



# FIRE RISK STRATEGY 2024

Approved by the Chair of Finance, Audit and Risk Committee 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024.

Signature of the Chair:

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Renewal Date: July 2027

## Introduction

Fire Risk Management is a process based on best practice, designed to ensure that school premises are doing their 'reasonable best' to manage themselves in order to meet their objectives to protect staff, pupils, visitors, contractors and the general public when on the school premises against fire risks of all kinds.

Schools will endeavour to promote a culture which ensures that the safety of staff, pupils and visitors is at the heart of all practices; and that all staff are open to sharing learning from the experiences related to the management of risk.

The same rules of courtesy and respect apply to all persons regardless of their (protected) characteristics, including age and disability. Persons with any mobility or physical impairment should not be treated as a specific fire safety concern that will need to be resolved.

**Important:** - "See the person not the disability or impairment".

Mobility needs and preferences vary widely between each individual.

A key element of the UK's Fire and Rescue Service modernisation programme is that Fire Authorities should adopt a locally-determined risk-based approach to managing fire risks and fire-fighting resources. Therefore, The De Curci Trust intends to apply an integrated risk approach to identifying high and low fire risk areas involving collaboration with The De Curci Trust's Fire Safety Advisor(s) and the local Fire and Rescue Service.

The Fire Risk Strategy, Fire Safety Management Policy and Arson Risk Assessment will seek to manage fire safety through safe systems of: Information, Instruction & Fire Safety Training, Education, Health and Safety practices and school buildings management.

The fire risk safety strategy and fire safety management policy will be subject to annual review from the date of issue, as the organisational structure of The De Curci Trust and the individual schools develop.

This document and fire safety management policy will also be subject to future development in line with changing legislative requirements.

In the future, the scope of the fire risk management within The De Curci Trust may alter, and therefore strategy and policies may need to be substantially altered to reflect these changes

## Purpose

The purpose of this Fire Risk Safety Strategy is: -

- ✓ To demonstrate that the school premises Fire Safety Management structure ensures shared responsibility for managing fire safety throughout the school premises
- ✓ To ensure demonstration of the development of a system for implementation of fire safety practices, including risk assessments, monitoring and reviews in all areas of the school premises including planned internal and external developments
- ✓ To identify within the strategy documentation and process, the roles and responsibilities of the key individual(s) in post with responsibility for co-ordinating fire safety activities
- ✓ To identify within the strategy documentation the respective roles, responsibilities and accountability undertaken by the person in charge and all the staff for their particular areas of risk
- ✓ To identify the responsibilities of all school committee members and staff and their authority with regard to managing fire safety
- ✓ To build upon the school's fire safety policy statement, which requires those responsible for fire safety within the school premises to: -
  - ✓ Comply with prevailing legislation
  - ✓ Implement fire safety precautions through a risk managed approach
  - ✓ Comply with monitoring and reporting mechanisms appropriate to the management of fire safety
  - ✓ Develop initiatives with other agencies and bodies in the provision of safety

This document provides a framework for the implementation of Fire Safety and Arson Prevention which will help to ensure that statutory duties for the school premises under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 are complied with.

The Fire Risk Safety Strategy sets out the approach to be taken by the school premises in addressing the following core elements: -

1. Fire safety policy
2. Management roles and responsibilities
3. New building specifications
4. Upgrading of fire precautions
5. Fire alarm and fire detection systems
6. Staff fire awareness training
7. Provision and use of fire-fighting equipment
8. Emergency plans (including evacuation plans)
9. Fire safety audits
10. Young Persons
11. The Equality Act 2010
12. (See Part 4 Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan - PEEP)
13. Fire Safety Maintenance
14. Fire Safety Records
15. Fire risk assessments should be held in with the **Fire Safety Management File** [Log book, Manuals & Registers]. The nominated Fire Safety Assistant is responsible for maintaining these files.
16. Integrated risk management plans
17. Audits, Monitoring and Reviews

## **Planning And Responding To A Fire Emergency**

The safety from fire of all the occupants within all school premises is paramount and will therefore depend upon the successful implementation of fire safety procedures in addition to the use of active and passive systems e.g. the fire alarm and detections systems, fire doors, and fire fighting equipment, smoke ventilation systems and so on.

The overall aim of fire safety procedures is to ensure that all occupants in the school premises can escape unharmed to a place of safety either within or outside the school building(s). To achieve this, there must always be a prompt response to the alarm of fire and an effective pre-planned and tested strategy for evacuation.

School premises can be complex buildings and a sufficient number of adequately and appropriately fire safety trained staff will need to be available to assist in the event of a fire. Whilst it is not possible to give precise guidance in the event of an occurrence, the underlying principles for undertaking pre-planning should contain: -

1. Action on discovery of fire
2. Action on hearing the fire alarm
3. Calling the Fire and Rescue Service
4. Plans and procedures for evacuating persons who require assistance (PEEPs)
5. Arranging and co-ordinating evacuation
6. The safe use of fire fighting equipment
7. Procedures for accounting for all persons evacuated
8. Procedures for maintaining control of evacuated persons
9. Availability of staff as an extra resource
10. Internal management control systems
11. Availability of additional specialist equipment for continuing education
12. Facilities for the continuation of effective education

13. Caring for high risk and vulnerable pupils and staff
14. Information for the Fire and Rescue Service on their arrival (during and outside school hours)
15. Contingency planning and Business Continuity planning
16. Persons with physical and learning disabilities
17. Visitors and contractors
18. Information, instruction and training for staff & visitors
19. Debriefing procedures after an incident including when appropriate following a fire drill
20. Returning the building to normal activities and services
21. Recognising the issues of using a building that is a designated building of historical interest
22. Recognising and addressing those school buildings (or parts of) that provide an amenity facility to the local residents outside of school hours

**A Fire Service Information Pack** providing information about the premises and the risk to fire fighters etc normally held at the main reception or entrance hall ideally positioned adjacent to the fire alarm panel.

Information should include: -

- A floor plan of the premises
- The location of valuable equipment
- Fire and safety systems
- Utilities and environmental systems – main shut off or isolation valves and switches
- Information and location with regard to hazardous materials (Flammable liquids, compressed gases, chemicals, radiation sources etc found on the premises)
- Nearest available water supplies – i.e. fire hydrants, swimming pools etc.

## Evacuation Strategies

Any evacuation strategy will be dependent upon the type of school premises, its use, and the occupancy profile for each room and building(s), which includes staff members, pupils, visitors and available staffing levels.

All school premises mainly work on the principle of full evacuation. It is the responsibility of the senior duty person in charge to ensure that the evacuation strategy for the school premises accurately reflects the individual needs of both the premises and its occupants.

The evacuation strategy should clearly define the sequence of events to be followed and should include reference to:-

- Evacuation of the school premise's occupants
  
- The outside assembly point(s)
  
- Refuges and places of comparative and ultimate safety
  
- The use of lifts or other mobility handling facility
  
- Communication during the evacuation

Details should also ensure that:

- All persons are accounted for
  
- Designated staff carry out a thorough check to ensure that no persons have been left behind
  
- The arrangements for the evacuating the mobility or impaired are adequate
  
- Re-entry into the building is not permitted until advised by the Senior Fire Officer present it is safe to do so
  
- The evacuation strategy must also take into account the use of the school premises by outside organisations outside of the normal school hours

The concept of inclusive means of escape ensures that the means of escape arrangements and facilities for disabled people are not considered in isolation.

## **Fire Safety And The Equality Act 2010**

The Equality Act 2010 requires the adjustment of the The De Curci Trust's policies, practices and procedures and, where necessary, the fabric of each building, so as not to discriminate against persons with mobility or impairment needs. The development of the Fire Risk Safety Strategy should take account of these requirements

The main principle of fire safety is that all persons should be evacuated from a building in the event of a fire. Note: Where circumstances dictate that progressive horizontal evacuation is appropriate, this should be dealt with by an individual PEEP.

The person in charge must ensure that all staff required to assist with evacuation of those persons with mobility or impairment needs, are adequately trained.

**Note:** Refer to PEEP on the evacuation of persons with mobility or impairment needs.

## **Fire Safety Training**

Fire safety training is essential for all school staff; it is a legal requirement under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

All Staff are expected to have an understanding of fire risks and know what to do in the event of a fire so that the premises fire safety procedures can be applied effectively

The school management will provide appropriate levels of fire training; this will apply to all the school staff without exception including, all contract school staff

The person in charge, in liaison with the Fire Safety Advisor, H&S Advisor and CFOO, will develop a training programme

The training programme will reflect the staff responsibilities for fire safety, including:

- ✓ Recording and monitoring of attendance
- ✓ Course evaluation

## **Fire Training Objectives**

- All staff (teaching or otherwise) should receive appropriate fire safety induction training on or before their first day of employment
- Where those members of staff are working in areas where there are specific risks, the induction training must include job specific instruction
- All staff should receive regular and updated training. The duration and frequency of training should be determined by a training needs analysis and should take account of the fire risks present, the numbers of people at risk and the responsibilities of staff in a fire emergency



- The outcomes of fire risk assessment and any identified training requirements should be formally recorded and reviewed
- The Trust uses 'iamcompliant' for induction and refresher training which is IOSH and CPD accredited

Training programmes will include: -

- ✓ Basic fire safety
- ✓ Good housekeeping practices
- ✓ Actions to take on discovering a fire
- ✓ Actions to take on hearing the fire alarm
- ✓ Procedures for evacuation
- ✓ Specific Staff responsibilities and duties during a fire incident

### **Fire Safety Log Book**

A maintained fire safety log book is essential for the school premises, and is a fundamental requirement for good fire safety management practices.

Information to be included is as follows: -

- Planning arrangements for fire and life safety
- Construction and details of the fire safety systems installed (for example the fire alarm, fire detection, fire suppression etc)
- Records of ongoing fire safety testing and maintenance
- Operational records which include copies of fire risk assessments and action plans
- This may be stored electronically in all or part on the 'iAm Compliant' system

### **Note:**

The school's fire safety log book should be available for inspection by the enforcing authority inspectors (the Fire and Rescue Service).

### **Procedures For Reporting Fire Incidents**

The Fire and Rescue Service must be called to all outbreaks of fire and any suspected fire.

All outbreaks of fire in the premises must be reported within 12 hours to the person in charge.

Fires involving death or injury must also be reported to the Health and Safety Executive through RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulation 1995).