

# FIRE SAFETY POLICY



THE GRANGE  
SCHOOL

Document Name	Fire Safety Policy
Version Number	JBOCT2023
Date	October 2023
Document Owner	Head of Estates
Next Review Date	October 2024

# FIRE SAFETY POLICY



## POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of The Grange School as part of its Health & Safety Policy to ensure that adequate arrangements for the prevention of fire are in place. This will be achieved by undertaking fire risk assessments in line with the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order (2005) reviewing the findings from such assessments and having in place suitable fire precaution systems and robust procedures for the evacuation of the buildings and site in case of fire. It is the responsibility of the Head of Estates to carry through this policy with support from the Chief Operating Officer.

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

The schools Fire Safety Policy is a whole school policy including EYFS and forms part of the school's wider Health & Safety Policy.

## AIMS OF THE POLICY

Our policy is that:

- no life be put in jeopardy in anyway whatsoever
- that regular evacuation procedures are regularly tested
- that possessions and equipment are replaceable and no person's life or an injury to a person is worth their rescue
- that the responsible person will undertake a fire safety risk assessment on a regular basis
- that we put in place, and maintain, appropriate fire safety measures
- that fighting any fire is only undertaken when the alarm has been raised, when there is no risk to a person or persons and that person to have received appropriate training
- that all staff receive information, fire safety instruction and training

## OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS & POLICIES

In reading this policy you should also consider and consult the following documents & policies:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Senior School Fire Procedures
- Junior School Fire Procedures
- Staff Handbook
- Employee Handbook
- Risk Management Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Risk Register

**Last Reviewed: October 2023**

**Next Review: October 2024**

**Person responsible for review: Head of Estates**

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To ensure the effectiveness of the policy, it will be closely monitored and will be formally reviewed and revised in light of any legislative or organisational changes. This policy is reviewed by the Compliance Committee and then approved by the Full Board of Governors (including the Chair of Governors and the Head(s)).

## Introduction

It is our priority to minimise the risk to life and to reduce injury by maintaining the physical fire safety of the school; to ensure that staff, pupils and visitors do not add to the fire risk and through safe evacuation of our buildings if a fire breaks out. The fire safety policy, procedures and risk assessments at The Grange School are designed to help our community to respond calmly and effectively in the event that fire breaks out in one of our buildings.

## Responsibilities

The Governing Body has the ultimate responsibility for fire safety in the School. The Governing Body acts through the Compliance Sub-Committee to review this policy and to monitor the effective working procedures of the School including reviewing the reports of incidents, near misses or concerns raised by any member of the School.

The Head and the Head of the Junior School are responsible to the Governing Body for fire safety within the school although they have delegated the immediate operational role to the Head of Estates.

The Head of Estates is the appointed Fire Safety Officer – they will be assisted in the carrying out of their responsibilities by the Estates & Compliance Officer and Junior School Caretaker who have been appointed as Deputy Fire Safety Officers. The Head of Estates also consults with the Health and Safety Forums (one for each site, both Senior and Junior) which take place at least once per term.

## Role of the Fire Safety Officer

The Head of Estates is the designated Fire Safety Officer and is responsible for ensuring that:

- the Fire Safety Policy is kept under regular review by the Governors and SLT/ELT
- the Fire Safety Policy is communicated to the entire school community
- everyone in the school community (including visitors and contractors) are given clear written instructions on where they should go in the event of a fire - with additional information being provided when large numbers of visitors are on site, ie for Parents evenings or events within The Grange Theatre
- contractors working for the School will be given written documentation detailing the procedures that they should follow whilst working on the school campus, and also informing them of the school's procedures in an emergency situation
- the appropriate basic fire training for all school staff is provided on an annual basis and specifically to ensure that fire training is provided to all new employees on starting work at the School
- records are kept of the fire induction training given to all new staff and pupils

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- procedures and arrangements for emergency evacuation are regularly tested and reviewed
- Fire Risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated
- Records are kept of all fire practices
- Certificates for installation and maintenance of fire-fighting systems and equipment are kept
- Fire risk assessments are regularly reviewed and incorporate any alterations to the layout, systems installed or operational use of the premises. As part of the regular review of the school's risk assessment, the school's arrangements for ensuring fire safety will be kept under continual review
- the appropriate liaison takes place with third parties; the emergency services and the School's insurers to ensure that best practice for fire prevention and procedures is in place
- the integrity of all fire prevention systems and equipment in place is maintained in good working order
- this policy is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that any new risk or alteration to the relevant regulations is addressed

The Fire Safety Officer is supported by two nominated Deputy Fire Safety Officers as follows:

- Senior School: Estates Compliance Officer
- Junior School: Caretaker

## Role of Fire Marshalls

Fire Marshalls are responsible for facilitating the orderly evacuation of the school buildings by standing along exit routes (particularly alongside the roads outside of the school) to ensure that pupils and staff can leave the premises safely. It is not the responsibility of Fire Marshalls to fight fires.

## Role of Teaching Staff

Teaching staff are responsible for escorting their pupils safely out of the building (with the support of PEEPS for those children with disabilities) in an orderly fashion. They are responsible for conducting a head count on arrival at the muster point and for ensuring that the name of anyone who cannot be accounted for is passed immediately to the Fire Safety Officer.

## Procedure in the Event of a Fire

In the event of a fire, safety and preservation of life will override all other considerations. The safe evacuation of all pupils and staff is our priority. Buildings and property come second and no one should attempt to fight any fire at the expense of their own, or anyone else's, safety. It is the duty of all staff to study and make themselves familiar with the school's emergency evacuation procedures. As part of the regular review of the school's risk assessment, the school's arrangements for ensuring fire safety will be under continual review.

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## Emergency Evacuation Procedures

It is the responsibility of individual members of staff to ensure the safe evacuation of all pupils for whom they are responsible, to a previously designated muster point. It is the responsibility of the designated PEEP to ensure the safe evacuation of their designated person.

The Junior School operates an evacuation system based on attendance register and headcount. A baton system is in place at the Senior School to ensure that all areas of the building are checked upon evacuation.

When an alarm sounds, pupils should be marshalled in an orderly fashion via the nearest escape route and, if possible, any open windows should be closed. The class teacher will always bring up the rear. If possible, doors should be closed behind the group. It is important for staff to be familiar with alternative escape routes in the event that the primary route is blocked. Use of any lifts by pupils and staff to evacuate a building is strictly forbidden.

The group will assemble at the predetermined place of safety, which is the Hartford Cricket Field for the **Senior School**, where batons should be handed to the Director of Teaching and Learning.

For the **Junior School** there are two muster points; the hard standing across the road from the Reception play area and the rear play area.. On arrival, names should be checked against the attendance register.

The fire alarm system does not automatically alert the fire service. The fire service will be called by a member of staff as soon as it has been confirmed that a real fire situation exists.

As a general rule, if someone is missing, the building should not be re-entered but information should be given immediately to the Fire Safety Officer who will liaise with the fire service to make a search. Nobody should re-enter the building until being given express permission to do so by the senior fire officer present.

Visitors on site will be made aware of fire safety arrangements upon arrival.

## Evacuation of Disabled Persons from the School Buildings

Students and employees with a disability should be identified and a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) prepared for the person concerned. The timetable for those pupils and staff for whom PEEPS have been prepared are kept in a wallet by the main school fire panel.

After taking into account all known risks, the Head of Estates, in conjunction with the School Nurse, will propose specific procedures for assisting in the evacuation of persons with a known disability. Where required a 'buddy' will be appointed for any student or employee requiring assistance in an emergency evacuation. Where teachers have a pupil with a known disability, they must ensure that the pupil is aware that the alarm has been triggered and that they follow the evacuation procedure accordingly.

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Wheelchair users or any person with difficulty walking (for example anyone temporarily using crutches) should make their way to a designated fire refuge area and wait until they are assisted to evacuate the building. The fire refuge areas are clearly signed and listed in both the Senior and Junior Fire Procedures.

## Fire Warning Equipment

The school is equipped with fire warning devices designed to activate the school's alarm system in the event of a fire. The warning of a fire will be a siren, which will sound continuously.

The alarm will be tested regularly, (weekly, Friday 07:15am at the Senior School and Friday 8:00am at the Junior School unless an external or oral examination is in progress) and reports of inaudibility are to be reported.

Call buttons are located throughout the building. In the event of a fire, the call point should be operated and the school alarm will automatically sound.

This equipment will be maintained regularly.

## Fire-fighting Equipment

Fire-fighting equipment (commonly known as "fire extinguishers") are located throughout the school. Different appliances are designed for different applications and conditions; this will have been taken into account with respect to their siting. The main purpose of fire extinguishers is to clear a path to an exit.

Staff will receive training in the safe operation of portable fire-fighting equipment and the appropriate applications for particular items.

No attempt should ever be made to tackle a fire unless it is very minor and poses no significant threat to the occupants of the building.

This equipment is to be maintained regularly. It is a disciplinary offence – for pupils and staff alike – to tamper with any fire-fighting or alarm equipment.

## Evacuation Drills

An evacuation will be carried out at least once a term either in the form of an accidental or planned practice evacuation. After each evacuation, staff are required to provide information and observations on positive and negative aspects. The conditions and timings of the practice will be varied, such that sometimes no notice will be given to either Staff or Students, and sometimes a false fire will be used to block a major exit route to test how people cope when required to deviate from the normal route.

## Fire Prevention Measures

Staff should follow good housekeeping practices, including those listed below, which can eliminate or reduce many fire risks:

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- Sources of ignition should be controlled. Heaters should not be covered up and electrical sockets should not be overloaded.
- Electrical appliances are tested by an NICEIC qualified electrical engineer
- Catering equipment is switched off at the end of every day
- Lightning and earthing protection conforms to BS 6651-1999. This is tested annually by a specialist contractor
- All gas appliances are tested and serviced annually by Gas Safe Registered Engineers
- Portable electrical equipment should be checked regularly.
- Rubbish should not be left lying around.
- Care should be taken to avoid large flammable displays along escape routes.
- Escape routes should always be kept clear and fire exit doors never blocked.
- Outside rubbish storage (bins) should always be located away from buildings.
- The safe storage areas for flammable chemicals in the Senior School Science block will be used whenever necessary.
- Exit routes are regularly walked by the Fire Safety Officers at both schools to ensure that they are, and remain, clear of obstruction.

## Outside Security

In the knowledge that most school fires occur when school is not in session, the school places a high priority on outside security.

## Risk Assessment

The School contracts its fire risk assessment activity to a health and safety specialist (Compliance Education) and works with that company to implement its findings and recommendations. This is kept under review by the Head of Estates.

## Record Keeping

All records relating to Fire Safety are retained in the Estates office and are available to view. These are also reported termly via the H&S Dashboard. These include –

- Gas Safety Certificates
- PAT Testing Certificates
- Lift Service and Statutory Inspection Reports
- Fire Log Book which contains records of fire safety issues is maintained by the Deputy Fire offices at each site and includes details of fire drills, hot works permits, the storage of hazardous materials
- Lightning Conductor Testing
- Fire Fighting Appliances Service Records
- Electrical Installation test certificates including 5 year and 3 year (for those areas let for community use) fixed wiring test certificates