire. We therefore undertake to put in place arrangements for the assessment of risks from fire and appropriate control measures to minimise the risks identified and prevent fire. These measures will include the following arrangements, procedures and controls:

- The school's fire risk assessments will be reviewed and updated annually
- Fire detection equipment which will be maintained and regularly inspected.
- Fire alarms, bells, will be tested weekly and tests recorded and be regularly serviced.
- Fire fighting equipment will be determined by the risk assessment and will be checked annually by a competent contractor and the service date recorded.
- Emergency lighting is provided where lighting would continue to be required in the event of a mains power failure (eg stairs, emergency exits), and is routinely tested, maintained and serviced and records retained.
- Emergency exit routes and signs to be kept clear at all times.
- Instruction and appropriate training will be given commensurate with the duties that staff are expected to undertake within this policy. Those allocated specific responsibilities, such as Fire Marshalls, are given additional training relevant to the role.
- Fire evacuation drills will be conducted at least termly.

The Fire Safety Policy should be considered alongside associated other policies including the Health and Safety Policy and the Risk Management & Assessment Policy.

### 4. Emergency Procedures

Written emergency instructions are provided, as detailed in the attached, covering procedures in the event of a fire or other evacuation such as in the event of a bomb warning. Notices are displayed in each building of the School premises detailing the action to take in the event of a fire and highlight the assembly point to evacuate to in an emergency.

The means of escape for all occupants of the school premises are clearly signed with pictograms. The means of escape will be regularly inspected by the Facilities 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 students there will be a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) in place, and visitors will be catered for when notified. This will include school events and events open to the public (such as in the Theatre). There are purpose-built lightweight stairway evacuation chairs which are specially designed for moving disabled people down stairs in an emergency and designated safe refuge points in specific locations, duly sign-posted.



The Fire Officer has responsibility for maintaining and ensuring the local implementation of the School fire procedures; for making and maintaining a 'fire map' of the School premises, showing places of high risk and the precautions put in place by the School. Copies of these maps are brought to the attention of all employees and others who may be affected by:-

- (a) posting a copy of the fire map on notice boards;
- (b) bringing the fire map to the attention of all employees, contractors and visitors, etc during training and site induction sessions;
- (c) providing at least one trained Fire Marshal in every building. All Fire Marshals are trained to provide "safety assistance" in the event of a fire and receive regular refresher training. Fire Marshals are identified for each site.

Teaching staff are responsible for escorting their students safely out of the buildings in silence and in an orderly fashion. A headcount should be conducted on arrival at the assembly point and anyone unaccounted for will be passed immediately to the School Executive who will ensure this information is passed to the Emergency Services.

## **5. Summoning the Fire Brigade**

The School Reception is staffed 8.00am to 4.30pm, a member of Executive is on duty 7.30am - 6.00pm and a member of the Caretaking Team 5.30am to 7.00pm during term time with students on the School premises. Opening hours in School holidays vary and are communicated accordingly but always with a member of Caretaking Team on site when the School is open. The master panels, located in the foyers of all buildings, show the location of all alarm call points.

Advance notice is always given of fire practices (notably to the School Reception, the Facilities Team and the School Executive). If the alarm goes off for any other reason the standing instruction is to summon the Fire and Emergency services.

The Facilities Team carry pagers connected to the fire panel which notify of any alarm; and two caretakers reside on site in School accommodation

## **6. Fire Risk Assessment**

All of the School premises will be subject to a fire risk assessment. The fire risk assessment will be reviewed and / or updated every year by a competent person or in the event of significant changes to the buildings or their usage. A copy of the fire risk assessment report will be available on site and employees' attention brought to any hazards found in the assessment.

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, including the Facilities Team and Fire Marshals to ensure that the walkways are kept clear of obstruction and tripping hazards.

## 7. Fire Prevention

The School takes all reasonable precautions to prevent a fire from breaking out (recognising oxygen, flammable materials and ignition are needed for fire to take place). Fire prevention is aimed at preventing one or more of these elements together and includes:

- Compliance at all times with relevant regulations on the storage, transportation, handling and disposal of flammable materials (including weapons and ammunition, hazardous substances etc);
- Regularly inspecting all the areas where there are potential sources of ignition and ensure that no flammable materials are stored close by;
- Maintaining awareness through training and refresher training;
- Consulting regularly with the Fire marshals;
- Including fire prevention and evacuation procedures during the induction process with all new starters; and
- Paying close attention to the activities of contractors as appropriate, particularly during maintenance and building works.

## 8. Records

Records of maintenance, tests and changes to the fire detection system are held by the Facilities Manager. This includes certificates for the installation and records of maintenance of alarms, detectors, emergency lighting and fire-fighting systems and equipment. Other records which are kept include: the fire risk assessment and its review; fire procedures and arrangements; training records; records of inspection of escape routes (as part of regular site inspections); and fire practice drills.

## 9. False Alarms and Improper Use of Fire Extinguishers

Improper use of firefighting equipment or the fire alarm must be reported to the Director of Finance and Operations. All staff and students should be aware that misuse of any equipment provided for the safety of others may result in disciplinary action being taken. Furthermore, abuse of these systems breaches Health & Safety Legislation and may be subject to prosecution.

## 10. Visitors & Contractors

Supervision and monitoring of visitors, including contractors will be carried out by the manager of the area concerned. Contractors undertaking “hot works” will be issued permits to work by the Facilities Manager specifying any controls required.



## **11. Lettings to Third Parties**

A copy of this policy and fire procedure will be made available to organisations that use any part of the school premises. Smoking is not permitted on any school premises. Organisations using the school premises must inform the school management of any potential fire risks arising from their activity and risk assessments will need to have been carried out. All electrical equipment must be tested by a competent person. Test certificates may be required prior to use.

The organiser of any letting should familiarise themselves with the fire procedure and ensure that those attending are aware of the action to be taken in the event of fire.

## **12. Fire Exits**

To ensure a safe evacuation in the event of a fire, all fire exits and stairways must be free of any obstruction.

## **13. Fire Training**

The Fire Officer is responsible for reviewing existing policies, procedures, and systems associated with fire safety. The Fire Officer is responsible for co-ordinating staff training. Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that their staff undertake training when required.

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; and action to take in the event of a bomb alert. Students will be informed of exits and escape routes. Fire Marshals will be trained in: emergency evacuation procedures; use of fire extinguishers; emergency procedures; and how to spot fire hazards. Fire Marshals are typically assigned to assist with the locations associated with their normal area of work.

Visitors and contractors are to be made aware of the policy procedures and assembly points in the event of an evacuation. For events with large numbers of attendees, such as open days, concerts an announcement will be made at the beginning of the event regarding evacuation arrangements.

## **14. Policy Review**

These arrangements will be reviewed at least annually and on any significant change in activities that take place on the premises. Improvements and alterations may be carried out, following advice from the Fire Prevention Officer, our insurers, or our safety advisors.



## 15. Employees Duties

Employees are reminded that they have a legal obligation under the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1992 to inform their manager of situations where they see serious and imminent danger to health and safety. They should also report any matters where they see a shortcoming in our arrangements for health and safety protection.



## FIRE PROCEDURE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY 07:00 – 18:00

- Raise the alarm by breaking the glass of the alarm point.
- Move away from any immediate danger.
- Close all doors and windows where possible and safe to do so.
- Turn off gas isolation valves where safe to do so
- Use fire fighting equipment if safe to do so.

If you hear the alarm:-

- Follow instructions of staff
- Commence evacuation in silence and assemble at the designated fire assembly point (the Fairfield for the London Road sites (including the Lovekyn Chapel) and in front of the two pavilion buildings at Ditton Field)
- Close doors and windows if safe to do so
- Turn off gas valves if safe to do so
- Turn off equipment and appliances that may pose a risk, if it is safe to do so

Do not:-

- Re-enter the building until “all clear” has been sounded
- Use the lift

At the Fire Assembly Point

- Assemble in silence and wait for the register to be called.
- Do not reoccupy the building until told to do so by a member of staff.



## EVENING AND EVENTS FIRE PROCEDURE

This procedure relates to performances held in the Hall, Studio and Theatre after 18:00

Prior to the performance:-

- The audience will be informed of the type of fire alarm to expect.
- The audience will be informed of the escape routes and where to assemble.

In the event of a fire:-

- Raise the alarm by breaking the glass of the alarm point.
- Move away from any immediate danger
- Leave the building by the nearest exit.

If you hear the alarm:-

- Follow instructions of staff
- Commence evacuation of the school and assemble in Caversham Road
- Turn off equipment and appliances that may pose a risk

Do not:-

- Re-enter the building until “all clear” has been sounded
- Use the lift



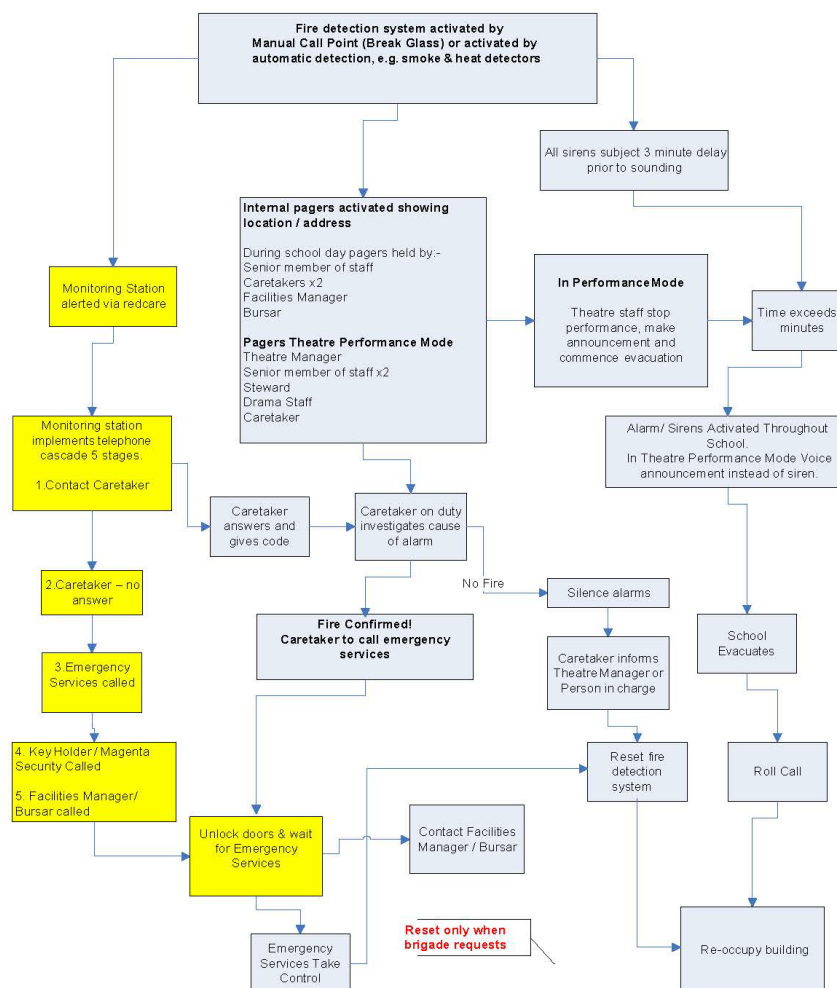


## FIRE TEAM

During the school day the fire team at the main site comprises of:-

- Head or Deputy Head or Director of Finance and Operations
- Caretakers x2
- Facilities Manager

Members of the Facilities team must have a Fire Pager. On activation of the alarm, fire team will be alerted immediately by the internal paging system. Details of the process are set out below:-





- An external monitoring station, in yellow, is automatically contacted as soon as the alarm is activated.
- School sirens are subject to a three-minute delay during which the cause is investigated

The Caretakers and Facilities Manager will attend the location where the alarm has been activated. If a fire is confirmed, they will contact the emergency services providing the following information.

- Name
- Contact Number
- Location of Fire, e.g. Fairfield Road, Ditton Field or London Road

In the event of a fire, without putting themselves at risk, the Fire Team are responsible for checking that the building has been evacuated. This includes refuge points in the QE2 building.

If the investigation shows that there is not a fire the fire panel will be silenced prior to the sirens sounding.

#### Fire Panels

There are four fire panels on the school premises in the following locations.

- London Road Entrance lobby
- QE2 Entrance corridor
- Fairfield Entrance corridor
- 100 London Road reception

The alarm can be silenced and re-set at any of these locations.

The fire panel in the Lovekyn (a separate system) is located in the Garden Room, off the side entry door; and at Ditton Field the panel is located in the refreshment/kitchen area on the ground floor of the main Pavilion Building.

#### Fire Control Points

The fire control points are located at the entrance to the Main Reception area at 70 London Road and in the reception area at 100 London Road. These locations will be attended by the Director of Finance and Operations, Head or their Deputy. For the Ditton Field site this is situated at the main Pavilion Building.

#### Evacuation

During the orderly evacuation corridors and fire exits will be supervised by members of staff.

Students must remain with at their assembly point. A register will be called. Students will be informed by a senior member of staff when it is safe to reoccupy the school.



#### AT THE CONTROL POINT:

A senior member of staff will take control as “Control Point Co-ordinator”. The purpose of this role is to co-ordinate the response to the alarm. In the event of a fire the Control Point Co-ordinator will check that the Fire Brigade has been called. If not, they will designate one person to do so. They will also meet the emergency services and direct them to the incident.

#### Theatre Events

During school theatre shows or school events the following staff will hold a fire marshal pager

- Theatre Manager
- Senior member of staff
- Stewards
- Drama Staff
- Caretaker

On activation of the alarm the theatre manager or person in charge of the theatre control room will stop the performance, turn on the theatre lights and announce the immediate evacuation of the theatre.

During external events the same process will be followed, and stewards will assist in the safe evacuation of the theatre.