



# WARWICK INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

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## FIRE SAFETY & PREVENTION POLICY

### 1.0 Introduction & Scope

- 1.1 The Governors of Warwick Independent Schools Foundation (“WISF”, “Governors”) recognise their responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 1.2 This Policy applies to all staff working for WISF and visitors/contractors/agency workers/volunteers and informs them of the provision for and their responsibilities toward fire safety and fire prevention.
- 1.3 The Governors have employed a Head of Health & Safety (HHS) and a Head of Estates & Operations (HEO) to assist them in meeting the requirements of the legislation. The Head for each School is deemed to be the “responsible person”, assisted by the HHS, the HEO, Deputy Heads, and Heads of Department (HoDs) where applicable.
- 1.4 The primary emphasis is always on ensuring the safety of staff, pupils, contractors and visitors rather than prevention of damage to property.
- 1.5 This Policy will be reviewed annually by the HHS or more frequently if required.

### 2.0 The Basics

What’s included in this Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General information applicable across WISF</li> <li>• Fire Safety &amp; Prevention Generic Risk Assessment (Appendix 1)</li> </ul>
Other Policies you might need to refer to (Portal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contractors</li> <li>• Permit to Work</li> <li>• School-specific fire procedures</li> </ul>

### 3.0 Who this Policy applies to

<b>Person(s) Responsible:</b>	<b>Responsible for:</b>
Governors / School Heads	Overall responsibility for fire safety and fire prevention compliance within the schools & to provide necessary resources.
Head of Health & Safety	Updating the policy annually. Organising Fire Risk Assessments across WISF. Liaising with enforcement authorities.
Head of Estates & Operations	Organising testing and maintenance of systems and equipment for fire detection/ fighting/ safety and maintaining appropriate records.

<b>Person(s) Responsible:</b>	<b>Responsible for:</b>
Deputy Heads/ Schools' Responsible Person	Ensuring that school-specific fire procedures are updated annually (or more often if required), and as a result of Fire Risk Assessments. Arrange termly fire drills.
Heads of Department (HoDs)/ Line Managers	Ensuring staff are familiar with the policy and its contents including school-specific procedures.
Staff	Ensuring that they follow fire safety and prevention measures at all times. Report any concerns to HoD.

#### **4.0 Policy**

- 4.1 Adequate and appropriate resources must be provided so that the requirements of this Policy and its associated legislation are met.
- 4.2 WISF has a Foundation Health & Safety (H&S) Committee and each School has a H&S Committee that meets termly, of which the HHS is a member.

#### **5.0 Fire Risk Assessments**

- 5.1 The HHS will ensure that formal Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) are carried out for all buildings on the School sites. These assessments must consider:
- The safety in case of fire of all staff, pupils and visitors on site, paying particular attention to young persons and those with mobility issues (temporary or permanent) or other disabilities, and taking into account any dangerous substances liable to be on the premises.
  - The fire hazards in terms of sources of ignition, fuel and oxygen and identify those people at risk in every location.
- 5.2 The HHS will maintain the FRAs, the HEO will arrange for remedial works to be carried out as recommended by the FRAs. The FRAs are reviewed regularly as required and if major structural alterations or significant changes in usage are made to the building.
- 5.3 Prioritised action plans are in place to help implement and monitor improvements.
- 5.4 The HHS will ensure that the generic Fire Safety & Prevention Risk Assessment (see Appendix 1), which is applicable across all WISF buildings, is regularly updated and reviewed.

#### **6.0 Fire Protection Equipment**

- 6.1 Adequate fire protection equipment is provided in all buildings and this is regularly checked and serviced as organised by the HEO.
- 6.2 Appropriate staff will be trained in the safe use of fire extinguishers, protective equipment (e.g. fire blankets) and evacuation equipment in order to ensure all may be used without injury. Training is arranged by the HHS when requested, details of those who have been trained are kept by the HHS and circulated to the Schools. Basic information is included during new starter induction.

## **7.0 Fire Alarm and Detection System**

- 7.1 The HEO will ensure that an effective fire alarm system is installed in each School premises to enable evacuation of staff, pupils and visitors in the event of a fire. This system incorporates smoke and heat detection devices where necessary to provide early warning and, where required, automatic fire door closure devices to restrict the spread of smoke and door security lock release switches to facilitate evacuation.
- 7.2 The fire alarm systems will be checked weekly by WISF Estates & Operations (E&O) to ensure that they are in full working order, and records of the checks are kept.
- 7.3 The HEO will arrange for the fire alarm and fire detection system, including emergency lighting, to be inspected and maintained by qualified engineers on a scheduled basis and records kept. This includes smoke detectors, fire alarm panels and any other associated equipment.
- 7.4 Any staff aware of faults with the fire alarm system must report these immediately to E&O for remedial action to be taken as a priority.

## **8.0 Enforcement Visits**

- The HHS will be the contact person between Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service (WFRS) and WISF.
- The HHS will organise inspections at the request of WFRS, informing the Deputy Head, HEO and relevant HoD's of when visits are due to take place.
- Information regarding any requirements as a result of these visits will be fed back to those responsible by the HHS and a report included to the termly relevant H&S Committees and Governor Meetings.

## **9.0 Emergency Evacuation Procedures / Fire Drills**

- 9.1 Suitable escape routes, including alternatives where appropriate, are identified for all buildings.
- 9.2 The HHS and HEO will ensure that notices and signs are displayed to identify escape routes in an emergency.
- 9.3 The School's Responsible Person will ensure that an Evacuation Plan/Fire Procedures document detailing the escape routes, each building's Assembly Point and individual responsibilities in the event of a fire alarm activation is available and updated annually or more often if necessary.
- 9.4 Evacuation Procedures will be communicated to all staff and pupils by the School Heads/Deputies, with practice fire drills taking place at least once per term.
- 9.5 The Deputy Head within each school is responsible for ensuring the drills take place and completing any actions that are required as a result. At Warwick School, individual drills for each building are carried out on a rotating basis, due to the nature of the fire alarm installation and separation of buildings. In addition, Warwick School Boarding Houses carry out half-termly drills at various times of day/night.

## **10.0 Records and Review**

- 10.1 Records of all fire drills are maintained within the school by the Deputy Head. The HHS will maintain records for all fire safety training undertaken. Checks and inspections carried out on the fire detection/alarm system and fire protection equipment will be kept by HEO, which enables the effectiveness of the fire safety system to be monitored and reviewed.
- 10.2 Individual School's Fire Procedures are available on the WISF SharePoint Portal, these are reviewed and updated annually.

## **11.0 Safety of Staff and Others on School Premises**

- 11.1 Health & Safety information for visitors and contractors is available at each School's main reception and is brought to the attention of all visitors when signing in by the School Office.
- 11.2 Contractors are required to adhere to the WISF Contractors' & Permit to Work Policies and to undergo an induction process. They must produce suitable and sufficient Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMS) for the work they are undertaking. Hot Works Permits are used when required.
- 11.3 Safety building checks take place each half term across the Schools and include a system for the maintenance of fire routes, exit signs and notices etc. Records of these checks are kept by the HEO and made available to the HHS.

## **12.0 Smoking**

- 12.1 All WISF School sites are No Smoking for staff, pupils, visitors and contractors. Smoking, including e-cigarettes, vape pens and other vaping devices, is not permitted anywhere in the grounds or buildings. Appropriate signage is in place.
- 12.2 Outside normal school hours, exceptions can be made to the above for events only if agreed in advance with the Head/Deputy. This must be strictly controlled with appropriate signage and an external designated smoking/E-cigarette area provided. The person responsible for the event is responsible for ensuring the area is suitably sited so that it does not cause a fire risk or discomfort to others and is left in a clean and tidy state. The area and safeguards should be included as part of the event risk assessment. This agreement can be reviewed and permissions withdrawn at any time. Events held on site during school hours must be strictly No Smoking.

## **13.0 Elimination and Reduction of Dangerous Substances**

- 13.1 Where dangerous substances are present, the HoD, upon advice from the HHS, will take reasonable steps to eliminate or reduce the risk.
- 13.2 The HoD will ensure a less hazardous substance is sourced if practicable. Use of the substance will be limited and controlled, appropriate storage will be sourced and labelled. High standards of housekeeping will be maintained. There will be a separation of combustible materials and sources of ignition.

13.3 The following departments/areas are specifically noted as using potentially dangerous substances:

- Estates & Operations – maintenance, grounds, caretaking, cleaning
- Science
- Art
- DT
- Bridge House Theatre - technical department
- Warwick Hall – drama and technical departments
- Sports Centre – swimming pool chemicals
- Catering
- Food Technology
- Boarding House / Laundry
- Boiler Rooms
- LEV Equipment
- CCF

13.4 Where Propane Gas bottles are used and stored on site, a suitable external gas storage cage is available and in use by Catering/WSEL Events departments. Where a WSEL client is using Propane Gas, quantities must be minimised and advice on storage should be sought from the WISF Event Supervisor. Where gas canisters are used in productions, a storage cage is available in the secure area behind the Bridge House Theatre. Use of gas cannisters will be documented within the relevant Risk Assessment and all staff involved sign to confirm they have read and understood.

## **14.0 Fire Prevention in Specific Areas**

### **Estates & Operations**

14.1 Appropriate Risk Assessments (RAs) should be in place for any activity that may pose a fire risk including the use of machinery; these should be regularly reviewed and all staff involved will have read and understood the RAs and signed to confirm.

14.2 All equipment is checked prior to use by the user/s and the HEO is responsible for ensuring all appropriate annual testing and inspection of machinery and equipment takes place by qualified and competent engineer/s, and records are kept.

14.3 The HEO is responsible for ensuring the testing and inspection of fixed gas installations and pipework. HoD's for specialist areas such as Catering, Art/DT, Food Tech, Science are responsible for the equipment/appliance servicing and maintenance in accordance with current regulations and guidance.

14.4 Flammable substances are stored appropriately in a lockable, flammables cupboard which is clearly labelled. COSHH information is available.

### **Science**

14.5 All hazardous substances are stored in original packaging and in appropriate storage such as flammables cupboards. Science staff follow the guidance as issued by CLEAPSS, and appropriate risk assessments are in place. COSHH information, including fire fighting and storage details, is available and followed.

- 14.6 Radioactive substances are stored appropriately in lockable cupboards and signed in and out when used. Warwick School and King's High School each have a designated Radiation Protection Supervisor (RPS) and use the service of an external Radiation Protection Adviser (RPA). Regular testing and inspection of radiation equipment at both schools is carried out by the RPA, and records kept. Details of the location of these substances are indicated on the plans available for the fire service in the event of an emergency.

#### **Art**

- 14.7 The Art Departments may use a number of potentially flammable substances which are kept in a locked flammables cupboard which is clearly marked. Appropriate risk and COSHH assessments are in place.
- 14.8 High attention to housekeeping, particularly regarding sources of ignition, is maintained with minimum levels of combustible materials kept.
- 14.9 The kilns are operated by trained operatives and a record of training is kept by the HoD / HHS. An independent company is employed to inspect and service the kilns on an annual basis. No combustible items should be kept in the kiln rooms or areas where the kilns are located.

#### **Design & Technology (DT)**

- 14.10 The DT Departments may store some flammable substances (in suitable storage) and utilise equipment which may pose a fire risk.
- 14.11 The HoDs within each School are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate risk assessments are in place for such equipment and that any annual checking and maintenance of equipment is carried out and recorded.
- 14.12 Oxyacetylene gas cylinders must be secured to the wall by way of a chain and a gas isolation switch should be clearly marked for easy identification. Procedures for what to do in case of fire in the proximity of the cylinder should be incorporated into the school-specific fire procedures document as required. Where a fire occurs, or is suspected, in a building where cylinders are not removed as part of the evacuation procedure, WFRS may impose a 500m exclusion zone.

#### **Bridge House Theatre & Warwick Hall technical departments**

- 14.13 The Performing Arts Manager manages the technical departments with the support of the Performing Arts Technical Manager and Front of House staff. They ensure that all equipment is serviced and maintained and that only competent staff are allowed to use any hazardous substances and/or equipment.
- 14.14 All flammables are stored in an appropriate flammables cupboard which is clearly labelled.
- 14.15 Any hot works carried out in the design of a set must have a Risk Assessment and Hot Works Permit issued.
- 14.16 When these venues are hired out for external bookings, the lead hirer will be fully briefed on school fire procedures before the event by the WSEL Event Supervisor, as part of the event contract. The client is responsible for maintaining accurate

delegate attendance lists and should advise the WSEL Event Supervisor and/or WFRS of any persons unaccounted for in the event of a fire alarm evacuation.

### **Sports Centre – swimming pool**

- 14.17 All Sports Centre staff undergo the Pool Plant Operators course renewable every five years which is organised by the Sports Centre Manager.
- 14.18 All chemicals are appropriately stored as per the manufacturer's guidance and chemicals which may react are stored separately.
- 14.19 The Sports Centre Manager ensures that high levels of housekeeping are maintained.
- 14.20 All Sports Centre staff must adhere to the Pools Emergency Operating Plan.

### **Catering**

- 14.21 The WISF Head of Food Operations (HFO) is responsible for the equipment/appliance servicing and maintenance in accordance with current regulations and guidance, and for keeping records of these checks.
- 14.22 The HFO is also responsible for ensuring all catering staff have received relevant training in use of kitchen/washing-up equipment and use/storage of cleaning products and have read, understood and signed all Risk Assessments relevant to the equipment they are using.

### **Boarding House / Laundry**

- 14.23 Warwick School has two Boarding Houses (School House and Way House) as well as a Laundry within the main school building.
- 14.24 The Head of Boarding (HoB) is responsible for arranging half-termly fire drills in both Boarding Houses, both during the day and at night, and for keeping records of these drills. The HoB is also responsible for ensuring that all staff who work in the Boarding House are familiar with the fire evacuation procedures and assembly point.
- 14.25 The HoB will ensure that all Laundry staff have received relevant training on the use of Laundry products and equipment, and have read, understood and signed all Risk Assessments relevant to the area in which they work.

### **Boiler Rooms**

- 14.26 The HEO is responsible for ensuring the testing and inspection of equipment in the boiler rooms by competent staff, record keeping and the provision of appropriate safety devices.
- 14.27 No combustible items are stored in the boiler room and appropriate fire extinguishers are in place.

### **15.0 Combined Cadet Force (CCF)**

- 15.1 CCF is based at Warwick School and has its own Risk Assessments, policies and procedures in place which are regularly reviewed and updated. All staff working in this area will have read, understood and signed the RAs.

## 16.0 Local Exhaust Ventilation Equipment

16.1 Local Extract Ventilation (LEV) Equipment is found in DT, Art, Science, Catering and Maintenance Departments. Each HoD is responsible for arranging suitable and sufficient cleaning of the equipment, as well as annual servicing and maintenance by a qualified and competent engineer. Records of this must kept within their department.

## 17.0 School-Specific Fire Procedures

17.1 Please refer to the individual School's Fire Procedures document for specific arrangements pertaining to each School.

### Legislation and Definitions that apply to this Policy

<b>Legislation/guidance applying to this policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005</li><li>• Current Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (EISSR) applicable to Fire Safety</li></ul>
<b>Definitions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Fire</i> – process in which substances combine chemically with oxygen from the air and typically gives out bright light, heat and smoke. Requires heat/ignition source, fuel and oxygen to start and sustain a fire.</li><li>• <i>Flammable</i> – easily set on fire.</li><li>• <i>RIDDOR reportable</i> – any unintentional explosion or fire in any plant or premises which results in the stoppage of that plant, or the suspension of normal work in those premises for more than 24 hours.</li></ul>