

## **FIRE RISK PREVENTION POLICY**

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THIS POLICY APPLIES TO MILLFIELD, MILLFIELD PREP SCHOOL AND MILLFIELD PRE-PREP SCHOOL (INCLUDING EYFS) AND MILLFIELD ENTERPRISES (TOGETHER REFERRED TO IN THIS POLICY AS “MILLFIELD” OR “THE SCHOOL”).

### **1. Introduction**

This policy sets out the approach Millfield adopts in securing fire safety and is based on the following legislation and guidance:

- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999
- Department of Communities and Local Government “Fire Safety Risk Assessment- Educational Premises.”

Millfield’s priority is to minimise risk to life and to ensure that there is adequate fire prevention methods in place and clear organisational arrangements in case of fire.

Millfield produces Fire Risk assessments covering the whole school, which are formally recorded and regularly reviewed to keep them up to date. Independent Schools Standards Regulations, and the above legislation and guidance, place on the Governing body additional duties to:

- Develop a fire risk (prevention) policy which includes the elimination, substitution or reduction of risks from dangerous substances
- Ensure the safety of staff, pupils and visitors
- Develop fire procedures and provide staff with training
- Carry out fire drills and contact emergency services when necessary
- Appoint competent persons (with sufficient training, experience and knowledge) to assist in taking preventive and protective measures (including firefighting and evacuation)
- Have a suitable system for the maintenance of clear emergency routes and exits (with doors opening in the direction of escape), signs, notices, emergency lighting where required, fire detectors, alarms and extinguishers
- Provide staff and any others working on the school site with fire safety information

### **2. Responsibilities**

The Governing Body is the designated “responsible person” for fire safety as outlined in legislation. Responsibilities throughout the school for fire safety are outlined below. The overall management falls to the Board of Governors, who:

- Consider and agree financial resources for any fire precautionary measures outlined in legislation and British Standards
- Approve the fire risk prevention policy and any reviews

- Ensure Fire Risk Assessments are undertaken and are regularly reviewed

Finance Director/Executive Group (through the Health and Safety (H&S) Advisor)

- Provide an update to the Governors on a regular basis regarding the fire risk assessment of the school and annually review the fire risk (prevention) policy
- Ensure that fire prevention and fire precautions are implemented
- Ensure that all staff receive adequate training and instruction in fire safety and retain training records
- Ensure that fire risk assessments are reviewed when there are any material changes to the school
- Arrange for regular fire practice drills to be undertaken and document the findings of the drills

Houseparents/Housemasters/mistresses

- Induct new boarding staff and pupils in the fire procedures
- Arrange for a termly fire drill to be undertaken during boarding time and document and action any findings of the drill. These include occasional drills during the time when (most) boarders are asleep
- Instruct matrons on the use of the fire panel and the grab sheet system
- Complete fire risk assessment and fire logbook
- Inspect fire appliances, fire doors and fire call point system

All Staff

- Attend fire training sessions as required by the school
- Ensure that the means of escape within their classroom/office/workshops are kept clear of any obstructions
- Report any issue which may affect the fire safety of the building to the Estates department or the H&S Advisor
- Ensure they have received a Fire Safety brief regarding their place of work

During an evacuation:

A cascade system of building evacuation will be employed to facilitate orderly and swift evacuation. A decision will be made by the Fire Officer/Fire Warden as whether to evacuate any other buildings in close proximity. This process should take into account the use of the building, what is stored within the building and its location in regards to the fire.

Fire Officer

- Accounts for all personnel within their building
- Takes overall control of an evacuation with support from Fire Wardens
- Liaises with the Fire Brigade with the support of the Fire Wardens in the event of an evacuation and arranges for all information regarding missing persons to be relayed to them
- Provides the all clear to staff upon consultation with the Fire Brigade
- Controls the perimeter around the building through the use of fire wardens
- Ensures that regular testing of the call points are undertaken and recorded
- Ensures that regular inspection of fire doors and fire appliances are undertaken and carried out

## Head of Departments

- Co-operate with Fire Officer and H&S Advisor to assist in fire prevention
- Highlight any areas of concern to the H&S Advisor

## Head of Estates/Head of Operations

- Ensure that regular testing of the emergency lights are undertaken and recorded
- Ensure that all recommendations arising from fire risk assessments regarding the fabrication of the building are implemented
- Organise the maintenance and testing of the fire alarm system and emergency lights by a competent person and maintain the certificates for the installation and maintenance of fire-fighting systems and equipment

## Fire Wardens

- Millfield has appointed and trained a number of Fire Wardens and a list of these can be located on Sharepoint. These competent persons assist in taking preventive and protective measures (including firefighting and evacuation)
- Where feasible fire wardens will:
  - Check their building/floor to ensure everyone has left and close doors where necessary
  - Assist other staff in evacuating the premises by ensuring that they use the best available fire exit.
  - Use fire-fighting equipment where it is safe to do so.

### **3. Management Arrangements for Fire Safety**

#### Fire Risk Assessment

Millfield ensures that suitable and sufficient fire risk assessments are undertaken by an independent fire risk assessor on the school premises and that the findings of the assessments are implemented. The risk assessments are reviewed if there are any structural or process changes to the premises.

### **4. Fire Precautions**

#### Prevention of Arson

Millfield takes all reasonable precautions to minimise the likelihood of arson. This includes:

- Supervision of pupils
- Security lighting on all entrances; footpaths and building facades.
- Close down procedures for the school site
- School entrance gates being on key pads.
- Ensuring that internal waste bins are emptied on a daily basis.
- Ensuring the Bin Compound areas are free from combustible items.
- Maintaining the Security Gates.

## Electrical Safety

Millfield utilises qualified in house electricians to maintain electrical services.

Portable electrical equipment is subject to an annual portable appliance test. Visual inspection of portable electrical appliances is carried out termly in boarding houses by matrons/houseparents/housemasters/mistresses. Qualified electricians are used for any remedial works required.

Only Millfield authorised adaptors are allowed in boarding houses. These are checked every term by the matrons and houseparents/housemasters/mistresses. All other adaptors that are on site should be of a recognisable quality (i.e. BS rated); further detail can be found on Sharepoint.

## Gas Safety

All gas equipment is subjected to an annual inspection by Gas Safe registered engineer. All boilers are inspected by external contractors.

## Hazardous substances

All flammable substances such as science chemicals, fuel and maintenance products are stored in 30 minute fire resistant cabinets or lockable cages.

All departments with hazardous substances must try to eliminate, substitute or reduce their chemicals that they hold within their areas, wherever possible.

## **5. Means of Escape**

All buildings are provided with a secondary means of escape.

Millfield aims to ensure that all staircases and doors opening onto protected routes are designed so that they prevent the spread of fire for 30 minutes. This includes the provision of door closers, automatic door guards and intumescent seals where necessary.

Millfield aims to ensure that all fire escape routes are provided with adequate emergency lighting as identified by the fire risk assessments.

## **6. Fire Fighting Equipment**

Millfield provides a suitable number of fire extinguishers and fire blankets as determined by the fire risk assessments. All fire extinguishers are checked by a specialist contractor on an annual basis. Fire extinguishers are checked monthly by the building Fire Wardens to ensure they are operational.

## **7. Fire Detection**

Millfield recognises that early detection of fire enhances the time available for evacuation and reduces the damage caused to buildings. Millfield is committed to continuing to review and upgrade its fire detection systems in relation to recognised standards. There is currently a programme in place to upgrade to all current fire alarms to addressable systems.

There is at present a combination of addressable and zone systems within the boarding houses. The majority of houses have L1 systems. Smoke detectors are linked to addressable fire panels, which are located in the front receptions of houses where those systems are present. Call points, smoke detectors, combined heat detectors and sounders are located within the majority of buildings.

The category of school alarm systems is dependent on the type and function of the building, and this is assessed on a case by case basis.

## **8. Arrangements for action to be taken in the event of fire**

Millfield provides an action plan (grab sheet) in the event of fire for staff, pupils, visitors and contractors whilst on the estate. The Grab Sheets are located at every entry point of the buildings. All personnel should make themselves familiar with its contents.

These fire procedures and action plans are tested regularly (typically termly) in the form of a fire drill. The drills are organised by the Fire Officer for the building.

The outcomes of all fire drills are logged by the Fire Officer who will also follow up any action as appropriate.

## **9. Maintenance and Testing**

Millfield makes arrangements for the fire alarm systems to be maintained and tested every six months in line with the current British standard, by a specialist contractor. The service schedule includes the following:

- Service of fire alarm system
- Emergency lighting is inspected 4 x a year and comprises of the following:
  - a. 2 x 1 hour discharge test
  - b. 2 x functional test

Records of maintenance and testing are retained by the Electrical Supervisor.

In addition, Millfield undertakes regular weekly testing of call points, and sounders as per the fire policy. Millfield is rolling out a computer based software program for all buildings with terminal access. As such, this will give a real time picture of compliance across both estates. Training gaps will be identified during the induction of new staff.

## **10. Training**

Information on fire procedures is provided to all staff. Information is reviewed to ensure that it is suitable and sufficient by means of feedback from fire drills and via the health and safety committee.

All staff are provided with fire awareness training at induction and during employment.

At the start of the academic year all boarders are shown the fire routes from their dormitory, the importance of ensuring their route is kept clear, how to activate a call point and how to operate the fire exit doors.

All Fire wardens are trained in the operation of fire panels and the use of fire extinguishers.

## **11. Safety of staff/anyone else on the school premises, including others working on the school site**

All visitors or contractors, other than parents/guardians collecting pupils, arriving at Millfield in term time are requested to sign the visitor's book. They are given information outlining the procedures to follow in the event of the alarm being raised and the location of the relevant assembly points. Both schools have public rights of way running through their grounds and, as such, Millfield may be unaware of personnel on their grounds; however, the location of the public rights of way are perceived as low risk.

All Estates contractors on site are informed that they should book in at the Estates office daily before they can commence work. On larger scale projects, the contractor will have to sign in at the site office.

## **12. Use of School Premises outside school hours/ letting of premises**

Millfield School Enterprises uses the facilities at both sites to run holiday courses for external adults and children, some of which are residential.

Enterprises staff receive a full induction onto the campus and carry out training to ensure they fully understand their responsibilities as Fire wardens/Houseparents. Fire drills are conducted on arrival for all students.

Policy owner	Finance Director/Health & Safety Advisor
Reviewed on	May 2021
Review by date	May 2022
Audited by Governor Committee	N/A
Publication	Website, Parent Portal, Sharepoint