



FIRE SAFETY MANAGEMENT POLICY & PROCEDURES

Recommended by:

Chief Operating Officer

Ratified by:

**Finance and Resources
Committee**

Signed:

G Bower

Position on the Board:

Chair to F&R Committee

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**Policy.Tier
(Central/Hub/School):**

Central

Fire Safety Management Policy & Procedures

1. Introduction

Central Region Schools Trust (the Trust) is a responsible employer and we take our fire safety duties very seriously.

The effects of a fire could be catastrophic and could have a devastating effect on the schools and is, potentially the greatest threat to individual health and safety in the schools.

Management of fire safety is therefore essential to ensure that fires are unlikely to occur; but if they do occur they are likely to be controlled quickly, effectively and safely, and that all occupants can escape to a place of safety easily and quickly.

This policy has been formulated in line with our legal obligations to staff, pupils, contractors and visitors under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Fire safety is everyone's responsibility. All staff, pupils, contractors and visitors are required to follow Trust and School procedures and to co-operate with staff to achieve the highest standards of fire safety.

2. Policy Statement

It is the Trust's policy to:

- Ensure that all staff, pupils, contractors, visitors and members of the public are protected from the risk of fire;
- Ensure that all buildings comply with all statutory requirements;
- Undertake suitable and sufficient fire risk assessments and to identify and implement reasonably practicable control measures to control risks from fire;
- Provide staff, pupils, contractors and visitors with sufficient and appropriate fire awareness, instruction and training **with the support of our Health and Safety Providers**
- Complete regular fire evacuation drills and testing of emergency equipment; and
- Ensure effective liaison with the local emergency services as appropriate

3. Fire Safety Strategy

- Prevention strategy:
 - The Estates Lead will organise formal recorded Risk Assessments for the buildings; and these will be reviewed annually or revised when major changes take place to building structures;
 - Staff will be provided with fire safety training as appropriate;
 - Schools will be designed to ensure that the risks of fire through sources of ignition are suitably controlled; and risk assessments will be completed prior to occupation;
 - Materials will be stored appropriately and where necessary in specialised storage units or containers with signage;
 - Smoking will be prohibited from all Trust sites;
 - The storage of fuels and highly flammable materials will only be allowed with the permission of the Estates Lead;
 - Activities involving naked flames or heat production will only be allowed with the permission of the Estates Lead in assigned areas; and
 - Activities of contractors will be subject to hot works permits.
- Response Strategy:
 - All schools have established emergency action plans that are kept under review;
 - Fire wardens are trained and appointed to specific areas;

- Fire evacuation drills will be carried out once each term;
- Equipment to support the safe evacuation of individuals with mobility difficulties is provided where required;
- Relevant staff are trained in the use of evacuation equipment and fire extinguishers; and
- Suitable means of fire detection shall be regularly tested and checked within all facilities.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Estates Lead is responsible for health and safety and has overall responsibility for the effectiveness of the fire safety strategy. They will be supported in this role by the Chief Operating Officer, Estates staff, Principals and other members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

- The Estates Lead is accountable for the following across the Trust:
 - Monitoring compliance and effectiveness of the fire safety strategy and liaising with staff over their allocated duties and performance;
 - Effective implementation of procedures as outlined in the fire safety strategy policy and fulfil their allocated duties;
 - Ensuring all task and operational risk assessments are completed to identify the specific and general risks of fire and the preventative actions necessary within their managed areas;
 - Ensuring that staff are properly inducted in the local fire emergency procedures;
 - Ensuring that fire action notices are displayed in all classrooms, reception, staff rooms and other key locations;
 - Ensuring that all areas are covered by fire wardens;
 - Ensuring that appropriate emergency action plans are in place by working with the Principals; and
 - Keeping fire safety records.
- The Site Manager is responsible for the following in the relevant school:
 - Monitoring compliance and effectiveness of the fire safety strategy and liaising with staff over their allocated duties and performance;
 - Effective implementation of procedures as outlined in the fire safety strategy policy and fulfilling their allocated duties;
 - Ensuring all task and operational risk assessments are completed to identify the specific and general risks of fire and the preventative actions necessary within their managed areas;
 - Ensuring that staff are properly inducted in the local fire emergency procedures;
 - Ensuring that fire action notices are displayed in all classrooms, reception, staff rooms and other key locations;
 - Ensuring that all areas are covered by fire wardens;
 - Ensuring that appropriate emergency action plans are in place by working with the Principals; and
 - Keeping fire safety records.
- Teaching staff are responsible for the following:
 - Ensuring that a high standard of housekeeping is maintained within their areas of control;
 - Ensuring that all pupils and visitors within their areas participate in emergency evacuations; and
 - Ensuring that any fire safety concerns are reported immediately to the Site Manager.
- Employee's duties: Under fire safety legislation employees have a general duty to co-operate with their employer to include:
 - Being aware of and co-operating with the Trust's policies on action to be taken in the event of a fire and the recommended evacuation policies;
 - Proceeding to the external assembly points in an orderly fashion as directed by fire wardens
 - Being prepared to offer assistance to a fire warden if required;

- To ensure they observe the information, instruction and training provided regarding fire safety and evacuation procedures;
- To not knowingly place themselves and others at risk through their actions or failures to act at work; and
- To report immediately all hazards (including fire risk hazards) encountered in the workplace.

5. Arrangements for fire safety

- Risk assessments
 - As required under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, suitable and sufficient fire risk assessments will be carried out for each school.
 - These arrangements will be reviewed on an annual basis and in particular when significant changes to a building have been made.
 - The Estates Lead is accountable for this process across the Trust and will, as far as reasonably practicable, identify and implement control measures to control risks from fire.
 - The Site Manager is accountable for this process in the relevant school and will, as far as reasonably practicable, identify and implement control measures to control risks from fire.
- Testing and maintenance of fire detection and fire-fighting equipment
 - The Estates Lead is accountable for ensuring that all fire detection, fire alarm, fire-fighting equipment and emergency lighting systems across the Trust will be tested, maintained and serviced regularly in line with statutory requirements.
 - The Site Manager is responsible for ensuring that all fire detection, fire alarm, fire-fighting equipment and emergency lighting systems in the relevant school will be tested, maintained and serviced regularly in line with statutory requirements.
 - The Site Manager is responsible for ensuring that the fire alarms in the relevant school are tested weekly and for maintaining a log of all fire alarm tests. Tests must not be carried out at the same time every week if they are tested during the school day. It is acceptable for tests to be carried out before and after the school day.
- Training

Principals/Site Managers (nominated emergency co-ordinators)

 - The Estates Lead will ensure that the Site Managers will receive appropriate guidance and training for their role.

Site staff

- The Estates Lead will ensure that the site staff will receive appropriate guidance and training for their role.

Fire wardens

- Arrangements shall be put in place to ensure that there are sufficient employees trained and appointed as fire wardens.
- Fire wardens are primarily responsible for supervising and controlling the immediate response to an emergency situation and to ensure that staff and pupils follow emergency procedures.
- Fire warden appointments are reviewed periodically by the Estates Lead and the appointment of new fire wardens will be determined by the relevant Site Manager.
- Once appointed, fire wardens will receive additional guidance and information on their roles and responsibilities.

Staff

- All employees shall receive a fire safety briefing on commencement of employment, or if their employment location changes. All new staff will complete the EduCare 'Fire Safety in Education' online course as part of their induction.
- All staff will be required to attend annual fire safety refresher training as directed by the Trust.
- The Estates Lead is responsible for ensuring that employees who have specific responsibilities for fire safety management are trained appropriately to ensure statutory obligations are met.

Pupils

- All pupils shall be given fire safety instruction when they start at school. All pupils are expected to participate fully in fire drills supported by staff. There may be circumstances, especially involving younger children and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, where notice will be given of a drill to minimise risk / impact for those involved.
- Fire drills
 - In order to comply with legislation and to ensure that appointed staff members fully understand their role in any evacuation, each school will undertake scheduled fire drills at least once each term.
 - The Estates Lead will arrange, in consultation with the Principal, for evacuation drills to be conducted at suitable times and dates. As drills are intended primarily to train the staff rather than the public, it is not necessary to cover all eventualities.
 - The Estates Lead will ensure that programmes of drills are conducted and shall carry out this programme without prior warning being given.
 - In all drill situations a check will be undertaken in an attempt to avoid exam situations. However, arrangements must be in place to ensure that there is an appropriate response if alarms sound during an exam. The Exams Officer is responsible for ensuring that all invigilators respond as appropriate to the emergency.
- Evacuation and other responsibilities

Principals/Site Managers (nominated emergency co-ordinators)

- An emergency co-ordinator has been appointed for each school and emergency actions plans are in place along with guidance notes related to the particular school.
- On hearing the alarm or having been advised of the emergency situation, the Site Manager will go to the fire alarm panel to assess the issue and the Principal shall proceed to the Fire Assembly point.
- The Principal/Site Manager will allocate duties to any member of staff as required.
- The school's fire evacuation plan will state who should carry out the following duties:
 - Wear a high visibility jacket;
 - Take appropriate action to prevent people from re-entering the building;
 - Ensure that people move away from the building to the assembly point;
 - Prevent the movement of vehicles other than the Emergency Services on the site; and
 - To assess and co-ordinate, if considered necessary, the retrieval of staff and/or pupils at designated refuge points
- The Principal/Site Manager should hand over control to the Fire and Rescue Service when they arrive, informing them of the up-to-date situation and any outstanding problems-eg at risk persons or dangerous materials.
- When the Fire and Rescue Service indicate that the emergency is over, the Principal/Site Manager will organise the return of people to the building and ensure the school is returned to normal as quickly as possible by confirming the "all clear" or make a decision as to whether the school needs to be closed. This will be subject to advice given from the Emergency Services relating to damage or risk associated to the emergency/fire.

Fire wardens

- The fire warden is the designated person in their area.
- It is important that all staff including fire wardens conduct themselves in a calm and effective manner, setting an example to others and thereby contributing towards a safe and speedy evacuation.
- When the alarm sounds the duties of the fire wardens are to:
 - o Check all rooms including toilets in their area to make certain a complete evacuation of the area has taken place;
 - o Check all refuge points and ensure that a member of staff remains in attendance, if required and where possible to proceed to evacuate the person using an evacuation chair;
 - o Close all doors on evacuating the building;
 - o Report to the Principal/Site Manager or as directed by the school's fire evacuation plan and ensure that reporting in has been made;
 - o Notify the Principal/Site Manager of the whereabouts of any disabled persons awaiting evacuation;
 - o To ensure that all staff and pupils move away from the building; and
 - o Undertake any other duties (eg traffic control, marshalling duties etc) that may be assigned to them by the Principal/Site Manager.

Teaching Staff

- The prime responsibility of a teacher taking a class, at the time the alarm is sounded, is to secure the safe evacuation of their class from the building.
- Teachers should:
 - o Instruct pupils to proceed in silence to the nearest emergency exit and to the assembly point;
 - o Where persons with impairment are involved, assist those unable to use the stairs (if applicable) to the nearest refuge point and ensure that they or another member of staff waits with them;
 - o Ensure that the fire warden is made aware of their presence at that refuge point;
 - o If not required at a refuge point, proceed to supervise pupils to the assembly point and remain there with their class. Continue supervising the pupils throughout the emergency situation, ensuring they move away from the building;
 - o If working in a workshop or lab, ensure that all machines are switched off where it is safe to do so. Ensure that as long as no undue delay will be caused, all the gas and power supplies to equipment are shut off using the isolation means provided; and
 - o To provide support and assistance as necessary to ensure a smooth and effective evacuation.
- Teaching/achievement assistants will also have a role in this at some schools.
- When the "all clear" is given by the Site Manager, teachers will be allowed to return to the building with their pupils.

Support Staff

- The school's fire evacuation plan will state who should locate the visitor book, staff signing in and out book, student signing in late book and fire bag (if applicable) and take these to the assembly point. The relevant member(s) of staff should register all visitors and staff and inform the Principal/Site Manager of anyone who is unaccounted for.

Site Staff

- Following an alarm, Site Staff will be responsible for:

- Assisting the Site Manager in establishing the facts and general information about the fire and guiding the fire services to the nearest control panels, isolation valves and locations of concern;
- Assist in securing buildings as directed;
- Aid the controlling of traffic and people as directed;
- Aid and assist in the retrieval of a person from refuge points if the Site Manager assesses the need to do so; and
- Assist in securing a safe and effective re-occupation of buildings once the all clear has been given.

First Aiders

- On hearing a fire alarm, First Aiders who are not required in any other capacity and with easy access to portable first aid kits should collect these kits and report to the Site Manager.
- The Site Manager will assess if there is need to establish a first aid point at a safe location.
- Where a school holds inhalers for children in classrooms, the teaching staff will ensure that these are brought to the Assembly Point.

Fire Registers

- Fire registers will be taken to the assembly point and dealt with in accordance with the Emergency Action Plan in each school.

Ensuring safety of other related third parties

- Ensuring the safety of visitors: All visitors will be asked to read the emergency procedures on arrival at reception. In the event of an evacuation, the member of staff hosting the visitor is responsible for overseeing their safe evacuation.
- Ensuring the safety of Contractors' personnel: The Estates Lead is responsible for ensuring that contractors' personnel are made aware of fire procedures before they start work. The contractors' site supervisor is responsible for the accounting of their staff and the safety of their equipment and shall be advised to liaise with the Site Manager if they have concerns. The Contractor and their personnel shall be responsible for observing school procedures and any failures will be investigated and may lead to their removal from site.

6. Pupils, visitors and employees with Physical or Sensory impairments

The school accommodates pupils, visitors and employees with physical and sensory impairments so far as is reasonably practicable to do so.

The Principal is responsible for accepting such individuals and the Estates Lead must ensure that the school has adequate and appropriate staff trained in the safe evacuation of these pupils and that a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is to be devised and implemented.

- Evacuation Plan: Mobility impaired
 - It is the policy of the Trust not to locate those who are mobility impaired in a location in which their impairment would unduly expose them to the risk of injury due to a fire and the subsequent need for emergency evacuation.
 - Where the school buildings have more than one floor, they have emergency refuge points established which offer protection for at least 30 minutes to anyone in these areas.
 - In the event of an emergency situation the Principal/Site Manager will make an assessment on the location of people in refuge points in relation to the hazard, the ETA of the emergency services and will decide whether to instruct retrieval.
 - Where the blind or visually impaired person is in a classroom or office at the commencement of the alarm activation, it is the responsibility of the Teacher, supervisor or by default the Fire warden to ensure they have a member of staff or "Buddy" with them.

- On arrival the Fire and Rescue Service will be informed immediately on the status of anyone at refuge points and they ascertain whether the lifts may be reactivated and used for any evacuation.
- Evacuation plan: Hearing Impaired
 - There is no restriction on the location or movement of pupils, visitors or employees who have a hearing impairment, as they would be able to evacuate without undue concern, once made aware that the alarms are sounding.
 - It is the policy of the Trust that those who have a hearing impairment would be integrated in the same group(s) as those who do not; they would therefore gain knowledge of the danger from those around them.
 - A PEEP will be completed for each individual.
 - Should there be a need for the hearing impaired person to be left on their own either in class, office or for personal needs, then it would be the incumbent on their teacher or supervisor to ensure they are made aware and safe evacuation effected.
- Evacuation Plan – Blind or visually impaired
 - There is no restriction on the movement of pupils, visitors or employees who suffer from blindness or visual impairment, as they would be able to evacuate with limited assistance.
 - It is the policy of the school that those who have a visual impairment would be integrated in the same group(s) as those who do not; they would therefore gain knowledge of the danger from those around them.
 - Should there be a need for the blind or visually impaired person to be left on their own either in class, office or for personal needs, then it would be the incumbent on their teacher or supervisor to ensure they are made aware and safe evacuation effected.
 - In order to ensure that the blind or visually impaired person does not receive undue pressure or cause obstruction, they should be encouraged and guided to use the left hand side of any stairway or corridor or moved to a Refuge Point. A PEEP will be completed for each individual.
 - Where the blind or visually impaired person is in a classroom or office at the commencement of the alarm activation, it is the responsibility of the Teacher, supervisor or by default the Fire warden to ensure they have a member of staff or “Buddy” with them.
- Evacuation Plan – Other impairments
 - There are no restrictions on the movement of pupils, visitors or employees who suffer from sensory impairments (mental illness, mental health problems, learning difficulties, dyslexia and conditions such as diabetes or epilepsy), but there could be a greater degree of effort needed to control the individual or group in the event of a fire situation.
 - A PEEP will be completed for each individual if this is deemed to be necessary.
 - In order to ensure that the sensory impaired person does not receive undue pressure or cause obstruction to the able bodied during an evacuation they should be assisted and encouraged to use the left hand side of any stairway or corridor.
- Evacuation Plan – Language difficulties
 - The Trust does not anticipate a situation where employees or visitors would not understand the evacuation procedure therefore no special arrangements are required.
 - As the Trust undertakes the education of pupils from a variety of national and ethnic origins there is the likelihood that some pupils may have difficulty understanding the instruction given. Even though all evacuation route signs are in accordance with the European standards, Health & Safety (Safety Signs & Signals) Regs 1996, there is still the possibility that some members of the class may not understand them.

- Where the pupil is in a classroom at the commencement of the alarm activation, it is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure the pupils have a member of staff or other responsible person, whom they understand, with them.

7. General Emergency Procedures

- What you should do if you discover a fire
 - Leave the area quickly, closing the door behind you;
 - Immediately raise the alarm; and
 - Do not attempt to tackle the fire yourself unless you have received fire extinguisher training and have a clear exit route. If in doubt – get out.
- What you should do when the fire alarm is heard
 - Turn off any electrical equipment you are using, if this can be done swiftly and without delay;
 - Close any doors as you leave;
 - Do not stop to collect personal belongings;
 - Leave the building by the nearest available fire exit unless advised otherwise by a fire warden;
 - Do not use the lifts to leave the building, where applicable, use the designated emergency escape routes;
 - If you are asked to help with the evacuation of an impaired colleague, pupil or visitor by a fire warden please do so without delay;
 - Go to the designated assembly point; and
 - Do not re-enter the building unless you are given permission by the Principal/Site Manager. Only Emergency staff shall be allowed to re-enter the building during an emergency.