

PLYMOUTH COLLEGE FIRE SAFETY POLICY

All Sites, including Boarding



Last reviewed:	June 2026
Next review date:	August 2027
Responsibility:	Business Manager Health & Safety Officer

Introduction

Plymouth College will ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that all staff, pupils, contractors and visitors are protected from the risks of fire whilst on the premises.

Responsibilities

Plymouth College Fire Safety Policy extends through all buildings on site including boarding accommodation, with specific responsibilities as below:

- The School's Management Board* ensures that an appropriate policy is in place in the School and that arrangements are made for its effective implementation.
- The Senior Leadership Team has ultimate responsibility for the implementation and management of this policy and will support the 'Responsible Person' and the 'Fire Officer' in this respect.
- The 'Responsible Person' is responsible for the effective implementation of this policy and its role within the School's Health & Safety Policy. The Regulatory Reform Order 2005 places duties on the Responsible Person. The Responsible Person is currently the Business Manager.
- The Fire Officers are responsible for overseeing emergency evacuation procedures and work with the Responsible Person to ensure this policy is implemented effectively. The Fire Officer at Plymouth College is the Health and Safety Officer.
- All employees have the responsibility to cooperate and to ensure that the workplace is safe from fire and its effects and must not do anything that will place themselves or other people at risk.
- All visitors have the responsibility to cooperate with reasonable instructions and to take steps to keep themselves and others safe from fire risks, and to report any concerns to the School.

Policy Objectives

- To safeguard all persons from death or injury in the event of fire by the effective management of fire safety.
- To minimise the risk of fire and to limit fire spread.
- To minimise the potential for fire to disrupt services, damage buildings and equipment, or harm the environment.

Managing Fire Safety

The School has delegated day-to-day responsibility for managing fire safety to the Responsible Person. The Responsible Person will:

1. Take all reasonable steps to ensure that all means of escape are properly maintained, kept free from obstruction and remain available for safe and effective use at all times, and that all means of escape have adequate emergency lighting.
2. Provide and maintain in working order all firefighting appliances and devices including:
 - a) fire detection and alarm systems
 - b) emergency lighting systems
 - c) firefighting equipment
 - d) notices and signage relating to fire procedures
 - e) means of escape, taking into account the needs of any disabled users
3. Carry out a fire safety risk assessment to ensure that the School's facilities are compliant and reduce the risk of fire incidents by carrying out appropriate task risk assessments.
4. Provide appropriate instruction and training for all School staff on the action to be taken to protect people and property including fire evacuation practices.
5. Ensure that all staff, students, contractors, visitors and third-party hirers are made aware of and comply with the School's fire procedures.
6. Identify any special risks, for example, the storage of hazardous materials, and put in place appropriate procedures to minimise the risks.
7. Liaise with third parties including external health and safety advisors, the emergency services and the School's insurers to ensure that best practice for fire prevention and procedures are in place.
8. Monitor and review this policy on a regular basis in order to ensure that any new risk or alteration to regulations is addressed.
9. Keep records of the fire risk assessment and its review, fire procedures and arrangements, training records, fire practice drills, certificates for the installation and maintenance of firefighting systems and equipment.

Monitoring

The School may access the services of various external organisations and individuals to carry out effective monitoring of its duties.

- The School fire detection and alarm systems are routinely maintained and checked.
- The fire alarm sounders are tested on a regular basis.
- Regular tests on the emergency lighting are carried out.
- Firefighting equipment is replenished or replaced immediately after use and all extinguishers are checked annually.
- Fire logs and details of staff training are recorded by the Health & Safety Officer.
- Historic fire logs are held on site and contain records of fire safety issues, these logs are maintained by the Fire Officer and are held in the Porters' Lodge.

Fire Risk Assessment

The School maintains a comprehensive Fire Risk Assessment. This is kept by the Health & Safety Officer.

The FRA identifies who may be at risk in case of fire, where people may be working, and who else may be at risk, either in the premises or nearby (such as members of the public, visiting contractors) and where these people are likely to be located.

The FRA will be reviewed and amended annually or if any significant changes are planned to structures or use of the buildings.

Fire Safety Training

- All staff receive a basic fire safety induction on joining, and will attend training refresher sessions as required.
- Key staff in the individual school buildings receive more detailed instruction including the use of firefighting equipment.
- Pupils are given instruction by their Form Tutors or Teacher during the first week of the Autumn Term on alarm systems and actions to be taken in the event of a fire.
- Fire drills are planned each term, both during the daytime and out of normal school hours in each Boarding House to familiarise with and to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's evacuation procedures. The findings of each drill are recorded and any remedial actions implemented by the Fire Officer.

Evacuation Procedures

The School operates a 'one out / all out' evacuation policy. This is to ensure that all students, staff and visitors can be accounted for in the event of fire.

The evacuation procedures which are to be followed in the event of a fire alarm can be found in **Appendix 1** (for day school timings of 0800hrs to 1800hrs, Monday to Friday) and in **Appendix 2** (for Boarding - out of hours and at weekends).

Appendix 1

Fire Safety Emergency Evacuation Procedures (Day)

These procedures cover Monday to Friday between 08.00hrs and 1800hrs.

The **Designated Assembly Point** is:

1. PRIMARY – **Astro Pitch** in front of the Old School Building
2. SECONDARY – **Corner of Playing Fields** by Ford Park Road / cricket nets

Action on Discovering a Fire

Any person discovering a fire should press the nearest safe alarm call point location and if possible contact School Reception to confirm that there is a fire. The person discovering the fire should only attempt to tackle the fire if they feel it is safe to do so. Emergency services must be called by dialling 999. There is no automatic call-out. If the person discovering the fire is unable to contact School Reception for any reason they must dial 999 immediately.

SPECIAL PROVISION – Fire in the Kitchen or Dining Room

If a fire is discovered in the kitchen or dining room, staff should immediately call 999 and activate the alarm.

Investigation Delay – DAY PROCEDURE ONLY

The purpose of this procedure is to minimise disruption and complacency caused by false alarms. In the event that the fire detection system is activated, an investigation delay is built into the system before the general alarm sounds to allow Fire Wardens to investigate the cause of the activation. A warning sound will be triggered at both the local and central fire panels, with an indication of the location of the activated sensor. The following investigation steps will be taken:

1. Warning sound triggered
2. Fire Wardens investigate the cause as soon as possible
3. AT ANY TIME A FIRE IS IDENTIFIED OR SUSPECTED, A CALL POINT MUST BE PRESSED TO ACTIVATE THE GENERAL ALARM AND FULL EVACUATION PROCEDURES MUST BE FOLLOWED
4. Having investigated the trigger sensor location, if Fire Wardens are confident that there is no danger, the general alarm can be cancelled and no evacuation is required.

IN ALL CASES WHEN THE GENERAL FIRE ALARM SOUNDS, A FULL SCHOOL EVACUATION WILL TAKE PLACE AND ALL OTHER PROCEDURES BELOW WILL BE FOLLOWED.

Fire Evacuation – Key Steps



Upon Discovering a Fire:

- Activate the nearest call point to raise the alarm.
- Shout "FIRE, FIRE, FIRE" and the location loudly (Loud Vocal Alarm).
- Repeat until evacuation is complete.

Evacuate:

- Leave immediately and go to the assembly area on the Astro turf.
- Only use a fire extinguisher if safe to do so.
- Notify support staff or H&S Officer if you use an extinguisher.

Notify Others:

- Alarms are not linked – inform Porters, Reception, nearby staff.
- Send runners to alert other areas and activate alarms.
- Runners must return to the assembly area.

Fire Marshals:

- Stop tasks immediately and sweep your assigned area.

Remember:

- Whole-school evacuation may be necessary, even if the fire is in one area.
- Follow these steps until the alarm system is fully linked.

**In any fire situation, the first
priority is evacuation**

- Where appropriate and if possible, ensure classroom windows are closed and doors closed.
- On evacuation leave immediately and do not attempt to take personal belongings with you.
- Always use the closest and quickest safe route for evacuation. Remember that your closest evacuation route may be blocked: be prepared to find an alternative route if necessary. Should the alarm sound outside of lesson times, pupils should be instructed to leave the building by the nearest safe fire exit and proceed to the Designated Assembly Point. Staff should assist this process where possible without putting themselves at risk.
- Under no circumstances should staff or pupils return to a building or pass through any other buildings to get to the Designated Assembly Point.

- On arrival at the Designated Assembly Point a member of SLT will take charge as '**Muster Coordinator**'. This will normally be the Deputy Head.
- **Teaching Staff** must accompany pupils in silence to the Designated Assembly Point (**Astro Pitch**) leaving the classroom and walk **not** run. The classroom door should be closed behind the last person to leave.
- **Staff** should only speak if it is to direct pupils or other staff for purposes of managing a safe evacuation.
- **School Office Staff** will take the evacuation checklists, registers and other required documentation to the Assembly Point.
- **School Office Staff** must notify the Muster Coordinator whether or not they have called emergency services.
- **The School Nurse** should collect any sick pupils from the Health Centre and proceed to the Assembly Point.
- **The Fire Officer**, or other fire warden acting in their absence will attempt to identify the source of the fire from external visual observation. Where safe to do so, the zone triggered by the alarm will be noted.
- **The Fire Officer**, or other fire warden acting in their absence, will meet emergency services and direct them to the source of the fire.
- **The traffic barrier** at the front entrance is set to open automatically in the event of a fire alarm.

Procedure for Assembly and Roll Call

If a named person with responsibility is absent, their named deputy will assume their role in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Senior School Reporting Procedure

- **Pupils** are to line up in their year groups and are registered by their tutor or Head of Year.
- **Class / Form Teacher** – collect registers from School Office staff and supervise roll call. If the Class or Form Teacher does not arrive, the Head of Year or other members of the Tutor Team should assume responsibility.
- **Class / Form Teacher** not responsible for pupils at the time of evacuation should assemble in the staff area and await completion of roll call.

Prep School Reporting Procedure

- **Pupils** are to line up in their year groups (in class groups where there are multiple classes) and are registered by their form teacher.
- **Prep Teachers** – collect registers and supervise roll call. If the **Teacher** does not arrive, the Head of Prep or other members of the teaching staff should assume responsibility.
- **Prep School Office Staff** – take the evacuation checklists, registers and other required documentation to the Assembly Point.
- **Prep School Receptionist** should collect any sick pupils from the prep Sick Bay and proceed to the Assembly Point.

Once roll call is completed, Class Teacher / Form Tutors report to the Heads of Year. Heads of Year report to the Senior Deputy Head. **Teachers should locate themselves in the centre of the astroturf to make this process easier.**

Support staff are to report to their relevant line manager or designated group leader who will confirm attendance to the Bursar. Contractors on site will be made aware of who to report to when signing into reception, this person will be responsible for reporting their attendance to the Bursar.

School Office staff to check any pupil or staff absences against the pupil registers, missing persons (if any) are identified and reported to the Senior Deputy Head, and appropriate action is taken by the Fire Officer, or other fire warden acting in their absence.

In the absence of the Senior Deputy Head the Deputy Head (Co-Curricular and Operations) will deputise.

Staff and Visitors Reporting

All staff and visitors must register on arrival and departure with the School's access log system.

This is linked to the Door Access system (physical access control), and is also accessible contactless by scanning QR codes, by using the sign-in tablets, or from your laptop / PC using the designated app.

The Muster Coordinator will confirm that all staff and visitors are accounted for.

Fire List Number	The following people	Report to the following lead staff	Deputy in case of absence
1	Senior Teaching Staff (excluding Peri Staff)	Deputy Head (Academic) and Assistant Head (Pupil Welfare)	Deputy Head (Co-Curricular and Operations)
2	Prep Staff (excluding Peri Staff)	Interim Head of Prep	Head of EYFS
3	Administration Staff	Attendance and Welfare Officer (via their line manager/group leader)	Receptionist
4	Peri Staff	Attendance and Welfare Officer	Receptionist
5	Domestic Services and Maintenance Staff	Domestic Services Manager	Domestic Services Supervisor
6	Catering Staff	Catering Manager	Deputy Catering Manager
7	Visitors	Receptionist	Attendance and Welfare Officer

All lead staff, in turn, report to Senior Deputy Head, or the senior member of staff present once Fire Lists are completed.

In the event of any fire evacuation the Fire Officer (or other fire warden acting in their absence) will check with the Muster Coordinator that all persons are accounted for and will ensure that nobody re-enters any buildings until it is deemed safe to do so.

No-one may leave the Assembly Point until instructed to do so by the Muster Coordinator.

Special Evacuation Requirements

Guidance on the Evacuation of Disabled Persons from the School Buildings

Pupils with a disability must be identified and information held in the School Office. A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) must be completed for each individual requiring support to exit the school buildings. This also applies to pregnant women and any person with a temporary physical impairment, for example anyone temporarily using crutches.

A Responsible Adult will be nominated for any pupil requiring assistance in an emergency evacuation. Staff must ensure that any a pupil with a known disability is aware that an alarm has been triggered and that they follow the evacuation procedure (PEEP) accordingly.

Wheelchair Users / Persons with Mobility Difficulty

Wheelchair users or any person with difficulty in walking, for example, anyone temporarily using crutches, should wait until everyone else has left the room before making their way to the exit, assisted by a Responsible Adult or other third party if required.

Visitors with Disabilities

The person hosting the visitor should ensure the visitor's safety in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Wherever possible (ie, when on the ground floors) all persons, including wheelchair users, should make their own way out of the building by utilising the fire escape routes. Whenever the route is blocked or the person is above ground floor, wheelchair users must be assisted either by the designated Responsible Adult or other third party. When evacuating the upper floors of buildings, anyone unable to leave without assistance should wait for assistance at the top of the stairs. The Responsible Adult or other third party should seek assistance where possible.

Lifts must not be used during an emergency evacuation.

Appendix 2

Fire Safety Emergency Evacuation Procedures (out of hours)

Staff Responsible: Head of Boarding

SLT Responsible: Senior Deputy Head

These procedures operate out of hours during the following times:

Overnight

Monday 1800hrs to Tuesday 0800

Tuesday 1800hrs to Wednesday 0800

Wednesday 1800hrs to Thursday 0800

Thursday 1800hrs to Friday 0800

Weekends

Friday 1800hrs to Monday 0800

The **Designated Assembly Point** is:

PRIMARY – Gravel drive in front of Main School Reception Building

SECONDARY – Corner of Playing Fields by Ford Park Road / cricket nets

General

1. A Boarding Fire Practice will be carried out every term, ideally at the beginning of each term.
2. All individuals should be aware of the location of the firefighting equipment, alarm points and escape routes, together with the fire procedure.
3. Staff will test different evacuation procedures and routes and log them in the fire log. The evacuation must be timed from the first sounding of the alarm to the end of roll-call.
4. When the fire alarm sounds all staff should help to evacuate the boarders as quickly as possible, shouting 'Fire' and checking rooms. Close windows and doors and turn off lights where possible. Take the duty roll call sheet and the signing in / out book with you.
5. It is important that the roll-call is taken outside straight away and that Boarding pupils line up in Year group order for roll-call at the Designated Assembly Point.
6. The House Parent will record the drill in the Fire Log.

Instructions to Sound / Silence / Reset the Alarm for a Fire Drill

1. **Sound** the alarm to start the evacuation. Leave the bells ringing until everyone is out.
2. After the roll call is complete, silence the alarm.
3. **Reset** the system before allowing everyone to return to the building. Then check all emergency exits throughout the house resetting alarms as necessary.

Boarding House	Location of Fire Panel / Keys	Instructions for Use of Fire Panel
Colson / Mannamead	Mannamead 2 Entrance Keys: Boarding Office	Sound: Use key to open box, Press Evacuate Silence: Press Silence button Reset: Press Reset button, lock box
Thompson	On wall beside door to staircase (all digital; no key)	Sound: press 2222 then Alarms ON/OFF Silence: press Alarms ON/OFF then Silence Buzzer Reset: press Reset system

Fire Safety Procedure in case of fire in boarding areas

(Including Colson, Mannamead and Thompson Houses)

If you discover a fire in any boarding area you must sound the alarm immediately using the nearest alarm call point.

The following actions must be followed:

1. Dial 999 saying:

For Colson or Mannamead:

“Fire at Plymouth College (state building: Colson or Mannamead) best approach via Ford Park Road”

For Thompson:

“Fire at Plymouth College, Thompson building, best approach is via Ford Park Lane, off Hyde Park Road”

2. Warn others by sounding the alarm system and by shouts of ‘FIRE’
3. Inform the Head of Boarding

Evacuation

1. The primary duty of all in charge of boarders at the time of alarm is their safe evacuation.
2. When an alarm is given, exit by the shortest safe route and go quietly to the Assembly Point and line up in Year groups.
3. Duty staff will check the register / signing out book.
4. Doors and windows should be left closed where possible but the main aim is to GET OUT AND STAY OUT.
5. Any staff on site and any contractors will assemble at the Designated Assembly Point and report to the supervising staff member.
6. Any commercial letting clients will assemble at the Designated Assembly Point and report to the supervising staff member.
7. When emergency services arrive, the **Fire Officer**, or other fire warden acting in their absence will be in charge and their instructions carried out.

False Alarms

In the case of a false alarm the procedure for a fire drill evacuation should always be followed. Fire Wardens must be informed. The Fire Officer (or other fire warden acting in their absence) will check the fire alarm control panel to discover the location of the false alarm or fault. If the false alarm / fault is easily identified and the house is safe the duty staff may silence the alarm and let everyone return to the house.

The evacuation must be recorded in the Fire Log.

If the fault is not easily identified and the fire alarm control panel cannot be reset this should be followed up with the maintenance team.

Fire Prevention in the Boarding Houses

All staff should be aware of and follow basic fire safety and good housekeeping rules, such as:

- a. Cardboard boxes, luggage and other combustible materials should be kept in a locked storeroom when not in use and not left around the house.
- b. Corridors, stairways, entrances and exits must be kept clear.
- c. Items on display boards can be a fire risk if hung near sources of heat. Decorations must not be hung from light fittings.
- d. General tidiness is important especially around electrical appliances.
- e. Smoking and vaping is not permitted anywhere in the School buildings or grounds.
- f. All storerooms must be kept locked shut.
- g. Boiler rooms should be kept clean, clear and locked.
- h. Electrical equipment must be used properly and kept in safe working order. Electrical points should never be overloaded. Cables should not trail across the bedroom floors.
- i. Kitchen equipment should be turned off at night (except for fridges and freezers).
- j. Computers, televisions and DVD players should be turned off at night and not left on standby.
- k. All fire doors must be kept shut; a door wedge may only be used to hold a door open for a short period of time, e.g. while a delivery is made, or cleaning is in progress. Any wedges in use must be removed as soon as the activity has been completed or when a fire alarm sounds.
- l. No kettles, cooking appliances, electric blankets or heaters are allowed in any bedroom. If discovered, staff are expected to confiscate the items and hand them in to the Head of Boarding.
- m. Boarders may not light candles, incense or any other kind of naked flame in the boarding house at any time. Staff may not leave these items unattended if used in staff accommodation.
- n. Over exuberant use of aerosol deodorants may set off the fire alarm system.
- o. Boarding house irons must be left unplugged when not in use.
- p. All residents are encouraged only to plug in the electrical equipment they are using at the time rather than leaving everything plugged in all the time. Personal electrical equipment must be PAT tested on a regular basis.

*Plymouth College is part of the Galaxy Global Education Group. The College is managed by the Schools Management Board of the Galaxy Global Education Group (*which is responsible for Group Governance and Local Advisory Board Liaison, Co-ordinating Learning Initiatives & Setting Group KPIs, Regulatory Compliance, Safeguarding Oversight & Student Voice*). The Local Advisory Board (LAB) is an advisory sub-committee of the Galaxy Global Education Group Schools Management Board, providing local insight, support, and challenge to the school's leadership with regard to educational standards and school improvement, safeguarding and welfare, community and stakeholder engagement, compliance and reporting. The Chair of the LAB is appointed by the Chair of the Schools Management Board and the LAB is composed of 3 to 4 local members appointed by the Chair of the Schools Management Board (with whom formal governance authority rests) and approved by the Board of Directors of the Galaxy Global Education Group.