

# FIRE SAFETY, FIRE PROCEDURE AND FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

## BROCKWOOD PARK SCHOOL

|                         |                                            |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
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## Introduction

Brockwood Park School acknowledges its duty under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to take all necessary steps, as far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure the safety of students, all staff, volunteers and visitors and any other persons in the School from the dangers of fire. As a full boarding school, the School also has regard to Standard 10 (fire precautions and drills) of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. The Procedures apply to all staff and students of the School, all visitors, guests, lettings and contractors – there are no exceptions. All the foregoing must take part in evacuations, whether drill, real incident or false alarm. The Procedures are the same for all evacuations, whether a real incident or a false alarm.

## Responsible Persons

In accordance with the requirements of article 3 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 the "Responsible Person" is our Chair of Trustees Wendy Smith.

In accordance with Article 9 of the Order the Responsible Person will ensure a "suitable and sufficient" Fire Risk Assessment has been undertaken and will be reviewed at least annually. The Fire Risk Assessment will also be reviewed whenever a building is altered, extended or a new building acquired or built. The competency framework BS8674 is used to establish the competency of the fire risk assessor.

### The responsible person will ensure that:

- The fire safety policy is kept under regular review by Trustees and School Management Committee
- The fire safety policy is promulgated to the entire school community;
- Everyone in the school (including visitors and contractors) are given instructions on where they should go in the event of fire;

- Records are kept of the fire training given to new staff and students and the training is to be provided by a competent person or training provider. Fire warden training is to be refreshed annually by a competent trainer;
- Procedures and arrangements for emergency evacuation are regularly tested;
- Fire risk assessments are reviewed annually and renewed at least every 3 years or immediately if any significant changes occur to the building including structural changes etc;
- Fire prevention measures are meticulously followed;
- Fire procedures and risk assessments are reviewed on each occasion that a building is altered, extended or rebuilt, or when new buildings are acquired;
- Records are kept of all fire practices, including night practice evacuations from boarding accommodation; and
- Certificates for the installation and maintenance of fire-fighting systems and equipment are kept.

The above are captured as part of the monthly Health and Safety Inspection and delegated to Robert Beddow who is named here as the competent person (having a level 3 qualification in fire risk assessment).

## Fire Alarm System

- All buildings have a fully installed fire alarm system with a series of fire alarm call points which is supplemented by automatic fire detection (AFD) within most of the rooms of the buildings. The fire alarm system has undergone significant upgrades in recent years and is continuing to be improved. The level of detection identified as requirement in the FRA for the main building (and beyond) is:

*“The Fire Alarm system must be provided across the premises to L5 level under the current edition of BS 5839-1 (Fire Detection and Alarm Systems for Buildings) and the fire alarm service engineers must install, service and maintain the equipment to that standard.”*

*An L5 fire alarm system is a non-prescriptive system in which the protected area(s) and or the location of detectors is designed and specified to satisfy a specific fire risk objective. In this case L1 detection is required in the sleeping sections of the building and on top of this, additional detection is required in the plant rooms, kitchen and escape routes of the remainder of the building, where sleeping is not occurring to a L1 standard.”*

This is in accordance with British Standard 5839: Part1. Our system is actually closer to L3 with L1 in the areas identified by FRA with the improvements in the main house taking it up to L2 by 2027. The Pavilions was a new build in 2013 and fitted to L1 standard.

- There are four control panels throughout the school site. 3 are linked together. The locations of these panels are:
  1. Main House (in reception corridor) part of this system is now wireless with a 3 year plan to upgrade the whole house to wireless;
  2. Cloisters (in entrance way);
  3. Art Barn (in entrance lobby).
- In addition, there is a stand alone panel in the Pavilions:
  4. The Pavilions (in western entrance to Magnolia pavilion) control panel is solely for the Pavilions accommodation block. In the event of an alarm elsewhere this alarm is manually set off by fire marshals in order to evacuate people for the roll call. In the event of an alarm in Pavilions a fire marshal sets off the alarm elsewhere for the same reasons of evacuation and roll call.
- At each fire alarm panel there is a combination safe that contains the master keys for that area, at least one radio pre-set to the correct channel, and a torch.

- The fire alarm system is regularly tested by staff members and is maintained by contractors.

## Instructions for Fire Marshals

- Upon the activation of the fire alarm system, all trained fire marshals will make their way to their nearest fire alarm panel.
- The first fire marshal to arrive at the Main House panel takes overall charge of the situation and coordinates the response. This person is referred to as Control throughout this section.
- On identifying the location(s) of the fire from the panel, Control determines who to send to this area to perform search and rescue tasks. This will include identifying via the radio whether there are any fire marshals already close to the fire location. In addition, Control will assign a staff member with a radio to be Pavilions Control. This staff member will remain at the Pavilions Fire Panel and in contact with Control via radio.
- For search and rescue, a minimum of two people will be sent into an area to ensure that there is support in case of an accident.
- Control will also send at least one marshal to organise the assembly point (the North Lawn opposite the main house) who will perform a roll-call.

## Specific duties for each role

### Control:

- Identify which marshals take which roles and ensure they are adequately equipped to do their job (e.g. they have radios, torches, fire lists etc.);
- Remain at the main panel to observe if any additional fires are detected;
- Obtain regular reports from search and rescue team(s) and from the assembly point;
- Determine whether and when to call the fire brigade and/or the all clear;
- Is the main contact for the fire brigade should they be called, including providing information about any missing persons which will have been identified by the roll-call.

### Search & Rescue:

- Search the area/zone where the fire has been detected in an organised, systematic and safe manner (for example check each and every door with back of hand before opening);

- Ensure any able bodied people left in the area immediately leave and report to the assembly point;
- Ensure anyone in the area who has a specific evacuation procedure in place receives the evacuation support they require as part of their plan.
- Close all fire doors found open during search.
- Search for both the fire and any casualties with equal emphasis on each;
- Maintain regular contact with Control, updating her/him on progress;
- Maintain at least audio contact with at least one other marshal throughout the search;
- On discovering a fire, if it is small enough to tackle, do so with a single fire extinguisher if safe to do so. If it is not possible to tackle it, immediately clear the area and shut the door;
- On discovering a casualty in immediate danger from fire, remove them as quickly as possible behind a fire door, calling for assistance if needed;
- On discovering a casualty not in immediate danger from fire, identify cause of injuries and arrange for appropriate medical intervention;
- Only report back to Control that there is no fire if the entire area has been searched completely and the detector/call point that triggered the system has been identified.

#### Assembly Point:

- Take the fire list and all 'sign out' books to the assembly point;
- Perform the roll-call in a calm and efficient manner;
- Report to Control if anyone who is not a fire marshal is missing;
- Prevent anyone returning to buildings until the all clear is given;
- Once Control has given the all clear, communicate this to the assembled persons.

### Instructions for staff not trained as marshals, students, volunteers and visitors

- If you discover a fire, do not attempt to tackle the fire, activate the alarm by means of the nearest alarm call point and leave the building following the procedure below;
- When you hear the fire alarm, follow the exit signs and leave the building by the nearest exit and assemble at assembly point located on the North Lawn in front of the main entrance;
- Do not delay in leaving the building;
- Stay at the assembly point - do not move around the site unless instructed;
- Remain silent at the assembly point;

- Await further instruction;
- Do not return to a building until told it is safe to do so. The alarm stopping sounding is not the all clear;
- If it is obvious that there is a fire and no fire marshalls are present, call the fire brigade immediately.

## Provision of Fire Marshal Cover

- When the school is in session a roster of fire marshals ensures that no fewer than four are on site and on-call at any time. The exception is when the whole school moves elsewhere (for example for an activity or trip) when there will be two fire marshals who remain behind.
- When the school is not in session there will be a duty staff on site at all times familiar with the alarm system.

## Visitors and Contractors

All visitors and contractors are required to sign in at the Reception/Office, 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 by their host upon their arrival and are shown the way to the assembly point.

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.

## Means of escape for disabled persons

Disabled staff, students and members of the public may be in the building particularly for public events such as concerts within the main assembly. The responsible person(s) should prepare individual Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP's). These plans should be tailored to meet the specific needs of the individual and are an essential communication tool for those required to provide assistance. The PEEPs for disabled residential staff and students are part of their individual care plan.

Any information relating to visitors with disabilities or who may have reduced mobility will subsequently be made known to members of the fire crew.

## Fire Drills

Regular fire drills are carried out to confirm that facilities and procedures are effective and that everyone understands what they need to do in the case of evacuation.

School holds at least one fire practice every term. We also practise a night-time evacuation of the boarding houses once a year.

All findings are recorded. Should there be any misunderstanding or the fire drill was not to the recommended standard another unannounced drill is carried out in quick time after.

## System Testing

The fire system call points are tested weekly to ensure its proper functioning and the overall system serviced every six months

## Training

No one should attempt to fight a fire at the expense of their own, or anyone else's safety. Fire marshal training is provided to all new staff and refresher training is available to all staff at the beginning of the academic year.

### Staff Fire Safety Training

Training is provided by either the Health & Safety Office or an external specialist. Training is carried out for all staff and includes:

- Action to take on discovering a fire;
- How to raise the alarm and how to react when it is raised;
- Procedures for alerting and assisting members of the public and visitors;
- Arrangements for calling the fire brigade;
- The evacuation procedure;
- Location and use of fire-fighting equipment;
- Location of escape routes;
- Operation of escape doors;
- Fire door discipline;
- Procedures for isolation and machine and process shut-down;
- The importance of general fire safety and good housekeeping; and
- Fire warden training. Training is given as part of induction and on-going refresher programmes.

### Training for Students

All our students are given a briefing on the schools emergency evacuation procedures on their first day at the Schools either by staff members. We show them where the emergency exits, escape routes and assembly points are located. Fire action notice is displayed on the school notice board. All students are shown how to activate the fire alarms if they see or smell a fire. No one should attempt to use a fire extinguisher before he or she has been trained in its use.

## Good Housekeeping

We know the importance of good housekeeping, including not obstructing fire routes, fire doors and general tidiness. The risk of fire can be greatly reduced by a regime of good housekeeping within the workplace. The need for good housekeeping cannot be overemphasised and students are also aware of the importance of this. If good housekeeping is not maintained the risk of fire spreading is vastly increased.

Our housekeeping rules include:

- No smoking anywhere within any of the buildings, including the boarding accommodation;
- All spills are cleaned away as soon as possible;
- All rubbish is cleared away and not left in fire routes or against the building fabric;
- Flammable waste and contaminated rags are kept in separate metal bins with close fitting metal lids; and
- All flammable materials, liquids and gases are stored properly in suitable containers/cages.

## Provision and Maintenance of Emergency Routes and Exits

As part of the monthly Health and Safety Inspection, the Responsible person ensures that:

- All fire escape routes are clear of obstruction (this is also part of the school's daily routine of morning jobs at Brockwood Park School)
- Emergency routes and exits lead as directly as possible to a place of safety and are identified by suitable fire signs;
- Emergency fire doors open in the direction of escape wherever possible and are unobstructed;
- Emergency fire doors are not locked so that they can be easily and immediately opened by any person who may need to use them in an emergency;
- Emergency fire escape routes and exits are provided with emergency lighting, of adequate intensity in case of failure of their normal lighting; and
- No items are stored under stairways.

## Emergency Lighting

Wherever areas are identified as being in use during the hours of darkness (in line with our fire risk assessment), escape routes, including external routes, are provided with sufficient lighting for people to clearly see their way out to safety. Typical areas requiring emergency escape lighting are those without natural light or those occupied at night.

Emergency lighting provides illumination along escape routes to allow safe movement towards the final exits. A 3 hr drain test is conducted annually and flick testing monthly.

Emergency lighting units are sited to cover specific areas, including:

- Intersections of corridors;
- At each exit door;
- Near each staircase ensuring direct light to each flight;
- Close to a change in floor level;
- Outside each final exit; and
- Near each fire alarm call point.

## Sources of Ignition

- **SMOKING** – The persons at work and students and other persons visiting this property appear to adhere to the government's no smoking law within the work areas of the property and there appears no sign of smoking materials to internal areas at the time of the fire risk assessment. In addition, there is a no smoking policy within the internal areas of each private room. Smoking is not normally approved within this estate. Further information can be found at [www.hse.gov.uk/contact/faqs/smoking.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/faqs/smoking.htm)
- **ELECTRICAL** – All portable electrical equipment which is brought in for use by any staff member, student or visitor within the areas of the building which is used as a workplace or any contractor at work within the common area must be regularly serviced in accordance with the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1992.

The responsible person for the property is to ensure that all portable electrical appliances are tested (PAT tested) regularly according to the type of equipment and the environment it is used in and on the advice of an approved electrical contractor. The responsible person is also to ensure that a safe system of managing trailing wires across floors is in place, including the neglect and misuse of electrical wiring. Further information can be found at [www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/maintenance/safety.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/maintenance/safety.htm)

- **COOKING** –There is a main kitchen area located within the ground floor level of the building. This kitchen area is provided with a gas hob and oven, warming ovens and electrical white goods. From information received during the survey, the filters and extractor equipment is subjected to a regular cleaning regime. A gas shut off switch is located near the exit doors to the kitchen.
  - Staff apartments located on the upper floors of this building are provided with small kitchen areas which include an electrical cooking hob, oven and fridges. They have extinguishers and fire blankets.
  - All portable electrical equipment which is situated within any kitchen and currently used by members of staff of the building, should form part of the electrical PAT testing regime
- **HEATING APPLIANCES** – Where portable heaters are in use, particular care should be taken to ensure that they are used safely, particularly those which are kept for emergency purposes, such as during a power cut or as supplementary heating during severe weather. The greatest risks arise from lack of maintenance and staff unfamiliarity with them. Heaters should be secured in a position when in use and fitted with a guard if appropriate. As a general rule, oil filled radiators should be preferred to radiant heaters because they present a lower risk of fire. The following advice should be observed:-
  - All heaters should be kept well clear of combustible materials and where they do not cause an obstruction;
  - Heaters which burn fuel should be sited away from draughts;
  - Portable fuel burning heaters (including bottled gas (LPG) should only be used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions;
  - In general, staff should be discouraged from bringing into the workplace their own portable heaters.
- **RUBBISH AND WASTE MATERIALS** – Rubbish and waste should not be allowed to accumulate within common areas, particularly within staircase enclosures. Combustible materials are to be removed on a regular basis and placed in suitable containers in a safe place prior to collection. Care should be taken that wheelie bins containing rubbish are locked away to prevent them being moved near to the building and set on fire.
- **ARSON** – The responsible person representing Brockwood Park School is to ensure processes are in place to reduce the threat of a fire being started maliciously. The occurrence of arson can be reduced and its effect controlled if consideration is given to identify potential threats and effective protection measures are undertaken at an early stage.

- **CONTRACTORS** – Where contractors are likely to be undertaking work within the building, they are to receive a brief from the responsible person regarding the appropriate means of escape from the areas where they are at work and also the method of raising the alarm in the event of a fire. Contractors should not be left alone to work within the building unless they have a means of reporting to the responsible person(s) outlined above on a regular basis. In addition, regular checks are to be made by the responsible person(s) to ascertain their work is being carried out safely and that their work does not obstruct designated escape routes or passages.

Should any hot work be required by an individual contractor, a hot work permit is to be issued by the contractor undertaking the work. Prior to a hot work permit being issued, the contractor would have to submit method statements and risk assessments (RAMS) for approval by the responsible person for Brockwood Park School. However, the responsible person or a duty member of staff must ensure that contractors engaged to carry out any form of hot work with the potential to cause a fire, such as cutting, welding, or brazing, are fully conversant with suitable precautions to minimise the risks. This may require the provision of additional portable fire fighting equipment.

## General Fire Precautions

- **MEANS OF RAISING THE ALARM** – The responsible person(s) for this building is responsible for ensuring the fire detection system provided within this property and fire alarm sounders are tested. A competent contract company is to be engaged who service the system every 6 months. All tests and servicing on the fire alarm system are to be recorded within the log book or folders provided in order to display proof of testing to the enforcing authority should it be required.
- **EMERGENCY POWER AND LIGHTING** – The responsible person(s) for this building is responsible for ensuring the emergency lighting system provided within this property is routinely tested on a monthly basis in accordance with the relevant current British Standard 5266: Part1. A competent contract company is to be engaged who would inspect and maintain the equipment at regular periods. All tests on this system are to be recorded within the log book or folders provided in order to display proof of testing to the enforcing authority should it be required.
- **ESCAPE ROUTES** – The responsible person(s) for this building is to carry out routine checks to ensure the internal/external escape routes are available for use at all times and are not obstructed. It is advisable that the responsible person(s) or his/her representative checks all final fire exit doors from this building to ensure that they can be easily openable from the inside without the use of a key.

- **PORTABLE FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT** – The responsible person(s) for this building is to carry out routine checks to ensure that the portable firefighting equipment which includes fire extinguishers are routinely checked on an annual basis and replaced every 10 years in accordance with the relevant British Standard. In addition, regular checks are to be undertaken to ensure that this equipment is not obstructed with the fire extinguishers correctly sited. The annual risk assessment would highlight issues of positioning and age of extinguishers. The checks of the extinguishers are to be recorded within the log book or folders provided
- **FLAMMABLE MATERIALS** – At the time of the fire risk assessment, only small amounts of flammable aerosol canisters were being used for cleaning purposes. However, should flammable liquids or flammable aerosol canisters be used, they are to be locked away in an appropriate flammable storage facility and locked in a fire resisting store cupboard.
- **COMBUSTIBLE MATERIALS** – The policy for this building will be to bring in the minimum amount of combustible materials on a day to day basis. Any combustible storage will be kept within a room which has a minimum 30 minutes fire resistance (and has a similar rated door provided). Where possible, combustible packaging will be removed following delivery into the building. Regular housekeeping issues are to be addressed and access to storage areas will be restricted

## Means of Fighting Fires

All students and volunteers are advised never to fight fire and simply sound the alarm and exit the nearest route out to a safe area.

There are six recognised classes of fire as follows:

- Class A - Fires involving solid materials e.g. wood, paper or textiles.
- Class B - Fires involving flammable liquids e.g. petrol, diesel or oil.
- Class C - Fires involving gases.
- Class D - Fires involving metals.
- Class E - Fires involving electricity
- Class F - Fires involving cooking oils e.g. deep fat fryers.

The type of fire extinguisher provided is suitable for the risks involved around the premises, they are adequately maintained and appropriate records kept of all inspections and tests.

## Fire Extinguisher Information

Fire extinguishers are generally P50 foam so suitable for most fires but other extinguishers are available for specific situations (e.g plant rooms).

## Record Keeping

The existing fire log book or folders is to be maintained on a regular basis to enable it to be assessed and is to include the following records tests/drills:

- A record of the fire alarm call point tests currently recorded as weekly tests
- Firefighting equipment
- Emergency lighting
- Visits by the local fire authority

## Fire Risk Assessment

A fire risk assessment for the school has been undertaken as required by Article 9 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. There are 4 separate assessments made:

1. Brockwood main house including tower
2. Cloisters
3. Pavilions
4. Additional buildings (Art Barn, Woodshed, Garden Rooms, Music Building, IT Office, Garden Sheds and Maintenance Barn)

These risk assessments are reviewed annually by a competent individual and are renewed every 3 years. If there is any reason to suspect that the fire risk assessment is no longer valid or there has been a significant change to the building then the fire risk assessment will need to be reviewed and if necessary revised. The reasons for review could include: -

- Alterations to the building, including the internal layout;
- Changes to work processes or the way that they are organised, including the introduction of new equipment;
- Substantial changes to the furniture and fixings;
- Introduction, change of use or increase in the storage of flammable or hazardous materials;
- The failure of fire precautions, e.g. fire – detection and fire alarm systems or ventilation systems;
- Significant changes to displays or quantities of stock;
- The presence of persons with some form of disability.

Any actions that are identified within any of the fire risk assessments are dealt with within the timeframes as outlined by the assessor. This process is supported by the maintenance of the fire risk assessment action deadlines sheet which is maintained by the SMC in conjunction with the EMM.

### Areas of the School used in the Hours of Darkness

For the purposes of the fire risk assessment, it is necessary to clarify the locations on site which are used in the hours of darkness and are therefore required to have emergency lighting. These areas are as follows:

As a fully boarding school, all areas of main school site may be used in the hours of darkness with the exception of:

- Garden sheds
- Bike shed
- Animal Hospital (tower paint room)