



Fire Management Policy

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Fire Management Policy

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1. Scope

- 1.1 This Policy forms part of the health and safety arrangements for Bedford School. It outlines the arrangements in place to achieve compliance with the duties contained within the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, and specifically with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022.
- 1.2 It is applicable to all Estate buildings, including Boarding Houses and offsite provisions including Gordon Field and Ickwell (herein referred to as 'Sites').

2. Interpretation

- 2.1 The following definitions apply to this policy:
- 'the Order' – the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
 - **Responsible Person** – the legal term used in the Order upon whom the relevant duties fall. At Bedford School this is the **Director of Finance and Operations**.
 - FRA – Fire Risk Assessment
 - FMP – Fire Management Plan
 - PEEP – Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 The responsible person **must**:
- Carry out a fire risk assessment of any premises under their control (see below).
 - Appoint one or more competent persons to assist in undertaking any of the preventive and protective measures required by the Order. A competent person is someone with enough training and experience or knowledge and other qualities to be able to implement these measures properly.
 - Provide employees with clear and relevant information on the risks to them identified by the fire risk assessment, about the measures taken to prevent fires, and how these measures will protect them if a fire breaks out.
 - Consult employees (or their elected representatives) via the School Health & Safety Committee about nominating people to carry out particular roles in connection with fire safety and about proposals for improving the fire precautions.
 - Before employing someone under 18 years, provide a parent with clear and relevant information on the risks to that child identified by the risk assessment, the measures in place to prevent/protect them from fire and inform any other responsible person of any risks to that child arising from their undertaking.

- Inform non-employees, such as students and temporary or contract workers, of the relevant risks to them, and provide them with information about who the nominated competent persons, and about the fire safety procedures for the premises.
- Provide the employer of any person from an outside organisation who is working in the premises (e.g. agency providing temporary staff) with clear and relevant information on the risks to those employees and the preventive and protective measures taken. And to provide those employees with appropriate instructions and relevant information about the risks to them.
- Consider the presence of any dangerous substances and the risk this presents to relevant persons from fire.
- Establish a suitable means of contacting the emergency services and provide them with any relevant information about dangerous substances.
- Provide appropriate information, instruction and training to employees, during their normal working hours, about the fire precautions in their workplace, when they commence employment, and from time to time throughout the period they are employed.
- Ensure that the premises and any equipment provided in connection with firefighting, fire detection and warning, or emergency routes and exits are covered by a suitable system of maintenance, and are maintained by a competent person in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair.

4. Fire Risk Assessment

4.1 All buildings must have a Fire Risk Assessment carried out by a competent person. The assessment must be reviewed annually and recommissioned every 5 years. It should be recommissioned sooner should any of the following occur:

- A new building be constructed
- A significant proportion of an existing building be repurposed or refurbished, especially if this creates a room within a room (refer to the [HMGOV FRA Educational Premises](#) guidance)
- A fire incident
- Should information come to light that suggests the FRA is no longer accurate.

4.2 The initial and 5-yearly FRA must be carried out by an external specialist with experience of carrying out FRAs in the Education Sector and hold membership/accreditation from one of the bodies listed here: <https://www.bedsfire.gov.uk/Business-safety/Fire-risk-assessments/Choosing-a-fire-risk-assessor.aspx>

4.3 When selecting a competent fire risk assessor for boarding houses, it must be verified that any potential assessor has experience of assessing not just educational premises but sleeping accommodation also.

4.4 The FRA will generate an action plan identifying issues that require attention, normally with timescales for completion. This action plan must be followed.

5. Fire Detection

5.1 Each of the school premises must have adequate means of fire detection. The detection equipment will be maintained and regularly checked by competent persons.

6. Fire Management Plan

6.1 The School has a Fire Management Plan (FMP) detailing the following:

- The arrangements in place for fire safety management
- Fire Action Notice information
- The type of fire detection and alarm system installed
- The firefighting equipment provided
- Training resources and delivery methods
- Identification of areas of greatest fire risk (chemical stores, hot works areas)
- PEEP arrangements
- Servicing and maintenance arrangements
- Service and maintenance provider contact details

6.2 The FMP must be reviewed annually and in combination with the fire risk assessment, will satisfy ISI requirements for a Fire Prevention Policy.

7. Servicing and Maintenance Requirements

7.1 The fire alarm is serviced every six months by a competent contractor.

7.2 Fire alarm panels are checked daily by a competent employee.

7.3 Fire alarms are tested weekly by a competent employee.

7.4 Firefighting equipment is serviced annually by a competent contractor.

7.5 Emergency lights are tested monthly and serviced annually by a competent employee.

7.6 All gas plant and appliances are serviced annually by a competent contractor.

7.7 All appliances in the commercial kitchen are serviced annually by a competent contractor.

- 7.8 The school's lightning protection is serviced annually by a competent contractor.
- 7.9 PAT testing is carried out as required by a competent contractor.
- 7.10 Daily records are not required for daily checks (where only exception reporting is required), however, weekly, monthly, quarterly, six-monthly, and annual checks must be documented and stored in an easily retrievable format. This is especially important where corrective actions are identified as necessary.

8. Fire Log Book

- 8.1 Bedford School uses the Every CAFM system to log and monitor compliance activities, and all activities are recorded here.
- 8.2 Boarding Houses have a hard copy Fire Log book which is stored within each boarding house.

9. Fire Drills

- 9.1 Fire drills must be carried out every term. In boarding houses, drills must be carried out at least once per term and in boarding time. One drill per year must be carried out while the boys are asleep.
- 9.2 The objectives of a fire drill are to:
- identify any weaknesses in the evacuation plan;
 - test the procedure following any recent alteration or changes to working practices;
 - familiarise new occupants with procedures; and
 - test the arrangements for disabled people.
- 9.3 Where premises have multiple escape routes, unavailability of one escape route should be simulated to mirror the circumstances likely to be found in a real fire. By rotating this scenario to different escape routes each time a drill is carried out individuals will be encouraged to use alternative escape routes that they may not normally use.
- 9.4 Ideally, fire drills should be unannounced to ensure the outcomes are broadly representative of a real emergency. However, it may not be practicable or safe to always carry out drills in this manner and these factors should be considered when planning a fire drill.
- 9.5 Throughout the drill the responsible person and nominated observers should aim to identify:
- communication difficulties with regard to the roll call and establishing that everyone is accounted for

- the use of the nearest available escape routes as opposed to common circulation routes
 - difficulties with the opening of final exit doors
 - difficulties experienced by people with disabilities or young children
 - the roles of specified people, e.g. fire wardens
 - inappropriate actions, e.g. stopping to collect personal items, attempting to use lifts, not leaving the building etc, and
 - windows and doors not being closed as people leave.
- 9.6 On-the-spot debriefs are useful to discuss the fire drill, encouraging feedback from everybody. Later, reports from fire wardens and observations from people should be collated and reviewed. Any conclusions and remedial actions should be recorded and implemented. Key findings should be reported back to the H&S Committee.

10. Fire Wardens

10.1 The role of a fire warden may include:

- helping those on the premises to leave;
 - using firefighting equipment if safe to do so;
 - liaising with the fire and rescue service on arrival;
 - shutting down vital or dangerous equipment; and
 - performing a supervisory/managing role in any fire situation.
- 10.2 Porters, Security, Events and Maintenance staff should undertake the role of Fire Warden, and Fire Wardens must be present at all external events.

11. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)

- 11.1 A personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) is required for anyone who may have special needs that could affect their ability to evacuate the premises safely. This could be a disability of any kind, an expectant mother, someone with a temporary medical condition etc. It is essential to consider if any visitor to the site will require a PEEP.
- 11.2 To ensure appropriate measures are taken, an individual's needs should ideally be discussed with them.
- 11.3 A template PEEP is available from the Medical Centre.

12. Training

- 12.1 Fire safety training must be provided to all staff. The training content should include the following components.

- 12.2 Staff will be informed in relation to:-
- (a) action to take if they discover a fire, including how to activate the fire alarm;
 - (b) action to take on hearing the alarm, including location and use of exits and escape routes; and
 - (c) action to take in the event of a bomb alert.
- 12.3 Pupils will be informed of exits and escape routes and it is especially important that boarding students are provided with this information on their first day at the school.
- 12.4 Fire Marshals will be trained in:-
- (a) emergency evacuation procedures;
 - (b) use of fire extinguishers; emergency procedures; and
 - (c) how to spot fire hazards.
 - (d) the provision of "safety assistance" in the event of a fire.
- 12.5 Fire Marshals will receive regular refresher training.
- 12.6 Visitors and contractors:-
- (a) on arrival at the School will receive a briefing to ensure that they are aware of the policy procedures and assembly points in the event of an evacuation.
 - (b) For events with large numbers of attendees, such as open days, concerts an announcement will be made at the beginning of the event regarding evacuation arrangements.

13. Hiring Out of Premises or Facilities

- 13.1 Where premises are let out to third parties, it is essential that the division of responsibilities for fire safety are clearly established as part of the contract for hire. The **Responsible person** has delegated this to the **Events Officer** who must have particular regard to the hirer's potential unfamiliarity with the layout of the premises and the fire safety provisions employed.
- 13.2 In the majority of situations, the Responsible person will retain overall responsibility, however, some of the check-monitoring activities may be transferred to the hirer.

14. Fire Prevention

- 14.1 Boarders bringing personal items into boarding houses must make these available for PAT testing.

- 14.2 With the exception of a single designated area (behind the dining hall), the School Estate is a no smoking site, this includes e-cigarettes.
- 14.3 External bins are kept in compounds to reduce the risk of arson. Excess material / refuse is stored with due regard to the threat of arson.
- 14.4 A risk assessment must be carried out before undertaking any activity that includes the use of naked flames.
- 14.5 Any hot works must be undertaken under a Hot Works Permit – issued by the Head of Maintenance – see ‘Hot Works Policy’.

15. References

A: Handbook for the Inspection of Independent Schools: Section B Part 3: The Regulatory Requirements of Independent Schools, March 2009 version. (www.isi.net).

B. Part II of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005, (www.opsi.gov.uk)

C. Fire Safety Act 2021

D. "Fire Risk Assessment," Ecclesiastical Risk Services Ltd guidance note (www.ecclesiastical.com)

E. "Fire Safety" Chapter O of the Bursars' Guide by Owen David Risk Management Ltd (www.owendavidsafety.net)

F. "Fire Safety: In new and existing school buildings" DfE Guidance, (www.gov.uk/df)

G. "Fire Safety Risk Assessment for Educational Premises" and "[Fire Safety Risk Assessment: Sleeping Accommodation](#)," DCLG publications (www.communities.gov.uk)

H: Education Funding Agency "Fire risk during school maintenance or building works" (Nov 2016)

I: Bedford School Fire Management Plan

J: Bedford School Evacuation Procedure