



Bearwood College

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FIRE POLICY

Bearwood College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors to share this commitment.

All outcomes generated by this document must take account of and contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at Bearwood College.

The Bearwood College Policy Documents are revised and published periodically in good faith. They are inevitably subject to permanent revision. On occasions a significant revision, although promulgated within College separately, may have to take effect between the re-publication of the entire set of Policy Documents. Care should therefore be taken to ensure, by consultation with the Senior Management Team, that the details of any Policy Document are still effectively current at a particular moment.

While this current Policy / Procedure may be referred to elsewhere in Bearwood College documentation including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

Authorised by the Headmaster on behalf of the Governors, following Resolution by the Board in January 2012

Part 1: Fire Safety

Introduction

Our priority is to minimise the risk to life and to reduce injury by maintaining the physical fire safety integrity of the college in ensuring that staff, scholars and visitors do not add to the fire risk and through safe evacuation of our buildings if a fire breaks out. The fire safety policy, procedures and risk assessments at Bearwood College are designed to help our community to respond calmly and effectively in the event that fire breaks out in one of our buildings.

Role of the College Fire Safety Manager

The Bursar is the designated College Fire Safety Manager, who is responsible for ensuring that:

- The fire safety policy is kept under regular review by Governors and the SMT.
- The fire safety policy is promulgated to the entire college community.
- Everyone in the college (including visitors and contractors) are given clear written instructions on where they should go in the event of fire.
- Records are kept of the fire induction training given to new staff and scholars.
- Procedures for emergency evacuation are regularly tested and lessons absorbed.
- Fire risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated.
- Fire prevention measures are meticulously followed.
- Fire procedures and risk assessments are reviewed on each occasion that a building is altered, extended or rebuilt, or when new buildings are acquired.

Emergency Evacuation Notice

All new staff and scholars, all contractors and visitors are shown the following notice:

1. If you discover a fire, break the glass in the nearest alarm point to set off the alarm. Leave the building by the nearest exit.
2. If you are responsible for a class, make them leave quietly with you. No one should talk or run. Make your way to the assembly point in the Chapel

3. If you are teaching a class, take your register with you. Do not take anything else, and do not allow the scholars to take anything. Shut doors and windows behind you.
4. The College Office will summon the Emergency Services if the alarm sounds.
5. Take the register of your class as soon as you reach the assembly point.
6. Report anyone who is waiting to be evacuated from a designated refuge, or who is missing immediately to the College Fire Safety Manager (the Bursar) or the SSI who will inform the Fire Brigade. On no account should anyone return to any building until given permission by the Fire and Emergency Services.
7. Remain at the assembly point with your scholars until the all clear is given.

Buildings in which the fire alarm sounds must be evacuated immediately and all personnel should assemble in the Chapel.

There is a difference in the evacuation procedure in the holidays and when school is not in session and they are as follows.

In the School Term Time and During the Working Day

During the working school day the college's permanent support staff will investigate the cause of the alarm, and providing the cause can be ascertained, will instruct the senior academic staff when it is safe to readmit personnel to the building.

If the fire brigade is required they will call the fire brigade.

In term time outside normal working hours and in the Holiday

Outside normal working hours the incident is managed by a **Competent Person**

Part 2 Fire Safety Procedures

Briefing New Staff and Scholars

All our new staff (teaching and non-teaching alike) and all new pupils are given a briefing on the college's emergency evacuation procedures on their first day at Bearwood College. We show them where the emergency exits and escape routes are located, and walk with them to the outside assembly point. Fire action notices are displayed on the walls of all rooms and in all corridors, and we make certain that everyone knows what they look like, and where they should go on hearing the fire alarm. All new staff are shown how to activate the fire alarms if they see or smell a fire.

The safe evacuation of everyone - staff and scholars alike, is our priority. Protecting property comes second. No one should attempt to fight a fire at the expense of their own, or anyone else's safety.

We offer fire awareness INSET training, including the basic use of fire extinguishers, to all staff during their first term. We also offer regular refresher training. No one should attempt to use a fire extinguisher before he or she has been trained in its use.

Summoning the Fire Brigade

The College Reception is manned between 8.00am and 5.30pm during weekdays in term-time and between 9.15am and 4.30pm during half terms and holiday apart from the Christmas and Easter closedowns.

The master panel that shows the location of all the alarm call points on the networked alarm system in the college buildings is physically located in the college entrance hallway. The College Reception is always given advance warning of fire practices. If the alarm goes off for any other reason, the staff have standing instructions to summon the Fire and Emergency Service at once.

One of the members of the maintenance staff is on duty or on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year, including public holidays. H/She has standing instructions to summon the Fire and Emergency Services if the alarms go off outside the hours that the College Reception is staffed, (unless warned of a planned fire practice).

Visitors and Contractors

All visitors and contractors are required to sign in at Reception, where they are issued with a visitor's badge, which should be worn at all times that they are on college property. They are made aware of the emergency evacuation notice and are shown the way to the assembly point.

When large numbers of visitors are at the college for open days, plays, concerts, exhibitions etc a brief announcement is made advising them of the location of the emergency exits that they should use in the event of the alarms sounding.

Disabled Staff, Scholars or Visitors

We have a special one to one induction on fire safety for disabled pupils and their carers and for disabled members of staff.

We have designated safe refuge points on every floor of every building, with signs advising of their location, (usually in a stair well). When the fire alarm is sounded, it is the responsibility of the carer of a disabled person to take him or her to the refuge point and to wait for rescue by the Fire and Emergency Service. The teacher will ensure that the name of the disabled person and his or her carer, together with the location of their safe refuge point, are passed to the College Fire Safety Manager (the Bursar) or Second Master as soon as he or she reaches the assembly point.

It is the responsibility of the College Fire Safety Manager (the Bursar) and/or the Second Master to ensure that this information is passed as soon as possible to the Fire and Emergency Services.

Responsibilities of Teaching Staff

Teaching staff are responsible for escorting their pupils safely out of the college buildings 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 Second Master. It is the responsibility of the College Fire Safety Manager (the Bursar) and/or Second Master to ensure that this information is passed to the Fire and Emergency service as soon as they arrive.

Clearing the Building

Once the alarm sounds and evacuation is underway, staff should check that no one remains in his or her department. Once they have left the building no one will be permitted back inside. For this reason checking areas are clear is very important.

Heads of Pastoral, Academic and Administrative Departments are asked to clear their areas, if present when the alarm sounds. In their absence, this responsibility devolves to other members of the Department present but they should ensure that arrangements are in place which have been discussed with, and are fully understood by, all members of their department, to ensure the efficient evacuation and clearing of this department when any member of staff is present.

It is intended that Heads of Department will organise the clearing of their Department along the following lines:

1. Call upon those staff working on each floor to assist in clearing the area. It is suggested that each floor is treated as a separate area.
2. It is considered possible that some areas will not be checked because there are no staff in that area at the time of the evacuation. The Fire Brigade will anticipate this and can be expected to clear the buildings when they arrive.
3. On reaching the Assembly Area the Head of Department or another member of the Department's staff should inform the Fire Officer that their departmental area is clear.

Phased Evacuation Plans

Because of the number of buildings within the grounds it is quite likely that a building may be evacuated before the alarm is sounded in other buildings. For example the Mansion building may be evacuated but the alarm may not have sounded in Jellicoe or Drake House.

It is entirely understandable that all the buildings of the school are unlikely to be evacuated unless there is a real fire alarm and then it will be done under the control of the fire brigade, SMT or the Competent Person.

Please note that the whole school might NOT be evacuated in the event of a fire in one area, say for example Jellicoe.

Responsibilities of Fire Marshals in the Event of a Fire or Evacuation

We have at least one trained Fire Marshal (aka Competent Person) in every building and boarding house.

All Fire Marshals have been trained to provide “safety assistance” in the event of a fire and receive regular refresher training.

Boarding Houses

Evacuation Training

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires staff in an organisation to be trained appropriately to the fire risk that may apply to them, as part of the risk assessment. Guidance on the Fire Risk Assessment for Sleeping Accommodation is contained in the third in a series of eleven Fire Risk Assessment guidance documents published by the then Department for Communities and Local Government to enable proprietors to have the appropriate level of fire risk assessment carried out by a Competent Person.

This Risk Assessment has been carried out for Bearwood College, within the context of a full series of Fire Risk Assessments for all buildings , and a list of Action Points required to be completed to bring the risk down to a safe level was attached to the individual risk assessments.

In the Boarding Houses in particular the risk assessments identified the importance of providing an enhanced level of fire safety training boarding staff.

Paragraph 7.4 of the guidance document states that “The actions of staff if there is a fire are likely to be crucial to their safety and that of other people in the premises. All staff should receive basic fire safety induction training and attend refresher sessions at pre-determined intervals.” It is believed that this basic requirement is met under current arrangements at Bearwood College.

Likewise there is a requirement for fire wardens/marshals to have appropriate training. The level of training is not prescribed exactly, but if there were a fire at 0300 in a boarding house and a child was a boarder at Bearwood a parent would expect the boarding staff on duty to be able to get the child to a place of safety under all circumstances for any fire. This would include the following items suggested in the guidance:

- a. Be able to help those on the premises to leave
- b. Checking the premises to ensure that everyone has left
- c. Using firefighting equipment if safe to do so
- d. Liaising with the fire and rescue service on arrival
- e. Shutting down vital or dangerous equipment
- f. Performing a supervisory/managing role in any fire situation

Training for this role includes:

- i. Detailed knowledge of the fire safety strategy of the premises
- ii. Awareness of human behaviour in fires
- iii. How to encourage others to use the most appropriate escape route
- iv. How to search safely and recognise areas that are unsafe to enter
- v. The difficulties that some people may have in escaping and any special evacuation arrangements that have been pre-planned
- vi. Additional training in the use of firefighting equipment
- vii. Reporting of faults, incidents, and near misses.

This training is carried out as part of INSET or separately as may be convenient from time to time, and assumes that staff are aware of their duties, and know what fire safety policies are in place at the College. Typically it consists of a 25 minutes interactive session in a classroom environment, and 20 minutes carrying out practical fire fighting on real fires using the types of extinguisher found in the school. The staff then understand the dangers that fire poses, when and when not to attempt to fight a fire, all with the sole aim of ensuring that they make the correct judgement for them and their pupils to reach a place of safety at minimal risk to all.

Fire Practices

We hold one fire practice every term at Bearwood College. We also practice a night-time evacuation of the boarding houses every term. This combined with a programme of inducting new staff and pupils with emergency escape procedures and the presence of trained Fire Marshals in every building helps to ensure that the college can be safely evacuated in the event of a fire.

Fire Prevention Measures

We have the following fire prevention measures in place at Bearwood College:

Simple Fire Precautions

The Fire Officer, the Health & Safety Inspector and the Insurance Inspector have instructed the College to ensure staff obey the following simple fire precautions and staff are asked not only to obey the following but where they see inobservance to take measures to rectify the situation for the safety of all:

1. **Fire doors** must not be propped or wedged open.
2. **Cleaning and storage cupboards** must be kept locked and free of rubbish.
3. **Fire Escape Routes** such as corridors must be kept free of furniture.
4. **Protected areas** such as stairwells must be kept clear of all combustible and electrical equipment.
5. **Gas Cylinders** may not be stored inside the building.

6. **Rubbish** must not be allowed to accumulate

Staff should be aware that failure to follow the fire precautions laid down in law could be a disciplinary offence if proven.

Escape Routes and Emergency Exits

- There are at least two escape routes from every part of all buildings
- Fire notices and evacuation signs are displayed in every room, corridor and stairwell.
- Fires extinguishers (of the appropriate type), smoke/heat detectors, and other means of fighting fire are located in every building in accordance with the recommendations of our professional advisors. They can be manually activated by breaking a glass panel, and are automatically activated when smoke/heat builds up.
- All stairs, passages and emergency exits are illuminated by emergency lighting.
- Automatic door closures that are activated by the fire alarms are fitted on doors in or leading onto escape routes
- The main building master panel for the alarm system is located in the school reception hall and shows the location of a fire. It is fitted with an uninterrupted power supply (UPS)
- Alarms sound in all parts of the college.
- Keeping fire routes and exits clear at all times. The Master at Arms is responsible for unlocking the main buildings in the morning, when he removes bolts, padlocks and security devices from all emergency exits, checks that escape routes are not obstructed and that the emergency light work, and for reporting defects.
- Testing all fire alarms weekly (and recording all tests and defects). This is the responsibility of the Maintenance Manager, who also arranges for an ISO9001 certified/BAFE approved contractor to carry out:
 - Monthly checks of fire doors, automatic door closures and emergency lights,
 - Six monthly professional check on fire detection and warning equipment,
 - An annual service of alarms, smoke detectors, emergency lights, sprinklers, smoke control systems and fire extinguishers and hoses.
- Records of all tests are kept in the Master at Arm's office
- Displays in corridors, theatre scenery, stage curtains and props and gym “crash” mats are treated with fire retardant spray.
- Plans showing the location of fire hydrants, gas and electricity shut off points are displayed in fire proof glass fronted display boards next to the entrance of each building

Electrical Safety

The College has current electrical test certificates for all its buildings. It uses NICEIC qualified Electrical Engineers to inspect and maintain its electrical installations all of

which are RCB protected and meet the requirements of BS7671 IEE wiring regulations.

- Regular portable appliance testing take place. The Maintenance Team is trained in this role.
- Records of all tests are kept in the Master at Arms office
- The Heads of Science and DT, respectively, check that all Scientific and DT equipment is switched off at the end of the school day.
- All computers, projectors, printers and electronic whiteboards have been set to switch off automatically every evening and during holidays and weekends.

Lightning Protection

- All lightning protection and earthing conforms to BS 6651-1999. It is tested annually by a specialist contractor. Records of all tests are kept in the Master at Arm's Office

Gas Safety

- All gas appliances (boilers, kitchen equipment etc) are regularly maintained and serviced by Gas Safe Registered Engineers. Records of all tests are kept in the Maintenance Department
- Landlord's gas safety certificates are held for all school domestic accommodation with gas appliances.
- All kitchen equipment is switched off at the end of service.
- All laboratories are checked daily to ensure that the central gas supply is turned off.

Safe Storage

- We ensure that flammable materials used in teaching or maintenance are locked in purpose-made, flame-proof containers at the end of every day.
- Weapons and ammunition used by the CCF are kept in a securely locked, fire resistant store that is located within a permanently locked room, the door of which is fitted with an alarm and is fire resistant.

Rubbish and Combustible Materials

- Flammable rubbish is stored away from buildings in the secured rubbish compound.
- Combustible materials used in teaching, catering, maintenance, grounds and caretaking are stored in flame proof cupboards

Letting or hiring the College

Our standard contractual terms that we use for letting and hiring the college covers fire safety and specifies that the hirer should certify that he/she has read and understood the college's fire safety policy and procedures. A member of college staff is always on duty/call when the college is let or hired for an outside function or event.

Part 3: Fire Risk Assessment

The College's Fire Risk Assessment meets the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the FSO). Specifically it identifies:

- The Hazard
- The people at risk
- The measures to evaluate, remove, reduce and protect from the risk
- The measures needed to record, plan, inform, instruct and train people in risk reduction or removal
- The arrangements for reviewing the assessment

All risk assessments follow a standard grid procedure for evaluating risk, and we are progressively updating them to follow the format of Specification 79: 2005. Generic risk assessments are used for classrooms; but individual ones are needed for corridors, stairs, kitchens, laboratories, workshops etc. At Bearwood College, we use simple line diagrams to supplement the grids.

Bearwood College has a fire risk assessment which is updated every 3 years, more frequently if significant changes are made to the interior of buildings, or new buildings are bought or added.

Copies of Bearwood College's fire risk assessments are on the health and safety section of the college's intranet for all staff to read, together with this document. Any comments or suggestions for improvement are always welcome. All Heads of Department should ensure that they and their Department read the sections that are relevant to them.

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