



Ripley Court School

Fire Risk (Prevention) Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The School's priority is to minimise the risk to life and to reduce injury. This is done by maintaining the physical fire safety integrity of the school and by training staff, pupils and visitors to evacuate safely if necessary. The School's fire risk (prevention) policy, procedures and risk assessments are designed to help the School community to respond calmly and effectively if fire breaks out.

2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1. The Site Operations Manager is the designated School Fire Safety Officer and is responsible, along with the Director of Operations and RCS Bursar, for:

- Keeping the Fire Risk (Prevention) Policy under regular review by Governors and the SLT
- Promulgating the Fire Risk (Prevention) Policy to the entire school community
- Ensuring everyone in the school (including visitors and contractors) are given clear instructions on where they should go in the event of fire
- Ensuring fire induction training is given to new staff and pupils
- Ensuring records of the fire induction training given to staff are kept
- Ensuring procedures for emergency evacuation are regularly tested and lessons absorbed
- Ensuring fire risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated
- Ensuring fire prevention measures are meticulously followed
- Ensuring fire procedures and risk assessments are reviewed on each occasion that a building is altered, extended, or rebuilt, or when new buildings are acquired
- Ensuring certificates for the installation and maintenance of firefighting systems and equipment are kept.

- 2.2. The Headmaster is responsible for emergency evacuation and makes sure that termly practices for the whole School community take place. The Headmaster is additionally responsible for:

- Providing clear instruction to all staff, pupils, visitors, and contractors on the fire evacuation procedure
- Ensuring records are kept of all fire drills

- Ensuring fire induction training is given to new pupils
- Termly testing of emergency evacuation procedures, recording the outcomes, and following up on any actions arising
- Appointing and overseeing training for the fire marshals
- Giving the 'all clear' to staff once this is received.

3. Emergency Evacuation Notice

3.1. All new staff and pupils, all contractors and visitors are shown the following notice:

- If you discover a fire, break the glass in the nearest alarm point to set off the alarm. Leave the building by the nearest exit.
- **The person discovering the fire should call the Emergency Services on 999.**
- If you are responsible for pupils, make them leave quietly with you. No one should talk or run.
- Do not stop to collect any items. Shut doors behind you.
- **Make your way to the assembly point at the Top Field.**
- Teachers – collect your register and a pen from Reception Staff at the assembly point and check your pupils are all present. If you have all your pupils, raise your hand.
- Report anyone who is waiting to be evacuated or who is missing immediately to the Headmaster or member of SLT who will inform the Fire Service.
- All alarms are first investigated by the Caretaker or, in his absence, the Headmaster.
- DO NOT return to any building until given permission by the Fire Service (if on scene) or the Headmaster.
- Remain at the Assembly Point with your pupils until the 'all clear' is given.

4. Briefing New Staff and Pupils

- 4.1. All new staff and pupils are given a briefing on the School's emergency evacuation procedures on their first day at Ripley Court School. They are shown where the emergency exits and escape routes are located and walked to the outside assembly point. Fire action notices are displayed in all rooms and corridors and pointed out to staff and pupils at induction. New staff are shown how to activate the fire alarms if they see or smell a fire.
- 4.2. The safe evacuation of everyone, staff and pupils alike, is the School's priority. Protecting property comes second. No one is expected to fight a fire at the expense of their own, or anyone else's safety. No one should attempt to use a fire extinguisher before undergoing appropriate usage training which will be given to staff at intervals.

5. Summoning the Fire Service

- 5.1. The person discovering the fire should sound the alarms by breaking a 'call point' and should then summon the fire brigade by calling 999. If the fire alarm is activated

automatically by a detector, the duty person or caretaker will investigate to check it is not a false alarm before calling the Fire Service.

- 5.2. The main alarm panel is in the Reception area of the Manor House on the ground floor. The panel shows the location of all the alarm call points on the networked alarm system in the school buildings.

6. Visitors and Contractors

- 6.1. All visitors and contractors are required to sign in at Reception in the main building, where they are issued with a visitor's badge, which should always be worn whilst on site. Visitors are given fire evacuation instructions which identifies the route to the assembly point. Reception staff will check the register for signed in visitors in the event of an evacuation.
- 6.2. When large numbers of visitors are at the school for open days, plays, concerts, exhibitions etc. a brief announcement is made advising them of the location of the emergency exits that they should use in the event of the alarm sounding. Parents/Guardians will be reminded that staff will be responsible for evacuation of pupils and Parents/Guardians must not take their child away from the assembly area until the 'all clear' has been given.

7. Disabled Staff, Pupils or Visitors

- 7.1. A one-to-one induction on fire safety is given to disabled pupils, their carers, staff and visitors.
- 7.2. When the fire alarm is sounded, it is the responsibility of the carer of a disabled person to manage the evacuation process. If evacuation is possible, the disabled person should report to the assembly point together with the carer or host. If evacuation is not possible, the senior staff member on site will pass this information to the Fire Service.
- 7.3. Pupils or staff who suffer a temporary impediment (for example, a broken leg and use of crutches) to their ability to self-evacuate, will be provided with a PEEP (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan) which will detail the support available to them in the event of an evacuation.
- 7.4. If a PEEP is required for a pupil, it is the responsibility of the pupil's tutor to complete the PEEP. If a PEEP is required for a member of staff, it is the responsibility of the relevant Line Manager to complete the PEEP.
- 7.5. Completed PEEPs will be shared as per the distribution list on the PEEP form. Support with completing the PEEP can be obtained via the HR Department, Compliance Manager or Fire Safety Officer if required.

8. Responsibilities of Staff

- 8.1. Teaching staff are responsible for escorting their pupils safely out of the building in silence and in an orderly fashion. When they arrive at the Assembly Point, they must collect a copy of their printed register and a pen and conduct a head count. The name of anyone who cannot be accounted for (and, if possible, their last known or likely location) must be passed at once to the Headmaster who will inform the Fire Service on their arrival.
- 8.2. Forest School is held in an outdoor area which is not connected to the Fire Alarm system. In order to ensure that the Forest School staff are alerted to the activation of a Fire Alarm, staff will use a 2-way radio to make contact. Forest School staff will carry a 2-way radio in order to be able to summon assistance in case of emergency and/or to receive notification of an activation. In addition, an external sounder has been fitted to the outside of the Holloway building so that this can be heard by staff and pupils on the playing fields and/or in Forest School.
- 8.3. On receiving notification of the activation, Forest School staff will advise if they have any pupils who have temporarily returned to the school for any reason and where they were going (e.g. to use the toilet, to the medical room etc.) to enable them to be accounted for. Forest School staff and pupils will make their way to the Assembly Point to enable pupils to join their class teacher.
- 8.4. Staff who are not responsible for escorting pupils, and any visitors and contractors should make their way promptly and silently to the assembly area. Their names will be checked against the InVentry sign in system along with those of teaching staff.

On no account should anyone return to a burning building.

9. Responsibilities of Fire Marshals

- 9.1. All Fire Marshals are 'competent persons' who have been trained to provide 'safety assistance' with the evacuation of the buildings. A 'sweep' of each area will be carried out by the Fire Marshal to ensure that no-one is left behind. This 'sweep' will involve checking classrooms, offices, corridors and toilets, closing doors and windows as they move through their designated area. This 'sweep' will be carried out by designated staff, who are not responsible for escorting pupils, and are assigned to specific areas.
- 9.2. The Fire Marshals should then report the area as 'clear' to the Headmaster. Fire Marshals receive regular refresher training

10. Fire Practices

- 10.1. At least one fire practice is held every term. Observations are made and fed back to staff, and where relevant, to pupils by the Headmaster and/or the Fire Safety Officer. Opportunities for improvement are considered by the Health & Safety Committee and processes amended where relevant.

11. Fire Prevention Measures

11.1. The School has the following fire prevention measures in place:

11.2. Escape Routes and Emergency Exits

- Fire notices and evacuation signs are displayed in every room, corridor, and stairwell.
- Active measures are provided with fire extinguishers (of the appropriate type), smoke/heat detectors, call points and automatic fire doors. Academic areas are generally only provided with call points.
- All stairs, passages and emergency exits are illuminated by emergency lighting
- The master panel for the alarm system is located in Reception on the ground floor of the Manor House.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to keep fire routes and exits clear at all times.
- Daily visual checks are carried out by staff when they arrive in their area.
- Weekly checks are carried out by Estates team or site supervisor.
- The Caretaker and the Fire Safety Officer will together carry out regular inspections of escape routes.
- The alarm system is tested weekly and is serviced and tested by an ISO9001 certified/BAFE approved contractor biannually.
- Emergency lighting is tested every half term and has an annual full drain down test.
- Fire extinguishers are serviced annually.
- Records of all tests are kept by the Estates Team.
- External stairs from residential accommodation are regularly checked to ensure they remain free from debris.

11.3. Electrical Safety

- The School has current electrical test certificates for all its buildings. It uses NICEIC qualified Electrical Engineers to inspect and maintain its electrical installations [all of which are RCB protected and meet the requirements of BS7671 IEE wiring regulations].
- PAT testing is carried out annually.
- Records of all tests are kept by the Estates Team.
- Fixed wire testing is carried out every 5 years and any remedial works recommended in EICR (Electrical Installation Condition Reports) are carried out.
- The Swimming Pool electrical wiring is tested annually.
- The catering manager checks that all kitchen equipment is switched off at the end of the day.

11.4. Lightning Protection

- Where fitted, lightning protection and earthing conforms to BS 6651-1999. It is tested annually by a specialist contractor. Records of all tests are kept by the Estates Team.

11.5. Gas Safety

- All gas appliances (boilers, kitchen equipment etc.) are regularly maintained and serviced by Gas Safe Registered Engineers. Records of all tests are kept by the Estates Team.
- Landlord's gas safety certificates are held for all school domestic accommodation.
- The science laboratory is kept locked when not in use.
- The laboratory is fitted with 'Gas Guard' safety system or a manual isolator which remains off unless gas is used during an experiment.

11.6. Safe Storage

- All flammable materials used in teaching or maintenance are locked in purpose-made, flame-proof containers at the end of every day.

11.7. Rubbish and Combustible Materials

- Flammable rubbish should be stored 6m away from buildings.
- Combustible materials should be stored away from sources of ignition.
- Large quantities of flammable materials should not be allowed to accumulate near fire escape routes.

12. Letting or Hiring the School

- 12.1. The standard contractual terms that are used for letting and hiring the school cover fire safety and specify that the hirer should certify that they have read and understood the School's Fire Risk (Prevention) Policy and procedures. A duty security person is always on duty/call when the school is let or hired for an outside function or event.

13. Fire Risk Assessment

- 13.1. The School's Fire Risk Assessment meets the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the FSO) and The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 which came into force on 23rd January 2023. Specifically, it identifies:

- The hazard
- The people at risk
- The measures to evaluate, remove, reduce and protect from the risk
- The measures needed to record, plan, inform, instruct and train people in risk reduction or removal
- The arrangements for reviewing the assessment

- 13.2. Fire risk assessments are carried out for all school buildings and accommodation, or when changes are made. These are carried out by the Fire Safety Officer with a third-party specialist undertaking the assessment every two years.
- 13.3. Copies of Ripley Court School's fire risk assessments are kept in the Risk Assessments section of the school's SharePoint site for all staff to read. Any comments or suggestions for improvement are always welcome.
- 13.4. This policy is reviewed at least annually and may be updated from time-to-time as necessary.

Compiled by: Fire Safety Officer	Revision Number: 17 (Spring 2026)
Approved by: Finance, Risk & Estates Committee	Next Revision Date: Spring Term 2027

Revision History Table

Revision Number	Section/Paragraph number	Amendments
17 – Spring 2026	2.1	Update job title
	11.5	Minor modifications to reflect there is now a single Science Lab.