



## **Woodcote House School**

**September 2023**

### **Fire Prevention Policy**

#### **PART 1: FIRE SAFETY**

##### **INTRODUCTION**

Our priority is to minimise the risk to life and to reduce injury by maintaining the physical fire safety of the school. It is also a priority to ensure that staff, pupils and visitors do not add to the fire risk via safe evacuation of our buildings if a fire breaks out. The Fire Prevention Policy, procedures and Risk Assessments at Woodcote House 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 Prevention Policy is kept under regular review by the SMT. It is checked regularly throughout the academic year.
- The Fire Prevention 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 frequently 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-fighting systems and equipment are kept in the Bursar's Office.

## EMERGENCY EVACUATION NOTICE

1. If you discover a fire, lift the cover on the nearest alarm point and press the panel to set off the alarm. Raise the alarm locally by shouting "FIRE!". Leave the building by the nearest exit.
2. If you are responsible for a class, they should leave quietly with you. No one should talk or run. Make your way to the assembly points as indicated below in point 3. Do not take anything with you and do not allow the pupils to take anything with them. Check you have all your class with you as soon as you reach the assembly point.
3. *Between the hours of 8am and 6pm*  
The Headmaster, Bursar or delegated person will attend to the fire panel and call the Fire Brigade, if required. All other staff will report to the Astro and tutors will carry out a roll call of their forms. The Headmaster, Bursar or delegated persons will meet the Emergency Services at the roadside.

*Between the hours of 6pm and 10pm*

One of the Masters on Duty will attend to the fire panel and call the Fire Brigade, if required. The other Master on Duty will attend the Chapel and carry out a roll call. All other staff will assist in the evacuation of pupils/meeting the Emergency Services.

*Between the hours of 10pm and 8am*

The night assigned Fire Warden (HE), or delegated person, will attend to the Fire Panel and call the Fire Brigade and meet the emergency services, if required. The Matrons on Duty will assist in evacuating the boarders and taking a head count and a roll call in the Chapel. In the absence of HE, another senior member of staff will be appointed.

Should the fire alarm ring in the evening/night, the nominated Dormitory Captains will be expected to lead their dormitory out of the building by the shortest available route. Each dormitory, or set of dormitories, have their own specific routes, found on the Fire Notices displayed. The boys will put on their dressing gowns and slippers and leave the dormitory in an orderly line. The Dormitory Captain will lead the way with a torch and he will appoint a 'Tail-End Charlie' to bring up the rear. All resident staff will help to evacuate the building.

- Once everyone is assembled at the Chapel and accounted for, the Master on Duty or the night assigned Fire Warden (depending on the time of day) will then take another head count.
- Report anyone who is missing immediately to the most senior Master on Duty who will inform the Fire Brigade. On no account should anyone return to any building unless given permission by the Fire Brigade and/or Emergency Services.
- Remain in the Chapel with pupils until the all clear is given. Continue to follow instruction from the Fire Brigade and/or Emergency Services.

## **PART 2: FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURES**

### **BRIEFING NEW STAFF AND PUPILS**

All 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 Woodcote House School. We tell them where the emergency exits and escape routes are located, and where the outside assembly point is located. We ensure that everyone knows 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 training, as well as Fire Warden INSET training including the basic use of fire extinguishers, to all staff. We will refresh this training for all staff at intervals of no more than three years. No one should attempt to use a fire extinguisher before he or she has been trained in its use.

### **FIRE PANEL LOCATION**

The Master Panel is physically located in the Bursar's Office, with a Repeater Panel in Main Reception. Staff should only attend to the Master Fire Panel. The Repeater Panel should not be touched, unless there is a fire in the Bursar's Office.

For information purposes, the School Office, located in Main Reception, is manned between 8.00am and 6.00pm during weekdays and 9.00am and 1.00pm on Saturdays in term-time.

### **VISITORS AND CONTRACTORS**

All visitors and contractors are required to sign in at Reception. They are made aware of the fire assembly point.

When large numbers of visitors are at the school for Open Days, plays, concerts, exhibitions, etc., a brief announcement will be made advising them of the location of the emergency exits that they should use in the event of the alarms sounding. They will be advised of the fire assembly point.

### **DISABLED STAFF, PUPILS OR VISITORS**

Should the need arise, we will have a special one-to-one induction on fire safety for disabled pupils and their carers and for disabled members of staff or visitors.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF**

All staff, including teaching staff, have received fire training. Those who have received Fire Warden Training are 'competent persons' who have been trained to provide 'safety assistance' in the event of a fire. Fire Wardens receive regular refresher training. Relevant staff are also trained in how to use the Master Fire Panel.

## **FIRE PRACTICES**

We hold at least two fire practices every term at Woodcote House School, one during the daytime to familiarise the boys with the procedure and then one at night-time. This, combined with a programme of inducting new staff and pupils with emergency escape procedures and the presence of trained staff, 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 Woodcote House School:

### Escape Routes and Emergency Exits

- There are at least two escape routes from every part of all buildings
- Fire notices and evacuation signs are displayed in every dormitory
- Fires extinguishers (of the appropriate type), smoke/heat detectors & fire hoses are located in every building in accordance with the recommendations of our professional advisors. The alarm system can be manually activated by breaking a glass panel, and is automatically activated when smoke/heat builds up.
- All stairs, passages and emergency exits are illuminated by emergency lighting
- Automatic door closures that 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 Bursar's office. A secondary Repeater Panel is located in Main Reception, both of which show the location of a fire
- Alarms sound in all parts of the building and outside. There is also a sounder in Headmaster's House. Some areas are supplemented by visual alarms (red flashing lights)
- Fire routes and exits are kept clear at all times
- The fire alarms are tested weekly on a Monday morning at 11.30am and a record made
- The Bursar arranges for 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 and fire extinguishers
- Records of all tests are kept in the Bursar's office

### **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 (many of which are RCB protected and meet the requirements of BS7671 IEE wiring regulations)
- Bi-annual portable appliance testing (PAT Testing) takes place
- Records of all tests are kept in the Bursar's office
- The Head of Science checks that all scientific equipment is switched off at the end of the school day
- The Catering Manager checks that all kitchen equipment is switched off at the end of the day and isolates the gas supply

### **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 Bursar's office
- Landlord's gas safety certificates are held for all school domestic accommodation
- 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 and ammunition used by the rifle club are kept in a securely locked, fire resistant store the door of which is fire resistant

### **Rubbish and Combustible Materials**

- Flammable rubbish is stored away from buildings in the secured rubbish compound.
- Combustible materials used in teaching, catering, maintenance, grounds and caretaking are stored in flame proof cupboards

### **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 grid procedure for evaluating risk in all classrooms, kitchens, bathrooms, laboratories, workshops, pavilions, etc.

Woodcote House School has a professional Fire Risk Assessment which is updated every year.

Copies of school's Fire Risk Assessments are available on request from the Bursar. 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.

Reviewed: September 2023