

Emergency Evacuation Policy (Exams) 2025-26

School Governance Status

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations.

Review dates	By Whom	Approval date
March 2018	Staff and Governors	19 March 2018
January 2019	Staff and Governors	22 January 2019
October 2020	Staff and Governors	20 October 2020
February 2022	Staff and Governors	14 February 2022
January 2023	Staff and Governors	7 February 2023
December 2023	Staff and Governors	9 January 2024
February 2025	Staff and Governors	1 April 2025

Signed by Chair:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B Crosby', with a horizontal line underneath.

Key staff involved in the emergency evacuation policy/procedure

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Susan Boyd
Exams officer	Gill Teasdale
ST member(s)	Andrew Whelan
SENCo	Hazel Kirk

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Whitby school deals with an emergency evacuation of an exam room(s) by defining staff roles and responsibilities and confirming the emergency evacuation procedure.

When is an emergency evacuation required?

An emergency evacuation is required where it is unsafe for candidates to remain in the exam room. This might include a fire in the exam room, the fire alarm sounding to warn of fire, bomb alert or other serious threat.

In exceptional situations, where candidates might be severely disadvantaged or distressed by remaining in the exam room, the emergency evacuation procedure may also need to be followed. This might include situations where there is severe disruption in the exam room, serious illness of a candidate or invigilator or similarly serious incidents. As each incident may be different, advice will be sought from the relevant awarding body as soon as it is safe to do so

Emergency evacuation of an exam room

Roles and responsibilities

Head of centre

- Ensures the emergency evacuation policy for exams is fit for purpose and complies with relevant health and safety regulation
- Ensures any instructions from relevant local or national agencies are referenced and followed where applicable, including information from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office on the *Procedures for handling bomb threats*
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bomb-threats-guidance/procedures-for-handling-bomb-threats>
- Where safe to do so, ensures candidates are given the opportunity to sit exams for their published duration

Senior leader

- ▶ Where responsible for the centre-wide emergency evacuation procedure, ensures all staff and appointed fire marshals are aware of the policy and procedures to be followed when an emergency evacuation of an exam room is required

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- ▶ Ensures appropriate arrangements are in place for the emergency evacuation of a disabled candidate from an exam room where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for the candidate
- ▶ Ensures the candidate is informed prior to taking their exams of what will happen in the event of an emergency evacuation

Exams officer

- ▶ Ensures invigilators are trained in emergency evacuation procedures and how an incident and actions taken must be recorded
- ▶ Ensures candidates are briefed (through student briefings/assembly), prior to exams taking place, on what will happen in the event of an emergency in the exam room
- ▶ Provides invigilators with a copy of the emergency evacuation procedure for every exam room
- ▶ Provides a standard invigilator announcement for each exam room which includes appropriate instructions for candidates about emergency procedures and what will happen if the fire alarm sounds
- ▶ Provides an exam room incident log in each exam room
- ▶ Liaises with the SENCo and other relevant staff prior to each exam where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate
- ▶ Briefs invigilators prior to each exam where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate
- ▶ Ensures appropriate follow-up is undertaken after an emergency evacuation reporting the incident to the awarding body and the actions taken through the *special consideration* process where applicable (in cases where a group of candidates have been disadvantaged by a particular event).

Invigilators

- ▶ By attending training and/or update sessions, ensure they understand what to do in the event of an emergency in the exam room
- ▶ Follow the actions required in the emergency evacuation procedure issued to them for every exam room
- ▶ Confirm with the exams officer, where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate they are invigilating
- ▶ Record details on the exam room incident log to support follow-up reporting to the awarding body by the exams officer (see below).

Other relevant centre staff

- Support the senior leader, SENCo, exams officer and invigilators in ensuring the safe emergency evacuation of exam rooms.

Recording details

As soon as practically possible and safe to do so, details should be recorded. Details must include:

- the actual time of the start of the interruption
- the actions taken
- the actual time the exam(s) resumed
- the actual finishing time(s) of the resumed exam(s).

Further details could include:

- ▶ report on candidate behaviour throughout the interruption/evacuation
- ▶ a judgement on the impact on candidates after the interruption/evacuation

Emergency Evacuation Procedure During Exams

Invigilators must:

- Stop the candidates from writing
- Collect the attendance register and evacuate the examination room in line with the instructions given by the appropriate authority
- In the Hall/Sports Hall/larger classroom - advise candidates to close their answer booklet and leave all question papers and answer booklets in the examination room.
For smaller groups in classrooms/access arrangement rooms - quickly gather the papers, place the papers in your exam box and take the box with you when you evacuate the room.
- Candidates should evacuate the room in silence using the main door from the Hall or the side exit onto the field from the Sports Hall.
- Ensure that they supervise candidates effectively distributing themselves amongst the candidates to ensure maximum speed of evacuation and to make sure there is no discussion about the examination.
- Candidates must wait on the railway side of the drive away from other students if they have evacuated from the Hall. Candidates evacuated from the Sports Hall must wait on the sports field opposite the tennis courts.
- Candidates in Access Arrangement rooms must wait on the sports field opposite the tennis courts.
- Make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted.
- Allow the candidates the full working time set for the examination.
- If there are only a few candidates, consider the possibility of taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination.
- Make a full report of the incident and of the action taken and give this to the exams officer to send to the relevant awarding body.
- Following the all clear candidates must be brought back into the exam room in silence and be allowed to continue.
- At the end of the examination all candidates must be fully reassured that the interruption will be fully reported to the examination board concerned.
- Should a candidate become ill during an exam and need to be evacuated, the above procedures would apply to that candidate only.