Fire Safety Policy & Guidance

Reviewed November 2020

FIRE SAFETY POLICY AND GUIDANCE

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 Newark Orchard School will ensure the provision of comprehensive risk controls to prevent fire and to ensure preservation of life in the event of fire for its areas of responsibility.

1.2 Fire is a prime concern for Newark Orchard School who will take the following actions in order to protect its employees and others who may be affected and to meet legal and financial responsibilities.

1.3 Newark Orchard School will conduct fire risk assessment on the premises where its employees work.

1.4 Newark Orchard School, through its management structures, will make and maintain arrangements to manage the risk of fire, specifically:
- Introduce and maintain risk controls that will prevent fire
- Eliminate or reduce the risk from dangerous (flammable or explosive) substances
- Take steps to detect fire and where risk assessment makes it appropriate, to fight fire
- Warn people in the event of a fire
- Provide and maintain safe means of escape from premises
- Provide an emergency plan and people to carry it out in the event of fire
- Provide specific emergency plans in respect of dangerous substances
- Carry out drills to check the efficiency of any emergency plans
- Maintain all fire risk controls in an efficient state and working order
- Appoint competent persons to assist with compliance with fire safety legislation
- Provide employees and employees from other organisations with information on hazards, risks, risk controls and emergency plans
- Provide employees with training that will enable them to safeguard themselves and others.
- Provide information to the Fire and Rescue Service that will help protect their employees and assist them to fight a fire.

1.5 All employees are required to take reasonable care, to co-operate with the School and to report dangerous situations and shortcomings in fire prevention or protection.

1.6 The premises managers will maintain the following paperwork. This must be kept up to date and accessible at the premises.
- Fire Policy & Guidance
- Fire risk assessment records (including local management arrangements and action plans)
- Building floor plans detailing relevant fire safety information
- Fire Log Book (records of fire safety maintenance, inspections and drills)
- Employee training records
- Emergency Action Plans

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO) came into force on 1st October 2006. The RRFSO applies in England and Wales and affects all non-domestic premises.

2.2 Fire legislation as it relates to Nottinghamshire County Council is enforced by Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS). Health and Safety legislation, which may relate to fire safety, is enforced by the Health and Safety Executive.

2.3 The RRFSO replaces previous fire safety legislation. If your premises were in use before 2006, then they may have been subject to the Fire Precautions Act 1971 and the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulation 1997 as amended 1999. Any fire certificate issued under the Fire Precautions Act 1971 will cease to have any effect.

2.4 The RRFSO requires fire precautions to be put in place 'where necessary' and to the extent that is 'reasonable and practicable' in the circumstances of the case.

2.5 Responsibility for complying with the RRFSO rests with the 'Responsible person'. This is not an individual. The actual duties are discharged by a number of employees. Sections 4 and 5 give the details of these responsibilities.

2.6 If you are the 'responsible person' you <u>must</u> carry out a fire risk assessment which must focus on the safety of all 'relevant persons'. This is not a new requirement, the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997 as amended 1999 also required a fire risk assessment to be carried out.

2.7 Why is this important?
- Fire kills – In 2004 (England and Wales) Fire and Rescue Services attended over 33,400 fires in non-domestic buildings. These fires killed 38 people and injured over 1300.
- Fire costs – The costs of a serious fire can be high and afterwards many businesses do not reopen. In 2004, the cost as a consequence of fire, including property damage, human casualties and lost business, was estimated at £2.5 billion.
- In the years 2002-2005, there were 104 insurance claims for fire incidents on Authority premises. These totalled £16.5 million with 3 claims making up £16 million of this total.

2.8 The fire risk assessment should pay particular attention to those at special risk, such as disabled people, those who you know have special needs and young persons and must include consideration of any dangerous substance(s) liable to be on the premises. The fire risk assessment will help to identify risks that can be removed or reduced and to decide the nature and extent of the general fire precautions we need to take.

3.0 CORPORATE ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 Planning and implementation

3.1.1 Fire risk assessment is used to plan the implementation, maintenance and improvement when necessary, of fire risk controls.

3.1.2 Fire risk assessments will be conducted on each site by a NCC Fire Safety Advisor on a bi-annual basis. The Head Teacher and School Business *Leader* will conduct a Fire Risk Assessment on each site on an annual basis.

3.1.3 The findings of the fire risk assessment will be confirmed or amended by the Head Teacher and School Business *Leader* before dissemination. Any fire risks identified during a fire risk assessment that are of immediate, major concern will be pointed out for prompt action.

3.1.4 The Head Teacher and School Business Manager will be responsible for maintaining fire risk controls and emergency plans.

3.2   Control

3.2.1 Control will be established over the management of fire safety. This will be achieved by:
- Establishing and communicating clear responsibilities for fire safety
- Ensuring that employees are clear on their responsibilities within this policy.
- Achieving necessary competence for all employees to discharge their responsibilities.
- Regular monitoring of the effectiveness of management arrangements and fire safety performance.
- Promoting the importance of fire safety within the school.

3.3   Review

3.3.1 The review will promote successes in the fire safety management system and make recommendations for improving performance as appropriate.

4.0   FIRE SAFETY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

4.1   Organisation of people

Position/Job	Responsibility
Manager(s) in control of building The "Responsible Person(s)" Head Teacher	• Overall control of fire safety on the premises/site • Controlling actions on site that impact on fire risk control • Ensuring that there is a fire risk assessment for the site and that it is reviewed regularly and kept up to date • Ensuring that there is an "Emergency Action Plan" and that it is kept up to date • Maintaining records in accordance with 2.6 of this document.
Manager in control of building or their nominated person(s)	• Implementing and maintaining fire risk controls and emergency plans • Providing information and training to people at risk • Monitoring effectiveness of fire risk controls • Conducting periodic fire drills
All managers on site	• Implementing and maintaining fire risk controls and emergency plans within their area of control • Providing fire safety information and training to people at risk in their area of control • Co-operating with other managers to control fire risks
Fire Wardens (appointed when appropria	• Assistance with premises evacuation

4.2   Planning and implementation (Fire risk assessment)

4.2.1   The risk assessment will indicate those fire risk controls that are in place and any further risk controls that should be implemented. If choices need to be made on which further controls to implement first, preference should be given to those that will result in the greatest reduction in risk to the largest number of people.

4.2.2   Section 1.4 gives a list of the fire arrangements that should be in place to meet the requirements of the RRFSO. These risk controls do not include special, technical or organisational controls required to control fire or other risks from work processes under other statutory provisions, for example not overloading electrical systems.

Fire safety risk assessment

1 Identify fire hazards
Identify:
- sources of ignition;
- sources of fuel; and
- sources of oxygen.

2 Identify people at risk
Identify:
- people in and around the premises; and
- people who are especially at risk.

3 Evaluate, remove or reduce, and protect from risk
- Evaluate the risk of a fire starting.
- Evaluate the risk to people from a fire.
- Remove or reduce fire hazards.
- Remove or reduce the risks to people from a fire.
- Protect people by providing fire precautions.

4 Record, plan, inform, instruct, and train
- Record any major findings and action you have taken.
- Discuss and work with other responsible people.
- Prepare an emergency plan.
- Inform and instruct relevant people.
- Provide training.

5 Review
- Review your fire-risk assessment regularly.
- Make changes where necessary.

Remember to review your fire-risk assessment regularly.

A basic approach to fire risk assessment

4.2.3   Details of specific risk controls to be applied at a particular site will be included in the risk assessment.

4.2.4   Risk assessments must give details of all people at risk from a fire. This must include consideration of the risk to young persons (less than 18 years of age) and to people with disabilities if they might reasonably be expected to be on site.

4.3   Control

4.3.1   The responsible person and other managers will need to exert control over the following activities, in order to maintain standards for fire safety:
- Design of building work that will not compromise fire risk controls
- Selection and maintenance of work equipment that minimises risk of fire
- Managing work by contractors, so that fire risks are identified and controlled
- Provision of training and information to all people who need it
- Maintaining fire safety information and records

- Maintenance of fire risk controls over time
- Maintenance of effective emergency procedures through times of change
- Secure waste storage and regular waste disposal
- Effective security arrangements
- Purchasing, storing, handling and use of dangerous substances that minimises the risk of fire
- An assessment is made of fire safety implications of one-off events

4.4   Measuring performance

4.4.1   Fire evacuation drills will be carried out periodically in order to check the effectiveness of the Fire Emergency Action Plan. The outcome of any drill must be recorded in the Fire Log Book

4.4.2   Any incidents involving fire will be reported via the Authority's reporting system on form (SR 3/5).

4.4.3   Managers or their nominated person(s) will make period inspections of the workplace and work activities to check that fire prevention and protection measures remain in place. Inspections should be recorded in the fire log book.

4.4.4   Fire risk controls will be included in inspections/audits by the Departmental Health and Safety Advisors and Strategic Fire Safety Advisor.

4.4.5   Records, particularly the "Fire Log Book", will be kept of all actions taken to maintain, inspect or check the performance of any fire risk controls.

4.5   Review

4.5.1   The Head Teacher will review the performance of the local fire risk management system on an annual basis or during the planning stage for any significant changes (see 5.3). This will include a thorough review of the fire risk assessment and of any data collected when measuring performance.

4.5.2   A copy of the annual review sheet will be sent to the Strategic Fire Safety Advisor if they show that any significant changes have been made.

4.5.3   The Responsible Person (see table 2 above) will ensure that the building fire risk assessment is kept up to date following any building alterations or additions and following the annual review.

5.0   TRAINING AND INFORMATION

5.1   The School will provide such training and information as is necessary to enable employees to discharge their duties under this policy.

5.2   The Head Teacher and their nominated staff will attend the Authority's "Fire Safety Awareness" course. This will give them an understanding of:
- fire hazards and spread
- fire prevention
- fire protection
- emergency action plans
- maintenance of fire safety measures
- legislation and responsibilities

5.3 Fire Wardens (if appointed) will receive site based training that enables them to assist with an evacuation if the need arises.

5.4 All employees will receive a fire safety induction on recruitment. A typical induction will include a tour of the site and information about:
- Fire hazards and the individual's role in prevention (e.g. turn off portable heaters)
- Fire protection measures and the individual's role in maintaining them (e.g. closing fire doors)
- Identification of fire wardens (if appointed)
- Emergency action plan/evacuation plan
- Escape routes
- Security arrangements

6.0 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

6.1 Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

6.1.1 This requires the County Council to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of its employees and of any other persons who may be affected by its operations. This requirement includes hazards from fire. The Authority has legal duties as an employer and as an occupier of premises.

6.2 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (as Amended) 1999 (the "Management Regulations"

6.2.1 The general requirements of the Management Regulations will be discharged by compliance with the more specific requirements for fire safety under the RRFSO.

6.3 Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

6.3.1 The RRFSO is now the primary legislation for fire safety in England and Wales. It replaced the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997 as amended 1999 and fire certification required under the Fire Precautions Act 1971 with:
- a general duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of employees
- a general duty, in relation to non-employees, to take such fire precautions as may reasonably be required in the circumstances to ensure that premises are safe
- a duty to carry out a fire risk assessment that includes consideration of dangerous substances and the presence of young people where relevant.

6.3.2 Domestic premises (apart from the shared areas of multi-occupancy domestic premises) and Agricultural or Forestry land away from main buildings are exempted from the RRFSO. The risk of fire from activities on agricultural & forestry sites must still be assessed under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

7.0 REFERENCES

HSE "Successful health and safety management" (HSG65)
Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005" (SI 2005 Number 1541)
HM Government "Fire safety risk assessment – Shops and offices"
HM Government "RRFSO - A short guide to making your premises safe from fire