

Fire Safety Strategy

Federation of Heavers Farm & Selsdon Primary Schools

December 2022

Statement of Intent

The Federation is committed to protecting and preserving the health and safety of all our pupils, staff members and visitors; this includes our dedication to mitigating the risk of fires. We will achieve this by educating our pupils, training our staff and ensuring that each school's fire safety measures are checked regularly and in full working order.

The Executive Headteacher is the 'Responsible Person' with overall responsibility for fire safety at the school. The Executive Headteacher has delegated responsibility to the Senior Site Manager to complete specified checks on each school's fire safety measures. They will ensure specialist contractors are commissioned as 'Competent Persons' to complete technical checks on the fire safety equipment.

In the event that a fire breaks out, the Federation has put in place procedures to ensure all risk is minimised and the premises can be evacuated quickly.

The Federation's designated Fire Safety Officer (FSO) is the Senior Site Manager. The FSO and Executive Headteacher are responsible for overseeing the review of this strategy, as well as other relevant fire safety information, e.g. risk assessments and evacuation procedures.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child underpins all policies that are implemented at our schools. Specifically, for this strategy we are seeking to uphold:

- Article 3 – the best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

Legal Framework

This strategy has due regard to statutory legislation and government guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Department for Communities and Local Government (2006) 'Fire Safety Risk Assessment – Educational Premises'
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions'
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended)

Responsibilities of Governing Board

The Governing Board in consultation with the Executive Headteacher will:

- Ensure personal and whole-school familiarity with the requirements of the appropriate legislation and codes of practice.
- Create and monitor a management structure responsible for health and safety in the school, including but not limited to, fire safety.
- Ensure there is a detailed and enforceable policy for fire safety, and that the policy is implemented by all.
- Help to put in place measures to identify risks relating to possible accidents and injuries, suggesting reasonable adjustments to prevent them occurring.

The Governing Board will endeavour to provide:

- A safe place for all users of the site, including staff, pupils and visitors.
- Safe means of entry and exit for all site users.
- Equipment, grounds and systems of work which are safe.
- Safe arrangements for the handling, storage and transportation of any articles and substances.
- Safe and healthy working conditions that comply with statutory requirements, codes of practice and guidance.
- Supervision, training and instruction, so that all staff can perform their duties in a healthy and safe manner.
- Where necessary, protective equipment and clothing, along with any necessary guidance and instruction.
- Adequate funds to ensure the training of the FSO and all other staff.

Responsibilities of Executive Headteacher

The Executive Headteacher will:

- Oversee the day-to-day development and implementation of safe working practices and conditions for all staff, pupils and visitors.
- Take reasonably practicable steps to ensure the Fire Safety Policy is implemented by all members of staff across the school.
- Employ or designate an FSO to be responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the Fire Safety Policy. This person will also be the designated contact with the LA and the HSE where necessary.
- Take steps to ensure all members of staff, pupils and visitors are familiar with the Fire Safety Policy.
- Work with the FSO to review and update this policy accordingly, every year.
- Identify risks relating to possible accidents and injuries, and make reasonable adjustments and suggestions to prevent them occurring.

Responsibilities of Fire Safety Officer

The Fire Safety Officer will:

- Take responsibility for the school's fire safety matters, in collaboration with the Executive Headteacher.
- Co-ordinate the implementation of all fire safety measures, ensure staff and pupil training takes place, and monitor the standard of the school's fire detection and protection equipment.
- Sporadically throughout the school year, but at least once per term, undertake a whole-school fire evacuation drill – to ensure the school's staff members, pupils and visitors know what to do in the event of a real fire. If one or more false alarm occurs during a term we will record in log and may not undertake planned fire drill.
- Review relevant and updated legislation to ensure the school is working within the parameters of the law and as safely as possible.
- Ensure new and existing staff members undertake training sessions at least once per year, in accordance with the school's Fire Safety Policy.
- Communicate relevant correspondence regarding fire safety to all members of staff and, where necessary, the governing board.
- Review and, if necessary, update the school's Fire Safety Policy and other relevant procedures once per year.
- Conduct risk assessments and ensure necessary procedures are in place to mitigate the risks of fires.
- Draw up a plan of the school, including the locations of all fire extinguishers and fire exits.
- Create personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) for people who will require assistance during fire drills. Create a generic plan for visitors who may require assistance to evacuate the building.
- Contact the emergency services in the event of a fire.
- Use fire extinguishers where necessary and ensure Fire Wardens are trained.
- Work with the Executive Headteacher to nominate a temporary FSO in their absence.
- Take steps to ensure the appropriate precautions, including the communication of this strategy, are put in place where events are organised outside of normal school hours, or by third party organisations.
- Review activities to ensure specific restrictions on events, such as setting capacities and limiting the types of activity.

Responsibilities of Staff Members

Staff members will:

- Take reasonable care of their health and safety.
- Cooperate with their colleagues, the FSO and Executive Headteacher on all fire safety matters.

- Complete fire safety training as requested.
- Carry out their work in accordance with fire safety training and instructions.
- Ensure they sign in on arrival and sign out when they leave site.
- Inform the FSO of any work situation representing serious and immediate danger, so that remedial action can be taken.
- Familiarise themselves with all their responsibilities as set out in the Fire Safety Policy, and aspects of their work relating to potential fire hazards.
- Avoid any conduct which puts themselves or others at risk.
- Follow, and help to carry out, relevant risk assessments to ensure the safety of themselves and other staff members, pupils and visitors.
- Ensure that all staff, pupils and visitors are applying fire safety regulations and adhering to all rules, routines and procedures in place.
- Ensure all equipment is in good working order and safe to use, including adequate fire safety guards. Staff will also not entertain all improper use of such equipment.
- Use the correct equipment and tools for their work and any protective clothing supplied.
- Ensure classrooms and working environments are tidy and exits are kept unobstructed.
- Ensure any toxic, hazardous or flammable substances are used correctly, and stored and labelled as appropriate.
- Report any defects in equipment or facilities to the designated FSO and/or the designated health and safety officer.
- Take an interest in fire safety matters, and suggest any changes they think are appropriate.
- Make suggestions as to how the school can reduce the risk of fires.
- Adhere to their common law duty to act as a prudent parent would when in charge of pupils.
- Ensure waste paper bins and recycling boxes in their classrooms are emptied to mitigate the risk of fire.

Responsibilities of Pupils

Pupils will:

- Observe the rules of the school and behave safely when on site.
- Respond to the instructions given by staff members in an emergency, e.g. evacuation procedures.
- Not misuse, neglect or interfere with items supplied for their, and other pupils' health and safety.

Responsibilities of Contractors

All contractors will:

- Familiarise themselves with all health and safety policies and procedures including, but not limited to, the Fire Safety Policy.
- Complete the hot works form prior to any hot works taking place at school.
- Be aware of the school's evacuation procedure and fire assembly points.
- Ensure they sign in on arrival and sign out when they leave site.
- Respond to the instructions given by staff members in an emergency.
- Put a principal person in charge, who will take responsibility for safe practice, in the event the school is used for purposes not under the direction of the Executive Headteacher, e.g. building works.
- Inform the Executive Headteacher of all potential risks to staff, pupils and visitors.
- Assist the Executive Headteacher and FSO in carrying out relevant risk assessments, suggesting ways to mitigate potential risks, before any work is carried out.
- Report any defects in equipment or facilities to the FSO and/or the designated health and safety officer or, failing this, the nearest member of staff.
- Discuss any concerns regarding fire safety with the Executive Headteacher or FSO.

Responsibilities of Visitors

All visitors will:

- Ensure they sign in on arrival and sign out when they leave site
- Be aware of the school's evacuation procedure and fire assembly points.
- Inform a member of staff if they require additional assistance whilst onsite.
- Respond to the instructions given by staff members in an emergency.
- Report any defects in equipment or facilities to a member of staff in office.
- Discuss any concerns regarding fire safety with the Executive Headteacher or FSO.

Fire Safety Arrangements

The School has a number of planned and co-ordinated arrangements designed to reduce the risk of fire and to ensure the safety of people if there is a fire.

Risk Assessments

The FSO, in co-operation with the Executive Headteacher, has responsibility for ensuring all fire related hazards are identified and risk assessments are completed for all areas of the school in accordance with legislation.

A full Fire Safety Risk Assessment must be carried out at least every three years or when a change of conditions occurs. The risk assessment is reviewed annually by a competent person. The outcomes from the Fire Risk Assessment will be communicated to the Executive Headteacher and relevant staff and visitors and a record will be kept of how issues have been addressed in Schools fire file.

Daily checks of fire exits undertaken and monthly checks of fire exit doors and Fire Fighting Equipment alongside weekly testing of fire alarm call points.

Fire Hazards & Preventative Measures

Fire hazards are identified as part of the risk assessment process and preventative measures are put in place to mitigate and control risks, such as:

- Fire hazards, such as hot surfaces, naked flames, electrical equipment and flammable liquids, are identified by the FSO and measures are put in place to ensure these risks are mitigated and controlled.
- Hot surfaces, such as electrical heaters, are kept uncovered and clear at all time.
- Radiant or gas heaters are not used. The school is heated by central heating systems and fixed convector heaters only.
- Lighters, matches and other sources of ignition are kept locked away from pupils and can only be accessed by authorised staff.
- Pupils will not be allowed to carry out processes involving heat, such as welding and using bunsen burners.
- All flammable materials, such as paper, cardboard and solvents are securely disposed of.
- Inside waste bins and recycling boxes are emptied daily. Outside bins are kept as far away from the school building as possible and are emptied regularly.
- Stocks of flammable liquids, materials and gases are kept to a minimum and are kept locked in secure cupboards, away from pupils.
- Highly flammable materials, such as petrol or gas canisters are not kept on site.
- Electrical equipment is reviewed in accordance with the school's Health & Safety Policy, and steps are taken, e.g. regular checks as part of classroom risk assessments, to ensure equipment is maintained to a high standard and is PAT tested every 12 months.
- All curtains, upholstered furniture and other soft furnishings are fire retardant, or have been treated to ensure their safety.
- Relevant risk assessments are undertaken before using certain equipment, e.g. the D&T Risk Assessment.

Fire Safety Systems, Equipment & Checks

The following arrangements are in place to minimise the risk of fire on the premises:

- Fire safety systems are in place and are in working order. The fire alarm is tested six - monthly by a competent contractor.

- Detection equipment, smoke and heat detectors, are fitted throughout the school and are tested by a competent contractor.
- The Caretaker unlocks fire doors daily, ensures they are not blocked and checks that the fire alarm panel is operational.
- Any fault on the fire system is reported to the contractor immediately for rectification.
- Alternative fire safety measures, such as fire wardens with walkie talkies and the school bell used to raise the alarm, will be put in place should the fire alarm system be out of action. In extreme cases, the Executive Headteacher may take the decision to close the school.
- Fire protection equipment is available and easily accessible all around the school.
- Fire blankets are available in the school kitchens and staffroom.
- Break glass points are numbered and a different point is tested weekly by the Caretaker. Tests are recorded in the Fire Log Book.
- The Caretaker completes regular visual inspections of the School's fire extinguishers to ensure they are correctly sited and in good order and records the outcome.
- The Caretaker completes regular inspections of the fire doors to ensure they are in good working order and shut correctly. Defects are rectified as soon as possible.
- Emergency lighting is installed; in the event that normal lights fail during a fire these emergency lights will illuminate exit routes and help people escape if visibility is poor.
- The Caretaker completes switch tests of the emergency lighting on a monthly basis and records the outcome. The emergency lighting system is fully tested annually by a competent contractor.
- Fire extinguishers and fire blankets are serviced annually by a competent contractor.
- Fire signs must comply with current legislation.
- Multiple fire exits are in place to ensure all staff members, pupils and visitors can escape the school. These are marked on a plan at Appendix 1.
- All escape routes and fire exits must be kept clear from any obstruction at all times.
- Fire doors must remain closed at all times.
- Registers, staff signing in list and the visitors' book are taken to the assembly point by a member of the office staff in order for a roll call to be carried out.
- Fire Marshals "sweep" the building in the event of a fire or alarm to ensure it is empty and that doors are closed.
- Only staff who have had proper training and are confident to operate a fire extinguisher should try to extinguish a small fire, but they must not put themselves in personal danger by doing so.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP)

A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is completed for all pupils or staff requiring assistance to evacuate the School. Measures such as a downstairs classroom for a person with mobility issues will be implemented. Staff working with the individual will be made aware of the PEEP.

A generic PEEP has been completed for visitors to the school who have additional needs or require assistance.

Evacuation Procedures

In the event that a fire breaks out, the school has put in place procedures to ensure all risk is minimised and the premises can be evacuated quickly. The Emergency & Business Continuity Plan contains detailed procedures for managing evacuations.

Evacuation Procedures for Disabled Visitors and Staff

All visitors will remain on the ground floor. In the event of an evacuation, any visitors and staff who may require additional support, will be escorted to the nearest fire exit and to the assembly point by one of the fire marshals.

Staff Training & Evacuation Drills

All staff, contractors and visitors are made aware of the School's fire evacuation procedures including the whereabouts of the fire assembly point. Mandatory fire safety training is given to all staff as part of induction and refresher training is completed annually. The FSO will undergo training from fire safety professionals, to ensure they are capable of carrying out their role. All training is recorded.

Fire drills are carried out at least once per term, the outcome of which will be recorded in the Fire Log Book and recommendations will be communicated to staff.

Data Protection

The Federation of Heavers Farm & Selsdon Primary Schools will collect and process all personal data and sensitive personal data in accordance with the legal obligations as set out in the General Data Protection Regulations 2018. Please see the school's GDPR Data Protection Policy for further information.

Monitoring and Review

The strategy will be reviewed annually by the Executive Headteacher and the FSO. All updates to the Fire Safety Policy, Fire Safety Strategy and other relevant school documents, such as risk assessments and procedures, will be communicated to all staff members.

*Policy review date **December 2024***

