



FRIENDS' SCHOOL SAFFRON WALDEN

FIRE PREVENTION POLICY

This policy applies to all sections of Friends' School, including the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage One.

Friends' School recognises its legal responsibility to complete a fire safety risk assessment, as part of its overall responsibility for the Health and Safety of all those who live in, work at, or visit the school.

RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of **the Head** to ensure that regular fire drills are carried out, that a fire register is maintained and that adequate measures are in place to prevent fire, including risk assessments of all areas of the site and buildings.

It is the responsibility of **the Bursar** to ensure that fire alarms are tested regularly, that clear signage and fire notices are provided throughout the school and that all gas and electrical appliances are monitored for safety on a regular basis. The Bursar also keeps records of Fire Safety Inspections and takes advice from the visiting Fire Officer.

The **Fire Officer** visits the school for inspection, giving written notice of his intention to inspect the premises. The Bursar records his visits and acts in accordance with the advice received in the fire safety report.

It is the responsibility of **all employees** at the school to take reasonable precautions to prevent fire.

All visitors to the school are required to sign in at Reception, where they are given a copy of fire evacuation procedures.

When running an event in school, it is the responsibility of the **person leading the event** to ensure that fire exits are pointed out and evacuation procedures made clear to any visitors.

FIRE HAZARDS

The following fire hazards are identified:

- a) Smoking
- b) Electrical Equipment
- c) Naked flame and gas appliances
- d) Portable heaters
- e) Laboratory equipment
- f) Lightning
- g) Flammable / combustible substances
- h) Arson

TO REDUCE RISK OF FIRE

- a) Smoking
 - The school is a non-smoking site. Smoking is not allowed on any part of the school site and signs are distributed around the buildings to reinforce this.
- b) Electrical equipment
 - Electrical equipment is PAT tested every year.
 - Electrical equipment is switched off when not in use and unplugged, if appropriate, at the end of the working day.
 - The computer system is programmed to shut down each evening at 8.00 pm.
 - Care is taken to ensure that electrical circuits are not overloaded, by using only fused extension cables, which should be fully unwound.
 - Extension cables are never plugged into other extension cables and adaptor blocks are not used.
 - Increasingly extension cables are being replaced by extension 'towers'.
 - Central electrical cut-off points are located in laboratories.
- c) Naked flame and Gas Appliances
 - The use of Bunsen burners is covered by the Science Laboratory risk assessment: all staff and pupils are trained in their safe use and must wear correct safety clothing and goggles. Pupils may not approach naked flames without staff supervision. The Bunsen burners are regularly inspected and replaced as necessary. There are gas isolation points separate from the practical areas.
 - Gas appliances elsewhere are regularly inspected and tested and the supply can be cut off in an emergency.
 - In the kitchen and Food Tech rooms, correct clothing must be worn.
 - The kitchen and Food Tech areas are covered by separate risk assessments and safe codes of practice.
- d) Portable heaters
 - Occasionally the use of additional heaters may be required. These appliances are inspected and tested regularly. They are sealed units which are plugged in. They must be positioned at a safe distance from any furniture and must never be covered.

e) Laboratory equipment

- All laboratory equipment is regularly inspected and maintained in good working order, or labelled clearly as unserviceable, by Science staff.
- Science staff (and pupils, where appropriate) are trained in its safe use; pupils are never allowed to enter a Science laboratory unsupervised and may never use laboratory equipment without staff supervision.
- All potentially hazardous equipment and procedures are used / carried out with strict adherence to CLEAPSS guidelines.

f) Lightning

- The school's lightning conductors are inspected annually.

g) Flammable / combustible materials.

- All new school furniture should conform to British Fire Safety Standards.
- Flammable or combustible materials are stored in accordance with COSHH.
- Flammable materials such as chemicals are kept in a secure store; stocks are inspected regularly and recorded and any obsolete stocks are disposed of safely in accordance with CLEAPSS (HAZCARDs).
- All containers / storage areas are clearly and appropriately signed.
- Safety screens are used when experiments with highly combustible materials are carried out and there is a spark risk.

h) Arson

- Site security is monitored and reviewed regularly. Visitors are required to identify themselves and sign in at Reception during the working day.
- No unaccompanied visitors are to be on site at any time.
- At weekends, boarding and duty staff make regular checks of the site and ensure they keep lists of all those who are expected to be on site.
- Any strangers should be challenged, if it is safe to do so. In the event of any suspicious activity, the police should be called. There is plenty of telephone access across the site and boarding and duty staff carry mobile phones.

FURTHER MEASURES FOR FIRE SAFETY

- Escape routes should never be blocked and fire safety equipment should never be obstructed. Corridors and entrances are kept clear at all times; pupils and staff have designated space for storing bags, coats etc safely. At busy times (eg lunch queue) supervising staff will ensure that bags are not left in corridors or doorways. Fire extinguishers, blankets and alarms are clearly signed and kept accessible at all times.
- Fire doors are installed at appropriate points around the building, in accordance with the advice of the inspecting Fire Officer; these are kept shut at all times.
- Emergency lighting of the fire exits is regularly tested.

- Smoke detectors are in use throughout the building and these are tested termly and records of the tests are kept.
- Rubbish should not be left adjacent to buildings. Bins are emptied on a daily basis. Larger exterior bins are securely closed, never allowed to overflow and emptied once a week.
- Fire extinguishers of different kinds (water, foam, powder and CO2) are located strategically around the school site, according to the main type of fire risk posed.
- Mandatory signage around the buildings, indicating fire exits, evacuation procedures, action in case of an emergency is clearly displayed. The Bursar conducts a 'walkabout', to check for clear signage.

IN THE EVENT OF FIRE

- Evacuation procedures are regularly practised at different times of the day and night, every half term.
- Fire notices are distributed throughout the buildings.
- Escape routes are clearly marked.
- There are regular reminders of this information during the year.
- Fire alarms are electronic sounders and sirens and are located strategically around the building and clearly signed.
- A fireboard is maintained with updated information and lists of staff; registers are also used, as well as the signing register at Reception in the event of a fire alarm being sounded, so that efficient checks may be made as to who is on site at any particular time. A designated person collects the fireboard at different times of the day.

TRAINING

- Staff are trained in fire safety and records of the training are kept.
- Heads of Department risk assess their subject areas and review and update this with their staff regularly.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DISABLED

- If a pupil with a disability joins the school, an assessment of need is made prior to his/her arrival and risk assessment is carried out according to individual need.
- The school has an evacuation chute for emergency evacuation from an upstairs room.
- Ramps are available for use should a wheelchair user need to be evacuated from the building.
- All pupils are required to practise regular fire drills; in the event of a disability preventing independent response to a fire alarm, a

designated member of staff would be responsible for the evacuation of the disabled individual.

LONE WORKING

- As the school is also a place of residence, staff are encouraged to inform the resident boarding staff if they are planning to work at times when the school is not normally occupied. They should sign in and out, giving times of arrival and departure.
- Lone working is discouraged and it is recommended that staff work during the holidays only at those times when the office or reception is staffed.
- Resident staff are all trained in fire procedures.

OTHER USERS OF THE SCHOOL SITE

- Any organisation or group hiring school premises for their own use hold their own fire drills at different times of the day, using the regular evacuation procedures.
- Risk Assessments are available to these visiting groups prior to their arrival, so that they can make their own independent risk assessments.

May 2011

This policy will be presented to the May meeting of the Finance Committee, to be recommended to June Board for ratification.

Signed on behalf of the Governors -----

Date -----