



# FIRE SAFETY POLICY

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Author: Stuart Ansell, Chief Operating Officer

## **FIRE SAFETY & EMERGENCY EVACUATION STRATEGY AND POLICY**

Under the terms of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 Box Hill School must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety from fire of all staff, pupils, contractors and visitors. In order to do this the school must:

- Undertake fire safety risk assessments as appropriate.
- Appoint people with sufficient training, experience and knowledge to undertake the preventive and protective measures required by legislation (employees or outside contractors).
- Provide employees with information on:
  - the risks identified by the fire risk assessment,
  - the measures that have been taken to prevent fires, and
  - how these measures will protect them if a fire breaks out.
- Inform non-employees, e.g. students and temporary or contract workers, of:
  - the risks fire poses to them
  - who the nominated competent persons are, and
  - fire safety procedures for the premises.
- Consider the presence of any dangerous substances, e.g. highly flammable substances such as chemicals, LPG and petrol, or radioactive substances, and the fire safety risks they present.
- Establish a suitable means of contacting the emergency services and providing them with any relevant information about dangerous substances.
- Provide appropriate information, instruction and training for employees about the fire precautions in the workplace, when they start work, and regularly thereafter.
- Ensure that the premises and any equipment provided in connection with firefighting, fire detection and warning, emergency routes and exits are covered by a suitable system of maintenance, and are maintained by a competent person in an efficient state of working order and in good repair.

Our priority is to minimise the risk to life and to reduce the risk of 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 Box Hill 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 Fire Safety Officer**

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) is the designated School Fire Safety Officer, who is responsible for ensuring that:

- The fire safety policy is kept under regular review by Governors 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 instructions on where they should go in the event of fire.
- Records are kept of the fire induction training given to new staff and pupils.
- Procedures and arrangements 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 when new buildings are acquired
- Records are kept of all fire practices, including night practice evacuations from boarding accommodation.
- Certificates for the installation and maintenance of fire detection and firefighting systems and equipment are kept.

### **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

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 assembly point as indicated on the nearest Fire Action notice.
3. If you are teaching a class, take your register with you. Do not take anything else, and do not allow the pupils to take anything. Shut doors and windows behind you.
4. Duty SLT / member of the pastoral staff will summon the Emergency Services if required.



5. If you have a disabled pupil in your class, you should direct him or her, together with his or her Carer, to wait for the Fire and Emergency Service in the nearest designated safe refuge.
6. Report anyone who is waiting to be evacuated from a designated refuge, or who is missing immediately to the School Fire Officer who will inform the Fire Brigade. *On no account should anyone return to any building until given permission by the Fire and Emergency Services..*
7. Remain at your designated assembly point until the all clear is given.

### **Briefing New Staff or 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 as part of their induction to Box Hill School. We show them where the emergency exits and escape routes are located, and walk with them to the outside assembly point. 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 offer fire awareness INSET training, to all staff during their first term. 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.

### **Summoning the Fire Brigade**

Reception is manned between 8.00am and 5.00pm during weekdays in term-time and between 10am and midday and 2:15pm, to 4:15pm during half terms and holiday apart from the Christmas and Easter closedowns. 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 kitchen entrance. All staff are always given advance warning of fire practices. If the alarm goes off for any other reason, the duty member of SLT has instructions to summon the Fire and Emergency Service.

One of the Support Staff or Pastoral Staff is on duty or on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year, including public holidays. He or she has standing instructions



to summon the Fire and Emergency Services if the alarms go off outside the hours that Reception is staffed, (unless warned of a planned fire practice).

### **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 an 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 have a special one to one induction on fire safety for disabled pupils and their Carers and for disabled members of staff or visitors. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans are included into the risk assessment written for children and staff who require them, taking into account the particular needs of each individual. The individual, the Carer, and the school's Fire Safety Officer will all have an input to the risk assessment.

We have designated safe refuge points on every floor of every building, with signs advising of their location, (usually in a stair well). When the fire alarm is sounded, it is the responsibility of the Carer of a disabled person to take him or her to the refuge point and to wait for rescue by the Fire and Emergency Service. The teacher will ensure that the name of the disabled person and his or her Carer, together with the location of their safe refuge point, are passed to the duty SLT member as soon as he or she reaches the assembly point. It is the responsibility of the SLT to inform the fire brigade if appropriate.

### **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. The tutors 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 duty



member of SLT. It is the responsibility of the duty member of SLT 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.***

### **Responsibilities of Fire Marshals**

We have at least one trained Fire Marshal in every building and boarding house. All Fire Marshals are “competent persons” who have been trained to provide “safety assistance” in the event of a fire. Fire Marshals receive regular refresher training normally every three years.

### **Fire Practices**

We hold one fire practice every term at Box Hill School. We also practice a night-time evacuation of the boarding houses every term. This combined with a programme of inducting new staff and pupils with emergency escape procedures and the presence of trained Fire Marshals in every building helps to ensure that the school can be safely evacuated in the event of a fire.

### **Fire Safety Measures**

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

#### **Escape Routes and Emergency Exits**

- There are at least two escape routes from every part of a building in the vast majority of cases. Where there is only one route this is fully risk assessed.
- Fire notices and evacuation signs are displayed in every room, corridor and stairwell.
- Fires extinguishers (of the appropriate type) and fire detection systems appropriate to the usage of the building are located in every building in accordance with the recommendations of our professional advisors. The alarm systems 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

The logo for Inspirational Box Hill School features the word "INSPIRATIONAL" in a green, sans-serif font, with a stylized purple star or flower-like symbol integrated into the letter "I". Below this, the words "Box Hill School" are written in a larger, black, sans-serif font.

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- Automatic fire door closers are activated by the fire alarms are fitted on doors in or leading onto escape routes
- The master panel for the alarm system is located in the main kitchen entrance and shows the location of a fire. It is fitted with an uninterrupted power supply (UPS)
- Alarms sound in all parts of the buildings. In the following areas they are supplemented by visual alarms (red flashing lights):
  - Sound-proofed music practice rooms
  - Recording studio
- Fire routes and exits must be kept clear at all times.
- Testing of all fire alarms (and recording all tests and defects) takes place on a rotation basis over a 3 month period. This is the responsibility of the Maintenance Manager, who also arranges for an ISO9001 certified/BAFE approved contractor to carry out:
  - monthly checks of fire doors, automatic door closures and emergency lights,
  - three monthly professional check on fire detection and warning equipment,
  - An annual service of alarms, smoke detectors, emergency lights, smoke control systems and fire extinguishers and hoses.
- Records of all tests are kept in the Maintenance Department and documented on the SMARTLOG system.
- The kitchen is fitted with heat alarms and 30 minute fire doors that close automatically when the fire alarms sound

## Electrical Safety

- The School has current electrical test certificates for all its buildings. It uses NICEIC qualified Electrical Engineers to inspect and maintain its electrical installations in accordance with the current IEE regulations.
- Regular portable appliance testing takes place appropriate to the type and usage of the equipment.
- Records of all tests are kept in the Maintenance Department

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- The appropriate academic staff must check that all Scientific and DT equipment is switched off at the end of the school day
- The Catering Manager / duty chef checks that all kitchen equipment is switched off at the end of the day.

## Lightning Protection

- All lightning protection and earthing conforms to BS 6651-1999.
- It is subject to an annual check.

## 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 in the Maintenance Department
- 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.
- Kitchen gas-fired equipment has electrical safety interlocks with the ventilation equipment.

## 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.

## Rubbish and Combustible Materials

- Flammable rubbish is stored away from buildings where possible and if not this is regularly removed.
- Combustible materials used in teaching, catering, maintenance, grounds and caretaking are kept in flame proof storage.





## **Letting or Hiring the School**

Our standard contractual terms that we use for letting and hiring the school covers fire safety and specifies that the hirer should certify that he/she has read and understood the school's fire safety policy and procedures. A member of school staff is always on duty/call when the school is let or hired for an outside function or event.

## **Fire Risk Assessment**

The school's Health and Safety Consultant (the Competent Person) carries out fire safety risk assessments assisted by appropriate Box Hill staff. These focus on the safety of all 'relevant persons' (any person lawfully on the premises and any person in the immediate vicinity, but not fire-fighters carrying out fire-fighting duties). The risk assessment will help ensure that the school's fire safety procedures, fire prevention measures, and fire precautions (plans, systems and equipment) are all in place and working properly, or if there are any issues they are brought to the attention of the Chief Operating Officer who may require direct action to be taken.

The fire risk assessments take the whole of the premises into account, including any rooms and areas that are rarely used. The premises are divided into a series of assessment areas using natural boundaries, e.g. Boarding Houses, Teaching Blocks, Science Block and so on.

Those responsible for particular areas will be guided by the Health and Safety Consultant on the contents of his Fire Risk Assessment, and be invited to comment upon it and in due course be involved in its review.

The School's Fire Risk Assessments meet the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the FSO). Specifically they identify:

- 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 grid procedure for evaluating risk. Generic risk assessments are used for classrooms; but individual ones are needed for corridors, stairs, kitchens, laboratories, workshops etc.

Copies of Box Hill School fire risk assessments are stored on the Health and Safety Management Software. Any comments or suggestions for improvement are always welcome. All Heads of Department should ensure that they and their Department read the sections that are relevant to them.

### **Fire Fighting Equipment and Facilities**

The school has appropriate firefighting equipment located around the school. People who have not been trained to use fire extinguishers are not be expected to use them to attempt to extinguish a fire. However, all staff should be familiar with the areas in which they work, and the fire detection and firefighting equipment within it, and their normal and alternative emergency escape routes. They must know the basic operating procedures in case they need to use firefighting equipment to escape from a fire.

Staff should only consider fighting a fire if they need to do so in order to evacuate people in their charge, or after they have been evacuated, the alarm has been raised, and if they have been trained. They should inform other members of staff of their intention to fight the fire and they must be certain that their actions will not place themselves or others in danger. They should not fight the fire if they are in the slightest doubt.

**Stuart Ansell**

**Chief Operating Officer & Clerk to the Governors**

**February 2025**

**Review: February 2026**