



Whitby School

FIRE SAFETY POLICY

Governance Status

This policy was issued in April 2017. It has been reviewed annually and was adopted by Governors on 24 March 2020. It will be reviewed every year, or sooner if new, related legislation or guidance is issued.

Review Dates	By Whom	Date approved/for approval
February 2020	Staff and Governors	24 March 2020
March 2021	Staff and Governors	25 March 2021
March 2022	Staff and Governors	22 March 2022
March 2023	Staff and Governors	21 March 2023
December 2023	Staff and Governors	9 January 2024
September 2024	Staff and Governors	October 2024
March 2025	Staff and Governors	1 April 2025
March 2026	Staff and Governors	

Please also refer to the Staff Handbook for procedures to follow in the event of a fire and the School Health and Safety Policy

Signed by the Chairs of Governors:

Brian Crosby

General Statement

Governors and staff take fire safety duties very seriously. For this reason, we have formulated this policy to help us to comply with our legal obligations to all building users, including staff, students and visitors, under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. These obligations include the provision of a safe place of work where fire safety risks are minimised. Due to its importance, this fire safety policy is an extension of our overall health and safety policy.

Employees' Duties

All employees have a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that they do not place themselves or others at risk of harm. They are also expected to cooperate fully in complying with any procedures that strategic leaders and/or governors may introduce as a measure to protect the safety and well-being of staff and visitors.

Communication

We will keep staff informed of any changes that are made to our fire safety procedures and fire risk assessment. We will also ensure that all visitors to our premises are briefed in the evacuation procedures and not left alone unless they are aware of, and familiar with, all available escape routes.

Procedures

We have introduced the following procedures in order to maintain high standards of fire safety:

- A fire risk assessment has been undertaken which will be reviewed annually. More frequent reviews will occur if there are changes that will impact on its effectiveness. These may include alterations to the premises or new work processes.
- The fire evacuation procedures will be practised at least termly and documented.
- Fire awareness training will be provided to all staff.
- All new members of staff and temporary employees will be provided with induction training on how to raise the alarm and on the available escape routes.
- All escape routes will be clearly signed and kept free from obstructions at all times.
- All fire-related equipment will be regularly serviced and maintained. If any employee notices defective or missing equipment, they must report it to a member of the site team immediately.
- Alarm systems will be tested regularly. Staff will be told when a test is scheduled if during normal working hours.
- Any other safety systems will be checked regularly to ensure their correct operation, where necessary, eg, emergency lighting.
- In the event of an emergency, the Fire Service will be called.
- In the event of the whole or part of one of our buildings becoming unstable, we will evacuate to the other school site.
- This policy forms part of each employee's conditions of employment. Failure to comply may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

FIRE SAFETY ACTIONS

Risk assessments

Ensuring an assessment of the fire risks across our premises is a key part of the "responsible person's" role and, in this case, all staff are responsible for ensuring their working area is safe. Performing thorough risk assessments, and acting on any findings, helps to reduce risks, ensures compliance with legislation and could save lives.

The 5 steps of a risk assessment

Steps 1-3: Identifying & evaluating risks

Steps 4-5: Recording & reviewing

The 5 steps of a risk assessment for which we are all responsible are:

Step 1 - Identifying fire hazards, and recording them on risk assessment form, including:

- Sources of ignition
- Sources of fuel.

Step 2 – Identifying the people who may be especially at risk, and recording details of these on a risk assessment form. This may include:

- staff and students
- people unfamiliar with the premises
- people working alone.

Step 3 - Evaluate, remove, reduce and protect people from risks, recording the risks on a risk assessment form, including:

- measures to prevent fires
- measures to protect people from fire.

Step 4 - Record, plan, instruct, inform and train including:

- record significant findings and actions taken
- prepare and publish an emergency plan
- inform relevant people, provide instruction, co-operate and co-ordinate with others
- provide training on what to do in the case of a fire and as a result of practise evacuations.

Step 5 - Review

- keep risk assessments under review
- de-brief after any evacuation and revise plans where necessary.

In case of a fire:

- If a fire is detected, the nearest activation point should be used to trigger the alarm system (this should occur automatically but the glass can be broken at a fire 'break-glass' point if not).
- **All staff are responsible for the implementation of the evacuation plan.**
- In the case of a fire, or other reason for evacuation, sirens - ie, the fire alarm, will sound.
- On hearing the siren, the building must be cleared of all its occupants, as quickly as possible, to a point of safety where everyone can be registered to ascertain if anyone is missing.
- If practicable, close windows, as these provide a fire with oxygen, but don't waste time evacuating the building to do this.
- Do not waste time logging off computers or collecting belongings - **time saves lives.**
- You must use the planned evacuation route from the building you are in - this has been planned to move as many people as possible to the assembly point quickly.
- If your primary evacuation route is blocked by fire, or temporary works, then use an alternative fire evacuation route, as shown on the map in your area.
- **At NO point should anyone re-enter the premises.**
- During the evacuation, it is important to be silent as it may be necessary to relay instructions during the evacuation. **All staff must actively ensure this; it applies to staff and pupils.**
- **Staff must be aware of all evacuation routes as these may need to be used in event of the fire blocking an evacuation route.**
- It is NYC policy to provide fire extinguishers, however, there is no expectation placed on staff to use them. The priority is for staff and pupils/students to get out of the building. NYC only advocate the use of a fire extinguisher if the fire is in its early stages, small and contained, ie, waste-paper bin sized or the fire is blocking an escape route.

At the assembly point:

- Key postholders with fire register duties will stand in designated places with registers.
- The Headteacher/other, designated senior member of staff deputising will be in a central area and will use a megaphone, if required, to give instructions.
- Pupils and sixth form students must line up in their designated points, as per the evacuation maps, of which form tutors will be made aware, in alphabetical order, and should do so silently in order to hear any instructions being given.
- Tutors must collect their evacuation register from the designated administrator before going to their register point. Pupils and sixth form students need to be registered promptly and any absentees must be reported back, as soon as possible, to the designated member of staff registering pupils and students present.
- Non-tutors should register themselves present with the designated member of staff before standing in their designated area and should actively help to keep students quiet and calm, as appropriate, so that further instructions can be given and heard.
- Designated staff/Fire Marshals (ie, technicians and site staff) should sweep the building when exiting the building and, on completion, report any findings to the appropriate member of staff who is registering students/to the Headteacher/designated deputy.
- After the evacuation and subsequent registration, key staff/marshals will report to the Headteacher/designated deputy and/or the lead fire-fighter on arrival.
- The Headteacher or their designated deputy will then, in conjunction with the Fire Service, decide whether to send pupils and sixth form students home or to re-occupy the premises.

After a fire drill or any unplanned evacuation

The reason for evacuation should be found - if not an actual fire, and steps taken to ensure that further false alarms do not happen as these de-value the process. After any evacuation, at the earliest opportunity, staff should be de-briefed/updated and the results of this used to modify the evacuation plan where necessary.

Planned evacuations should be regularly scheduled.

During these evacuations, nominated staff should observe the evacuation and make notes on possible areas for improvements. Once the evacuation procedure is well established, nominated staff should be used to stop an evacuation route and then observe the effect it has on the plan. Different routes should be barred to test the robustness of the plan. A small group may be detained to see how long it is before the Headteacher/their designated deputy is notified. Reference to the Fire Policy will be included in the staff induction programme.

Responsibilities:

There should be a clear understanding of who has the following roles and who will deputise in their absence. School technicians and site staff will act as fire marshalls, and Heads of Subject will be responsible for sweeping their areas on their way out of the building. Please also refer to the Staff Handbook for the procedures to be followed.

Overall command at assembly point: Headteacher/their designated deputy

Takes overall control at assembly point until the Fire Service arrives and then, after consultation with the Fire Service, instructs the assembled body of people on the next move.

Makes the decision to cancel the 999 call.

Makes the re-entry command if a false alarm or practise evacuation.

Designated administrators/key postholders with fire evacuation duties

Collects evacuation plan registers.

Hands out registers to staff where appropriate and collates reports from staff and Fire Marshals.

Reports on those present and/or missing to the Headteacher/their designated deputy.

Fire marshals

Sweep the allocated zones for stragglers on their way out of the building and ensure fire doors are closed as they leave the building - this should be done in a calm manner, heading in the direction of the evacuation plan exit route and should not involve re-entering the building. Report to the Headteacher/their designated deputy any findings.

Tutors/All staff

On reaching the assembly point, collect your register from the designated member of staff. If not a tutor, assist where tutors are not present and keep pupils/students orderly and quiet. Register and return the register and details of any absences to Head of Year/other designated member of staff. Evacuate promptly, ensuring orderly and silent movement and register your name with the appropriate administrator before going to your designated assembly point. (If you are a Tutor, you can send a responsible pupil to register your name with the member of staff who is undertaking the staff roll call once they themselves are registered as being present.)

In the event of a fire evacuation out of normal school hours

If the alarm is raised prior to or during the arrival of staff and pupils/students, evacuate the building as normal and go to the assembly point.

If the alarm is raised as pupils and sixth form students are leaving or after school, evacuate to the assembly area and pupils and sixth form students may be allowed to leave if they can travel home safely, or can remain until transport home has been arranged.

Any areas for concern should be reported, in writing, to the Site or Business Manager, or the Headteacher, as soon as possible.

There will be a staff de-brief/update after each alarm, allowing open comments to be made on possible improvements to this policy and to our procedures.