RYDE SCHOOL
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Fire Safety Policy

Policy date:	September 2026	
Date of next review:	Summer Term 2026-27	
Owner(s):	BGS	
Approval body:	Head Master	
Intended audience:	Pupils, parents, staff and visitors	
ISI Regulatory Paragraph No:	12	
Location (tick as appropriate):	Website	✓
	Parent Portal	✓
	Staff Portal	✓
	Inspection folder	✓

INTRODUCTION

Ryde School will ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that all staff, pupils, contractors and visitors are fully protected from the risks of fire whilst on the premises.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (commonly referred to as the FSO) came into force on 1st October 2006. The Building Safety Act 2022 amends the Fire Safety Order to improve fire safety in all buildings regulated by the FSO. The purpose of the legislation is to place a greater emphasis on fire prevention by ensuring that all persons responsible for premises comply with their statutory duties and implement the general fire precautions which are needed to protect all persons from death or injury in the case of fire. The Building Safety Act 2022 amends the Fire Safety Order to improve fire safety in all buildings regulated by the FSO. This Policy explains how the school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Building Safety Act 2022 to ensure that, where possible, fire is prevented and that any fire risks are adequately controlled.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The School Fire Safety Policy forms part of the School's Health and Safety Policy and in common with that policy extends through the whole school, with specific responsibilities as below:

- Governors ensure that an appropriate policy is in place in the School and that arrangements are made for its effective implementation;
- The Head Master has the ultimate responsibility for the implementation and management of this policy;
- The Director of Estates & Operations is responsible for the effective implementation of this Policy and its role within the School's Health and Safety Policy (the Responsible Person);
- The Director of Estates & Operations is the delegated duty holder, responsible for the day to day fire safety requirements; and
- All employees have the responsibility to cooperate and to ensure that the workplace is safe from fire and its effects and must not do anything that will place themselves or other people at risk.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Safeguard all persons from death or injury in the event of fire by the effective management of fire safety;
- Minimise the risk of fire and to limit fire spread; and
- Minimise the potential for fire to disrupt services, damage buildings and equipment, or harm the environment.

MANAGING FIRE SAFETY

The School has delegated day to day responsibility for managing fire safety to the 'Duty Holder', the Director of Estates & Operations, assisted by the Estates Manager and School Staff, the Duty holder will:

- Ensure that all means of escape are properly maintained, kept free from obstruction and available for safe and effective use at all times; and that the means of escape have adequate emergency lighting;
- Provide and maintain in working order all fire-fighting appliances and devices including:
    - Fire detection and alarm systems;
    - Emergency lighting systems;
    - Fire-fighting equipment;
    - Notices and signage relating to fire procedures;
    - Means of escape, taking into account the needs of any disabled users.
- Carry out or arrange to have carried out a fire safety risk assessment by a competent person on each of the school buildings to ensure that the School's facilities are compliant; and reduce the risk of fire incidences by carrying out appropriate task risk assessments;
- Provide appropriate instruction and training for all school staff on the action to be taken to protect people and property including regular fire evacuation practices for all the School;
- Ensure that all staff, students, contractors, visitors and third-party hirers are made aware of and comply with the School's fire procedures;
- Identify any special risks, e.g. the storage of hazardous materials, and put in place appropriate procedures to minimise the risks;
- Liaise with third parties; the emergency services, and the School's insurers to ensure that best practice for fire prevention and procedures is in place;
- Monitor and review this policy on a regular basis so as to ensure that any new risk or alteration to regulations is addressed.
- Ensure that 5-yearly inspection takes place of fixed electrical systems and regular PAT.

MONITORING

Ryde School utilises the services of various outside personnel/contractors to carry out effective monitoring of its duties:

- The Main School and Boarding House fire detection and alarm systems are maintained and checked by contractors (Lifeline or Wight Fire) on an annual basis;
- The alarm sounders are tested on a weekly basis by the Maintenance Manager
- The School's emergency lighting is checked annually by contractors (Lifeline);
- Notices and signage are updated as and when required and checked annually by the Maintenance Manager;

- Fire-fighting equipment is visually checked weekly by the Maintenance Manager and extinguishers are replenished or replaced annually by contractors (Chubb or Wight Fire);
- A Master Folder for each building is maintained by the Director of Estates & Operations and located in their office. These folders contain all annual inspections including
    - Gas Safety Checks
    - Fire Alarm systems and lighting inspections
    - Extinguishers Servicing
    - 5 year Fixed Electrical Inspections
    - Staff Training records
- Folders for all weekly testing and inspections are maintained by the Maintenance Manager and located in their office, including:
    - Hot work permits, etc;
    - Storing of hazardous materials;
    - The inspection and testing of fire detection and alarm systems, including fire doors and fire escapes

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

Every 4 years a competent outside contractor is used to carry out and record a comprehensive fire risk assessment for each of the School's buildings. These assessments are kept in the building folders in the Maintenance Manager's office.

The fire risk assessment identifies who will be at risk if there is a fire, where people may be working and who else may be at risk, either in the premises or nearby, such as members of the public, visiting contractors, etc, and where these people are likely to be located.

The fire risk assessment will be reviewed and amended annually, and at other times if it is either no longer valid or if any changes are planned, such as:

- Any structural changes (alterations to the layout of the premises, erection of partitions, refurbishment etc) which may affect the spread of fire;
- Any change to the use of the premises which may affect the risk rating;
- Any change to work processes or work equipment which may introduce new fire hazards; and
- Any change to the numbers of people using the premises to ensure that escape routes can accommodate the numbers safely.

Staff are actively encouraged to report any health and safety concerns, including on fire issues using the online Incident Manager reporting system. All reports are investigated and any action taken is recorded.

When planning school events, fire issues are covered within the particular event risk assessment and control measures are put in place.

FIRE SAFETY TRAINING

Within Ryde School, fire safety training is conducted as follows:

- All staff receive basic fire safety induction training on arrival (within an online Health and Safety module) and attend a refresher Health and Safety briefing at the beginning of each school year in the Autumn. There are separate training sessions for Support Staff;
- Key staff receive more detailed instruction (online fire warden training);
- Students are given instruction by their form tutors during the first week of the Autumn Term on their actions to be taken in the event of a fire; and
- Fire drills are planned each term to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's evacuation procedures. The findings of the drill are reported to staff through the Minutes of Health and Safety Committee meetings and any conclusions and remedial actions are recorded and implemented.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

The evacuation procedures which are to be followed in the event of a fire alarm are at Annex A to this policy. The document details the responsibilities of staff and individuals during an evacuation and subsequent roll call. Annex B includes specific Guidance on the Evacuation of Disabled Persons from the School Buildings.

Annexes:

A. Ryde School Fire Routine (not attached – see separate document)

B. The Evacuation of Disabled Persons from Ryde School Buildings.

ANNEX B

THE EVACUATION OF DISABLED PERSONS FROM RYDE SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Students and employees with a disability should already have been identified and information held in the relevant School Office (Senior School, Prep School, Pre-Prep & Nursery or Boarding House(s)).

With the assistance of the Director of Estates & Operations the relevant School Office should produce a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) for the pupil/employee using the provided template.

Having considered the risks, the relevant Head of School will propose specific procedures for assisting in the evacuation of persons with a known disability. A "buddy" must be appointed for any student or employee requiring assistance in an emergency evacuation. Where teachers have a student with a known disability, they must ensure that that student is aware that the alarm has been triggered and that they follow the evacuation procedure accordingly.

Disabled staff must have identified themselves to their line manager and any specific requirements must be addressed as soon as they are known.

Specific Evacuation Requirements Wheelchair users/Persons with Mobility Difficulty

Wheelchair users or any person with difficulty walking (e.g. anyone temporarily using crutches) should wait until everyone else has left the room before making their way to the exit, assisted by their "buddy" or other third party if required.

Visitors with Disabilities

On arrival, disabled visitors to the School should be asked to identify any special requirements in the case of an emergency evacuation. The person hosting the visitor should ensure the visitor's safety in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Evacuation

Wherever possible all persons, including wheelchair users, should make their own way out of the building by utilising the fire escape routes. Whenever the route is blocked or the person is above ground floor, wheelchair users must be either assisted by their "buddy" or other third party.

When evacuating the upper floors of the Bembridge Building, anyone unable to leave without assistance should wait for assistance in one of the 2 the refuge areas: on the roof over the Dining Room and the upstairs disabled toilet.

The use of the term "Refuge" is intended to mean a place where people can safely wait for a period of time whilst the evacuation process is being undertaken. It is not a place to leave people for the duration

of the alarm, but it has been selected for its additional protection from fire, meaning that it will remain a safe place to wait.

Lifts must not be used during an emergency evacuation.