



HORRIS HILL  
SCHOOL

# Fire Policy

**Policy reviewed:** Spring 2025

**Date of next review:** Spring 2026

# **FIRE POLICY**

## **SCOPE**

This policy is applicable to all premises under the control of the School and details the approach to the control of risk from fire.

## **OBJECTIVES**

To ensure that risks from fire are identified and that arrangements are in place to control those risks. To enable the School to comply with its duties under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and other education specific guidance.

## **ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Responsible Person under the Fire Safety Order is John Forsyth, the Proprietor, Chairman and Director of Forfar Hampshire Limited (trading as Horris Hill Preparatory School). The Responsible Person is required to comply with Articles 8 to 22 and 38 of the Fire Safety Order and any regulations made under article 24 as relevant, which set out how to ensure fire safety throughout the premises including a requirement to complete a fire risk assessment. The significant findings of this risk assessment, including measures that have been or will be taken and any groups of persons identified by the assessment as being especially at risk, must be recorded.

There is a Governor with responsibility for oversight of Health, Safety and Security and this Governor attends meetings of the Health, Safety and Security Committee.

The Health, Safety and Security Committee meets at least termly and it monitors the implementation of the Fire Policy and the effectiveness of fire safety arrangements. Minutes of the Committee's discussions are provided to meetings of the Governors and a fuller annual report on Health, Safety and Security, including commentary on fire safety matters, is provided to the Autumn meeting of the Governors.

The Bursar has responsibility for maintaining and ensuring the local implementation of the School's fire procedures. This includes arranging for fire risk assessments to be undertaken, documented and reviewed and ensuring that: regular fire drills are carried out; a register of fire drills is maintained; adequate measures are in place to prevent fire; fire detection and alarm systems, plus emergency lighting and fire-fighting systems and equipment, are tested and maintained regularly; records are kept for the installation and maintenance of fire safety systems and equipment; clear signage and fire notices are provided throughout the school; gas and electrical appliances are monitored for safety on a regular basis; and that actions identified in fire risk assessments are completed in a timely manner.

The Bursar has responsibility for overseeing any regular testing and inspections that are to be undertaken by the Maintenance team and for arranging any remedial maintenance works arising from tests, inspections, risk assessments and reports of defects.

The Bursar and Maintenance Manager will review the actions arising from any updated or reviewed fire risk assessments and the Bursar will report on progress each month to help ensure that actions are completed in a timely manner.

The Fire Officer from the local Fire and Rescue Service (Hampshire) can visit the school to inspect the premises and assess the effectiveness of the School's fire safety arrangements. The Bursar records these visits and acts in accordance with the advice received in the fire safety report.

Houseparents are to assist the Head and Bursar in taking preventative and protective measures in the boarding houses. Heads of Department and those with specific responsibilities for particular buildings or areas are to ensure that fire safety measures are observed in those buildings/areas e.g. that fire escape routes are kept clear.

It is the responsibility of all employees at the school to take reasonable precautions to prevent fire and to act in accordance with this policy and fire safety training. All employees must report any fire safety concerns to the Bursar; physical defects requiring remedial works should be reported to the Bursar.

All visitors to the school are required to sign in at Reception, where they are given specific instructions with regard to the fire evacuation procedures in the event of a fire.

When running an event in school, it is the responsibility of the person leading the event to ensure that fire exits are pointed out and that evacuation procedures are made clear to any visitors.

The Bursar is responsible for ensuring that: this policy is reviewed annually, or more often if necessary; all employees receive appropriate fire safety training and that training records are maintained.

### **FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT**

All of the School premises, other than detached staff accommodation, will be subject to a fire risk assessment. These are undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced specialist consultant (currently Watson & Watson). The fire risk assessments will be reviewed and / or updated every two years or in the event of significant changes to the buildings or their usage. A copy of the fire risk assessment report will be available on site (from the Bursar) and employees' attention will be brought to any significant hazards found in the assessment. Fire hazards will be eliminated or the risk reduced to the minimum level practicable by implementing control measures and safe systems of work.

### **FIRE DETECTION & ALARM**

Each of the School premises has adequate means for detecting fire and raising the alarm in the event of fire. The following buildings have automated detection and alarm systems: Main School building, Stow building, Music School, Greenhill (including the Theatre), the Sports Hall (including DT and Squash Courts), Wood boarding house and Bank boarding house. These automated detection and alarm systems are maintained and regularly serviced by a specialist contractor (currently Premier Fire & Safety Systems Limited who are contracted to visit 4 times a year). Other buildings have domestic style detectors and alarms.

The automated detection and alarm systems in the Main School building, Greenhill, Squash Courts the Sports Hall/DT and Squash Courts are connected to a remote monitoring service provider (Scutum south West Ltd).

The fire alarm system in each location is to be tested weekly with the date and time made known. The alarm will be activated using a different activation point each week, where this is practicable. This regime will be managed by the Maintenance Manager.

Records of tests and servicing are maintained within the Every facilities management system.

### **FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT**

The fire risk assessment will determine the minimum level of firefighting equipment which must be present in each of the School premises. Fire extinguishers of different kinds (water, foam, powder and CO<sub>2</sub>) are located appropriately within each building, according to the main type of fire risk posed.

Fire extinguishers will be serviced by a competent contractor annually (currently Red Box) and the service date recorded on each extinguisher. Records of servicing are maintained within the Every facilities management system.

### **EMERGENCY LIGHTING**

Emergency lighting must be installed in the school where lighting would continue to be required in the event of a mains power failure, e.g. stairs, passageways and emergency exits.

Emergency lighting will be tested monthly (charge & illumination) and an annual full discharge test will be conducted by a competent contractor (currently Premier Fire & Safety Systems Limited who are contracted to visit 4 times a year). The Maintenance Manager will ensure that any defects are rectified in a timely manner.

Records of testing and servicing of emergency lights are maintained within the Every facilities management system.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Fire action notices will be displayed in each building of the School premises detailing the action to take in the event of a fire and highlighting the assembly point to evacuate to in an emergency. The assembly point for the core buildings is the Astro at the front of the school. If an alarm sounds in one building during the working day, all other buildings will also be evacuated by triggering the sounder in each building to ensure that all pupils and staff can be accounted for. There must be adequate means of escape for all occupants of the school premises. These means of escape will be clearly signed with pictograms.

The means of escape will be regularly inspected by the Maintenance Department and boarding house staff to ensure they are kept clear of obstructions and tripping hazards.

Where disabled persons use the premises, specific arrangements will be made to ensure they can escape in an emergency. For staff and pupils there will be a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) in place.

Any member of staff who discovers a fire should make an immediate assessment, sound the fire alarm from a call point (if not already activated) and contact the fire brigade by dialling 999.

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 head count 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 Fire Marshall in charge of the roll call at the assembly point. It is the responsibility of the Incident Controller to ensure that this information is passed to the Fire and Rescue Service as soon as they arrive.

The Incident Controller will ensure that the Fire and Rescue Service is called at once, if not already called, if it is believed that there is or may be a fire and will liaise with them on their arrival, or assign a suitable member of staff to do this e.g. the Bursar.

Fire drills will be held every term and there are also practice night-time evacuations of the boarding houses every term.

Written records of fire / evacuation drills are made on a standard form and these are passed to the Bursar for review and central filing. The Bursar will record a review of all drill/evacuation records and will instruct any further actions as necessary.

### **FIRE TRAINING**

Staff will be informed in relation to: action to take if they discover a fire, including how to activate the fire alarm; action to take on hearing the alarm, including location and use of exits and escape routes.

Pupils will be informed of exits and escape routes.

Fire Marshals will be trained in: emergency evacuation procedures; use of fire extinguishers; emergency procedures; how to spot fire hazards. Fire Marshals will receive regular refresher training.

Visitors and contractors will receive a briefing on arrival at the School to ensure that they are aware of the policy procedures and assembly points in the event of an evacuation. For events with large numbers of attendees, such as open days and concerts, an announcement will be made at the beginning of the event regarding evacuation arrangements.

### **FIRE PREVENTION**

The School takes all reasonable precautions to prevent a fire from breaking out and recognises that for a fire to take place oxygen, flammable materials and a source of ignition must all be present. The processes of prevention are aimed at preventing one or more of these elements being together. To ensure the processes are being implemented the Bursar, Estate Manager, and Heads of Department will:-

- Comply at all times with relevant regulations on the storage, transportation, handling and disposal of flammable materials (including hazardous substances etc);
- Regularly inspect all the areas where there are potential sources of ignition and ensure that no flammable materials are stored close by;
- Maintain awareness through training and refresher training of the preventative steps that need to be taken;
- Consult regularly with the staff regarding fire prevention;
- Include fire prevention and evacuation procedures during the induction process with all new starters; and

- Pay close attention to the activities of contractors as appropriate, particularly during maintenance and building works.

## **FIRE HAZARDS**

The following fire hazards are identified:

- Smoking
- Electrical Equipment
- Naked flame and gas appliances
- Portable heaters
- Laboratory equipment
- Lightning
- Flammable / combustible substances
- Arson
- Hot Works

## **TO REDUCE THE RISK OF FIRE**

- Smoking
  - The school is a non-smoking site. Smoking is not allowed on any part of the school site and signs are distributed around the buildings to reinforce this
- Electrical equipment
  - Electrical installations are inspected by qualified contractors at appropriate intervals and remedial actions are completed as required
  - Electrical equipment is PAT tested at appropriate intervals
  - Care is taken to ensure that electrical circuits are not overloaded, by using only fused extension cables, which should be fully unwound
  - Extension cables must not be plugged into other extension cables and adaptor blocks are not to be used
- Naked flame and Gas Appliances
  - The use of Bunsen burners is covered by the Science Laboratory risk assessment: all staff and pupils are trained in their safe use and must wear correct safety clothing and goggles. Pupils may not approach naked flames without staff supervision. The Bunsen burners are regularly inspected and replaced as necessary
  - Gas appliances in the kitchen are regularly inspected and tested and the supply can be cut off in an emergency
  - In the kitchen, correct clothing must be worn
  - The kitchen is covered by separate risk assessments and safe codes of practice
- Portable heaters
  - Occasionally the use of additional heaters may be required. These appliances are inspected and tested regularly. They are sealed units which are plugged in. They must be positioned at a safe distance from any furniture and must never be covered.
- Laboratory equipment

- All laboratory equipment is regularly inspected and maintained in good working order, or labelled clearly as unserviceable, by Science staff
- Science staff (and pupils, where appropriate) are trained in its safe use; pupils are never allowed to enter a Science laboratory unsupervised and may never use laboratory equipment without staff supervision
- All potentially hazardous equipment and procedures are used / carried out with strict adherence to CLEAPSS guidelines
- Lightning
  - The school's lightning conductors are inspected and serviced annually
- Flammable / combustible materials.
  - All new school furniture should conform to British Fire Safety Standards.
  - Flammable or combustible materials are stored in accordance with COSHH
  - Flammable materials such as chemicals are kept in a secure store; stocks are inspected regularly and recorded and any obsolete stocks are disposed of safely in accordance with CLEAPSS (HAZCARDs)
  - All containers / storage areas are clearly and appropriately signed
  - Safety screens are used when experiments with highly combustible materials are carried out and there is a spark risk
- Arson
  - Site security is monitored and reviewed regularly. Visitors and contractors are required to identify themselves and sign in at Reception during the working day.
  - No unaccompanied visitors are to be on site at any time
  - At weekends, boarding and duty staff make regular checks of the site and ensure they keep lists of all those who are expected to be on site
  - Any strangers should be challenged, if it is safe to do so. In the event of any suspicious activity, the police should be called. There is plenty of telephone access across the site and boarding and duty staff carry mobile phones
  - The main school dustbin area is kept locked to prevent unauthorised access to combustible materials
- Hot Works
  - These works are subject to a permit regime and specific control measures as required by the school's insurers.

#### **FURTHER MEASURES FOR FIRE SAFETY**

- Escape routes should never be blocked and fire safety equipment should never be obstructed. Corridors and entrances are kept clear at all times; pupils and staff have designated space for storing bags, coats etc safely. At busy times (e.g. lunch queue) supervising staff will ensure that bags are not left in corridors or doorways. Fire extinguishers, blankets and alarms are clearly signed and kept accessible at all times.
- Fire doors are installed at appropriate points around the building, in accordance with the advice of the inspecting Fire Officer or the school's Health & Safety Adviser/Fire Risk Assessor; these are kept shut at all times, or are on hold-backs that will release in the event of an alarm.

- Rubbish should not be left adjacent to buildings. Bins are emptied on a daily basis. Larger exterior bins are securely closed, never allowed to overflow and emptied on a scheduled basis
- Combustible materials including cardboard boxes are not to be stored under stairwells, in attics, in boiler rooms or adjacent to electrical distribution boards. Storage in cellars and attics is to be minimised. Cellar and attic areas are to be periodically inspected

#### **OTHER USERS OF THE SCHOOL SITE**

Any organisation or group hiring school premises will be informed about fire alarm and evacuation procedures. Residential groups will be required to hold their own fire drills using the regular evacuation procedures. Risk Assessments are available to these visiting groups prior to their arrival, so that they can make their own independent risk assessments.

#### **FIRE RECORDS**

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

#### **COMMUNICATION OF THE POLICY**

This policy is to be provided to all staff via the Every document management system and the school website. It will be recirculated to staff each year, or earlier in the event of significant changes to the policy.