

*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 Governing Body is responsible for the policy overall with day to day management delegated to the Headteacher. The School Business Manager is to be informed of all fires, no matter how small. A fire is not considered extinguished until such time as it has been confirmed by the fire brigade.

## **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 will 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**

Every member of staff will receive instruction in fire precautions during induction and yearly thereafter following updates of the Fire Prevention Policy, Emergency Evacuation Procedures and the associated Fire Safety Risk Assessment. Further training will be given only when changes are made to the school structure.

### **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. Emergency drills are to be carried out at least termly.

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**

The purpose of the fire drill is to ensure all employees and pupils have an understanding of the emergency evacuation plan and ensure it works. 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. The Caretaker must ensure that the alarm is audible throughout the whole building. Any defects must be brought to the attention of the School Business Manager immediately.

### **3.4 Emergency lighting**

The emergency lighting is to be tested monthly 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. The Caretaker is to carry out an inspection of all fire exits monthly and record the findings in the log book.

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.

### **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:

- Weekly Fire Alarm test.
- Monthly firefighting equipment inspection
- Monthly emergency light test
- Monthly fire exit checks.

## **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 risk. These must not be tampered with or moved location without the School Business Manager approval. The Caretaker will carry out monthly inspections of all firefighting equipment and record the findings in the log book. All firefighting equipment should be annual inspected by a qualified inspector.

### **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. Checks to be carried out monthly by the Caretaker at the same time as the firefighting equipment inspection and recorded accordingly.

## **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 to be stored in a designated locked cupboard.

#### **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 Grass and undergrowth**

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

## **6.11 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 the mobile classroom's kitchen and the mobile ovens is of paramount importance. Staff are to be mindful of leaving the equipment unattended. This is to be avoided as far as possible, but staff should carry out checks every ten/fifteen minutes when cooking for long periods.

## **6.12 Disabled persons**

Special precautions may be required when disabled persons have access to a building. For any pupils within the school with particular needs the school will compile a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP). Visitors in wheelchairs will need to sign into school via the Digigreet system highlighting that they would need assistance exiting the building in the case of an emergency.

## **6.13 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).

## **6.14 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.

## **6.15 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. The Caretaker carries out Portable Appliance Testing yearly. Caretaker to keep an accurate record.

## **6.16 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.

## **6.17 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.

## **6.18 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.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of Governors

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_