



Fire Safety Policy

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1 Related Information

1.1 Availability of Statutory Policies

All statutory policies are available on the schools' websites.

1.2 Regulatory Guidance

This statutory policy has been reviewed in accordance with the following Independent School Inspectorate guidance on Compliance Inspection:

Part 3, Paragraph 12. The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

Fire Prevention Requirements

The regulations require **a fire risk assessment** (formally recorded and regularly reviewed so as to keep it up to date) and place on the proprietor or governing body additional duties to:

- produce a fire risk (prevention) policy which includes the elimination or reduction of risks from dangerous substances;
- develop and implement fire procedures and provide staff training (repeated periodically where appropriate);
- ensure the safety of staff or anyone else legally on the school premises;
- carry out fire drills and contact emergency services when necessary;
- appoint one or more competent persons (with sufficient training, experience and knowledge) to assist in taking preventive and protective measures (including firefighting and evacuation);
- have a suitable system for the provision and maintenance of: clear emergency routes and exits (with doors normally opening in the direction of escape), signs, notices, emergency lighting where required, fire detectors, alarms and extinguishers; the maintenance should be by a 'competent person' (for example, ISO9001 certified or BAFE approved);
- provide staff and any others working on the school site with fire safety information.

1.3 Supporting Documents

The following related information is referred to in this policy:

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RR(FS)O)
Emergency Evacuation Policy (Examinations)
Fire Evacuation Procedure
First Aid & Accident Reporting Guidance
Health and Safety Policy

1.4 Terminology

School means Haberdashers' Boys' School and/or Haberdashers' Girls' School which are operated by Haberdashers' Aske's Elstree Schools Limited, the Schools Trustee of Haberdashers' Aske's Charity.

Student or **Students** can reflect anyone in the school at any age.

2 Introduction

The School is committed to ensuring, so far as reasonably practicable, that all staff, students, contractors and visitors are protected from the risks of fire whilst on the premises.

2.1 Legal Requirements

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO) places a greater emphasis on fire prevention, requiring all persons responsible for the premises to comply with statutory duties and implement appropriate fire safety measures. This policy outlines how the School ensures compliance with the RRFSO by preventing fires where possible and effectively managing fire risks to protect all individuals from harm.

3 Responsibilities

The Fire Safety Policy forms part of the School's Health and Safety Policy. Specific responsibilities assigned are as follows:

- **Governors:** To ensure that an appropriate fire safety policy is in place and that effective arrangements are made for its implementation
- **Director of Estate Development:** To hold overall responsibility for the implementation and management of this policy who has the necessary skills and experience to undertake the role.
- **All Employees:** To have a duty to cooperate in maintaining a fire-safe environment. They must ensure that their actions do not compromise fire safety and must not engage in any activity that places themselves or others at risk.

4 Managing Fire Safety

4.1 Responsibility

The School has delegated day to day responsibility for managing fire safety to the Director of Estate Development who will:

- Ensure that all means of escape are properly maintained, kept free from obstruction at all times, and available for safe and effective use. This includes ensuring that escape routes have adequate emergency lighting.
- Provide and maintain all firefighting appliances and devices including:
 - Fire detection and alarm systems
 - Emergency lighting systems
 - Firefighting equipment
 - Notices and signage relating to fire procedures
 - Means of escape, considering the needs of any disabled users
- Arrange for fire safety risk assessments to be conducted to ensure compliance and reduce the risk of fire.
- Provide appropriate instruction and training for all School staff on fire safety procedures, including regular fire evacuation practices.

- Ensure that staff, students, contractors and visitors are aware of and comply with the School's fire procedures.
- Identify special risks such as the storage of hazardous materials and implement procedures to minimise these risks.
- Liaise with third parties, emergency services, and the School's insurers to ensure best practices in fire prevention and procedures is in place.
- Regularly monitor and review this policy to address any emerging risks or changes in legislation.

4.2 Monitoring

The School engages various external personnel to support the effective monitoring and management of fire safety responsibilities:

- The School's fire detection and alarm systems are maintained and inspected by an external contractor on a quarterly basis. The alarm sounders are tested on a weekly basis by the estates team.
- The School's emergency lighting is inspected annually by an appropriately qualified engineer.
- Fire safety notices and signage are updated as and when required
- Firefighting equipment is replenished or replaced annually by an external contractor.
- A file repository which contains records of fire safety issues is maintained by the Director of Estate Development and contains:
 - Records of fire drills
 - Inspection and testing of fire detection and alarm systems
 - Servicing and replacement of firefighting equipment
 - Records of external fire risk assessments
 - Staff training records.

5 Fire Procedures

5.1 Briefing New Staff and Students

All new staff and students are briefed on the School's emergency evacuation procedures including actions to take upon discovering a fire and the locations of the assembly points. This briefing is delivered by staff mentors, Heads of Departments or form tutors as appropriate. Fire action notices are prominently displayed around the school.

The safe evacuation of everyone is the School's priority. No one should attempt to fight a fire at the expense of their own or anyone else's safety. The School provides fire awareness training to its staff. In addition, key members of staff have undertaken fire marshal training including the use of fire extinguishers.

5.2 Responsibilities of Staff

The school operates two fire alarm systems, one for the Boys' School and one for the Girls' School. In the event of discovering a fire, it is the responsibility of the person making the discovery to raise the alarm immediately. No action should be taken to contain the fire using local appliances until the alarm has been sounded.

Staff who have students in their care should ensure that all students evacuate the building and visually check the surrounding areas to confirm areas are clear.

- Staff should ideally position themselves at the back of the line to account for any stragglers.
- Staff do not need to go in any other direction other than towards the nearest exit.
- Staff should insist upon silence as all students and staff proceed to the assembly area
- Teaching staff should arrange the students in the appropriate section of the assembly area:
 - **Boys' School:** Students should line up in teaching groups during lesson time and in form groups outside of lesson time
 - **Girls' School:** Students should line up in forms/classes
- All staff without students at the time of the alarm should assemble in silence in the designated area and await further instructions.

The relevant Head of Department responsible for the engagement of contractors must ensure that all contractors are briefed on fire evacuation drills. Basic fire evacuation instructions are also provided in visitor leaflets.

Trained staff will identify the location of the possible fire and inform the team to sweep the affected area.

As soon as the location of the fire is known and/or it is determined there is no danger, this information will be relayed to the person in charge of the assembly area via radio.

All staff with a radio assigned to them must ensure they take it with them during evacuation.

The executive decision to return to School buildings and resume routine activities will be made by in order of priority:

- Director of Estate Development
- Duty caretaker
- Member of SLT or a responsible person to whom this duty has been delegated (e.g., when SLT are off site).

5.3 Special Arrangements for Science Laboratories

Departments with higher risk activities have specific emergency procedures in the event of fire. Please refer to departmental local management arrangements for detailed information.

5.4 Fire Practice

It is the School's policy to conduct termly fire practices at unspecified times. The timing of these practices is recorded, and details are maintained by the Director of Estate Development. Following a practice, feedback is collected, and any issues are discussed at the next health and safety committee meeting if appropriate.

If the evacuation of a building takes longer than is considered reasonable due to inherent site challenges, additional practices will be scheduled until satisfactory result are achieved.

Fire alarm equipment is tested and serviced at appropriate intervals to ensure its reliability.

5.5 Summoning the Fire and Emergency Services

Caretaking staff must immediately assess if the alarm is a false alarm or the result of a fire. If there is any uncertainty, the default assumption is to assume there is a fire and act accordingly. Caretakers must confirm the source of the fire and communicate this information over the radio, ensuring that both the Security Huts and Senior Leadership are informed. If a fire is confirmed, the Fire and Emergency Service must be summoned immediately.

The Duty Caretaker (or their nominated deputy during periods of absence) is responsible for informing the Security Huts that the fire alarm has been activated. Security Huts should close the site to visitors pending the 'all clear' instruction.

If the Fire and Emergency Services have been summoned, the person summoning the Fire and Emergency Service must inform staff at the Security Huts of the following details:

- Location of the fire
- Emergency services that have been requested
- Location of the Incident Control Point (ICP)
- Member of staff i/c the ICP to whom the emergency services should report. The member of staff i/c the ICP should ensure wherever possible they have a "grand master" key set for use by the emergency services if required.

Staff at the Security Huts are to direct emergency services to the incident and person i/c the ICP.

The fire alarm should not be turned off unless it is confirmed beyond doubt that there is no danger. In the event of a false alarm the evacuation of that zone should proceed as a drill. The Duty Caretaker is to be notified if it is confirmed there is a false alarm.

The decision to return to the School buildings and resume normal activities will follow the process outlined in [Section 5.2](#), in order of priority.

5.6 Arrangements for Public Examination Students and Staff

The arrangements for Students and staff during public examinations are outlined in the Emergency Evacuation Policy (Examinations).

5.7 Prep and Pre-Prep Students on the Senior School Site (Boys' School)

Prep School and Pre-Prep School students participating in activities on the Senior School site (e.g. music and swimming) must evacuate and assemble under the direction of their teacher following the Senior School's evacuation procedures or arrangements as agreed with SLT and the Site Manager.

5.8 Fire Prevention Procedures

The following fire prevention measures are in place:

5.8.1 *Escape Routes and Emergency Exits*

- Fire notices and evacuation signs are displayed prominently in each building.
- Fire extinguishers and appropriate detectors are located in accordance with recommendations of professional advisors. The alarm can be manually activated by

breaking a glass panel on the fire alarm and automatically activated when smoke or heat is detected.

- Automatic door closers that are activated by the fire alarms, are fitted on doors in or leading onto escape routes.
- Escape routes and exits are kept clear at all times. The Duty Caretaker is responsible for unlocking the buildings in the morning, removing bolts, padlocks and security devices from all emergency exits, checking that escape routes are unobstructed and ensuring the emergency lights work. Any defects are reported promptly.
- All fire alarms are tested weekly by the estates team.
- Fire alarm systems are serviced regularly by an approved contractor.
- An annual fire risk assessment is conducted for the whole school.
- Records of all tests and inspections and services are maintained by the Site Manager at the Boys' and Girls' School.

6 Visitors, Contractors and Hirers

All visitors and contractors are required to sign in at Reception. Upon arrival, they are provided with a visitor's badge which should be worn at all times that they are on School property. They will also receive instructions on the School's emergency evacuation procedures. Visitors are generally accompanied or supervised at all times while on the premises.

On occasions when maintenance or construction staffs are working unaccompanied, they are given an induction talk for their area of work on fire safety.

It is the responsibility of staff hosting visitors to ensure that they are familiar with the School's emergency evacuation procedures and to escort them to the appropriate fire assembly point. As part of the School's Selecting and Managing of Contractors Policy, contractors must be made aware of the emergency evacuation alarms and procedures before commencing work.

For events with large numbers of visitors, such as Open Days, plays, concerts, or other public gatherings, modified fire evacuation procedures will be in place.

A brief announcement should be made at the start of the event if appropriate. This announcement should advise visitors of the location of emergency exits and the designated assembly area in the event of the alarms sounding.

7 Fire Risk Assessment

The School carries out annual comprehensive fire risk assessments for each of its buildings. These assessments may be conducted by an external consultant or by a competent person such as the Director of Estate Development who is designated as the competent person for fire safety. The Director of Estate Management will liaise with the Maintenance Manager to review the recommendations and plan remedial works.

Where possible, fire hazards are eliminated, and risks are reduced to the lowest practicable level through the implementation of control measures and safe systems of work.

Regular inspections will be conducted by the Site Managers and Maintenance Manager to ensure the following:

- Fire extinguishers are in place and not tampered with

- Fire escape routes are kept clear and free from flammable materials
- Fire doors are all fully self-closing
- Fire escape stairs are kept free of slipping or tripping hazards
- Security measures against arson are maintained
- Any evidence of smoking is reported to the Director of Estate Management.

8 Fire Detection

The School is equipped with adequate fire detection systems. The systems are maintained and regularly checked by competent persons to ensure their reliability and effectiveness.

9 Fire Alarm

- The School has a reliable means of raising the alarm in the event of fire.
- The fire alarm systems are regularly tested, and records are kept by the Site Managers.
- The fire alarm system is serviced twice a year by a competent contractor.
- Servicing records are maintained in a fire logbook which is held by the Site Manager's at the Boys' and Girls' School.

10 Fire Fighting Equipment

- Fire Fighting equipment should be used primarily to aid escape. Staff and students are not expected to fight fires. Fire extinguisher training is provided to the Estates teams and other staff including some science technicians.
- Fire extinguishers and other fire suppressant systems are serviced regularly by a competent contractor

11 Emergency Lighting

- Emergency lighting is installed throughout the School buildings in areas where lighting is necessary in the event of a mains power failure, e.g. stairs, passageways and emergency exits.
- Battery operated emergency lighting is tested monthly, quarterly or annually based on the risk assessment for each building. This includes charge and illumination with an annual full discharge test.
- Records of all testing and servicing of emergency lights are maintained by the Maintenance Manager.

12 Fire Safety Training

All staff will undergo annual refresher training which covers the following key areas:

- Risks of fires occurring and spreading.
- 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.

Estates staff and science technicians receive additional specific fire extinguisher training.

Students are given instructions by their form tutors during their first week of term, outlining the actions to be taken in the event of fire.

13 Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)

A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) should be in place for any member of staff, student or visitor who has a temporary or permanent impairment that may impact on them being able to evacuate the premises in an emergency.

Students: the PEEP will be written in consultation with the medical team, the form tutor and the student themselves. This will record any specific arrangements required.

Staff: the PEEP should be completed by the member of staff and their line manager. The completed PEEPs are then shared with relevant staff including the site manager.

If a visitor has an impairment, their needs will be discussed with their host and a PEEP completed if appropriate.

Refer to First Aid & Accident Reporting Guidance for further details.

Appendix A

Fire Action

If you discover a fire:

- Set off the fire alarm by using the nearest call point
- Call the fire brigade by telephoning 999 or ask an adult to do so
- Leave the building by the nearest exit
- Report to your assembly point:
 - Boys' School Pre-Prep – Playground
 - Boys' Prep School – Playground
 - Boys' Senior School - Astro turf
 - Girls' School Outside the main entrance
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings
- Do not use lifts

Outdoor Sports Facilities

There is no requirement for those using the outdoor playing surfaces on the Parks Pitches, Top Field or Main Field to move from these areas to a fire safety evacuation point. To do so would add risk of potentially moving close to areas/buildings at risk. This does not apply to groups using the astro turf pitches who must stop playing immediately, maintain silence and line up in their teaching/activity group with the rest of the school. Where continuation of the activity may disrupt any evacuation then groups will be asked to stop playing and maintain silence on the fields until it is indicated that they can return to normal activities.

If you are cut off by fire:

- Close the door using clothing etc to block any gaps
- Go to the window and attract attention
- If the room becomes smoky, stay low – it is easier to breathe
- If the window is jammed, break it; remove jagged glass from the lower sill and cover it using clothing etc
- If appropriate, get out feet first and (if not on the ground floor) lower yourself to the full length of your arms before dropping
- Make your way to your evacuation assembly point and ensure you are registered. Refer to the Fire Evacuation Procedure
- Do not hinder roadways and routes that may be used by emergency vehicles
- Do not return to the building until all clear has been given and until instructed by SLT
- Never assume the evacuation is a drill.

Gas Escape

If you smell gas:

DO	DO NOT
Turn off gas supply Open all doors and windows Notify line manager without delay (also notify the gas supplier where possible) Evacuate the building	Smoke Use naked flames Turn electrical switches on or off

Electricity

If you suspect that there is an electrical fault with an appliance, immediately switch off and unplug it and notify your line manager. The item must not be used again until it has been inspected by the Maintenance Department and passed as fit for use.

If you suspect that the fault is in the mains electricity circuit, immediately notify your Line Manager. Do not attempt to touch any of the electrical circuits or fuse boards.