

Winchelsea



All Individuals Matter

WINCHELSEA PRIMARY SCHOOL
RUSKINGTON

FIRE PREVENTION POLICY

Part 1: 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 overriding 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 School Business Manager and she 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.

Part 2: Fire Prevention

2.1 Fire risk assessments

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 made under the Regulatory Reform Act 2001 replaces most fire safety legislation with one simple order. It states that any person who has some level of control in premises must take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from fire and make sure people can safely escape if there is a fire. These fire precautions include:

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

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

An emergency plan to evacuate the premises should be created, providing for calling the fire service and 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 form 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.

2.2 Strategy for fire prevention

Management strategy for fire prevention may be classified as follows:

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

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

2.3 Issue of general fire notice

The issue of general fire notices to staff will take place during induction (Staff Handbook). It is imperative that this document is issued and explained in detail to an employee as health and safety is just as important as details of pay, working hours and holidays. This requirement applies to all staff.

2.4 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.

Part 3: Control of risks: training of staff and instruction of pupils

3.1 Employees

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.

Instruction and training for all will include the following points:

- Action to be taken upon discovering a fire
- Action to be taken on hearing the fire alarm

- Method of raising the alarm, including location of call points and location of external telephone
- Correct method of calling the fire service
- Location and use of fire-fighting equipment
- Knowledge of escape routes
- Evacuation method for the building, location of assembly point and method of accounting for persons
- 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.

3.2 Pupils

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

- Identify the fire alarm
- Know the action they should take on hearing the alarm
- Know the location of the assembly point
- 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.

3.3 Fire drills

Fire drills will be carried out at least once every term. One 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, such as 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.

All staff must participate in at least two drills per year.

3.3 Testing of fire alarm systems

The fire alarm system will be tested weekly by the caretaker. A different call point for each test will be used and recorded in the log book.

3.4 Emergency lighting

The emergency lighting is to be examined weekly by the caretaker. The log book will be completed indicating any defects and these will be brought to the attention of the School Business Manager immediately.

This lighting will also be checked by an electrical contractor annually.

3.5 Emergency exits

All emergency exits are to be kept clear and free from obstruction at all times. It is the responsibility of every individual to ensure that they are fully aware of the

contents of these instructions and know the location of all fire exits and the assembly point.

3.6 Fire records

The safety of a building's occupants cannot be assured by design alone. Any building can quickly become dangerous unless there is foresight in the activities carried out there, and care in the maintenance of it.

The following fire records are to be maintained by the School Business Manager:

- Fire alarm fault records
- Fire alarm maintenance inspection
- Emergency lighting maintenance inspection
- Fire drills
- Fire-fighting equipment tests and maintenance by contractors
- Visits and inspections by the fire service.

The following fire records are to be maintained by the caretaker:

- Fire alarm call point locations and checks
- Weekly fire alarm tests
- Fire alarm fault records
- Weekly emergency lighting tests.

Part 4: Fire alarms

4.1 Types

- Central siren operated from administration
- Single-stage electrical fire alarm operated by breaking a glass release button
- Telephone

4.2 Alternative alarms

- 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".
- The fire alarm is to be raised no matter how small the fire.

Part 5: Fire-fighting equipment

5.1 Fire extinguishers

There should be the correct type of fire extinguisher at each fire point, dependent upon the location.

5.2 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.

Part 6: General information

6.1 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.

6.2 Fire prevention checks

Teaching staff are to ensure that regular fire prevention checks are carried out.

Checks are to include checking that unnecessary lights and electrical appliances are switched off and, where possible, unplugged.

A fire prevention check is to be carried out in all areas at the end of the working day prior to the premises being vacated.

The following precautions are to be observed:

- With exception of essential systems that must continue to operate after normal working hours, all electrical appliances and lighting systems are to be switched off and disconnected
- Waste paper bins are to be emptied and the contents removed from the building
- All parts of the school are to be inspected by the caretaker at the end of the working day to ensure that e.g. electrical fires and television sets etc have been disconnected and that all doors are closed
- Windows and inspection apertures are to be left free from obstruction.

6.3 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.

All surfaces on which deposits can accumulate should be regularly cleaned.

The storage or accumulation of combustible materials in roof voids, boiler houses and similar spaces is forbidden.

6.4 Smoking

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

6.5 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.

6.6 Flammable materials

Flammable materials are not to be stored near any form of heating.

6.7 Electrical fires

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

6.8 Electrical appliances

When using electrical appliances, the following rules should be observed:

- They are to be switched off and unplugged when not in use
- The use of multi-plug adapters is prohibited
- They are to be fitted with the correct plug for the socket provided. Plugs are to be undamaged
- Temporary wiring and extensions are not to be used
- Inspection lights are to be of an authorised pattern and fitted with a guard
- Electrical faults are to be reported immediately to the caretaker
- Fuses that have blown must only be replaced after establishing the cause for the blowing, with fuses of the correct rating
- A fuse should never be replaced with one of a higher rating
- Flexible cable to fittings should be as short as possible and should be inspected regularly and replaced if worn.

6.9 Controlled burning

Burning of any sort is forbidden.

6.10 Rubber

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.

6.11 Paint solvents

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

Paint stores are to have electrical fittings of the approved safety pattern.

Floors of paint stores are to be covered with sand.

6.12 Grass and undergrowth

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

6.13 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.

6.14 Disabled persons

Special precautions may be required when disabled persons have access to a building. Where possible they should be located on the ground floor. However, consideration must be given to any steps or other changes of level that may need to be crossed.

6.15 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 pupils' education.

The opportunity for reducing such vandalism lies partly in the long-term development of a good relationship with neighbours, and partly 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 the spread of smoke damage).

6.16 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.

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.

6.17 Electricity

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.

6.18 Fire doors

Fire doors have at least one of two functions, to protect:

- Escape routes from the effects of fire so that occupants can safely reach a final exit
- The contents and/or 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.

6.19 Contractors

Building contractors bring a large number of ignition sources to the school. 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 School Business Manager should be made aware when hot cutting work is to take place for both the safety of the pupils and the school.

6.20 School grounds

Access for emergency vehicles must be made available at all times. Parking in front of the double gates in the hashed area is prohibited. Combustibles, rubbish containers and equipment, which could be used by vandals, especially those used by outside contractors, must not be left unsecured.

Part 7: Lettings

7.1 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.

Decorations are not to be put up without the advice of the fire officer. Any decorations that 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 décor 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 purposes. 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 walkway 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.

Part 8: Fire procedures

8.1 Fire and emergency procedures

All liaison in respect of fire precautions in Winchelsea Primary School will be through the fire officer.

At a flexible time each week, the caretaker is to ensure that the alarm is tested to ensure that it is effective. Points from different zones should be used to trigger the alarm to ensure that all break glass or other points are in working order.

Fire drills must be carried out at least once per term to enable everyone to become familiar with the procedure for evacuation.

On sounding the alarm, the fire service must be summoned and all staff, students and visitors must leave the building immediately, closing doors and windows behind them if possible.

An assembly point should be designated at a safe distance from the building to prevent possible injury from falling debris.

If there is no risk of personal injury, attempts may be made to tackle the fire using a suitable type of extinguisher and to switch off power sources from the mains.

At all times, fire exit routes must be unobstructed. All exit doors must be unlocked whilst there are people in the building. Smoke doors must not be hooked or wedged open, other than to allow temporary movement within the area.

Exit routes must be clearly identified and marked.

The use of display material must be controlled on fire exit routes.

8.2 General fire notice

It is the duty of anyone discovering a fire to sound the alarm.

On discovering a fire:

- Operate the nearest fire alarm point without delay
- Call the fire service by pressing line and dialing 999
- Evacuate all occupants to the agreed assembly point (see below)
- Staff may attempt to extinguish fire with the nearest suitable fire appliance
- If fire has reached such proportions as to endanger life or escape, do not attempt to extinguish the fire, but proceed to assembly point.

On hearing the fire alarm:

- Close all doors and windows
- Proceed to your assembly point and take the roll call (see below)
- On arrival of the fire service, the School Business Manager should meet the fire service officers and give as much information as possible about the fire.

Know:

- Your means of escape (see below)
- The nearest fire-alarm point
- The nearest fire appliance and how it should be used
- The assembly point.

In the event of fire:

- Maintain silence
- Do not stop to collect your personal belongings
- Do not rush
- Do not attempt to pass others.

Remember to call the fire service by pressing line/9 and dialing 999, ask for the fire service and give the precise location of the fire.

Guidance on Fire Drill

When the fire bell rings please observe the following procedure:

- Leave the classroom or work area by the nearest exit
- Encourage the children to move quietly and without panic
- Assemble the children in class lines facing towards the exterior fencing in the playground
- Check that everyone is out of the building by carrying out a roll call.

Important

Make sure the children know the procedure and stress that they must leave quietly by the nearest exit and do not need to put on outdoor shoes/coats etc.

Signed: _____
Chair of Governors

Dated: _____