RHK Education

Fire Safety Policy

Reviewed: August 2025

Director: Ruth Knight

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Statement of intent

RHK Education is committed to protecting and preserving the health and safety of all our pupils, staff and visitors – this includes our dedication to mitigating the risk of fires. We will achieve this by educating our pupils, training our staff, and ensuring the alternative provision's fire safety measures are checked regularly and in full working order.

In the event that a fire breaks out, we have put in place procedures to ensure all risk is minimised and the premises can be evacuated quickly.

RHK Education's designated fire safety officer is the head of centre and is responsible for overseeing the review of this policy, as well as other relevant fire safety information, e.g. risk assessments and evacuation procedures.

We acknowledge our duty under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to take all necessary steps, as far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure the safety of all pupils, staff, volunteers and visitors in the alternative provision from the dangers of fire. The procedures in this policy apply to all staff and pupils of the alternative provision, as well as all visitors, guests, lettings and contractors present – there are no exceptions. All the foregoing will take part in evacuation and/or invacuation procedures, whether implemented during a drill, real incident or false alarm. The procedures are the same for all evacuations and invacuations, whether a drill, real incident or a false alarm.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended)
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Department for Communities and Local Government (2006) 'Fire safety risk assessment: educational premises'
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions'
- DfE (2022) 'Good estate management for schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following RHK Education policies:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Evacuation Procedure
- Fire Safety Risk Assessment

2. Roles and responsibilities

The director, in consultation with the head of centre, will:

- Ensure personal and whole-school familiarity with the requirements of the appropriate legislation and codes of practice.
- Create and monitor a management structure responsible for health and safety in the alternative provision, including but not limited to, fire safety.
- Ensure there is a detailed and enforceable policy for fire safety, and that the policy is implemented by all.
- Help to put in place measures to identify risks relating to possible accidents and injuries, suggesting reasonable adjustments to prevent them occurring.

The director will provide:

- A safe place for all users of the site, including staff, pupils and visitors.
- Safe means of entry and exit for all site users.
- Equipment, grounds and systems of work which are safe.
- Safe arrangements for the handling, storage and transportation of any articles and substances.
- Safe and healthy working conditions that comply with statutory requirements, codes of practice and guidance.
- Supervision, training and instruction, so that all staff can perform their duties in a healthy and safe manner.
- Protective equipment and clothing, where necessary, alongside any necessary guidance and instruction.
- Adequate funds to ensure the training of the head of centre and all other staff.

The head of centre will:

- Oversee the day-to-day development and implementation of safe working practices and conditions for all staff, pupils and visitors.
- Take reasonably practicable steps to ensure this policy is implemented by all members of staff across the alternative provision.
- Employ or designate a fire safety officer to be responsible for the day-to-day implementation of this policy. This person will also be the designated contact with the LA and the HSE where necessary.
- Take steps to ensure all members of staff, pupils and visitors are familiar with this policy.
- Work with the FSO to review and update this policy accordingly, every year.
- Identify risks relating to possible accidents and injuries, and make reasonable adjustments and suggestions to prevent them occurring.
- Take responsibility for the alternative provision's fire safety matters, in collaboration with the head of centre.
- Coordinate the implementation of all fire safety measures, ensure staff and pupil training takes place, and monitor the standard of the alternative provision's fire detection and protection equipment.
- Sporadically throughout the academic year, but at least once per term, undertake a whole-school fire evacuation drill – to ensure the alternative provision's staff members, pupils and visitors know what to do in the event of a real fire.
- Review relevant and updated legislation to ensure the alternative provision is working within the parameters of the law and as safely as possible.
- Ensure new and existing staff members undertake training sessions at least once per year, in line with the alternative provision's Fire risk assessment and training plan.
- Communicate relevant correspondence regarding fire safety to all members of staff and, where necessary, the director.
- Review and, if necessary, update the alternative provision's Fire Safety Training Plan and other relevant procedures once per year.
- Conduct risk assessments and ensure necessary procedures are in place to mitigate the risks of fires.
- Draw up a plan of the alternative provision, including the locations of all fire extinguishers, hosepipes and fire exits.
- Create an individual Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) for each person who will require assistance during fire drills.
- Contact the emergency services in the event of a fire.
- Use fire extinguishers where necessary.
- Nominate a temporary fire safety officer in their absence.
- Take steps to ensure the appropriate precautions, including the communication of this policy, are put in place where events are organised outside of normal school hours, or by third party organisations.
- Review activities to ensure specific restrictions on events, such as setting capacities and limiting the types of activity.

Staff members will:

- Take reasonable care of their health and safety.

- Cooperate with their colleagues, the fire safety officer and head of centre on all fire safety matters.
- Carry out their work in accordance with fire safety training and instructions.
- Inform the head of centre of any work situation representing serious and immediate danger, so that remedial action can be taken.
- Familiarise themselves with all their responsibilities as set out in this policy, and aspects of their work relating to potential fire hazards.
- Avoid any conduct which puts themselves or others at risk.
- Follow, and help to carry out, relevant risk assessments to ensure the safety of themselves and other staff members, pupils and visitors.
- Ensure that all staff, pupils and visitors are applying fire safety regulations and adhering to all rules, routines and procedures in place.
- Ensure all equipment is in good working order and safe to use, including adequate fire safety guards. Staff will also not entertain all improper use of such equipment.
- Use the correct equipment and tools for their work and any protective clothing supplied.
- Ensure any toxic, hazardous or flammable substances are used correctly, and stored and labelled as appropriate.
- Report any defects in equipment or facilities to the designated fire safety officer and/or the designated health and safety officer.
- Take an interest in fire safety matters, and suggest any changes they think are appropriate.
- Make suggestions as to how the alternative provision can reduce the risk of fires.
- Exercise good standards of housekeeping and cleanliness.
- Adhere to their common law duty to act as a prudent parent would when in charge of pupils.
- Ensure waste paper bins in their classrooms are emptied to mitigate the risk of fire.

All pupils will:

- Ensure they are aware of the alternative provision's fire safety procedures, with support from the alternative provision.
- Exercise personal responsibility for the health and safety of themselves and others.
- Respond to the instruction given by staff members in an emergency, e.g. evacuation procedures.
- Observe all health and safety rules of the alternative provision.
- Not misuse, neglect or interfere with items supplied for their, and other pupils' health and safety.
- Report any defects in equipment or facilities to their teacher as soon as possible.

All visitors and contractors will:

- Familiarise themselves with all health and safety policies and procedures including, but not limited to, this policy.
- Be aware of the alternative provision's evacuation procedure and fire assembly points.
- Respond to the instruction given by staff members in an emergency.

- Put a principal person in charge, who will take responsibility for safe practice, in the event the alternative provision is used for purposes not under the direction of the head of centre, e.g. building works.
- Inform the head of centre of all potential risks to staff, pupils and visitors.
- Assist the head of centre and fire safety officer in carrying out relevant risk assessments, suggesting ways to mitigate potential risks, before any work is carried out.
- Report any defects in equipment or facilities to the fire safety officer and/or the designated health and safety officer or, failing this, the nearest member of staff.
- Discuss any concerns regarding fire safety with the head of centre or fire safety officer

Instructions for pupils, volunteers, visitors, and staff members who are not trained fire marshals

If you discover a fire, do not attempt to tackle the fire. Activate the alarm by means of the nearest alarm call point and leave the building following the procedure below:

- When you hear the fire alarm, follow the exit signs and leave the building by the nearest exit
- Assemble at the assembly point, which is by the gates, located in the car park
- Do not delay in leaving the building
- Stay at the assembly point – do not move around the site unless instructed
- Remain silent at the assembly point
- Await further instruction
- Do not return to a building until told it is safe to do so – the alarm no longer sounding is not the ‘all clear’ signal

3. Risk assessments and checklists

The quality consultant, in cooperation with the head of centre, will ensure all fire related hazards are identified and risk assessments are completed for all areas of the alternative provision, in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government’s ‘fire safety risk assessment: educational premises’ guidance.

Risk assessments will be used to ensure that RHK Education premises and facilities are maintained to a standard that ensures the health, safety and welfare of pupils, staff and visitors.

RHK Education will maintain a Fire Safety Risk Assessment for all premises under its control and will include the procedures that are in place to:

- Reduce the likelihood of fire.
- Maintain fire detection and alarm systems.
- Familiarise staff and pupils with emergency evacuation procedures.

The Fire Safety Risk Assessment will be regularly reviewed and updated, particularly in circumstances where there is reason to suspect it is no longer valid or where significant changes to the premises take place.

The fire safety officer will have the appropriate qualifications and experience required to competently carry out the Fire Safety Risk Assessment.

Termly assessments of high-risk areas, such as kitchens, will be undertaken. Annual risk assessments will be conducted for all other lower-risk areas of the alternative provision. The fire risk assessments will be reviewed by the fire safety officer and will be amended after:

- Any structural changes, e.g. alterations to the layout of the premises or refurbishment, have taken place.
- Any change to the use of the alternative provision grounds which may affect the risk rating.
- Any change to work processes or equipment which may introduce new fire hazards.
- Any change to the number of people using the alternative provision, to ensure that fire escapes and fire assembly points can accommodate the numbers safely.

All visitors and contractors will be made aware of the risk assessments relevant to their activities as soon as possible after entering the alternative provision.

The fire safety officer will use checklists to ensure all fire detection and protection equipment, e.g. smoke alarms and fire extinguishers, are in working order.

Checklists of all kitchen and electrical equipment, e.g. cookers and heaters, which pose a potential fire risk, will be taken to ensure they are in working order.

4. Preventative measures

The head of centre will inspect the alternative provision's fire prevention measures once per half term to ensure the alternative provision is achieving maximum fire safety.

The head of centre, as the fire safety officer will ensure that regular checks are carried out on the following:

- Fire doors
- Extinguishers
- Fire blankets
- Hose reels
- Fixed systems, e.g. sprinkler systems
- Facilities for the fire service, including:
    - Dry risers
    - Access for emergency vehicles
    - Emergency switches for installations
    - Firefighting lifts
    - Information in respect of the premises and its contents
- Emergency lighting
- Signage and exit routes
- Lightning protection

Fire hazards, such as hot surfaces, naked flames, electrical equipment and flammable liquids, will be identified by the fire safety officer and measures will be put in place to ensure these risks are mitigated and controlled.

Hot surfaces, such as electrical heaters, will be kept uncovered and clear at all times. All flammable materials and fuels, such as paper, cardboard and solvents, will be securely disposed of. Where possible, naked flames and radiant heaters will be replaced by fixed convector heaters or central heating systems.

Pupils will be supervised at all times whilst undertaking activities and processes that involve heat. Relevant risk assessments will be undertaken before using certain equipment.

Stocks of flammable liquids, materials and gases will be kept to a minimum and, where possible, outside, to ensure the risk of fires can be mitigated. If storing materials outside is viable or possible, they will be kept locked in secure cupboards, away from pupils. Flammable liquids, materials and gases will be kept separate from each other in storage, and stored properly in suitable containers or cages.

All curtains, upholstered furniture and other soft furnishings are fire retardant, or have been treated to ensure their safety.

Good housekeeping

The risk of fire can be greatly reduced by a regime of good housekeeping within the workplace, and the need for good housekeeping cannot be overemphasised; if good housekeeping is not maintained, the risk of fire spreading is vastly increased. The alternative provision recognises the importance of good housekeeping, including not obstructing fire routes, fire doors and general tidiness. Pupils will also be made aware of the importance of good housekeeping.

The alternative provision's housekeeping rules include:

- No smoking anywhere within any of the alternative provision buildings.
- Spillages will be cleaned up as soon as possible.
- Rubbish will be cleared away and will not be left in fire routes or against the building fabric.
- Flammable waste and contaminated rags will be kept in separate metal bins with close fitting metal lids.

Provision and maintenance of emergency routes and exits

As part of the alternative provision's half termly fire safety inspection, the fire safety officer will ensure that:

- All fire escape routes are clear of obstruction.
- Emergency routes and exits lead as directly as possible to a place of safety.
- Emergency routes and exits are identified by suitable fire signs.
- Emergency fire doors open in the direction of escape wherever possible and are unobstructed.
- Emergency fire doors are not locked, and can be easily and immediately opened by any person who may need to use them in an emergency.

- Emergency fire escape routes and exits are provided with emergency lighting, of adequate intensity in case of failure of their normal lighting.
- No items are stored under stairways.

All fire doors will be regularly checked by a competent person to ensure that they remain in efficient working order. A record will be kept of any maintenance.

The inspection of fire doors will check that:

- Self-closing devices operate properly.
- Hold-open devices release when the fire alarm operates.
- Glazed panels are intact and undamaged.
- Warning signs are in place, e.g. ‘fire door keep closed’.
- Doors open and close freely and are not damaged.
- There is no distortion or warping of the door or frame.
- Intumescent strips and smoke seals are in place and not damaged.
- Hinges and locks are properly lubricated.
- Fire doors are not propped open.

5. Educating pupils

At least one PSHE lesson, per year group, per academic year will be dedicated to fire safety and mitigating the risk of a fire. The head of centre will invite the local fire service to perform a presentation to pupils once per year.

Pupils will be reminded to remain vigilant to fire and fire hazards, including flammable materials, during fire drills and other times where there is a heightened risk of fire, e.g. cooking lessons and science experiments.

The alternative provision’s zero-tolerance approach to pupils unnecessarily tampering with fire alarms will be communicated during lessons.

Any updates relevant to pupils, such as changes in responsibilities in the Fire Safety Policy, will be communicated to parents and pupils.

6. Measures for disabled people

The head of centre will be notified of anyone who may be unable to evacuate the alternative provision unassisted – this person will be subject to a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP), created by the head of centre and quality consultant. This may include being led out by a teacher.

To avoid serious injury, extra measures, such as editing timetables and moving classes, will be taken to ensure disabled pupils, members of staff or visitors do not attend lessons up flights of stairs, unless reasonable provisions, e.g. lifts, are in place.

Staff will be taught to modify evacuation routes for people with disabilities as part of their training.

Visual alarms, such as flashing lights and beacons, will be placed in all corridors throughout the alternative provision to ensure those with hearing difficulties are aware should a fire break out.

Evacuation procedures for disabled people

People with mobility impairments: People who require only limited assistance with evacuation will evacuate the building using the nearest exit. If they move at a slower pace, they will allow others to exit the building before them and then continue their evacuation to their designated refuge area. A responsible member of staff will be nominated to escort people who need assistance from the building.

People with visual disabilities: People with visual disabilities will usually require the assistance of one person to evacuate safely. On stairways, the helper will descend first with the visually impaired person's hand on their shoulder. On level surfaces, the visually impaired person will take the helper's arm and follow them.

People with hearing disabilities: People with hearing disabilities will be escorted out of the building by staff. Staff with hearing impairments may require additional means of being warned in the event of a fire alarm, e.g. a pager that vibrates when the alarm is activated and/or a flashing beacon linked to the alarm. The alternative provision will provide the appropriate alternative means of alarm.

7. Cooking facilities

To ensure potential fire hazards are mitigated whilst cooking, in the alternative provision canteen, extra measures will be taken to ensure the safety of staff members, pupils, visitors and contractors.

The alternative provision canteen will be thoroughly cleaned at the end of each day by the alternative provision's staff.

The alternative provision's site head of centre will check all electrical equipment in the alternative provision canteen and classrooms termly, to ensure their usability and safety. An electrical engineer will check all electrical equipment in the alternative provision canteen and classrooms annually, to ensure their usability and carry out any maintenance.

Flammable materials, such as flour, will be kept away from heat sources, including microwaves, cookers and radiators. Food waste, including paper food wrappers, will be properly disposed of, and bins emptied daily to mitigate fire risks.

Pupils will be allowed to use the kettle and microwave, under close supervision.

Staff members will report any defective equipment to the head of centre as soon as possible.

8. Fire hazards

Relevant risk assessments will be conducted to ensure areas for concern are identified and addressed.

Waste paper bins are emptied daily to mitigate risks. To minimise the risk of a fire, outdoor waste containers and refuse bins will be kept at a safe distance from the alternative provision building at all times.

Lighters, matches and other sources of ignition are kept in a locked store cupboard, away from pupils and can only be accessed after gaining permission from the fire safety officer. Electrical equipment will be reviewed in accordance with relevant school policy, and steps will be taken, e.g. regular checks by the fire safety officer, to ensure equipment is maintained to a high standard.

9. Procedure in the event of a fire

In the event of fire, the person who discovers the fire and/or smoke will sound the nearest fire alarm. As soon as the fire alarm sounds the fire brigade will be called by the head of centre.

All pupils, volunteers and visitors will be advised never to fight fire; instead, they will simply sound the alarm and exit the building via the nearest route out to a safe area.

On hearing the alarm, the building will be evacuated without delay and all pupils, staff members and visitors will proceed to their designated fire evacuation point for a register called by the fire safety officer (for staff and visitors), or for pupils, by their class teacher.

People will only be allowed to re-enter the building once it has been deemed safe by the head of centre or other responsible person, e.g. member of the fire brigade. If the building is not safe to re-enter all staff members, pupils and visitors will be sent home until further notice.

In the event someone is injured in the fire, the head of centre will ring for an ambulance immediately. Whilst waiting for the emergency services, the alternative provision's first aider will administer any first aid required.

Measures such as multiple fire escapes and exits will be put in place to ensure all staff members, pupils and visitors can escape the alternative provision. Fire exits will be kept clear and are clearly signed.

To ensure the fire alarm is heard throughout the alternative provision buildings, manual call points are fitted.

The alternative provision has a relevant and up-to-date Evacuation Procedure in place. The Evacuation Procedure will be reviewed by the head of centre once per year, to ensure it is accurate and relevant. A copy of the alternative provision's Evacuation Procedure is kept in every classroom. As part of their training, all staff members will familiarise themselves with the Evacuation Procedure. Details of the alternative provision's fire evacuation points are available in the Evacuation Procedure.

10. Detection equipment

All areas and rooms within the alternative provision are fitted with a smoke detector.

Fire detection and alarm systems will be tested each week. The head of centre, a competent person, will test the smoke and fire detectors at the start of every term.

A trained electrical engineer will test the smoke and fire detectors at the start of every year; any required maintenance will also be carried out by the engineer.

All work on the fire alarm system, including routine testing, will be recorded and accessible to the fire service.

Zone diagrams will be available at the main control panel to enable the fire services to determine the location of the incident and devise the most appropriate methods for fighting the fire.

The alternative provision's budget will be adjusted to ensure the upkeep of fire detection equipment.

11. Protection equipment

Fire protection equipment is available and easily accessible all around the alternative provision.

There are six recognised classes of fire as follows:

- Class A: Fires involving solid materials, e.g. wood, paper or textiles
- Class B: Fires involving flammable liquids, e.g. petrol, diesel or oil
- Class C: Fires involving gases
- Class D: Fires involving metals
- Class E: Fires involving electricity
- Class F: Fires involving cooking oils, e.g. deep fat fryers

The alternative provision will ensure that the type of fire extinguisher provided is suitable for the risks involved around the premises, that they are adequately maintained, and that appropriate records are kept of all inspections and tests.

One fire extinguisher is placed in each main room; the type of fire extinguisher will need to be relevant to the need of the room or area. Fire blankets are available in the provision canteen.

All fire protection equipment will be checked by the head of centre termly. The alternative provision's budget will be adjusted to ensure the upkeep of fire protection equipment.

The head of centre will keep a checklist of all service by dates on fire extinguishers, to ensure they are not kept beyond their shelf life.

Emergency lighting is installed; in the event that normal lights fail during a fire, these emergency lights will illuminate exit routes and help people escape if visibility is poor. Emergency lighting will be tested and checked monthly by the head of centre to ensure it remains in full working order, and remedial action taken in the event of a failure. The head of centre will also ensure that the emergency lighting is annually inspected, tested and maintained by specialist contractors. All tests will be recorded, together with any remedial action taken or any changes made to the system.

Protective clothing, such as beauty tunics and aprons, will be provided and funds will be made available to replace or purchase additional equipment from the alternative provision's budget.

12. Fire drills

The head of centre will carry out random fire drills at least once per term. All staff members, pupils, visitors and contractors will be expected to take part in the drill.

Pupils will go to their class's designated evacuation point for a registration call. Class teachers and pupils will only be allowed to return to their lessons or activities once all registers have been called. Visitors, contractors, and non-teaching staff will be allowed to return to their work once the head of centre has finished the registers.

The head of centre will make notes based on the evacuation, e.g. speed and organisation. Depending on the success of the fire drill, e.g. how long the evacuation took, the fire safety officer may make suggestions based on how the alternative provision can ensure the safe and quick evacuation of the alternative provision. Any improvements will be recorded.

During the fire drill, teachers will take a zero-tolerance approach to pupils misbehaving or running. Pupils will be expected to behave vigilantly, as they would in the event of a real fire.

13. Staff training

Staff will undergo mandatory fire safety training after joining the alternative provision. This will be led by the head of centre or quality consultant and include details about the fire precautions in the workplace and emergency procedures, in accordance with The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (as amended).

The fire safety officer will undergo annual training from fire safety professionals, to ensure they are capable of carrying out their role.

Refresher training will be undertaken by all staff at least annually, to ensure staff are reminded of the procedures in place, and know what to in the event of a fire.

To help ensure staff members are knowledgeable about fire safety, the fire safety officer will communicate regular updates and correspondence.

14. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the head of centre as fire safety officer in conjunction with the quality consultant, and after any changes to relevant legislation or statutory guidance.

Any changes made to this policy and other relevant documents will be communicated to all members of staff. Changes pertaining to pupils, e.g. their responsibilities, will be communicated to parents and pupils.

The next scheduled review for this policy is August 2026