



## **FIRE MANAGEMENT POLICY**

**Presented to: Trustee Resource Committee**

**19 June 2024**

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<sup>1</sup> This is the date the policy was approved by the meeting

<sup>2</sup> This is the date the policy was reviewed prior to its approval above

<sup>3</sup> This is the date as set by the policy review clause or the date approved plus three years

## INDEX

○ <b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
○ <b>Policy Scope.....</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
○ <b>Responsibilities.....</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
○ <b>Fire Procedure template .....</b>	<b>Page 4</b>
○ <b>Fire Detection .....</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
○ <b>Maintenance of fire safety measures .....</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
○ <b>Fire Prevention and risk assessment.....</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
○ <b>Fire Doors .....</b>	<b>Page 11</b>
○ <b>Fire Training.....</b>	<b>Page 11</b>
○ <b>Fire Drills.....</b>	<b>Page 12</b>
○ <b>Fire Records .....</b>	<b>Page 12</b>
○ <b>Review of policy .....</b>	<b>Page 13</b>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In 2006, the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 introduced changes to fire safety law in England and Wales which repealed previous fire safety legislation. This policy has been produced to ensure those who have responsibility to be compliant under this Act for ensuring fire safety in all Four Cs Trust schools.

Reducing the risk from fire is an important and fundamental duty in our school.

## 2. POLICY SCOPE

The guidance in this document is applicable to the general fire safety in our schools. We will provide and maintain safe working condition, equipment and systems of work for all students/pupils and staff and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose. Our academies will ensure that all staff are aware of the important role they play regarding fire prevention and in responding promptly and effectively in the event of a fire. The Trust will give a high level of commitment to Health and Safety and will endeavour to comply with all statutory requirements.

## 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

### 3.1 The Board of Trustees/CEO

Will ensure:

- That a comprehensive induction programme is in place for all staff on commencing work with an academy, to ensure that they are fully aware of all the arrangements in place for preventing fire and implementing the fire evacuation procedure.
- The requirements for employee training in fire safety are adhered to.
- The fire alarm and associated equipment is tested in accordance with Regulations and manufacturer's guidelines, with records kept.
- Emergency lighting and emergency exit lights are tested according to current guidelines and tests recorded.
- A written fire risk assessment is undertaken within the building, outlining who may be affected by a fire along with any special requirements that may be required. This must be carried out by a competent professional and reviewed regularly to ensure it is still fit for purpose.

### 3.2 The Headteacher/Head of School

The Headteacher has the following responsibilities:

- To ensure that an up-to-date register for students/pupils, staff and visitors is available at all times and ensure it is taken to the fire assembly point in the event of an evacuation.
- To keep an up-to-date fire folder (hard copy or electronic) with all relevant records relating to fire safety and ensure that it is made available for inspection by the Local Authority or Fire Brigade or external inspectors.
- Arrange for the completion and appropriate review of the Fire Risk Assessment.
- Review the evacuation procedures for the school annually and ensure it is communicated to all staff, visitors and students/pupils.
- Have in place a system of regular checks to ensure escape routes and doors are not obstructed. Fire exit doors should be unlocked and available for use at all times; fire doors should be kept closed at all times when not in use and not wedged open.
- Ensure procedures for contacting the Fire Service when a fire is identified are in place.
- Ensure all staff receive appropriate fire training, including new employees
- Keep records of fire evacuation drills, fire safety training and inspections, maintenance of means of escape, fire-fighting equipment and fire alarm systems.

- Ensure fire drills are conducted at least each term for all staff and children, fire drills must be used as a process for continual improvement. Over an academic year, every staff member should have been involved in a drill.
- Ensure monitoring of fire precautions is conducted at appropriate intervals and records kept for 3 years.
- Complete and communicate to staff PEEP's for all students/pupils and staff who will require additional support to exit the building in an evacuation. Consideration should be given to anyone with mobility, sensory or behavioural needs.
- Recruit and train sufficient number of fire wardens within each academy.
- To ensure that all the necessary information for the Fire Service are available. This information must include site plans, details of locations of any highly flammable and explosive substances.

### 3.3 Teachers and Support Staff

Have the following responsibilities:

1. Attend Fire Training and ensure up-to-date with evacuation information and procedures.
2. Ensure all students/pupils are familiar with the evacuation plan at the earliest opportunity.
3. Ensure recommendations that are set out in the schools Fire Risk Assessment are continually implemented
4. Maintain fire safety awareness at all times.
5. Have an awareness of the risk of fire occurring.
6. Draft, communicate and maintain Personal Evacuation Plans where necessary.
7. At the first sign of smoke or fire follow Fire Procedure – RAISE THE ALARM.
8. Respond to any fire alarm as per Evacuation Plan.
9. To support the Headteacher in keeping all fire exits clear.

### 3.4 Fire Wardens

Have the following responsibilities:

- To be known by others and support in fire drills and personal evacuation plans.
- Constantly assessing fire risks and ensuring means of escape.
- Ongoing fire hazard identification then taking remedial action.
- Ensuring that fire exits are clearly marked, emergency lighting is maintained, and firefighting equipment is in position.

In an evacuation the fire warden will:

- Take appropriate action in a fire as confirmed within their training and induction.
- Ensuring that as far as possible the safe evacuation of everyone from the premises.
- Undertaking firefighting only in accordance with the policy.
- Supporting the Fire Incident Controller in briefing the Fire Service on their arrival.

## 4. **FIRE PROCEDURE TEMPLATE**

### **Emergency fire evacuation procedures:**

#### 4.1 On discovering a fire

- If you discover a fire, raise the alarm **immediately** however small the fire is.
- If you have been trained, are confident and feel that it is safe to do so attempt to fight a small fire using the equipment provided but never use more than one extinguisher.
- If this fails evacuate immediately, ensuring that no-one is left in the room and close the door behind you.
- Ensure that you or the designated person has called the Fire Service giving the

school address

- Assist any students/pupils in your immediate care or your vicinity to leave the building through the nearest exit and take them to the school nominated fire evacuation point. Ensure the students/pupils face away from the school.
- Play your part in the roll call so you and any students/pupils you are responsible for are safely accounted for and **ensure students/pupils stay away from the building.**
- Do not return to the building until instructed to do so by the Headteacher or Fire Service.

#### 4.2 If you hear the fire alarm

- Exit the premises whilst directing students/pupils or visitors calmly to immediately leave using the nearest available fire exit, closing all doors behind you to prevent the spread of fire.
- Report to the assembly point for a roll call so you and any students/pupils you are responsible for are safely accounted for.
- If you have a visitor with you, ensure they accompany you and register their safe evacuation.

#### 4.3 Person(s) in charge on hearing or raising the alarm

1. Encourage all staff, students/pupils and visitors around you to evacuate and to proceed to the assembly point.
2. Using the fire panel and other information, establish immediately if it is a genuine fire or false alarm.
3. Ensure that the Fire Service has been called.
4. Note any absence from the roll.
5. Ensure someone is positioned at the main entrance to signal directions to the Fire Service.
6. Gather all information regarding the evacuation including anyone believed to still be inside and where any hazardous or explosive substances are located.
7. Liaise with the Fire Service on its arrival providing relevant information regarding anyone potentially inside the building.
8. Do not allow anyone to return inside the building until either the Fire Service instructs that it is safe to do so, or it is established it is a false alarm.

It is important to note that:

- The fire evacuation plan should be documented and displayed throughout the school and where firefighting equipment is positioned.
- All staff should be familiar with the procedure through induction and the staging of regular fire evacuation drills, at least termly.
- Students/pupils are aware of the fire evacuation plan and the class teacher should explain at the earliest opportunity and in age-appropriate language.
- In the event of fire, the safety of life shall override all other considerations, such as saving property and extinguishing the fire.
- The Fire Service should be informed immediately on arrival of anyone suspected as still being within the school building.
- If a fire is discovered, the alarm shall be raised immediately by the appropriate method (such as operation of a break glass manual call point). This should be the first action taken on discovery of any fire, however small. Staff should not make a judgement on the size of the fire.
- If a fire is identified ensure that by dialling **999** the Fire Service have the full postal address and inform them that this is a school with students/pupil present
- The grab bag/Fire Service information should be removed and taken to the fire assembly point. The grab bag should contain site plans, personal evacuation plans,

details of any flammable or explosive substances on site which could harm the Fire Service personnel and details of any fire wardens.

- Re-entry of the building is strictly prohibited until the Fire Service officer in charge declares it is safe to do so.
- Silencing of the fire alarm system should never be taken as it is an indication that it is safe to re-enter the building.

## 5. FIRE DETECTION

Appropriate fire detection system will be in place with connection to an audible alarm when activated.

The alarm system in the service must meet the specification and requirements of the local Fire Officer.

The alarm system must be maintained in good working order in line with Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order. Maintenance must be recorded to ensure consistent, and faults are addressed.

A valid maintenance agreement should be in place which:

- Meets the relevant British Standards
- Ensures that equipment is serviced in accordance with relevant British Standards 5266 Part 1 and 5306 Part 1 in relation to six monthly and annual testing.

Provides a written record of the testing done and remedial action taken.

### 5.1 Staff should remember

- The Fire Service should remain present whilst the Fire Panel is reset and stay until the all clear is given.
- Read all fire notices and know the location of all break glass points and fire extinguishers.
- Know all fire exit points locations.
- Keep all fire exits free from obstruction and report any faults with doors etc.
- Do not wedge doors open with objects.
- Turn off electrical appliances which are not in use.
- The use of portable heaters should be minimal, and they should always be PAT tested and supervised whilst in use.
- Always attend training to maintain awareness of dealing with such an emergency.

**Most importantly, Remain Calm!**

### 5.2 Fire Incident Controller

Fire wardens will also act as the incident controller in the event of a member of SLT being unable to and will liaise with the Fire Service on their attendance and arrange any assistance required. The Fire Incident Controller must:

- Ensure that a fire has been detected and the Fire Service contacted.
- Co-ordinate a roll call to identify if anyone remains in the building. The roll call must cover visitors, fire wardens and staff as well as students/pupils.
- Determine if the students/pupils need to move away from the school to a safer location.
- Ensure that the Fire Service can access the site and water supply.
- Ensure that first aiders are released from supervising students/pupils to assist with any injuries.
- Ensure that a member of the Trust has been contacted.

## 6. MAINTENANCE OF FIRE SAFETY MEASURES

There should be regular checks, periodic servicing and maintenance of the physical fire safety measures. Any defects which occur should be put right as quickly as possible, though there may be a need for contingency plans when life safety systems such as fire-warning systems are defective. These must be implemented and communicated as soon as the fault is identified.

The maintenance and testing of some systems and equipment will fall within the recommendations of a British Standard.

The following inspections and routine maintenance checks must be completed by a competent person, the regularity is a minimum although due to increased risk on specific sites the regularity may be more frequent:

6.1

	Maintenance & inspection	Frequency
<b>Fire &amp; Emergency Lighting</b>	Fire Risk assessment - FRA (and review)	Annually
	Fire alarm (no faults)	Daily
	Fire call point testing (rotational)	Weekly
	Emergency lighting tests	Monthly
	Emergency lighting Annual testing (3 Hour Drop)	Minimum annually
	Fire alarm servicing	*Six monthly
	Fire door visual inspection	Monthly
	Fire door activation and closure	Monthly
	Fire door audit	As required in FRA
	Firefighting equipment visual inspection	Weekly
	Firefighting in location equipment check	Daily
	Firefighting equipment inspection	Annually
	Fire drill completed and recorded	Termly
	Fire evacuation route check	Weekly
	Automatic closers and door release mechanisms	Weekly
Training of fire wardens/competent persons	Annually	

*\*Dependant on manufacturers recommendations and any SLA.*

### 6.2 Escape routes and doors

Teachers and Fire Wardens should monitor that exit routes are clear of obstructions and combustible materials, and that self-closing doors are not wedged open during their daily activity.

Weekly check of escape routes, safety signs and notices, exit securing mechanism; and door self-closing devices should be undertaken by the site supervisor. Checks that fire doors are in good working order: inspect doors for warping or distortion, fire-resisting glazed panels are in good condition and secure in their frame, and that intumescent strips and smoke seals are in good condition should happen termly.

### 6.3 Portable fire-fighting equipment

Weekly visual check of fire extinguishers to ensure no obvious faults.  
Annual maintenance of fire extinguishers completed via service contract.

#### 6.4 Fire warning system

Weekly test by activating a manual call point (usually by inserting a test key) should be undertaken. This checks that the control equipment is capable of receiving a signal and in turn, activating the sounders. A different call point is used for each successive weekly test and the results recorded; any defect should be rectified with urgency. Call points can be numbered or marked on a plan to assist with sequential testing. It is good practice to test the alarm at the same time each week. During test, the alarm should not operate for too long so there is a distinction between a test and an unplanned actuation. Check that the test causes the operation or disabling of other features such as any electrically powered locks, the release of doors on hold-open devices, the operation of doors on swing free arms and automatic opening doors reverting to manual operation.

#### 6.5 Emergency lighting

Monthly functional test of all emergency light fittings at a time when, following the test, the lighting will not be immediately required. Test methods vary; some systems have self-testing facilities that reduce routine checks to a minimum.

Annual maintenance and full discharge test should be carried out by a competent person.

### 7. **FIRE PREVENTION**

#### 7.1 Fire Risk Assessment

The Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) must be completed for each school building by a competent person and then reviewed every 12 months by someone familiar with the fire management practices of the school and site layout. The FRA should then be repeated every 2-5 years dependant on the level of risk to the building and any changes to the premises.

The Headteacher/Head of School is responsible for ensuring that all recommendations are considered, and appropriate actions are carried out to reduce the risk.

#### 7.2 Electrical

Electrical installations and electrical equipment can be a significant cause of fire. Possible causes include:

Equipment faults;

- Overheating cables and equipment due to overloading or loose connections; Incorrect installation, use or maintenance of the installation or equipment; Damaged or inadequate insulation on cables or wiring.
- Combustible materials placed close to electrical equipment which may give off heat.
- Arcing or sparking; and modifications to an installation by unskilled/incompetent persons.

#### 7.3 Some precautions are:

- Only correctly wired and fused extension leads and plugs should be used; all electrical equipment must be regularly maintained and serviced in accordance with the manufacturers' guidance.
- Electrical equipment should only be used for its designed purpose.
- Sockets and extension leads must not be overloaded, a "daisy chain" of extension leads must not be used; and maintenance of installations and equipment should be done only by persons competent to do so.

In the case of fixed electrical installations, this is likely to involve periodic visual inspection at a frequency based on risk, possibly by a member of staff trained in what to look for, along with testing at intervals no greater than five yearly, normally by an approved electrician. If there is any doubt about the safety of electrical installations, a competent electrician should be consulted.

Where portable electrical equipment is used, including items brought into the premises by staff, it should be maintained - this is likely to include portable appliance testing at suitable intervals. **The use of non-manufactory mobile phone chargers are prohibited within schools and should not be used under any circumstances.**

7.4 Service testing should be carried out by a competent person within the following timescales:

	Maintenance & Inspection	Frequency
Electrical	PAT testing (Portable appliance not fixed)	Annually
	Fixed wiring/EICR	5- years
Other	D&T equipment	Annually
	Cooking equipment	In line with risk assessments
	Boiler maintenance and servicing	Annually
	Air conditioning unit inspection	Annually
	Extractor units deep clean	Annually

7.5 Smoking

For legal, health and safety reasons smoking and vapes are not allowed to be used anywhere on site. If they are onsite, they must be stored securely away from students/pupils and not charged on site.

7.6 Housekeeping and Storage

Control of combustible materials should be achieved by attention to good housekeeping principles. By carefully considering the type of material, the quantities kept and the storage arrangements, risks can be significantly reduced. Appropriate practices are:

- Not storing combustible materials in plant rooms, boiler rooms, attics or cupboards or where electrical boxes are located.
- Storage in dedicated storage areas, storerooms or cupboards.
- Regular checks and cleaning to remove and prevent the accumulation of waste in spaces such as plant rooms, entrance routes and basements, and fat residue in kitchen filters.
- Control and frequent disposal of packaging, waste and other combustible rubbish.
- Loose storage, bins and waste external to the building, sited securely and well away from the building so that any fire cannot affect external walls or overhanging eaves.
- External bins and storage containers secured to prevent movement.
- Where fire-raising is a potential problem, bin and container lids fitted with locks; and Regular building checks to ensure that storage arrangements are being complied with.

## 7.7 Storage and use of dangerous substances

Certain substances and materials are by their nature, flammable, oxidising or potentially explosive. These substances are controlled by legislation, in particular the Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002. The principles of safe handling and storage are:

- Avoid the use of flammable materials and liquids wherever possible or substitute flammable substances and materials with those that are preferably non-flammable or with those that are less flammable.
- Reduce the quantity of dangerous substances to the smallest reasonable amount necessary for use.
- Correctly store dangerous substances, for example in a fire-resisting metal enclosure. All flammable liquids, aerosols and gases should ideally be locked away, and segregated if necessary, to reduce the chance of them being involved in a fire or used in deliberate ignition.
- Ensure good ventilation is provided by way of high- and low-level vents to allow any flammable vapours to be dispersed; and ensure that all staff are aware of the fire risk of dangerous substances present and the precautions necessary.
- Hot works must be controlled through risk assessments and competent persons used to carry out the works.

## 7.8 Keeping escape routes clear

There needs to be control over the provision of combustible materials in escape routes. If a fire was to occur in an escape route or spread to material in the escape route, this could be a particularly difficult and threatening situation, preventing staff and students/pupils from escaping and preventing staff accessing to assist any students/pupils who require additional support.

Stairways that form part of escape routes should be kept sterile and clear of combustible items and items that could be a source of ignition. Items kept in corridors should be non-flammable, not obstruct the exit and be kept to a minimum.

Examples of some items which are normally unacceptable in stair and corridor escape routes are:

- Chairs and tables which obstruct exits.
- Books and paperwork.
- Upholstered furniture.
- Coat racks.
- Electrical equipment such as photocopiers and battery chargers.
- Storage of combustibles (such as refuse).

## 7.9 Food Preparation

The Trust offers a broad and varied curriculum enabling pupils to learn skills for life and at their own pace. We believe in building independence in relation to learning about safe preparation of food and understanding nutrition. However, students/pupils' experience and abilities vary and therefore when using any cooking equipment to ensure their safety students/pupils must be under staff supervision at all times.

## 8. FIRE DOORS

A 'fire door' is a fire-resisting door which is rated by performance to fire under test conditions. Fire doors are used to prevent fire spread as part of a fire compartment and for the protection of means of escape. A self-closing device is a normal feature of a fire door, though there are some exceptions such as doors to small cupboards which are kept locked shut.

A fire door rated to 30 minutes is described as FD 30, A suffix is added to denote that the door has a smoke control function giving FD 30S respectively. A 60-minute fire door with smoke control is designated FD 60S. The rating is an indication of test performance and not necessarily how a door will perform in a real fire.

The level of protection provided by a fire door is determined by the time taken for a fire to breach the integrity of the door assembly, together with its resistance to the passage of smoke and flame. The gap between the door leaf and the frame is normally fitted with intumescent strips, in either the door or the frame (except at the bottom of the door). The strips expand in response to heat from a fire, to seal the gap between the door leaf and the frame. Smoke seals prevent the spread of smoke at ambient temperatures.

A fire door will **only** fulfil its function to provide a barrier to fire and smoke if it is fully closed at the time a fire occurs or has a working emergency release and can close fully unaided.

A self-closing fire door can be held open by an electromagnetic hold-open device (which complies, where appropriate, to BS EN 1155 or BS 5839: Part 3) or with electromagnetic hold-open door closers (to BS EN 1155). Electrically operated hold-open devices should deactivate and release the door on operation of the fire warning system or any loss of power to the hold-open device. In the case of doors to stairways the doors should close automatically in the event of fault in the fire warning system, including total loss of power (mains and standby) to the system.

An alternative type of release is an acoustically activated door release mechanism complying with BS EN 1155. Acoustic devices actuate in response to the sound from the fire alarm sounders.

To help reduce the spread of fire and smoke during the night fire doors to kitchens, laundry and other unused areas of the building should be manually closed as part of the locking up procedure.

## 9. FIRE TRAINING

The actions of staff are crucial to the safety of the staff and students/pupils in our Trust. It is essential that staff know what they have to do to safeguard themselves and others on the premises and to have an awareness of the importance of their actions including risk reduction, maintenance of fire safety measures and action if there is a fire.

**All staff** (including cleaners, supply cover, temporary staff and volunteers) should be given information, instruction and training on the action to be taken in case of fire and the measures to be taken or observed on the premises.

Training of each member of staff should take place as soon as possible after they are appointed as part of induction and after that, at a frequency which will ensure that they remain familiar with procedures.

All staff should receive Fire Awareness Training refresher every year.

A record of individual staff member training is to be maintained.

## **10. FIRE DRILLS**

The names of all staff and students/pupils in the building must be maintained at all times and the number of souls in the building should be known ready for a roll call during an evacuation.

Staff should not be informed of a drill unless it aids the drill or is required due to Personal Evacuation Plans.

The Headteacher/Senior staff member must:

- Ensure the fire drills checks that all staff understand and are familiar with the operation of the emergency fire action plan, evaluate effectiveness and identify any weaknesses in the plan.
- Ensure fire drills should take place at least every term and the timing should be altered to ensure everyone experiences a drill. Each member of staff should be in a position to participate at least once a year. During drills, fire scenarios should be introduced to reflect what could occur in a fire and problems that staff may be faced with, such as an escape route unusable due to fire.
- Ensure that during drills, a member of staff who is told of the supposed outbreak should operate the fire alarm and the staff should then rehearse the routine as fully as possible.
- Ensure that the fire service is only called when a fire has been identified; the potential for misuse of the fire service through an incorrect call is minimal.
- Ensure that when carrying out a fire drill it may prove appropriate to:
  - Ensure that any equipment which is in use, such as cookers, can be made safe by isolating or turning off controls.
  - Inform visitors if they are present; and nominate observers to assess the appropriateness of actions and identify problems such as communication difficulties; the use of a frequently used route instead of the most appropriate escape route; and difficulties with door fastenings/fire doors left open.
- Ensure that timings of the building being cleared as well as after a roll call are taken. As a guide it is anticipated that the building should be cleared in 2-4 minutes and the roll call completed by 6 minutes however the drill should always strive for continual improvement. The drill must include a roll-call at the designated assembly point(s), noting any persons who are unaccounted for. In a fire situation, this information would be passed to the Fire and Rescue Service on arrival.
- Ensure the results of the fire drill are recorded, discussed and communicated with all staff and students/pupils, and action should be taken to address any issues which have arisen.

## **11. RECORDS / ASSESSMENTS**

The following information and records should be kept on the server and should be available:

- Fire Risk Assessment and any reviews.
- Fire drills record and improvements.
- Fire training of employees.
- Maintenance of Fire Extinguishers.
- Testing of Fire Alarms on rotation.
- Maintenance of Alarm Systems.
- Maintenance of Emergency Lighting.
- Monitoring of escape routes and fire doors termly.

## **12. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The Trustee Resource Committee has the responsibility for implementing, monitoring and reviewing this policy. Any issues, which arise, which do not fall within the remit of this Committee or are relevant to other areas of the Trust, will be brought to the attention of the relevant committees and /or individuals.

The Trustees will review this policy in line with the procedure for policy review.

Date for review - if no other reason for review (see policy review procedure) this policy will be reviewed every three years.