

Fire Safety Policy

Approved by:

Mrs C Ellis-Gage
Head Teacher

Date: May 2024

Signed:



Next review :

May 2025
Mr J Howard
Site Manager

Contents

Introduction	3
1. The Core Elements	3
1.1. Fire plan	3
1.2. Fire risk assessment	3
1.3. Fire Risk Assessment Review	4
1.4. Fire evacuation plan	4
1.5. Fire action notice	5
1.6. General emergency evacuation plan (GEEP)	5
1.7. Personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP)	5
2. Responsibilities: Schools	5
2.1. Headteachers	5
2.2. School staff with specific fire evacuation roles	7
2.3. All school staff	8
3. Fire risk assessor competence	8
3.1 Fire risk assessor – NCC TFM premises	8
3.2 Fire risk assessor – schools	9
3.3 Fire plans	9
3.4 Fire evacuation plans	9
3.5 Reviewing fire safety arrangements	9
3.6 Fire drills	9
3.7 Carrying out the fire drill	10
3.8 Roll call and checking the premises has been evacuated	10
3.9 Fire drill monitoring and debrief	11
Additional relevant documents	12
Changes since last revision	12

Introduction

Risks from fire need to be managed so that injury to building users and damage to property is avoided. Key to this is identifying fire hazards, assessing the risk presented by these hazards and ensuring the risk is adequately controlled.

This compliance code describes the requirements for managing fire safety in Norfolk County Council (NCC) premises and in schools. Principally, it sets out requirements for undertaking fire risk assessments, creating premises fire evacuation plans, maintenance of equipment and systems, staff training and fire drills.

1. The Core Elements

The core elements required for successful fire safety management include these (with definitions), in this order:

1.1. Fire plan

A fire plan is a diagram or line drawing showing general fire safety precautions in a building such as break glass call points, emergency lighting, fire extinguishers, fire exit signs, fire doors and designated escape routes.

For NCC premises the fire plan is created or updated by a competent person (a fire safety consultant) and provided to the premises manager and the Corporate Property Team (CPT) for use and reference.

Fire plans for schools should be created or updated by a competent person (a fire safety consultant) and provided to the headteacher for use and reference.

For both NCC premises and schools the fire plan should inform the fire risk assessment and the instruction, information and training provided to staff and other premises users.

1.2. Fire risk assessment

A fire risk assessment is an organised and methodical appraisal of a premises and the activities carried out therein, that identifies possible sources of fire, how the chances of a fire may be reduced and safe ways of protecting and evacuating people from the premises in the event of a fire, considering all users e.g., those who may need assistance with evacuation.

The fire risk assessment for each **NCC premises** should be created by a fire risk assessor (fire safety consultant) with reference to the fire plan. The assessment is developed by the fire risk assessor with input from the premises manager to ensure that the activities that take place at the premises are understood and are reflected accurately in the assessment.

The fire risk assessment for a **school** should be created by a fire risk assessor (fire safety consultant) with reference to the fire plan. The assessment is developed by

the fire risk assessor with input from the headteacher to ensure that the activities that take place at the premises are understood and reflected accurately in the assessment.

1.3. Fire Risk Assessment Review

Both NCC premises managers and headteachers need to understand the fire risk assessment, implement the control measures it describes and identify when circumstances change (incident / change of use / alterations etc.,) that may require the assessment to be reviewed – there should be a review at least yearly by NCC premise manager / headteacher. The fire risk assessment should be treated as a 'live' document and kept under constant review.

Fire risk assessments should be formally reviewed and updated by a competent person (a fire safety consultant) every five years, or whenever there is a significant change / incident to your premises – whichever comes first. This recommendation is for lower risk premises. Higher risk premises will need more frequent reassessments, which will be indicated in the fire risk assessment.

1.4. Fire evacuation plan

A fire evacuation plan is a document describing the procedures to follow in case of a fire, to enable persons to evacuate a premise safely and in a timely manner.

The fire evacuation plan is derived from the fire plan and the findings of the fire risk assessment and includes evacuation arrangements for anyone who may need assistance to evacuate safely e.g., for whom a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) or General Emergency Evacuation Plan (GEEP) is in place. The design of the building, the activities carried out and the numbers and needs of staff and visitors will determine the complexity of the plan and the resources required to implement it.

In NCC premises supported by the Total Facilities Management (TFM) contract, the fire evacuation plan shall be developed by CPT with reference to the fire plan and the fire risk assessment, with input from the premises manager, and consideration of users (via their managers) e.g., for PEEPs and GEEPs.

The fire evacuation plan shall be approved before implementation and **reviewed annually** thereafter by a competent person. A fire evacuation plan template for premises F607C can be utilised, or a comparable document containing the same key information, should be used.

In schools the fire evacuation plan should be developed by the headteacher and premise manager, with input from a fire safety consultant, referring to the fire plan and the fire risk assessment. A fire evacuation plan template for premises F607C is available.

There must be sufficient trained staff available to support the evacuation plan, when the building is operational, this resource planning shall consider shift work, holiday and absences.

Other key terms

1.5. Fire action notice

A fire evacuation plan should not be confused with a fire action notice, which is often present by fire exits and outlines key 'at a glance' instructions that a building's occupants need if a fire is discovered or the alarm is raised, e.g., call 999, leave the building by signposted routes and exits, go to the assembly point etc.

1.6. General emergency evacuation plan (GEEP)

A general emergency evacuation plan is information provided to occasional visitors to a premises who may need assistance with evacuation in an emergency.

1.7. Personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP)

A personal emergency evacuation plan is an individual plan for means of escape from fire for staff or regular visitors to a premises. The plan is tailored to individual needs and must be drawn up with the individual and their line manager to ensure that the method of evacuation can be agreed, supported, and exercised.

2 Responsibilities: Schools

Leader of the Council and Chief Executive

The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive have overall responsibility for NCC's fire safety arrangements and in Community, Voluntary Controlled and Maintained schools, where NCC is the employer.

In Voluntary Aided, Foundation and academy schools the governing body/local governing body has overall responsibility for fire safety.

2.1 Headteachers

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that:

- they consider attending, or delegate others to attend, relevant training to support competence in fire safety management - e.g., **NCC Safe Management of Premises – Fire**; this training provides an understanding of the fire risk assessment and fire evacuation plan for their premises and awareness of precautionary measures required to prevent fires occurring; this training is available through Norfolk Services for Schools (SLA Online)

- all staff receive induction/training on emergency procedures, including fire evacuation arrangements – see Induction checklist G502a and Induction page on InfoSpace
- consideration is given to all staff receiving relevant training on basic fire safety requirements in workplaces, e.g., **NCC Health and safety and fire prevention awareness elearning** (available through Norfolk Services for Schools (SLA Online))
- consideration is given to staff who support PEEPS attending relevant training, e.g., **NCC Supporting evacuation with dignity elearning** and (where required) Evac chair training; evacuation with dignity elearning is available through Norfolk Services for Schools (SLA Online); Evac chair training is available from Norfolk Fire and Rescue Community Interest Company
- reference is made, as needed, to Emergency support for people requiring additional support G607a, Personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) F607b and PEEP – checklist for managers C607
- a fire plan for the premises is obtained
- a fire risk assessment is carried out with reference to the fire plan, by a competent person (a fire safety consultant who meets the requirements detailed in section 3). Reference is made to the Fire safety technical appendix G607 when providing information to the fire safety consultant carrying out the fire risk assessment. A fire risk assessment template F607a is available and should be shared with the fire safety consultant.
- actions arising from the fire risk assessment are implemented
- they nominate an incident response (fire) team and create and implement a fire evacuation plan for the premises, derived from the fire risk assessment and the fire plan and requirements of GEEPS/PEEPs
- the fire evacuation plan is made available to staff
- staff are instructed in premises evacuation procedures, referencing the fire evacuation plan
- staff who carry out specific roles during evacuation, e.g., evacuation assistant or fire warden (fire marshal), are competent and have received suitable training
- consider if temporary, part time or seasonal staff, shift workers or volunteers are used to fulfil duties in relation to the evacuation plan, their suitability as they could leave a position at short notice

- the fire risk assessment and fire evacuation plan are reviewed at least annually by the headteacher or their delegate, noting the findings of fire drills/exercises and changes due to PEEPS/GEEPs and working arrangements
- Fire risk assessments should be formally reviewed and updated by a competent person (a fire safety consultant) every five years, or whenever there is a significant change / incident to your premises – whichever comes first. This recommendation is for lower risk premises. Higher risk premises will need more frequent reassessment, which will be indicated in the fire risk assessment.
- routine tests and checks of fire alarm systems, emergency lighting and fire extinguishers are carried out and documented and any defects are reported to the relevant contractor / premise manager
- fire drills are carried out - preferably each term - and recorded in the Fire logbook
- PEEP related exercises are supported and recorded, if carried out separately from fire drills
- fire drills and actual evacuations are reviewed for effectiveness and changes identified are implemented
- records of maintenance/inspection of fire safety equipment are kept and are readily accessible
- all contractors receive a recorded site induction and are made aware of emergency arrangements
- any significant changes to activities or building use that may affect the fire risk assessment are noted so that the fire plan, fire risk assessment and/or evacuation plan can be amended

2.2 School staff with specific fire evacuation roles

- nominated evacuation assistants complete **NCC Supporting evacuation with dignity elearning** or (where required) Evac chair training; Supporting evacuation with dignity elearning is available through Norfolk Services for Schools (SLA Online); Evac chair training is available from Norfolk Fire and Rescue Community Interest Company
- nominated evacuation assistants should endeavour to understand the evacuation experience of the individual(s) they support – for example, by sitting in the Evac chair themselves to appreciate how it feels to be moved downstairs by someone else in an emergency

- nominated fire wardens (fire marshals) must understand the fire evacuation plan for the premises and their role in actioning it
- staff with specific fire evacuation roles should communicate any concerns identified because of evacuation to the headteacher

Fire marshal training

Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service provides fire marshal and Evac chair training. These courses are run through Norfolk Fire and Rescue Community Interest Company (01603 964833; admin@norfolksafety.org).

Courses are available at the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Training Centre in Bowthorpe, local fire stations or your premises.

2.3 All school staff

- all staff complete **Health and safety and fire prevention awareness elearning**; training is available through Norfolk Services for Schools (SLA Online)
- should notify their manager if they require a Personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) and if they believe that a change to their PEEP is required

3 Fire risk assessor competence

3.1 Fire risk assessor – NCC TFM premises

CPT must ensure that for TFM premises the persons who develop fire plans, fire risk assessments and review and approve fire evacuation plans are competent and that:

- fire plans, fire risk assessments and reviews of fire evacuation plans are carried out by companies/individuals who meet the competence criteria described in A Guide to Choosing a Competent Fire Risk Assessor (Fire Sector Federation, 2020)
- the fire risk assessor should liaise with the premises manager to ensure that the fire plan and the fire risk assessment accurately reflects how the premises is used; and that the premises manager understands the findings of the fire risk assessment
- where a fire risk assessor reviews an existing fire plan, fire risk assessment or evacuation plan, they must advise CPT of any issues, e.g., where emergency lighting is required and has not been identified previously
- a suitable format is used for the fire risk assessment - the fire risk assessment template F607a (derived from the fire risk assessment standard 79-1:2020) or a template that contains the information identified within F607a.

3.2 Fire risk assessor – schools

Where a fire risk assessor (fire safety consultant) carries out a fire risk assessment the assessor should meet the competency criteria described in the bullets immediately above.

3.3 Fire plans

Fire plans should detail the following as a minimum:

- fire detection and alarm systems
- emergency lighting
- escape routes and compartmentation
- breach or lack of fire stoppage
- fire doors, final exit doors and doors forming part of accepted escape routes
- fire signage including fire action notice
- areas that were not accessed

3.4 Fire evacuation plans

The fire evacuation plan, derived from the fire plan, the findings of the fire risk assessment and relevant PEEPS and GEEPs, should be recorded using the Fire evacuation plan - template for premises F607c.

3.5 Reviewing fire safety arrangements

Fire safety arrangements must be subject to ongoing review. If there are identified issues as result of drills / testing etc., and/or change in the premises that have affected existing fire precautions, the assessment should be reviewed and revised. Reasons for review could include:

- a change of use to part of the premises
- alterations to the building, including the internal layout
- substantial changes to furniture and fixings
- the introduction, change of use or increase in the storage of hazardous substances
- the failure of fire precautions, e.g., fire-detection systems and alarm systems
- a significant increase in the number of people present
- the presence of people with some form of disability

3.6 Fire drills

NCC premises managers and headteachers should test the effectiveness of fire evacuation arrangements by carrying out fire drills.

Fire drills should be carried out at least annually in NCC premises and preferably once a term in schools.

A well-planned and executed fire drill will confirm understanding of the training and provide information for future training.

Fire drills should:

- identify any weaknesses in the evacuation strategy
- test the procedure following any recent alteration or changes to working practices
- familiarise new occupants with procedures
- test the effectiveness of arrangements for disabled people and those supporting them in a fire evacuation

Premises that consist of several buildings on the same site should be dealt with one building at a time over an appropriate period unless the fire evacuation plan dictates otherwise.

3.7 Carrying out the fire drill

For premises with more than one escape route, the escape plan should be designed to evacuate all people on the assumption that **one exit or stairway is unavailable because of the fire**. Applying this scenario to different escape routes at each fire drill will encourage individuals to use alternative escape routes which they may not normally use.

When carrying out the drill it may be beneficial to:

- nominate observers
- inform the alarm receiving centre (if the fire warning system is monitored)
- ask a member of staff at random to set off the alarm by operating the nearest alarm call point

Drills involving individuals with PEEPs may need to be carried out separately where someone is not able to participate in planned evacuations.

3.8 Roll call and checking the premises has been evacuated

Ensure that a roll call (where applicable) is carried out at the designated assembly point(s) and/or reports are received from fire wardens (fire marshals) designated to 'sweep' the premises. Note any people who are unaccounted for. In a real evacuation this information will need to be passed to the Fire and Rescue Service on arrival.

Once the roll call is complete or all reports have been received, allow people to return to the building. If the fire warning system is monitored, inform the alarm receiving centre that the drill has been completed and record the outcomes of the drill.

In larger schools and larger NCC premises, a roll call is generally not a practical proposition, so it is important to develop robust management procedures to ensure that the building has been evacuated effectively, e.g., sweeping of the premises by fire wardens/evacuation marshals.

3.9 Fire drill monitoring and debrief

During the drill the premises manager/headteacher and any nominated observers should pay attention to:

- communication difficulties regarding the roll call and establishing that everyone is accounted for
- the use of the nearest available escape routes as opposed to common circulation routes
- difficulties with the opening of final exit doors
- difficulties experienced by people with disabilities or by young children
- the roles of specified people, e.g., fire wardens, evacuation marshals
- inappropriate actions such as stopping to collect personal items, attempting to use lifts, anyone who does not evacuate
- windows and doors not being closed as people leave

On the spot debriefs are useful to discuss the drill. Later, reports from fire wardens and observations from participants should be collated and reviewed. Any conclusions and remedial actions should be recorded and implemented.

Details should be noted in a fire logbook and kept on site. A Fire logbook F607 is available.

Adequate fire safety training must be provided for staff. Fire safety training requirements for different job roles – premises manager, line manager, staff with specific evacuation roles etc - are detailed in the section on responsibilities.

As a minimum all staff should receive training about:

- the responsibilities and procedures detailed in the fire evacuation plan, including how to raise an alarm
- the importance of fire doors and other basic fire-prevention measures
- the appropriate use of firefighting equipment
- the importance of reporting to the assembly area
- exit routes and the operation of exit devices
- assisting people with disabilities

Training is necessary:

- when staff start employment or are transferred to the premises
- when changes have been made to the plan and the preventive and protective measures
- where working practices and processes or people's responsibilities change to ensure that staff know how to safeguard themselves and others on the premises
- where staff are expected to assist disabled people

Fire training can be recorded in the Fire logbook F607. Training should be repeated as often as necessary.

Additional relevant documents

- Fire safety technical appendix G607
- Fire evacuation plan - template for premises F607c
- Fire logbook F607
- Fire risk assessment form F607a
- Emergency evacuation arrangements for people requiring additional support G607a
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) F607b
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) – Checklist for managers C607
- General emergency evacuation plan F607e
- Monthly fire safety checks F607d
- NCC Evacuation of persons requiring assistance in an emergency - Equality Impact Assessment P607a

Changes since last revision

Date	Details of change	Approved by	Version number
13/09/23	<p>Completely revised document aligned for use by NCC and schools. Revised to show the organising role of the Corporate Property Team in fire safety management at NCC premises supported by TFM.</p> <p>Fire safety technical information, previously contained in this document (on InfoSpace) and in G607c (on MyNet) is now contained in a single updated document - Fire safety technical appendix G607.</p> <p>All associated forms simplified and updated.</p> <p>Fire risk assessment competency questionnaire F607d on InfoSpace has been deleted.</p> <p>Monthly fire safety checks form F607d and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) – Checklist for managers C607 are new documents.</p>	P Downer - Health and Safety Manager	94