



FIRE POLICY

This is a whole School policy and applies to all members of Copthorne Preparatory School including EYFS.

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PART 1: FIRE SAFETY

1. Introduction

1.1 Copthorne Preparatory School's (the School) 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 the School buildings if a fire breaks out. The Fire Safety Policy, procedures and risk assessments at Copthorne Preparatory School are designed to help the School community to respond calmly and effectively in the event that fire breaks out in one of the School buildings.

2. Role of the Fire Safety Manager/Fire Marshal

2.1 The Business Manager is the designated Fire Safety Manager who is responsible for ensuring that:

- The Fire Safety Policy is kept under regular review by the Governing Body and the Senior Leadership Team.
- The Fire Safety Policy is promulgated to the entire School community.
- Everyone in the School (including visitors and contractors) are given clear instructions on where they should go in the event of fire.
- Records are kept of the fire induction training given to new and/or returning staff.
- Procedures and arrangements for emergency evacuation are regularly tested and lessons absorbed.
- Fire risk assessments are carried out every three years or on each occasion that a building is altered, extended or rebuilt, or when new buildings are acquired.
- Fire prevention measures are meticulously followed.
- Fire procedures and risk assessments are reviewed
- Records are kept of all fire evacuation practices.
- Certificates for the installation and maintenance of fire-fighting systems and equipment are kept.
- Fire Marshals walk the School weekly to ensure that fire-fighting equipment, emergency lighting, etc is all working and that escape routes are clear.

3. Emergency evacuation procedure

3.1 All staff and pupils, contractors and visitors must follow these steps:

Term time – weekdays



- If you discover a fire, break the glass in the nearest alarm point to set off the alarm. Leave the building by the nearest exit.
- If you hear the fire alarm going off, leave the building by the nearest exit.
- If you are responsible for a class, make them leave quietly with you. No one should talk or run. Make your way to the assembly point in the PLAYGROUND, as clearly marked.
- If you are teaching a class, please do not take anything with you and do not allow the pupils to take anything. Shut doors behind you and remove door wedges. This also applies to anyone who works in an office.
- The form teacher is to take the register of their class as soon as you reach the assembly point.
- Whilst the fire alarm is still ringing, two Fire Marshals will go to the fire alarm panel in the affected building and locate which zone the fire is in. The Marshals will then go towards that area and, if the fire is deemed to be manageable in terms of their training, a fire extinguisher will be used to douse the flames. However, should the fire be more significant, the Fire Marshals will evacuate immediately and **call 999**.
- One Fire Marshal will then go outside the front of the School to await the Fire and Emergency Services, whilst the other will report back to the Headmaster on the playground.
- At that point, on no account should anyone else return to any building until given permission by the Fire and Emergency Services.
- Remain at the assembly point with your pupils until the all clear is given.
- If a decision is taken to evacuate the assembly point for the safety of pupils and staff, then pupils and staff will evacuate to the other School sports field, crossing Effingham Lane. Once off School premises, the Crisis Incident Plan team will take over.
- A specific risk assessment will be put in place, when required, for vulnerable children in school.

Boarding - weekdays

- If the fire alarm sounds, boarding pupils and residential staff are to meet in the kitchen carpark. The member of staff on duty must collect the fire register (located by Flat 1) and take it out to the assembly point and account for all pupils. All pupils are told this when they stay in boarding and are shown their nearest fire exit route. The staff member on duty must then call the Fire and Emergency services whilst another adult walks around the School to the front to wait for the Fire and Emergency services.

Residential staff - weekends

- If the fire alarm sounds, residential staff are to meet in the kitchen car park. One of their number is to call the Fire and Emergency services whilst another adult walks around the School to the front to wait for the Fire and Emergency services.

PART 2: FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURES

4. Briefing new staff

- 4.1 All new staff are given a briefing on the School's emergency evacuation procedures during their induction. They will be shown where the emergency exits and escape routes are located and they will go to the outside assembly point. Fire action notices are displayed on the walls of all rooms and in all corridors, and the School makes certain that everyone knows what they look like, and where they should go on hearing the fire alarm. All new staff are shown how to activate the fire alarms if they see or smell a fire.
- 4.2 The safe evacuation of everyone - staff and pupils alike - is the School's priority. Protecting property comes second. Whilst firefighting equipment is held at the School and is regularly serviced, staff are not expected to use equipment with which they are unfamiliar or have not been trained. This rests with the Fire Marshals. Our priority is the safe evacuation of everyone and calling the Fire and Emergency Services.



5. Summoning the Fire Brigade

5.1 The School Office is manned between 8am and 5pm during term time, the Bursar's Office is manned between 9am and 4.00pm during half term and school holidays, apart from Bank Holidays. There are five fire alarm panels throughout the site, located:

- Prep office: outside main office
- Pre-Prep: library area
- Nursery: by the staff toilet
- New Block: inside the front main door
- Sports Hall: inside the front foyer

5.2 Alarms in the Prep building and the New Block are linked. The Sports Hall, Nursery and Pre-Prep buildings are not currently linked.

5.3 If the fire alarm goes off as per 3.1 above, the emergency services will to be summoned by either the Head or Fire Marshals.

6. Visitors and contractors

6.1 All visitors and contractors are required to sign in at the School's Reception, where they are issued with a visitor's badge, which should be worn at all times when they are on School property. Visitors and contractors are made aware of the Emergency Evacuation Procedure and the Assembly Point in the playground.

6.2 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.

7. Responsibilities of ALL staff

7.1 Teaching staff are responsible for escorting their pupils safely out of the building in silence and in an orderly fashion; any new or supply staff are assisted by their classroom Teaching Assistant. Staff should close doors on the way out plus quickly check all toilets by shouting if anyone is inside.

7.2 Form teachers 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 a Fire Marshal, the Headmaster or Deputy Head. It is the responsibility of the Fire Marshals, Headmaster or Deputy Head to ensure that this information is passed to the Fire and Emergency Services as soon as they arrive. On no account should anyone return to a burning building.

7.3 The admin staff are responsible for checking the Sign In app records that all staff are present who have signed in.

8. Responsibilities of Fire Marshals

8.1 The School has six trained Fire Marshals in school:



- Ben Purkiss – Executive Head
- Michelle Barton Scott – Business Manager
- Tony Ireland – Estates staff
- Matt Staples – Estates staff

The Fire Marshals who do not have specific duties in the event of fire or other emergency are responsible for looking after pupils. All Fire Marshals are '*competent persons*' who have been trained to provide '*safety assistance*' in the event of a fire. Fire Marshals receive refresher training every three years and up to date certificates are filed accordingly with the Bursar and within their Personnel file.

9. Fire evacuation practices

- 9.1 One fire evacuation practice is held every term. This combined with a programme of inducting new staff with emergency escape procedures and the presence of trained Fire Marshals in school helps to ensure that the School can be safely evacuated in the event of a fire. The target time for a whole school evacuation is under 5 minutes. Anyone hearing the fire alarm should proceed to the School playground outside the art block, our designated Assembly Point.

10. Fire prevention measures

- 10.1 The School has the following fire prevention measures in place:

(a) 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, corridor and stairwell.
- Fire extinguishers of the appropriate type and smoke/heat detectors are located throughout the School in accordance with the recommendations of the School's professional advisors. They can be manually activated by breaking a glass panel, and are automatically activated when smoke/heat builds up.
- All stairs, passages and emergency exits are illuminated by emergency lighting.
- Automatic door closures that are activated by the fire alarms are fitted on doors in or leading onto escape routes.
- Alarm panels are located as per 5.1 above and sound in all parts of the building that they relate to.
- Fire routes and exits are kept clear at all times.
- Combustible rubbish must not be allowed to accumulate and any hazardous materials e.g. flammable chemicals, aerosols or volatile liquids must be stored safely.
- The fire alarm is tested weekly and all tests and defects are recorded.
- Records of all tests are kept in the Estates Manager's office.
- The kitchen is fitted with heat alarms and 30 minute fire doors that close automatically when the fire alarms sound.

(b) Electrical safety

- The School has current electrical test certificates for the school. It uses NICEIC qualified Electrical Engineers to inspect and maintain its electrical installations.
- Annual portable appliance testing takes place.
- Records of all tests are kept electronically in the Estates folder.



- All computers, projectors, printers and electronic whiteboards are switched off every evening as well as during holidays and weekends.
- The Catering Manager checks that all kitchen equipment is switched off at the end of each day.

(c) Gas safety

- All gas appliances are regularly maintained and serviced by Gas Safe Registered Engineers. Records of all tests are kept electronically in the Estates folder.

11. Service and maintenance

- 11.1 The School's fire alarm system, emergency lighting and detection systems are serviced twice a year by Fire Risk UK (01403 738000) who are both ISO9001 certified and BAFE approved. The fire extinguishers are service annually by the same company. PAT testing is carried out annually by South East Technical Services (SETS) (0330 1333 220).
- 11.2 Following the Grenfell disaster, the School has reviewed its buildings and has no buildings over 18 metres in height with partial Aluminium Composite Material (ACM).

12. Letting or hiring the School

- 12.1 The School's standard contractual terms used for letting and hiring the School covers fire safety and specifies that the hirer should certify that they have read and understood the School's Fire Safety Policy and procedures.

PART 3: FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

13. Fire Risk Assessment

- 13.1 The School's Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) meets the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, Building Regulations 2010, Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, as amended from time to time.

Specifically, the FRA 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; and
 - The arrangements for reviewing the assessment.
- 13.2 An overall FRA is carried out professionally every three years by Michael Whitty of MW Fire, Health & Safety Consultants. The last FRA was carried out in June/July 2024. The FRA will be more frequent if significant changes are made to the interior of buildings, or new buildings are bought or added.
- 13.3 Copies of the School's FRA together with this Policy are available from Bursar's Office. All Heads of Department should ensure that they and their Department read the sections that are relevant to them.

14. Monitoring and review



- 14.1 This Policy is reviewed annually. The Fire Safety Risk Assessment is reviewed prior to the start of each term.