

Handsworth Grange Community Sports College Fire Evacuation Procedures



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Governor Committee: Strategic

Handsworth Grange Community Sports College - Fire Evacuation Procedure

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2. Overview of the Fire Evacuation Procedure

To recognise the unique circumstances and practicalities of managing the risk of fire within an educational establishment, with a significant degree of risk of a malicious triggering of the fire alarm system and the chaos this could cause, the school operates a "second knock" fire alarm procedure.

In order to mitigate risk in the event of a real fire, the following actions should be undertaken by staff when the alarm rings for the first time:

- Buildings staff will attend the fire alarm panel, turn off the alarm, identify the area in which the alarm has been triggered and investigate that area.
- At the same time all staff must immediately check the area where they are working and the immediate vicinity (corridor etcetera) for any sign of smoke

or fire. If the alert is genuine, the main office and/or the buildings staff should be contacted immediately.

- Buildings staff will investigate the area concerned. If a genuine fire is discovered, or notified by other staff members, the fire glass at the nearest call point will be broken to trigger a continuous warning to evacuate the building.
- In the event of a false or malicious triggering of the alarm, the second alarm will not be sounded, school activities will continue as normal and buildings staff will return to the fire alarm panel and reset the system.
- In the event of a fire, the alarm will be sounded by the buildings staff for a second time and all staff, pupils and visitors should evacuate the building immediately via the nearest designated exit and congregate at the fire assembly point on the astro turf pitch.

3. Responsibilities of Building Occupants

3.1 Buildings Staff

Buildings staff should follow the procedure outlined in points 1 and 3-4 of the "Overview" above. Overall responsibility for following this procedure and initiating the evacuation of the school premises lies with the buildings staff. It is the responsibility of the buildings staff to maintain the barrel locks to external gates in working condition at all times.

3.2 Staff

- Details of the fire evacuation procedure are included within the staff handbook given out as a part of the starter pack. It is the responsibility of all staff to:
 - To acquaint themselves with this procedure, the fire notice sheet in the room(s) they occupy and the evacuation route from those rooms.
 - To ensure their pupils are aware of the fire notice sheet in the room(s) they occupy and the evacuation route from those rooms.
 - To acquaint themselves with the fire warden duties in the event of a fire (see Appendix 1).
- All fire call points are now protected with anti-tamper devices (referred to as Screamers) to act as a deterrent to the malicious triggering of the fire alarm. To break the glass on a call point the pupil will have to lift the cover of the anti-tamper device which will trigger a loud high pitched

noise in the local vicinity of the call point. If this is triggered staff nearby should attend the call point immediately to prevent the call point glass being broken and triggering the main fire alarm.

- At the first sounding of the fire alarm, staff should check the area in which they are working and the immediate vicinity for signs of smoke or fire.
- If the location of the fire is evident, staff should evacuate the building immediately and contact the buildings staff on 07816 894070, 07816 894081 or 07816 894082 or main reception on 0114 2694801 (extensions 2201-2204) to advise them of the location of the fire, if they have immediate access to a phone and time to do so.
- If no signs of fire are evident, staff should stay where they are and only evacuate the building if there is a second alarm. If this does not sound, then no further action is required.
- It is straight forward to distinguish between a fire alarm sounder and session bells, as session bells do not sound in classrooms and offices whereas the fire alarm sounds in all areas of the building.
- All external exit gates are locked with a coded barrel lock in compliance with fire regulations and it is the responsibility of staff to familiarize themselves with the current code, how to operate the lock and the first staff member to arrive at a gate should unlock it.

3.3 Pupils

- To acquaint themselves with the fire notice sheet in in the room(s) they occupy and the evacuation route from those rooms.
- To follow the instructions of staff implicitly in the event of fire or fire drill and vacate the building in a prompt but quiet and orderly manner.
- If they hear the fire alarm for the **first time they should remain where they are**, unless there is an obvious obvious **fire in their area**, or a member of staff directs them to evacuate the building.
- The first alarm will be quickly turned off. Staff will check the point of the alarm and if this is genuine, and there is a fire, the alarm will be started again. They should follow the instructions on the "FIRE" card & exit the building by the route highlighted, unless this is blocked, in which case use an alternative route as identified by a member of staff.

- If the alarm is false, then no further alarm will be sounded, and they should carry on as normal.

Pupils should note the following:

- All fire call points are protected by anti-tamper devices monitored by CCTV cameras. If these are tampered with an alarm will sound and the culprit(s) will be subject to sanctions.
- Activating a fire alarm without due cause is a criminal offence, and puts people's health and safety at risk.
- The school will work closely with the police and will prosecute any pupil found responsible for such a criminal act.

3.4 Visitors

- Visitors to the site will be invited to read the health and safety information on the rear of their visitor pass.
- Supply staff are given a copy of the fire evacuation procedure as part of the pack they receive upon their arrival on site.

4. Evacuation Procedure

Only when the fire alarm sounds for a second time should all staff, pupils and visitors evacuate the building immediately via the nearest designated exit and congregate at the fire assembly point on the astro turf pitch. Teachers should assemble their pupils in their allocated positions at the fire assembly point (see the 'Fire' notice sheet in each room).

Staff should familiarise themselves with the route for each room that they teach or work in since the evacuation procedure will vary according to position of the room on the school site. Each room has a clearly identified evacuation route and it is the duty of staff to make themselves and their pupils familiar with these.

If for any reason a staff cannot use the usual route, they should exercise discretion and get the pupils to safety by another nearest route.

If time permits, staff should close windows and doors (but not lock) as they leave the room. In practical areas, gas taps should be turned off and experiments/equipment made safe as quickly as possible, time permitting.

Teachers should take a roll call with their TUTOR GROUP once the students have been assembled outside. Registers will be provided by office staff.

No member of staff or pupil should go back into the school until formally dismissed from the fire assembly point.

5. Fire Equipment

The most important issue in case of fire is the preservation of life. Staff must be aware of the location of break glasses and fire equipment near their room(s).

Equipment must remain in its designated location at all times. If it is used or missing, or if you are concerned that it may not be in working order, contact the Buildings Office (extension 2229).

6. Fire Notices

All staff are responsible for ensuring that a copy of the relevant fire notice is displayed within each room. If one is missing or becomes defaced, replacements can be obtained from the Buildings Office.

7. Fire Practices

There will be a fire practice at least once per term. Staff will not be notified of one of these practices.

8. Evacuating the Building

The school buildings are divided into fire zones and individuals or groups of staff designated as fire wardens (LT and Support Staff as available) have responsibility to ensure the unlocking of gates, closing external entrances, ensuring the effective flow of pupils/staff out of the buildings and to the fire assembly point, and checking designated areas of the building. **NB** Teaching staff in a particular area of the building, without a class that period, are requested to assist with a sweep of the zone they are in prior to exiting promptly to the fire assembly point.

The zones, roles and designated fire wardens are listed on Appendix 1(zone numbers are those designated on the fire alarm panel). Since we all have a duty of care for the safety of our pupils and other colleagues, all staff other than those identified on the list will at times be required to fulfill fire warden duties.

9. Evacuating Disabled Persons and Refuge Points

The school will identify a disabled evacuation plan, including any reliance on staff and will have this agreed with the Fire Service. Impairments or disabilities will be considered when assessing emergency evacuation procedures such as:

- Hearing Impairments;
- Visual Impairment;
- Physical or Mobility Impairment.

Evacuation of the above will be carried out by the school without dependence on assistance from the Fire Service. Disabled people will make use of the safe places of refuge provided at the top of certain stairwells on site, as last resort to be evacuated by trained members of the SEN team:

- Main building – at the top of the crossroads stairwell and at the top of the Humanities stairwell near the staff room – evacuate to the main entrance gate
- New building – at the top of both stairwells – evacuate to the nearest Beaver Hill Road pedestrian gate
- Z block – on the top floor outside Z18 at the kitchen end of the building – evacuate to the caretakers gate

The above procedure is considered reasonable given that the school is an existing building and the proposed refurbishment will not make the existing situation any worse. In fact the school will be fitted with a sprinkler system which will reduce the risk to occupants and fire fighters, fire compartmentation which will reduce smoke spread and enhanced detection which will give early warning to occupants.

10. Where and how to assemble

The fire assembly point is the astro turf pitch to the rear of the sports centre. The support posts to the astro perimeter fencing are numbered (1-8 at the far side opposite the entrance gates) and lettered (A-F at the entrance gate side). These provide reference points for tutor groups and staff to assemble as follows:

- Year 7 – between posts 1 and 2 – roll call by teacher, collated by HoY/KSM
- Year 8 – between posts 3 and 4 – roll call by teacher, collated by HoY/KSM
- Year 9 – between posts 5 and 6 – roll call by teacher, collated by HoY/KSM
- Year 10 – between posts 7 and 8 – roll call by teacher, collated by HoY/KSM
- Year 11 – between post A and the Handsworth Grange Road end of the astro – roll call by teacher, collated by HoY/KSM

- Teachers not allocated to tutor groups, PSA's, GTC students and supply teachers – between posts B and C – to be checked by AJD and LJC
- Cleaners, lunch time staff and exam invigilators – between posts D and E – to be checked by JSR/JDD
- TA's between posts D and E if not supporting disabled pupils – to be checked by CMH/ENF and presence notified to STW on 07817 312196.
- Other support staff– between posts D and E – to be checked by JBW/JNC/SCW
- Visitors and Catering Staff – post F to the left of the astro entrance gate – to be checked by AEK/HLW

NB – Visitors and students teachers (except GTC students) should be directed to post F.

Form tutors should escort their pupils to the fire assembly point, stand with them and take a manual register at the point specified on the fire assembly point plan (Appendix 2) within their classroom, until they are given permission to return to their classrooms. Support staff will bring you the register to mark & you will be asked by your Head of Year (or in their absence Key Stage Manager) to specify if anyone is missing. Anyone signed out of school will be checked off by the office staff.

Please note disabled pupils in your tutor group will assemble in different locations (safe place of refuge), if they cannot be brought to the fire assembly point but you will be informed of their presence:

- Main building – front gate
- New building – Beaver Hill Road pedestrian gate(s)
- Z block – caretakers gate

Once dismissed from the fire assembly point all pupils and staff should retrace their exit route back to their room (unless a real fire has occurred).

11. Fire Evacuation Procedure during Exams

In the event that it is necessary to evacuate the buildings during exams, the exam invigilators and any other staff present in the exam room(s) will be responsible for the evacuation and escort of pupils to the fire evacuation point.

All the contents of the fire evacuation procedure will apply however, further steps will be necessary to recognise that pupils will remain under exam conditions:

- The pupils will leave the building(s) by the nearest exit escorted by exam invigilators, the Head of Year, at least 1 member of LT and any other staff present at the time.
- The pupils must not talk or communicate with in any other manner with other pupils, unless this is necessary to carry out the instructions of the exam invigilators e.g. during the roll call.
- **Exams taken by half or more pupils in a year group:**
 - If the exam is for the greater majority of the pupils (i.e. more than half of the year group), these pupils will assemble in the normal tutor group assembly point positions on the astro turf pitch. The roll call will be taken by the exam invigilators, the Head of Year and at least 1 member of LT (and form tutors if it is a full year group).
 - Those not taking the exam should be assembled the opposite side of the large double gate on the lane running along the top end of the astro. The roll call should be taken by the form tutors and 1 member of LT.
- **Exams taken by less than half the pupils in a year group:**
 - If less than half the pupils are taking the exam they should be assembled the opposite side of the large double gate on the lane running along the top end of the astro. The roll call should be taken by the exam invigilators, the Head of Year and at least 1 member of LT.
 - The majority of the pupils who are not taking the exam should assemble in the normal position on the astro and a roll call taken by form tutors.
- The presence of those staff taking these roll calls should be verified by the designated fire wardens as normal.
- The roll calls should be cross checked by the Head of Year and lead invigilator(s) to ensure there are no pupils missing.

- If it is deemed safe to return into the school premises at the conclusion of the evacuation procedure, exam invigilators should escort pupils back to the exam room(s) with complete silence being maintained at all times. Normal exam board procedures for re-starting the exam and time allowances will apply.
- If it is not possible to re-enter the school premises the exam will be suspended and normal exam board procedures followed for such circumstances.

12. Summary of Key Points to Remember

- Staff should thoroughly read the fire evacuation procedure.
- Staff should read the fire plan in their room(s) to ensure they are clear about the fire evacuation route.
- If the anti-tamper device at a fire call point is set off, staff in the locality must respond to this immediately to prevent the fire alarm been set off.
- **At the first sounding of the fire alarm please stay put UNLESS a fire is obvious, in which case evacuate the building immediately and contact the buildings staff on 07816 894070, 07816 894081 or 07816 894082 or main reception on 0114 2694801 (extensions 2201-2204) to advise them of the location of the fire.**
- **After the first sounding of the alarm the buildings staff will turn it off, identify and check the area in which it has been triggered. If no signs of a fire are evident they will take no further action.**
- **In the event of a fire or suspected fire the buildings staff will sound the alarm for a second time, and all staff, pupils and visitors should evacuate the building immediately via the nearest designated exit.**
- All staff should read Appendix 1 of the fire procedure that identifies who is responsible for what in the event of an evacuation. We all have a duty of care for the safety of our pupils, so all staff are expected to contribute towards fire warden duties.
- Staff should make themselves aware of the barrel lock code to the external gates and how the lock operates.
- Staff should remain with pupils at all times on the journey to the fire assembly point and on the return trip.

- Staff to make sure where they should stand and who they should report to at the fire assembly point. **NB – teachers not allocated to tutor groups should not stand with tutor groups but congregate at the designated place.**
- If unallocated teachers or PSA's are covering form tutors and therefore taking a register of a form, it is their responsibility to make AJD and LJC aware of their presence.

Revised September 2014

Approved by

Governor: **Date:**

Signature: