

The Cornwall Independent School

Fire Safety Policy, Procedures and Fire Risk Assessment

This policy, which applies to the whole school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), is publicly available on the school website and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office.

Scope: All who work, volunteer or supply services to our school have an equal responsibility to understand and implement this policy and its procedures both within and outside of normal school hours, including activities away from school. All new employees and volunteers are required to state that they have read, understood and will abide by this policy and its procedural documents and confirm this by signing the Policies Register.

Legal Status: Complies with The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations currently in force.

- Regulatory Requirements, Part 3, Paragraph 13 of the Independent School Standards (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- [Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)
- [The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#)
- [The Fire Precautions \(Workplace\) Regulations 1997 \(as amended 1999\)](#)
- [The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974](#)
- [The Fire Precautions Act 1971](#)

Availability

- This Policy is made available to parents, staff and students in the following ways: via the Office from where a request for a copy of the Policy may be obtained.
- The Fire Safety Policy and Emergency Evacuation Procedures (available to staff via the school office) along with relevant procedural documents, are provided either electronically or in hard copy to all new employees and volunteers before commencing work at The Cornwall Independent School.

Monitoring and Review: These arrangements are subject to continuous monitoring, refinement, and audit by the Headteacher. The Advisory Board will undertake a full annual review of this document, inclusive of its implementation and the efficiency with which the related duties have been implemented. This review will be formally documented in writing. Any deficiencies or weaknesses recognised in arrangements or procedures will be remedied immediately and without delay. All staff will be informed of the updated/reviewed arrangements and it will be made available to them in writing or electronically.

Signed:

Reviewed: November 2024
Next Review: September 2025

Miss Louise Adams
Headteacher

Mr Stephen Beck
Chair of the Advisory Board

Mr. Bill Brown
Education and Compliance Adviser

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 The Cornwall Independent School are designed to help our school community to respond calmly and effectively in the event that fire breaks out in our buildings.

The Government published the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order in 2005. It applies to the vast majority of premises. The aim of the new regime is to create a simple fire safety regime applying to all workplaces and other non-domestic premises. The regime is based on risk assessment, a duty to maintain fire precautions which are for the use of fire fighters and new duties on fire authorities for fire safety, investigation and testing. The fire safety arrangements in The Cornwall Independent School have been dictated by the provisions of the Fire Safety Acts.

Responsible Persons

The Regulatory (Fire Safety) Reform Order 2005 states the meaning of 'Responsible Person' as being:

- The employer, if the workplace is to any extent under his control; or
- The person who has control of the premises (as occupier or otherwise) in connection with carrying out their trade, business, or undertaking.

The Main requirements of the above legislation include:

- Fire risk assessment and fire precautions to minimise the risk of fire.
- Design of buildings to prevent the spread of fire
- Means of detection and giving warning in the event of fire
- The provision and maintenance of means of escape
- Emergency evacuation procedures and means of fighting a fire
- The training of staff in fire safety and the management of fire safety

The main objectives of our school Fire Policy are:

- to safeguard persons who may be affected by fire at any of the school premises;
- to safeguard the physical assets of the school, its staff, students and visitors;
- to reduce the incidence of fires;
- to minimise the potential for fire to disrupt the work of the school;
- to minimise the incidence of unwanted fire alarm signals and false alarms and
- to protect the environment.

The Proprietor has undertaken a fire risk assessment in accordance with the Fire Precautions Workplace Regulations. The Health and Safety Manager (HSM) with the Risk Assessment consultant ensure compliance and this is viewed as a minimum standard to be achieved. The Headteacher will ensure any further modifications required as a result in changes in legislation or established best practice. In accordance with legislation, there is an annual Health and Safety Fire Risk Assessment. This is completed by an external contractor. Fire Marshals are trained externally on a three year cycle. The whole school staff receive Fire Safety training at the start of each year and updates take place during the year.

In compliance with both regulations and best practice, the Proprietor has ensured that:

- all fire call points are identified and weekly call point tests (different call point every week) undertaken and recorded;
- adequate and suitable fire extinguishing appliances are provided and maintained;
- suitable means of fire detection and signalling of the presence of fire is provided and maintained;
- adequate means of escape are provided and maintained;
- suitable signs designating firefighting equipment and means of escape are provided and maintained;
- a fire logbook is provided and maintained;
- fire training is provided to employees;
- evacuation drills are undertaken at least termly and the results recorded;
- suitable fire procedures are published in respect of:
 - Action to be taken on discovering a fire.
 - Action to be taken on hearing the alarm.
 - Responsibility of key personnel in the event of a fire.

Role of the Fire Safety Manager

The Headteacher who is the Health and Safety Manager is also the designated School Fire Safety Manager, who is responsible for ensuring that:

- The fire safety policy is kept under regular review by the Headteacher and the SLT
- 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.
- New Staff are provided with training when joining the school.
- Procedures and arrangements for emergency evacuation are tested once a term.
- Fire risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated.
- Fire prevention measures are followed.
- Fire procedures and risk assessments are reviewed on each occasion that a building is altered or extended.
- Records are kept of all fire practices.
- Certificates for the installation and maintenance of fire-fighting systems and equipment are kept.

Emergency Contact

A Pro-forma for emergency contact telephone numbers is issued to parents on entry to the school. Notification of any change to these details must be reported to the School Office. Every employee at the school has been asked to complete a form giving details of next of kin, emergency contact numbers.

- The primary aim of our Fire Safety Policy is to safeguard life and to this end the Proprietor will assume this responsibility. Policies and procedures are available for all staff who are required to be familiar with and apply them.
- Advice is taken from the Fire Brigade inspector and appropriate specialist advisors.
- Problems will be noted, prioritised and acted upon appropriately.
- Outside teachers, visitors and contractors will be required to take note of and follow our emergency procedures.
- Public events are assessed for all risks including fire.
- Fire Drills are held regularly, at least once a term and timed. Records of fire drills are kept in the Log Book in the School Office.
- Escape routes are clearly labelled and lead to a safe assembly point.
- All staff and students are instructed on action to be taken in the event of an emergency.
- Every room has prominently displayed clear notices describing the action to be taken.
- Fire doors are clearly labelled and unlocked.
- Clear and prominent signage directs visitors to the nearest evacuation route.
- Arrangements are in place for summoning the Fire Brigade.
- A roll call is taken using registers, staff signing in book, visitors' book and students signing in and out book.
- The alarm system is never switched off. It is tested weekly and serviced every six months by an external company.
- All the firefighting equipment is checked on a monthly basis and externally every 6 months.
- Electrical equipment is regularly checked and maintained by an approved electrical.
- Regulations concerning the control and storage of flammable liquids are followed.

Fire-fighting equipment is regularly serviced and clearly labelled. Signage is regularly checked and updated in line with current legal requirements. There is a fire drill/emergency evacuation procedure at least once a term. Neither staff nor pupils are warned of an impending practice. It is essential; therefore, that each member of staff is aware of what the evacuation arrangements are for each area of the school. These are detailed in to this document. The evacuation and safety of visitors and contractors will be the responsibility of the person who they are visiting.

The School has:

- Fire Safety Policy and Procedures
- Fire Safety Audit
- Evacuation Procedures

In accordance with statutory requirements there is an annual fire safety audit which includes checking all firefighting equipment by an approved contractor and records maintained. The fire alarm will be tested weekly from different points when the site is not in use and records maintained. All emergency lighting is tested monthly and records maintained.

Responsibility of Staff

The effectiveness of the Fire Safety Policy will depend on the full co-operation of every member of staff, without exception. Co-operation should be encouraged from the highest level. Complying with the fire safety procedures should be regarded as a basic duty by all the staff and an essential obligation for all Officers with management responsibility. The Health and Safety Manager and the Bursar are responsible for coordinating the fire evacuation of the school building in the event of a fire emergency.

Fire Marshalls

Fire Marshall training should be made role –specific, to include:

- how and when to check areas to ensure that people have evacuated;
- an overview of the School’s emergency plan; the role of the First Response Team and Fire Marshalls;
- the location of the ‘Control’ and ‘Assembly’ Points.
- understanding of the fire detection and alarm system and the fire equipment available.
- reporting procedures for non-compliant issues.

Fire Drill

Staff are also informed of the location of the fire extinguishers. All employees and voluntary helpers are provided with a personal copy of the fire drill procedures including:

- evacuation from the premises;
- exit routes;
- checking the pupils are present;
- their responsibilities regarding the pupils they are supervising.

Execution

Our fire safety policy regime mirrors The Cornwall Independent School Health and Safety Policy (H&S) systems and procedures. Fire safety is by definition a subset of the current H&S systems and procedures. Our School’s H&S Policy includes a statement that the Proprietor of the School has a duty to take reasonable precautions to safeguard the lives of employees, pupils and other visitors. Responsibilities are as follows:

	Tasks	Comments
The Proprietor	Responsible in law for what happens on the premises	
Responsible Person (Headteacher/HSM)	Plans, implements, monitors and reviews the policy	
Health and Safety manager (HSM)	Assists the Responsible Person in the Management of H&S including fire precautions	
Employees	Comply with H&S policy and take reasonable steps to protect themselves and colleagues at work.	
Visitors	Should be briefed on any H&S issues that will affect them, as required, when they are on site	

Risk Assessment. The Responsible Person produces the risk assessment for the purpose of identifying the general fire precautions that he needs to take. The Risk Assessment is based on an understanding of the relevant legislation, guidance and good practice in the fire prevention field.

Maintenance of Fire Alarm Systems

The School’s Health and Safety Manager will be responsible for ensuring the ongoing maintenance of all the school’s fire alarm systems, within the school buildings.

Fire Precautions Maintenance

The following arrangements have been made for maintenance:

	Item	By whom
Ongoing	Check signage, safety clips on fire extinguishers	HSM
Weekly	Test fire panels/Call Points	HSM
Weekly	Routes of Escape	HSM
Monthly	Emergency lighting	HSM
Monthly	Fire Fighting Equipment	HSM
Monthly	Fire Doors/Self Closers	HSM
Every Six Months	Test all emergency lights, alarms and fire extinguishers, check all fire blankets.	External Contractor – Walker Fire UK LTD

Smoking

Smoking can be a major source of fires. Smoking on the school’s premises is prohibited.

Training

The Health and Safety Manager (HSM) will arrange annual training for staff.

Practice Evacuation

The aim of the practices is to familiarise students and staff with evacuation procedures, a full evacuation is considered successful when a building is evacuated within 3 minutes. The HSM will set off the fire panel and monitor the time it takes to evacuate the building, details are recorded in the fire logbook.

Who	Detail	By whom
Whole School	One evacuation practice per term.	The HSM

The Cornwall Independent has an Emergency Evacuation Plan which forms an appendix to this policy.

Overview of hazards, people at risk, level of risk, records and review

Identification of hazards.

- **Sources of ignition.** Sources of ignition include: electrical sockets and equipment; maintenance; items covered under CoSHH; and specific rooms such as science lab and kitchen. These areas are kept under review to minimise risk. Contractors are supervised and have to comply with both CDM regulations and school policies in relation to Fire Safety and Health and Safety.
- **Sources of fuel** Mains electric and Mains gas.
- **Sources of oxygen.** Doors are kept shut to reduce the levels of draft (an accelerant) and slow the spread of fire; there are no stored oxygen containers on site. All fire doors must not be wedged open when room unattended.

People at risk.

- **By day.** Children, staff and visitors.
- **By night.** At night there is nobody in the school.
- **During holidays.** During the holiday periods there could again be occasions when the school is used for continuing professional development and maintenance works.
- **People especially at risk.** This would apply if either a child or adult with a physical disability was on the school site.

Evaluation of risk

- **Overall evaluation of risk.** The overall evaluation of the risk of a fire starting is assessed as **LOW** because there are few ignition sources and combustible materials are kept away from them. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the school premises or the entrance area. Electrical equipment is inspected regularly and tested, and the chance of arson is assessed as low due to the security arrangements of the school.
- **Evaluation of risk to people from fire.** Risk to people from fire is low.
- **Reduction of fire hazards.** All adults are briefed on induction and annually on the importance of good housekeeping to prevent the build-up of combustible material.

Reduction of risk to people.

- **Detection and warning.** The premises are protected with fire detection equipment, emergency lighting, and warning sirens.
- **Firefighting.** Key staff have practised with fire extinguishers. Although the school policy is not to fight fire unless it is to ensure a safe evacuation.
- **Fire Marshall.** All Fire Marshall will receive training every three years.
- **Escape routes.** The school follows the principal that main escape routes are all signed.
- **Signs and notices.** Signs and notices comply with H&S (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996.

Emergency Evacuation Notice

All new staff and pupils, all contractors and visitors are shown the following notice:

1. 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.
2. If you are responsible for a class, make them leave quietly with you. No one should talk or run. Make your way to the designated assembly point
3. Do not take anything else, and do not allow the pupils to take anything. Shut doors and windows behind you.
4. The School Office will summon the Emergency Services if the alarm sounds.
5. If you have a disabled pupil in your class, you should direct him or her, together with his or her carer, to the nearest designated assembly point.
6. The Bursar will bring registers to the playground, take the register immediately for your class once you receive it and are waiting at the assembly point.
7. Report anyone who is missing immediately to the School Fire Safety Manager who will inform the Fire Brigade. *On no account should anyone return to any building until given permission by the Fire and Emergency Services.*
8. Remain at the assembly point with your pupils until the all clear is given.
9. In a major incident we would move to Paradise Park our neighbouring attraction.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE: FIRE

1. The bell will ring continuously.
2. Line up by the door. LEAVE ALL BAGS.
3. CLOSE ALL WINDOWS if possible and turn off lights.
4. Lead out in single file and in silence.
5. Last person out CLOSE the door.
6. Go to form positions on playground, lining up in front of the wall Reception nearest the hedge and year 11 nearest the shed.
7. Wait for class teacher to take the register.

Once Outside:

- Class teachers should stay with their classes, keep the children silent and check if they are present.
- Class teacher should hold registers in the air to show that all recorded on registers are present.
- The Bursar will check staff and visitors are all present using the logbooks from the office.

Bomb Threats

The aim is to prevent bomb or incendiary attacks, or when this is not possible, to minimise their effects in buildings to which members of the public must have access. This must be done without imposing unacceptable restrictions on them and the Proprietor must weigh the seriousness of the threat against the need to maintain business as usual and decide the extent to which counter measures should be adopted.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE: BOMB

1. The bell will ring continuously as in a fire drill.
2. Line up by the door,
3. Lead out in single file and in silence.
4. Go to form positions on the playground.
5. Wait for class teacher to take the register.
6. We will then leave the playground to an alternative pre-arranged safe space.

Package Bombs and Hoaxes

Postal bombs are unlikely to be in large parcels, rather in flat packages. Staff should be on their guard for:

- Stains – these could be sweating explosives.
- The smell – usually an aroma of marzipan or almonds indicate an explosive.
- The sound – if the parcel rattles, ticks, etc.

Telephone Calls

These are more of a common occurrence than parcels. All members of staff should be aware of the necessary procedures should they receive such a call (9 These are displayed in the office if required):

- Alert security/police immediately.
- Above all, be calm, listen carefully, and report exactly what is said.

Prevention of Arson

Arsonists in schools often start their first fires by chance. There is no planning, no organisation. Having got inside, they can't find too much to steal, they have matches in their pocket, they see the wastepaper bin and they start a fire. This chance element in arson makes some people believe that arson is the hardest of all the security risks to control.

With the number attacks on schools rising rapidly and the number of large fires also rising fast, some credence is given to this view. But the fact that the action of most arsonists is either unplanned or badly planned does give the school a good chance of preventing the fires. Because it seems to be easy, because they don't get caught, because of the thrill they get from the adrenaline rush, because the school seems powerless to do anything about the problem, the arsonists do it again – which is why school fires come in cycles.

Larger scale attacks – a serious attempt to burn the whole school down – normally come after the smaller-scale events. Some arson is aimed at hiding the details of another crime – although this is rare in schools. Arsonists do not normally bring the method of starting the fire into the school – they are reliant on finding scrap paper, etc., in the school to start the fire. There are few instances of arsonists seemingly tearing up books etc. in order to create the blaze – they look for loose paper on desks, in waste bins, etc. The school policy on arson prevention is therefore:

- As far as is practicable inflammable materials are locked away.
- All waste bins are emptied.

PART 2: FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURES

Briefing New Staff & Pupils

All our new staff (teaching and non-teaching alike) are given a briefing on the school's emergency evacuation procedures on their first day at The Cornwall Independent School. When new pupils join our school we conduct a fire drill soon after they start so that they are aware of the action they need to take. Fire action notices are displayed on the walls of all rooms and in all corridors, and we make 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.

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. We have fire awareness training, including the basic use of fire extinguishers at the start of the year. We also offer regular refresher training through the year. No one should attempt to use a fire extinguisher before he or she has been trained in its use.

Summoning the Fire Brigade

The School Office is manned between 8.00am and 5.00pm during weekdays throughout the year apart from the School Holidays. The master panel that shows the location of all the alarm call points on the networked alarm system in the school buildings is physically located in the Reception Area. 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.

Visitors and Contractors

All visitors and contractors are required to sign in at Reception, 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 (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.

Disabled Staff Pupils or Visitors

We would put in place an induction on fire safety for disabled pupils and their carers and for disabled members of staff or visitors to ensure their safety and necessary requirements for safe and effective evacuation. There would be a specific risk assessment put in place to ensure suitable procedures are in place.

Responsibilities of the Teaching Staff

Teaching staff are responsible for escorting their pupils safely out of the building in silence and 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 Headteacher (the School Fire Safety Manager). It is the responsibility of the Headteacher (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 one fire practice every term at The Cornwall Independent School. This combined with a programme of inducting new staff and pupils with emergency escape procedures, which 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 The Cornwall Independent School:

Escape Routes and Emergency Exits

- Fire notices and evacuation signs are displayed in every room, and corridor
- Fire extinguishers (of the appropriate type), are located in accordance with the recommendations of our professional advisor/Maintenance company. Call points can be manually activated by break glass panels around the school. Emergency lighting illuminates key passages.

- The master panel for the alarm system in the main school building is located in the cloakroom/entrance area. It is fitted with an uninterrupted power supply (UPS)
- Alarms sound in all parts of the building.
- Keeping fire routes and exits clear at all times.
- Testing individual fire alarms weekly (and recording all tests and defects) and monthly checks of fire doors, automatic door closures and emergency lights. This is the responsibility of the HSM.
- Alarms, extinguishers and firefighting equipment are all serviced on a six monthly basis.
- Records of all tests are kept in the school office.

Electrical Safety

- The School uses Electrical Engineers with a NAPIT City and Guilds Qualification to inspect and maintain its electrical installations all of which are RCB protected and meet the requirements of BS7671 IEE wiring regulations.
- Regular portable appliance testing takes place.
- Records of all tests are kept in the School Office, Fire and Health and Safety Files.
- All classroom computers, projectors and printers are switched off every evening and during holidays and weekends

Lightning Protection

- All lightning protection and earthing conforms to BS 6651-1999.

Safe Storage

- We ensure that flammable materials used in maintenance are locked in the shed away from the main building.

Rubbish and Combustible Materials

- Flammable rubbish is stored away from buildings.
- Combustible materials used in maintenance, grounds and caretaking are stored securely in shed away from the main building

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 procedure for evaluating risk. Generic risk assessments are used for classrooms; but individual ones are needed for kitchens, etc.

The HSM conducts risk assessments of all communal areas of The Cornwall Independent School and class teachers conduct their own risk assessments for their own classrooms. We update the risk assessment documents annually, more frequently if significant changes are made to the interior of buildings, or should a new extension be added.