



FIRE SAFETY POLICY AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

REVIEWER:	SENIOR OPERATIONS MANAGER
REVIEW DATE:	MAY 2024
NEXT REVIEW DATE:	MAY 2025
APPROVED BY:	BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Summary

Framlingham College (the College) takes its fire safety duties seriously. For this reason we have formulated this policy to help us comply with our legal obligations to staff, students and visitors under the following regulations:

- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO)
- The Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2015
- Management of Health and Safety at work regulations 1999

This Fire Safety Policy forms part of Framlingham College's approach to overall health and safety.

This guidance is applicable to all premises under the control of the College and details the approach to the control of risk from fire

Although the control measures put into place will mitigate the risk of losses to property and equipment, the prime motivational factor is to protect life.

Review

This policy and attaching control measures are subject to regular checking and review by the Governors' Health and Safety Steering Group. This Group will formally review the policy at least annually and recommend it for ratification by the Principal and Governors.

The Health and Safety Steering Group will arrange test checks, inspections and external audits as necessary.

Risk Assessment

All of the College premises will be subject to fire risk assessments. These will be conducted by a competent person, in liaison with occupants of each building. They will be reviewed every year or in the event of significant changes to the buildings or their usage. Copies of the fire risk assessments will be held on site and employees' attention brought to any hazards found in the assessments. These are held on the College's SharePoint, under the Support Services/Health and Safety section for all staff to read. Any comments or suggestions for improvement can be directed to the Compliance Manager.

Fire hazards identified will be eliminated or the risk reduced to the minimum level practicable by implementing control measures and safe systems of work. A programme of works to address issues arising will be reviewed by the Health and Safety Steering Group.

Training

All new members of staff and temporary employees will be provided with a copy of the Fire Policy and induction training on how to raise the alarm and available escape routes.

Training will be provided, as necessary, to any staff given extra fire safety responsibilities, such as Housemasters / Mistresses and those involved in evacuations.

All staff will receive annual fire safety training updates. Training sessions will provide information on topics such as:

- The significant findings from the fire risk assessments;
- What to do on discovering a fire;
- How to raise the alarm, including the locations of fire alarm call points;
- The action to take upon hearing the fire alarm;
- The evacuation procedure for alerting guests, residents and visitors;
- The arrangements for calling the fire and rescue service;
- The location and, where appropriate, the correct use of portable fire extinguishers and fire-fighting equipment;
- Knowledge of escape routes including stairways and especially those not in regular use;
- How to open emergency exit doors;
- The appreciation of the importance of fire doors, keeping them closed and not wedged open to prevent the spread of smoke and heat, keeping escape routes unobstructed;
- Where appropriate, isolating electrical power and gas supplies and stopping machines and processes;
- The reasons for not using lifts;
- The safe use of and risks from storing and working with highly flammable and explosive substances;
- General fire precautions, fire awareness and good housekeeping practices;
- The no smoking policy;
- Special provisions (PEEPs) for assisting disabled people and any training needed;
- Identifying fire hazards and fire incidents reporting procedures.

HR will store training records centrally together with other Health and Safety and Safeguarding training records.

Evacuation Arrangements for Disabled People

Where disabled persons use the premises, specific arrangements will be made to ensure they can escape in an emergency. For staff and pupils there will be a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) in place. Visitors will be catered for by the Assistant Bursar, or nominated deputy in their absence, when notified.

Visitors & Contractors

Details of evacuation and fire procedures are provided on a poster located at Reception next to the signing in book and on the back of visitor badges. Visitors are required to sign in for fire record purposes and by signing are agreeing that they are aware of the fire evacuation procedures. Visitors should be accompanied whilst on the premises and the member(s) of staff accompanying are responsible for ensuring they are directed to the assembly area in the event of an alarm and reporting their presence.

For events with large numbers of attendees, an announcement will be made at the beginning of the event regarding evacuation arrangements.

Ensuring details of fire evacuation procedures are available to Contractors in advance of works forms part of the appointment process for awarding contracts.

Accountability Framework

Board of Governors

The Board of Governors retains the overall responsibility for Fire Safety, including an oversight of structures in place, including identifying persons responsible for tasks and actions. It also ensures systems are in place to check and review implementation of safety standards.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible for operation of this Policy to ensure the Health, Safety and Welfare of staff, students and visitors. Specifically:

- ensure that this Policy and any other policies or guidelines that complement this Policy are in place, properly implemented and reviewed;
- ensure that a competent and appropriately trained Responsible Person is appointed to oversee and implement fire safety arrangements;
- ensure that arrangements are in place for the completion of fire risk assessments, including, where appropriate, technical surveys in respect of fire protection;

Health and Safety Management Group

This Group monitors Health and Safety matters including reviewing the Fire Safety Policy and Management Plan, monitoring Fire Risk Assessments and actions taken in response to any findings. It reports its findings formally to the full Governing Body at least annually.

Responsible Person

The College will appoint a Responsible Person who has sufficient training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the College is compliant. From Spring 2022 this role will be held by the Compliance Manager. Their role will include:

Fire Risk Assessment

To ensure that each building is fire risk assessed at least every three years, or sooner if there are significant changes to the premises, occupancy or work practices, that could impact upon fire safety and the means of escape. The significant findings are to be recorded and prioritised in an action plan.

All fire risk assessments must be reviewed annually.

On completion or review of each fire risk assessment the Assistant Bursar is to be made aware of any significant findings, and any recommendations made to reduce, or maintain the risk at a tolerable level. These should then be prioritised and entered into the Colleges **Fire Action Plan**, which will be regularly reviewed by the Health and Safety Steering Group.

Inspection, Testing and Record keeping

For all of the following, to ensure that appropriate testing and maintenance regimes are followed, and records are kept:

- Fire detection systems and associated equipment;

- Fire alarm systems;
- Emergency lighting;
- Fire extinguishers and other firefighting equipment;
- Portable electrical equipment.

In addition, the Compliance Manager will regularly check:

- Fire action notices and fire signage are appropriate and kept up to date.
- Escape routes are kept clear of obstructions.
- Access to fire extinguishers and fire alarms is not impeded.
- Implementation of the “Hot Work” permit scheme.

Information and advice

The Compliance Manager will assist in development of processes, procedures and guidelines for all fire related matters and ensure these are appropriately implemented.

They will:

- Maintain their level of competency in fire safety matters by attending relevant training sessions/briefings as and when required.
- Provide employees and pupils with the necessary information to ensure their safety from fire.
- Monitor work activities which may involve fire hazard, so that appropriate safety standards are maintained.
- Receive reports of fire incidents and near misses; investigate and report findings to management, as required.
- Inform the Operations Director or governing body of issues where resources are insufficient to enable compliance with fire legislation.
- Alert the College to new or impending legislation/practices on fire safety and assist in assessing the impact upon this policy and the College’s activities.
- Interpret the law in the context of the College, and provide pertinent and meaningful guidance, information and advice on fire safety issues.
- Liaise with the Fire and Rescue Service and other appropriate bodies as necessary.
- Ensure that effective arrangements are in place for calling the emergency services.
- Provide information to emergency services in relation to hazardous materials or processes on site, as appropriate.
- Develop Fire Management Plans and Fire Emergency Evacuation Plans specific to the premises, test the effectiveness of those plans and ensure staff are made aware of the contents.

Fire Safety Officer

A Deputy will be identified and trained to be responsible for covering the fire safety duties of the Compliance Manager in their absence.

Assistant Bursar

Responsible for ensuring the completion of repair and improvement works identified in the **Fire Action Plan**, including:

- Fire detection and warning system
- Emergency lighting
- Escape routes
- Fire safety signs and notices
- Fire resisting walls, partitions and doors
- Firefighting facilities

- Electrical appliances and premises installations

Senior Leadership Teams (Senior and Prep Schools)

- Making sure that this Fire Policy is considered, as appropriate, when organisational changes/decisions are made.
- Agreeing plans for improvement and reviewing progress of the Fire Action Plan, including consideration of the resource provision necessary.
- Ensuring that responsibilities for managing fire safety are properly assigned, understood and implemented.
- Ensuring that this policy is strictly observed and monitored by way of consultation with employees and students.

Governors' Finance and Operations Committee

This Committee ensures the long-term availability of funding, staffing and resources necessary for Fire Safety. It also acts as the arbiter in any case where a tension between funding for fire safety and other College development needs arises and which the Internal Strategy Group requires assistance to decide on priorities.

Housemasters / Housemistresses

- The member of staff in charge of the boarding house, must be aware of specific fire procedures relating to the building, including the fire alarm panel, evacuation procedures and safety measures to be followed.
- Responsible for implementing the policy and procedures at local level, in the boarding houses.
- To ensure all staff operating in the House are aware of the location and contents of the fire procedures.
- Responsible for carrying out practice fire drills both day and night-time hours for houses on a termly basis, entering the details into the fire logbook and ensuring appropriate actions are taken to rectify any issues discovered.

House Matrons

Matrons are trained to allow them to complete daily checks of fire escape routes, perform PAT visual checks of pupil's equipment, and general fire safety matters in boarding houses.

Heads of Departments

- Ensure that fire risk assessments are in place for the buildings in which their departments operate, and for specific activities such as hot working involving welding, cutting, work with bitumen, etc;
- Responsible for ensuring arrangements for control of fire risk within their department are followed;

Bring to the attention of the **Compliance Manager** and Senior Management, any aspect of the policy that is not achievable together with the reason(s), in order that appropriate action can be determined.

Academic staff

Academic staff are responsible for escorting pupils safely out of the building in an orderly fashion and to remain with them until they are accounted for, and responsibility handed over, under the relevant evacuation procedure.

Human Resources

Organisation of fire safety refresher training in liaison with the **Compliance Manager**. Retention of records of training.

Individual employees and students

All Staff and Students have a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure they do not place themselves or others at risk of harm. They are also expected to co-operate fully in complying with any procedures introduced to protect the safety and well-being of staff, students and visitors.

Employees must:

- be aware of the action to be taken on discovering a fire, hearing a fire alarm, for raising the alarm (including the location of fire alarm call points) and calling the fire and rescue service;
- promptly evacuate the premises, to a place of safety without putting themselves and others at risk, and NOT attempt to extinguish a fire unless they have been specifically trained;
- co-operate with the Compliance Manager;
- report to their manager or supervisor any concerns about fire safety;
- be familiar with all escape routes;
- not wedge fire doors open, nor block or obstruct them;
- comply with the No Smoking legislation.

Preventing fire

The College takes all reasonable precautions to prevent a fire from breaking out and recognises that for a fire to take place oxygen, flammable materials and a source of ignition must all be present. The processes of prevention are aimed at preventing one or more of these elements being together. Safe systems of work will be designed based on risk assessment, to minimise the risk of fire and adequate provision will be made for the control of fire in work processes, including the control of hot working. The College will comply at all times with relevant regulations on the storage, transportation, handling and disposal of flammable materials (including weapons and ammunition, hazardous substances etc) Passive and active fire prevention and protection measures are provided. Passive fire precautions are concerned with the physical conditions in premises which are designed to facilitate containment of fire by design, construction and layout, effective communication and safe evacuation. In particular the:

- materials specification, design, construction and inspection of buildings, fire doors and escape routes taking into account the needs of pupils, service users, people with disabilities, contractors, the public, etc.
- appropriate safe and secure location of building services e.g. gas and electricity;

In addition, areas where there are potential sources of ignition are regularly inspected to ensure that no flammable materials are stored close by.

Awareness amongst staff through training and refresher training of the preventative steps that need to be taken.

Portable Appliances

The College organises Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) in reference to national guidelines and this is set out in a separate PAT policy.

Detecting

Each of the College premises will have adequate means of fire detection and raising the alarm in the event of fire. The detection equipment will be maintained and regularly checked by competent persons.

The fire alarm system in each location is tested weekly with the date and time recorded. The alarm will be activated using a different activator point each week, where this is practicable.

The fire alarm system will be serviced at recommended frequencies by a competent contractor (eg ISO 9001 / BAFE).

Equipment

Lighting systems for fire escape routes will be of the appropriate design and in the appropriate location. They will be inspected and tested at recommended frequencies.

The fire risk assessment will determine the minimum level of firefighting equipment which must be present in the College premises. Fire extinguishers, fire hoses, wet and dry risers and/or other fire suppressant systems will be serviced by a competent contractor annually and the service date recorded on each extinguisher/hose reel/system.

Escape Routes

There must be adequate means of escape for all occupants of the College premises. These means of escape will be clearly signed.

The means of escape within the main College buildings will be regularly inspected by the Compliance Manager during the fire alarm testing regime to ensure they are kept clear of obstructions.

Emergency lighting

Emergency lighting must be installed in the College where lighting would continue to be required in the event of a mains power failure, eg stairs, passageways and emergency exits.

Where emergency lighting is generator powered, the lighting will be tested monthly by way of simulated mains failure.

Battery operated emergency lighting will be tested monthly (charge & illumination) and an annual full discharge test by a competent contractor.

Records of testing and servicing of emergency lights will be maintained by the **Compliance Manager**.

Checks

- All fire-related equipment will be regularly serviced and maintained. If any employee notices defective or missing equipment, they must report it to the Compliance Manager
- Alarm systems will be tested regularly. Staff and students will be told when a test is scheduled
- Any other safety systems will be checked regularly to ensure correct operation, where necessary, e.g. emergency lighting
- All escape routes will be clearly signposted and kept free of obstructions at all times

Records

Records of testing, maintenance and inspection are held by the **Compliance Manager**.

Training records are held by HR.

Evacuation Practices

Whole College Fire drills will be held at least twice per year at both the senior and prep schools. These will be planned to test responses when key staff are unavailable and at different times on different days.

Each boarding house will also conduct fire drills termly and will include night-time evacuations.

Written records of fire / evacuation drills will be maintained in the fire logbook applicable to the building being evacuated and these records will be checked by the **Compliance Manager**.

Other reference documents

- Health and Safety Policy
- PAT Testing

References:

A: Handbook for the Inspection of Independent Schools: Part 3: The Regulatory Requirements of Independent Schools, March 2009 version. (www.isi.net).

B. Part II of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005, (www.opsi.gov.uk)

D. "Fire Risk Assessment," Ecclesiastical Risk Services Ltd guidance note (www.ecclesiastical.com)

E. "Fire Safety" Chapter O of the Bursars' Guide by Owen David Risk Management Ltd (www.owendavidsafety.net)

F. "Fire Safety: Managing School Facilities" DCSF Guidance, (www.gov.uk/df)

G. "Fire Safety Risk Assessment for Educational Premises" and "Fire Safety Risk Assessment: Sleeping Accommodation," DCLG publications (www.communities.gov.uk)

H: Education Funding Agency "Fire risk during school maintenance or building works" (Nov 2016)

Emergency Evacuation Plans

Each building that requires a Fire Risk Assessment should also have an Emergency Evacuation Plan which is easily accessible to occupants and visitors. The Plan will include details of what to do in the case of a bomb threat or a “lockdown” situation.

Each Plan will include:

- Details of the area covered
- Details of what alarm people will hear
- What to do when an alarm sounds (including any difference between fire / bomb / lock down procedures)
- Location of occupant details / incident controller equipment etc
- Use of lifts
- Use of firefighting equipment
- Disabled people
- Who is responsible for clearing the building
- The assembly area(s)
- Who is responsible for checking headcount at assembly area
- Who to contact in the event of an alarm
- Details to give to the emergency services

Fire Information Plans

Each building that requires a Fire Risk Assessment should also have a Fire Information Plan which details fire information relevant to that building. This information may be incorporated in the Emergency Evacuation Plan where this makes sense in the individual circumstances. The Plan must be easily available to all occupants and regularly checked and updated.

Each plan will typically include:

- Scope – the building(s) and area covered
- Details of any fire detection systems in operation including location of control panels and what to do in case of a fault or false alarm
- Details of who tests and maintains the detection system and when
- Location of details of occupants
- Location of any firefighting equipment and who may use it
- Location and details of any fire logbook in operation
- Names of key individuals with fire responsibilities for the building
- Details of any specific arrangements for evacuating disabled occupants