

TORMEAD

FIRE SAFETY POLICY

This whole school policy also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage

1. Policy Statement

Tormead will take steps to ensure that prevention of fire is given a high priority and that the risk from fire will be managed in compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

Management of fire risks will be undertaken in such a way as to prevent injury or ill-health to employees, girls, visitors, contractors and others who may be affected by the activities of the School.

Aims and Objectives

- To promote good fire safety working practices.
- To encourage fire safety awareness in staff and pupils at all levels.
- To undertake suitable and sufficient fire risk assessments of all premises and activities within premises.
- To identify and implement reasonably practicable measures to prevent and control risks from fire.
- To conduct regular fire evacuation drills and testing of emergency equipment.
- To conduct regular fire safety inspections.

Responsibilities:

The Governing Body as the 'Responsible Person' will ensure that the appropriate policies and procedures are in place and that they are reviewed from time to time. A member of the Governing Body's Finance & General Purposes Committee (who is the nominated Governor for Health & Safety) will oversee the policy and its implementation and will report back to the Committee on a regular basis.

The Governing Body has nominated the Bursar to be responsible for implementing this policy and its procedures. He / she will have responsibility for:

- supervising the day to day management of fire precautions
- ensuring that all staff take part in training and fire drills
- co-ordinating and directing the relevant staff in a fire emergency

Heads of Department and the Junior School Senior Team will ensure that these policies and procedures are implemented and adhered to for all activities in their departments

All staff have a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that they do not place themselves or others at risk of harm. They are expected to co-operate fully with the School in complying with any procedures that may be introduced as a measure to protect the safety and well-being of girls, staff and visitors.

2. Fire Risk Assessments

All the School's premises are subject to a fire risk assessment, which are reviewed and / or updated every year, or earlier in the event of significant changes to the buildings or their usage; any remedial action points identified are acted upon. The fire risk assessments are completed by an external specialist company. Fire risk assessments were most recently completed by Lawrence Webster

Forrest ('LWF') in October 2019; LWF are registered risk assessors (PAS79), NEBOSH certified and are members of the Fire Protection Association.

The school is also audited by Surrey Fire & Rescue Service ('SFRS'), typically every 5 – 7 years, and was most recently audited by SFRS in February 2017. Any recommendations from SFRS are acted upon promptly.

3. Fire Drills

Practice fire drills intended to test communications and the reaction of staff and girls are carried out termly in both the Senior School and the Junior School. The drills will be arranged by the Assistant Bursar (Estates & Facilities) who maintains a record of all fire drills, any feedback and any action taken. In all cases where the fire alarm sounds but it is a false alarm, the evacuation is recorded in the same manner as for a planned Fire Drill.

4. Fire Detection and Fire Fighting Equipment

Fire Alarms

Each of the School's premises has an adequate means of raising the alarm in the event of a fire. The Premises team inspect the fire alarm panel on a daily basis to check that the charge indicator is showing and that there is no fault indicator showing. The alarm is tested on a weekly basis by using a different call point each week, where this is possible, so that all call points are checked over a period of time. Records of testing are maintained by the Premises Team. The fire alarm system is serviced every six months by a competent contractor (currently EQ Systems Ltd – BAFE qualified in fire alarm design, installation and servicing / maintenance)

Fire Extinguishers

The fire risk assessments determine the minimum level of fire-fighting equipment which must be present. The fire extinguishers and related equipment are serviced annually by a competent contractor (currently Alban Fire Protection, who are FETA trained and also trained in portable fire extinguishers) and the service date is recorded on each extinguisher.

Emergency Lighting

Emergency lighting is installed in the school where lighting would continue to be required in the event of a mains power failure. The Emergency Lighting is tested on a monthly basis by the Premises Team by simulating a failing to the lighting circuit; these tests records are maintained by the Premises Team Leader. An annual full discharge test of the Emergency Lighting is also carried out and records maintained.

Emergency Exits

The Premises team visually inspect emergency exits on a daily basis to ensure that such exits are clear and unobstructed; they also check that the floor around emergency exits is in a good state, that emergency exits can be opened easily and that automatic fire doors close correctly.

5. Emergency Procedures

The priority in the event of a fire is the safe evacuation of pupils, staff and visitors.

Notices are displayed throughout the school detailing the action to take in the event of a fire and highlighting the Assembly Point to evacuate to in an emergency. 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 and visitors will be catered for by the Bursar / the Assistant Bursar (Estates & Facilities) when notified. All visitors to the school are advised of the fire procedures, to include the location of the assembly point, on arrival at the school.

- If you discover a fire, break the glass in the nearest call point to set off the alarm then leave the building by the nearest signed exit
- If you are responsible for a class, make them leave quietly with you - no-one should talk or run. Make your way to the Assembly Point
- Do not stop to gather possessions, and do not allow pupils to do so. Shut doors behind you
- The Bursar, the Assistant Bursar (Estates & Facilities) or Premises Team Leader will be responsible for summoning the Emergency Service if the alarm sounds
- If you have a disabled pupil in your class, you should direct her, together with her carer, to wait for the Emergency Service at the nearest designated safe refuge
- Take your allocated register as soon as you reach the Assembly Point
- Report anyone who is missing, or waiting to be evacuated from a designated refuge, immediately to the Head or the Bursar, who will inform the Fire Brigade
- Remain at the Assembly Point with your pupils until the all clear is given

6. Fire Prevention

The School 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 be present. The processes of prevention are aimed at preventing one or more of these elements being together. To ensure the processes are being implemented the Bursar, the Assistant Bursar (Estates & Facilities), the Premises Team Leader and Heads of Department will:

- Comply at all times with the relevant regulations on the storage, transportation, handling and disposal of flammable materials
- Regularly inspect all areas where there are potential sources of ignition and ensure that no flammable materials are stored close by
- Ensure that fire exits, routes and access to fire-fighting equipment is clear of any obstructions and that fire doors are kept closed (unless on automatic / magnetic closing mechanism)
- Maintain awareness through training and refresher training of the preventative steps that need to be taken
- Consult regularly with the Fire Marshall
- Include fire prevention and evacuation procedures during the induction process for new starters
- Pay close attention to the activities of contractors
- Ensure that fixed electrical installations are tested every 5 years and that issues identified are remedied
- Ensure that any portable electrical appliances brought into the School is PAT tested prior to use (and subsequently, as required)

The School complies with the national smoking ban (effective 1 July 2007) and no smoking is permitted on the premises.

7. Training

All staff are provided with a copy of this policy and are required to familiarise themselves with its contents and are informed, at induction and through refresher sessions, on:

- Action to take if they discover a fire, including how to activate the fire alarm
- Action to take on hearing the alarm, including location and use of exits and escape routes and the Assembly Point
- Appreciation of the importance of fire doors and the need to close all doors at the time of an alarm

In addition to educating pupils what to do in the event of fire through the termly Fire Drills, we also aim to provide Senior School pupils with training in basic fire awareness; this is delivered by a member of SLG (Cathy Williams).

The School appoints one or more Fire Marshalls who are competent persons to take preventative and protective measures, including firefighting and evacuation, in the event of a fire. The School ensures that the Fire Marshalls have sufficient training, experience and knowledge in :

- Emergency evacuation procedures
- Use of fire extinguishers and other fire-fighting equipment
- How to spot fire hazards

8. Other matters

The school has no buildings with partial Aluminium Composite (ACM) cladding.

9. COVID-19

The reduction of risk associated with COVID-19 to acceptable levels has required significant change to many aspects of the School day, including the restriction of certain areas of the School, grounds and access and exit routes to particular year groups. In implementing COVID-19 control measures, it remains a requirement that Tormead is compliant with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Fire evacuation routes have been configured to ensure the safe evacuation of pupils, staff and visitors. For this reason, evacuation routes have not been altered and when the alarm sounds, pupils and staff should follow prescribed evacuation routes irrespective of COVID zones or no-entry signage. The consequent risk of year group mixing has been ameliorated as far as possible by thorough briefing of pupils and staff on induction days, and active staff vigilance and direction in the event of an emergency. Pupils and staff have received the additional instructions to be vigilant to keep year groups apart, face forward and social distance from one another where possible, and always 2 meters in the case of adults. Initial fire drills will be for single year groups or small number of year groups. A full school evacuation will be held within the statutory period.

Assembly points have been altered to allow better social distancing to be achieved. Pupils will now assemble in their designated outdoor zone. Other staff or visitors should assemble on the Lower Tennis courts. On being given the all clear, pupils and staff should return to the building using their allocated year group entrance, being mindful to observe social distancing. Hands should be sanitised, as usual, on entering the building.

There are no changes to lock-down procedures, and no lock-down drills are planned for the duration of COVID-19 measures.

Date of Last Review: 1 September 2020

By Resolution of the Governing Body:

MRS R HARRIS
Chair of Governors

MR D BOYD
Head

23 September 2020

