SIR WILLIAM PERKINS'S SCHOOL

FIRE RISK (PREVENTION) POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. Policy Statement

1.1. Sir William Perkins's School's priority is to minimise the risk to life and to reduce injury from fire, for staff, students, contractors, visitors and any other person legally on the premises, by:

- maintaining the physical fire safety and integrity of the School;
- ensuring that staff, students and visitors do not add to the fire risk; and
- ensuring safe evacuation of our buildings if a fire breaks out.

1.2. Specifically, the safe evacuation of everyone – staff, students and visitors 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.

1.3. The fire safety principles, procedures and risk assessments at the School are designed to help its community to respond calmly and effectively in the event that fire breaks out in one of its buildings.

1.4. The School has an additional building away from the main School site, its Rowing Boathouse. References to the School's 'building/ buildings' in this Policy assume that the main School building and the Boathouse, whilst separate sites, can be considered in the same way from a Fire Risk Prevention perspective, unless specifically stated.

1.5. SWPS is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory, in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the school's Equal Opportunities policy.

2. Compliance

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires the School to:

a. appoint a competent person as Fire Safety Manager to carry out the preventative and protective measures necessary at the School. The School has appointed the Estate and Facilities Manager (EFM);
b. assess formally the risk of fire to the employees, students and visitors and provide them with relevant information on the risks;
c. ensure that the School's equipment for fire-fighting; fire detection and warning; and emergency exits are covered by a suitable system of maintenance and are kept in efficient working order and in good repair;
d. provide staff with appropriate information, instruction and training in firefighting. In particular, staff are required to complete mandatory online course on fire safety.
e. The DfE has a 'memorandum of understanding' with the fire authorities. Under this, no new independent school may open until a satisfactory Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) report has been received by the DfE and the school concerned. The School understands that the FRS will be involved in building regulations approval, where these apply to new buildings or alterations. The FRS will take a risk-based approach to additional school premises. For

established independent schools, risk is considered high for boarding and special schools, and the FRS will carry out a full safety audit for these schools. For premises posing medium to very low risk, a minimum of three schools a year will be inspected by the FRS in each fire authority.

3. Key responsibilities

3.1. The Governors are ultimately responsible for the effective oversight, review and amendment of this Policy and for compliance with it.

3.2. The Business Director (BD) is the owner of the Fire Safety and Evacuation Procedures and, with the Head, is accountable for implementation of/ compliance with the Procedures.

3.3. The Estates and Facilities Manager (EFM) reports to the Business Director and is the School's designated Health and Safety Officer, a role which includes the responsibilities of the Fire Safety Manager. He/ she is responsible for ensuring that:

a. the Fire Safety and Evacuation Procedures are kept under regular review by Governors and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
b. the Fire Safety and Evacuation Procedures are promulgated to the entire School community, including by fire induction training being given to new staff and students.
c. Fire evacuation drills are carried out on a termly basis.
d. everyone in the school (including visitors and contractors) can access appropriate written instructions on where they should go in the event of fire;
e. records are kept of: (i) the Fire Risk Assessment and its review; (ii) the Fire Risk (Prevention) Policy; (iii) Fire procedures and arrangements; (iv) training records; (v) fire practice drills; (vi) certificates for the installation and maintenance of firefighting systems and equipment.
f. procedures for emergency evacuation are regularly tested and lessons absorbed.
g. Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) is completed and reviewed on a regular basis, covering all School buildings.
h. a summary of the findings of the most recent FRA is always be available on the School's website with the Fire Risk (Prevention) policy itself. .
i. the FRA and this Policy is reviewed following a fire incident and modified as necessary.
j. fire prevention measures are meticulously followed.
k. fire procedures and risk assessments are reviewed on each occasion that a building is altered, extended or rebuilt, or when new buildings are acquired.

3.4 All staff and students have a responsibility for their own safety, the safety of their colleagues and of visitors in the event of a fire or other emergency.

4. FIRE SAFETY/ RISK PREVENTION PROCEDURES

4.1. An audible fire alarm system is installed and is capable of being heard in all areas of the School.
4.2. All alarm systems (eg break glass systems) are simple to operate, in a conspicuous position and clearly marked.
4.3. The fire alarm system is tested on a weekly basis by the Site Supervision staff or other trained staff and tested/serviced quarterly and annually by a specialist engineer. All false alarms are investigated and the incident recorded.

4.4. The Site Supervisors check that the alarm is audible in all parts of the School. All failures or faults must be rectified immediately.

4.5. All escape routes/ exits are clearly marked and those routes/ exits are to be kept free from all obstruction at all times.

4.6. No Fire Exits will be locked other than by crash bars and bolts or other similar approved devices.

4.7. Suitable and sufficient Fire Doors are provided, capable of isolating areas of the accommodation. Fire Doors can be held open using 'Fireco' door stops, where fitted, but must not be held open by any other means. The use of wedges can damage the hinge and self-closing mechanism and is illegal.

4.8. An Emergency Lighting System automatically operates during evacuation if the main lighting system fails.

4.9. Fire-fighting equipment of the correct type is provided throughout all the school buildings. Fire extinguishers and fire blankets are stored on the correct wall bracket or fire station and not moved to other locations or employed for other purposes, eg door stop. They are at readily accessible heights and conspicuously marked with an unobstructed sign at an appropriate level. Fire extinguishers should generally only be used by those staff who have received training in their practical use and have the confidence to use them.

4.10. All equipment/ apparatus provided to extinguish fires is overhauled annually. It will be replenished immediately if partially or totally discharged whether by accident or design.

4.11. All materials and waste is stored tidily and removed regularly in order to reduce the risk of a fire.

4.12. Separate sections in the Health and Safety Manual document the procedures for the control of hazardous substances (COSHH) generally and within specific departments eg Science, including the elimination or reduction of the risk of fire arising from these substances.

4.13. Department Heads must report to the Site Supervisors any faults with fire safety equipment, any faults on electrical or gas equipment, and cease the use of an item if a fault is identified during an obvious or real risk of a fire.

4.14. Regular cleaning and maintenance of deep fat fryers is done to reduce the risk of a fat fire in the catering operation. Cleaning and maintenance of kitchen extraction systems must also be carried out regularly.

4.15. A comprehensive Fire/ Emergency Evacuation Procedure is devised for each School site and regular drills are carried out to ensure familiarity by occupants, ie once each term. Summaries of evacuation procedures are be disseminated to staff and students annually. In addition:

- The evacuation procedure includes special arrangements for physically disabled or sensory-impaired staff, students or visitors to the school.
- External Contractors working on site are reminded of the procedures for fire evacuation.
- Fire drills are recorded.
- Representatives from all organisations hiring the School premises receive a fire briefing from the EFM.

5. FIRE/EVACUATION PROCEDURES

All students, staff and visitors will be trained in the following fire evacuation procedure:

5.1. If you discover a fire, keep calm, quiet and do not panic. Break the glass in the nearest alarm point to set off the alarm. Leave the building by the nearest exit.

5.2. If you are responsible for a class, make them leave quietly with you by the nearest available safe route. No-one should talk or run. Class registers will be taken to the Assembly points by the office staff. Shut doors and windows behind you if practicable.

5.3. Ensure that any physically-disabled or sensory–impaired staff, students or visitors leave with you. Move them downstairs OR direct them, together with any carer, to wait for the Fire and Emergency Service in the nearest designated safe refuge in accordance with any Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) in place.

5.4. If possible, turn off the gas and/ or electric supply to all equipment in the room you are evacuating, preferably with the quick-shut-off valve or emergency-stop button.

5.5. Do not attempt to extinguish or smother the fire unless it is safe to do so.

5.6. Proceed to the nominated Assembly Point, situated:

- Main School site: at the rear of the school adjacent to the netball/ tennis courts.
- Rowing Boathouse: in the small public car park to the north (ie upriver) of the Boathouse itself.

5.7. At the Assembly point, as soon as possible, all occupants of the School at the time of the evacuation will be checked against the relevant student/ staff/ visitor registers to identify any persons unaccounted for.

5.8. The EFM, or in his absence a member of the SLT or (for the Rowing Boathouse) the senior member of the Rowing Team present, will take responsibility for reporting any missing individuals, or any person waiting to be evacuated from a designated refuge, to the Fire Brigade as soon as they arrive.

5.9. On no account should anyone return to any building until given permission by the Fire and Emergency Services.

5.10. Remain at the Assembly point with all students until the 'all clear' is given.

5.11. Supplementary guidelines developed from previous fire evacuation drills and situations, for the detailed guidance of staff members, are set out as follows:

- Appendix 1: Main School Building
- Appendix 2: Rowing Boathouse.

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed and updated annually by the Business Director in consultation with the Health and Safety (H&S) Officer or as events or legislation require.

Any material changes to the Policy are agreed with the Head and then briefed to staff and students (as appropriate) immediately and to the next termly H&S Committee.

Material changes are then reported up to the termly Governors Property, Health and Safety Committee, who will report to the next Board as necessary.

Next scheduled review date: September 2024 *Last reviewed: September 2023*	
Key updates in this version:	• Updates to job titles • Updates to procedures to reflect updated practice • Minor changes to text / reference links to aid clarity • Updated SWPS branding / formatting

Appendix 1 – Fire procedures – Supplementary guidance – Main School Building

1. NORMAL PROCEDURE – Additional Guidance – during an incident

NOTE: All Senior Leadership Team members will aim to deputise for each other in the case of absence, on a flexible basis.]

NOTE: For a significant incident, it may be possible to get students/ staff into shelter eg the Sports Hall after a time, in bad weather. However, this will depend on the nature of the incident and may not be possible. The Head will liaise with the EFM and, if appropriate, the Fire Services to assess options. Tutors should manage students' expectations and keep a close eye out for any student in difficulties and report to the Central Point.

1.1. The Estates and Facilities Manager (EFM) and the site team perform the roles of Fire Officer and fire wardens. The EFM is responsible for assessing strategy at the site of the fire and for appropriate liaison with the Fire Services and the SLT.

1.2. Receptionist will print a list of visitors from the Digital sign in system and will issue this to the 'Central Point' on the field

1.3. An Office Administrator will manage the front barrier, to let Fire Brigade in/ restrict other traffic from entering. They will communicate with the EFM by phone;.

1.4. Teachers – when the alarm sounds Ensure that if students take their shoes off for a class, they are easily collectable OR ask each student to take the nearest pair of shoes, take them out of the building, and then students and their correct shoes can be re-united in due course.

1.5. Head (or Deputy Heads in absence):
- Receive information from all key parties;
- Give all-clear at the end of the process;
- Thank participants to indicate success;
- Dismiss the participants.

1.6. Deputy Heads:
- Deputise in the Head's absence;
- Receive all registers from teams and inform Head of missing individuals.

1.7. SLT and ELT:
- Ensure silence is to be maintained during the incident.

1.8. 'Central point' on the field:
- The Receptionist on duty will act as a 'Central Point' on the field, holding class lists, staff lists, signing in/ out lists, pens, blankets, first aid kit etc. Designated staff will come to this point to get lists and, following initial registration, check absentees.
- Deputy Head Pastoral will act as the contact for form tutors once the initial registration has been done.
- Relevant team leaders will act as the contact for staff in their teams once the initial registration has been done.

1.9. HoYs/ Tutors – checking students for absentees:

- HoYs will get full class lists and pens from the Central Point and give to Tutors;
- Tutors use class lists to tick off students present on the field – don't rely on explanations and assumptions as to where absentees are;
- Tutors go back to their HoY to check any absentees against 'signing in/ out' lists and lists are then returned to the Deputy Head Pastoral;
- HoYs/Tutors stay with students and await further information - report any students in distress (eg cold) to the Central point (obtain blankets as necessary).

1.10. Staff registration responsibilities:

- Once assembled at the muster point, all staff other than HoYs/ Tutors and those with specific roles should line up in their allocated Fire Team in the designated areas.
- The Deputy Head, Staff, Co-curricular and Compliance (for Teaching staff) and Director of Marketing and Admissions (for Support staff) will oversee the registration of staff who are not with a Form or Year Group.

1.11. All staff

- Hot drinks: Do not carry hot drinks out to the field.

2. Additional Guidance – general procedures

1.1. Receptionist:

- The Receptionist will always draw visitors' attention to fire instructions on the back of the visitor pass.

1.2. All staff:

- Staff should ensure that their visitors are aware of the fire procedures and look after them/ ensure they leave the building immediately the alarm sounds;

3. Additional Guidance – Staff signing in and out of school

3.1. The School has a legal responsibility for the safety of staff in School during working hours. It therefore needs to know if a staff member is in or out of School in order to check their whereabouts if necessary during an incident. Any procedure used should be subject to the application of common sense. However, the School's H&S Consultants have recommended that all staff be subject to an adequate roll call. Therefore:

- Part-time staff must sign in and out each day at Reception
- Full-time staff must sign out if they leave before the normal end of lessons ie 15:30 pm (Mon – Thurs) or 14:55 pm (Fri).
- All staff must sign out / in if they leave the School temporarily during the day.

4. Additional Guidance - Out-of-Hours School Functions

4.1. The staff member organising the event is responsible for:

- agreeing in advance with the Deputy Head, Staff, Co-curricular and Compliance the fire/ emergency evacuation procedures to be applied for the event;
- ensuring the actions to be taken in the event of a fire are noted on any relevant Risk Assessment, including a way to notify the relevant on duty site supervisor
- preparing in advance a list of students due to be participating, where appropriate. NB: Whether this is feasible will depend on the event. It should be possible for

School plays, concerts etc, but would not be feasible for, for instance, the FOSWPS Christmas Shopping event or parents' evenings, where people come and go – but where only limited areas of the School are used

- briefing participants appropriately at the start of the event on the procedure agreed.
- Should the fire alarm sound during such an event:
  - all participants eg the audience, should exit by the nearest available external door (not into the quadrangles). Therefore, for instance, for the Hall this would be the exits into the car park at the side and/or exit through Reception.
  - everyone should then usually gather in the back car-park.
  - where a student list has been prepared, this should be used to ensure that all students are accounted for.

5. Alarms Out of Hours on a School Day

5.1. Prep supervisors/ club supervisors/ tuition teachers – when the alarm sounds:

- ensure that students leave the building by the nearest exit and walk silently to the normal assembly point.
- take the relevant event signing-in sheet / iPad with SOCS register to the Central Point at the Assembly Point so that attendance checks can be carried out.

5.2. Estates and Facilities Management team

- for a fire alarm sounding before the start of lessons or after the end of lessons, when fewer staff are in the School and students are in the School, the Facilities Management staff on site who respond to a fire alarm – as part of their normal procedure – carry out a 'fire marshal-type' role, 'sweeping' the areas near to the incident as they approach it, to ensure that there are no persons in the immediate area, either still working or unable to leave for some reason.

6. PEEPS: For the small number of students and staff who at any one time may need additional assistance to evacuate the building, individual Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS) will be carried out by the First Aid Room Co-ordinator and notified to relevant staff and the EFM.

Appendix 2 - Fire procedures – Supplementary guidance – Rowing Boathouse

1. NORMAL PROCEDURE – Additional Guidance

1.3. Assembly Point: in the small public car park to the north (ie up-river) of the Boathouse itself;

1.4. PEEPS: For the small number of students and staff who use the Boathouse and who at any one time may need additional assistance to evacuate the building, individual Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS) will be carried out by the First Aid Room Co-ordinator and notified to relevant staff and the EFM.

1.5. Rowing teachers/ coaches – when the alarm sounds

- Ensure that, if possible, students take some form of warm clothing out with them (without this delaying leaving the building).
- Ensure that all students make their way in an orderly manner to the Assembly Point.

1.6. The most senior rowing teacher/coach/boatman is to take charge and:

- Take the Students/ Staff Attendance list, pens and Fire Procedures pack out to the Muster point;
- If appropriate, request one of the other staff present to call the Fire Brigade or other appropriate authority. Allocate them to act as direct liaison with these authorities, nearer to the Boathouse;
- Register students and staff present at the Assembly Point on the Students/ Staff Attendance list;
- Liaise with the Fire Brigade or other authorities as appropriate. Inform them of any absentees from the Attendance list;
- Stay with students and await further information - report any students in distress (eg cold) to the relevant authority;
- As soon as the students and staff are considered to be safe:
  - in School hours: (Monday to Friday) arrange for the EFM and/ or BD to be contacted to inform them of the Emergency Evacuation;
  - out of School hours: Call the Head or another available SLT member to inform them of the Emergency Evacuation and confer on actions required.
- Give all-clear at the end of the process;
- Dismiss the participants;
- Write up the details of the Emergency Evacuation and lessons to be learned from it, and pass to the EFM/ BD.