

FIRE SAFETY POLICY

All Sites, including Boarding

Last reviewed:	September 2024
Next review date:	October 2025
Responsibility:	Head of Operations Health & Safety Officer
Governance:	Finance & General Purpose Committee

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 accommodations with specific responsibilities as below:

- Governors ensure 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 Bursar.
- 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 Head Porter.
- All employees have the responsibility to co-operate 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.

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'. This person will:

1. Ensure that all means of escape are properly maintained, kept free from obstruction and available for safe and effective use at all times. In addition, 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 regular 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 so as 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 utilises the services of various outside personnel 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 weekly basis
- Six monthly 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 located on the Health & Safety Google Drive.

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 Office.

Fire Risk Assessment

The School has a comprehensive fire risk assessment in place. These assessments are kept electronically in the Health & Safety Google Folder.

The fire risk assessments identify who will be at risk if there is a 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 etc and where these people are likely to be located.

The fire risk assessment 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 and attend 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 their 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 evaluate the effectiveness of the school's evacuation procedures. The findings of each drill are recorded and remedial actions implemented.

Evacuation Procedures

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 8.00am to 5.00pm) **Appendix 2** Boarding.

Fire Safety Emergency Evacuation Procedures

These procedures cover Monday to Friday during the school day between the hours of 8.00am and 5.00pm.

Activating the Fire Alarm

The person discovering a fire should break the glass of the nearest alarm and from a safe location, if possible, contact Reception to confirm that there is actually a fire. The emergency services must be called by dialling (9)999 as the Fire Brigade no longer comes out automatically during the school day. If the person discovering the fire cannot make contact with Reception, they should make the decision to dial 999 themselves.

If the fire is in the kitchen, the Catering Manager or Duty Kitchen supervisor should call (9)999 and immediately send someone to break the glass of the alarm and advise School staff that the Fire Brigade has been notified.

IN ALL CASES WHEN THE FIRE ALARM SOUNDS, AN ORDERLY EVACUATION WILL TAKE PLACE AND ALL OTHER PROCEDURES BELOW WILL BE FOLLOWED.

On hearing the fire alarm, all persons should proceed to the Designated Assembly Point:

THE ASTRO PITCH

- Where appropriate, ensure classroom windows are closed, if possible.
- **Teaching Staff** must accompany pupils in silence to the Designated Assembly Point 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.
- Use the quickest route unless a blockage makes this impossible. Be prepared to find an alternative route if necessary. Should the alarm ring outside of normal 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 their classrooms or walk through any other buildings to get to the Designated Assembly Point.
- **The School Office Staff** will take the evacuation checklists, registers and other required documentation to the Assembly Point.
- **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 the Fire Brigade and direct them to the source of the fire.

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/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 from School reception 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** – will 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 signing in/out books held on Reception, 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/Visitors Reporting Procedure

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

Out of Hours Procedure

If a fire alarm is sounded after or before school hours (5.00pm – 8.00am):

- The teacher/tutor in charge of the activity in which pupils are involved will supervise their evacuation to the Designated Assembly Point: THE ASTRO PITCH and liaise with the senior member of staff present.
- Catering and Domestic Services staff on site together with any contractors will assemble at the Designated Assembly Point and report to the supervising staff member.
- Any commercial letting clients will assemble at the Designated Assembly Point and report to the supervising staff member.

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 a fire evacuation drill, The Fire Officer, or other fire warden acting in their absence will check with the Senior Deputy Head 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 Senior Deputy Head or the Deputy.

Guidance on the Evacuation of Disabled Persons from the School Buildings

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

A 'Responsible Adult' will be appointed for any pupil requiring assistance in an emergency evacuation. Where staff have a pupil with a known disability, they must ensure that the pupil is aware that the alarm has been triggered and that they follow the evacuation procedure accordingly.

Specific Evacuation Requirements

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 their '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 their 'Responsible Adult' or other third party. When evacuating the upper floors of the 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.

All Boarding Houses Fire Procedures

Staff Responsible: Head of Boarding

SLT Responsible: Deputy Head (Pastoral)

A Fire Practice will be carried out at the beginning of each term.

All individuals should be aware of the location of the firefighting equipment, alarm points and escape routes, together with the fire procedure.

Staff will test different evacuation procedures and routes and log them in the fire log. The evacuation must be timed from the sounding of the alarm to the end of roll-call.

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.

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.

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 at College House

(Including Colson, Mannamead and Thompson Houses)

Warning

If you discover FIRE in the boarding house you must at once sound the alarm using the nearest red square fire box and then make sure that:

1. the fire brigade is called by dialling 999 saying:
'Fire at Plymouth College (state building: Colson or Mannamead) best approach via Ford Park Road'.
For Thompson the best approach is via Ford Park Lane, off Hyde Park Road
Others in the boarding house are warned by sounding the alarm system and by shouts of 'FIRE'.
2. The Head of Boarding is informed.

3. The Head is informed via the House Parent or the School Office.

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. Duty staff will then check the register/signing out book.
3. Doors and windows should be left closed where possible but the main aim is to GET OUT AND STAY OUT.
4. When the fire brigade arrives, 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 be followed. The Fire Warden (Head of Boarding/Porters) 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 is not permitted 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 should 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/ when the 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, joss sticks 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 after use.
- p. All residents should be encouraged only to plug in the electrical equipment they are using at the time rather than leaving everything plugged in all of the time. Personal electrical equipment is PAT tested on a regular basis.