



ST VINCENT'S SCHOOL

A Specialist School for Sensory Impairment and Other Needs

Fire Safety Policy

Introduction

St. Vincent's school will ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that all staff, pupils, contractors and visitors are protected from the risks of fire whilst on the premises.

Legal Requirements

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (commonly referred to as the RRO) came into effect on 1st October 2006 and replaces all previous fire safety legislation eg The Fire Precautions Act 1971, the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997 etc.

The purpose of the legislation is to place a greater emphasis on fire prevention by ensuring that all persons responsible for premises comply with their statutory duties and implement the general fire precautions which are needed to protect all persons from death or injury in the case of fire.

This Policy explains how the school complies with the **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety)** to ensure that, where possible, fire is prevented and that any fire risks are adequately controlled.

Responsibilities

The School Fire Safety Policy forms part of the School's Health and Safety Policy and in common with that policy extends through the whole school, with specific responsibilities as below:

- Governors ensure that an appropriate policy is in place in the school and that arrangements are made for its effective implementation;

- The Principal has ultimate responsibility for the implementation and management of this policy and will support the Health and Safety committee in this respect;
- The Health and Safety committee will take responsibility for the effective implementation of this Policy and its role within the School's Health and Safety Policy:
- The 'responsible person' who is someone who has control of premises or anyone who has a degree of control over certain areas or systems during out of school hours.
- All employees have the responsibility to cooperate and to ensure that the workplace is safe from fire and its effects and must not do anything that will place themselves or other people at risk.

Policy Objectives

- To safeguard all persons from death or injury in the event of fire by the effective management of fire safety;
- To minimise the risk of fire and to limit fire spread;
- To minimise the potential for fire to disrupt

Managing Fire Safety

The school has delegated day to day responsibility for managing fire safety to the responsible person i.e. the Principal. The Health and Safety members will:

- 1) Ensure that all means of escape are properly maintained, kept free from obstruction and available for safe and effective use at all times; and that the means of escape have adequate emergency lighting.
- 2) Provide and maintain in working order all fire fighting appliances and devices including:
 - a) fire detection and alarm systems;
 - b) emergency lighting systems;
 - c) fire fighting equipment;

- d) notices and signage relating to fire procedures;
 - e) means of escape, taking into account the needs of any disabled users.
- 3) A fire safety risk assessment will be undertaken and reviewed annually of the school buildings to ensure that the school's facilities are compliant; and reduce the risk of fire incidences by carrying out appropriate task risk assessments.
- 4) Provide appropriate instruction and training for all school staff on the action to be taken to protect people and property including regular fire evacuation practices for all the school.
- 5) Ensure that all staff, students, contractors, visitors and third-party hirers are made aware of and comply with the school's fire procedures.
- 6) Identify any special risks, eg the storage of hazardous materials, and put in place appropriate procedures to minimise the risks.
- 7) Liaise with third parties including Safeguarding Officer, the school's Health and Safety advisors; the emergency services, and the school's insurers to ensure that best practice for fire prevention and procedures is in place.
- 8) Monitor and review this policy on a regular basis so as to ensure that any new risk or alteration to regulations is addressed.

Monitoring

- The school utilises the services of various outside personnel to carry out effective monitoring of its duties;
- The school fire detection and alarm system is maintained and checked by Honeywell/Roberts Fire and Security quarterly;
- The fire alarm sounders are tested on a weekly basis;
- The school emergency lighting is checked annually;

- Notices and Signage are updated as and when required and checked annually by Roberts Fire and Protection Services;
- Fire fighting equipment is checked regularly by Maintenance staff and extinguishers are replenished or replaced annually by Roberts Fire and Protection Services;
- The school Health and Safety Adviser, is consulted on a regular basis;

A Fire Log Book which contains records of fire safety issues is maintained by the maintenance staff. These logs include:

- fire drills;
- hot work permits, etc;
- the storing of hazardous materials;
- the inspection and testing of:
 - fire detection and alarm systems;
 - emergency lighting systems;
 - fire fighting equipment;
 - staff training records.

Fire Risk Assessment

The school has carried out a comprehensive fire risk assessment completed by Roberts and Sons. These assessments are kept within the Site Manager.

The fire risk assessments identify who will be at risk if there is a fire, where people may be working and who else may be at risk, either in the premises or nearby, such as members of the public, visiting contractors, etc, and where these people are likely to be located.

The fire risk assessment will be reviewed and amended on a yearly cycle if it is either no longer valid or if any changes are planned, such as:

- Any structural changes (alterations to the layout of the premises, erection of partitions, refurbishment etc) which may affect the spread of fire;
- Any change to the use of the premises which may affect the risk rating;

- Any change to work processes or work equipment which may introduce new fire hazards;
- Any change to the numbers of people using the premises to ensure that escape routes can accommodate the numbers safely.

Fire Safety Training

- All staff receive basic fire safety induction training and attend refresher sessions when required.
- Key staff in the individual school buildings receive more detailed instruction including the use of fire fighting equipment.
- Pupils are given instruction by their form staff during the first week of the Autumn term on their actions to be taken in the event of a fire.
- Fire drills are planned each term to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's evacuation procedures. The findings of the drill are reported to staff through the Minutes of the Health and Safety Committee meetings. Any conclusions and remedial actions are recorded and implemented.

Evacuation Procedure

The Fire Alarm

The person discovering the fire should:

- break glass of nearest alarm and, from a safe location, contact either Reception or the Main Office to confirm that there is actually a fire.
- In any event, the caretaking staff will check the source of the alarm to establish the cause of the activation.

In all cases when the fire alarm sounds, an orderly evacuation will take place and all other procedures (below) will be followed.

On hearing the fire alarm

All persons proceed to assembly point

Where appropriate, ensure Master switches for gas and electricity are off and windows closed. NB In the event of a gas leak, when evacuation is likely to be as a result of verbal instructions rather than a fire alarm sounding, no electrical switches should be used.

In classrooms, Staff assemble pupils **IN SILENCE** and instruct them to proceed to the Assembly Point (outside Junior classroom yard) **IN SILENCE**, walking rapidly **NOT** running. The classroom door should be closed behind the last person to leave.

Use the directed route - the quickest fire escape route is displayed in each room - unless a blockage makes this impossible. Be prepared to find an alternative route if necessary. Should the alarm ring during Break or Lunchtime pupils should be instructed to leave the building by the nearest safe fire exit and proceed to the Assembly Point. Staff should assist this process where possible without putting themselves at risk. Under no circumstances should staff or pupils return to their form rooms. All doors should be opened by those who are first to reach them and closed by the last person to pass through them.

Staff in Main Office will take the Visitors' signing in book to Assembly Point.

Office Manager should collect registers, named person to collect staff signing in/out books, off-site lists come with the office staff.

The **Site Manager** on duty or **Waking Night Officer** will meet for the Fire Brigade and await their arrival and will prevent any casual visitor from entering the premises.

If a named person with responsibility is absent, their named deputy will assume their role in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Procedure for Assembly and Roll Call (refer to Fire Procedures)

Pupils' Reporting Procedure:

- Pupils will assemble in Form or Group lines
- Form teachers collect registers from Office staff and supervise roll call.
- Once roll call is completed, all wait until informed by Principal the build is safe

Specific Evacuation Guidance and Requirements

Wheelchair users/Persons with Mobility Difficulty

Wheelchair users or any person with difficulty walking (eg anyone temporarily using crutches) should wait until everyone else has left the room before making their way to the exit.

Visitors with disabilities

On arrival, disabled visitors to the School should be asked to identify any special requirements in the case of an emergency evacuation. The person hosting the visitor should ensure the visitor's safety in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Wherever possible (i.e. when on ground floors) all persons, including wheelchair users, should make their own way out of the building by utilising the fire escape

routes. Whenever the route is blocked or the person is above ground floor, wheelchair users must be either assisted by their 'buddy' or other third party. When evacuating the upper floors of the buildings, anyone unable to leave without assistance should wait for assistance in the refuge¹ areas at the top of the stairs or at the top of the outside fire escape.

The use of the term "Refuge" is intended to mean a place where people can safely wait for a period of time whilst the evacuation process is being undertaken. It is not a place to leave people for the duration of the alarm, but it has been selected for its additional protection from fire, meaning that it will remain a safe place to wait.

Lifts must not be used during an emergency evacuation



ST VINCENT'S SCHOOL

A Specialist School for Sensory Impairment and Other Needs

Fire Procedures

All Staff

- Should be aware of evacuation procedure as outlined during induction.
- No person is expected to fight any type of fire unless they have been trained to do so.
- Should attend a basic fire awareness course;
- Should report any missing or damaged, fire fighting equipment signage or doors which do not close properly.
- Should be aware that use of wedges on doors is STRICTLY forbidden;
- Should be aware of the Duty Head and first aider. The names of these are displayed at main entrance.

In the event of the fire alarm sounding our evacuation time is regularly under 3 minutes maximum of 4 minutes. The Fire Brigade base is approximately 1½ mile away and arrival at the site is usually within the same time scale as evacuation.

Staff Responsibilities in case of fire

To facilitate the checking of pupils and staff at the fire assembly point, all members of staff are reminded of the following instructions:

- Upon hearing the fire alarm, direct the pupils in your care to the nearest fire exit, or out to the fire assembly point.
- When leaving the building please make sure to close all doors behind you.
- All members of the school community assemble at The Fire Assembly Point which is situated on the Yard outside Queens Wing
- Upon assembling outside please check your classes or groups and report to either the Principal or Duty Head/Senior Care Staff
- Never return to the building until permission is given by the Staff in Charge.
- Do not turn the Fire Alarm Off – This is the responsibility of the Fire Advisers

- As a back up a 9 999 call may be made

The Fire Alarm System

- The building houses a fully automatic system installed and maintained to comply with current regulations.
- Main Indicator Panel is installed in the reception area.
- Gents Optical and Fixed Temperature Heads and also manual call points will trigger the system.
- The alarm system is tested weekly and recorded.
- Fire drills are carried out twice per term one in school hours and one during the 'out of school' period.

Fire Fighting Equipment

- All fire fighting equipment is tested and serviced twice per year by a specialist contractor and is available for inspection under current regulations.
- The equipment is appropriate for all classes of fire that may occur throughout the building.

Emergency Lighting

- This system is tied into the Fire Alarm system; operation is independent of mains failure (24V Fluorescent) and is tested weekly.

Fire/Smoke Doors

- '½ hour' fire doors and smoke barriers doors are in use throughout the building. Most are manually closing.
- One unit 'Bridgman' uses magnetic closures tied in to the alarm system.

Lifts

- These are inspected annually and serviced by specialist contractor. They are not to be used in the event of a fire alarm.

Main Kitchens, Laundry and Residential Care Groups

Are all covered by separate risk assessment with particular emphasis on:

- Deep Fat Fryers

- Main Cookers
- Hot Water Boilers

The equipment is serviced annually by specialist contractors.

Smoking

St Vincent's School is a no Smoking Site. (See Smoking Policy).

Safety Signage

- Fire Action Plan
- Position of Fire Equipment
- Fire Assembly Points
- Position of Call Point
- No Smoking Site

Electrical

- The 440V 3 phases supply intake to the building is marked on the site plan.
- A portable appliance testing to appropriate equipment is in operation and records available.
- Visual inspection only on leads feeding computer and electronic equipment.

Gas

- The main kitchen area is served by gas supply. This has a main shut off valve. Signed for emergency use.
- The main gas intake is in a locked brick intake in the Lodge/Rice House Garden.
- Staff are instructed not to use and to report any equipment they may suspect as faulty.

Steam Boiler

- A service contract with the manufacturer's service department twice yearly.
- Steam Plant is inspected annually.

Appendix 1

Areas of responsibility

- Governors
- Principal
- Health and Safety Adviser
- Health and Safety Committee

Persons Responsible

- All Staff

In the absence of the Principal, the Acting Deputy is designated to act.

Health and Safety Advisers: **J BISHOP and B Buckle**

Area Covered	Person Responsible
	(Safety representatives)
Major Services and plant	J Bishop
Kitchen and ancillary rooms	T Pearson
Clinic and first aid boxes	C Wynne
Gym/changing rooms/ fitness suite	L Green
Swimming Pool	J B
School vehicles	JB
Class rooms	DS All Teaching/LSA responsible for own areas
Group rooms	Staff in charge of group
Corridors	JB
Yards, Grounds and Grids	JB

Area Covered	Person Responsible
---------------------	---------------------------

(Safety representatives)

Dining rooms	T Pearson
Staff and Visitors rooms	JB
Assembly Hall	JB
Laundry	E McVeigh
Science room	DS
Reprographics	M Hesketh