

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME SCHOOL

FIRE POLICY

This Document is available upon request to parents and prospective parents and is published to parents and prospective parents on the School's website
This policy applies to the whole School including the EYFS.

PART 1: FIRE SAFETY

Introduction

Our priority is to minimise the risk to life and to reduce injury by maintaining the physical fire safety integrity 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 Newcastle under Lyme 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

The Bursar is the designated School Fire Safety Manager, who is responsible for ensuring that:

- The fire safety policy is kept under regular review by Governors and the SMT.
- 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.
- Records are kept of the fire induction training given to new staff.
- Procedures 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 on a change of use, or when new buildings are acquired.

Emergency Evacuation Notice

All new staff and pupils, all contractors and visitors are instructed as follows:

1. If you discover a fire, activate the nearest fire alarm call 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 assembly point at the Victoria Fields Car Park and line up in registration classes.
3. If coats and jackets are close to hand they should be taken. Do not take anything else, and do not allow the pupils to take anything. Shut doors and windows (but not lock them) behind you.
4. The School Fire alarms are monitored by a security company who out of normal school hours will automatically call the fire service if an alarm is activated. During normal school working hours, following an alarm activation the nominated Caretaker will summon the fire service. If after investigation it is found to be a false alarm the nominated Caretaker will contact the Alarm Receiving Centre (EMCS) and Fire Service Control Centre to advise accordingly and cancel any further action. Take the register of your form group as soon as you reach the assembly point.

5. Report anyone who is missing immediately to the senior person present; either the Headmaster, Deputy Heads, Head of Junior School or the Bursar. The Bursar or Headmaster will co-ordinate received information and inform the fire service accordingly. On no account should anyone return to any building until given permission by the senior person present
6. Remain at the assembly point with your pupils until the all clear is given.

PART 2: FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURES

Briefing New Staff and Pupils

All our new staff (teaching and non-teaching alike) and all new pupils are given a briefing on the school's emergency evacuation procedures on their first day at Newcastle under Lyme School. We show them where the emergency exits, escape routes and assembly area are located, and early in the first term of the year a pre-notified walk through fire practice takes place. Fire action notices are displayed in prominent locations 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 offer fire awareness training, including the basic use of fire extinguishers to key staff. We also offer regular refresher training. No one should attempt to use a fire extinguisher before he or she has been trained in its use.

On evacuation of buildings all staff and pupils report to the assembly area adjacent to the Victoria Fields car park. Non-teaching staff and non-form staff assemble in the adjacent area beside R (Maths) Block. Staff and pupils may only re-enter buildings with the approval of either the Senior Fire Officer present or the Headmaster.

The fire notice is displayed in classrooms is as follows:

Action on Discovering a Fire or Hearing a Fire Alarm

- **Any Person Discovering a Fire**
 1. Sound the Alarm
 2. Ask a member of staff to call the Fire and Rescue Service/Bursar/Caretaker **immediately**
 3. Follow the instructions of the member of staff to whom you reported the fire
- **On Hearing the Fire Alarm - (continuous siren)**
 4. Listen to and follow your teacher's instructions
 5. In the absence of a teacher leave the building by the nearest fire exit
 6. Close doors behind you
 7. Report to the assembly point which is **VICTORIA ROAD PLAYING FIELDS - ADJACENT TO VICTORIA FIELDS CAR PARK**
 8. Form up in registration groups
 9. Wait quietly until you are given further instructions by a member of staff

DO NOT take risks
DO NOT stop to collect personal belongings
DO NOT run, push or overtake others
DO NOT re-enter the building

Nursery evacuation

Following advice from our Fire Inspector, the Nursery will initially evacuate to their outdoor area. Contact will then be made by the Junior School Fire Marshall by ringing their mobile phone on **07435 976 929** or **01782 664 623**.

If any member of staff becomes aware of a real need to evacuate further then Nursery Staff are to be notified to evacuate to the Junior School assembly point.

Summoning the Fire and Rescue Service

Main Reception is manned between 8.30am and 5.00pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30 to 4.30 on Fridays during term time. The master panels on both the Victoria and Lancaster Sites show the location of all the alarm call points on the networked alarm system in the school buildings. In addition a small slave panel in the kitchen area near the Main Reception identifies in which building an alarm has been activated. Reception and Caretakers are always given advance warning of fire practices. If the alarm goes off for any other reason, the Caretakers have standing instructions to quickly confirm the validity of the alarm and summon the fire service accordingly.

In addition the School Fire alarms are monitored by a Call Receiving Centre who out of normal school hours will automatically call the fire service if an alarm is activated. During normal school working hours, following an alarm activation the nominated Caretaker will summon the fire service. If after investigation it is found to be a false alarm the nominated Caretaker will contact the Alarm Receiving Centre (EMCS) and Fire Service Control Centre to advise accordingly and cancel any further action.

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 whilst on school property. They are made aware of the emergency evacuation notice (see above) and the location of the assembly point.

When large numbers of visitors are at the school for open days, plays, concerts, exhibitions etc a brief announcement is made by the event organiser advising those present of the location of the emergency exits that they should use in the event of the alarms sounding.

Disabled Staff, Pupils or Visitors

Should the School have disabled pupils and carers special consideration, such as fire refuges, will be given to their situation as appropriate to their disability and a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) will be issued where appropriate.

Responsibilities of 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 roll call of their form 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 Headmaster, Deputy Heads, Head of the Junior School or Bursar. It is the responsibility of Headmaster or Bursar to ensure that this information is passed to the fire service as soon as they arrive.

Fire Marshalls

On hearing the fire alarm all available trained fire marshals are to assemble at the entrance to the Victoria road car park adjacent to the assembly area. Those issued with school radios are to ensure that they are charged and ready for use at all times. They must be switched on when the fire alarm is activated and Fire Marshalls must don the issued high visibility vest for identification purposes. Voice traffic on the school radio net

must be kept to essential communication only during an evacuation and subsequent follow up.

The Bursar, or his representative in his absence, will detail off pairs of trained Fire Marshals and send them to conduct floor sweeps of areas where the alarm has been triggered to establish, where safe to do so, whether any person remains in any building, or adjacent building that may be at risk. On no account must a Fire Marshal enter a building where it is not safe to do so. If a building cannot be cleared this must be reported the Bursar, or his representative, immediately. This information must then be passed on to the senior Fire Service representative on their arrival.

Fire Marshals must not stand down unless given permission to do so by the Bursar. On completion of their relevant area checks they must report back to the Bursar for further tasking if necessary.

ON NO ACCOUNT SHOULD ANYONE RETURN TO A BURNING BUILDING

Fire Practices

We hold regular fire practices at Newcastle under Lyme School. Within the first term of the academic year there will be 2 practices; one a pre-notified walk through training exercise and another a no notice test. Prior to any test the Caretakers are responsible for ensuring the company that monitors our alarms is informed of the test.

Fire Prevention Measures

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

Escape Routes and Emergency Exits

- Apart from the Economics/Business Studies area there are at least two escape routes from every part of all buildings
- Fire notices and evacuation signs are throughout the buildings.
- Fire call points, smoke/heat detectors, are located in every building in accordance with the recommendations of our 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
- Alarms sound in all parts of the building. In the following areas they are supplemented by visual alarms (red flashing lights):
 - Sound-proofed music practice rooms
 - IT Classrooms
 - The swimming pool
- Fire routes and exits are to be kept clear at all times. The Caretakers are responsible for unlocking the buildings every morning, when they remove bolts, padlocks and security devices from all emergency exits, check that escape routes are not obstructed and that the emergency lights work, and for reporting defects.
- Regular testing of fire alarms take place weekly with all tests and defects recorded in the Fire Log, under the direction of the Estates Bursar. The Estates Bursar is also responsible for arranging an ISO9001 certified/BAFE approved contractor to carry out:
 - Six monthly professional check on fire detection and warning equipment,
 - An annual service of alarms, smoke detectors, emergency lights, smoke control systems and fire extinguishers.

- Records of all tests are kept by the Estates Bursar

Electrical Safety

- Regular portable appliance testing takes place and is carried out by Science/ICT/Design and Technology technicians and also the School electrician. A centralised record is to be maintained by the Estates Bursar.
- The Caretakers check that all lights etc. are switched off at the end of the school day.

Fire Fighting Equipment

Appropriate firefighting equipment is provided throughout the School and this is serviced annually. Training courses on the use of this equipment are organised by the Bursar in conjunction with the local fire authorities. It is the responsibility of the Estates Bursar to ensure that adequate equipment is provided and that it is properly maintained. It should be remembered that in the event of a fire the first priority is evacuation of the building and fire-fighting equipment should only be used when really necessary. When equipment has been used a report of this must be made to the Estates Bursar so that a replacement appliance can be provided. The types of equipment available in the School are as follows:

- **Fire Blanket**
Fire blankets operate by excluding oxygen from the fire and should be placed slowly over any fire so as not to splash burning liquid.
- **Water Extinguishers**
They are effective on paper, fabric, wood fires but must not be used on oil, fat or electrical fires.
- **CO2 Extinguisher**
These are effective against most fire types but should not be used in a small enclosed space as they operate by denying the fire oxygen.
- **Foam Extinguisher**
These discharge foam and are effective on inflammable liquid/oil fires but should not be used on electrical fires.
- **Dry Powder Extinguisher**
These discharge a fine powder and are effective on all small fires. However, the powder can clog and damage equipment.
- **Wet Chemical Extinguisher**
These discharge a wet chemical spray and are primarily deployed in kitchen for use on cooking oil fires and deep-fat fryers. Do not use on flammable liquids/gases or live electrical equipment.

Lightning Protection

- All lightning protection and earthing conforms to BS 6651-1999. It is tested annually by a specialist contractor. Records of all tests are kept by the Estates Bursar.

Gas Safety

- All gas appliances (boilers, kitchen equipment etc.) are regularly maintained and serviced by Gas Safe Registered Engineers. Records of all tests are kept by the Estates Bursar.
- All kitchen equipment is switched off at the end of service.
- All laboratories are checked daily to ensure that the central gas supply is turned off.

Safe Storage

- We ensure that flammable materials used in teaching or maintenance are locked in purpose-made, flame-proof containers at the end of every day.
- Weapons used by the CCF are kept in a securely locked, fire resistant armoury that is located within a permanently locked room, the door of which is fitted with an alarm and is fire resistant. The armoury is located in the basement of A Block adjacent to the Caretaker's Office.

Rubbish and Combustible Materials

- Rubbish is stored away from buildings.
- Combustible materials used in teaching, catering, maintenance, grounds and caretaking are stored in appropriate receptacles and cupboards.

Use of Public Rooms – Occupation Limits

There are a number of rooms in the School that are used for events involving the public or large number of pupils. The maximum numbers of users of rooms is determined by the number and size of fire doors taking into account the size and shape of the room. It should be noted that prior to changes in legislation for responsibility in setting these figures the Fire Officer had set limits on rooms used for public events and the School still uses these figures as a guideline in determining limits. However, for internal events when the occupants are primarily school staff and students, (who are aware of and have practiced evacuation procedures) and if there is a high level of staff supervision e.g. assemblies then these limits may be exceptionally be modified slightly but only with formal agreement of the Bursar or Headmaster. Current limits are as follows:

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|------------------------------------|---|-------|
| Memorial Hall | Seated | 220 |
| | Tables and Chairs | 152 |
| | Dancing and Seating | 186 |
| Dutton Dining Room | (Note 110 If Memorial Hall or David Cohen Suite are in use) | 220 |
| David Cohen Suite | | 160 |
| Donaldson Hall/Stinton Café | | 400* |
| Victoria Library | | 150 |
| Music Block | Seated | 192** |
| | Tables and Chairs | 125** |
| | Dancing and Seating | 152** |
| Junior School Hall | Pupils only with staff supervision | 220 |
| | Events involving public or parents | 200 |
| | If additional double exit installed | 520 |
| Sports Centre | | 600 |

*If all entrance doors (both doors in each set) are unlocked and available for use.

**If any event with more than 90 people inside the Music Hall is taking place, then both sets of front doors must be unbolted at all times and staff must be in the vicinity of doors to open doors prior to people existing building.

For further clarification on the above see the Bursar/Estates Bursar.

PART 3: FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

The School has commissioned fire risk assessments in respect of each building of the School using a third party contractor to ensure all possible risks have been assessed appropriately. These are reviewed regularly and held by the Estates Bursar and any recommendations arising from the fire risk assessments are monitored to completion.

Policy reviewed by SMT: February 2020

Policy reviewed by Governors: February 2020

Next Review Due: February 2021