

Queenswood



# Fire Safety Policy

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## *Fire Safety Policy*

### *Introduction*

Overall responsibility for fire precautions within Queenswood School is vested with the Governing Body and exercised through the Bursar, and in his absence the Head of Maintenance. This Fire Policy Statement is an extension of the School Health and Safety Policy and reflects the importance which Queenswood School attaches to the safety of its staff, students, visitors and other persons who may be affected by its activities and its property.

Queenswood School takes all reasonable and practicable steps to achieve the objectives and measures outlined below, in the manner that this statement sets out.

### *The Policy*

The school will comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO 2005) and all other applicable fire safety legislation and standards. Where the school could be granted exemptions from specific regulations, it is the school's policy that fire precaution standards and arrangements will be, so far as possible, at least equivalent to those which are set out in the Government Fire Safety Risk Assessment Guidelines.

Overall responsibilities for fire precautions are exercised through the executive members of the Health & Safety Committee. The Bursar delegates to Heads of Departments and House Staff the proper application of the Fire Action Plan and procedures in their areas of responsibility.

All members of staff, students, contractors and visitors are required to follow the standing instructions and fire procedures approved by the Health & Safety Management Committee and issued to Heads of Departments. In particular, in the event of a fire alarm sounding in a school facility, occupants must evacuate the building and only re-enter upon the instruction of the designated Fire Marshall or the Fire and Rescue Service. Emergency services would be contacted when necessary.

### *Objectives*

The Objectives of Fire Risk Management are to:

- Safeguard all personnel in Queenswood School occupied property, including visitors, from death or injury in the event of a fire or associated explosion.
- Reduce fire incidences.
- Minimise the potential for fire to occur and disrupt the work of the school and cause damage to property and the environment.

In respect of all facilities, which it owns, or leases, Queenswood School will:

- Provide appropriate means of escape in case of fire
- Ensure that all means of escape are properly maintained, kept free from obstruction and available for safe and effective use at all times.
- Provide the means of escape with adequate emergency lighting and maintain this in efficient working order.
- Provide and maintain in working order the alarm system/s or the means of giving warning in case of fire, clear emergency exits (with doors opening in the direction of escape) signs,

notices, emergency lighting where required, fire detectors, alarms and extinguishers which are maintained by competent people.

- Provide and maintain in working order all fire fighting appliances and devices.
- Provide appropriate instruction and training for all school staff on the actions to be taken and dealing with a fire and with fire safety information.
- Provide safety plans stating the precautions to be observed and steps to be taken to protect people and property.
- Ensure that measures which are commensurate with the risks and the significance of consequential losses are taken to protect buildings, installations and equipment from fire.

### *Management and Staff Responsibilities*

There is a Fire Risk Assessment for which the Bursar is responsible, along with a Fire Risk Prevention Policy which is to eliminate or reduce risks from dangerous substances.

Individual responsibilities and legal duties in respect of fire safety for all of school staff and students are contained in the Fire Action Plan, which gives detailed procedures. These Instructions also specify the responsibilities of managers, staff and students in respect of fire safety.

All staff are given training as part of their induction package. External training is booked by HR and given to staff as deemed necessary by the Bursar and Maintenance Manager. Factors to consider include location on site, likelihood of being on site out of hours and out of term time. The staff appointed to the role of assisting in taking preventive and protective measures including fire fighting and evacuation will be competent, trained, experienced and have the knowledge required. A list of trained staff can be seen at Appendix 2. Training is repeated periodically as appropriate.

All staff are to ensure that designated fire doors are not obstructed or held open other than by an authorised device connected to the fire alarm system, or interfered with in any way.

All resident staff shall be given instruction and training, appropriate to their responsibilities, in what to do in the event of a fire, based on the following:

1. Familiarisation with means of escape from Houses
2. What action to take on discovering a fire
3. How to call the fire brigade
4. Recognition and use of fire extinguishers

These instructions should be given every year.

In the event of a fire incident occupants should be able to evacuate the premises simply and safely by routes which are “fire safe” and free from obstructions, such as furniture in corridors etc.

House Staff and the Fire Officer are trained in the use of firefighting equipment. It should be understood by all personnel that the equipment is provided for the purpose of immediate use on small fires only and that if, in the case of fire, there is any doubt about their ability to douse the fire, they should leave the area immediately by the nearest escape route. The equipment is to be checked and serviced every twelve months.

Emergency routes and exits (with doors opening in the direction of escape), signs, notices, emergency lighting where required, fire detectors, alarms and extinguishers are all maintained by competent people.

The Fire Alarm System is tested every six months by an external contractor. Alarms are also to be checked during non-term time. Unless personnel are informed that it is a non-reactive alarm, any other sounding should be treated seriously and the premises should be evacuated. The alarms are tested weekly by the caretaking/security team. All these tests are logged.

The prime function of emergency lighting is to provide, in the event of failure of the normal lighting supply for whatever reason, adequate illumination of:

- Principle escape routes
- Exit and emergency fire doors
- Fire alarm call points and firefighting equipment

These lights are maintained and tested every six months.

The importance that fire doors play in the school's fire precautions cannot be over-emphasised. Fire doors are intended to delay the spread of smoke and fire so as to allow people to escape and are usually specified to have a half-hour fire resistance. The primary danger associated with fire in its early stages is not flame or heat but smoke and toxic gases produced by fire. These may make an escape route impassable long before a temperature which is dangerous to life is reached. It is therefore against smoke and toxic fumes that precautions must be mainly directed.

A fire door will only play its part in preventing the spread of smoke and fire if it is closed and stays closed during a fire. However, in practice residents sometimes find that fire doors are an inconvenience and inhibit their movements, particularly in corridors, or that they restrict the flow of ventilation on hot days. Consequently, many doors are wedged open or propped open with fire extinguishers etc. Such practices are prohibited, for not only will open doors promote the spread of fire but, if the areas have a fire certificate, staff may find themselves in breach of fire safety regulations which would result in prosecution with a fine and/or imprisonment. Please see Risk Assessment in line with the Regulatory Reform (fire safety) order 2005.

Great care and supervision should be applied so that temporary displays and decorations do not constitute fire hazards - in particular plastics. Great care must also be taken when using paper or flimsy materials for decoration especially near open fire heating, electric or gas appliances. Such decorations should not be suspended from or near light fittings and there are to be no decorations put up in corridors. A serious situation would arise should a fire start in a corridor since it may not be detected before smoke cuts off the escape route from nearby rooms.

Statistics show that fires occurring in suspended and highly flammable materials spread rapidly and blazing pieces may drop over a wide area before everyone in the room has a chance to escape.

The general fire notices are to be displayed in every bedroom and at each fire alarm call point and detail actions to be taken in the event of fire including instructions on how to operate the fire alarm. It is the House Staff's responsibility to ensure that all notices are visible and to report missing or defective ones.

Drills will take place twice a term, one being a daytime evacuation and one at night. It is the responsibility of staff to ensure that areas are quickly and quietly cleared and that everybody assembles at the assembly point. Drills are a necessity and should not be taken lightly.

### *Standards and Monitoring*

The Health & Safety Committee are responsible for the promulgation of the School Fire Policy, Fire Action Plan, standards and procedures. These are designed to reflect the statutory obligations and particular Fire Risk Management needs of Queenswood School. RRO 2005.

## APPENDIX I

### FIRE ACTION PLAN: PROCEDURE IN CASE OF FIRE

#### 1. Person Discovering the Fire

- a) Sound the Alarm immediately
- b) Call (9) 999 or (9) 112 for the Fire and Rescue Services
- c) If the fire is discovered while it is small enough to be put out by means of a portable extinguisher, use one, but only after you have given the alarm and if it is safe to do so and only if you have received training on using fire extinguishers.

#### 2. Action on Hearing the Fire Alarm

- a) On hearing the Fire Alarm all Staff, residents, visitors and girls are to walk quickly and quietly to the Assembly point on Trew Lawn. Leave all possessions.
- b) Staff are divided into manageable groups with a leader and deputy to whom they report. The lists are located in the Summer House and copies are also to be found on Hartley Staff Room noticeboard. Please check and make sure that you know which group you are in and who you report to. If the alarm sounds between 8 am and 5 pm, a list of staff signed in will be printed in the General Office.
- c) Staff meet at the Assembly Point on Trew Lawn and report to their group leader.
- d) Where to stand is clearly labelled on Trew Lawn by House and girls and staff must do so quickly and in silence.
- e) Girls line up in alphabetical order.
- f) Staff not attached to a House stand on the Trew terrace near to the Principal's office.
- g) Catering and Housekeeping will gather by the BBQ area.
- h) Staff and girl registers should be collected from the Summer House as quickly as possible. This should be done by the member of staff in charge of the list or their deputy and the House Fire Captains should do so for their House. However, House staff should be alert to collect the list for their House, if necessary.
- i) Registers should be taken as quickly as possible by House staff. Fire Captains may assist with this process but House staff must complete, sign the register and be responsible for informing the incident controller of any missing girls. The member of staff should take the completed list to the Incident Controller following a head count to verify the number of girls accounted for on the register. House staff must ensure that they have an accurate record of any pupil sleeping over (if a night alarm) or absent.

- j) No-one must leave the Assembly Point until directed to do so by the Incident Controller. It is essential that all personnel are silent to ensure they can hear any instructions that need to be given.

### ***3. Duties of Personnel***

The key personnel are as follows:

- Principal
- Deputy Head Pastoral
- Duty SMT/Housemistress/Houseparent
- Fire Officer/Caretaker
- House staff/Fire Captains
- Specialist personnel

#### ***a) Deputy Head Pastoral/Incident Controller***

The Deputy Head Pastoral will have full authority when an incident occurs. On hearing the fire alarm, she will go straight to the assembly point. The Deputy Head Pastoral is responsible for ensuring that all staff and Fire Captains have reported to her that all Houses are clear and personnel accounted for.

The Fire Officer or a nominated member of his/her team will assess, via the display panels, where the potential fire is and call the Fire and Rescue Service if necessary. They will then relay this information to the Incident Controller as quickly as possible.

It will be the responsibility of the Deputy Head Pastoral to take whatever action is necessary until the fire service arrive. The Deputy Head Pastoral is responsible for liaising with the Officer in Charge of the arriving fire service. She should relay the following information:

- i. number of persons missing
- ii. likely location of missing persons
- iii. type of fire/incident
- iv. location of the fire/incident
- v. hazards or problems associated with the incident or in the location of the incident.

She should also remain available to answer questions from the Fire Officer in charge.

#### ***b) SMT/Duty Housemistress***

In the event of the Deputy Head Pastoral not being available, the member of SMT on duty or the duty Housemistress/Houseparent will assume the responsibilities of the Incident Controller.

#### ***c) House Staff/House Fire Captains***

House staff are responsible for ensuring that Houses are evacuated from the nearest and/or safest escape route. Every room should be checked. There are no hard and fast rules about checking but it should not take more than a couple of minutes. If possible the House Staff “checking routes” should be towards the intended fire exit.

On leaving the buildings via stairs all personnel should be instructed to walk on the outside of the stairs as fire crews arriving at the scene may be coming up the stairs with equipment.

**d) Duty Housemistress**

During out of school hours the Duty Housemistress may become the Incident Controller. The immediate action taken by the Duty HM is as follows:

- i. Sound the fire alarm if not already sounding
- ii. Inform the Principal
- iii. Telephone the following:
  - Fire Brigade “999”
  - Security

Informing them of the incident and location.

**e) Specialist Personnel**

If available, the following personnel should report direct to the Incident Controller:

- i. Bursar
- ii. Maintenance Manager
- iii. Caretaker
- iv. Medical Sister

**APPENDIX II**  
**FIRE TRAINED STAFF**

**BOARDING HOUSES FIRE MARSHALL LIST**

<b>Belling</b>					
Merrell	Lucy	Senior Houseparent Sixth Form	Fire Marshall	02/09/2014	T & J Fire
<b>Senior</b>					
Hughes	Nichola	Houseparent	Fire Marshall	05/09/2016	SAFE I.S.
Makin	Liza	Boarding Assistant	Fire Marshall	05/09/2016	SAFE I.S.
<b>Trew</b>					
Brown	Jacqueline	Houseparent	Fire Marshall	05/09/2016	SAFE I.S.
Culora	Tina	Boarding Assistant	Fire Marshall		
<b>Stamp</b>					
Ludwick	Violaine	Housemistress	Fire Marshall	05/09/2016	SAFE I.S.
Harding	Claire	Boarding Assistant	Fire Marshall		
Pirvu	Ana-Marie	Boarding Assistant	Fire Marshall		
<b>Centre</b>					
Long	Helen	Housemistress	Fire Marshall	05/09/2016	SAFE I.S.
Long	Jeremy	Housemaster	Fire Marshall	05/09/2016	SAFE I.S.
Colson	Rebecca	Boarding Assistant	Fire Marshall		
Hurdall-Waldron	Stacey	Head of Boarding	Fire Marshall	05/09/2016	SAFE I.S.
Musa	Sabiha	Housemistress	Fire Marshall	05/09/2016	SAFE I.S.

**MAIN SCHOOL FIRE MARSHALL LIST**

<b>ABC</b>					
Long	Jeremy	Housemaster	Fire Marshall	05/09/2016	SAFE I.S.
Long	Helen	Housemistress	Fire Marshall	05/09/2016	SAFE I.S.
Ludwick	Violaine	Housemistress	Fire Marshall	05/09/2016	SAFE I.S.
Musa	Sabihabanu	Housemistress	Fire Marshall	05/09/2016	SAFE I.S.
<b>Trew</b>					
Waddingham	Graham	Maintenance Manager		27/10/2016	SAFE I.S.
Williams	Ian	Bursar		19/10/2016	SAFE I.S.
<b>Roaming</b>					
Bonner	Gareth	Caretaker		24/10/2016	SAFE I.S.
Heyward	Dave	Maintenance		22/10/2016	SAFE I.S.
Mahood	Doug	Maintenance		23/10/2016	SAFE I.S.
Murray	Brett	Caretaker		21/10/2016	SAFE I.S.
Parritt	Graham	Maintenance		26/10/2016	SAFE I.S.
Taylor	William	Caretaker		20/10/2016	SAFE I.S.
Waddingham	George	Maintenance		25/10/2016	SAFE I.S.