

Fire Safety and Evacuation Policy

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PART 1: FIRE SAFETY

INTRODUCTION

Our priority is to minimise the risk to life and to reduce injury by maintaining the physical fire safety of the school, in ensuring that staff, pupils and visitors do not add to the fire risk and through safe evacuation of our buildings if a fire breaks out. The fire safety policy, procedures and risk assessments at Heathcote School are designed to help our community to respond calmly and effectively in the event that fire breaks out in one of our buildings.

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL FIRE SAFETY MANAGER

Mrs Nadine Solsberg is the designated School Fire Safety Manager, who is responsible for ensuring that:

- The fire safety policy is kept under regular review by the Board of Directors, the SLT and Fire Safety Committee.
- The fire safety policy is promulgated to the entire school community.
- Everyone in the school (including visitors and contractors) are given clear written instructions on where they should go in the event of fire.
- Procedures and arrangements for emergency evacuation are regularly tested and lessons absorbed.
- Fire risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated.
- 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.
- Certificates for the installation and maintenance of fire-fighting systems and equipment are kept.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION NOTICE

All contractors and visitors are shown the following notice:

1. If you discover a fire, ring the nearest fire bell (or ask a member of staff to do so)– located in the front foyer, top lobby and lobby to Nursery. Leave the building by the nearest exit.
2. If the school bell sounds continually this indicates a fire – Leave the building by the nearest exit.
3. Make your way to the assembly point at the top playground, if it is appropriate to do so. If there is a fire in this area, the reserve Fire Assembly Point will be in the front playground. This may mean exiting the school via the back gate and walking round to the front playground.
4. If you are in the Village Hall, stay there until you have been informed it is safe to exit.
5. Do not take anything with you. Shut doors and windows behind you, if it is safe to do so.
6. The School Office or the Headteacher will summon the Emergency Services if the alarm sounds.
7. Remain at the assembly point with your pupils until the all clear is given.

Fire Drill when using the Village Hall

In the event of the fire bell sounding in school anyone in the village hall must stay there. They should gather their class together and a head count must be taken. Be prepared to leave the hall in an orderly fashion, if requested to do so by the fire officer or drill organiser, but do not go back into school until you have been told it is safe to do so. A member of the office staff will come into the hall to assist with registers and will liaise with the Fire Marshalls via mobile phone.

If the school fire bell rings during lunchtime, staff on duty should keep all children in the hall, preventing any returning with trays etc. until told it is safe to do so. A member of the office

staff will come into the hall to assist with registers and will liaise with the Fire Marshalls via mobile phone.

Catering staff should also remain in the kitchen until told it is safe to go back into school.

In the event of a fire in the hall, the first priority is to remove the children and other adults to a place of safety.

If the fire is in the kitchen area, the adult in charge should take everyone out through the front doors and round to the front playground. From there, follow school fire drill policy, make sure alarm is rung and that others are prevented from entering the hall.

If the fire is at the main entrance end of the hall, everyone should leave by the back door and into the playground. From there follow school fire drill policy, make sure alarm is rung and others are prevented from entering the hall.

Fire Drills at Lunch and Break Times

Staff on duty should be aware of any children that are in 'hidden areas' and ensure that they are evacuated. Staff in nearby classrooms should also ensure all children are evacuated. On no account, should any other staff go back into the buildings.

Once everyone is out of the buildings, the usual evacuation procedure should follow and everyone should meet on the top playground and line up in their year groups ready for the register to be taken. This should be done by the form teacher, if possible, or another member of staff if they are not present.

Communication with staff in the hall should confirm any missing children. The Fire Safety Officer should be informed immediately and they will take appropriate action depending on the circumstance of the evacuation.

PART 2: FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURES

BRIEFING NEW STAFF AND PUPILS

All of our new staff (teaching and non-teaching alike) and all new pupils, including EYFS pupils, are given a briefing on the school's emergency evacuation procedures as soon as possible after joining Heathcote School. We show them where the emergency exits and escape routes are located, and walk with them to the outside assembly point. We make certain that everyone knows where they should go on hearing the fire alarm.

The safe evacuation of everyone - staff and pupils alike, is our priority. Protecting property comes second. No one should attempt to fight a fire at the expense of their own, or anyone else's safety.

SUMMONING THE FIRE BRIGADE

The School Office is manned between 8.15am and 4.00pm during weekdays in term-time. The School Office is always given advance warning of fire practices. If the alarm goes off for any other reason, the staff have standing instructions to summon the Fire and Emergency Service at once.

The Head Teacher and various other members of staff have standing instructions to summon the Fire and Emergency Services if the alarms go off outside the hours that the School Office is staffed (unless they are warned of a planned fire practice).

VISITORS AND CONTRACTORS

All visitors and contractors are required to sign in at the school office, where they are issued with a visitor's badge, which should be worn at all times that they are on school premises. They are made aware of the emergency evacuation notice (see above) 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 or the information is included in the printed programme, schedule or order of service.

DISABLED STAFF, PUPILS OR VISITORS

We have a special one-to-one induction on fire safety for disabled pupils and their carers and for disabled members of staff or visitors when we have such individuals on site.

When the fire alarm is sounded, it is the responsibility of the carer of a disabled person to take him or her to the assembly point.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHING STAFF

Teaching staff are responsible for escorting their pupils safely out of the building in an orderly fashion. They are responsible for conducting a head count on arrival at the assembly point, and for ensuring that the name of anyone who cannot be accounted for (and, if possible, their likely location) is passed immediately to the School Fire Safety Manager. It is the responsibility of the School Fire Safety Manager to ensure that this information is passed to the Fire and Emergency service as soon as they arrive.

On no account should anyone return to a burning building.

FIRE PRACTICES

We hold at least one fire practice every term at Heathcote School. This, combined with a programme of inducting new staff and pupils with emergency escape procedures and the presence of our Fire Safety Manager, helps to ensure that the school can be safely evacuated in the event of a fire.

FIRE PREVENTION MEASURES

We have the following fire prevention measures in place at Heathcote School:

Escape Routes and Emergency Exits

- There are at least two escape routes from every part of all buildings
- Fire notices and evacuation signs are displayed in every room and lobby.
- Fire extinguishers (of the appropriate type) are located in every building in accordance with the recommendations of our professional advisors.
- Alarms sound in all parts of the school building.
- Keeping fire routes and exits clear at all times. The Caretaker is responsible for unlocking the buildings in the morning, when he removes bolts, padlocks and security devices from all emergency exits.
- Testing all fire alarms during the fire drill (and recording all tests and defects).
- Annual service of Fire extinguishers
- Records of all tests are kept in the Office

Electrical Safety

- The School has current electrical test certificates for all its buildings. It uses NICEIC qualified Electrical Engineers to inspect and maintain its electrical installations.
- Regular portable appliance testing takes place.
- All computers, projectors, printers and electronic whiteboards have been set to switch off automatically every evening and during holidays and weekends

PART 3: FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

The School's Fire Risk Assessment meets the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the FSO). Specifically it identifies:

- The hazard
- The people at risk
- The measures to evaluate, remove, reduce and protect from the risk
- The measures needed to record, plan, inform, instruct and train people in risk reduction or removal
- The arrangements for reviewing the assessment

All risk assessments follow a standard grid procedure for evaluating risk. Generic risk assessments are used for classrooms.

Heathcote School has a fire risk assessment, which is updated every 3 years or more frequently if significant changes are made to the interior of buildings, or new buildings are bought or added.

Copies of Heathcote School's fire risk assessments are available from the Bursar for all staff to read, together with this document. Any comments or suggestions for improvement are always welcome.