



St Anne's School and Sixth Form College

Fire Safety Policy

This policy was adopted in the Autumn term 2017 and updated September 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy has been produced under the Health and Safety guidance from the Local Authority.

This document outlines the arrangements at this school for ensuring compliance with the L.A's Policy, and where appropriate highlights the specific responsibilities of individual employees to ensure that this is achieved.

Employees are responsible for following the standards of conduct laid down in this policy and should understand how this relates to the school ethos, health and safety and safeguarding policy.

2. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

The Fire Precautions Workplace Amendment Regulations 1999 came into force on 1 December 1999. This ensures that employers are responsible for ensuring appropriate fire precautions, which include:

- appropriate fire detection and fire-fighting equipment that is accessible and simple to use
- nominated employees to implement fire-fighting measures
- provision of adequate training and equipment for those appointed
- arrangements for any necessary contacts with external emergency services
- provision of adequate emergency escape facilities

All young people with mobility problems will have a PEEP – Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan. Staff should familiarise themselves with this documentation.

An emergency plan to evacuate the premises is posted around the school and residence building, this includes information for calling the fire service / monitoring company and allocating individuals who are responsible for supervising, controlling and putting into effect the plan.

Fire drills are carried out each term and are in accordance with the emergency plan.

Any actions arising from the fire risk assessment form part of the overall health and safety policy for the school to ensure that the management of all health and safety risks are considered together. The whole of the workplace should be examined, including every room or area, particularly any area not often in use.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The prevention of fire is of vital importance. Most fires are caused by carelessness and ignorance. A high standard of fire consciousness will prevent this. It is the responsibility of all personnel to become conversant with these instructions.

Upon the outbreak of fire, the saving and preservation of life takes precedence over the salvaging of property. A member of staff's first and overriding duty is of course to look after the children or persons under their charge and this will mean the evacuation of the building. No attempt should be made to fight fire until their safety is assured, and then without exposing any person to risk.

The school fire officer is the school site manager and he is to be informed of all fires, no matter how small. In residence this will be the Child Care Manager or Senior Child Care Officer on duty. A fire is not considered extinguished until such time as it has been inspected by the fire officer.

4. STRATEGY FOR FIRE PREVENTION

Risk Assessment

Management strategy for fire prevention may be classified as follows:

- everyday management and vigilance by staff to ensure that potential hazards are kept under control to prevent the occurrence of fire
- alarm, evacuation and emergency action backed up by notices, drills and practice to ensure that correct action is taken in the event of an outbreak of fire

A strategy should also include:

- planning for the actions to be taken in the event of fire:
 - training of staff, including any specially delegated function
 - provision of instruction to pupils
 - display of appropriate fire instruction notices
 - control of risks associated with activities or processes that may cause or adversely affect any outbreak of fire, e.g. process, storage, gas, electricity, contractors on site, vandalism
- check on existing structural precautions, and seeking further advice where there are thought to be deficiencies
- monitoring the effectiveness of precautions, e.g. analysis of evacuation drills, annual review by checklist

Issue of general fire notice

The issue of general fire notices to staff will take place during induction. It is imperative that this document is issued and explained in detail to an employee in the same way as details of pay, work hours and holidays would be explained. This requirement applies to all staff.

Staff training

The fire officer is responsible for ensuring that all staff in the premises are trained in accordance with the requirements of St. Anne's. Every member of staff will receive instruction in fire precautions during induction.

After the initial instruction, all members of staff will receive at least half an hour of verbal instruction at least once every 12 months.

Control of risks: training of staff and instruction of pupils

Employees

- The training of all employed persons forms an essential part of St. Anne's fire precautions. The aim should be to ensure that all staff receive training in a basic appreciation of the risk of fire and the action to be taken in the event of fire, including instruction appropriate to their responsibilities in an emergency.
- Instruction and training for all will include the following points.
 - action to be taken upon discovering a fire
 - action to be taken on hearing the fire alarm
 - method of raising the alarm, including location of call points, use of internal telephone system.
 - method of calling the fire service / monitoring station
 - knowledge of escape routes
 - evacuation method for the building, location of assembly point and method of accounting for persons
 - stopping machinery, activities and isolating power and fuel supplies where appropriate
 - appreciation of the importance of fire doors and the need to close all doors and windows at the time of a fire or on hearing the alarm
 - location and use of fire-fighting equipment

Pupils

Pupils should be instructed at the start of their attendance at the school to enable them to:

- identify the fire alarm
- know the action they should take on hearing the alarm
- know the location of the assembly points
- know what to do if not in a supervised group (for those applicable), in the event of fire

These points should be included on the fire notice, and reinforced during practice evacuations.

Fire drills

Fire drills will be carried out at least once every term. The exercise will include a simulated evacuation drill with the assumption that one escape route is not available. Each exercise will be started by a predetermined signal, such as activating the fire alarm and the whole premises will be checked as if an emergency has arisen. This fire drill can be combined with the instruction given to staff. When a fire drill is held, it will be recorded in the fire log book, held by the site manager.

All staff / pupils must participate in at least two drills per year.

5. ON-SITE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PREVENTION

Testing of fire alarm systems

The fire alarm system will be tested weekly by the caretaker in school and residence. A different call point for each test will be used and recorded in the log book. The fire alarm systems will be serviced at least twice a year.

Emergency lighting

The emergency lighting is to be examined monthly by the caretaker. The log book will be completed indicating any defects and these will be brought to the attention of the school site manager / Child Care Manager immediately. This lighting will also be checked by the maintenance contractor at least twice annually.

Emergency exits

All emergency exits are to be kept clear and free from obstruction at all times. It is the responsibility of all staff to be fully aware of the contents of these instructions and know the location of all fire exits and the assembly point in the immediate vicinity.

Fire alarms

Electrical fire alarm operated by breaking a glass release button. The fire alarm is to be raised no matter how small the fire.

Fire extinguishers

There should be the correct type of fire extinguisher at each fire point, dependent upon the location. These are installed and checked annually by an external company.

Fire instruction notices

Printed notices should be conspicuously displayed at all fire points stating concisely what staff and others should do if a fire is discovered or if they hear the alarm. The notices should be permanently fixed in position and suitably protected to prevent loss or defacement.

Fire prevention checks

Regular fire prevention checks should be carried out.

Checks are to include the following.

- Unnecessary lights and electrical appliances (TVs, videos, microwave ovens etc) are to be switched off and, where possible, unplugged.

A fire prevention check by staff is to be carried out in their areas at the termination of the day's work or prior to the premises being vacated.

The following precautions are to be observed.

- With the exception of essential systems that must continue to operate after normal working hours / when an area is not in use, all electrical appliances and lighting systems are to be switched off and disconnected by a person nominated for this purpose.
- Waste paper bins are to be emptied and the contents removed from the building.
- All parts of the school are to be inspected by the caretaker at the end of the day. He is also to ensure that television sets have been disconnected and that all doors are closed.
- Windows are to be left free from obstruction. To facilitate detection of a fire from outside, prior to vacating rooms or premises at the end of the day, all curtains should be drawn apart, other than when security requirements dictate otherwise.
- Regular building checks across the daytime will be carried out by residence staff and recorded for.

Housekeeping

Tidiness and cleanliness are essential fire prevention measures. The accumulation of rubbish and waste material is to be kept to a minimum; it is to be cleared away each day on the cessation of work and removed to a safe location outside and away from buildings for early disposal.

Paint materials are subject to spontaneous ignition. Such items should be removed to a safe external location on cessation of work. The storage or accumulation of combustible materials in roof voids, under stairs and similar spaces is forbidden.

Smoking

Smoking is one of the main causes of fire and is prohibited in the school and the school grounds by LAW.

Refuse and rubbish

Refuse or rubbish must not be permitted to accumulate in or around the site. Disposal is to be undertaken at the end of each day.

Flammable materials

Flammable materials are not to be stored near any form of heating.

Electrical appliances

When using electrical appliances, the following rules should be observed.

- They are to be switched off and unplugged when not in use.
- The use of multi-plug adapters is prohibited.
- They are to be fitted with the correct plug for the socket provided. Plugs are to be undamaged.
- Temporary wiring and extensions are not to be used.
- Electrical faults are to be reported immediately to the site manager.
- Fuses that have blown must only be replaced after establishing the cause for the blowing, with fuses of the correct rating.
- A fuse should never be replaced with one of a higher rating.
- Flexible cable to fittings should be as short as possible and should be inspected regularly and replaced if worn.
- Personal portable electrical appliances must be PAT tested. Such items must not be used without the appropriate testing and prior authorisation of the headteacher.

Paint solvents

Paints and solvents suitably marked are to be segregated in properly prepared stores.

Paint and solvents should be disposed of correctly.

Grass and undergrowth

Grass and undergrowth is to be kept cut well back from buildings.

Kitchens

In order that losses by fire are kept to a minimum and that catering facilities are not jeopardised, a high standard of fire precautions in kitchens is of paramount importance. Catering staff are trained in the action to be taken when a fire occurs.

Vandalism and damage limitation

Fire caused by vandals or persons breaking into a building intent on causing damage are a constant risk, and this type of fire could be the greatest risk to the school. Such fires are often started at night or during holidays, and result in extensive material damage, and disruption of pupils' education.

The opportunity for reducing such vandalism lies partly in the long-term development of a good relationship with neighbours, and partly in the security of the premises, by ensuring the windows and internal doors are properly secured when the building is unoccupied. Combustible materials should not be left where they are immediately accessible to intruders, and flammable liquids, which may be used as accelerants, should be stored securely.

Structural fire precautions incorporated to assist escape from buildings will also reduce the

spread of fire. All fire doors should be closed when premises are vacated (closing of all doors and windows is recommended to limit the spread of smoke damage).

Curtains, furnishings, art displays and decorations

Care should be taken when choosing curtains, furnishings and fittings. Inherent or tested fire-retardant materials should be used whenever possible. Crib 5 furnishings and fittings are used within the Residence.

- Art displays and other decorations of a combustible nature can increase the spread of fire considerably. Accordingly, the quantity and location of such displays is critical in reducing the fire loading.
- Displays should not block exits.
- Sources of ignition, such as light bulbs, should not be placed near the displays.
- Expanded polystyrene and other plastics produce large amounts of toxic, black smoke and considerable heat. They should not be allowed on escape routes.

Storage

Readily combustible materials such as paper should be stored in designated areas where they will be secure against unauthorised entry. These areas must be free of sources of ignition, such as heaters and suspended lighting units.

Flammable liquids must be kept in purpose-built storerooms or cupboards provided with ventilation.

All persons handling such material should be aware of the dangers.

Electricity

All electrical apparatus is installed by an approved contractor, using the correctly rated fuse. When a fault occurs, it is taken out of action before continuing. Electrical installations are checked by external companies.

All electrical equipment not required to be used out of hours should be switched off and the plug removed from the socket. All portable electrical equipment are checked annually by a qualified contractor.

Fire doors

Fire doors have at least one of two functions, to protect:

- escape routes from the effects of fire so that occupants can safely reach a final exit
- the contents and/or the structure of a building by limiting the spread of fire

Neither of the above functions will be satisfactorily undertaken unless the door is a good fit in the frame, the self-closing device is working efficiently and the door is not wedged or held open.

Even if a door is not a fire door, it may reduce smoke and heat damage, so at evenings and weekends, all doors should be left in the closed position.

Contractors

Building contractors bring a large number of ignition sources to the school. We will ensure that all contractors entering the premises are aware of the fire precaution measures and procedures, should a fire occur.

At the end of the day, no building materials will be left outside where vandals can use them to damage the premises.

The school site manager will be made aware when hot works is to take place for both the safety of the pupils and the school.

School grounds

Access for emergency vehicles must be kept clear at all times. Combustible buildings must be sited away from the main building to avoid fire spread. Areas beneath raised buildings should be protected against the accumulation of litter and access for intruders.

Combustibles, rubbish containers and equipment, which could be used by vandals, especially those used by outside contractors, must not be left unsecured.

6. FIRE ROUTINE

The purpose of the fire routine is to establish what action is to be carried out in the event of a fire. Written protocols containing the facts below, are located around the school and residence buildings

- what to do if you discover a fire
- what to do when you hear the alarm of fire
- evacuation / order of evacuation
- assembly
- roll call
- calling the fire service

7. ADVICE ON THE PROCEDURE IN THE EVENT OF FIRE

At time of emergency:

- If you discover a fire – or one is reported to you – operate the nearest fire alarm call point by breaking the glass.
- If you hear the fire alarm, evacuate the premises immediately, as detailed in the evacuation procedure for the school or residence.
- The fire service is called automatically by the monitoring service employed by the school.

After the event, follow the procedure described below:

- Do not re-enter the premises until advised to do so by the senior fire service officer present.
- If the fire has been extinguished by staff, do not disturb any evidence that could indicate the cause of the fire, except for ensuring that the fire is out.
- Ensure that the premises are in safe working order before re-occupying: fire doors satisfactory, fire alarm operating, extinguishers re-charged.
- Statistics have shown that any publicity given to a school fire can result in a second fire. Members of staff are not to talk to the media unless authorised by the headteacher.
- The fire officer is to analyse the procedures followed during the fire to determine whether changes are required.

8. FIRE RECORDS

The safety of a building's occupants cannot be assured by design alone. Any building can quickly become dangerous unless there is foresight in the activities carried out there, and care in the maintenance of it.

The following fire records are maintained:

- persons with special responsibilities
- fire alarm call point locations and checks
- weekly fire alarm tests
- fire alarm fault records
- fire alarm maintenance inspection
- emergency lighting maintenance inspection
- fire-fighting equipment routine monthly checks
- fire drills
- fire-fighting equipment tests and maintenance by contractors
- training records (quarterly and on induction)
- visits and inspections by the fire service

9. REVIEW

A review of this policy is due in the Autumn 2019, or as required.