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FIRE

SAFETY POLICY

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This policy will be kept up to date and will be reviewed once per year as part of the company's Quality Assurance arrangements.

Review Period
1 Year

Approved by
Directors/Governors

Review Carried Out By
Quality Team

Date of Approval
November 2020

Introduction

The safety of students, staff, visitor's is of paramount importance to Orion and it is our aim to ensure that our education environment is as safe from fire as can reasonably be achieved and if a fire does occur; our staff are well trained in procedures for safe evacuation.

It is our priority to minimise the risk to life and to reduce injury by maintaining the physical fire safety of our school; to ensure that staff, students and visitors do not add to the fire risk and through safe evacuation of our buildings if a fire breaks out. The fire safety policy, procedures and risk assessments at Orion are designed to help our community to respond calmly and effectively in the event that fire breaks out in our building.

Orion's fire precautions comply with all relevant health and safety legislation including The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, and The Education (School Premises) Regulations 2012.

The Education (School Premises) Regulations provide that it must be possible for every part of a school building to be safely evacuated in case of fire.

Attention must be given to:

- Means of escape from the building;
- The likely rate at which flames would spread across exposed surfaces;
- The fire resistance of structures and materials in the building.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body has the ultimate responsibility for fire safety at Orion. The Governing Body will review this policy and monitor effective working procedures including reviewing the reports of incidents, near misses or concerns raised by any member of staff.

The Head of School is responsible to the Governing Body for fire safety within Orion but will delegate operational duties to a nominated staff member (Fire Safety Officer) for fire safety. The nominated person for fire safety will appoint two Fire Safety Wardens who will carry out specified fire safety duties alongside the Fire Safety Officer.

Role of the Fire Safety Officer

The Fire Safety Officer is responsible for ensuring that:

- The Fire Safety Policy is reviewed on a regular basis by Governors and Head of School
- The Fire Safety Policy is communicated to all
- Written fire safety instructions are provided to everyone (including visitors and contractors) detailing where they should go in the event of a fire - with additional information being provided when large numbers of visitors are on site, i.e. for Parents evenings or events.
- Contractors working at Orion will be given written documentation detailing the procedures that they should follow whilst working on the premises, and also informing them of procedures in an emergency situation

- Basic fire training for all staff is provided on an annual basis and
- Fire training is provided to all new employees on starting work at Orion
- Records are kept of the fire induction training given to all new staff and students
- Procedures and arrangements for emergency evacuation are regularly tested and reviewed
- Fire risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated
- Records are kept of all fire practices
- Certificates for installation and maintenance of fire-fighting systems and equipment are kept
- Fire risk assessments are regularly reviewed and incorporate any alterations to the layout, systems installed or operational use of the premises.
- Liaison takes place with third parties; the emergency services and insurers to ensure that best practice for fire prevention and procedures is in place
- The integrity of all fire prevention systems and equipment in place is maintained in good working order
- The policy is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that any new risk or alteration to the relevant regulations is addressed

The Fire Safety Officer is supported by two nominated Fire Warden's as follows:

Fire Safety Officer: Georgina Mendez

Fire Warden Ground Floor: Azim Kazi

Fire Warden First Floor: Don Bartley

Role of Fire Wardens

Fire Warden's are responsible for facilitating the orderly evacuation of the building by standing along exit routes to ensure that students and staff can leave the premises safely. It is not the responsibility of Fire Wardens to fight fires.

Role of Teaching Staff

Teaching staff are responsible for escorting their students safely out of the building (with the support of PEEPS for those students with disabilities) and in an orderly fashion. They are responsible for conducting a head count on arrival at the assembly point and for ensuring that the name of anyone who cannot be accounted for is passed immediately to the Fire Safety Officer.

Fire Risk Assessment

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires Orion to carry out fire risk assessments to examine and control the likelihood of a fire starting, and the consequences of a fire if one were to start. Fire risk assessments for the premises will either be conducted by a competent person or external consultant. (This will normally be the Fire Safety Officer (if not completed by a consultant) or a competent Fire Warden).

Fire risk assessments will be reviewed and or updated every year or in the event of any significant changes to the building or its usage. A copy of the fire risk assessment report will be available to all employees with attention brought to any hazards found in the assessment. Fire hazards will be eliminated, or the risk reduced to the minimum level practicable by implementing control measures and safe systems of work.

Regular assessments will be made by staff, to ensure that the walkways are kept clear of obstruction and tripping hazards.

The fire risk assessment will follow the principles below:

- Step one: Identify the fire hazards, e.g. what could start a fire, combustible materials, etc;
- Step two: Identify people at risk (look at numbers of people, vulnerable groups and the likelihood of the fire spreading);
- Step three: Evaluate the risks and implement control measures to remove or reduce the risk;
- Step four: Record the findings and inform staff;
- Step five: Review and revise the plan as and when there are changes in work activities, the use of the building, etc.

Fire Warning Equipment

Orion is equipped with fire warning devices designed to activate the alarm system in the event of a fire. The warning of a fire will be a siren, which will sound continuously. The alarm will be tested regularly, (weekly, Wednesday 10.30am unless an external or oral examination is in progress) and reports of inaudibility are to be reported. Call buttons are located throughout the building. In the event of a fire, the call point should be operated and the alarm will automatically sound. This equipment will be maintained regularly.

Fire-fighting Equipment

Fire-fighting equipments (commonly known as "fire extinguishers") are located throughout the premises. Different appliances are designed for different applications and conditions; this will have been taken into account with respect to their siting. The main purpose of fire extinguishers is to clear a path to an exit. Staff will receive training in the safe operation of portable fire-fighting equipment and the appropriate applications for particular items. No attempt should ever be made to tackle a fire unless it is very minor and poses no significant threat to the occupants of the building. This equipment will be maintained regularly.

It is a disciplinary offence - for students and staff alike - to tamper with any fire-fighting or alarm equipment.

Emergency Lighting

Emergency lighting is installed throughout the premises where lighting would continue to be required in the event of a mains power failure, e.g. stairs, passageways and emergency exits. Records of testing and servicing of emergency lights will be maintained regularly and recorded. Testing of the system will be carried out by a competent contractor.

Fire Safety Checks

Fire safety warning systems, lighting and equipment will be checked on a weekly basis by nominated Fire Safety staff (either Fire Safety Officer or Deputy Officers). Records of all checks will be clearly recorded in the Fire Safety Folder held in the main office. All equipment and system checks will also be held in the Fire safety folder, along with copies of fire risk assessments and any Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP's).

Evacuation Drills

An evacuation will be carried out at least once a term either in the form of an accidental or planned practice evacuation. After each evacuation, staff will be required to provide information and observations on positive and negative aspects. The conditions and timings of the practice will be varied, such that sometimes no notice will be given to either Staff or students, and sometimes a false fire will be used to block a major exit route to test how people cope when required to deviate from the normal route. Records of all evacuation drills will be detailed in the Fire Safety Folder.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Any person discovering a fire should:

- Activate the fire alarm;
- Ring 999; and
- Evacuate the building.

To enable staff and students to become familiar with the building, fire action notices are displayed in every room. On hearing the alarm, all staff, students and visitors must stop what they are doing and evacuate the building in an orderly manner.

Where possible and if it is safe to do so, teachers should ensure that any equipment in use in their classroom is turned off, and windows and doors are closed to prevent the spread of fire and smoke to other parts of the school. All cloakrooms, workshop areas and toilets should be checked to ensure that no one is left inside.

It is the responsibility of individual members of staff to ensure the safe evacuation of all students for whom they are responsible, to a previously designated assembly point. If a student has a disability it is the responsibility of the designated staff member appointed to assist with personal evacuation (PEEP) to ensure the safe evacuation of their designated person.

When the alarm sounds, students should be marshalled in an orderly fashion via the nearest escape route and, if possible, any open windows should be closed. The class teacher will always be positioned at the rear. If possible, doors should be closed behind the class. It is important for staff to be familiar with alternative escape routes in the event that the primary route is blocked. The class will assemble at the predetermined place of safety (assembly point), which is the far side of the school playground.

On arrival, names will be checked against the attendance register. The fire alarm system does not automatically alert the fire service. The fire service will be called by a member of staff as soon as it has been confirmed that a real fire situation exists. As a general rule, if someone is missing, the building should not be re-entered but information should be given immediately to the Fire Safety Officer who will liaise with the fire service to make a search. Nobody should re-enter the building until being given express permission to do so by the fire service, which should be communicated to all by the Fire safety Officer.

Visitors on site will be made aware of fire safety arrangements upon arrival.

Evacuation of Disabled

Students and employees with a disability should be identified and a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) prepared for the person concerned. The timetable for those students and staff for whom PEEPS have been prepared are kept in a wallet in the Fire Safety Folder in the main Office. After taking into account all known risks, the Head of School, in conjunction with the First Aider, will propose specific procedures for assisting in the evacuation of persons with a known disability. Where required a 'buddy' will be appointed for any student or employee requiring assistance in an emergency evacuation. Where teachers have a student with a known disability, they must ensure that the student is aware that the alarm has been triggered and that they follow the evacuation procedure accordingly.

Wheelchair users or any person with difficulty walking (for example anyone temporarily using crutches) should make their way to a designated fire refuge area and wait until they are assisted to evacuate the building. The fire refuge areas are clearly signed and listed in the Fire Procedures.

Fire Training

All new staff and students will receive a fire safety induction which will inform them about how to evacuate the building quickly, the alternative fire exit routes (where applicable), the types of fire extinguishers and their uses within the area and specific fire safety procedures that are relevant. A record of this induction will be kept in student and staff personnel files.

Fire Safety Officers and Fire Warden's will complete additional more comprehensive training specific to their role.

All staff will be trained in:

- What to do on discovering a fire;
- How to raise the alarm and what happens then;
- What to do upon hearing the fire alarm;
- The procedures for alerting guest, residents and visitors including, where appropriate, directing them to exits;
- The evacuation procedures for everyone to reach an assembly point at a place of total safety;
- The location and, when appropriate, the use of fire fighting equipment;
- The location of escape routes, especially those not in regular use;
- How to open all emergency exit doors;
- The importance of keeping fire doors closed to prevent the spread of fire, heat and smoke;
- The safe use of and risks from storing or working with highly flammable and explosive substances; and
- The importance of general fire safety, which includes good housekeeping.

Visitors and Contractors

Visitors and contractors will be made aware of emergency evacuations procedures via a leaflet provided to them when they 'sign in' at reception area. They will be made aware of any hazards and controls in place for their safety.

Fire Prevention Measures

Orion will ensure:

- Staff will follow good housekeeping practices
- Sources of ignition be controlled
- Portable heaters are sited correctly, not covered up and electrical sockets not be overloaded
- Electrical appliances are tested by a qualified electrical engineer

- Catering equipment is switched off at the end of every day
- All gas appliances are tested and serviced by Gas Safe Registered Engineers
- Portable electrical equipment is checked annually
- Rubbish is not be left lying around.
- Care is taken to avoid large flammable displays along escape routes.
- Escape routes are always kept clear and fire exit doors never blocked.
- Outside rubbish storage (bins) are located away from buildings.
- Flammable chemicals are stored safely and adhere to COSHH regulations
- Exit routes are regularly walked by the Fire Safety Officers to ensure that they are, and remain, clear of obstruction.

Fire Records

Orion will keep records of training; inspections; evacuations and maintenance of systems and equipment. These will be maintained by the Fire Safety Officer.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or at an earlier date if changes are required due to changes in Orion's fire safety process or legislation and or DfE guidance.