



Churchtown Primary School
Fire Safety Policy 2020/21

Signed: Chairperson of Local Academy Council

Headteacher

Date

Policy Review to be undertaken Autumn Term 2021.

This policy is provided by the governing body in pursuance of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASAWA)

This document acknowledges the schools legal responsibilities and outlines the objectives of the school for the safety of its staff, pupils and visitors and the arrangements for meeting these objectives.

The document is available in all classrooms and should be read and understood by all staff. The policy will be regularly reviewed following any relevant legislative changes or changes to the school or the activities carried out within it.

INTRODUCTION

Fires are the most destructive, disruptive and costly cause of damage to school property. They are often caused by momentary acts of carelessness, ignorance or failure to take account of fairly obvious hazards but a disturbing trend in recent years has been the increasing numbers of destructive fires, which have been started deliberately.

The battle against fire in schools requires awareness and the adoption of good fire prevention practice. Adequate security is essential if the premises are to be protected against intruders. It is the first line of defence against arson.

PRECAUTIONS AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

The main aims of fire-safety management are to:

- Minimise the risk of fire
- Protect the means of escape
- Limit the spread of fire

The main duties regarding fire-safety management are to:

- Make hazard and risk assessments
- Be responsible for fire-safety training
- Produce an emergency plan and put up fire notices
- Conduct fire drills
- Check the adequacy and maintenance of firefighting apparatus

- Consult and implement any recommendations of the local fire brigade
- Conduct fire-safety inspections every term
- Make frequent informal checks to confirm that the fire-safety rules are being followed
- Ensure fire-escape routes and fire-exit doors and passageways are unobstructed, and that doors open correctly
- Check that fire-detection and protection systems are maintained and tested, and that records are kept by the appropriate staff.
- Ensure close-down procedures are followed
- Include fire safety in the regular health and safety reports to the governing body

Individual Responsibilities

The Headteacher:

- Has overall day-to-day responsibility for implementing the fire safety policy and arrangements in the school
- will ensure that senior staff receive adequate information to enable them to carry out their own fire safety responsibilities
- will, where necessary, nominate an Assistant Headteacher to act on his\her behalf in matters of fire safety
- will advise the governing body of any circumstance preventing this policy from being implemented
- will in conjunction with the Senior Management Team, ensure that all relevant safety guidance is available, and that adequate training and supervision is given to enable staff to carry out their tasks safely, and in accordance with this policy
- will ensure that the school buildings and associated areas are subject to a termly formal fire safety inspection
- will take executive action to remove, contain or isolate as is appropriate any hazard emanating in the school buildings or associated areas
- will accept written reports from safety representatives and respond in writing within a reasonable time. Copies of reports will be presented to the governing body

The Assistant Head Teacher (Mrs Healy) will as and when necessary deputise for the Headteacher in matters of fire safety. This may be in the absence of the Headteacher, or for the purposes of specific delegated projects as directed by the Head Teacher.

The Caretaker(s)

Liaising as necessary with other relevant staff will take primary responsibility to:

- ensure that all communal areas, particularly those associated with fire escape routes, are kept free from obstructions
- ensure that all fire escape doors are properly identified, in a suitable state of repair and accessible when the school is in use

- ensure that all fire appliances are properly maintained, checked and kept in the designated locations
- ensure that fire procedure notices are properly maintained and correctly displayed
- ensure, so far as is reasonable, that the fabric, fixtures and fittings of the buildings and site are maintained in a safe and secure condition
- ensure that all fixed and portable electrical equipment receives regular recorded inspection \ maintenance in accordance with manufacturers instructions and relevant statutory provisions
- report to the Assistant Headteacher any circumstance preventing him\her from carrying out his\her fire safety responsibilities
- will on behalf of the Head teacher remove, isolate or contain any hazard and will record and notify the Assistant Headteacher of any such event
- Carry out weekly checks on Fire Alarm systems in both buildings

All Staff

- All teaching and support staff have a duty to assist in the implementation of good fire safety practice, and be conversant with the schools Fire Safety Policy.
- Staff must take primary responsibility for the safety of any non-employees who may be visiting them on the school premises for official reasons e.g. a parent.

Fire Marshalls

Key personal within the school have all undertaken Fire Marshall Training as follows:

- Jinnie Payne
- Belinda Taylor
- Jeanette Healy
- Christine Wilson
- Sue Anderson
- Chris Bateman
- Joe Cocks
- Alistair West
- Elaine Pursall
- Sandra Jackson

Fire precautions may be classified under two main headings:-

- a) Everyday management and vigilance by staff to ensure that potential hazards are kept under control to prevent the occurrence of fire.
- b) 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.

Building Design

In general, educational establishments are designed to nationally accepted Codes of Practice and incorporate the recommendations of the Fire Authority.

Major changes of use or teaching techniques may increase the risk of serious injury in the event of fire.

Curtains, Furnishings, Art Displays and Decorations

Care should be taken when choosing curtains, furnishings and fittings. Inherently or tested fire retardant materials should be used whenever possible. The reproofing of proofed furnishings should be in accordance with manufacturers recommendations.

Art displays and other decorations of a combustible nature can increase the spread of fire considerably. Accordingly the quality and location of such displays is critical in reducing the fire loading:

- a) Displays should not be placed on escape routes or block exits.
- b) Sources of ignition, should not be placed near the displays.
- c) Expanded polystyrene, cotton wool and other plastics produce large amounts of toxic, black smoke and considerable heat. They should not be allowed on escape routes.
- d) On staircases, wall displays made from combustible materials **should never be permitted.**

Storage

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 recycling should not accumulate in areas open to vandalism.

Flammable liquids must be kept in purpose-built storerooms or cupboards provided with ventilation which should be locked when the building is unoccupied. Small quantities of flammable liquids may be alternatively stored in a fire resistant container. All persons handling such material should be aware of the dangers. Where containers are marked "Highly Flammable" and indicate that the contents are formulated from petroleum spirit or mixtures, a Petroleum Licence may be required.

Stock Cupboards

Store cupboards will be checked as part of a Half Termly Fire Inspection by the Health and Safety Officer in school, using the Risk Assessment Checklist for Store Cupboards, to reduce the risk of potential fire hazards. This includes:

- Ceiling lighting tubes are shielded by a protective cover to reduce the risk of any potential fire hazard.
- If light covers are missing, the following must be adhered to:

Ensuring that a clear distance of at least 50cm from top of storage to ceiling (light fittings) is present throughout the storage room.

- Items should not be left plugged in over night in classroom store cupboards which contain electrical sockets.
- Combustible materials are kept to a minimum and kept segregated (eg: paper / plastics / cardboard)
- Any unwanted items are disposed of swiftly.
- Stairwells should not be used as temporary storage areas.
- Any combustible items stored in the stairwells must be kept in metal cupboards provided.

Stairwells should be kept free from any obstructions for evacuation purposes.

Electricity

All electrical apparatus should be installed by a competent authorised person, using the correctly rated fuse or circuit breaker. If a fault occurs get it repaired. Electrical installations should be checked regularly as electrical faults are a major cause of accidental fires. All portable electrical equipment not required to be used out of hours should be switched off and the plug removed from the socket. Advice given in the Code of Practice Electricity at Work Act which has been circulated to all Educational Establishments should be followed.

Fire Doors

Fire doors have at least one of two functions:-

- a) to protect escape routes from the effects of fire so that occupants can safely reach a final exit;
- b) 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.

Exception: In order to minimise the touching of surfaces around the school during the Covid 19 pandemic and reopening of schools, those fire doors without mag lock fittings will be wedged open during working hours. In the event of an emergency, the last teacher through the door OR the Fire Marshall conducting the building sweep of that area must have removed the wedge, so as to secure the doors in the closed position.

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.

Rubbish

The accumulated rubbish and refuse at the end of the day must be cleared away. Vandals entering the premises will use the most readily available combustible material to start a fire and usually the rubbish is the most handy. The collected rubbish should be secured safely **outside** the building.

Contractors

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. It is recommended that a pre-printed sheet or card setting out the procedures be handed to the operative/contractor. It might also be useful if the contractor signed to indicate that he has received, read and understood the procedure and will also comply with all current Health and Safety and fire regulation.

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

The Headteacher should be aware when hot cutting work is to take place for both the safety of the pupils and the school and be in receipt of a risk assessment from the contractor.

Smoking

In accordance with all Sefton schools and colleges this school and its grounds operate a no smoking policy.

Outside the Building

Access for emergency vehicles must be kept clear at all times.

No new combustible buildings may be erected without the approval of the Local Authority Planning Officer. They must be sited away from the main building to avoid fire spread.

Areas adjacent buildings should be protected against the accumulation of litter and access for intruders.

Combustibles, rubbish containers and equipment which could be used by vandals, especially those used by outside contractors, must not be left unsecured and they should be kept away from the exterior walls of the building.

Fire Warning System

The fire warning system should be tested once per week, by the caretaker, using a different call point for each successive test. Any defect should be reported immediately. A record of each test and any defects should be kept in a logbook.

FIRE DRILLS

A schedule of fire drills should be established, for example, **one drill per term**. One person should be appointed to organise the fire drills and should keep a record of the drill. See Appendix 1

Fire Precautions / Arrangements

Fire drills will be held at least termly in each building and will be instigated by the Headteacher, in conjunction with the Premises Officer, and recorded by them in a logbook and the Headteacher for the MAT. Fire evacuation procedures are posted

throughout the school and in each classroom. Teaching staff are responsible for the safe supervision of their pupils during an evacuation from any part of the school.

All staff have a shared responsibility to ensure that escape routes inside and outside the school buildings are kept clear.

All deficiencies noted in fire evacuations should be reported to the Head teacher or Caretaker.

Fire alarms may not be turned off except on the instruction of either the Head teacher or Caretaker.

The maintenance of fire extinguishers and evacuation notices is the primary responsibility of the Caretaker.

FIRE ROUTINE

1. If a fire is discovered raise the alarm via the nearest fire alarm call point.
2. On hearing the fire alarm all pupils should leave the school buildings under the direction of their teacher / support staff / teaching assistant.
3. Any pupils or adults identified as unable to leave the upper floor, due to issues with mobility, should congregate at the refuge point identified on their PEEP and await rescue.
4. Doors and windows should be closed as classrooms and corridors are vacated.
5. All electrical equipment should be turned off.
6. The Office School Liaison will telephone for the Fire Brigade once instructed to do so by a Person of Authority as identified on the Fire Evacuation Plan.
7. When the pupils are assembled the roll will be called via the class sheets that are in the class red bags and teachers will mark the register with who is not accounted for. On the pink sheet, teachers will indicate any adults that are present with their class. An adult will take the class list and pink sheet to the Office Fire Marshall (OFM) on the playground - the OFM will then check it against the list of people present on the Inventory Management System lists that they will have printed out. Any absentees will be reported by the Lead Fire Marshall to the Fire Department when they arrive on site.
8. Staff members working in the kitchen or as a lunchtime supervisor, should meet at the assembly point on the playground where a register will be taken by their managers from the signing in sheets. Other adults not associated with a class should report straight to the Office Fire Marshal.
9. Until the Fire Brigade arrives, the staff should, after the pupils are safely evacuated and accounted for, remain at the assembly point until re-entry of the building is allowed by the Fire Brigade.

Means of Escape

Regular inspections should be made of means of escape, to ensure that they are kept free from obstruction. If it is found that they are even partially blocked, for example, furniture or rubbish, **IMMEDIATE** action must be taken to clear the obstruction. Inspection should also include a visual check that all fire safety signs e.g. direction of escape route, are in place and clearly visible. Immediate action should be taken to replace or expose to view any sign which is not visible.

Fire Fighting Equipment

Fire fighting equipment should only be used in an **absolute emergency**. In almost all cases all people on site should leave the area immediately by the nearest escape route without tackling a fire. Firefighting equipment is to aid evacuation from the building in case of emergency. In the instance that a minor, confined fire can be put out safely, this should be done by a Quick Response Force comprising Fire Marshalls from the Leadership Team when conducting their building sweeps.

Location of fire extinguishers with dates of inspection by a specialist company should be known and kept centrally. Fire fighting equipment including extinguishers, blankets should be checked for:-

- (i) Its correct location (as advised by the local Fire Authority).
- (ii) Free of vandalism.
- (iii) Free from obstruction.

Fire Alarm Systems

The fire alarm system should be tested at a pre-determined time **on a weekly basis** via a **different alarm point** on each occasion.

This will ensure that in addition to checking the system as a whole, all alarm points are checked on a regular basis. Any sounding of the alarm outside of the agreed time should be treated as an evacuation. Any visitors or contractors should be informed of tests.

Fire Doors

Fire doors play an essential role in prohibiting the spread of smoke and fire, but only if they are closed and stay closed during a fire.

Fire doors should not be wedged open or propped open with fire extinguishers or litter bins. If a classroom or working space is left empty, then the door should be closed.

Weekly checks are carried out to inspect all fire doors as well as door furnishings such as hinges, glazing, push bar mechanisms and self closing devices.

Faults found in any mechanism should be reported for immediate attention.

Fire Precaution Checklist

All points below should be carried out by an appointed person and recorded in the Fire Precautions Log Books. See Appendix 2

ADVICE ON THE PROCEDURE IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE

See Appendix 3 and refer the Invac-Evac Policy 2020/21

At Time of Emergency

If you discover a fire or one is reported to you - Operate the nearest fire alarm call point.

If you hear the fire alarm - Evacuate the premises immediately, as detailed in the evacuation procedure for your school.

Ensure that the Fire Brigade is called by dialling the emergency services.

After the Event

Do not re-enter the premises until advised to do so by the Senior Fire Officer present.

If the fire has been extinguished by the school staff, except for ensuring that the fire is out, do not disturb any evidence which could indicate the cause of the fire.

Ensure that the premises are in safe working order before re-occupying, i.e. fire doors satisfactorily, fire alarm operating, and the recharging of extinguishers is organised immediately.

Inform your liaison surveyor or A.P.S.O. in order that the premises may be checked for you.

Do not re-enter the building without being sure it is safe to do so.

Statistics have shown that any publicity given to a school fire can result in a second fire.

Analyse the procedures followed during the fire and discuss with members of staff to determine whether changes are required.

Evacuation procedures for pupils with physical impairments:

Where pupils are physically impaired, there may be a need to adopt alternative procedures if they cannot be evacuated with the majority of pupils. This may be as a result of particular mobility problems or because of the nature of the building(s) which makes it difficult to evacuate quickly - e.g. multi storey blocks. In these cases wheelchair bound pupils or those with severe mobility problems should be evacuated to the refuge points as identified in their individual Pupil Emergency Evacuation Plan accompanied by their TA / Carer. **In no circumstances should the lift be used.**

The school has identified which pupils will need to be evacuated by this means and alerted all relevant staff. Relevant training has been put in place and those children have PEEP plans which are reviewed regularly (Personal emergency evacuation procedures).

These guidelines should be followed during fire drills to monitor their effectiveness.

Evacuation procedures for pupils with sensory impairment:

Special consideration will also be needed for pupils with hearing or visual impairment.

Generally speaking, the responsibility for ensuring the effective evacuation of these pupils will rest with the class teacher / teaching assistant.

In all cases, a procedure for ensuring that the building is empty, as part of the normal evacuation procedures, is essential.

Conclusion:

Schools will be responsible for making the risk assessment of the needs of their own pupils and introducing appropriate systems.

Appendix 1



CHURCHTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Record of Fire Drill
Location – Main Building / Early Years Centre**

Date of Drill

Approximate No of Participants

Optimum Evacuation Time	Actual Evacuation Time
----------------------------	---------------------------

All Present to Roll Call?

Person Responsible for Drill

Type and Extent of Drill

General Assessment of Drill

Action Taken

Date Fire Drill Report Filed

Appendix 2



CHURCHTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Record of Fire Drill Location – Main Building / Early Years Centre

Daily	Check exit doors and emergency routes are free from obstruction
Weekly	(a) Test fire alarm via different call alarm point
	(b) Ensure automatic doors release correctly and fire door mechanisms are functioning
Monthly	(a) Check smoke/fire detectors are free from damage/dirt.
	(b) Ensure fire extinguishers are in correct location and that their tamper devices have not been disturbed
	(c) Check fire signs are in situ.
Termly	Fire drill/evacuation
6 Monthly	Check battery systems for emergency lighting.
Annual	Check: hose reels, fire extinguishers, fire blankets, (this is carried out by service engineers)

Appendix 3



CHURCHTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Critical Incident Flow Chart for Fire in School

