

COGNITA

Fire Risk Management and Strategy Policy



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UK

Fire Risk Management and Strategy Policy

Cognita requires that all Cognita UK Schools policies and procedures are in place to manage fire safety in all our premises; that fire risk assessments are carried out for each workplace, school, establishment, etc; and that mutual arrangements are made with those in joint occupancy;

Key points

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 applies to all non-domestic premises and requires the Responsible Person (employers in workplaces) to carry out a fire risk assessment of their premises.

Cognita, being the employer and owner in respect of Cognita Schools, is the Responsible Person as defined by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Fire Risk Assessments must be reviewed at least every two years by the approved Fire Consultant or when there is any building alteration/change of occupation and use of the premises, or following a fire incident/emergency, etc. The School's Internal Fire Audit programme supplements this external FRA process to provide a suitably robust fire management system.

Emergency Plans must be drawn up for each premises, which reflect the outcome of the fire risk assessments.

Responsibilities in relation to this Policy fall on The Responsible Person and designated duty holders such as Head Teachers (Principal Dutyholder), Safety Assistants (nominated to support local fire safety management duties), Managers, Personnel, Fire Wardens, external Fire Safety Advisor and persons who otherwise have control of premises and employees.

Detailed information and guidance is given in the attached Appendices.

Fire Safety Management Corporate Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Policy describes the arrangements for effectively managing fire safety so as to prevent fire occurring and, in the event of fire, to protect people and property.
- 1.2 Compliance with the Policy is crucial in the context of business continuity planning and risk management generally, and to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which became effective on 1st October 2006.
- 1.3 The responsibility for complying with the Order rests with the 'responsible person'. This is the employer in respect of workplaces. Any duty imposed on the responsible person in respect of premises shall also be imposed on every person, other than the responsible person who has, to any extent, control of those premises (Head Teacher, teaching staff and other employees) so far as the requirements relate to matters within his/her control.

Responsibilities

2 Head Teachers (Principal Dutyholders) will:

- 2.1 Ensure that this Policy and/or any departmental fire safety policies/codes of practice that complement this Policy are in place, properly implemented and reviewed.
- 2.2 Ensure that a competent person (Safety Assistant) is appointed for all of their premises to oversee and implement fire safety arrangements, and ensure that they are competent and appropriately trained to undertake their duties;
- 2.3 Ensure that arrangements are in place for the completion of Fire Risk Assessments, including, where appropriate, technical surveys in respect of fire protection;
- 2.4 Ensure, in conjunction with the outcome of the fire risk assessment that the recommendations of the fire risk assessment are implemented and that all necessary fire precautionary measures and procedures, fire safety systems and equipment are provided and maintained as required.
- 2.5 Ensure that fire, security, and health and safety arrangements at each premise are complementary.
- 2.6 Ensure that staff are appropriately trained in fire safety procedures to reflect the requirements of the fire risk assessment;
- 2.7 Arrange for the Emergency Plan to be issued to their employees, visitors, etc. to inform them what to do in the event of fire, particularly safe evacuation;
- 2.8 Liaise with the local Trade Union Safety Representative, where appointed, on all aspects of the above arrangements.

3 Nominated Safety Assistants with responsibility for premises or parts of premises will:

- 3.1 Ensure that Fire Alarm and Detection Systems, Emergency Lighting and Fire Extinguishers are appropriately located and properly maintained;
- 3.2 Ensure that a robust and effective Emergency Plan is in place at each location to safely evacuate all persons, whether employees, visitors or service users. This Emergency Plan must take into account people with mobility, some sensory and some learning impairments, including those with temporary impairments, which will affect their ability to use stairs or otherwise evacuate premises promptly. The plan must be internally deliverable and not reliant on the Fire and Rescue Service to complete the evacuation;
- 3.3 Ensure that a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is developed for all relevant persons e.g. employees, service users, in accordance with the guidance on PEEPs. When necessary, further advice may be sought from the Fire Safety Advisor.
- 3.4 Ensure that if there is any doubt about the provision of new or replacement fire safety equipment or alteration to existing layouts, advice is sought from the Fire Safety Advisor;
- 3.5 Ensure that a copy of the current fire risk assessment for their premises is readily accessible, its provisions complied with;
- 3.6 Ensure that fire risk assessments are reviewed at every two years or whenever there is any building alteration, change of occupation or use of the premises or following an incident involving fire.
- 3.7 Ensure that internal fire safety audits are carried out at the designated frequencies.
- 3.8 Ensure that effective arrangements are in place for contacting the emergency services;
- 3.9 Ensure that the Fire and Rescue Service are aware of any significant hazards associated with the premises e.g. oxygen cylinders, storage of petrol, chemicals, etc;
- 3.10 Arrange and review Fire Evacuation Drills at the beginning of each Term;
- 3.11 Ensure that Fire Action Notices (displayed as a minimum at Fire Alarm Call Points) and Fire Signage are appropriate and kept up to date;
- 3.12 Ensure all escape routes are kept clear of obstructions and that access to Fire Extinguishers and Fire Alarm Call Points are not impeded; and
- 3.13 Ensure that the annual testing of portable electrical equipment and periodic testing (5 yearly) of the fixed electrical installations has been carried out.
- 3.14 Ensure Zurich hot works procedure is implemented, and Zurich hot works permit is issued for any works involving hot works processes

4 Sources of Help and Advice

- 4.1 Cognita SSC Ops Team and the Fire Safety Advisor will provide additional advice and guidance, on request, to assist with the implementation of this Policy, and ensure it is kept up to date in accordance with any changes in legislation and reflects current best practice;

- 4.2 Cognita will provide additional advice and guidance in respect of fire risk assessments and where applicable, specialist advice in respect of physical building structure from a fire safety perspective;

5 Fire Wardens will

- 5.1 Pro-actively monitor any fire protection measures and equipment present;
- 5.2 Competently react to emergency situations, in accordance with training;
- 5.3 Know how to raise the alarm and call the emergency services, along with being familiar with the means of escape in the area in which they are responsible;
- 5.4 Ensure that evacuations are carried out in an orderly manner; and
- 5.5 Support roll call to ensure that everyone has been accounted for.

6 Employees must

- 6.1 Ensure they are familiar with the Emergency Plan for their workplace and co-operate by participating in Fire Evacuation Drills and by observing practical fire safety arrangements;
- 6.2 Know, and co-operate with the Responsible Person's requirements and policies relating to fire safety for their workplace;
- 6.3 Report to their manager or supervisor any concerns about fire safety;
- 6.4 Be familiar with all escape routes;
- 6.5 Not wedge fire doors open, nor block or obstruct them nor abuse or interfere with any fire safety equipment or procedures or tolerate such actions by others.
- 6.6 Be aware of the action to be taken on discovering a fire, hearing a fire alarm, for raising the alarm (including the location of Fire Alarm Call Points) and calling the Fire and Rescue Service;
- 6.7 Promptly evacuate the premises, in accordance with the Emergency Plan, to a place of safety without putting themselves and others at risk, and NOT attempt to extinguish a fire unless they have been specifically trained; and
- 6.8 Comply with law relating to smoking and the employer's no smoking policy.
N.B. Failure by an employee to cooperate with the employer's fire safety arrangements is an offence under article 23 of the Regulatory reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

FIRE RISK STRATEGY

7 Introduction

- 7.1 Fire Risk Management is a process based on best practice, designed to ensure that Cognita school premises are doing their 'Reasonable Best' to manage themselves in order to meet their objectives to protect staff, pupils, visitors, contractors and the general public when on the school premises against fire risks of all kinds.
- 7.2 School premises will endeavour to promote a culture whereby ensuring that the staff, the pupils and all visitors' safety is at the heart of all practices and that all staff is open to sharing learning from the experiences related to the management of risk.
- 7.3 The same rules of courtesy and respect apply to all persons regardless of age, disabled and non-disabled staff and visitors alike. Persons with any mobility or impairment should not be treated as a specific Fire Safety concern that will need to be resolved.

Important: - "See the person not the disability or impairment".

Their mobility needs and preferences vary widely between each individual.

- 7.4 A key element of the UK's Fire and Rescue Service modernisation programme is that Fire Authorities should adopt a locally-determined risk-based approach to managing both fire risks and fire-fighting resources. Therefore, Cognita intends to apply an integrated risk approach to identifying high and low fire risk areas involving collaboration with Cognita's fire safety advisor(s) and the local Fire and Rescue Service.
- 7.5 The Fire Risk Strategy, Fire Safety Management Policy and Arson Risk Assessment will seek to manage fire safety through safe systems of; Information, Instruction & Fire Safety Training, Education, Health and Safety practices and the school buildings management.
- 7.6 The fire risk safety strategy and fire safety management policy will be subject to annual review from the date of issue, as the organisational structure of Cognita and the individual school develops.
- 7.7 This document and fire safety management policy will also be subject to future development and legislative requirements.
- 7.8 In the future, the scope of the fire risk management within Cognita may alter, and therefore strategy and policies may need to be substantially altered to reflect these changes

8 Purpose

- 8.1 The purpose of this Fire Risk Safety Strategy is: -
- To demonstrate that the school premises Fire Safety Management structure ensures shared responsibility for managing fire safety throughout the school premises
 - To ensure demonstration of the development of a system for implementation of fire safety practices, including risk assessments, monitoring and reviews in all areas of the school premises including, any planned internal and external developments;
 - To identify within the strategy documentation and process, the roles and responsibilities of the key individual(s) in post with responsibility for co-ordinating fire safety activities.

- to identify within the strategy documentation the respective roles, responsibilities and accountability undertaken by the person in charge and all the staff for their particular areas of risk;
 - To identify the responsibilities of all school committee members and staff and their authority with regard to managing fire safety;
 - To build upon the school's fire safety policy statement, which requires those responsible for fire safety within the school premises to:
 - Comply with prevailing legislation;
 - Implement fire safety precautions through a risk managed approach;
 - Comply with monitoring and reporting mechanisms appropriate to the management of fire safety;
 - Develop initiatives with other agencies and bodies in the provision of safety.
- 8.2 This document provides a framework for the implementation of the Fire Safety and Arson Prevention which will help to ensure that statutory duties for the school premises under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 are complied with.
- 8.3 The Fire Risk Safety Strategy sets out the approach to be taken by the school premises in addressing the following core elements: -
- Fire safety policy;
 - Management roles and responsibilities;
 - New building specifications;
 - Upgrading of fire precautions;
 - Fire alarm and fire detection systems;
 - Staff fire awareness training
 - Provision and use of fire-fighting equipment
 - Emergency plans (including evacuation plans);
 - Fire safety audits;
 - Young Persons
 - The Equality Act 2010
 - (See Part 4 Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)).
 - Fire Safety Maintenance;
 - Fire Safety Records;
 - Fire risk assessments
 - Integrated risk management plans.
 - Audits, Monitoring and Reviews.

9 Planning And Responding To A Fire Emergency

- 9.1 The safety from fire of all the occupants within all school premises is paramount and will therefore depend upon the successful implementation of fire safety procedures in addition to the use of active and passive systems e.g. the fire alarm and detections systems, fire doors, and fire fighting equipment, smoke ventilation systems and so on.
- 9.2 The overall aim of fire safety procedures is to ensure that all occupants in the school premises can escape unharmed to a place of safety either within or outside the school building(s). To achieve this, there must always be a prompt response to the alarm of fire and an effective pre-planned and tested strategy for evacuation.

- 9.3 School premises can be complex buildings and a sufficient number of adequately and appropriately fire safety trained staff will need to be available to assist in the event of a fire. Whilst it is not possible to give precise guidance in the event of an occurrence, the underlying principles for undertaking pre-planning should contain: -
- Action on discovery of fire
 - Action on hearing the fire alarm
 - Calling the Fire and Rescue Service;
 - Plans and procedures for evacuating persons who require assistance (PEEPs)
 - Arranging and co-ordinating evacuation;
 - The safe use of fire fighting equipment
 - Procedures for accounting for all persons evacuated
 - Procedures for maintaining control of evacuated persons
 - Availability of staff as an extra resource;
 - Internal management control systems;
 - Availability of additional specialist equipment for continuing education;
 - Facilities for the continuation of effective education;
 - Caring for high risk and vulnerable pupils and staff;
 - Information for the Fire and Rescue Service on their arrival (During and outside school hours);
 - Contingency planning and Business Continuity planning;
 - Persons with physical and learning disabilities;
 - Visitors and contractors;
 - Information, instruction and training for staff & visitors;
 - Debriefing procedures after an incident including when appropriate following a fire drill;
 - Returning the building to normal activities and services;
 - Recognising the issues of using a building that is a designated building of historical interest;
 - Recognising and addressing those school buildings (or parts of) that provide an amenity facility to the local residents outside of school hours;
- 9.4 **A Fire Service Information Pack** providing information about the premises and the risk to fire fighters etc normally held at the main reception or entrance hall ideally positioned adjacent to the fire alarm panel. Information should include: -
- A floor plan of the premises;
 - The location of valuable equipment;
 - Fire and safety systems;
 - Utilities and environmental systems – main shut off or isolation valves and switches;
 - Information and location with regard to hazardous materials (Flammable liquids, compressed gases, chemicals, radiation sources etc found on the premises);
 - Nearest available water supplies – i.e. fire hydrants, swimming pools etc.

10 Evacuation Strategies

- 10.1 Any evacuation strategy will be dependent upon the type of school premises, its use, and the occupancy profile for each room and building(s), which includes staff members, pupils, visitors and available staffing levels.
- 10.2 All school premises mainly work on the principle of full evacuation. It is the responsibility of the senior duty person in charge to ensure that the evacuation strategy for the school premises accurately reflects the individual needs of both the premises and its occupants.
- 10.3 The evacuation strategy should clearly define the sequence of events to be followed and should include reference to:-
- Evacuation of the school premise's occupants;

- The outside assembly point(s);
- Refuges and places of comparative and ultimate safety;
- The use of lifts or other mobility handling facility;
- Communication during the evacuation.

10.4 Details should also ensure that:

- All persons are accounted for;
- Designated staff carry out a thorough check to ensure that no persons have been left behind;
- The arrangements for the evacuating the mobility or impaired are adequate;
- Re-entry into the building is not permitted until advised by the Senior Fire Officer present it is safe to do so;
- The evacuation strategy must also take into account the use of the school premises by outside organisations outside of the normal school hours.

10.5 The concept of inclusive means of escape ensures that the means of escape arrangements and facilities for disabled people are not considered in isolation.

11 Fire Safety And The Equality Act 2010

11.1 The Equality Act 2010 requires the adjustment of the Cognita's policies, practices and procedures and, where necessary, the fabric of each building, so as not to discriminate against persons with mobility or impairment needs. The development of the Fire Risk Safety Strategy should take account of these requirements

11.2 The main principle of fire safety is that all persons should be evacuated from a building in the event of a fire. Note: Where circumstances dictate that progressive horizontal evacuation is appropriate, this should be dealt with by the individual PEEP.

11.3 The person in charge must ensure that all staff required to assist with evacuation of those persons with mobility or impairment needs, are adequately trained.

Note: Refer to PEEP on the evacuation of persons with mobility or impairment needs.

12 Fire Safety Training

12.1 Fire safety training is essential for all school staff; it is a legal requirement under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

12.2 All staff are expected to have an understanding of fire risks and know what to do in the event of a fire so that the premises fire safety procedures can be applied effectively.

12.3 The school management will provide appropriate levels of fire training; this will apply to all the school staff without exception including, all contract school staff and in line with the Cognita Compliance Training guide.

13 Fire Training Objectives

- All staff (Teaching or otherwise) should receive appropriate fire safety induction training on or before their first day of employment.
- Where those members of staff are working in areas where there are specific risks, the induction training must include job specific instruction.
- All staff should receive regular and updated training. The duration and frequency of training should be determined by a training needs analysis and should take account of

the fire risks present, the numbers of people at risk and the responsibilities of staff in a fire emergency.

- The outcomes of fire risk assessment and the identified training requirements should be formally recorded and reviewed.

13.1 **Note:** Those who are involved with the direct contact of 'Young Persons' would expect to receive more frequent training than those who may only be required to evacuate the school building(s) on hearing the fire alarm.

13.2 Training programmes will include: -

- Basic fire safety;
- Good housekeeping practices;
- Actions to take on discovering a fire;
- Actions to take on hearing the fire alarm;
- Procedures for evacuation;
- Specific Staff responsibilities and duties during a fire incident;

14 Fire Safety Log Book

14.1 A maintained fire safety log book is essential for the school premises, and is a fundamental requirement for good fire safety management practices.

14.2 The Fire Log Book should contain floor plans of the building(s) and operational records and be maintained by the nominated Fire Safety Assistant.

14.3 Information to be included is as follows: -

- Planning arrangements for fire and life safety;
- Construction and details of the fire safety systems installed (for example the fire alarm, fire detection, fire suppression etc);
- Records of ongoing fire safety testing and maintenance;
- Operational records which include copies of fire risk assessments and action plans

14.4 **Note:** The schools fire safety log book should be available for inspection by the enforcing authority inspectors (the Fire and Rescue Service).

15 Procedures For Reporting Fire Incidents

15.1 The Fire and Rescue Service must be called to all outbreaks of fire and any suspected fire.

15.2 All outbreaks of fire in the premises must be reported within 12 hours to the person in charge.

15.3 Fires involving death or injury must also be reported the Health and Safety Executive through RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulation 2013).

APPENDIX 1: Guidance to the Policy for Fire Safety Management

Useful reference documents which should be used to support your fire safety risk assessments and development of fire precautions.

The Fire Safety Risk Assessment Guides published by [Home office](#).

Practical Fire Safety Arrangements

As part of a holistic fire safety management system, in addition to the management action outlined below, considerations of passive and active fire precautions are essential.

Passive Fire Precautions are concerned with the physical conditions at workplaces which are designed to facilitate containment of fire by design, construction and layout, effective communication and safe evacuation. In particular the:

- materials specification, design, construction and inspection of buildings, fire doors and escape routes taking into account the needs of pupils, service users, people with disabilities, contractors, members of the public, etc;
- appropriate safe and secure location of building services e.g. gas;
- provision of clear fire safety signage for escape routes and final exits, in
- conformity with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996 and The Equality Act 2010.
- provision of prominently located Fire Action Notices (e.g. by Fire Alarm Call Points) to inform people of the action to be taken in the event of fire;
- education and training of staff in fire safety arrangements, in particular
- evacuation procedures and drills.

Active Fire Precautions are those features of the fire safety management system that detect and operate in the event of a fire, including fire alarm systems, emergency lighting systems and fire fighting equipment. In particular:

- the installation, maintenance, inspection and weekly testing of fire alarms;
- the appropriate design, location, operation, monthly inspection and annual testing of adequate (emergency) lighting systems for fire escape routes;
- the provision, use, appropriate type and location, and annual maintenance of portable fire extinguishers.

Fire safety inspections of the premises must be carried out at the frequency specified in the Fire Safety Inspections of the Premises section (Appendix A, section A1) of the Fire Safety Guides, which can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-safety-law-and-guidance-documents-for-business>

Fire Risk Assessments

Fire risk assessments are a requirement of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and are a structured approach to determining the risk of fire occurring in a workplace or from a work activity, and identifying the precautions necessary to eliminate, reduce or manage the risk. The outcome of the risk assessment must form the basis of the Emergency Plan.

Risk assessments must take into account those who could be affected, e.g. numbers involved, their location, physical and mental capabilities and employees of organisations with whom a workplace is shared. Where appropriate, an individual PEEP must be developed for staff, pupils or service users who have known disabilities that will impact on their ability to evacuate the particular premises.

Particular care should be taken when giving consideration to the use of Refuges as part of a PEEP. Placing people with mobility impairments, who cannot manage stairs without significant support, into a temporary Refuge is only acceptable if the Emergency Plan contains a robust and effective plan to enable them to be removed from the Refuge, to an external place of safety. Such plans must not rely on the Fire and Rescue Service to affect the rescue. Where an effective plan to quickly remove persons in a Refuge to an external place of safety cannot be put into place, then alternatives to a Refuge must be considered. A guidance note on PEEPs has been developed and is contained in Section 6 of the Fire Management Folder. When necessary, further advice may be sought from the Fire Safety Advisor.

Keeping sources of fuel such as combustible materials, flammable substances and waste; separated from sources of ignition including work equipment, lighting, hot surfaces, hot working processes, carelessness by contractors, etc on site, and arson must also be taken into account.

The risk evaluation and appropriate control measures to be taken into account will include those practical fire safety arrangements outlined above.

Fire Safety Audits

Fire Safety Audits may be carried out at any Cognita School by the Fire and Rescue Service who are the enforcing authority for this legislation and are likely to include a request to inspect the following documentation;

- Fire Safety Risk Assessment
- Fire Safety Policy
- Premises Specific Fire Safety Handbook or File, containing:
 - o Fire Safety Maintenance Records
 - o Fire Safety Log Book
 - o Written Fire Evacuation Plan
 - o Records of Staff Fire Safety Training

Historic Buildings

Cognita Schools occupy a number of historic and/or listed buildings. These buildings may present particular difficulties in achieving acceptable standards of fire safety and emergency evacuation commensurate with the character, structure, fabric and contents of the buildings.

A holistic approach to these situations will be required based on the premises specific fire risk assessment; which should take into account appropriate levels of supervision and surveillance, as well as practical security arrangements, e.g., engineered solutions, anti-arson mailbox, CCTV etc. and the statutory need to provide an effective and robust Emergency Plan.

Managing building works and alterations including Hot works Procedure

The fire risk assessment will be reviewed before any building work commences and with consideration to additional dangers that are likely to be introduced.

The school will liaise and exchange information with Contractors who have a duty under CDM Regulations 2015, to carry out a risk assessment and inform you of their significant findings, alongside preventative measures they may employ.

Continuous monitoring should take place to monitor the impact of building work on the general fire safety precautions such as the increased risk of combustible materials and accumulated waste and maintaining adequate means of escape.

Activities involving hot work such as welding, flame cutting, use of blow lamps or portable grinding equipment can pose a serious fire hazard and need to be strictly controlled when carried out in areas near flammable materials. This is done by having a written permit to work for the people involved (whether they are employees or contractors).

A permit to work is appropriate in situation of high hazard/risk and where there is a need to:

- Ensure there is a formal check confirming that a safe system of work is being followed.
- Co-ordinate with other people or activities
- Provide time-limits when it is safe to carry out the work, and
- Provide specialised personal protective equipment (such as breathing apparatus) or methods of communication

Additional risks that can occur during building work can include:

- Hot work such as flame cutting, soldering, welding or paint stripping
- Temporary electrical equipment
- Blocking of escape routes including external escape routes
- Introduction of combustibles into an escape route
- Loss of normal storage facilities
- Fire safety equipment, such as automatic fire detection systems being affected
- Fire resisting partitions being breached or fire doors being wedged open
- Additional personnel who may be unfamiliar with the premises

The school implements the Zurich "In Depth Guide to Hot Works Safety" and utilises the Zurich Hot Works Permit template.

Fire Risk Management and Strategy Policy

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