

Fire Safety Policy, Organisation and Arrangements

Health and Safety

Policy Owner(s)	Health and Safety Officer
Approved by	Director of Compliance
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Table of Contents

1. Context and Legislation.....	3
2. Organisation and Arrangements.....	3
3. Management of Fire Risk Assessments.....	7
4. Management of Drills and Evacuations	8
5. Building Specific Arrangements	10
6. Record Keeping	11
Table of substantive changes	11

1. Context and Legislation

1.1 This policy is written in order to meet compliance with:

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO)
- The ISSRs 2014
- All other applicable UK legislation

1.2 Highgate School recognises the dangers associated with fire and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that its premises have appropriate measures to fight, detect and give warning of fire and to ensure the safe evacuation of persons, via emergency routes and exits. Highgate School will ensure that suitable team members are selected and trained to manage the risks from fire.

2. Organisation and Arrangements

2.1 **The Responsible Person.** It is not necessary for the Responsible Person to be a named individual. The Responsible Person within the legislation can be an organisation. Within the Meaning of The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO). Highgate School is the Responsible Person. The duties of the School are detailed in the RRO, which in summary are:

- That risks from fire are assessed to ensure that risks from fire and the precautions needed to protect the staff, pupils, visitors and premises are identified;
- That the assessment is kept up to date;
- Make arrangements to implement and maintain the fire precautions identified in risk assessment;
- Make arrangements for effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventive and protective measures;
- Ensure that if fire risks from hazardous substances cannot be eliminated that they are mitigated;
- Ensure that the School is equipped with fire-fighting equipment, detection and alarms;
- Ensure that fire routes and exits are provided and kept clear;
- Make arrangements for drills and other training as is required;
- That there are effective emergency arrangements;
- That the premises and equipment are well maintained;
- Appoint competent persons to implement the arrangements;
- Ensure that third parties using the School premises are aware of the arrangements and of their responsibilities.

2.2 **General Arrangements.** The School will ensure that:

- A fire risk assessment is completed on a regular basis. A competent third-party assessor will be engaged for the major buildings. Any risks identified are addressed with appropriate control measures in accordance with Part II of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Suitably competent school staff may undertake fire risk assessments of simple low risk buildings such as Pavilion, Caen Wood Hall, Far Field Pavilion;

- The assessment is reviewed annually or in the light of significant changes;
- Adequate measures are in place to reduce or eliminate the risk from fire;
- Adequate means of escape are in place in case of fire for all areas of the School;
- All means of escape are correctly maintained, kept free from obstruction and available for safe and effective use at all times;
- Fire doors are kept shut and free from any obstruction which may force the door to remain open;
- Adequate emergency lighting (in case of fire) is maintained in efficient working order;
- Adequate means for fighting fire are present, regularly checked and maintained in working order;
- Appropriate instruction on fire evacuation is given to all employees, pupils and visitors;
- The annual review and display of fire evacuation notices throughout the School;
- Fire training is given to Fire Management personnel where deemed necessary and regularly updated;
- There is adequate Fire Officer cover on a day-to-day basis during term time;
- In collaboration with the Fire Officers, fire evacuations are conducted termly or more frequently if there are concerns for safety;
- All staff carry out a “walk through fire drill” with all new pupils at the start of the Michaelmas Term to ensure familiarisation with the Fire Evacuation Procedure (FEP);
- Appropriate signage relating to fire regulations is displayed and clear for all to see;
- That where the School is subject to a visit from the local fire authority, any resulting report is filed with the Fire Risk Assessment, and any subsequent actions required are carried out;
- Staff are not expected to fight fires and therefore specific training in the use of fire extinguishers is not a requirement of this policy. The priority is that staff will evacuate themselves and others.

2.3 **Competent Persons.** The School achieves compliance with the RRO by delegating its responsibilities for Fire Safety to key individuals and through the management chain. Responsibilities of competent persons are outlined below.

2.3.1 The Governing Body will:

- Review the School’s performance in respect of fire safety.

2.3.2 The Bursar will ensure that:

- There is sufficient resource (both financial and staffing) to ensure that fire risks can be identified and managed;

- The Health and Safety Executive Committee considers fire safety and reports on performance to the Governing Body;
- Competent persons (staff or third party) are employed/engaged to adequately implement fire preventative and protective measures.

2.3.3 Director of Compliance will:

- Assist the Bursar in the effective implementation of fire preventative and protective measures.

2.3.4 Health and Safety Officer:

- Be a source of competent advice on fire safety and understand the limits of their own competence;
- Undertake the annual review and update of the School's Fire Evacuation Plans;
- Undertake a termly review of fire risks in all areas of the School and monitor the work of Fire Officers;
- Arrange as necessary the fire risk assessment and the implementation of actions required;
- Maintain a central log of School Fire Management & Safety records to confirm that scheduled fire drills have taken place, and any action points followed up;
- Assess training needs across the School and organise training for relevant staff from an approved course provider;
- Organise refresher training when required;
- Ensure that all new employees, temporary employees are given appropriate fire awareness information at the induction stage;
- Arrange and oversee a biennial independent safety audit and oversee the implementation of agreed action points;
- Ensure that third parties using the School's facilities are made aware of their responsibilities;
- Oversee the annual review and display of fire evacuation notices throughout the School;
- Ensure that up to date information for the Emergency Services is kept available in the form of a building fire manual to be kept at each staffed reception.

2.3.5 Fire Officers will:

- Appoint Fire Marshals and Reporting Officers (where appropriate), and ensure all staff are reminded of their responsibilities;
- Review and display fire evacuation notices throughout the School;
- Undertake duties in respect of drills as described below.

2.3.6 Estates Department will:

- Ensure that fire risks and controls are identified at the design stage of construction projects;
- Ensure that fire risks during the construction phase of construction projects are managed;
- Arrange for portable fire-fighting extinguishers to be in place across the School and for them to be tested annually by a competent contractor;
- Arrange for the fire alarms to be serviced by competent contractors;
- Conduct weekly fire alarm tests and maintain records of these tests;
- Test the emergency lighting once every month to ensure the evacuation routes are illuminated;
- Ensure that all contractors are briefed on fire evacuation procedures;
- Appoint a contractor to provide, test and maintain portable fire-fighting equipment;
- Ensure the inspection, testing and maintenance of fixed electrical installations;
- Ensure the inspection, testing and maintenance of gas installations and equipment;
- Ensure that the buildings and their plant and equipment are maintained and that issues which affect fire safety are given priority when allocating resources;
- Provide and install relevant fire safety signage including (but not limited to) directional signage and fire equipment signage;
- Ensure that Hot Works, whether conducted by School Staff or Third Parties, are controlled;
- Keep relevant records.

2.3.7 All those with Line Management Responsibility will:

- Ensure that the fire risk assessment accurately reflects the nature of work in their area;
- Ensure that all their teams have received adequate training and provide induction training to new staff;
- Cooperate with Health & Safety Officer to ensure that relevant personnel including Fire Officers and Marshals are appointed.

2.3.8 All staff will:

- Ensure all means of escape are correctly maintained, always kept free from obstruction and available for safe and effective use;
- Report defects in premises or equipment;
- Fully cooperate with fire drills;

- Ensure that fire doors are not wedged open other than with a device which will release the door on the activation of the alarm (room doors may be held open if the room is occupied);
- Evacuate themselves and others without delay not stopping to fight fires.

2.3.9 Third parties:

- Responsibilities of third part occupiers are set out in the terms and conditions of their agreements for the use of the School premises;
- They are otherwise expected to follow the same procedures as ‘All Staff’;
- Control of hot works must be agreed with the Estates Department.

3. Management of Fire Risk Assessments

3.1 As described in Paragraph 2.3.4 the Health and Safety Officer (H&SO) is responsible for arranging fire risk assessments.

3.2 The School does not have buildings which meet the definition of “tier 3” or “High Risk” buildings.

3.3 Every three years, or after significant change, if competent to do so, Health and Safety Officer will conduct fire risk assessments for the following simple buildings:

- Pavillion
- Caen Wood Hall
- RMC
- Far Field Pavillion
- For all other buildings (and for simple buildings if not conducted by H&SO) fire risk assessments will be carried out by an accredited specialist fire risk assessor.

3.4 Fire risk assessments will be reviewed annually, or after significant change, by H&SO or if they are not competent to do so, by a specialist accredited assessor.

3.5 Accreditation of fire risk assessors can be via one of the following schemes or as advised by the School’s insurers.

3.5.1 Accreditation must be of the individual carrying out the assessment not just of the company that employs the assessor.

3.5.2 Accreditation should be at a “tier 2” level, or above.

3.5.3 When selecting a specialist consideration should also be given to:

- Checking that they have experience of undertaking fire risk assessments for education premises;
- Requesting references from previous clients.

Register Holders	UKAS Accredited Company Certification Scheme	UKAS Accredited Person Certification Scheme	Professional Body Person Registration Scheme
The BAFE 'SP205' company scheme is delivered by the following UKAS accredited certification bodies:- NSI , SSAIB .	✓		
IFC Certification Ltd operate the 'IFCC 0099' company scheme	✓		
Institute of Fire Prevention Officers (IFPO) This is a professional body registration scheme			✓
Institute of Fire Safety Managers (IFSM) This is a professional body registration scheme			✓
Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE) This is a professional body registration scheme			✓
Warrington Testing and Certification Ltd operate a 'Fire Risk Assessors Certification Schemes (Individuals) and (Company) FRACS'	✓	✓	

3.6 FRA will be recorded in a format which meets the standard of PAS 79-1:2020.

3.7 FRA for the School’s domestic rental and staff accommodation will be arranged by the School’s Property Agent and will meet the standard of PAS 79-2:2020.

4. Management of Drills and Evacuations

4.1 **General.** In addition to these general responsibilities staff have specific roles in respect of drills and fire evacuations.

4.1.1 Drills will be arranged once per term. Following drills staff will be given feedback on any lessons learned.

4.1.2 Fire drills may be suspended where necessary at the discretion of the Director of Compliance only where significant risk outweighs the benefit of the drill – for example to combat risk of infection during a pandemic.

4.1.3 Drills will not be held in Caenwood Hall, Pavilion, Far Field – as these are simple buildings with no regular occupancy.

4.2 Fire Officers will:

- Establish the evacuation plan for the areas for which they have responsibility;
- Organise regular fire drills;
- Monitor, record and report all drills and any concerns arising from them, to the H&SO;
- Undertake basic fire prevention and control training (e.g. use of fire extinguishers);
- Provide an emergency response to a minor fire as appropriate to their training and without putting themselves at risk;
- In consultation with the H&SO, assist with the annual review (for the start of the new academic year) of fire precaution and evacuation procedures and the drawing up and display of fire evacuation notices;

- Report to the H&SO;
- Keep a record drills and other evacuations <https://forms.office.com/e/D1mQn5GqZN>.

4.3 Fire Marshals will:

- In most instances, be nominated members of the teaching staff;
- Have a nominated deputy, though precise arrangements will be in accordance with the needs of a particular building/part of the school;
- In the event of both the Fire Marshal and their deputy being unavailable the most senior member of staff at the assembly point/building must assume responsibility;
- Ensure the fire evacuation kit bag (Senior School) is maintained in good order through fortnightly checks, ensure that walkie-talkies are charged and that timetables are present and up to date;
- Manage evacuation procedures in their areas/assembly points;
- In the event of a fire drill or an emergency requiring the evacuation of buildings (fire alarm sounds) receive confirmation from Reporting Officers that buildings have been evacuated and that all pupils and staff are accounted for, and to record this and details of any staff/pupils unaccounted for;
- Insist that good order (pupils lined up and supervised by staff) and silence is maintained at the Assembly Point;
- Discourage staff/pupils congregating near entrances/exits;
- In the Senior School, unlock gates to secondary evacuation points (keys in kit bag). This should be done automatically on all occasions with the task being delegated to a member of staff (the gates should be locked again after a drill);
- Relay information/instructions to pupils/staff/visitors at the assembly point, as instructed by the Fire Officer;
- Oversee the evacuation to the secondary assembly point if instructed by the Fire Officer or if the nature of the emergency deems this advisable;
- When satisfied that the evacuation has been completed, report to the Fire Officer – reporting any pupils staff/unaccounted for;
- Order the return to buildings/class following a drill or when all clear permission is given;
- Provide feedback on all evacuations to the Fire Officer.

4.4 Reporting Officer (Person in charge) will:

- In most instances, be nominated members of the teaching staff;
- Check that their designated areas have been evacuated;
- Report to the Fire Marshal at the Assembly Point that their areas are clear or give details of any concerns they may have about the whereabouts of pupils/staff/visitors;
- Help oversee the management of the assembly point.

4.5 All Teaching Staff will:

- Staff who are not in charge of a class should report to the Fire Marshal at their nearest Assembly Point and assist in the maintenance of good order;

- Take responsibility for the class they are teaching or assist in the maintenance of good order and silence throughout the evacuation/drill and at the assembly point;
- When the alarm sounds, immediately remind pupils that they must remain silent as they make their way to the Assembly Point;
- Ensure that classes are lined up and the class register taken;
- Report to the Fire Marshal, confirming that all pupils have been evacuated and noting any pupils who were registered present for the lesson but who are now unaccounted for;
- Assist the Fire Marshal in managing the evacuation to secondary assembly points and in carrying out other instructions as required.

4.6 All Staff will:

- Comply with all instructions given to them in regard to fire safety and any other fire procedures;
- Report any observed shortcomings in fire precautions to their line manager;
- Not re-enter a building once it is evacuated until all clear permission is given;
- Where pupils or visitors are not otherwise being directed by classroom teachers (for example during lesson changeovers) will assist in their evacuation.

5. Building Specific Arrangements

5.1 Specific arrangements for the evacuation of each part of the School are set out in evacuation procedures. The Fire Officer for that part of the School is responsible for ensuring that that plan is maintained.

Building	Fire Officer	Deputy	Periodicity of drills
Senior School	Dan Brandt	SLT	Termly
Junior School	Matt Anderson	SLT	Termly
Pre-Prep	Sally Hancock	Hayley Lock	Termly
Field House	Benjamin Crowhurst	Most Senior Person Present	Termly
MSC	Duty Manager	Duty Manager	Termly
RMC – IT	Phil Whitehead	Most Senior Person Present	Termly arranged by H&SO
RMC – SpEx	Mario Noto	Most Senior Person Present	Termly
Mills Centre	Cosy Pritchard	Most Senior Person Present	Termly
Dining Hall	Jamie Scott	Rupert Brown	Termly

6. Record Keeping

- 6.1 Fire Risk Assessments are maintained by H&SO on SharePoint in Fire Safety Records.
- 6.2 Records of inspection and test of alarms and detection systems are kept in the Estates Office.

Table of substantive changes

Section	Detail of Change	Date	Owner
All	Formatting Revisions	September 2019	HofH&S
	Changed Responsible Person from Bursar to School		
2.2	Include that adequate measures are in place to reduce or eliminate the risk from fire.	October 2019	HofH&S
All	Roles and responsibilities updated	January 2020	DoC
5.1	Table of fire officers added	October 2020	HofH&S
All	Variation of fire drill periodicity permitted (CV-19)		
All	Minor revision to fire drill periodicity (CV-19)	June 2021	HofH&S
All	Removed change to fire drill periodicity (CV-19) Added section to record location of records Amendment made to allow suspension of drills where a different risk outweighs the benefit	July 2021	HofH&S
All	Minor textual changes - reviewed CV-19 precautions	June 2022	HofH&S
All	Minor revisions	August 2022	HofH&S
All	Removed specific references to CV-19 Added specific requirement on Estates team to control hot works	August 2023	HofH&S
All	Reviewed duties of HofH&S against the new building regulations	December 2023	HofH&S
All	Added phrase that doors can be held open if rooms are occupied	July 2024	HofH&S

	Added phrase that FRAs for low risk buildings can be conducted by competent member of staff rather than external risk assessor		
All	Added section on Fire Risk Assessment Changed fire officer for Field House Inserted requirement for fire officers to record drills	May 2025	HofH&S
All	Reformatted Change of roles - H&SO	September 2025	H&SO

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