

Old Vicarage School

Fire Safety Policy and Emergency Evacuation Procedures

This document sets the policy on how the regulations are interpreted at our School.

Legal Status:

- Regulatory Requirements, Part 3, Paragraph 13 of the Independent School Standards (England) Regulations 2010, as amended 2013
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997 (as amended 1999)
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Fire Precautions Act 1971

Applies to:

- the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the out of school care and extra-curricular activities inclusive of those outside of the normal school hours;
- all staff (teaching and support staff), the proprietors and volunteers working in the school

Related Documents:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Accessibility Plan

Availability

- This Policy is made available to parents, staff and students by requesting a copy at the School Office.
- The Fire Safety Policy and Emergency Evacuation Procedures along with relevant procedural documents, are provided either in hard copy or electronically to all new employees and volunteers before commencing work at The Old Vicarage School. They are required to state that they have read and understood such documents.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head of School.
- The Proprietors will undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:

Date: February 2025

Matthew Adshead
Proprietor

Jenny Adshead
Bursar and Proprietor

Kerry Wise
Head of School

This policy was last reviewed by the Head of School in February 2025 and will next be reviewed annually, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require. All staff will be informed of the updated/reviewed policy and it is made available to them in either a hard copy or electronic format.

Fire Safety

Our Fire Safety Policy and Procedures are based on risk assessment, a duty to maintain fire precautions which are for the use of fire fighters and new duties on fire authorities for fire safety, investigation and testing. The fire safety arrangements in Old Vicarage School have been dictated by the provisions of the Fire Safety Acts, where, in such premises, there are at any one time either:

- a) More than twenty people at work; or
- b) More than ten people at work elsewhere than on the ground floor,
then the owner or occupier of the premises is required to apply for a fire certificate.

On establishing Old Vicarage School, the Proprietors liaised with Derby Fire Authority to determine the need for a Fire (Means of Escape) Certificate required by the Act. The Bursar has undertaken a fire risk assessment in accordance with the Fire Precautions Workplace Regulations. The Bursar ensures compliance and this is viewed as a minimum standard to be achieved. The Bursar will ensure any further modifications required as a result in changes in legislation or established best practice are approved by the Derby Fire Authority.

In accordance with legislation, there is an annual Health and Safety Fire Risk Assessment.

In compliance with both regulations and best practice, the Proprietors have ensured that:

- Each week, the fire call point is tested;
- Adequate and suitable fire extinguishing appliances are provided and maintained.
- Suitable means of fire detection and signalling of the presence of fire is provided and maintained;
- Adequate means of escape are provided and maintained;
- Suitable signs designating fire fighting equipment and means of escape are provided and maintained;
- A fire logbook is provided and maintained;
- Fire training is provided to employees;
- Evacuation drills are undertaken at least termly and the results recorded;
- Suitable fire procedures are published in respect of:
 - Action to be taken on discovering a fire.
 - Action to be taken on hearing the alarm.
 - Responsibility of key personnel in the event of a fire.

Emergency Contact

A Pro-forma for emergency contact telephone numbers is issued to parents at the beginning of each academic year and this is to be completed and returned to the School Office as soon as possible. Notification of any change to these details must be reported to the School Office. Every employee at the School has been asked to complete a form giving details of next of kin, emergency contact numbers, and relevant details about medication. If they do not wish to do this, a “disclaimer” must be signed.

Were there ever to be a disaster or crisis affecting the staff and/or pupils of the School, there would be need for easy access to certain data. It would also be essential for considered procedures to be pre-determined to avoid the risk of ill-considered action being taken during a time of stress.

- The primary aim of our Fire Policy is to safeguard life and to this end the Bursar will assume this responsibility. Policies and procedures are available for all staff who are required to be familiar with and apply them.
- Regular health and safety inspections are carried out by the Bursar, as the Health and Safety Manager.
- Advice is taken from the Fire Brigade Inspector and appropriate specialist advisors.
Problems will be noted, prioritised and acted upon appropriately.
- Outside teachers, visitors and contractors will be required to take note of and follow our emergency procedures.
- Public events are assessed for all risks including fire.
- Fire Drills are held regularly, at least once a term and timed. Records of fire drills are kept in the Log Book on Sharepoint.
- Escape routes are clearly labelled and lead to a safe assembly point.

- All staff and pupils are instructed on action to be taken in the event of an emergency.
- Every room has prominently displayed clear notices describing the action to be taken.
- Fire doors are clearly labelled and unlocked.
- Clear and prominent signage directs visitors to the nearest evacuation route.
- The Head of School checks that areas are evacuated and is on hand to assist those with a disability.
- Arrangements are in place for summoning the Fire Brigade.
- The designated assembly point is at a safe distance from the building and not on a route which may be used by the emergency services.
- A roll call is taken using class registers, staff signing in book, visitors book and children signing in and out book.
- The alarm system is tested regularly and audible in every part of the main building, arrangements are made to notify outside classrooms.
- The alarm is never switched off and is routinely serviced.
 - All the fire fighting equipment is recommended by the Fire Safety Consultants and checked on a regular basis.
- Electrical equipment is regularly checked and maintained by an approved electrical tester.
- Regulations concerning the control and storage of flammable liquids are followed.
- All appropriate risk assessments are in place and checked by the Bursar as Health and Safety Manager (HSM).

Fire-fighting equipment will be regularly serviced and clearly labelled. Signage is regularly checked and updated in line with current legal requirements.

There is a fire drill/emergency evacuation procedure at least termly. Apart from the first alarm of term, which is notified to staff, neither staff nor children are warned of an impending practice. It is essential therefore, that each member of staff is aware of what the evacuation arrangements are for each area of the School. These are detailed in this document. In case of a fire or bomb threat, evacuation procedures will be tested each term. The evacuation and safety of visitors and contractors will be the responsibility of the person who they are visiting or working for.

The School has:

- Fire Safety Policy and Procedures
- Fire Safety Audit
- Evacuation Procedures

In accordance with statutory requirements there is an annual fire safety audit. which All fire fighting equipment is checked every six months by an approved contractor and records maintained.

Fire Drill

Staff are also informed of the location of the fire extinguishers. All employees and voluntary helpers are provided with a personal copy of the fire drill procedures including:

- Evacuation from the premises;
- Exit routes;
- Checking the children are present;
- Their responsibilities regarding the children they are supervising.

A copy of these procedures is also available in each classroom.

Execution

Our fire safety policy regime mirrors closely the Old Vicarage School health and safety (H&S) systems and procedures. Fire safety is by definition a subset of the current H&S systems and procedures. Our School's H&S Policy starts with a statement that the Proprietor of the School has a duty to take reasonable precautions to

safeguard the lives of employees and other visitors. In this case pupils at our School are included as employees rather than visitors to the site.

Allocation of Responsibilities

Responsibilities are as follows:

	Tasks	Comments
Proprietor	Responsible in law for what happens on the premises	
Responsible Person (Bursar/Proprietor)	Plans, implements, monitors and reviews the policy	
Fire Marshall	Assist the Responsible Person in the Management of H&S including fire precautions	Member of staff appointed by the Head of School
Employees	Comply with H&S policy and take reasonable steps to protect themselves and colleagues at work.	
Visitors	Should be briefed on any H&S issues that will effect them, as required, when they are on site	

Risk Assessment. The Responsible Person (Bursar) produces the risk assessment for the purpose of identifying the general fire precautions that need to be taken. The Risk Assessment is based on an understanding of the relevant legislation, guidance and good practice in the fire prevention field.

Fire Precautions Maintenance

The following arrangements have been made for maintenance:

	Item	By whom
Ongoing	Check signage, safety clips on fire extinguishers, ensure that fire doors are not wedged open	Head of School
Weekly	Test fire panels on Friday between 5-6pm	Secretary
Bi-Annually	Test all fire extinguishers, check all fire blankets. Replace any missing fire evacuation signs.	External Contractor

Smoking

Smoking can be a major source of fires. Smoking on the School's premises is prohibited.

Training

The Head of School will arrange annual training for staff.

Practice Evacuation

The aim of the practices is to familiarise children and staff with evacuation procedures, a full evacuation is considered successful when a building is evacuated within 3 minutes. The Head of School will set off the fire panel and monitor the time it takes to evacuate the buildings, these details are to be kept for record keeping purposes. The following practices should occur every term:

	Detail	By whom
Whole School	One daytime evacuation practice	Head of School

Action on Hearing a Fire Evacuation Bell. The following actions should occur when anyone hears a fire evacuation bell:

- **Evacuate** all buildings and carry out roll call
- **Confirm** what has happened; decide whether to call the fire brigade
- **Control** re-entering to buildings. The Fire Marshall should investigate all false alarms, recording all details for record keeping purposes.
- **Fire fighting** The aim is to evacuate the buildings as quickly as possible. Staff are prohibited from fighting fire unless all available exits are blocked.

Annual Review

This document will be reviewed annually as part of the H&S Annual Report.

Overview of hazards, people at risk, level of risk, records and review.

1. Identification of hazards.

- General introduction.** With only a small number of people likely to be affected it is relatively easy to keep risk management under continual review.
- Sources of ignition.** The number of sources of ignition are relatively few. There are no hot surfaces, electrical sockets etc are constantly kept under review to minimise risk, there are few chances of mechanically generated sparks – contractors are supervised by School staff.
- Sources of fuel.** The School is on both mains gas and electric supply.
- Sources of oxygen.** Doors are kept shut to reduce the levels of draft (an accelerant) and slow the spread of fire; there are no stored oxygen containers on site. All doors are fire doors and must not be wedged open.

2. People at risk.

- By day.** By day the numbers fluctuate and although at this stage we are a very small School with a high staff ratio there are often external people using the premises.
- By night.** At night there is nobody in the School.
- During holidays.** During the holiday periods there could again be occasions when the School is used for activities and continuing professional development but these numbers are low and non OVS Staff do not have access to Main building apart from toilets at back door.
- People especially at risk.** At this stage, there are no people with a registered disability in this category.

3. Evaluation of risk.

- Overall evaluation of risk.** The overall evaluation of the risk of a fire starting is assessed as **LOW** because there are no ignition sources and combustible materials are kept away from them. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the School premises or the entrance area. Electrical equipment is inspected regularly and tested, and the chance of arson is assessed as low due to the security arrangements of the School.
- Evaluation of risk to people from fire.** Risk to people from fire is low.
- Reduction of fire hazards.** All adults are briefed on induction and annually on the importance of good housekeeping to prevent the build-up of combustible material.
- Reduction of risk to people.**
- Detection and warning.** The premises are well protected with fire detection equipment, emergency lighting, warning bells and a sprinkler system.

- f. **Fire fighting.** All staff are trained in using fire extinguishers. Although the School policy is not to fight fire unless it is to ensure a safe evacuation.
 - g. **Fire Marshall.** The fire Marshall will receive annual training.
 - h. **Escape routes.** Main escape routes are all signed.
 - i. **Signs and notices.** Signs and notices comply with H&S (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996.
4. **Records and Review.** The Head of School as the Responsible Person plans, implements, monitors and reviews the fire safety policy. She is responsible for record keeping and maintaining the emergency evacuation and liaison with other interested parties.

Fire Prevention, Control & Fire Marshalls

Introduction

The Head of School is appointed as the Fire Safety Coordinator at our School. She is responsible for ensuring that all procedures, precautionary measures and safety standards are clearly understood and complied with. To assist the Head of School staff have been appointed Fire Marshalls.

Appointments

The following personnel are appointed as Fire Marshall: Zoe Smedley

Tasks

Fire Marshalls have the following tasks (in priority order):

1. To ensure that all occupants of a building evacuate the building in an orderly manner using the recognised evacuation routes.
2. To assist with the control of pupils, staff and visitors in the fire assembly area
3. If there has been a false alarm the Head of School will decide when to silence all fire panels and re-enter the building.
4. To assist by reporting faulty fire fighting and fire detection equipment.
5. To make recommendations to improve fire safety.

Appropriate procedures are in place for ensuring that safety precautions are properly managed, formulated and disseminated to all staff. A copy of the School evacuation procedure is available in all key areas. There is one exit door from each room and on leaving the room the exit routes are clearly displayed. All staff, visitors and volunteers should be fully conversant with the evacuation procedures in the case of a fire/bomb threat. The procedure for this purpose at Old Vicarage School is in full at the bottom of this document.

Bomb Threats

The aim is to prevent bomb or incendiary attacks, or when this is not possible, to minimise their effects in buildings to which members of the public must have access. This must be done without imposing unacceptable restrictions on them and the Proprietors must weigh the seriousness of the threat against the need to maintain business as usual and decide the extent to which counter measures should be adopted.

Public Access

Consideration should be given to dividing the areas to which the public usually require access from the rest of the building. The rest of the building can then be made a secure area.

Package Bombs and Hoaxes

Postal bombs are likely to be in large parcels, rather in flat packages. Staff should be on their guard for:

- The post mark – especially foreign, and any name/address of sender.
- The writing – especially of foreign style.
- Stains – these could be sweating explosives.
- The smell – usually an aroma of marzipan or almonds indicate an explosive.

- The sound – if the parcel rattles, ticks, etc.

Telephone Calls

These are more of a common occurrence than parcels. All members of staff should be aware of the necessary procedures should they receive such a call:

- Alert security/police immediately.
- Above all, be calm, listen carefully, and report exactly what is said.

Fire and Bomb Alerts

In the event of a fire or bomb alert the Head of School or designated person must:

- Ring the fire alarm to activate the evacuation of the premises of all adults and children (see fire drill procedure).
- Phone 999 for the fire brigade and police.
- Check that the evacuation procedure has been followed.
- Remain at the front of the school to meet the fire brigade/police and direct them to the incident.
- All children and adults must remain outside.
- Only when the all clear has been given will registers be sent back to classes enabling children and adults to re-enter the premises.

If an alert is a practice, then the fire brigade must be informed before the evacuation of the premises takes place.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure: Fire

- The bell will ring continuously.
- Leave all bags/belongings.
- Close all windows and turn off lights.
- Lead out in single file and in silence.
- Last person out close the door.
- Go to class positions on bottom lawn.
- Wait for class teacher.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure: Bomb

- Leave all bags/belongings.
- Open all the windows, turn off the lights.
- Lead out in single file and in silence.
- Last person out close the door.
- Go to class positions on the bottom lawn. keep well away from the building.
- Wait for class teacher

Once Outside:

- Class teachers should stay with their class, keep the children silent and check if they are present.
- Office staff deliver registers to Class Teachers.
- Class Teachers should report to the Head of School that all children officially recorded on registers as present are present.
- All teaching and support staff should report their presence to the Head of School.

Prevention of Arson

Arsonists in schools often start their first fires by chance. Perhaps they break into the school just for the hell of it. ("Let's break into the school," "yeah" – and the bravado and adrenaline take over).

There is no planning, no organisation. Having got inside, they can't find too much to steal, they have matches in their pocket, they see the waste paper bin and they start a fire. It all happens by chance. This chance element in arson makes some people believe that arson is the hardest of all the security risks control.

With the number attacks on schools rising rapidly and the number of large fires also rising fast, some credence is given to this view. But the fact that the action of most arsonists is either unplanned or badly planned does give the school a good chance of preventing the fires.

Because it seems to be easy, because they don't get caught, because of the thrill they get from the adrenaline rush, because the school seems powerless to do anything about the problem, the arsonists do it again – which is why school fires come in cycles.

Larger scale attacks – a serious attempt to burn the whole school down – normally come after the smaller-scale events. Some arson is aimed at hiding the details of another crime – although this is rare in schools.

Arsonists do not normally bring the method of starting the fire into the school – they are reliant on finding scrap paper, etc., in the school to start the fire. There are few instances of arsonists seemingly tearing up books etc. in order to create the blaze – they look for loose paper on desks, in waste bins, etc.

The school policy on arson prevention is therefore:

- As far as is practicable inflammable materials are locked away.
- All waste bins are emptied into an external refuse bin.

Fire Drills

- Evacuation drills are carried out once a term. There is an additional announced Fire Drill in the Christmas Term.
- The first drill should be carried out as soon as the new year begins so that all new pupils and staff are aware of the procedures.

Fire Alarm Test

The fire alarms are tested once a week by the Secretary and records are kept on Sharepoint. The Secretary is responsible for reporting any defect and ensuring that they are repaired. The Fire Alarm system is serviced regularly by our Fire Consultants, KKK Fire Protection.

Fire Fighting Equipment

Fire fighting equipment will be examined and is tested twice a year by a competent service engineer.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

A separate chart states and clarifies these procedures, and is to be found in all main rooms.

The Bursar will ensure that the emergency plan is reviewed on an annual basis, or sooner if changes occur that affect this plan.

APPENDIX ONE **FIRE PREVENTION POLICY**

This policy, which applies to the whole School inclusive of the Early Years Foundation Stage, is in support of the Health and Safety policy and the individual health and safety assessments. This policy is publicly available from the School Office.

RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of Head of School to ensure that regular fire drills are carried out, that a fire register is maintained and that adequate measures are in place to prevent fire, including risk assessments of all areas of the site and buildings.

It is the responsibility of the Secretary to ensure that fire alarms are tested regularly, that clear signage and fire notices are provided throughout the School and that all gas and electrical appliances are monitored for safety on a regular basis. The Bursar also keeps records of Fire Safety Inspections and takes advice from the visiting Fire Consultants.

The Bursar will keep records as follows

- The fire risk assessment and its review
- The fire prevention policy
- Fire procedures and arrangements
- Training records
- Fire practice drills
- Certificates for the installation and maintenance of fire-fighting systems and equipment

It is the responsibility of all employees at the School to take reasonable precautions to prevent fire.

All staff and visitors to the School are required to sign in with the School Office. When running an event in School, it is the responsibility of the person leading the event to ensure that fire exits are pointed out and evacuation procedures made clear to any visitors. This is done as a safety briefing prior to the commencement of an event.

FIRE HAZARDS

The following fire hazards are identified:

- Smoking
- Electrical Equipment
- Naked flame and gas appliances (Applicable from September 2014)
- Portable heaters
- Laboratory equipment
- Lightning
- Flammable I combustible substances
- Arson

TO REDUCE RISK OF FIRE

- Smoking (The School is a non-smoking site. Smoking is not allowed on any part of the School site. (Read Health and Safety Policy)
- Electrical equipment is PAT tested every year.
- Electrical equipment is switched off when not in use and unplugged, if appropriate, at the end of the working day.
- Care is taken to ensure that electrical circuits are not overloaded, by using only fused extension cables, which should be fully unwound and PAT tested.
- Extension cables are never plugged into other extension cables and adaptor blocks are not used.

Naked flame and Gas Appliances (Applicable with new development from September 2014)

The use of the portable Bunsen burners is covered by the Science Laboratory risk assessment: all relevant staff and pupils are trained in their safe use and must wear correct safety clothing and goggles. Pupils may not approach naked flames without staff supervision. The Bunsen burners are regularly inspected and replaced as necessary. There is no fixed gas supply in practical areas.

Gas appliances elsewhere are regularly inspected and tested and the supply can be cut off in an emergency.

Portable heaters

Occasionally the use of additional heaters may be required. These appliances are inspected and tested regularly. They are sealed units which are plugged in. They must be positioned at a safe distance from any furniture and must never be covered.

Laboratory equipment

All laboratory equipment is regularly inspected and maintained in good working order, or labelled clearly as unserviceable, by Science staff.

Science staff (and pupils, where appropriate) are trained in its safe use; pupils are never allowed to enter a Science laboratory unsupervised and may never use laboratory equipment without staff supervision.

All potentially hazardous equipment and procedures are used/ carried out with strict adherence to CLEAPSS guidelines.

Flammable & combustible materials

- All new School furniture should conform to British Fire Safety Standards.
- Flammable or combustible materials are stored in accordance with COSHH.
- Flammable materials such as chemicals are kept in a secure store; stocks are inspected regularly and recorded and any obsolete stocks are disposed of safely in accordance with CLEAPSS (HAZCARDs).
- All containers/ storage areas are clearly and appropriately signed.
- Safety screens are used when experiments with highly combustible materials are carried out and there is a spark risk.
- Site security is monitored and reviewed regularly. Visitors are required to identify themselves and sign in at the School office during the working day.
- No unaccompanied visitors are to be on site at any time.
- Any strangers should be challenged, if it is safe to do so.
- In the event of any suspicious activity, the police should be called.

FURTHER MEASURES FOR FIRE SAFETY

- Escape routes should never be blocked and fire safety equipment should never be obstructed.
- Corridors and entrances are kept clear at all times; pupils and staff have designated space for storing bags, coats etc safely.
- At busy times supervising staff will ensure that bags are not left in corridors or doorways.
- Fire extinguishers, blankets and alarms are clearly signed and kept accessible at all times.
- Fire doors are installed at appropriate points around the building, in accordance with the advice of the inspecting Fire Officer; these are kept shut at all times.
- Emergency lighting of the fire exits is regularly tested.
- Smoke detectors are in use throughout the building and these are tested termly and records of the tests are kept.
- Rubbish should not be left adjacent to buildings. Bins are emptied on a daily basis. Larger exterior bins are never allowed to overflow and emptied once per week.
- Fire extinguishers of different kinds (water, foam, powder and CO2) are located strategically around the School site, according to the main type of fire risk posed.
- Mandatory signage around the buildings, indicating fire exits, evacuation procedures, action in case of an emergency is clearly displayed. The Bursar conducts a 'walkabout', to check for clear signage.
- Maintenance of fire fighting /identification equipment, maintenance of fire alarms and emergency lighting is undertaken by a competent BAFE (BS 5306 Part 3 Portable Extinguisher Maintenance and Modular Scheme SP203) approved company.

IN THE EVENT OF FIRE

- Evacuation procedures are regularly practiced at different times of the day every term.
- Fire notices are distributed throughout the buildings.
- Escape routes are clearly marked.
- There are regular reminders of this information during the year.
- Fire alarms are electronic sounders and sirens and are located strategically around the building and clearly signed.

TRAINING

- Staff receive general fire safety training at time of joining The Old Vicarage School and annually, records of the training are kept.
- Office Manager is trained at Fire Marshall Level (Zoe Smedley)
- Fire Marshall delivers refresher fire training to School staff as part of the Christmas Term Inset days
- Fire Marshall Training is updated every 3 years.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DISABLED

- If a pupil with a disability joins the School, an assessment of need is made prior to his/her arrival and risk assessment is carried out according to individual need.
- Ramps are available for use should a wheelchair user need to be evacuated from the building.
- All pupils are required to practise regular fire drills; in the event of a disability preventing independent response to a fire alarm, a
- Designated member of staff would be responsible for the evacuation of the disabled individual.

LONE WORKING

Staff are encouraged to inform the Head of School if they are planning to work at times when the School is not normally in operation. Lone working is discouraged and it is recommended that staff work during the holidays only at those times when the office is staffed.

OTHER USERS OF THE SCHOOL SITE

Any organisation or group hiring School premises for their own use hold their own fire drills at different times of the day, using the regular evacuation procedures. Risk Assessments are available to these visiting groups prior to their arrival, so that they can make their own independent risk assessments.