

Fire Safety Policy

Date of Policy- October 2015

Date of Review- December 2019 (PD)

Next Review – December 2020

This policy has taken guidance from:

HM Government – Fire Safety Risk Assessment for Educational Premises, June 2006

Fire Safety in New and Existing School Buildings, March 2014

Statement of Intent

St. Mary's College is a responsible provider of education and employer that takes its fire safety duties seriously. For that reason, this policy has been formulated to help the College comply with its legal obligations to staff and visitors under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the Order). The College is committed to taking all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of staff, students and other persons who may be affected by its activities.

This policy addresses our obligation under the Order that requires the College to:

- Develop a policy to minimize the risks associated with fire
- Reduce the risk of an outbreak of fire
- Reduce the risk of the spread of fire
- Provide a means of escape
- Demonstrate preventive action
- Maintain documentation and records in respect of fire safety management

The Responsible Person

The College has an appointed 'responsible person' who is charged with the responsibility of ensuring the safety of the staff and any person who may legally come onto College property and of anyone not on the premises but who may be affected. The person appointed as the 'responsible person' is: The Principal. The responsible person must ensure that competent persons carry out Fire Safety Risk Assessments.

Fire Safety Manager

The Fire safety manager should manage fire safety by implementing the policies agreed and monitored by the Leadership team and the Governing body. To do this the manager should consult with professionals from the local authority, the local fire brigade and the College insurers.

A fire log-book in which a record of essential information such as evacuation procedures, tests on firefighting equipment, details of training sessions and results of fire drills must be maintained.

The Fire Safety Manager is responsible for all sites belonging to St. Mary's College. This includes the Senior school, the Sports Centre, the Early Years Department, the Preparatory school and the Games field

The College will appoint a Fire Safety Manager to carry out the following duties:

- To ensure the Fire Safety Policy is promulgated to the entire College community. The Fire Safety Policy must be kept under regular review by Governors and the College Leadership Team
- To check fire detection and protection systems are maintained and tested and records kept.
- To ensure that everyone in the College (including visitors and contractors) are given clear written instructions on where they should go in the event of fire.
- Liaising with colleagues to minimise the incidence of fire (fire prevention); e.g., good housekeeping and security
- To produce an Emergency Fire Plan for all sites and put up notices in each room. And to ensure procedures and arrangements for emergency evacuation are regularly tested and lessons absorbed
- To ensure fire escape routes and fire exit doors/passageways are kept unobstructed and doors operate correctly
- To be responsible for organising suitable fire safety training and to maintain records of the fire induction training given to all staff
- To ensure that fire drills are conducted on all sites.
- To ensure fire risk assessments are conducted and that they are regularly reviewed and updated.
- To ensure fire prevention measures are meticulously followed.
- To ensure fire procedures and risk assessments are reviewed on each occasion that a building is altered, extended or rebuilt, or when new buildings are acquired
- To record dates and any subsequent actions required after all fire practices
- To ensure certificates for the installation and maintenance of fire-fighting systems and equipment are kept.
- To conduct termly fire safety inspections.
- To make more frequent informal checks to confirm that the fire safety rules are being followed and to record dates and any subsequent actions required after all informal checks
- To ensure a fire safety report is included in the regular health and safety reports to the Health and Safety Officer and governing body

Documentation and Records

The College documents and keeps records to prove that we have acted responsibly. The following records will be kept in good order, up to date and available for scrutiny at any time by the Fire Safety Manager, unless otherwise stated:

- This fire safety policy
- Fire evacuation procedures
- Copies of all risk assessments
- Records of all fire training
- A record of all fire drills (at least two per year) listing all attendees, evacuation times and any comments.
- Records of tests of fire alarms.
- Record of inspection and testing of all firefighting equipment
- Records of periodic tests of emergency lighting
- Records of all scheduled and unscheduled maintenance of fire detection and alarm systems
- Records of inspection, risk assessment and maintenance of workplace and electrical equipment,
- Storage of hazardous substances and other hazards identified with fire safety
- Records of any unwanted alarm activations and action
- Plans of the College Buildings

Duties of Staff

(Staff includes all employees of the College)

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 also expected to co-operate fully in complying with any procedures that the College may introduce as a measure to protect the safety and well-being of all staff and visitors.

Communication

The College will ensure that any person it employs (directly or indirectly) is provided with all information related to fire safety and consult with our employees on all matters of fire safety policy and arrangements. We will keep staff informed of any changes that are made to our fire safety procedures and fire risk assessment. A fire safety briefing will form part of the induction training for new members of staff. We will also ensure that all visitors to our premises are briefed in the evacuation procedures and not left alone unless they are aware of, and familiar with, all available escape routes.

Procedures

The College has the following procedures in order to maintain high standards of fire safety:

- The fire evacuation procedures will be practiced at least twice annually.
- All staff will be given training, including a fire safety briefing as part of the induction process, and will receive refresher training as appropriate. Further training would be required if there were any change that may affect fire safety.
- All training will be provided during normal working hours as far as reasonably possible (e.g. any after school workers may be required to attend during the day).
- All staff will be trained in the use of fire extinguishers every two years.
- All escape routes will be established, kept in good working order and free from obstruction and combustible materials at all times. Operation of fire exit doors will be tested.
- Firefighting equipment will be provided. In general, this means fire extinguishers but additional provision of fire blankets may be made where deemed appropriate by the findings of a risk assessment.
- All fire related equipment will be regularly serviced and maintained by a contractor. If any member of the College notices defective or missing equipment, they must report it to the Fire Safety Manager or Deputy Fire Safety Manager.
- All available technological solutions to fire prevention will be examined by the College and innovative practices and equipment will be adopted as appropriate – advice on available equipment and solutions will be sought at regular intervals from the Colleges' contractors.
- An appropriate fire detection and alarm system will be provided. The type and extent of the alarm system provided will be based on the findings of the relevant risk assessment.
- Alarm systems will be tested weekly. Staff will be told when a test is scheduled.
- Emergency lighting will be provided for escape routes where applicable. The need for and the extent of the system will be determined by the findings of the relevant risk assessment.
- The risk of fire spread will be controlled by the provision of fire resisting construction, and or fire/smoke resisting doors. These provisions will be kept in good order as part of our regular maintenance schedule. All staff are required to ensure that any fire door provided remains closed at all times.
- Any other safety systems provided will be checked monthly to ensure correct operation, where necessary e.g. emergency lighting, fire doors etc.
- Appropriate signs and notices will be displayed, giving clear instructions to staff and others in the event of a fire. In addition, signs will be provided to indicate the position of fire extinguishers, fire alarm call points and, to indicate the emergency exit routes.

In the normal course of their work, maintenance staff will make it their business to ensure that students, staff, visitors and other users of the College buildings keep

exits and open areas clear of debris, furniture etc., that fire doors are not propped open, fire extinguishers have not been removed from their brackets and fire signs and notices have not been removed.

Risk Assessments

A competent person, shall make, record, review and, where applicable, revise Fire Safety Risk Assessments at regular intervals in accordance with The Order. They should also be carried out if there has been any significant change in the physical layout of a building or a change of use.

The Fire Safety Risk Assessments must take into consideration everyone who may come on our premises, whether they are employees, visitors or members of the public. Particular attention will be paid to people who may have a disability or anyone with special needs.

Heads of department have a duty to identify all hazardous substances and other potential or actual hazards and to make this information available to those who carry out the risk assessments.

A 'five step' approach will be taken as follows:

- Step 1: Identify potential fire hazards in the workplace.
- Step 2: Decide who might be in danger, in the event of a fire, in the workplace or while trying to escape from it, and note their location.
- Step 3: Evaluate the risks arising from the hazards and decide whether the existing fire precautions are adequate or whether more should be done to get rid of the hazard or to control the risks (e.g. by improving the fire precautions).
- Step 4: Record findings and details of the action taken as a result.
- Step 5: Keep the assessment under review and revise it when necessary.

The policy statement will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary. The Governing Body of St. Mary's College endorses this policy and is fully committed to its implementation.