

ACT Schools – Fire and Emergency Procedures

Commitment

ACT Schools recognises the significant risks and dangers that can arise in the event of a fire and is committed to maintaining a safe environment for pupils, staff, visitors, and other persons on the premises. Appropriate measures will be implemented to prevent fires wherever reasonably practicable, reduce the risk of harm, and ensure that effective arrangements are in place should a fire or other emergency occur.

ACT Schools will ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and will regularly review fire safety arrangements, including risk assessments, emergency procedures, evacuation arrangements, staff training, fire drills, and the maintenance of fire safety equipment. All staff are expected to familiarise themselves with the relevant emergency procedures and act promptly and appropriately to support the safety and wellbeing of everyone within the school.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear, robust, and effective framework for the prevention of fire and the management of fire and other emergency situations at ACT Schools. It outlines the procedures, responsibilities, and arrangements that underpin effective emergency planning and response, ensuring that appropriate measures are in place to protect pupils, staff, visitors, and other persons on the premises.

The policy supports a consistent approach to fire prevention, evacuation, emergency response, and staff awareness, while ensuring compliance with relevant legislation, including the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. It also promotes regular monitoring, testing, training, and review to maintain a safe environment and ensure that ACT Schools is prepared to respond appropriately to emergencies.

Scope

This policy applies to all ACT Schools sites and covers all pupils, staff, contractors, visitors, and other persons who may be present on school premises. It applies to all areas of the school and outlines the arrangements and responsibilities for fire prevention, emergency response, evacuation, and the management of fire-related risks. The policy also applies to other emergency situations where appropriate and should be read alongside relevant risk assessments, emergency procedures, and health and safety arrangements.

Responsibilities

The Directors, ACT Schools management team, and all staff have a responsibility to support and maintain effective fire safety arrangements within ACT Schools. All staff must familiarise themselves with the fire safety procedures relevant to their workplace, including knowing who the designated Fire Marshals are, how they can be contacted, the location of fire alarm points and firefighting equipment, and the designated emergency assembly points. Staff are expected to follow evacuation procedures promptly and support the safe evacuation of pupils, visitors, and other persons where appropriate. Directors and managers are responsible for ensuring that suitable fire safety arrangements, training, risk assessments, and emergency procedures are implemented and regularly reviewed.

Communication and Storage

This policy will be communicated via Calon and will be stored on Calon under School Policies & Procedures.

Induction and Emergency Information

ACT Schools will provide all employees, pupils and contractors with induction training covering fire and emergency procedures. Ongoing mandatory training will be provided as required to ensure that all individuals are aware of the actions to be taken in the event of a fire or emergency evacuation.

Strategically placed notices and instructions outlining emergency procedures will be displayed throughout the school, with clearly identified emergency exit routes in place. Information relating to building emergency evacuation procedures and Fire Risk Assessments will be available on Calon.

Fire Risk Assessments

A Fire Risk Assessment will be carried out for the school annually or following any significant change. The assessment will consider and detail:

- Fire procedures and the emergency response/evacuation team.
- Details of fire detection systems, emergency lighting, firefighting equipment and other relevant fire safety measures.
- Identification of potential sources of ignition that may cause a fire.
- Identification of people who may be at significant risk.
- Identification of structural features that could promote or control the spread of fire.
- Building inspection records and any actions required.

Fire Prevention and Safety Measures

In general, ACT Schools will ensure that:

- Waste is appropriately controlled and is not allowed to accumulate to levels that could increase the risk of fire.
- Firefighting and fire detection equipment is provided in accordance with relevant guidance and is inspected and tested regularly. Records will be maintained by the Facilities Department.
- Emergency lighting is provided throughout relevant areas to support the safe evacuation of employees, pupils and visitors in the event of a power failure. Emergency lighting will be inspected and tested regularly, with records maintained by the Facilities Department.
- ACT School is a non-smoking building. The use of naked flames, including candles, cigarette lighters and matches, will be controlled and risk assessed where necessary.

Emergency Evacuation Team

ACT Schools will maintain an appropriate number of trained employees to support emergency evacuations. Training will include emergency evacuation procedures and clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Training records and renewal dates will be maintained by the P&D Department.

Evacuation Procedures and Assembly points

Clearly defined emergency evacuation procedures will be in place for all centres, including designated fire assembly points.

All employees, pupils and contractors should be aware of the appropriate assembly point for their location and understand what is expected of them during an emergency evacuation, including reporting and registration procedures.

Emergency Evacuation Drills

Emergency evacuation exercises will ideally be undertaken every six months and at least annually within the school.

Any failures, issues or recommendations for improvement identified during an evacuation exercise will be recorded and appropriate actions taken.

At locations with ACT Schools, emergency evacuation exercises will be carried out every term, three times per academic year.

Responsibilities during an emergency

All employees, pupils and contractors must not, under any circumstances, place themselves or others at risk during a fire or emergency evacuation.

Everyone must follow the relevant safety and evacuation procedures, leave the building safely when instructed and follow the directions of the emergency evacuation team and emergency services where applicable.

Document / Policy Change Request

Any changes to this document must be requested via the Facilities department and/or Headteacher.

Document / Policy Reviewing and Approving

The policy will be reviewed at least on an annual basis by the Facilities Department and/or Headteacher.

References

This policy has been written in conjunction with the following legislation and guidance:

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005