

Habs

HABERDASHERS'
ELSTREE SCHOOLS

Fire Safety Policy

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1 Related Information

1.1 Availability of Statutory Policies

All statutory policies are available on the Schools' websites.

1.2 Regulatory Guidance

This statutory policy has been reviewed in accordance with the following Independent School Inspectorate guidance on Compliance Inspection:

The principles are—
(f) developing a coherent overall prevention policy which covers technology, organisation of work and the influence of factors relating to the working environment;

1.3 Supporting Documents

The following related information is referred to in this policy:

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RR(FS)O)
Fire Evacuation Procedure
Health and Safety Policy

1.4 Terminology

School means Haberdashers' Aske's Elstree Schools Limited as Trustee of Haberdashers' Aske's Charity trading as Haberdashers' Girls' School **and/or** Haberdashers' Boys' School, as now or in the future constituted (and any successor).

Student or **Students** can reflect anyone in the School at any age.

2 Introduction

The School will ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that all staff, Students, contractors and visitors are protected from the risks of fire whilst on the premises.

2.1 Legal Requirements

The RR(FS)O places a greater emphasis on fire prevention by ensuring that all persons responsible for premises comply with their statutory duties and implement the general fire precautions which are needed to protect all persons from death or injury in the case of fire. This policy explains how the School complies with the RR(FS)O to ensure that, where possible, fire is prevented and that any fire risks are adequately controlled.

3 Responsibilities

The Fire Safety Policy forms part of the School's Health and Safety Policy and in common with that policy extends through the whole School, with specific responsibilities as below:

- Governors ensure that an appropriate policy is in place at the School and that arrangements are made for its effective implementation
- The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for the implementation and management of this policy which is delegated to the Deputy Director of Operations who has the necessary skills and experience to undertake the role (see next section).
- All employees have the responsibility to cooperate and to ensure that the workplace and its effects is safe from fire and must not do anything that will place themselves or other people at risk.

4 Managing Fire Safety

4.1 Responsibility

The School has delegated day to day responsibility for managing fire safety to the Deputy Director of Operations who will:

- Ensure that all means of escape are properly maintained, always kept free from obstruction and available for safe and effective use; and that the means of escape have adequate emergency lighting
- Provide and maintain in working order all firefighting appliances and devices including:
 - Fire detection and alarm systems
 - Emergency lighting systems
 - Firefighting equipment
 - Notices and signage relating to fire procedures
 - Means of escape, considering the needs of any disabled users
- Arrange for a fire safety risk assessment on each of the School buildings to ensure the School's facilities are compliant; and reduce the risk of fire incidents by carrying out appropriate task risk assessments
- Provide appropriate instruction and training for all School staff on the action to be taken to protect people and property including regular fire evacuation practices
- Ensure that staff, Students, contractors and visitors are made aware of and comply with the Schools' fire procedures
- Identify any special risks e.g. the storage of hazardous materials, and put in place appropriate procedures to minimise the risks
- Liaise with third parties, the emergencies services, and the School's insurers to ensure that best practice for fire prevention and procedures is in place
- Monitor and review this policy on a regular basis to ensure that any new risk or alteration to legislation is addressed.

4.2 Monitoring

The School utilises the services of various outside personnel to carry out effective monitoring of its duties.

- The School fire detection and alarm systems are maintained and checked by an external contractor on a quarterly basis. The alarm sounders are tested on a weekly basis by caretakers
- The School emergency lighting is checked annually by an external contractor
- Notices and signage are updated as and when required
- Firefighting equipment is replenished or replaced annually by an external contractor
- A file repository which contains records of fire safety issues is maintained by the Deputy Director of Operations and contains:
 - Records of fire drills
 - Inspection and testing of fire detection and alarm systems
 - Servicing and replacement of firefighting equipment
 - Records of external Fire Risk Assessments
 - Staff training records.

5 Fire Procedures

5.1 Briefing New Staff and Students

All new staff and new Students are given a briefing on the School's emergency evacuation procedures, which include action upon discovering a fire, and where the main fire assembly points are located. The briefing is delivered by staff mentors, heads of departments or form tutors as appropriate. Fire action notices are displayed prominently around the school.

The safe evacuation of everyone is the School's priority. No one should attempt to fight a fire at the expense of their own, or anyone else's safety. The School provides fire awareness training to its staff. In addition, key members of staff have undertaken Fire Marshal training including the use of fire extinguishers. The training records for those staff are maintained by the estates department.

Evacuation Procedures. The school operates two fire alarm systems, one for the Boys' School and one for the Girls' School. In the event of the discovery of a fire it is the responsibility of the person making the discovery to raise the alarm at once. No action should be taken to contain the fire using local appliances until the alarm has been sounded.

5.2 Responsibilities of Staff

Staff who have students in their care should ensure that all students leave the building and should visually check around them to see areas are clear.

- Staff should ideally be at the back of the line to account for stragglers.
- Staff do not need to go in any other direction other than the nearest exit.
- Staff should insist upon silence as all students and staff move to the assembly area
- Teaching staff should arrange the students in the appropriate section of the assembly area:
 - In the Boys' School they should line up in teaching groups during lesson time, and in form groups outside of lesson time
 - in the Girls' School they should line up in forms/classes
- All staff without students at the time of the alarm should meet in silence in the assembly area and await further instructions.

Trained staff will identify the location of the possible fire and alert the team to sweep the affected area.

As soon as the location of the fire is known and/or it is found there is no danger, this information will be passed to the person in charge of the assembly area via radio.

All staff who have a radio assigned to them should ensure they take it with them upon evacuation.

The executive decision to return to School buildings and resume routine activities will be given by (in order):

- Head of Estates, Deputy Director of Operations or Director of Operations
- Duty caretaker
- Member of SLT or responsible person to whom responsibility may have been delegated (i.e. when SLT are off site).

5.3 Special Arrangements for Science Laboratories

Higher risk departments have specific emergency procedures for in the event of fire. Please refer to departmental local management arrangements.

5.4 Fire Practice, Alarm Equipment and Testing

It is the School's policy to hold regular termly fire practices at unspecified times. The timing is recorded and details of fire practices are kept by the Head of Estates. Following a practice, feedback is collected and issues are discussed and raised at the next health and safety committee meeting if appropriate.

Fire alarm equipment is tested and serviced at appropriate intervals.

5.5 Summoning the Fire and Emergency Services

The Head of Estates is responsible for ensuring that evacuation instructions and routes to assembly points are placed next to the main exit from all rooms and are regularly reviewed and maintained up to date. The relevant Head of Department responsible for the engagement of contractors must ensure that all contractors are briefed on fire and evacuation drills. Basic instructions on fire evacuation can also be found on the reverse of the "Visitors" badges and in Visitors leaflets.

In the event of the discovery of a fire it is the responsibility of the person making the discovery to raise the alarm at once. No action should be taken to contain the fire using local appliances until the alarm has been sounded. All this should sound the same for both schools.

Caretaking staff are to immediately identify if the alarm is a false alarm or the result of a fire. If it is uncertain whether it is a false alarm the default assumption is to assume there is a fire and act accordingly. Caretakers are to confirm the source of the fire and communicate this information over the radio, ensuring that the Security Hut and Senior Leadership are made aware. On confirmation of a fire, the Fire and Emergency Service is to be summoned immediately.

The Duty Caretaker or his nominated deputy during periods of absence are to inform the Security Hut that the fire alarm has been activated. Security Hut should close the site to visitors pending the 'all clear' or instructions from Director of Operations.

If the Fire and Emergency Service have been summoned the person summoning the Fire and Emergency Service is to inform staff at the Security Hut of the following details:

- Location of fire
- Emergency services that have been requested
- Location of the Incident Control Point (ICP)
- Member of staff i/c the ICP to whom the emergency services should report. The member of staff i/c the ICP should ensure wherever possible they have a "grand master" key set for use by the emergency services if required.

Staff at the Security Hut are to direct emergency services to the incident and person i/c the ICP.

The fire alarm is not to be turned off unless it is confirmed beyond doubt that there is a false alarm. In the event of a false alarm the evacuation of that zone should proceed as a drill. The Duty Caretaker is to be notified if it is confirmed there is a false alarm. The executive decision to return to School buildings and resume routine activities will be given by (in order):

- Head of Estates, Deputy Director of Operations or Director of Estates and Facilities
- Senior Caretaker or Duty Caretaker
- Member of Senior Leadership Team or responsible person to whom responsibility may have been delegated (i.e. when Senior Leadership Team are off site)

5.6 Arrangements for Public Examination Students and Staff

The arrangements for Students and staff during the public examination season (May-June) are outlined in the Emergency Evacuation Policy (Examinations). Separate evacuation procedures exist for public examinations, please refer to information provided by the examinations department.

5.7 Prep School and Pre-Prep School Students on the Senior School Site

Prep School and Pre-Prep School Students participating in activities on the Senior School site (e.g. music and swimming) are to evacuate and assemble under the direction of their teacher as per Senior School evacuation procedures.

5.8 Fire Practice, Alarm Equipment and Testing

It is the School's policy to hold regular termly fire practices at unspecified times. The timing is recorded, and details of fire practices are kept by the Head of Estates together with any lessons learned.

Where evacuation of the building is considered to be slower than is considered a reasonable time given the inherent problems of the site, a further practice is to be held until a satisfactory result is achieved. The School will take all reasonable steps to ensure that all corridors forming exit routes, fire doors and stairwells are kept clear of any obstruction.

5.9 Fire Prevention Procedures

We have the following fire prevention measures in place:

5.9.1 *Escape Routes and Emergency Exits*

- Fire notices and evacuation signs displayed prominently in each building
- Fire extinguishers of the appropriate type, smoke detectors, and fire hoses are located in accordance with the recommendations of our professional advisors. The alarm can be manually activated by breaking a glass panel on the fire alarm, and automatically activated when smoke/heat builds up
- Automatic door closers that are activated by the fire alarms are fitted on doors in or leading onto escape routes
- Keeping fire routes and exits clear at all times. The Duty Caretaker is responsible for unlocking the buildings in the morning, when he removes bolts, padlocks and security devices from all emergency exits, checks that escape routes are not obstructed and that the emergency light work, and for reporting defects
- All fire alarms are tested weekly by the Caretakers
- 6 monthly professional check on fire detection and warning equipment
- A contractor services the alarms, smoke detectors, emergency lights, smoke control systems and fire extinguishers on an annual basis
- Arranging the annual fire risk assessment for the Senior, Prep and Pre-Prep Schools.
- Records of all tests are kept with the Head of Estates.

6 Visitors, Contractors and Hirers

All visitors (including Students from other schools) and contractors are required to sign in at Reception. They are provided with a visitor's badge which should be worn at all times that they are on School property and receive instructions in the event of an evacuation. Visitors to the site are generally accompanied or supervised at all times.

On occasions when maintenance or construction staffs are working unaccompanied, they are given an induction talk for their area of work on fire safety.

It is the responsibility of staff hosting visitors to ensure they are aware of the School's emergency evacuation procedures, and escort them to the appropriate fire assembly point. It is a condition of the School's Selecting and Managing of Contractors Policy that contractors are aware of the emergency evacuation alarms and procedures.

When large numbers of visitors are attending the School for Open Days, plays, concerts, exhibitions etc. a modified fire evacuation procedures will apply and staff will be informed beforehand of these. For public events where there are likely to be a number of visitors, such as plays and concerts and external professional development training courses, a brief announcement must be made at the start of the event advising visitors of the location of the emergency exits that they should use and where to assemble in the event of the alarms sounding.

7 Fire Risk Assessment

The School carries out comprehensive fire risk assessments for each of its buildings. This may be conducted by an external consultant or other competent person such as the Deputy

Director of Operations who is the competent person. The Deputy Director of Operations will liaise with the Head of Estates in respect of the recommendations and future works.

Fire risk assessments are undertaken annually, and any actions or recommendations are undertaken or monitored by the Head of Estates.

Fire hazards are eliminated where possible and the risk reduced to the minimum level practicable by implementing control measures and safe systems of work.

Regular inspections will be made by staff, including the Head of Estates, School Site Manager and Compliance Manager to ensure that:

- Fire Extinguishers are in place and not tampered with
- Fire Escape routes are kept clear and free of flammable materials
- Fire Doors are all fully self-closing
- Fire Escape Stairs are kept free of slipping or tripping hazards
- Security against arson is maintained
- Any evidence of smoking is reported to the Deputy Director of Operations.

8 Fire Detection

The School has adequate means of fire detection. The detection equipment is maintained and regularly checked by competent persons.

9 Fire Alarm

- The School has an adequate means of raising the alarm in the event of fire.
- The fire alarm systems are tested regularly, and records are kept by the Head of Estates.
- The fire alarm system is serviced twice a year by a competent contractor.
- Records of servicing are maintained in a fire logbook held by the Head of Estates.

10 Fire Fighting Equipment

- Fire Fighting equipment should be used primarily to aid escape. Staff and students are not expected to fight fires. The Estates teams, and other staff including some science technicians have fire extinguisher training.
- Fire extinguishers, and other fire suppressant systems are serviced by a competent contractor at regular intervals.

11 Emergency Lighting

- Emergency lighting is installed across the School buildings where lighting would continue to be required in the event of a mains power failure, e.g. stairs, passageways and emergency exits.

- Battery operated emergency lighting will be tested monthly, quarterly or annually depending on the risk assessment for that building (charge & illumination) and an annual full discharge test by a competent contractor.
- Records of testing and servicing of emergency lights are maintained by the Head of Estates.

12 Fire Safety Training

All staff will undergo annual refresher training which covers:

- Risks of fires occurring and spreading
- Action to take if they discover a fire including how to activate the fire alarm
Action to take on hearing the alarm including location and use of exits and escape routes

Estates staff and science technicians have specific fire extinguisher training.

Students are given instructions by their form tutors during their first week of term on their actions to be taken in the event of fire.

Fire practices are planned each term to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's evacuation procedures. The findings of the practice are reported to staff through the Health and Safety Committee and any conclusions and remedial actions are recorded and implemented.

13 Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)

A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) should be in place for any member of staff, student or visitor who has a temporary or permanent impairment that may impact on them being able to evacuate the premises in an emergency.

If a student has a temporary impairment that may affect their ability to evacuate, parents should inform the school by way of the nurses who will discuss their needs with relevant staff. The nurses will then complete a PEEP and share this with the student's staff and a record will be kept with the site manager.

Similarly, a member of staff with an impairment such discuss with their line manager, and nurse and the PEEP will be shared with their line manager and a record kept with the site manager.

If a visitor has an impairment, their needs will be discussed with their host and a PEEP completed if appropriate.

Appendix A

Fire Action

If you discover a fire:

- Set off the fire alarm by using the nearest call point
- Call the fire brigade by telephoning 999 or ask an adult to do so
- Leave the building by the nearest exit
- Report to your assembly point:
 - Boys' School Pre-Prep – Playground
 - Boys' Prep School – Playground
 - Boys' Senior School - Astro turf
 - Girls' School Outside the main entrance
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings
- Do not use lifts

If you are cut off by fire:

- Close the door using clothing etc to block any gaps
- Go to the window and attract attention
- If the room becomes smoky, stay low – it is easier to breathe
- If the window is jammed, break it; remove jagged glass from the lower sill and cover it using clothing etc
- If appropriate, get out feet first and (if not on the ground floor) lower yourself to the full length of your arms before dropping
- Make your way to your evacuation assembly point and ensure you are registered. Refer to the Fire Evacuation Procedure
- Do not hinder roadways and routes that may be used by emergency vehicles
- Do not return to the building until the all clear has been given and until instructed by SLT
- Never assume the evacuation is a drill.

Gas Escape

If you smell gas:

DO	DO NOT
Turn off gas supply Open all doors and windows Notify line manager without delay (also notify the gas supplier where possible) Evacuate the building	Smoke Use naked flames Turn electrical switches on or off

Electricity

If you suspect that there is an electrical fault with an appliance, immediately switch off and unplug it and notify your line manager. The item must not be used again until it has been inspected by the Maintenance Department and passed as fit for use.

If you suspect that the fault is in the mains electricity circuit, immediately notify your Line Manager. Do not attempt to touch any of the electrical circuits or fuse boards.