



Work, play, pray - together

St. Mary's R.C Primary School
Ayr Drive,
Jarrow,
NE324AW

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2015

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2 SCHOOL ARRANGEMENTS AND ORGANISATION

Responsibilities

The Governing body has a legal responsibility to ensure that the School has suitable and sufficient arrangements for complying with their statutory duties. The LA is responsible for making the Governing body aware of these statutory duties.

Member of SMT who co-ordinates Health and Safety: **Marie Graham**

Member of staff who co-ordinates information required for the Fire Risk Assessment: **James Tiffin**

Members of staff with specific responsibilities

- ◇ Health and safety co-ordinator.
Inform new members of staff of any matters relating to health and safety including, fire evacuation as part of Induction Training.
- ◇ Senior Administration Officer -Susan Smith has responsibility for:
Calling the Fire Brigade in the event of a fire
Ensuring all classes have registers to carry out roll call when I their designated areas.
- ◇ The Site Caretaker- James Tiffin is responsible for:
Making the fire log available to the Fire Brigade in the event of fire
Ensuring systems are maintained under SLA with Gentoo
Portable Appliance Testing
Grounds and waste maintenance
Security
Liaising with contractors and those who let the premises
Testing the fire alarm and emergency lighting system with Gentoo
Carrying out/arranging improvements to premises to reduce fire risk.

All members of staff are responsible for assessing fire risks and for ensuring they are aware of the requirements of this policy.

Process of monitoring and review of the FRA

The school monitors health and safety inspection process half termly. Any problems are addressed immediately and reported to the Head Teacher / Governing Body (as appropriate). The school reviews the suitability and effectiveness of the fire precautions arrangements detailed in this document at the annual health and safety audit and whenever there are significant changes to the workplace, and implements any recommended changes as soon as possible.

Staff are requested to report issues to the health and safety co-ordinator if they arise during the year.

Communication and Dissemination of Information

All information received by the school concerning fire safety is passed to the Health and Safety Co-ordinator. It is disseminated via one or more of the following procedures:

- ◇ displayed on the staff notice board
- ◇ agenda item at staff meeting
- ◇ agenda item at Governing Body meeting (Health and Safety committee or Full governing body)
- ◇ directly to individuals / staff

3. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS IDENTIFICATION

Hazards with regard to fire can fall into two categories:

- Something that has the potential to start a fire
- Something that has the potential to burn easily in a fire thereby accelerating the spread and or ferocity of the fire.

3.1 Electrical

Electrical hazards have the potential of starting a fire and should be controlled in the following ways:

- a) Always purchase to the appropriate British or European Standard
- b) Maintain an accurate inventory of equipment
- c) Ensure equipment is placed in suitable locations with regard to fire safety, particularly with respect to escape routes
- d) Ensure equipment is tested and maintained in accordance with the manufacture's instructions and the Portable Appliance Testing Policy.
- e) Ensure all staff are aware of the need to visually inspect electrical equipment for damage prior to each use and remove from circulation if damaged.
- f) The use of temporary/portable electrical heaters must be strictly controlled and should only be used in the event of a breakdown of the permanent heating supply and under the direction of a competent electrical/heating engineer.
- g) Ensure the mains supply is maintained and tested in accordance with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- h) Ensure all staff are aware that they must not interfere with or amend the mains supply in any way.
- i) Ensure that adapters are prohibited from use at all times and that the use of extension leads is controlled in accordance with the LA Policy. Where extension leads are in long-term use, they are identified for planned replacement.
- j) Ensure electrical intake rooms and Switchgear are kept clear of combustible material at all times.

3.2 Chemical

Chemical hazards will accelerate the spread and ferocity of a fire and should be controlled in the following ways:-

- a) Ensure all purchases of chemicals, including non-curriculum areas, comply with the control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations and include the Hazard Data Sheet. This will provide the information on the chemicals flammability and safe storage arrangements.
- b) Ensure stocks of chemicals are kept to reasonable levels and do not exceed safe storage capabilities.
- c) Ensure regular stock checks are undertaken and chemical disposal is undertaken where appropriate, in the manner prescribed in the Hazard Data sheets.
- d) Ensure storage areas for chemicals have suitable health and safety signage.

3.3 Gas

Gas hazards have the potential of starting a fire and will accelerate the spread and ferocity of a fire and should be controlled in the following ways:-

- a) Ensure all staff working in areas provided with gas equipment (kitchen and boiler room) are aware of the location of isolation equipment/valves
- b) Ensure isolation equipment/valves remain accessible at all times and in good working order.
- c) Ensure gas equipment such as boilers and similar plant is regularly maintained and serviced.
- d) Ensure that boiler rooms etc are kept clear of combustible material at all times and that paints are stored in a separate room.
- e) Portable gas heaters should never be introduced into schools unless under the direction of a competent heating engineer.

3.4 Furniture and Furnishings

Furniture and furnishings will accelerate the spread and ferocity of a fire and should be controlled in the following ways:-

- a) Ensure all budget holders are aware of the School's purchasing policy, which should ensure that upholstered furniture and soft furnishings have suitable fire retardant qualities. Upholstered furniture should meet the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988. Any furniture purchased before this date is likely to contain foam, which gives off highly toxic smoke when ignited. Covers are also likely to ignite more easily than those are, which meet the Regulations. This includes PE equipment.
- b) Ensure inspection procedures identify any damage to furniture and furnishings, which will affect their fire retardant qualities and that they are stored safely until repairs can be made or disposed of, as appropriate.
- c) Any upholstered furniture, which does not meet the Regulations should be phased for replacement and should never be placed in open-plan or semi-open plan areas.
- d) Never accept second hand furniture or soft furnishings unless it carries a label confirming that it complies with the Regulations.

- e) All PE equipment must be stored appropriately when not in use.

3.5 Stationery, paper, cardboard, etc.

Stationery, paper, cardboard, etc. will accelerate the spread and ferocity of a fire and should be controlled in the following ways:-

- a) Only minimal amounts of stationery, paper, cardboard etc. should be kept within individual classrooms, all significant supplies should be kept in a suitable store.
- b) Ensure stocks are kept to reasonable levels and do not exceed safe storage capabilities.
- c) Displays of artwork, posters etc should be placed in stair enclosures
- d) Staff need to be mindful of fire escape routes when positioning displays in corridors. Never suspend artwork from the ceilings in corridors.
- e) Ensure fire exits are never blocked by displays, or the corridors or other escape routes are obstructed. Ensure fire alarm call points, notices and signs are not obscured by displays.
- f) Ensure artwork is never hung from light fittings.

4 HAZARDOUS ACTIVITIES IDENTIFICATION

Some activities that take place within the school may either be the cause of a fire, or may through poor management of them, make the consequences of any fire more severe.

4.1 Curriculum

The need to undertake risk assessments for curriculum activities is already well established. Where the activity includes the possible hazard of fire, the risk assessment must also include this hazard, and the control measures necessary to reduce the risk of fire as far as is reasonably practicable.

4.2 Smoking

St Mary's RC Primary School is a 'No Smoking Zone'. This policy must be made known to all staff, visitors, contractors and pupils. The restrictions on smoking should not be lifted for social events, community use or for contractors working during school holiday periods.

4.3 Waste Handling

All accumulated waste, including discarded furniture and equipment should be removed from the building as soon as possible but at least at the end of each day. Waste materials must never accumulate in corridors or stairwells where it may cause an obstruction to the escape of occupants or may accelerate a fire's spread. The school must have a clearly acknowledged system for the removal and safe storage of large items of waste until collection can be arranged. External waste stores should be as secure as possible.

4.4 Contractors

When contractors are working in schools the work they are undertaking may be a potential source of fire, or their presence may cause an obstruction to escape routes. Before contractors are permitted to start work in the school, the following issues must be discussed with the Site Manager and agreed.

- Will any of the work carried out use heat? e.g. blow lamps, welding etc.
- What combustible materials or flammable liquids will the contractor have and where will it be stored? eg. paints, thinners, gas cylinders.
- Will any of the work being undertaken affect the existing fire protection? E.g. breaking through fire resistant structures to pass cables, make the alarm inaudible in a section of the building, etc.
- Will the presence of the contractor restrict the escape routes or exits in any way? E.g. position of ladders, trestles or other materials.

These matters must be considered even during holiday times, as cleaners, summer schools, holiday clubs etc may still occupy the school.

4.5 Shows and Productions

All shows and productions undertaken by the School are subject to a formal written *risk assessment*, which should include the hazard of fire. Consideration must be given to the activities within the show/production, which may cause a fire, such as the use of candles, the scenery or props. The number of people allowed into the space must be strictly controlled and ensure seating layout does not obstruct exits or escape routes. Scenery and curtains must not obscure fire signs.

4.6 Lets and Community Use

The school is responsible for assessing the suitability of the group and its activities for the space they are hiring to them. Any implications the group's presence may have on the schools normal occupation of the premises must be considered. The hirer is responsible for assessing the risks to those taking part in their activities and providing the school with any information they need to decide on the suitability of the venue. The school must also provide the hirers with information regarding emergency procedures to ensure they can react appropriately if a fire occurs during the let. Groups who let the premises regularly are recommended to have drill at least once during the year.

5 FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT

The School / Governing Body are responsible for determining the provision of fire extinguishers in terms of location and type, and also for the annual maintenance of the equipment. The School is responsible for the purchase of new equipment and the repair or recharging of existing equipment.

Teaching staff are not trained to use extinguishers. Simple instructions are however located by extinguishes in high-risk places. The site manager is trained to use extinguishers. Three staff are enrolled on a fire marshal course this March 2016.

Details of fire fighting extinguishers, their type, location and maintenance are kept in the School Fire Log

6 FIRE DETECTION AND ALARM SYSTEMS

The school has an automated system to raise the alarm in case of fire. The alarm is activated by striking call points/break glass units, which are located in each classroom that has an external door, at a number of points along corridors, and also at three locations on the upper floor. Smoke detectors are installed in a number of places around the school, including each room on the upper floor.

The school is responsible for ensuring that the alarm system is maintained, and is inspected and serviced annually. The site manager tests the fire alarm weekly. A different location is selected each time.

Details of the alarm system are kept in the School Fire Log.

7 EMERGENCY LIGHTING

Emergency lighting is installed. It is the schools responsibility to ensure that emergency lighting is provided in escape routes and in areas used out of normal school hours. The Governors Health and Safety Committee need to meet to arrange for further installation of emergency lighting when funding is available.

Details of the location of emergency lighting and its maintenance are kept in the School Fire Log.

8. FIRE NOTICES AND SIGNS

All fire signs must comply with either the British Standards or with the European Standards and be of the same type. The need for signs is identified during internal inspection or annually during maintenance of fire equipment.

8.1 Fire Action Notices

Every occupied room has a fire action notice detailing how to raise the alarm if a fire is discovered and the action to take on hearing the alarm, and all teaching rooms (classrooms, halls, library, small-group rooms) have a plan of the school with the escape routes and assembly points shown.

8.2 Fire Exit Signs

Signs direct people from the place within the building that they are at, to the final fire exit. Signs are also located at the final fire exits. These signs must include the words "Fire Exit" and a directional arrow.

8.3 Fire/Smoke Control Doors

Fire doors and Smoke Control doors, not on hold-open devices, should be kept closed.

8.4 Fire Point Signs

The location of fire extinguishers is indicated by the use of a fire point signs.

8.5 Flammable stores

Flammable stores need to have appropriate signs on the outside to warn others of the nature of the materials stored within.

9 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

The firm alarm is a continuous bell and is used in case of any emergency requiring immediate evacuation of the building.

Fire drill procedures endeavour to emulate the real thing in as many situations as possible. Staff must be aware of the location of fire exits, fire blankets and fire alarm call points.

- The Headteacher and Health and Safety Co-ordinator decide on times/dates of drills.
- Drills take place at least once a term
- The Site Caretaker or Headteacher sets the alarm ringing.
- On hearing the alarm all supervising adults (teachers, classroom assistants etc) will evacuate the children by the nearest fire exit in a calm orderly manner.
- Doors must be closed on exiting classrooms and the building, and registers taken outside by teachers or admin staff as applicable
- Class support have responsibility for checking evacuation from areas near their classrooms.
- SMT unlock gates from their assembly points.
- Children and adults assemble at their designated assembly point and await further instructions. Teachers call the register and report clearance of areas/rooms to the Headteacher / H & S co-ordinator.

- The Site Caretaker checks the school is completely evacuated and unlocks external gates.
- The Health and Safety Co-ordinator records the date and time, and any important points relating to the drill.

Fire drill procedures and exit routes are displayed in each classroom and non-teaching areas and fire exit signs are displayed in accordance with Health and Safety requirements. Matters arising from the drill are reported to the Headteacher or Health and Safety Co-ordinator so procedures can be reviewed as necessary.

Children or staff with special needs or disabilities must be supervised by support staff to ensure rapid evacuation. False alarms are treated as the real thing, and are investigated as necessary by the headteacher.

If you discover a fire:

- Immediately operate the nearest fire alarm call point by breaking the glass
- Dial 999 and inform the Duty Officer of the location of the fire (**this will usually be done by the office staff**)
- Staff are not expected to fight fires, but may do so in minor circumstances without taking any risks.
- Exit the building following fire drill procedures and teachers call the register
- Remain calm and if caught in smoke, get down below the smoke level, and use the back of the hand / fingernails to feel your way out of the room / building
- Report someone missing and their last know location as early as possible
- Do not re-enter the building until you have been given clearance to do so by the fire service.
- The Admin Officer / Head Teacher liaises with the Fire Brigade and provides them with the Fire Log, containing a plan of the school.

Details of evacuation / fire drills are kept in the School Fire Log.

10 EMERGENCY PLAN

In the case of unsafe conditions, the headteacher or member of the SMT will arrange for evacuation of the area, having decided on the extent of the area to be evacuated i.e. partial or complete evacuation.

Initially those evacuated will assemble at the assembly points in the playgrounds and await further instructions. These may include assembling in another location e.g. the school field Having called the emergency services, the Headteacher will contact the LA and diocese to obtain rapid advice and support.

In the case of any evacuation, teachers and admin staff must take out registers and records of those on the premises. This enables children and adults to be accounted for and parents and carers to be informed of the situation.

To assist the Fire Brigade, a plan of the school is given to them on arrival. This includes:

- Position of fire exits
- Position of fire fighting equipment
- Main isolation valves/points

- Areas of high fire risk such as chemical stores, furniture and equipment stores such as gymnasium/sports hall stores.
- An indication as to whether asbestos is known to be present in the building or not.

11 COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION

The contents of this document is communicated to all persons affected by it, (including staff, trade union health and safety representatives, pupils, contractors and members of the community) by:

- ◇ Distribution of copies to members of staff
- ◇ Display on school website
- ◇ Drawing staffs' / pupils' / contractors' / community's attention to certain aspects verbally and /or in writing

It is part of the School's Induction Policy to ensure new members of staff, including support staff, are informed of matters concerning Health and Safety. It is the Site Caretakers responsibility to advise contractors and those who let the premises occasionally. Organisations that let the premises regularly are given a copy of this policy and the school recommends that regular users have an evacuation drill annually.

12 TRAINING

The school ensures that all members of staff given duties within this document are trained and competent to do so. If training is required, the school ensures this is provided. Staff must take responsibility for attending training that is offered / provided.

A record of training relating to this policy is kept in the School Fire Log

13 SCHOOL FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

The findings in terms of the risk of fire are summarised in the Risk Assessments in the Fire Log.

14 MONITORING AND REVIEW

The school uses the termly health and safety inspection process to monitor compliance with the detailed fire precautions set out in this document. Any problems should be addressed immediately and reported to the Governing Body in the usual way.

The school reviews the suitability and effectiveness of the fire precautions arrangements detailed in this document at the annual health and safety audit and whenever there are significant changes to the workplace, and implement any recommended changes as soon as possible.

Reviewed Dec 2016