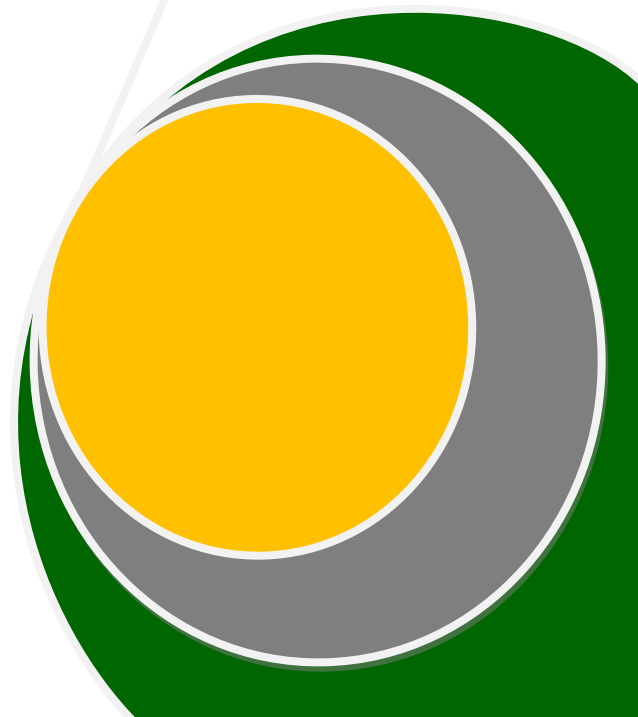


Crowstone Preparatory School

Fire Safety Policy

This document sets Fire Safety Policy for Crowstone Preparatory School.

JP Thayer / SA Thayer
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FIRE SAFETY POLICY

INTRODUCTION

One of the most serious hazards which can threaten any premises (and life) is fire. It is, therefore, essential to do all that is possible to prevent fire occurring and to minimise the risk of casualties and damage if it does. In the case of schools, the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1981 (SI 1981 No. 909) apply.

In order to prevent a fire occurring and to minimise the risk of casualties and damage in such an event, fire risk assessments will be carried out for all areas of the site. The findings of the fire risk assessment will then feed back into this policy document and will be used to form the foundation of a robust, evolving school Fire Safety Policy (FSP), which will:

- be as simple yet comprehensive as possible
- provide the basis for action to achieve the objectives of preventing a fire and minimising damage if fire does occur
- focus on priorities rather than on the fine detail
- identify the potential risks to look for
- the action to take to mitigate or monitor those risks identified
- outline methods for monitoring and recording of FSP Procedures

This will be an iterative process, reviewed on a regular basis – at least annually.

AIMS

It is the aim of this policy to:

- provide all occupants of the site with a safe environment in which to work and study
- identify what constitutes a fire hazard and a fire risk
- identify proper procedure for safe evacuation
- outline proper procedure for maintenance of fire safety equipment
- define the policy and procedure to follow in case of fire or during a fire drill
- define methods of improving existing safety measures

It is the task of the Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) document to define and quantify actual risk and mitigation and is beyond the scope of this document.

FIRE RISKS

As is the case with any other risk there are usually at least two factors which determine the degree of risk present for any given situation, in this case fire. The two factors here are:

- **Fire Hazard:** A fire hazard is something which has the potential to cause a fire. A fire hazard could be either an explosive or flammable material, an electrical installation or a situation in which it is possible that a fire could occur, e.g. a science experiment which uses naked flames.
- **Fire Risk:** A fire risk is the likelihood that a fire will occur as a result of a fire hazard and the extent and severity of the damage (i.e. the harm potential) which may be caused.

The FRA should take into account the competence of teachers, non-teaching staff, parent helpers, contractors and other visitors to the school and the age and competence of the pupils.



FIRE HAZARDS

Fires occur either by accidental ignition or by malicious ignition (fire raising/arson). A fire can only happen if all three of the following phenomena are coincidentally present:

1) Oxygen	2) Fuel e.g.	3) Heat or Ignition Source e.g.
a) <i>In the air</i>	a) <i>Paper</i>	a) <i>Chemicals</i>
b) <i>In chemicals</i>	b) <i>Wood</i>	b) <i>Friction</i>
	c) <i>Flammable liquids</i>	c) <i>Electrical resistance</i>
	d) <i>Chemicals</i>	d) <i>Electrical fault</i>
	e) <i>Furniture</i>	e) <i>Nearby heat source</i>
	f) <i>Rubbish</i>	f) <i>Open flame</i>

The first two are always present. In order to prevent unwanted fires heat and ignition sources must be controlled.

Accidental fires are caused in a number of ways, for example:

- Manipulation of flammable liquids or gases in close proximity to a naked flame
- Lack of maintenance of machinery and equipment
- Installation of wiring by non-competent persons
- Dangerous location of portable heat-producing appliances
- Carelessly discarded smoking materials

If a fire is discovered at an early stage, it can be extinguished before much damage is done. If, however, the fire is allowed to develop, a great deal of damage may be caused, even to the extent where the building must be demolished.

It is the School's policy that the priority, in the case of fire, is the preservation of life over material – insurance can usually replace damaged property, stock and equipment, insurance cannot replace life or limb or adequately compensate for loss of quality of life. Indeed, without proper training it is possible that a minor situation may be exacerbated through the application of incorrect fire extinguishing equipment: for example the use of an H₂O extinguisher on an electrical fire. If, however, a trained person (or non-trained) finds themselves in proximity to a fire and with the correct (or incorrect) equipment to hand, that person attempts to extinguish that fire the School accepts no liability for any consequences of that action. It is the first duty of any person discovering a fire to raise the alarm.

COMMON CAUSES OF FIRE

Electricity – Is a source of heat and a frequent cause of fire in buildings, some contributing factors are the misuse of electrical equipment and poor maintenance. With the increasing number of electrical appliances we use, consideration of the need for additional sockets or upgrading of electrical circuits may be necessary, an annual inspection of the electrical system by a competent electrician will help to identify any areas of concern. Inspection of electrical equipment will reveal whether:

- It is installed and maintained correctly
- Sockets and extension cables are overloaded
- The correct fuses are used

Ensuring electrical equipment is switched off and unplugged when not in use will assist to reduce the risk of fire occurring (and energy costs).

Rubbish – When left to accumulate, could not only increase the chance of fire occurring, it may assist a fire to spread throughout the premises a lot quicker. We have adopted a good housekeeping



regime to ensure rubbish is taken out of the premises as daily and as often as possible and contained within lidded metal bins. We ensure external rubbish bins are sited away from buildings reducing the risk of a fire spreading to the building and ensure that they do not obstruct either our escape routes or those of neighbouring premises.

Smoking – Careless disposal of smoking materials is a major cause of fire. Smoking on site is actively discouraged and is in line with the Safeguarding policy which entitles pupils to enjoy a smoke free environment.

Heaters – If placed near furniture or combustible materials can start a fire. Regular checks help to ensure that they are positioned carefully and used appropriately.

Dangerous goods – Most correction, duplicator fluids and most aerosols are flammable and aerosols can explode if they become too hot and must be kept well away from any heat sources. The careful use and storage of any flammable liquid or gas is essential to maintain a safe working environment.

Arson – Protection of our premises is further enhanced by securing any combustible waste in an appropriate receptacle and locking away any flammable liquids or gases. Considering the potential problem of arson is an important aspect and is one that should not be underestimated as it is not only a major cause of fire but frequently a problem when the premises are unoccupied. End of day checks to ensure all windows and doors are secure can help to manage the risk of arson. As part of our site is also residential precaution is even more important.

SCHOOL FIRE SAFETY OFFICER

The legal responsibility for all aspects of fire safety within a school rests with the employer, Crowstone Prep School Limited. The day-to-day responsibility for fire safety is hereby delegated to the Head, who may, by reference to a job description, further delegate responsibilities to competent persons. The Senior and Deputy Fire Safety Officer(s) will be displayed on the notice board in the main office on the ground floor adjacent to the main entrance. The records and check-lists contained in this document are designed to assist this person to carry out his or her responsibilities.

SERVICE AND INSPECTION

Portable Fire Extinguishers

It is recommended that regular inspections of all extinguishers are carried out by the responsible person or other nominated competent person not less than monthly.

Inspection checks should include:

- Are extinguishers located in the designated place
- Are extinguishers visible and unobstructed
- Are operating instructions legible and do they face outwards
- That extinguishers have not been used and have no obvious damage
- That pressure gauges/indicators are reading within operational and safety limits
- That the seals and tamper indicators are not broken or missing. Corrective action should be arranged where necessary.

Annual service and inspection by a competent person

The user should ensure that extinguishers, gas cartridges and replacements charges are inspected, serviced and maintained as recommended in current British Standards. These procedures should be carried out by a competent person capable of conducting them according to the recommendations



of this code and any special procedures recommended by the manufacturers using recommended tools, equipment and materials at least annually.

Schedule of Maintenance

Type of Extinguisher	Basic Service	Extended Service with discharge test	Overhaul and Recharging
Water (Stored Pressure) Water (Gas Cartridge)	Every Year	Every 5 Years	-
Foam (Stored Pressure) Foam (Gas Cartridge)	Every Year	Every 5 Years	-
Powder (Stored Pressure) Powder (Gas Cartridge)	Every Year	Every 5 Years	-
Carbon Dioxide	Every Year	-	Every 10 Years

Fire Detection and Warning Systems

The fire alarm system is required to be monitored and tested by a nominated responsible person. The responsible person should have sufficient information and training in order to carry out all aspects of routine testing and supervision of the system.

Regular tests are vital to ensure that there has not been any major failure of the entire or a significant part of the system.

- Inspect the alarm panel daily for normal operation of the system (this does not have to be recorded) if any defects are found then record in the logbook and report it to a responsible person. It should be ensured that any faults recorded have received appropriate attention.
- Every drill a different manual call point should be operated during normal School hours.
- Quarterly and annual inspections and tests will only be undertaken by a competent person with the relevant technical knowledge and training.

Regular visual inspection of manual call points and fire detectors is required to ensure that:

- Manual call points are unobstructed and conspicuous.
- A clear space of 500mm is maintained below each automatic fire detector and is not impeded by any other means i.e. accumulation of dust in detector head or layers of paint.

False alarms should be recorded and positive action taken to manage the problem.

Escape Routes:

Daily checks should ensure that the escape routes are:

- Free from obstruction, slip or trip hazards (stored or temporary items).
- Clearly indicated to ensure relevant people can use them easily and immediately.
- Fire doors are not wedged open or have self closing devices removed, to prevent the spread of fire, heat and smoke.
- Final exit doors can be opened quickly and easily but not with the use of a key.
- Areas outside the final exit doors are kept clear from obstruction.
- Available for access by the emergency services.

INFORMING, INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING

Are all relevant people aware of their responsibilities in the event of an emergency? Ensure that they know:

- What action to take on discovering a fire and on hearing the fire alarm.
- How to raise the alarm
- How to contact the Fire Service



- Correct evacuation procedures and location of the assembly points
- Only tackle a fire if it safe to do so (when fire is small and correct extinguisher is available).
- Aware of the contents of the Fire Risk Assessment

Staff may receive training during working hours when they start employment, following any changes to the emergency plan or to the workplace and if there are changes to work practices and processes. Staff be given guidance on the nearest exit points, their responsibilities during a fire (drill or otherwise) and the procedure for reporting the building clear (or otherwise). They will not receive training or guidance in the use of fire equipment as it is not the School's policy for staff to fight fires and/or endanger their lives and the lives of others.

NEW INTAKE:

On the first day of a School Term all new entrants, staff and pupils should be made aware of all primary and secondary evacuation routes, shown the alarm points and be instructed in the fire routine procedure. As soon as possible this drill should be practiced by means of a Fire Alarm Evacuation Drill.

WHAT TO DO IN THE CASE OF A FIRE

On the sounding of the fire alarm the building must be evacuated following the emergency plan. Where possible try to contain the fire by shutting doors and windows, this will help to reduce draughts that may fan and spread the fire.

Contact the Fire Service immediately ensuring the name and address of the premises is given clearly. Try not to position yourself too close to fire bells if possible when making the emergency call. It can become very difficult for all parties to hear vital information. When the Fire Services arrive ensure the responsible person meets them to collate information. **Do not re-enter the building for any reason.**

FIRE ALARM DRILL/FIRE EMERGENCY EVACUATION

The fire alarm is signalled through the same system as the School bell.

- The signal for the School bell is a short ring of approximately one second
- **The signal for a fire alarm is a continuous ring**

It is the duty of ANYONE discovering a fire to operate the nearest Fire Alarm point. These are located around the building in prominent locations and are identified by the following (or similar) sign:



All outbreaks of fire, however small or any suspected fire should be reported immediately to the Fire Brigade by the quickest means available.

UPON HEARING THE FIRE ALARM:

- Persons in charge of classes will take up their registers (if available) and marshal the class in an orderly manner via the nearest exit to the assembly point.
- Administration staff will take up any returned registers and the visitors book and make their way to the assembly point. Where possible any visitors will be escorted to the nearest evacuation exit.



- Visitors and/or contractors will make their way to the nearest exit point.
- Anyone not actually in their classrooms or normal place of work, e.g. in the toilet, passages and corridors, etc., will make their way directly to the assembly point via the nearest Fire Exit point.
- A senior person in charge must be delegated immediately to call the Fire Brigade.
- There must be no rushing or overtaking en route to the assembly point.
- As soon as classes and groups are assembled each teacher and Senior Member of a group will take a roll call, where possible from a register, or a head count and report to the Senior Fire Officer or their Deputy that all are present or how many are missing.
- If there are any persons found to be missing do not return to the building. The Senior Fire Officer or their delegate will communicate this to the Fire Services.
- No person may leave the assembly point for whatever reason, to recover clothing, property or rescue until permission has been given, either by the Senior Fire Officer or by the Fire Services.

DO NOT HESITATE IN CARRYING OUT THE ABOVE PROCEDURE.

The safety of all persons on School premises may depend upon instant and efficient action.

Test Fire Evacuation Drills will be conducted at least once every half term. Only the Senior and Deputy Fire Marshalls and the person nominated to call the Fire Brigade will know the timing of such drills and no warning will be given to any other person of their occurrence or authenticity – each drill must be carried out as if it were not a drill.

Test drills should not be allowed to become stereotyped, as the situation under actual fire conditions will vary widely. For instance a staircase may be unusable due to smoke or other causes. They will also not be timed to be held in the most “convenient” part of any particular day. They may also involve the withdrawal of either pupil or staff member. They may also involve deliberate obstruction of a walkway, staircase or exit route to simulate impassable sections of the building and where alternative means of escape to safety must be found. Records of all drills should be kept and any permutations to the normal evacuation noted.



END