Castle Camps C. of E. (V.C.) Primary School

Policy for

Fire Safety Policy

Date Approved by the Governing Body:
28th September 2026
Date for Review: September 2027

Part 1: Fire prevention

Introduction

The prevention of fire is of vital importance. Most fires are caused by carelessness and ignorance. A high standard of fire consciousness will prevent this. It is the responsibility of all personnel to become conversant with these instructions.

Upon the outbreak of fire, the saving and preservation of life takes precedence over the salvaging of property. A member of staff's first and overriding duty is of course to look after the children or persons under their charge and this will mean the evacuation of the building. No attempt should be made to fight fire until their safety is assured, and then without exposing any person to risk.

The school fire officer is the school business manager and he or she is to be informed of all fires, no matter how small. A fire is not considered extinguished until such time as it has been inspected by the fire officer.

Fire risk assessments

The Fire Precautions Workplace Amendment Regulations 1999 came into force on 1 December 1999. This ensures that employers are responsible for ensuring appropriate fire precautions, which include:

- appropriate fire detection and fire-fighting equipment that is accessible and simple to use
- nominated employees to implement fire-fighting measures
- provision of adequate training and equipment for those appointed
- arrangements for any necessary contacts with external emergency services
- provision of adequate emergency escape facilities

In order to do this, employers should carry out risk assessments and revise them from time to time. They should identify any person especially at risk in a case of fire, eg a person who is deaf, blind or disabled etc.

An emergency plan to evacuate the premises should be created, providing for calling the fire service and allocating individuals who are responsible for supervising, controlling and putting into effect the plan. Fire drills must be carried out in accordance with the emergency plan and modifications made. It is important that any actions arising from the fire risk assessment form part of the overall health and safety policy for the school to ensure that the management of all health and safety risks are considered together.

There are no hard and fast rules about how the assessment should be carried out. The important thing is that it should both be practical and systematic to ensure that the whole of the workplace is examined, including every room or area, particularly any area not often in use.

Strategy for fire prevention

Management strategy for fire prevention may be classified as follows:

- everyday management and vigilance by staff to ensure that potential hazards are kept under control to prevent the occurrence of fire
- alarm, evacuation and emergency action backed up by notices, drills and practice to ensure that correct action is taken in the event of an outbreak of fire

A strategy should also include:

- planning for the actions to be taken in the event of fire:
  – training of staff, including any specially delegated function
  – provision of instruction to pupils
  – display of appropriate fire instruction notices
  – control of risks associated with activities or processes that may cause or adversely affect any outbreak of fire, eg process, storage, gas, electricity, contractors on site, vandalism
- check on existing structural precautions, and seeking further advice where there are thought to be deficiencies
- monitoring the effectiveness of precautions, eg analysis of evacuation drills, annual review by checklist

Issue of general fire notice

The issue of general fire notices to staff will take place during induction. It is imperative that this document is issued and explained in detail to an employee in the same way as details of pay, work hours and holidays would be explained. This requirement applies to all staff.

Staff training

The fire officer is responsible for ensuring that all staff in the premises are trained in accordance with the requirements of the school. Every member of staff will receive instruction in fire precautions during induction.

After the initial instruction, all members of staff will receive at least half an hour of verbal instruction at least once every 12 months. The school business manager will arrange fire training.

Control of risks: training of staff and instruction of pupils

Employees

- The training of all employed persons forms an essential part of the school's fire precautions. The aim should be to ensure that all staff receive training in a basic appreciation of the risk of fire and the action to be taken in the event of fire, including instruction appropriate to their responsibilities in an emergency.
- Instruction and training for all will include the following points.
  – action to be taken upon discovering a fire
  – action to be taken on hearing the fire alarm

– method of raising the alarm, including location of call points, use of internal telephone system and location of external telephone
– correct method of calling the fire service
– location and use of fire-fighting equipment
– knowledge of escape routes
– evacuation method for the building, location of assembly point and method of accounting for persons
– stopping machinery, activities and isolating power and fuel supplies where appropriate
– appreciation of the importance of fire doors and the need to close all doors and windows at the time of a fire or on hearing the alarm

Pupils

Pupils should be instructed at the start of their attendance at the school to enable them to:

- identify the fire alarm
- know the action they should take on hearing the alarm
- know the location of the assembly points
- know what to do if not in a supervised group, in the event of fire

These points should be included on the fire notice, and reinforced during practice evacuations.

Fire drills

Fire drills will be carried out at least once every term. The exercise will include a simulated evacuation drill with the assumption that one escape route is not available. Each exercise will be started by a predetermined signal, such as activating the fire alarm and the whole premises will be checked as if an emergency has arisen. This fire drill can be combined with the instruction given to staff. When a fire drill is held, it will be recorded in the staff training record book, held by the site manager.

All staff must participate in at least two drills per year.

Testing of fire alarm systems

The fire alarm system will be tested weekly by the caretaker. A different call point for each test will be used and recorded in the log book. The fire alarm systems will be serviced twice a year.

Emergency lighting

The emergency lighting is to be examined weekly by the caretaker. The log book will be completed indicating any defects and these will be brought to the attention of the school business manager immediately. This lighting will also be checked by the maintenance contractor twice annually.

Emergency exits

All emergency exits are to be kept clear and free from obstruction at all times. It is the responsibility of all staff to be fully aware of the contents of these instructions and know the location of all fire exits and the assembly point in the immediate vicinity.

Fire alarms

Electrical fire alarm operated by breaking a glass release button. The fire alarm is to be raised no matter how small the fire.

Fire-fighting equipment

Fire extinguishers

There should be the correct type of fire extinguisher at each fire point, dependent upon the location.

Fire instruction notices

Printed notices should be conspicuously displayed at all fire points stating concisely what staff and others should do if a fire is discovered or if they hear the alarm. The notices should be permanently fixed in position and suitably protected to prevent loss or defacement.

Fire prevention checks

Regular fire prevention checks should be carried out.

Checks are to include the following.

- Unnecessary lights and electrical appliances (TVs, videos, microwave ovens etc) are to be switched off and, where possible, unplugged.
- It is recommended that convector heaters are not used in school. All other electric fires must be regularly tested and maintained.

A fire prevention check is to be carried out in all areas at the termination of the day's work prior to the premises being vacated.

The following precautions are to be observed.

- With the exception of essential systems that must continue to operate after normal working hours, all electrical appliances and lighting systems are to be switched off and disconnected by a person nominated for this purpose.
- Waste paper bins are to be emptied and the contents removed from the building.
- All parts of the school are to be inspected by the caretaker at the end of the day. He or she is also to ensure that computers have been closed down and television sets have been disconnected and that all doors are closed.

- Windows are to be left free from obstruction. To facilitate detection of a fire from outside, prior to vacating rooms or premises at the end of the day, all curtains should be drawn apart, other than when security requirements dictate otherwise.

Housekeeping

Tidiness and cleanliness are essential fire prevention measures. The accumulation of rubbish and waste material is to be kept to a minimum; it is to be cleared away each day on the cessation of work and removed to a safe location outside and away from buildings for early disposal.

Paint materials are subject to spontaneous ignition. Such items should be removed to a safe external location on cessation of work. The storage or accumulation of combustible materials in roof voids, under stairs and similar spaces is forbidden.

Smoking

Smoking is one of the main causes of fire and is prohibited in the school and the school grounds.

Refuse and rubbish

Refuse or rubbish must not be permitted to accumulate in or around the school. Disposal is to be undertaken at the end of each day.

Flammable materials

Flammable materials are not to be stored near any form of heating.

Electrical appliances

When using electrical appliances, the following rules should be observed.

- They are to be switched off and unplugged when not in use.
- The use of multi-plug adapters is prohibited.
- They are to be fitted with the correct plug for the socket provided. Plugs are to be undamaged.
- Temporary wiring and extensions are not to be used.
- Electrical faults are to be reported immediately to the site manager.
- Fuses that have blown must only be replaced after establishing the cause for the blowing, with fuses of the correct rating.
- A fuse should never be replaced with one of a higher rating.
- Flexible cable to fittings should be as short as possible and should be inspected regularly and replaced if worn.
- Personal portable electrical appliances must be PAT tested. Such items must not be used without the appropriate testing and prior authorisation of the headteacher.

Paint solvents

Paints and solvents suitably marked are to be segregated in properly prepared stores.

Paint and solvents should be disposed of correctly.

Grass and undergrowth

Grass and undergrowth is to be kept cut well back from buildings.

Kitchens

In order that losses by fire are kept to a minimum and that catering facilities are not jeopardised, a high standard of fire precautions in kitchens is of paramount importance. Catering staff should be fire conscious and are to be trained in the action to be taken when a fire occurs.

Disabled persons

Special precautions may be required when disabled persons have access to a building. Where possible they should be located within a building so that they are able to evacuate with the minimum of assistance. This will normally mean location on the ground floor. However, consideration must be given to any steps or other changes of level that may need to be crossed.

Vandalism and damage limitation

Fire caused by vandals or persons breaking into a building intent on causing damage are a constant risk, and this type of fire is probably the greatest risk facing the school. Such fires are often started at night or during holidays, and result in extensive material damage, and disruption of pupils' education.

The opportunity for reducing such vandalism lies partly in the long-term development of a good relationship with neighbours, and partly in the security of the premises, by ensuring the windows and internal doors are properly secured when the building is unoccupied. Combustible materials should not be left where they are immediately accessible to intruders, and flammable liquids, which may be used as accelerants, should be stored securely.

Structural fire precautions incorporated to assist escape from buildings will also reduce the spread of fire. All fire doors should be closed when premises are vacated (closing of all doors and windows is recommended to limit the spread of smoke damage).

Curtains, furnishings, art displays and decorations

Care should be taken when choosing curtains, furnishings and fittings. Inherent or tested fire-retardant materials should be used whenever possible.

- Art displays and other decorations of a combustible nature can increase the spread of fire considerably. Accordingly, the quantity and location of such displays is critical in reducing the fire loading.
- Displays should not be placed on escape routes or block exits.
- Sources of ignition, such as light bulbs, should not be placed near the displays.
- Expanded polystyrene and other plastics produce large amounts of toxic, black smoke and considerable heat. They should not be allowed on escape routes.
- In corridors or on staircases, wall displays made from combustible material should be limited to 20 per cent of the available overall surface.

Storage

Readily combustible materials such as paper should be stored in designated areas where they will be secure against unauthorised entry. These areas must be free of sources of ignition, such as heaters and suspended lighting units.

Flammable liquids must be kept in purpose-built storerooms or cupboards provided with ventilation.

All persons handling such material should be aware of the dangers.

Electricity

All electrical apparatus should be installed by an approved contractor, using the correctly rated fuse. If a fault occurs, get it repaired before continuing. Electrical installations should be checked regularly as electrical faults are a major cause of accidental fires.

All electrical equipment not required to be used out of hours should be switched off and the plug removed from the socket. All portable electrical equipment is to be checked annually by a suitably qualified contractor.

Fire doors

Fire doors have at least one of two functions, to protect:

- escape routes from the effects of fire so that occupants can safely reach a final exit
- the contents and/or the structure of a building by limiting the spread of fire

Neither of the above functions will be satisfactorily undertaken unless the door is a good fit in the frame, the self-closing device is working efficiently and the door is not wedged or held open.

Even if a door is not a fire door, it may reduce smoke and heat damage, so at evenings and weekends, all doors should be left in the closed position.

Contractors

Building contractors bring a large number of ignition sources to the school. Ensure that all contractors entering the premises are aware of the fire precaution measures and procedures, should a fire occur.

At the end of the day, no building materials should be left outside where vandals can use them to damage the premises.

The school business manager should be made aware when hot cutting work is to take place for both the safety of the pupils and the school.

School grounds

Access for emergency vehicles must be kept clear at all times. Combustible buildings must be sited away from the main building to avoid fire spread. Areas beneath raised buildings should be protected against the accumulation of litter and access for intruders.

Combustibles, rubbish containers and equipment, which could be used by vandals, especially those used by outside contractors, must not be left unsecured.

Fire routine

The purpose of the fire routine is to establish what action is to be carried out in the event of a fire. It should be in the form of a written notice and cover the basic facts below (see part 2):

- what to do if you discover a fire
- what to do when you hear the alarm of fire
- evacuation
- assembly
- roll call
- calling the fire service
- special needs of cleaners, disabled, etc.

Advice on the procedure in the event of fire

At time of emergency:

- If you discover a fire – or one is reported to you – operate the nearest fire alarm call point by breaking the glass.
- If you hear the fire alarm, evacuate the premises immediately, as detailed in the evacuation procedure for the school.
- Ensure that the fire service is called by dialling 9/999.

After the event, follow the procedure described below:

- Do not re-enter the premises until advised to do so by the senior fire service officer present.

- If the fire has been extinguished by school staff, do not disturb any evidence that could indicate the cause of the fire, except for ensuring that the fire is out.
- Ensure that the premises are in safe working order before re-occupying: fire doors satisfactory, fire alarm operating, extinguishers re-charged.
- Statistics have shown that any publicity given to a school fire can result in a second fire. Members of staff are not to talk to the media unless authorised by the headteacher.
- The fire officer is to analyse the procedures followed during the fire to determine whether changes are required.

Fire records

The safety of a building's occupants cannot be assured by design alone. Any building can quickly become dangerous unless there is foresight in the activities carried out there, and care in the maintenance of it.

The following fire records are to be maintained:

- persons with special responsibilities
- fire alarm call point locations and checks
- weekly fire alarm tests
- fire alarm fault records
- fire alarm maintenance inspection
- emergency lighting maintenance inspection
- fire-fighting equipment routine monthly checks
- fire drills
- fire-fighting equipment tests and maintenance by contractors
- training records (quarterly and on induction)
- visits and inspections by the fire service

Publication of fire instructions

These instructions are to be held by all staff.

All new arrivals are to have fire instructions brought to their attention.

Part 2 of these instructions are to be displayed prominently at all fire points.

The classroom fire notice is to be displayed in each classroom.

Appendix A: Displays, display boardings and decorations

Great care should be taken that educational and display materials, which may be added to a building by the occupants, do not unintentionally cause a fire hazard. The same caution is needed in respect of decorations using combustible materials, for example, Christmas trimmings and displays of autumn leaves. Flimsy materials, natural and artificial, can be readily combustible and increase the risk of fire occurring and, depending on quantity and

location, will increase the possibility of rapid spread of smoke and fire. Blazing pieces may drop over a wide area before people have a chance to escape.

In determining what is reasonable by way of display materials and/or decorations, the overriding consideration is whether persons are likely to be trapped as a result of fire involving such materials. This is a difficult area for the lay person to assess as it needs an understanding of how parts of the building contribute to escape routes, and how materials, for example display boarding, may contribute to the spread of fire over its surface. The following guidance can be given concerning materials that form the linings of walls and ceilings (the technical terms are defined in DCSF Building Bulletin 7 (DCSF, 2005) and British Standard 476 (for fire doors), and are essential to understanding which materials are acceptable).

- In 'protected stairways', 'protected corridors' and 'protected lobbies', the surface linings should be 'class 0', ie non-combustible. The meaning of this is that display boards and free-standing displays should not be incorporated in these areas.
- In 'horizontal circulation areas', the linings should be 'class 0', except that 20 per cent of the total wall and ceiling area may be 'class 2'. This means that display boarding may be acceptable in these areas, subject to its area being within the amount given, and that the character of the fire resistance as given in the manufacturer's specification is 'class 1'.
- In new construction, these requirements should have been taken into account at the design stage. However, occupants should ensure that no modifications occur, such as covering or painting that will change the nature of its fire resistance.
- Where there are any areas of doubt, for example whether a certain material is acceptable in terms of the effect that it may have on fire precautions, then the advice of the fire officer should be sought.
- Where displays are provided in other cases, they must be located where they are well clear of any source of ignition.
- Where paper, natural or plastic materials are used for decorations or display, they should not be suspended from light fittings or near any heat source. Coloured paper must not be placed inside light diffusers for coloured effects.
- Cellular plastics (polyurethane foam) present particularly severe fire risks and should not be used for display purposes.

Appendix B: Electricity

The current running through electric wiring is a source of heat, and if a fault develops in the wiring, that heat can become excessive and start a fire. Neglect and misuse of wiring and electrical appliances is one of the main causes of fire. Fuses or circuit breakers are incorporated in a system to protect against overloading in the event of defect.

Plugs and circuits must be correctly wired and fused. Equipment and plugs with loose connections must be taken out of use.

In the event of a fuse protecting equipment or a circuit blowing, the cause of the failure should be identified before replacing the fuse.

Any replacement of fuses must be with fuses of the same rating.

Electrical socket outlets must not be overloaded, and the use of multi-way adapters inserted directly into the socket outlet is not permissible. It is therefore essential that before additional equipment is obtained, facilities should exist to allow its safe use.

It may be permissible to run up to four items of equipment which draw low amounts of current, for example computer and monitor from a single socket outlet by a fixed plug connected to a purpose-designed, four-socket outlet with an integral fuse. Careful location of the cable is essential. The unit should be removed when not in use.

Flexible cables are to be replaced when worn or damaged. This is not a task expected to be in the ability of most employees, as it will involve partial disassembly of the equipment.

After use, outlets should be switched off, and plugs removed from sockets.

Any addition or alteration to the permanent electrical system of premises must be carried out by a qualified electrician. Under no circumstances should work of this nature be undertaken without prior approval of the school business manager.

Appendix C: Deep-fat fryers

The principal fire hazard in kitchens is the deep-fat fryer, whether or not it is thermostatically controlled. Cooking oils and fats over-heating or boiling over usually results in a fire that can rapidly involve the ceiling or fume extraction ducting. Fires in fryers usually occur when they are left unattended or when used by unqualified persons. Catering staff are to adhere to the following fire precautions.

- Deep-fat fryers are not to be left unattended when switched on. The appropriate fire precaution notice is to be prominently displayed.
- After use and when oil has sufficiently cooled, deep-fat fryers should be drained and oil strained into a suitable container.
- After repeated use of oil, a residue of food particles can build up and the danger of fire can become progressively higher.
- Defects in cooking apparatus are to be reported immediately.
- In the event of fire, electricity and gas supplies are to be switched off, preferably at the main switch or valve, and appropriate action taken.

Staff are to be aware of the locations of:

- fire alarms and fire-fighting equipment
- main electrical switch or gas isolation valve, which must be indicated by suitable notices
- dampers for isolating ducting in kitchen hoods etc

Appendix D: Sheds and garages

Smoking and the use of naked flame is prohibited in all storage sheds and garages. Appropriate fire notices are to be displayed in conspicuous positions.

Castle Camps Primary School

Part 2: Fire procedures

General fire notice

On discovering a fire:

- operate the nearest fire alarm point without delay
- call the fire service by dialling 9/999
- evacuate all occupants to the agreed assembly point
- staff may attempt to extinguish fire with the nearest suitable fire appliance
- if fire has reached such proportions as to endanger life or escape, do not attempt to extinguish, but proceed to assembly point

On hearing the fire alarm:

- close all doors and windows
- proceed to your assembly point and take the roll call
- on arrival of the fire service, the fire officer or a senior member of staff should meet the fire service officers and give as much information as possible about the fire

Know:

- your means of escape, primary and secondary
- the nearest fire-alarm point
- the nearest fire appliance and how it should be used
- the assembly point

In the event of fire:

- maintain silence
- do not stop to collect your personal belongings
- do not rush

Remember to dial 9/999, ask for the fire service and give the precise location of the fire.

Fire and emergency procedures

All liaison in respect of fire precautions in Castle Camps Primary School will be through the headteacher.

At a fixed time each week, the caretaker is to ensure that the alarm is tested to ensure that it is effective. Points from different zones should be used to trigger the alarm to ensure that all break glass or other points are in working order.

Fire drills must be carried out at least once per term to enable everyone to become familiar with the procedure for evacuation.

On sounding the alarm, the fire service must be summoned and all staff, students and visitors must leave the building immediately, closing doors and windows behind them if possible.

An assembly point should be designated at a safe distance from the building to prevent possible injury from falling debris.

If there is no risk of personal injury, attempts may be made to tackle the fire using a suitable type of extinguisher and to switch off power sources from the mains.

At all times, fire exit routes must be unobstructed. All exit doors must be unlocked whilst there are people in the building. Smoke doors must not be hooked or wedged open, other than to allow temporary movement within the area.

Exit routes must be clearly identified and marked.

The use of display material must be controlled on fire exit routes.

Persons appointed as fire wardens must liaise with the headteacher and bursar to establish safe procedures.

Extinguishers

The location of all fire extinguishers must be clearly marked. No materials may be placed near these in such a way that their location is hidden or that their use is hindered.

If possible, training in the use of fire extinguishers should be arranged with the local fire officer.

Storage of flammable materials

Flammable materials, such as paper, floor-cleaning materials and petroleum products, must not be stored in boiler houses or other high-risk locations.

Classroom fire notice

A classroom fire notice is to be displayed in each classroom.

Room _____

Raise the alarm

It is the duty of anyone discovering a fire to operate the nearest fire alarm point by breaking the glass cover. The nearest member of staff must be immediately informed.

Evacuation route

Evacuate the building in an orderly manner.

The evacuation route from this room is:

1.Primary: _____

2.Secondary:_____

Assembly areas during lessons

Staff and pupils will assemble by classes at the designated area.

Roll call

Teachers must ascertain, by roll call, the whereabouts of all pupils and staff and report the results of the roll call to the senior member of staff.

Instructions for fire officer

The fire officer should undergo training in fire duties at the appropriate training establishment before assuming his or her appointment. Where it is not possible to arrange training before the appointment is assumed, he or she is to attend the first practicable course after appointment.

His or her primary duties are to:

- be responsible to the headteacher for all matters relating to fire precautions and the school fire organisation, establishing close liaison with the local fire service officer in the area
- supervise, maintain and control on behalf of the headteacher:
  – preparation of school fire instructions
  – measures for fire prevention and fire-fighting, including fire practices
  – allocation, maintenance and testing of all fire-fighting equipment held by the school for its fire protection
  – the efficiency, training and duties of the fire wardens and the instruction of all in

the use of fire-fighting equipment
– arrangements for summoning fire-fighting resources, with details displayed in buildings and by the school telephone exchange
– liaison with the appropriate fire service representatives in the area

- maintain suitable records to show the following:
  – training of personnel and attendance on courses
  – distribution and appropriate inspection, maintenance and testing of school fire equipment, fire alarms and water supplies
- take charge of fire-fighting operations until the fire service arrives
- ensure that adequate arrangements are made for sign-posting and marking water supplies for fire-fighting, and that a water supply map is maintained for use by the fire service
- ensure that authorised fire notices are displayed as necessary
- ensure that contractors employed within the school perimeter maintain an adequate standard of fire precautions

Instructions for fire wardens

- Fire wardens should attend a training course at an appropriate training establishment.
- They are to assist the fire officer in such fire duties as required.
- They are specifically responsible for their own designated area.