

Fire Safety Policy and Evacuation Procedures

Applies to:

- The whole school along with all activities provided by the school, including those outside of the normal school hours;
- All staff (teaching and support), the Directors and volunteers working in the school.

Availability

- This policy is made available to parents, staff and pupils in the following ways: via the school website, and on request a copy may be obtained from the School Office.
- The Fire Safety Policy and Evacuation Procedures (available to staff on the school intranet), along with relevant procedural documents, are provided either in hard copy or electronically to all new employees and volunteers before commencing work at the school. They are required to state that they have read and understood such documents and confirm this by signing the Policies Register.

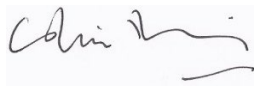
Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head.
- The Board of Directors undertake a formal annual review of this policy.

Signed:



Fraser Halliwell
Head
August 2023



Dr Colin Diggory
Chairman of the Board of Directors

1 Introduction

The Governing Body is very aware of the importance of fire safety. For this reason, the Fire Safety Policy has been formulated to be compliant with legal obligations to students, 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.

- 1.1 Radnor House Sevenoaks has established a Fire Safety Policy and Procedures, which are designed to protect pupils, staff and visitors and school assets. The effectiveness of these policies 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.
- 1.2 Compliance with fire safety policies and procedures is a legal requirement. All staff will have duties and responsibilities in respect of fire safety. Ultimate responsibility for this policy rests with employer. The school Board of Directors will look to the Head to ensure that the Fire Safety Policy and the Fire Safety Procedures are effectively applied and brought to the attention of their staff and are observed by them at all times. As with all matters relating to health and safety, the Leadership Team (LT) and Heads of Faculty have devolved responsibility for the application of this Fire Safety Policy.
- 1.3 The main objectives of our school Fire Safety Policy are:
 - to safeguard persons who may be affected by fire at any of the school premises;
 - to safeguard the physical assets of the school, its staff, pupils and visitors;
 - to reduce the incidence of fires;
 - to minimise the potential for fire to disrupt the work of the school;
 - to minimise the incidence of unwanted fire alarm signals and false alarms and
 - to protect the environment.
- 1.4 The Board of Directors has undertaken a fire risk assessment in accordance with the Fire Precautions Workplace Regulations 1997 (amended 1999). The Estates Manager ensures compliance and this is viewed as a minimum standard to be achieved. The Head ensures, on behalf of the Board of Directors, any further modifications required as a result of changes in legislation or established best practice are approved by the local fire authority. In accordance with legislation, there is an annual Health and Safety Fire Risk Assessment carried out by Charter Health and Safety Solutions, an external contractor. Additionally there is external fire safety training.
- 1.5 In compliance with both regulations and best practice, the Board of Directors have ensured that:
 - all fire call points are identified and weekly call point tests (different call point every week) undertaken and recorded;
 - adequate and suitable fire extinguishing appliances are provided and maintained;
 - suitable means of fire detection and signaling of the presence of fire is provided and maintained;
 - adequate means of escape are provided and maintained;
 - suitable signs designating firefighting equipment and means of escape are provided and maintained;
 - a fire logbook is provided and maintained;
 - fire training is provided to employees;
 - evacuation drills are undertaken at all the school's premises termly and the results recorded;
 - suitable fire procedures are published in respect of:
 - I. action to be taken on discovering a fire.
 - II. action to be taken on hearing the alarm.
 - III. responsibility of key personnel in the event of a fire.

2 The Management of Fire Safety

- 2.1 The Head, Estates Manager and Premises Manager (PM) who is also the Chief Fire Marshall are responsible for the

on-going management and maintenance of fire safety arrangements within the areas that come under their control. This includes:

- ensuring that appropriate training for those assisting in evacuations;
- ensuring that all staff, pupils, contractors and visitors are made aware of basic fire safety procedures;
- ensuring that day and where required, evening fire emergency practices or fire drills are carried out each school term, to familiarise staff, pupils and other users of the school with the school evacuation procedures in the event of a fire emergency;
- ensuring that all means of escape are kept clear of obstructions, and free of combustible material and any potential sources of ignition;
- ensuring that good standards of housekeeping are maintained at all times;
- ensuring that all statutory instructions relating to fire doors are observed;
- reporting any defects with the fire alarm system, emergency lighting, fire doors, portable fire extinguishers or fire signs, etc. to the appropriate persons; and
- reporting any incidents of fire.

2.2 Emergency Contact: A pro-forma for emergency contact telephone numbers is issued to parents at the beginning of each academic year and this is to be completed and returned to the School Office. Notification of any change to these details must be reported to the School Office. Every employee at the school has been asked to complete a form giving details of next of kin, emergency contact numbers, and relevant details about medication. If they do not wish to do this, a disclaimer must be signed. Were there ever to be a disaster or crisis affecting the staff and/or pupils of the School, there would be need for easy access to certain data. It would also be essential for considered procedures to be pre-determined to avoid the risk of ill-considered action being taken during a time of stress. The management of the school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan agreed with Board of Directors.

2.3 The primary aim of our Fire Safety Policy is to safeguard life and to this end the Head and the Board of Directors assume this responsibility. Policies and procedures are available for all staff who are required to be familiar with and apply them.

2.4 Advice is taken from the Fire Brigade inspector and appropriate specialist advisors. A Fire Risk Assessment, and inspections of the fire equipment and lighting, are conducted annually. Problems are noted, prioritized and acted upon appropriately.

2.5 Outside teachers, visitors and contractors are required to take note of and follow our emergency procedures.

2.6 Public events are assessed for all risks, including fire.

2.7 Fire Drills are held regularly, once a term and timed. Records of fire drills are kept in the Logbook in Senior School Reception

3 Evacuations, Fire Precautions and Fire Drills: General information

3.1 Every room has prominently displayed clear notices describing the action to be taken. Fire doors are clearly labelled and unlocked. Escape routes are clearly labelled and lead to a safe assembly point. Clear and prominent signage directs visitors to the nearest evacuation route. Locations of fire extinguishers are made known to staff.

3.2 All staff and pupils are instructed on action to be taken in the event of an emergency.

3.3 The Chief Fire Marshall checks that areas are evacuated and is on hand to assist those with a disability. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) are created as part of the fire strategy and consider the needs of the disabled persons using the building, the building design and construction, the fire strategy, and the local fire procedures.

- 3.4 Arrangements are in place for summoning the Fire Brigade.
- 3.5 The designated assembly point is at a safe distance from the building and not on a route which may be used by the emergency services.
- 3.6 A roll call is taken using class registers, InVentry is used for staff and visitors and the pupils signing in and out book.
- 3.7 The alarm system is tested weekly and is audible in every part of the premises.
- 3.8 The alarm is never switched off and is routinely serviced.
- 3.9 All the fire fighting equipment is recommended by the Fire Services and checked on a regular basis.
- 3.10 Electrical equipment is regularly checked and maintained by an approved electrical contractor.
- 3.11 Regulations concerning the control and storage of flammable liquids are followed.
- 3.12 All appropriate risk assessments are in place and checked by the Fire Marshall and Estates Manager.
- 3.13 Fire-fighting equipment is regularly serviced and clearly labelled. Signage is regularly checked and updated in line with current legal requirements. There is a fire drill/emergency evacuation procedure every term. Neither staff nor pupils are warned of an impending practice. It is essential, therefore, that each member of staff is aware of what the evacuation arrangements are for each area of the school. These are detailed in this document. In case of a fire or bomb threat, evacuation procedures will be tested each term. The evacuation and safety of visitors and contractors will be the responsibility of the person who they are visiting or working for.
- 3.14 The school carries out an annual fire safety audit which includes checking all firefighting equipment by an approved contractor and records maintained. The fire alarm is tested weekly from different points when the site is not in use and records maintained. All emergency lighting is tested monthly and records maintained. Additional more thorough inspections are conducted on an annual basis by a third party supplier.

4 Responsibility of Staff

- 4.1 The effectiveness of the Fire Safety Policy depends on the full co-operation of every member of staff, without exception. Co-operation is encouraged from the highest level. Complying with the fire safety procedures is regarded as a basic duty by all the staff and an essential obligation for all staff with management responsibility. The Head is responsible for coordinating the fire evacuation of all school buildings in the event of a fire emergency, or if he/she is not present then the Head of Senior School or Deputy Head, Academic carries out this role.

5 The Chief Fire Marshall and Maintenance of Systems

- 5.1 Fire Marshall training includes:
- How and when to check areas to ensure that people have evacuated;
 - An overview of the school's emergency plan including the role of those assisting in evacuations;
 - The location of the 'Control' and 'Assembly' Points;
 - Understanding of the fire detection and alarm system and the fire equipment available;

- Reporting procedures for non-compliant issues.

- 5.2 The Chief Fire Marshall is responsible for the weekly testing of all fire alarm systems within the school's buildings.
- 5.3 The Chief Fire Marshall is responsible for ensuring the on-going maintenance of all the school's fire alarm systems, within the school buildings.
- 5.4 The Fire Marshall has the following tasks
- In the event of a fire alarm, to call/liase with the Fire services and Southern Monitoring Company as appropriate.
 - To ensure that all occupants of a building evacuate the building in an orderly manner using the recognised evacuation routes.
 - To assist with the control of pupils, staff and visitors in the fire assembly area.
 - If there has been a false alarm, the Fire Brigade will decide when to silence all fire panels and re-enter the building.
 - To report faulty firefighting and fire detection equipment to the Head.
 - To make recommendations to improve fire safety.
- 5.5 The Chief Fire Marshall will ensure that appropriate procedures are in place for ensuring that safety precautions are properly managed, formulated and disseminated to all staff. These procedures include fire drills and the use of fire extinguishers. A copy of the school evacuation procedure is available in all key areas. There is one exit door from each room and on leaving the room the exit routes are clearly displayed. All staff, visitors and volunteers should be fully conversant with the evacuation procedures in the case of a fire/bomb threat.
- 5.6 The following arrangements have been made for maintenance:

Frequency	Item	By whom
On-going	Check signage, safety clips on fire extinguishers, ensure that fire doors are not wedged open.	Premises Manager
Weekly	Test fire panels on Wednesday (or a specified other day) between 0700 –0730.	Premises Manager
Termly	Test fire panels and devices.	External Contractor
Half yearly & Annually	Test all fire extinguishers, check all fire blankets, service Ansul Suppression systems, deep clean	External Contractor

6 Smoking

- 6.1 Smoking can be a major source of fires. Smoking on the school's premises is prohibited.

7 Training

- 7.1 The Estates Manager arranges annual general fire awareness training for all staff in INSET in September. Fire Marshal training is carried out every 24 months for the appropriate staff

8 Practice Evacuation

- 8.1 There is a practice evacuation (fire drill) each term. There will be at least one whole-school evacuation each term. The aim of the practices is to familiarise pupils and staff with evacuation procedures. A full evacuation is considered successful when a building is evacuated within 5 minutes.
- 8.2 The Chief Fire Marshall (or designated deputy) activates the alarm through the fire panel and monitors the time

it takes to evacuate the buildings. These details along with call point activation ID are recorded in the 'Fire Logbook' located in Senior Reception and also passed to the Estates Manager for record keeping purposes.

- 8.3 The school has an Emergency Evacuation Plan: see Section 12 below.

9 Hazards, level of risk, records and review

- 9.1 Sources of ignition: these include: electrical sockets and equipment; maintenance; items covered under COSHH; and specific rooms such as science laboratories, boiler house, workshops and kitchens. These areas are kept under review to minimise risk, and to ensure that there are few chances of mechanically generated sparks. Contractors are supervised and have to comply with both CDM regulations and school policies in relation to Fire Safety, and Health and Safety.

Sources of fuel: mains, gas and electric: their maintenance is monitored and kept under continual review.

Sources of oxygen: doors are kept shut to reduce the levels of draft (an accelerant) and slow the spread of fire; there are no stored oxygen containers on site. All doors are fire doors and must not be wedged open.

- 9.2 Evaluation of risk: the overall evaluation of the risk of a fire starting is assessed as low because there are few ignition sources and combustible materials are kept away from them. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the school premises or the entrance area. Electrical equipment is inspected regularly and tested, and the chance of arson is assessed as low due to the security arrangements of the school.
- 9.3 Reduction of fire hazards. all adults are briefed on induction and annually on the importance of good housekeeping to prevent the build-up of combustible material.
- 9.4 Reduction of risk to people: detection and warning. The premises are well protected with fire detection equipment, emergency lighting and warning sounders. It is school policy not to fight fire other than to ensure a safe evacuation.

10 Bomb Threats and Hoax Calls

- 10.1 The aim is to prevent bomb or incendiary attacks or, when this is not possible, to minimise their effects in buildings to which employees, pupils, parents, contractors or visitors may have access. This must be done without imposing unacceptable restrictions on them and the Board of Directors must weigh the seriousness of the threat against the need to maintain business as usual and decide the extent to which counter measures should be adopted.
- 10.2 Package Bombs and Hoaxes: postal bombs are unlikely to be in large parcels, rather in flat packages. Staff should be on their guard for:
- The post mark – especially foreign, and any name/address of sender.
 - The writing – especially of foreign style.
 - Stains – these could be sweating explosives.
 - The smell – usually an aroma of marzipan or almonds indicate an explosive.
 - The sound – if the parcel rattles, ticks, etc.
- 10.3 Telephone Calls: these are more of a common occurrence than parcels. All members of staff should be aware of the necessary procedures should they receive such a call:
- Alert Head/Estates Manager/police immediately.
 - Above all, be calm, listen carefully, and report exactly what is said.

11 Prevention of Arson

- 11.1 Arsonists in schools often start their first fires by chance. There is no planning, no organisation. Having got inside, they can't find too much to steal, they have matches in their pocket, they see the waste paper bin and they start a fire. It all happens by chance. This chance element in arson makes some people believe that arson is the hardest of all the security risks control.
- 11.2 Arsonists do not normally bring the method of starting the fire into the school – they are reliant on finding scrap paper, etc., in the school to start the fire. There are few instances of arsonists seemingly tearing up books, etc. In order to create the blaze – they look for loose paper on desks, in waste bins, etc.
- 11.3 The school policy on arson prevention is therefore: as far as is practicable inflammable materials are locked away; all waste bins are emptied; the Head makes occasional unannounced checks that the procedure is being adhered to.

12 Procedures for Evacuation

- 12.1 The Chief Fire Marshall (or designated deputy) will locate the zone in the school which has triggered the alarm and, if necessary, summon the fire services.
- 12.2 If feasible and safe, the Chief Fire Marshall will orchestrate a sweep of the area/building concerned.
- 12.3 Report the situation to the Head and Estates Manager if there is a suspected fire.
- 12.4 Update the member of staff in charge (either the Head or Estates Manager (or designated deputy) either advising that there is no fire and that the buildings can be re-entered or that the evacuation remains in place.
- 12.5 Wait for the arrival of the Fire Brigade at the front of the school.
- 12.6 Inform the Estates Manager of the evacuation the next working day if there was no fire.
- 12.7 Members of staff (or an appointed assistant) will:
- Ensure all pupils and visitors re-locate immediately to the designated assembly point
 - Check that the area they have been using has been cleared of pupils and visitors
 - Go to the designated assembly point and wait for the Fire Marshall in attendance
- 12.8 If there is a fire or if the Fire Brigade have attended the premises, the member of staff in charge will decide whether or not to send pupils home and will make specific arrangements for this.
- 12.9 If the Chief Fire Marshall or Fire Brigade confirms that it is safe to return to the school buildings, the member of staff in charge will give the instruction to pupils and member of staff assembled.
- 12.10 All cleaners and other member of staff working in school will:
- Evacuate the buildings by the nearest exit and assemble at the assembly point
 - Report to the Fire Marshall.
- 12.11 During the school holidays, members of staff are required to sign in/out at reception using the InVentry System. The InVentry System will be used by the Chief Fire Marshal, or designated deputy.
- 12.13 In the event of casualties, these will be looked after initially by the designated first aid persons. Any incidents will be recorded in the incident book.
- 12.14 Evacuation drills are carried out once a term. The first drill should be carried out as soon as the new school year begins so that all new pupils and staff are aware of the procedures.

12.15 Emergency Evacuation after 16.00 or Out of School Term: In the event of the fire alarm sounding after school hours or during the holiday, all persons in the school should assemble at the assembly point.

12.16 For large after school events (for example those hosted in the Senior School Hall , Prep School Hall, Sports Centre and Performing Arts Building where the number of visitors make it not possible for a member of staff to personally escort visitors out of the building, the member of staff in charge will make an announcement prior to the start of the event, informing visitors of the nearest escape routes and the location of the assembly point (see Appendix - public performance announcement for after school events). The member of staff in charge will designate either themselves or another member of staff as Fire Marshall in attendance (subject to availability, this will be a member of the Premises team).

13 Public announcement for after-school events

13.1 To comply with the school's fire emergency evacuation plan, staff organising any public event on site are required to give the following emergency evacuation guidelines:

- what the fire alarm sounds like (an intermittent sound)
- the need to evacuate calmly via the nearest fire exit in the event of the alarm sounding
- the location of the nearest fire exits
- where the designated assembly points are and how to get there
- remind visitors not to enter/re-enter a school building until the Fire Marshall has advised that it is safe to do so.

13.2 Members of staff hosting an event are responsible for managing their event and any subsequent evacuation. This must include the sweeping of the premises to ensure that the areas they have been using have been evacuated. Guidance to all such staff should be provided by the Chief Fire Marshall.

Appendix A : Fire Risk Assessment

The Fire Risk Assessment for the school is carried out every Autumn by an external contractor, Fire Safe Solutions.

A hard copy of the Risk Assessment is held by the Premises Manager and the Estates Manager.