

FIRE SAFETY POLICY, PREVENTION MEASURES AND PROCEDURE

Statement

It is the priority of the Governing Body to minimise the risk to life and to reduce injury by ensuring that the school has robust fire prevention measures and effective fire safety procedures. The fire safety procedures and risk assessments at The Queen's School are designed to help our community to respond calmly and effectively in the event that fire breaks out in one of our buildings.

Policy

The School will comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and all other applicable fire safety legislation and standards. Where the School could be granted exemptions from specific regulations, it is the School's policy that fire precaution standards and arrangements will be, so far as is possible, at least equivalent to those which are set out in the Government Fire Safety Risk Assessment Guidelines.

Overall responsibilities for fire precautions are exercised through the executive members of the Health & Safety Committee. The Headmistress delegates to teaching and operations staff the proper application of the fire procedures in their areas of responsibility.

All members of staff, students, contractors and visitors are required to follow the instructions and fire procedures approved by the Health & Safety Committee and issued to staff. Contractors are informed of the fire procedures when signing in with the maintenance staff. Other visitors are informed of the fire procedures when signing in at reception.

In particular, in the event of a fire alarm sounding in a school facility, occupants must evacuate the building and only re-enter upon the instruction of the designated Fire Marshal or the Fire and Rescue Service.

Objectives

- to safeguard all personnel in The Queen's School occupied property, including visitors, from death or injury in the event of a fire or associated explosion;
- to reduce fire incidences;
- to minimise the potential for fire to occur and disrupt the work of the School and cause damage to property and the environment.

In respect of all facilities The Queen's School will:

- provide appropriate means of escape in case of fire;
- ensure that all means of escape are properly maintained, kept free from obstruction and available for safe and effective use at all times;
- provide the means of escape with adequate emergency lighting and maintain this in efficient working order;
- provide and maintain in working order the alarm system or the means of giving warning in case of fire;

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- provide and maintain in working order all firefighting appliances and devices;
- provide appropriate instruction and training for all school staff on the actions to be taken when dealing with a fire;
- provide safety plans stating the precautions to be observed and steps to be taken to protect people and property;
- ensure that measures which are commensurate with the risks and the significance of consequential losses are taken to protect buildings, installations and equipment from fire.

Management and staff responsibilities

Individual responsibilities and legal duties in respect of fire safety for all School staff and students are contained in the fire procedures for both sites. These instructions also specify the responsibilities of managers, staff and students in respect of fire safety.

All staff are to ensure that designated fire doors are not obstructed or held open other than by an authorised device connected to the fire alarm system, nor interfered with in any way.

Standards, monitoring and reviews

The Health & Safety Committee is responsible for the promulgation of the Fire Policy and the fire evacuation procedures to everyone in the school (including visitors and contractors). The fire safety procedure and fire prevention measures are kept under regular review by the Health and Safety Committee, SLT and governing body. This policy statement will be reviewed by SLT annually or at more frequent intervals if there are relevant legislative changes. The sub-committee responsible for Fire Safety issues will review aspects of fire safety each term, then report back to the Health and Safety Committee.

Fire risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated by the external advisor, Compliance H&S, and fire procedures and risk assessments are reviewed in consultation with the Estates Manager, the Headmistress and the external advisor Compliance H&S, on each occasion that a building is altered, extended or rebuilt, or when new buildings are acquired. Emergency evacuation procedures are tested each term and changes to procedures are made where necessary.

Fire safety and prevention measures

- there are at least two escape routes from every part of all buildings (excluding 1st floor Languages & 1st floor Gym; extra measures are taken in these locations to keep the escape route sterile with limited fixtures and fittings);
- fire notices and evacuation signs are displayed in every room, corridor and stairwell;
- fire alarms are located in every building in accordance with the recommendations of our professional advisors. They can be manually activated by breaking a glass panel or push button system and are automatically activated when smoke/heat builds up;

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- fire extinguishers (of the appropriate type), smoke/heat detectors and fire hoses are located in the school in accordance with the recommendations of our professional advisors;
- all stairs, passages and emergency exits are illuminated by emergency lighting;
- the master panels for the alarm system are located close to reception at each site and show the location of a fire. They are fitted with an uninterrupted power supply (UPS);
- fire routes and exits are kept clear at all times;
- the fire alarm system is tested every week at both sites;
- a fire risk assessment is maintained for every area of the school;
- the School has current electrical test certificates for all its buildings;
- regular portable appliance testing takes place;
- all gas appliances (boilers, kitchen equipment etc) are regularly maintained and serviced by Gas Safe Registered Engineers;
- records of all safety tests are kept in shared documents in the Estates Manager's folder.

Fire safety procedures

Briefing staff and pupils

All staff and pupils are given a briefing on the school's emergency evacuation procedures on the first day of the autumn term at The Queen's School. Fire notices are displayed on the walls of all rooms and direction arrows for evacuation are displayed in the corridors. All staff are told how to activate the fire alarms if they see or smell a fire.

New staff and pupils who join the school later in the academic year are fully instructed in fire safety procedures as part of their staff induction. Further refresher training is provided via the one planned drill each term, and additional regular reminders are given to all pupils by form tutors.

The safe evacuation of everyone - staff and pupils alike - is our priority. Protecting property comes second. Nobody should attempt to fight a fire at the expense of their own, or anyone else's safety. No-one should attempt to use a fire extinguisher before he or she has been trained in its use.

Details of the Fire Evacuation Procedure for:

The Lower School can be found in Appendix 1.

The Senior School can be found in Appendix 2.

Contractors and visitors can be found in Appendix 3.

Examinations (Senior School) can be found in Appendix 4.

Visitors and contractors

All visitors and contractors are required to sign in at reception, where they are issued with a visitor's badge, which should be worn at all times that they are on school property. They are made aware of the emergency evacuation notice (Appendix 3). Details of the fire evacuation procedure and the alarm sounds are displayed at reception.

When large numbers of visitors are at the school for open days, plays, concerts, exhibitions, etc. a brief announcement is made advising them of the location of the emergency exits that they should use in the event of the alarms sounding.

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Fire marshals

We have trained fire marshals at the Senior School and Lower School. They are responsible for reviewing fire safety procedures and discussing issues relating to fire safety with the relevant sub-committee of the Health and Safety Committee.

Fire practices

We hold one fire practice every term at each site at The Queen's School. This, combined with a programme of inducting new staff and pupils with emergency escape procedures, helps to ensure that the school can be safely evacuated in the event of a fire. Fire evacuation details are recorded in the fire log book, which is retained by the Estates Manager. After each evacuation, comments are received from staff - any major changes are updated as part of the risk assessment/H&S meetings; smaller adjustments are communicated via staff briefings.

Summoning the Fire and Rescue Service

The fire alarm is directly linked to the local fire and emergency service for immediate response. The Headmistress is always given advance warning of fire practices and on such occasions the fire and emergency services are notified of a planned practice.

The fire service will no longer automatically respond to an Automatic Fire Alarm between 9am and 5pm unless the alarm has been backed up by a call confirming that there is a fire. The responsibility for making this call rests with the Fire Safety Officer (the Estates Manager) and the Headmistress.

Responsibilities of teaching and form staff

All staff are expected to close windows and doors of their area, as they exit the building, where it is safe to do so. Teaching staff are responsible for escorting their pupils safely out of the building in silence and in an orderly fashion. Form staff are responsible for conducting a pupil head count on arrival at the assembly point, and for ensuring that the name of anyone who cannot be accounted for (and, if possible, their likely location) is passed immediately to the fire marshal (Deputy Head at Senior School; Head of Lower School). It is the responsibility of the fire marshal to ensure that this information is passed to the fire and emergency service as soon as they arrive.

Details of the Fire Evacuation Procedure can be found in Appendix 1 and 2.

Letting or hiring the school

Our standard contractual terms that we use for letting and hiring the school cover fire safety and specify that the hirer should certify that he/she has read and understood the school's fire safety policy and procedures. A school caretaker is always on duty when the school is let or hired for an outside function, except for some long-term established lets, where onsite induction and training are given to the lettings leader to include fire evacuation, health, safety and security procedures, and forms part of the lettings agreement. In addition, the lettings leader will have a full contact list in case of incidents and emergencies occurring during the let.

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If the alarm sounds between 5pm and 9am the Fire and Rescue Service will try and make contact with the school, but if there is no reply will automatically send fire engines to the site.

Holiday procedure

A signing-in sheet is maintained at each site outside the main reception areas. All staff and visitors are required to sign in and are made aware of the emergency evacuation procedure, by the member of staff responsible for the visitor.

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Appendix 1 Fire Evacuation Procedure – Lower School

Emergency plan in the event of a fire

A fire practice takes place once every term at the Lower School. At the start of the year, girls are given an opportunity to hear the fire alarm bell. Then a 'walk through' practice will take place. These practices are timed and conducted in silence. A record is made of the practices for reference by the Fire and Rescue Service / inspectors.

Detailed Fire Evacuation Procedure

If the fire alarm rings pupils must

- maintain silence and follow instructions from their teacher if they are in a lesson;
- exit in single file using the route specified on the fire notice in their teaching room.

If the fire alarm rings staff must

- immediately stop all activity (this includes kitchen, office, maintenance);
- exit the area and building they are in, using the emergency exit, following the route specified on the fire notice displayed in the room/working area.

If the fire alarm rings staff who are teaching must

- give instructions to their class to be silent and exit the room in single file in accordance with the route specified on the fire notice in their teaching room. Staff and pupils must not take any personal belongings with them.
- quickly check the room listed, remove the clip board in the teaching room and close the door. The clip board holds green and red laminated A4 cards and a laminated room number. The teacher escorts the class to the assembly point (in front of Sandford House);
- if the exit route is blocked, the teacher in charge of the pupils will redirect the class via the safest route;
- if the main assembly point area (in front of Sandford House) is unsafe and the school cannot assemble there, pupils will be escorted to the rear of the site to assemble on the Tennis Courts *or* Field at the rear of the site. (There is an emergency vehicle exit located at the rear of the site. Pupils can exit the site via the gate to a public footpath).

Assembly Point

In front of Sandford House (school day);

In front of Nedham House on the lawn area (after school hours; when Sunset- After School Club is in operation);

On the Tennis courts *or* Field if the front of Sandford and Nedham House is blocked or unsafe.

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Evacuation route to the front of Sandford House

Dining Room Fire Exit – used by occupants of Room 1, 2, 4, 4A, 4B, 4C, 21, 20, 24

Year 6 Toilet Exit – 3A, 5

Kitchen Exit – 3

Loggia Exit – 6, 7, 8, 9, 9A, 10, 10A, 11, 22, 23, 39, 25, 26, 26A, 14, 12, 12A

Infant Playground Exit – 16, 16A, 16B, 18, 19, 29, 30, 13, 41, 42

Front Classroom Sandford House Exit – 17, 31, 32, 33, 34

All staff responsible for pupils must adhere to the guidance on their evacuation route as described in the Fire Evacuation Notice for each specific room.

Responsibilities for staff who are not teaching

Office Staff	<p>Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take the staff signing in/out record to the Head of Lower School PA/Senior Administration Assistant. • Take the visitors' record to the Head of Lower School PA/Senior Administration Assistant. • Take the pupil signing in/out record (this record contains the pupil registration sheets) to the Administration Assistant. • Take the Fire File to the Head of Lower School PA/Senior Administration Assistant. (This contains the site maps and all information required to pass on to the Fire Brigade.)
Site manager /Headteacher SLT	<p>Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHECK THE FIRE PANEL LOCATED TO THE RIGHT OF RECEPTION. Check location of fire. • Ensure that the emergency exit gate is open to enable access to any emergency vehicle/s. • Ensure that the car park is clear and that any traffic on the site remains stationary as the school is evacuated. Any vehicles attempting to enter the site will be stopped.
Catering Staff	<p>Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to the Catering Manager if on site, or senior catering staff member, adhering to the procedure for all staff. Catering staff must show a green/red laminated card to reflect that the staff are accounted for. This is registered by the Head of Lower School PA/Senior Administration Assistant as all staff are counted.
Peripatetic Staff	<p>Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to the Head of Lower School PA/Senior Administration Assistant.

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Fire Marshals	<p>Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with the Head of Lower School, who will report to the Site Manager. The Site Manager (Fire Warden) and the Head of Lower School will liaise with the Fire Brigade. • As a result of an evacuation procedure, recommendations are recorded for action in the Fire Drills Log. If necessary, an addition drill will be arranged if it is deemed appropriate by the Head of Lower School.
Teaching staff responsible for pupils in their care	<p>Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check attendance. • Report full pupil attendance by showing a GREEN card. • Report any pupil absence by showing a RED card. • Hold the room number card to show the area they have evacuated in the school. • Maintain silence. • Report any signs of fire to a Fire Marshal and the Head of Lower School immediately.
Contractors, External Club Providers and Visitors	<p>Responsibilities</p> <p>Contractors and Visitors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to the Head of Lower School PA/Senior Administration Assistant. <p>External Providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check attendance. • Report full pupil attendance by showing a GREEN card. • Report any pupil absence by showing a RED card. • Hold the room number card to show the area they have evacuated in the school. • Maintain silence.

Note: the fire alarm system is tested regularly and there is no need to evacuate the school when the alarm rings at this appointed time. This is conducted by the Site Manager.

To note:

- **All staff** must sign in and out at The Queen's School. All staff wear a Queen's School blue staff lanyard.
- **All visitors** must sign in at the office.
- Visitors who have permission to be on site unaccompanied wear a blue visitor's Lanyard.
- Visitors who require supervision on site wear a red visitor's lanyard.
- All new visitors to The Lower School are briefed by office staff on the fire procedures for the school.

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Appendix 2 Senior School Fire Evacuation Procedure

If the fire alarm rings pupils must

- maintain silence and follow directions from their teacher if they are in a lesson;
- exit in single file using the route specified on the fire notice in their teaching room.

If the fire alarm rings staff who are teaching must

- give instructions to their class to be silent and exit the room in single file in accordance with the route specified on the fire notice in their teaching room. Staff and pupils must not take any personal belongings with them.
- quickly check the room(s) listed. If present, remove the fire tag in the teaching room and close the door and check rooms listed. This tag should be handed to designated members of staff at the top of the steps before the teacher escorts their class to the tennis courts;
- if the exit route is blocked, redirect their class via the nearest safe exit.

Assembly point:

Tennis courts during the school day, Stanley Place after 4pm

Evacuation route to the tennis courts

Years 7 - 10 use the steps and Years 11, 12 and 13 must walk round via the lower car park
Forms should line up in complete silence facing the walls with Year 7 nearest the pavilion.

Responsibilities of staff who are not teaching

Office staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take the staff signing out sheet to the Headmistress/the Headmistress' PA (on tennis courts) • take the visitors' book to the tennis courts and check that any visitors are present • take the registration sheets to hand out to form tutors (on the tennis court) • take the Fire Check List (Part time) to the IT Manager (on tennis courts) • take the Fire Check List (Music) to the Head of Music (on tennis courts) • take the tag to the designated members of staff (top of steps) • take the phone from the office • give the phone to the Deputy Head at the top of the steps • take the megaphone from the office and hand to the Headmistress
Site manager/ Caretaking staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHECK THE FIRE PANEL. Check location of fire.

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Library staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> take the Year 12 and 13 signing out books to the Head of Sixth Form (on tennis courts)
Designated staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> guide the pupils over City Walls Road to join the end of the queue of girls at steps pupils coming from Stanley Place are directed around the walls via the car park on to the tennis courts
Finance staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> take the staff signing out book to the Headmistress/the Headmistress' PA (on tennis courts)
Caretaking staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that City Walls Road is safe for pupils and staff to cross

On the tennis courts

Form staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect form list from office staff. Check attendance Report full attendance/ absences to the Headmistress/the Headmistress's PA who will inform a fire marshal Maintain silence
Full time non form/ operations staff	report to the Deputy Head/the Fire Safety Officer
Part time staff	report to IT Manager
Peripatetic music staff	report to the Head of Music
Office staff/ contractors/visitors	report to the Headmistress/the Headmistress' PA
Catering and domestic staff	report to Catering Manager

The Fire Officers will liaise with the Headmistress and the Fire Service.

Only staff or pupils who are unable to go down the steps may stay in the front car park with the Fire Officers but confirmation of their presence must be sent to the appropriate member of staff on the tennis courts.

Note: the fire alarm system is tested every Wednesday at 7.30am and there is no need to evacuate the school when the alarm rings at this appointed time.

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Appendix 3 Fire evacuation notice for contractors and visitors (Senior School)

1. If you discover a fire, break the glass in the nearest alarm point to set off the alarm.
2. Nobody should attempt to fight a fire at the expense of their own, or anyone else's safety. Nobody should attempt to use a fire extinguisher before he or she has been trained in its use.
3. Quickly leave the building by the nearest exit, closing doors and windows behind you.
4. Make your way carefully to the assembly point - the tennis courts during the school day, Stanley Place after 4pm.
5. Report to the Headmistress or the Headmistress' PA.
6. Remain at the assembly point until the all clear is given.
7. On no account return to any building until given permission by the Fire and Emergency Services.

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Appendix 4 Fire Evacuation Procedure during an Examination (Senior School)

If the fire alarm sounds, the invigilator:

- Should note down the time that the alarm went off and how long the exam has been going on
- Should tell all candidates to remain calm and ask them to leave their papers and personal belonging and follow him/her
- Should remind candidates before they exit that they are still under exam conditions and that they must not talk to one another as this would be a breach of regulations and could mean disqualification from the exam
- Should take the attendance register and seating plans with them as they exit
- Should evacuate the room and exit the building taking the most direct route to tennis courts
- Should direct the candidates, once outside, to enter the tennis courts via the steps line up against the right hand fence. THEY MUST NOT JOIN THEIR FORM GROUPS. A roll call should then be taken.

Returning to the exam room after the 'all clear' has been given

- The candidates should be given priority to re-enter the building first
- The Exams Officer must ensure the security of the exam room before the invigilator and candidates are allowed back in
- If computers or sound equipment were in use prior to the alarm, IT support staff may be contacted to check that it is still working correctly
- All invigilators must supervise the candidates closely at all times to make sure silence and exam regulations are maintained
- Candidates may need to be reassured and time may be required for noise from other pupils to have abated before the exam is allowed to continue
- When the candidates are ready, the exam should be re-started and the start and finish times on the board amended
- Details of the incident should be recorded on the 'Incident Reporting Form' as soon as possible as this information will be crucial for contacting the Awarding Bodies. This includes the duration of the disruption and steps taken to ensure the security of the exam.