

Fire Safety Policy



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Fire Safety Policy

BETHANY SCHOOL
CURTISDEN GREEN
GOUDHURST
KENT

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Date of Revision	September 2025
Date for review	September 2026

Revision History

Version	Date Issued	Reason for Issue
1.0 – Re-written policy	September 2022	Annual Review
2.0 – Re-written policy	September 2023	Annual Review
3.0 – added radioactive and PAC	September 2024	Annual Review
4.0	September 2025	Annual Review
4.1	April 2026	Location of RPA
4.2	April 2026	Flexi Boarding

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1.1 Scope

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

1.2 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.

This policy further notes The Fire Safety Act 2021 which amends the FSO to clarify that, in buildings with two or more sets of domestic premises, the FSO applies to these two elements:

- the structure and external walls of the building, including cladding, balconies, and windows and;
- all doors between the domestic premises and the common parts (e.g. entrance doors to individual flats which open on to common parts)

The effect of the Act will be to require fire risk assessments of buildings with two or more sets of domestic premises to be updated to take account of structure, external walls and doors, as described above, if they have not already done so. Further detail is provided on this in the following sections.

1.3 Guidance

1.3.1 The School has in place procedures for:-

- (a) carrying out fire risk assessment;
- (b) preventing fires;
- (c) evacuation in the event of a fire;
- (d) maintaining and checking all fire detection, alarm and fighting systems.

1.3.2 The Assistant Bursar has responsibility for maintaining and ensuring the local implementation of the School fire procedures; for making and maintaining a 'fire map' of the School premises, showing places of high risk and the precautions put in place by the School. Copies of these maps are brought to the attention of all employees and others who may be affected by:-

- (a) posting a copy of the fire map on notice boards;
- (b) bringing the fire map to the attention of all employees, contractors and visitors, etc during all training and site induction sessions;
- (c) ensuring all staff are trained in fire risk awareness.

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1.4 Fire Risk Assessment

- 1.4.1 All of the School premises are subject to a fire risk assessment. This is conducted by an independent external consultant.
- 1.4.2 The fire risk assessment will be reviewed annually and revised/updated/reinspected at least on a bi-annual basis or earlier in the event of significant changes to the buildings or their usage.
- 1.4.3 A copy of the fire risk assessment report will be available on site (from the Assistant Bursar) and employees' attention brought to any hazards found in the assessment.
- 1.4.4 Fire hazards will be eliminated or the risk reduced to the minimum level practicable by implementing control measures and safe systems of work.
- 1.4.5 Regular monthly assessments will be made by staff, including the Maintenance Co-ordinator and caretakers to ensure that walkways are kept clear of obstruction and tripping hazards.

1.5 Fire Detection

Each of the School premises must have adequate means of fire detection. The detection equipment will be maintained and regularly checked by competent persons.

1.6 Fire Alarm

- 1.6.1 Each of the School premises has an adequate means of raising the alarm in the event of fire.
- 1.6.2 The fire alarm system in each location is to be tested weekly with the date and time made known. This will be managed by the Assistant Bursar. The alarm will be activated using a different activator point each week, where this is practicable.
- 1.6.3 The fire alarm system will be serviced six monthly by a competent contractor (e.g. ISO 9001 / BAFE)
- 1.6.4 Records of these tests and servicing are maintained in a fire logbook held by the Maintenance Department and online in the Estates Compliance Team.

1.7 Fire Fighting Equipment

- 1.7.1 The fire risk assessment determines the minimum level of firefighting equipment which must be present in the School premises.
- 1.7.2 Fire extinguishers, fire hoses, wet and dry risers and/or other fire suppressant systems where present will be serviced by a competent contractor annually and the service date recorded on each extinguisher/hose reel/system.

1.8 Emergency Lighting

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- 1.8.1 Emergency lighting is installed in the school where lighting continues to be required in the event of a mains power failure, eg stairs, passageways and emergency exits.
- 1.8.2 If emergency lighting is generator powered, the lighting will be tested monthly by way of simulated mains failure. A maintenance and servicing programme for the generator will be arranged by the Assistant Bursar/Maintenance Coordinator.
- 1.8.3 Battery operated emergency lighting will be tested monthly (charge & illumination) and an annual full discharge test by a competent person
- 1.8.4 Records of testing and servicing of emergency lights will be maintained by the Assistant Bursar / Maintenance Department.

1.9 Emergency Procedures

- 1.9.1 Written emergency procedures will be provided, see Appendix 1 and fire notices throughout the site. These written instructions will include procedures in the event of a fire and where required, procedures in the event of other emergency evacuation.
- 1.9.2 Notices will be displayed in each building of the School premises detailing the action to take in the event of a fire and highlight the assembly point to evacuate to in an emergency. This may be different from the Fire evacuation point depending on location.
- 1.9.3 There must be adequate means of escape for all occupants of the school premises. These means of escape will be clearly signed.
- 1.9.4 The means of escape will be regularly inspected by the Maintenance Team to ensure they are kept clear of obstructions and tripping hazards.
- 1.9.5 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, visitors will be catered for by the Bursar when notified. Example arrangements are included at Appendix 2 to this guidance.
- 1.9.6 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 Assistant Bursar. It is the responsibility of the Assistant Bursar to ensure that this information is passed to the Fire and Emergency service as soon as they arrive.
- 1.9.7 **SUMMONING THE FIRE BRIGADE:** The School Office is manned between 7.30am and 5.30pm during weekdays throughout the year, in term-time and between 08.00 am and 5.00 pm during half terms and holidays apart from the Christmas and Easter closedowns. The School Office 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

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once. One of the Caretakers or member of the Senior Management Team is on duty or on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year, including public holidays. He/She has standing instructions to summon the Fire and Emergency Services if the alarms go off outside the hours that the School Office is staffed, (unless warned of a planned fire practice).

1.9.8 **Fire drills** will be held every term at the School. The first drill in any academic year will be pre-announced and will be for the primary purpose of orientation for new staff and pupils. The Astro turf is the main evacuation/muster point in event of fire alarms sounding, a secondary muster point of the Firs pitch is available if the muster point is blocked or unsafe. Each building has a secondary evacuation place, outside of school hours, detailed in Appendix 3.

19.9 We also practice a night-time evacuation of the boarding houses every year. Termly Fire drills take place in boarding houses, possibly more to cover regular occasional boarders. Occasional boarders will be given a walk through and hear the sound of the fire alarm bell. Muster point for evenings is **Cage**

19.20 Written records of fire / evacuation drills will be maintained by the Bursar.

1.10 Fire Training

1.10.1 Staff will be informed in relation to:-

- (a) action to take if they discover a fire, including how to activate the fire alarm;
- (b) action to take on hearing the alarm, including location and use of exits and escape routes; and
- (c) action to take in the event of a bomb or other evacuation event alert.

1.10.2 Pupils will be informed of exits and escape routes

1.10.3 All staff will be trained in:-

- (a) emergency evacuation procedures;
- (b) how to spot fire hazards.

1.10.4 Visitors and contractors:-

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

1.11 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 Assistant Bursar, Head of Maintenance / Maintenance Coordinator, Caretaker and Heads of Department will:-

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- 1.11.1 Comply at all times with relevant regulations on the storage, transportation, handling and disposal of flammable materials (including weapons and ammunition, hazardous substances etc);
- 1.11.2 Regularly inspect all the areas where there are potential sources of ignition and ensure that no flammable materials are stored close by;
- 1.11.3 Maintain awareness through training and refresher training of the preventative steps that need to be taken;
- 1.11.4 Include fire prevention and evacuation procedures during the induction process with all new starters; and
- 1.11.6 Pay close attention to the activities of contractors as appropriate, particularly during maintenance and building works;

1.12 Fire Records

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

Recommended review period:	Annual
Review by:	Assistant Bursar/Bursar
Date reviewed:	September 2025

Appendix 1: Emergency Evacuation Notice/Procedure

All new staff and pupils, 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. Only tackle the fire if you believe it is safe to do so and only if you feel able to.
3. 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 at the Astro
4. If you are teaching a class, Reception will bring registers to the Assembly Point. Do not take anything else, and do not allow the pupils to take anything. Shut doors and windows behind you. Classes should muster within year groups.
5. The School Office or the duty Caretaker/ duty SMT member will summon the Emergency Services if the alarm sounds.
6. If you have a disabled pupil in your class, you should move him or her downstairs, using the special evacuation chair OR direct him or her, together with his or her carer, to wait for the Fire

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and Emergency Service in a previously designated safe refuge, in accordance with the individual's PEEP.

7. Take the register of your class as soon as you reach the assembly point.
8. Report anyone who is waiting to be evacuated from a designated refuge, or who is missing, immediately to the Bursar / Assistant Bursar who will inform the Fire Brigade. On no account should anyone return to any building until given permission by the Fire and Emergency Services.
9. Remain at the assembly point with your pupils until the all-clear is given.
10. It cannot be over emphasised that the main aim is to ensure everyone reaches a place of safety. Putting a fire out is secondary to this.
11. All other staff remain to the right-hand side of the Astro turf pitch and will be registered by HR or HM's PA.
12. Radioactive substances – when in use the Science teacher or technician to advise the fire officer so that the Fire Service can be advised. In event of a fire drill the technician should be released first to ensure no pupils tamper with the radioactive material. The location of the radio-active sources is the Science building, the physics store on the ground floor near the SLT rooms. Keys to the store are held by Head of Science, Science Technician and the Bursary (in key box).

Appendix 2: Disabled Staff, Pupils or Visitors

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

All the teachers and carers of disabled pupils will be trained in the use of the purpose-built lightweight stairway evacuation chairs which are specially designed for moving disabled people downstairs in an emergency. One of these chairs is located by the entrance to the dining hall.

Should we have designated safe refuge points, signs will be advising of their location, (usually in a stair well). When the fire alarm is sounded, it will be 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 Bursar / Assistant Bursar as soon as he or she reaches the assembly point. It is the responsibility of the Bursar / Assistant Bursar to ensure that this information is passed as soon as possible to the Fire and Emergency Services

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Appendix 3: Local Fire Assembly Points (outside schools hours)

Music School Teaching	Car Park
Old Poplars Boarding	Driveway to side of building
Mount/North wing Boarding	Car park front of the building
Chapel	Outside main entrance
Administration Building	Administration car park
Medical Centre	Administration car park
Orchard House & Acorns Boarding	Adjacent to the workshop
Modern Languages/ Food Technology/ Textiles.	Grass area in front of building
Art/CDT	Grass area in front of Art School Buildings Teaching
Holmes Building Teaching	Administration car park
Sports Complex Teaching	Astro Pitch
Hayward Teaching	Astro Pitch
Kendon House - Boarding	Main Car Park
Kitchen / Dining Hall	Main Car Park
Library	Main Car Park
Science Centre	Area behind pond
Years 7 – 9 Day House	Grass area in front of Hayward
Pengelly Performance Centre	Grass area and the concrete area ex Drama Studio

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Appendix 4: Site Plan

