



## **FIRE PREVENTION POLICY**

**This policy applies to the Junior and Senior Schools (as applicable)**

<b>Policy Owner</b>	Bursar
<b>Last Review Date</b>	October 2024
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## PART 1: FIRE SAFETY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The School's priority is to minimise the risk to life and to reduce injury by maintaining the physical fire safety integrity of the School. It ensures that staff, pupils and visitors do not add to the fire risk by the safe evacuation of the buildings if a fire breaks out. The fire safety policy, procedures and risk assessments at School are designed to help everyone using the buildings to respond calmly and effectively in the event that fire breaks out in one of the buildings.

### 2. ROLE OF THE SCHOOL FIRE SAFETY OFFICER

The Bursar 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 SMT.
- The fire safety policy is promulgated to the entire School community.
- Everyone in the School (including visitors and contractors) are given clear written 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 for emergency evacuation are regularly tested and lessons absorbed.
- Fire risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated.
- Fire prevention measures are 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.

### 3. EMERGENCY EVACUATION NOTICE

All Staff and pupils (particularly those new to the School), all contractors and visitors are shown the following notice:

#### **131 – 133 Queen's Gate (Senior School)**

##### **If you discover a fire:**

1. Remain calm.
2. Immediately raise the alarm by activating the nearest alarm.
3. Do not attempt to fight the fire unless you have been trained.
4. Leave the building by the nearest fire exit and proceed to your assembly point.

##### **On hearing the alarm:**

1. Remain calm.
2. Close windows if this can be easily done.

3. Leave room by nearest Fire Exit. Do NOT pause to collect your belongings.
4. Last person to leave to shut the door.
5. Proceed down the nearest stairs and out through the nearest front door, turn right and assemble at the designated muster points where you should report to the designated member of staff.
  - If you are in the basement, leave via the nearest exit at the front of the building. If the front exits are impassable, leave through the Gym.
  - If you are elsewhere in the building and the front exits are impassable leave through the rear exit in the Music Room.
6. Listen out for further instructions. Do not return to the building until the 'all clear' has been given.

### **125 – 126 Queen's Gate (Junior School)**

#### **If you discover a fire:**

In the event of discovering a fire and the alarm not sounding, activate the alarm at the nearest call point and start evacuating the building. Proceed to the assembly point outside 131/133 Queens Gate.

#### **On hearing the alarm:**

As soon as the fire alarm sounds and without putting yourself at risk:-

1. Ensure open windows are closed
2. Ensure everyone leaves the room by nearest fire exit
3. Ensure the classroom door is shut when the room is empty
4. Ensure everyone proceeds in silence down the nearest stairs (DO NOT USE THE LIFT) and out through the nearest front door.
  - If you are in basement laboratory B1 (Biology) leave via the external stairs directly onto Queen's Gate
  - If you are in basement laboratory B2 (Physics) leave via the side entrance and external stairs directly onto Queensberry Mews West
  - If you are in basement laboratory B3 (Chemistry) leave either through the storeroom or via the side entrance and external stairs onto Queensberry Mews West
  - If the external staircases are impassable leave via the nearest internal staircase and then through the front door onto Queen's Gate
5. Those who cannot leave the building by stairs should be taken to the nearest refuge point and shown the operation of the emergency phone
6. Pupils, under the supervision of members of staff, should proceed across Queensberry Mews West to the assembly point on the pavement outside 131/133.
7. At the assembly point pupils should line up in single file in front of 131/133 in form order. Wait in silence for the register to be taken.

On leaving the building staff must report to the school secretary. Form tutors or deputies collect the register from the school secretary and check that everyone is present. Then they report that all girls are present to the Headmistress or whoever is in charge in her absence, returning the register at the same time to the school secretary and keep the girls waiting in silence until they are told where to go.

## PART 2: FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURES

### 1. BRIEFING NEW STAFF AND PUPILS

All new staff (both teaching and non-teaching) and all new pupils are given a briefing on the School's emergency evacuation procedures on their first day at the School. They are advised of the location of the emergency exits and escape routes, and where to assemble outside the School in event of a fire. Fire action notices are displayed on the walls of all rooms and in all corridors, and the School ensures that everyone knows what they look like and where they should go on hearing the fire alarm.

The safe evacuation of everyone - staff and pupils alike, is the School's priority. Protecting property comes second. No one should attempt to fight a fire at the expense of their own, or anyone else's safety. Fire awareness training, including the basic use of fire extinguishers, via an online training resource is provided to all staff during their first term. Regular refresher training is also offered, and all staff are required to complete this every three years.

### 2. SUMMONING THE FIRE BRIGADE

Under the current arrangements, the Fire Brigade are automatically called in the event of the fire alarms being activated. The master panel in the Main Building indicates from which building the alarm has been raised. In each building there is a panel that identifies the location of all alarm call points.

### 3. VISITORS AND CONTRACTORS

All visitors and contractors are required to sign-in in the hallway of 133 Queen's Gate where they are issued with a visitor's badge, which should be worn at all times when they are on School property. They are made aware of the emergency evacuation notice and where to assemble in the event of an emergency.

When large numbers of visitors are at the School for open days, plays, concerts, exhibitions etc. a brief announcement is made advising them of the location of the emergency exits that they should use in the event of the alarms sounding.

### 4. DISABLED STAFF, PUPILS OR VISITORS

A tailored, individual induction on fire safety for disabled pupils and their carers, and for disabled members of staff, is offered.

#### 5. PERSONAL EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLANS (PEEPS)

There are occasions when Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS) are required when pupils or staff are incapacitated in some way and are not able to evacuate in the normal manner.

In such situations a PEEP is put together, after consultation with the individual or individuals concerned, to ensure that evacuation in emergency is effective and safe.

#### 6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHING STAFF

Teaching staff are responsible for escorting their pupils safely out of the building in silence and in an orderly fashion. They are responsible for conducting a head count on arrival at the assembly point, and for ensuring that the names of those who cannot be accounted for and, if possible, their likely location is passed immediately to the School Fire Safety Officer, Principal or senior person present. It is the responsibility of that person to ensure that this information is passed to the Fire and Emergency Service on its arrival.

***On no account should anyone return to a burning building.***

#### 7. FIRE PRACTICES

Fire practices are held at least once every term during the day at both School premises. This, combined with a programme of inducting new staff and pupils with emergency escape procedures, helps to ensure that the School can be safely evacuated in the event of a fire.

#### 8. FIRE PREVENTION MEASURES

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

##### Escape Routes and Emergency Exits

- Fire notices and evacuation signs are displayed in every room, corridor and stairwell.
- Fire extinguishers (of the appropriate type), smoke detectors, and manual alarm points are located in every building in accordance with the recommendations of our professional advisors. The alarm is activated either automatically by one of the smoke detectors or manually using the break glass alarm points.
- All stairs, passages and emergency exits are illuminated by emergency lighting
- Automatic door closers that are activated by the fire alarms are fitted on a number of doors in, or leading onto, escape routes.

- Alarms sound in all parts of each building.
- Fire routes and exits are to be kept clear of all obstructions at all times. The Maintenance Manager is responsible for unlocking the buildings in the morning, when he removes bolts, padlocks and security devices from all emergency exits, checks that escape routes are not obstructed, and for reporting defects.
- All fire alarms are tested weekly and all tests and defects are recorded. This is the responsibility of the Bursar, who also arranges for an ISO9001 certified/BAFE approved contractor to carry out maintenance as appropriate.

#### 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 all of which are RCB protected and meet the requirements of BS7671 IEE wiring regulations.
- Regular portable appliance testing takes place.
- Records of all tests are kept in the Bursar's office.
- Heads of Department check that all Scientific and DT equipment is switched off at the end of the school day.

#### 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.
- 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.

### 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.

The School has a professional fire risk assessment which is updated every year, more frequently if significant changes are made to the interior of buildings.

Copies of the School's fire risk assessments are in Shared Work together with this document. 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.

Sian Lehrter  
October 2024