



Fire Risk (Prevention) Policy and Procedures incl. EYFS

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Policy

General Statements

The Board of Governors of Cheam School Educational Trust (the Employers) are accountable for fire safety at the School. To achieve this, the Board of Governors will ensure that 'best practice' is followed in accordance with the *Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005*^{1,2} and other education specific guidance. This document describes the policies and procedures the Governors deem vital to ensure that risks from fire are identified and that arrangements are in place to control those risks.

The Staff of Cheam School Educational Trust (the Employees) have a responsibility to take reasonable care in carrying out their duties.

Responsibilities

The *Headmaster* is primarily responsible to the Board of Governors for ensuring that their policy is followed on a daily basis. To assist him in this responsibility, the *Director of Finance & Operations (DFO)* is the *School's Designated Fire Safety Officer (DFSFO)*.

Fire safety forms a key element of the standing agenda of the Health, Safety, Security & Environmental (HSSE) Committee, whose objective is 'no harm to people; no harm to the planet'. The HSSE Committee meets at the *start* of every academic term and is chaired by the *DFO*.

The *DFSFO* ensures that:

- This policy is kept under regular review
- Policies and procedures are promulgated across the whole school community
- Everyone on site is clear on where they should go in the event of a fire (muster points)
- Records are kept of fire drills for staff and pupils
- Procedures for emergency evacuation are regularly tested and lessons learned
- Appropriate training is provided to staff
- Cheam's fire risk assessment is regularly reviewed and updated
- Fire prevention measures are followed
- Fire procedures and Cheam's fire risk assessment are reviewed on each occasion that a building is materially altered, extended or rebuilt, or when new buildings are added to the site

The *HSEQ Manager* is IOSH qualified³ with extensive knowledge and experience of Cheam's fire detection, alarm and suppression systems and the site more generally. As such, the *HSEQ Manager* acts as Cheam's appointed competent person, responsible for assisting with preventative and protective measures (including firefighting and evacuation).

¹ Cheam notes that the *Fire Safety Act 2021* ("the Act") received Royal Assent on 29th April 2021 and was implemented on 16th May 2022 taking effect immediately. The *Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022* ("the Regulations") arising from the Act were laid before Parliament on 18th May 2022 and take effect from 23rd January 2023. The Regulations were introduced to meet the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's Phase 1 recommendations. The Act amends the *Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005* ("the FSO") and clarifies that "Responsible Persons" for multi-occupied residential buildings [any building containing two or more sets of domestic premises] must manage and reduce the risk of fire for the structure. The FSO applies to a building's structure and all doors between domestic premises and "common parts". Cheam is preparing for the introduction of the Regulations in January 2023 by reviewing, and updating where necessary, its fire risk assessment to take account of buildings' structures, external walls and flat entrance doors.

² As amended by Section 156 of the Building Safety Act 2022 which came into force on 1 October 2023.

³ Institute of Occupational Safety & Health – Managing Safely

Fire Wardens have recently been reintroduced at Cheam. Each warden is responsible for a specific area of the School site (with cover arrangements in place for half-days etc.) and supports emergency evacuation procedures. They receive additional training in spotting fire hazards, the practical use of fire extinguishers and the provision of ‘safety assistance’ in the event of a fire.

Teaching staff are responsible for escorting their pupils safely out of the building in silence and in an orderly fashion. They are responsible for conducting a headcount on arrival at the assembly point, and for ensuring that the name of anyone who cannot be accounted for (and, if possible, their likely location) is passed immediately to the person controlling the muster point(s). It is the responsibility of the *DFSO* to ensure that this information is passed to the Fire and Rescue Service as soon as they arrive.

Form tutors are responsible for classroom evacuation plans. These plans must be clearly displayed inside classrooms, normally on the inside of the classroom door. Form tutors are responsible for ensuring their classes know and understand what is expected of them in the event of a fire.

In the event of a fire during working hours, the *School Office Secretaries* take relevant documentation to the muster point(s) to assist in the process of ensuring all pupils are properly accounted for.

Visitors should be accompanied at all times. However, they are also provided with a ‘Safeguarding and Safety Information for Visitors’ card on arrival at the School’s main reception which includes guidance on Fire and Evacuation and what to do in the case of emergencies and fire alarms. Contractors are similarly briefed by the *HSEQ Manager*.

Fire Risk Assessment

Background

The Authorised Fire Safety Inspecting Officer of the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority visited Cheam in August 2018. The purpose of that visit was to inspect improvements notified in an April 2017 Action Plan. The Inspecting Officer concluded that the School had a reasonable standard of fire safety and that the premises did not present a high risk.

In October 2019, as part of its ongoing duty to periodically review its fire risk assessment and fire safety measures to avoid high risks, Cheam commissioned an extensive report by *BB7*, a specialist third-party contractor. This raised almost 100 action points and led to a major programme of immediate and multi-year works. All high priority actions were closed and, despite the disruption in recent years caused by COVID that saw many staff furloughed, all other medium and low priority items have also been closed or appropriate action plans put in place.

In parallel, Cheam’s fire detection system in the Main House where boarders sleep was upgraded by *Pyrotec*, another specialist contractor, to BS5839 Type 1 (or Category L1) coverage. This means detection sensors are included in all rooms and circulation spaces above a specific size, including escape routes. Fire detection systems in other buildings were also upgraded and the whole system fully integrated, providing a site-wide solution (including an external klaxon to alert those outside) that supports whole school evacuations in less than four minutes.

Review

All School premises are subject to a fire risk assessment which is reviewed and updated at least annually by the *HSEQ Manager* and *DFSO*. New assessments will be performed every three years by a specialist

contractor⁴. Cheam adopts a philosophy of continuous improvement in its aim to reduce as far as is reasonably practicable the risk of fire at School⁵.

The fire risk assessment will also be reviewed in the event of significant changes to any building or its usage.

A copy of Cheam's fire risk assessment (and action log) is available on site. Copies are held by the *HSEQ Manager* in the maintenance office and by the *DFSO* in the Bursary. As a matter of course, employees are made aware of specific hazards in regular staff briefings or via the cascade of minutes from the HSSE Committee.

Weekly checks performed by the property services team will highlight matters requiring escalation to the *HSEQ Manager* and/or *DFSO*. This helps embed a culture that ensures walkways and fire escapes are kept clear of obstruction and tripping hazards, fire doors are not left (wedged) open and windows are closed in unoccupied rooms.

Fire Detection

Cheam has an integrated fire detection system across its entire site. This offers Category L1 coverage in the Main House where boarders sleep.

The system (including emergency lighting) is comprehensively serviced every six months by a specialist third-party contractor, with records retained by the *HSEQ Manager* in the maintenance offices.

Fire Alarm

Fire alarms are located in all School premises together with an external klaxon to alert those outside. All alarms are integrated with the main fire detection system.

Fire alarm tests are conducted weekly during term time at 10:10 a.m. on Fridays. Different activators are used, whenever possible. Records of these tests are retained by the *HSEQ Manager* in the maintenance offices.

Alarms are serviced at the same time as the fire detection system; every six months by a specialist contractor.

Firefighting Equipment

Fire extinguishers (of varying types, suitable for each area) are located every 30 metres throughout the School premises, in line with statutory requirements.

As a high-risk area, a separate fire suppression system is situated in the School's kitchens.

All firefighting equipment is checked, serviced and/or replaced annually by a specialist contractor. Service dates are recorded on each extinguisher. Similarly, the fire suppression system is tested every year. Records of all checks are retained by the *HSEQ Manager* in the maintenance offices.

⁴ The most recent fire risk assessment was completed in February 2023 by *Red Box*; the Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service revisited Cheam in November 2023.

⁵ Cheam notes the withdrawal in January 2022 of post-Grenfell advice by The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Building Safety Programme for owners of buildings over 18 metres with partial Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding, because it drove a cautious approach to building safety that went beyond what the Department considers necessary.

Emergency Lighting

The School has installed emergency lighting where lighting continues to be required in the event of a mains power failure. This includes stairwells, passageways and emergency exits.

Since Cheam is in an area susceptible to mains power outages, it also operates a back-up generator fuelled by (white) diesel. This protects the Main House where boarders sleep, as well as limited other areas of the site. Frequent temporary outages, and in particular the extended outage caused by the significant storms and related damage in February 2022, have demonstrated the immediacy and reliability of this alternative source of power. Circuit breakers protect key systems and equipment from overload during transition periods.

Emergency lighting is tested every six months by a specialist third-party contractor, with records retained by the *HSEQ Manager* in the maintenance offices.

Fire Training

The *DFSO* organises fire (refresher) training for all staff. Recently, this has migrated from a face-to-face presentation before the start of each academic year during the September INSET, to an online module that can be completed at any time. In addition to relevant legislation and regulations, staff are trained on the action to take if they discover a fire or hear the alarm. Training includes theory on the conditions that give rise to fire (i.e. the presence of oxygen, flammable materials and a source of ignition) and guidance on the different types and appropriate use of fire extinguishers. The *DFSO* maintains a record all training. The *HSEQ Manager* is IOSH qualified and is expected to complete refresher training at least every three years.

Fire Wardens receive additional (refresher) training, usually during the January INSET. This will include emergency evacuation procedures; a practical session on the use of fire extinguishers; how to spot fire hazards; and the provision of 'safety assistance' in the event of a fire.

Pupils are informed of exits and escape routes by form tutors who are responsible for classroom evacuation plans. Maps marking escape routes (and alternative routes if these are blocked) are displayed on Boarding floors. Pupils practice safe and orderly evacuations via planned drills which occur at least once per term. Drills are conducted at different times to ensure pupils practice using escape routes from different parts of the School. Boarders also practice a night-time evacuation at least once per term.

Visitors are provided with a 'Safeguarding and Safety Information for Visitors' card on arrival at the School's main reception. This includes guidance on Fire and Evacuation and what to do in the case of emergencies and fire alarms. Contractors are similarly briefed by the *HSEQ Manager*.

Fire Records

Records are kept of training; inspections; evacuations and maintenance of systems and equipment.

Procedures

General Statements

The priority is to minimise the risk to life and to reduce injury by ensuring that staff, pupils and visitors do not add to the fire risk and conduct a safe evacuation if a fire breaks out. The procedures set out below are designed to help staff, pupils and visitors respond calmly and effectively should an evacuation

be required.

Fire Alarm Activation

Sensors and call points

It is most likely that the alarm will be activated by heat or smoke sensors located on ceilings throughout the school. However, if you discover a fire that has not yet triggered the alarm, this can be activated manually using one of the many wall-mounted red call points located around the School: break the small glass panel.

Fighting a Fire

If a minor fire has just started near you, and you feel confident in doing so, a fire extinguisher can be used to fight the fire. However, your safety remains imperative:

- Ensure you keep your back towards a means of escape
- Only use the type of extinguisher suited to the flammable materials involved (see diagram)
- Discharge the extinguisher fully; do not stop, even if you think the fire has been put out
- If, after discharging the extinguisher, the fire is not out, abandon it and leave safely by the nearest exit



In the Event of a Fire Alarm Sounding

Evacuation Plans

If you are in class, you should follow the evacuation plan⁶ for that room. Plans must be clearly displayed inside classrooms, normally on the inside of the classroom door (see example at Annex A). Pupils should leave calmly and quietly with you; no one should talk or run. Make your way to the relevant muster point(s).

If you are in any other part of the School, you should exit by the nearest door and proceed directly to the muster point(s).

Visitors should be accompanied to the muster point(s), in line with the guidance⁷ issued to them on arrival.

Specific arrangements known as *Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)* should be in place for anyone who may require additional assistance. This could include disabled persons, those with temporary mobility issues (e.g. on crutches) or where language barriers may exist.

In all cases, doors and windows should be closed to retard the development and spreading of the fire. *Fire Wardens* will assist as they clear areas, but your help will minimise the time it takes to do so.

Automatic Fire Doors & Fire Exits

There are various automatic fire doors that close in the event of a fire alarm sounding. Under no circumstances should they be tampered with, propped open or blocked. Fire exits are also clearly marked and illuminated; they must not be blocked or used as a general exit except in the case of fire. The *HSEQ Manager* and *DFSO* will regularly inspect escape routes.

It is an offence to prop open a fire door. This is because it can cause bowing which prevents the door from sealing correctly.

Identifiable Personnel

During an evacuation, the *DFSO* and *HSEQ Manager* are identified by their yellow *Hi-Viz* jackets. The *DFSO* will be stationed on the West Porch steps to oversee the evacuation and will remain in radio contact with the *HSEQ Manager* as the fire alarm is investigated. The *DFSO* will also be carrying a mobile telephone.

During an evacuation, *Fire Wardens* are identified by their red *Hi-Viz* vests.

Summoning the Fire Brigade

In the event of being notified that a real fire exists that has not been contained, the *DFSO* will immediately ring the Fire & Rescue Service.

At the Muster Point(s)

The Prep School muster at the tennis courts; Pre-Prep muster at their top playground. If either of those locations is unavailable, the secondary muster point is Benham Courtyard.

Once you have arrived at the muster point, pupils should line up in their form classes to enable staff to quickly account for all children. Report immediately if anyone is missing and await further instructions.

⁶ Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)

⁷ General Emergency Evacuation Plan (GEEP)

In the event of a false alarm, the *DFSO* will issue an all-clear message and staff and pupils will be dismissed. Lessons learned will be captured to enable continuous improvement.

In the event of a real fire that has not been contained, the *DFSO* will advise the Fire and Rescue Service of anyone reported missing. All those gathered at the muster point(s) will remain in-situ. On no account should anyone return to any building until given permission to do so by the Fire and Rescue Service.

Evening Routine

The procedures outlined above apply to day-time evacuations. A separate schedule applies for alarms after 18:15pm through to 08:30am:



FIRE OFFICER

The Director of Finance and Operations (DFO) has overall responsibility for fire safety throughout the school both in term and holiday time. However, the DFO does not live on site and may be away during term time on school business, on annual leave or during the night when the fire alarm is activated. It is then the responsibility of another delegated member of staff to respond.

Staff areas of responsibility over night in case of fire alarm sounding/emergency.

Time (Every night)	Staff	Area of Responsibility	Other info
18.15 – 20.30	ANY MEMBER OF STAFF	<i>If alarm sounds between 18.15 and 20.15 staff must assist in locating children and send to courtyard asap. Outdoor Alarm: this is now integrated into main fire system so will automatically sound for 2 minutes if fire alarm is set off.</i>	<i>Some boarders may be in Woods or pool or playing golf/sport outside so staff must help and help to locate all children.</i>
19.15-08.30	TC/FC & boy Gaps in main building (& staff/matrons on duty)	<i>Clear boys' corridor, ensure everyone has evacuated the building. Shut doors/windows where possible.</i>	<i>Liaise with MBS & WP in the event of emergency</i>
19.15-08.30	RP & girl Gaps in main building (& staff/matrons on duty)	<i>Clear girls' corridor, ensure everyone has evacuated the building. Shut doors/windows where possible</i>	
19.15-08.30	MBS	<i>Manage courtyard for when children start to arrive. Open barrier with key if time. Phone on site staff (when required & in case of emergency to assist.)</i>	<i>Liaise with TC & WP in the event of emergency.</i>
19.15-08.30	WP	<i>Liaise with MBS & TC regarding seriousness of emergency & call 999 if not already done so.</i>	
19.15-08.30	Paul Miller (Caretaker)	<i>On arrival determine cause of alarm/emergency. Liaise with MBS, & TC before feeding back to WP.</i>	<i>Liaise with DFO in the event of emergency</i>
19.15-08.30	Gap students living in flat above courtyard.	<i>Assist MBS in courtyard to ensure children are silent. If safe to do so enter school building/position themselves by kitchen area and ensure children are silent as they make their way to courtyard.</i>	
19.15-08.30	Monday: EG/NM Tuesday: TC/FC/RP Wednesday: TC/FC/RP Thursday: EJ Friday: CB/MK Sunday: TC/FC/RP	<i>On receiving call from MBS assist staffing of children in courtyard ASAP. Please keep phones 'on' overnight. (NM: Reserve)</i>	

Useful Phone numbers: MBS: 07787 998141 TC: 07717 455125 FC: 07855 332182 RP: 07340 216222 Boarding Flat: 01635 267809 Lloyd Jenkins: 07810 856303	Paul Miller: 07510 053168 Duty Matron: 07917 862691 Surgery: 01635 267808 NM: 07787 528588 DP: 07739026132 On site duty staff:	Mon: EG : 07531 122302/ NM: 07787 528588 Tues: TC/FC/RP Wed: TC/FC/RP Thursday: EJ : 07957 545837 Fri: Cba: 07983 354411 / MK: 07479231956 Sun: TC/FC/RP
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Policy Owners

Staff: Director of Finance & Operations
Governors: Financial Sub-Committee

Latest Reviews

Staff Policy Owner: February 2024
Compliance: February 2024
Board of Governors: June 2024

Annex A

Example evacuation plan



FIRE NOTICE

for CLASSROOM X

EXIT Route to be taken:

Through Chapel Foyer Doors or via Notice Board Area side doors onto front of school car park and then walk around outside of school to assembly area.

Location of Nearest Fire Extinguisher:

Top of Chapel Corridor (Notice Board Area) or in Chapel Foyer

Location of nearest '*break glass panel*' to sound fire alarm:

Top of Chapel Corridor (Notice Board Area) on wall above fire extinguisher or in Chapel Foyer

Assembly Area:

Tennis Courts. In the event that this area is dangerous assemble in Benham Courtyard.