

Fire Safety Policy

March 2025

St Katharine's Knockholt Fire Policy

At St Katharine's Knockholt the health and safety of all staff and pupils is our main priority. This policy has been prepared to ensure safe procedures are in place to minimize the risk of fire and to outline emergency procedures to ensure the safe evacuation of the school in the event of a fire. The contents of this policy are regularly shared with staff and, alongside the health and safety policy, are updated annually.

Legal Requirements

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires all employers and occupiers to carry out fire assessments in their workplaces and implement appropriate fire safety measures by the development of a Fire Plan. The person in control of the premises (The Headteacher) is the designated 'responsible person' under the order and is therefore responsible for ensuring:

- A suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment is undertaken for the site by a competent person.
- A suitable fire plan is developed taking account of the nature and size of the site.
- The provision of information and training for staff and other building users on the fire safety arrangements including fire drills and fire fighting, with specific training for those with particular duties in the Fire Plan e.g. Fire Wardens
- Adequate means of fire detection, raising the alarm, means of escape, signage, fire fighting equipment, emergency lighting and a means of summoning emergency services is provided.
- Regular fire drills are undertaken.

Responsible Persons

Fire Safety Management & the Designated Responsible Person

The Headteacher is responsible for managing fire safety in the school in the same way they manage other health and safety issues; by implementing the policies agreed and monitored by the LEA and School Governing Body. To do this, they may need to consult professionals from the LEA, the local fire brigade and the insurers.

Main Aims

The main aims of fire-safety management are to:

- Minimise the risk of fire
- Protect the means of escape
- Limit the spread of fire

Main Duties

The main duties regarding fire-safety management are to:

- Make hazard and risk assessments
- Be responsible for fire safety training
- Produce an emergency plan and put up fire notices
- Conduct fire drills
- Check the adequacy and maintenance of firefighting apparatus
- Consult and implement any recommendations of the local fire brigade

- Conduct fire-safety inspection, preferably every term
- Make frequent informal checks to confirm that the fire-safety rules are being followed
- Ensure fire-escape routes are fire-exit doors and passageways are unobstructed, and that doors open correctly
- Check that fire-detection and protection systems are maintained and tested, and records kept
- Ensure close-down procedures are followed
- Include fire safety in the regular health and safety reports to the governing body

Fire Safety Manager

The Fire Safety Manager, in co-ordination with the Designated Responsible Person, are responsible for:

- The completion of a Fire Risk Assessment
- The development of an effective Fire Plan that will ensure all those duties involved with fire safety are adequately addressed, co-ordinated and suitable maintained.
- The provision of information and training for staff and other building users about the fire safety arrangements including evacuation, fire drills and fire fighting with specific training for those with duties under the Fire Plan eg Fire Wardens
- The monitoring and recording (in Fire Safety Log Book) of the servicing of the fire alarms, fire fighting equipment and emergency lighting
- The visual inspection of the fire system as defined in the Fire Safety Log Book
- The Premises Manager must ensure that there is a Fire Safety Log Book on site, in hard copy or electronic version and that all services, faults, tests, fire drills etc... are entered in the Fire Safety Log Book

Caretaker

- Unlock all fire doors on arrival every morning
- Check Fire alarm and extinguishers regularly – they are in place, they are not broken, they are not obstructed, the right extinguishers is in the right area remembering that all extinguishers now are red.
- Assess the likelihood of fire occurring
- Decide whether existing fire safety measures are adequate or need improvements
- Check the materials stored ie cleaning, furnishing, internal linings, paints, plastic materials including polyurethane foam, portable heaters etc
- When contractors come on site check if they are doing any “hot work”, if so make sure they have a work permit
- Make sure that all fire and exit signs are up to date.
- Check that cables run only where damage is unlikely and not under floor covering or through doorways?
- Is the school free of accumulations of rubbish, waste paper or other materials which could catch fire or be set alight?
- Are there suitable measures to protect against the risk of arson?
- Check that Fire Action Notices are up to date
- Internal fire doors and self-closing devices are in good working order

Office Manager

- Make sure fire practice is carried out once a term and record what went wrong, time it took, what improvement was made
- Make sure Fire Audit is done once a term
- Add an obstacle to some fire drills, so staff have to use a different exit
- Ensure all persons, including visitors, evacuate building and proceed to their designated Assembly Area
- Ensure everyone is confident in what they are to do
- If there is time, shut all doors and windows and switch off electrical equipment unless you know that was the cause. DO NOT open doors into area where you suspect a fire
- When the building is clear of people, go to your Assembly Area
- Check with the Assembly Point Controller that everyone is out of the building

All Staff

- Keep fire doors, gangways and exits clear
- Identify all likely fire hazards, reducing them wherever possible
- Check that nothing is stored on heaters and that heaters are not placed under noticeboards
- All employees have a duty to co-operate with all the measures in place to ensure fire safety and must not do anything that will place themselves or other people at risk.
- Employees must also draw to the attention of their line manager any shortcomings in safety arrangements
- Sign in and out of the building
- Do not obstruct access for emergency vehicles in the car park
- Know who to tell if there is a fire risk
- Be responsible for any visitors to your classroom

Use of Fire Fighting Equipment

It is important that staff training includes information on the location and use of fire extinguishers.

It is the school policy that all staff be instructed NOT to use a fire extinguisher unless in an extreme situation (i.e. to assist in exiting the building). However, all staff will be informed of the different types of extinguishers and where they are sited. The type of extinguisher used to fight a fire is very important, both to the success of extinguishing the fire and to the safety of the operator.

Practice Fire Drills

Fire drills and evacuation of the building will take place at least 3 times per year and when any significant changes are made to staff, occupants or changes to the layout of the building.

Records should be kept indicating the date, evacuation time, number of participants. The drills will be held at different times so that different staff and children are involved and Fire Drills incorporate children and staff being in different areas of the building, i.e. the School Hall, Library or Forest School.

Drills should be a pre-planned evacuation of all staff to a place of safety. Members of other organisations (i.e. catering staff) should be taken into account and be a part of the school.

In the event of a fire

Fire Notices are displayed in appropriate positions and confirm the essential points of the fire procedure depending on the building and zone you are in.

A copy of the evacuation plan is displayed in the staffroom together with a list of those particular duties in that plan.

If you discover a fire:

- Raise the fire alarm by hitting the nearest fire alarm call point
- If you have designated fire duties, begin your procedures
- Leave the building quickly and calmly by the nearest exit
- Go to the assembly point

Do not:

- Stop to shut windows or doors
- Stop to collect your personal belongings
- Never return to the building unless you are told to do so by the Fire Warden

Make sure you know:

- The fire alarm sounds and signals for all buildings
- The nearest fire exit
- The nearest fire alarm call point
- What you should do if there is a fire
- Where the assembly point is

Management of Fire Safety:

1	Has a responsible person been designated to take charge of fire precautions?	Yes
2	Has a responsible person been designated to notify any repair faults which affect fire safety?	Yes
3	Is a designated person responsible for ensuring that the buildings are secure at the end of the day?	Yes

Means of Escape in Case of Fire

1a	When the buildings are occupied, are all designated final exits from the building to open air capable of being opened immediately in an emergency without using a key or digital/numerical lock?	Yes
1b	Are emergency exit doors checked at intervals for ease of operation?	Yes
2	Are all internal doors on exit routes within the building kept unlocked?	Yes
3	Are the doors leading into staircases fire/smoke doors with self-closing devices?	N/A
4	Are combustible materials present in staircases? If so, give details:	No

Means of Escape in Case of Fire (continued)

5	Do long corridors have fire/smoke doors with self-closing devices?	N/A
6	Are any fire-resisting, self-closing doors held open by devices linked to the fire alarm system?	No
7a	Are there fire exit signs (with arrows as necessary) on the fire exit routes and at the final exits?	Yes
7b	Are any fire exit signs of the old red and white type?	No
8	Are there any locations within the building from which there is only one escape route? Eg rooms whose door leads into a corridor which provides an exit route in one direction only (a 'dead-end' corridor)?	Yes. Upstairs of the School House.
9	Is any combustible item (bookshelves, upholstered furniture, etc.) located in a 'dead-end corridor'?	No
	Comments:	

Fire Alarm System:

1a	Does the main building have a fire alarm system?	Yes
1b	How are other buildings covered:- Own system/linked to main system No alarm system	KS1 and Hall are on their own system. School House is on its own system.
2	What sort of sounders are fitted	Alarms
3	Are the sounds clearly audible above background noise in all parts of the building?	Yes
4	Are these sounders also used to signal lesson times/break times/other purposes?	No
5	Does the system automatically summon the fire brigade?	No
6	How many people know how to test the system/silence the sounders/reset the system?	5
7	How often is the alarm tested? Weekly/monthly/other?	Monthly
8	Where are the records of testing kept?	Office
9	Is there a break-glass operating point at every exit from the building?	
10	Is there a break-glass operating point at every entrance to a staircase?	
11	Are there any heat or smoke detectors on the systems?	Yes – heat detectors
	Comments:	

Fire Drill/Evacuation Procedure:

2	How many people are designated to take charge of the fire drill	2
2	Is a fire drill held near the beginning of each school year to involve the new pupils/staff?	
3a	Is a fire drill held at least once each term?	
3b	Does the fire drill involve school kitchen employees and other ancillary employees at the premises?	

4	Where is the record of fire drills kept?	Office
5	Who is responsible for calling the fire brigade as part of the fire procedure?	
6	Are fire procedure notices accurate and clearly legible?	
	Comments:	

Fire Extinguisher:

1	Are there 2 or more water or foam spray (AFFF) extinguishers on each floor?	Yes
2	For possible fires in electrical equipment, are there carbon dioxide (min 2.5kg) or dry powder (min 1.5kg) extinguishers provided in addition?	Yes
3	Is there a contractor for the annual inspection of extinguishers? If so, who is the contractor?	Yes - Kent Fire Extinguisher Services Ltd
4	Is a person designated to check that extinguishers are still in position?	Yes - Caretaker
5	Are there extinguishers specially provided for:	
a	Catering Kitchen?	Yes
b	Staff Room?	Yes
c	School Hall?	Yes
	Comments:	

Electrical:

1	Is portable and transportable electrical equipment checked annually?	Yes
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Storage:

1	Is a special fire-resisting bin/cupboard/store room used to store flammable substances?	No
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Waste Removal:

1	Is combustible waste removed from the buildings daily?	Yes
2	Is there a place outside the buildings, at a safe distance, where such waste is kept to await collection?	Yes

Smoking:

1	Is the Authority's smoking policy observed in the buildings?	Yes
	Comments:	

Security Against Arson:

1	Have the police been consulted about security measures for the school?	Yes
2	Is the security (fence/hedges/gates/etc.) at the boundary of the school property considered adequate?	Yes
3	Is there an intruder alarm covering each building?	Yes
4	Is there any external lighting apart from street lamps?	
	- at the main entrance?	Yes
	- other areas?	Yes
5	Is there a system for prompt repair of broken windows, faulty locks and window fasteners, or any other fault which reduces security?	Yes
6	Are there any significant gaps under external doors?	No
7	Do letter boxes have a metal container on the inside?	N/A
8	Are there clear signs to direct visitors to reception areas?	No
9	Is the movement of visitors, including contractors, controlled within the buildings?	Yes
	Comments:	

Fire Evacuation Procedure

At St. Katharine's, the old and new buildings have separate fire alarm systems. If an alarm sounds in one, it won't automatically trigger the other.

The priority is to evacuate the building where the alarm was activated. Alerting the other building is secondary to the duties outlined below. If a staff member without assigned duties is available, they should go to the other building and activate the nearest break point. If not, the Robins or Hedgehogs TA will do so after completing their tasks. Teachers will likely begin evacuation upon hearing the alarm or noticing evacuations by other classes; however, they should first activate a break point before proceeding.

Headteacher

The Headteacher will retrieve the register, medical box/bag and their hi-vis vest from the office and go straight to the playground.

Class teachers / class or group supervisors

The person with overall responsibility for a class or a group will immediately lead the class outside to the meeting point on the playground. They will be met outside by the Headteacher who will pass out registers. Teachers will register their children and return the completed registration sheet to the headteacher.

Office Manager

The Office Manager will retrieve a hi-vis vest and be responsible for checking the following zones. Once each zone is checked, the zone card will be removed from its location and once all zones have been checked, the zone cards will be given to the headteacher. All doors should be closed behind each checked space.

Zone 1

Main Office, Headteachers Office, Staff and Otter toilets, Library, Otter Classroom, Owl Classroom, Staff Room, Boys Cloakroom and Y4 Boys Toilets, Girls Cloakroom and Y4 Girls Toilets

Zone 2

Badgers Classroom, Badgers Accessible toilet, School Hall, Kitchen storage cupboard, PE Cupboard, Kitchen.

Zone 3

Summerhouse, Adventure Playground, Field, Gym, The Zone, The Zone Storage, Changing Rooms

Hedgehogs TA

The Hedgehog Teaching Assistant will retrieve a hi-vis vest and be responsible for checking the following zones. Once each zone is checked, the zone card will be removed from its location and once all zones have been checked, the zone cards will be given to the headteacher. All doors should be closed behind each checked space.

Zone 4

Reception Classroom, Reception Toilets, Reception outside areas,
Rabbits Classroom, Rabbits Art Cupboard, Rabbits toilets boys, Rabbits toilets girls, SenCo office, Caretakers cupboard

Robins Teaching Assistant

The Robins Teaching Assistant will retrieve a hi-vis vest and be responsible for checking the following zones. Once each zone is checked, the zone card will be removed from its location and once all zones have been checked, the zone cards will be given to the headteacher. All doors should be closed behind each checked space.

Zone 5

Robins Classroom, Robins Cupboard, KS1 outdoor area, KS1 cloakroom, Ks1 toilets bots, KS1 Toilets girls, Squirrels classroom, Squirrels cupboard. Visual check of Forest School.

Zone 6

School House ELSA room, School house Resource Room, School House Uniform Room, School House Lounge, School House Dining Room, School House Kitchen.

Forest School Leader: Zone 5A

Should Forest School be in session, the Forest School Leader will be responsible for ensuring the Forest School is properly closed down and evacuated. The Forest School Leader may delegate the taking of the children to the meeting point to the Forest School helper where they will join their class teacher for registration. All doors should be closed behind each checked space.

Interventions, clubs and small group lessons

If any child or children is out of the classroom for any reason, the responsible adult will take them to the meeting point before carrying out any zone check duties they may have with any assigned tasks they may have. All doors should be closed behind each checked space.

In the event of finding a fire:

Close all doors to the room or vicinity of the fire.
Alert the headteacher immediately.

The office manager will call 999 from a phone in an alternative building