



THE
PORTSMOUTH
GRAMMAR
SCHOOL

The PGS Fire Safety Policy

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The Portsmouth Grammar School Fire Safety Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Our priority is to keep all visitors and members of our community safe. In doing so, we aim to minimise the risk to life and reduce the possibility of injury by ensuring that staff, pupils and visitors follow our fire safety procedures.
- 1.2. This fire safety policy includes procedures to be followed and explains the risk assessments that have been undertaken to ensure we respond calmly and effectively in the event that a fire breaks out in one of our buildings.

2. Role of the School Fire Safety Manager

- 2.1. The Estates Bursar (**'Estates Bursar'**) is the School's designated Fire Safety Manager.
- 2.2. The Estates Bursar is responsible to the Bursar and reports to the Bursar on matters of school fire safety.
- 2.3. Key areas of responsibility include ensuring that:
 - 2.3.1 The Fire Safety Policy is reviewed annually by the Health and Safety Committee / the Health & Safety Executive Group and the Senior Management Team, and is approved by Governors
 - 2.3.2 The Fire Safety Policy is promulgated to the entire school community
 - 2.3.3 Everyone in the school (including visitors and contractors) are given clear instructions on where they should go in the event of a fire
 - 2.3.4 All new staff and pupils, all contractors and visitors are notified of what to do if the Fire Alarm sounds, with regular drills to reinforce this at least termly
 - 2.3.5 Staff who contribute to the evacuation process (be that Gold Commander or Fire Wardens) are provided with regular refresher training, be that individual on line fire training, practical hands on extinguisher or classroom-based training
 - 2.3.6 Procedures for emergency evacuation are regularly tested with their effectiveness reviewed
 - 2.3.7 Fire risk assessments are reviewed and updated biennially via our contractor Benfields Fire Services, and recommended actions are carried out
 - 2.3.8 Fire prevention measures are carefully followed in line with advice from the local fire officer

- 2.3.9 Fire procedures and risk assessments are reviewed on each occasion that a building is altered (including change of use), extended or rebuilt, or when new buildings are acquired

3. Emergency Evacuation Notice

- 3.1. All new staff via the HR induction process and pupils via regular drills and contractors and visitors are notified of what to do if the Fire Alarm sounds.

- 3.2. The following guidance is communicated regularly to all staff:

3.2.1 On discovering a Fire, you should:

- (a) Sound the alarm
- (b) Warn others
- (c) If appropriate, operate a fire extinguisher
- (d) Evacuate the building, with priority for the safety of pupils, staff and visitors in your care
- (e) Ensure that 999 has been called by the Marshals or other senior member of staff (see paragraph 4.2 or 7 below). Failing this (eg at an after-hours activity), call 999 yourself as soon as you can.

3.2.2 On hearing the Fire alarm:

- (a) Escort any pupils you are teaching to the Quad or JS Quad or UJS Playground where they will assemble in Tutor Groups/Forms as shown in Appendix 1.
- (b) On your way out, designated staff (or reserves) are to conduct a Site check: check those areas of the school designated to you; shut doors, close windows but do not delay. Report the clearance of your designated area by quoting the area number to the Surmaster or their designated reserve/assistant immediately. The Fire Warden personnel will be identified by their high-vis jackets in the Main Quad: these will be the Senior Deputy Head, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) the Surmaster and the Estates Bursar (or their reserves). If the fire prevents mustering in the Quad, another area will be designated such as Governors Green or the green area across Museum Road next to the Ravelin Centre; any change will be passed on via loud speaker. The Marshals/caretakers x2 are to go to both Museum Road gate and also Penny Street gate (with handheld radios on channel 1) and be prepared to open these gates to allow out pupils or assist emergency services with access.
- (c) In the Junior School:

- (i) Form Teachers on the main school site are to register their forms using a roll call and report back to Junior School Secretary and JS Head's PA. Junior School Secretary and Head's PA to report back to the Head of the Junior School when all registers have been completed. The Pre-School Lead or Deputy to report to Head of the Junior School when all Pre-School registers have been completed.
- (ii) Form Teachers on the Upper Junior School site to register their Forms using a roll call and report back to Upper Junior School Secretary. The Upper Junior School Secretary to report to the Senior Deputy Head by mobile telephone or school phone when all registers have been completed.
- (d) Senior School teaching staff who are not tutors should muster in front of D Block and be available to substitute for absent colleagues; non-teaching staff and all visitors/contractors should muster in front of E block - hosts of visitors/contractors are to identify them and report into the Surmaster only if they are missing.
- (e) Any staff member covering a tutor group (either for morning registration or another part of the day) should roll call that tutor group in the event of a fire alarm.
- (f) Heads of Year should collect Register forms from the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and distribute them to their Tutors. These should be returned to Heads of Year who should report to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) any unexplained absences. The SMT and School Office Administrator delivers the 'Pupil Out of School List' to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the 'Staff Out of School' list to the Senior Deputy Head, or designated deputies.
- (g) On Games afternoons, pupils in normal school lessons will be registered in the usual way. Pupils involved in on-site games activities should assemble in the appropriate area as indicated on the PGS Main Site Fire Plan (see *PGS Online – Key Staff Information – Fire, Evacuation and Lockdown*) and be registered by the teacher in charge of that activity. Pupils who are 'off games' will also assemble in the designated area and be registered by the member of staff on Games Cover who should then pass the register to the Head of Year who then liaises as normal with the Deputy Head (Pastoral).
- (h) A reserve has been identified for all staff with specific site-check responsibilities as well as for the Fire Warden Personnel, the Maintenance Manager and the Senior Deputy Head.

- (i) If the alarm sounds during a public examination the invigilators in the Old Gym and BCSC Lecture Theatre should not evacuate the room until they have checked that the candidates are genuinely at risk (unless it is immediately obvious that this is the case). This decision will be taken by the Senior Deputy Head and will be communicated by the Deputy Head (Academic) or Head of Exams. If it is necessary to evacuate the room, then invigilators should follow the instructions published by Head of Examinations and these will be briefed and available in the examination room. Candidates should assemble in front of G block unless otherwise instructed. There is an obvious emergency escape route also to the right directly outside the Gym onto the High Street. A sweep also of the new exam secure room next to the old gym needs to be included, Invigilators in all other rooms including IT suites should evacuate as normal, following the instructions published by the Head of Examinations and these are available in the examination room. Staff who have been allocated to assist in the evacuation of supplementary exam rooms should ensure the class they are teaching are sent to muster in the Quad before moving to their allocated exam room. They should remain with the exam group to maintain exam security; if they are a tutor, the Head of Year (failing which, a replacement member of staff) will be allocated to complete the tutor group register.
- (j) Should it be necessary to evacuate the site, normal fire drill procedures will be followed. Pupils and staff will assemble in the Quad, JS Quad or UJS Playground and be directed through an appropriate exit to an assembly point which has been identified to all evacuees before they leave school premises. The preferred site is Governors Green via the Penny Street gate and the Main Arch onto the High Street, leaving the Museum Road gate for fire engine access. The Marshals are deployed as a default setting to all 3 access gates to ensure these gates are open if needed.

4. Fire Safety Procedures

4.1. Briefing Staff and Pupils

- 4.1.1 All new staff (teaching and support staff) and all new pupils are to be briefed by the Surmaster (staff) and the Head of Year (pupils) respectively, as part of the PGS HR induction process on the School's emergency evacuation procedures within their first week at The Portsmouth Grammar School. For teaching and support staff this includes discussion on their first day at work from their line manager on fire evacuation routes from the area they will be working in (including a walk through) as well as location of the fire alarms and fire extinguishers, followed by a briefing to reinforce this learning within the first week of their work. They are shown where the emergency exits and escape routes are located and walked to the outside assembly point. Fire action notices are displayed on the walls of all rooms and in all corridors. All pupils are shown what they look like and where they should go on hearing the fire alarm.

- 4.1.2 Fire awareness training is provided to all staff at least annually. Specific-to-role training is also provided on an ongoing basis, for example for Fire Wardens or in the basic use of fire extinguishers; this may be in person or by video training or similar. Those involved in the evacuation process will also be given special group sessions led by Benfield's so we know how to deal with different evacuations processes, for example if we need to evacuate off site
- 4.1.3 Staff are reminded termly of the School's procedures, and instructions and information relating to fire and evacuation, including roles and responsibilities, are maintained and available to staff on PGS Online (under Staff – Key Staff Information - Fire, Evacuation and Lockdown Procedures) as well as through this Policy. Termly reminders are usually through Professional Development Day training in the Autumn, through briefings in the Spring and Summer Terms, and in person if changes, such as a change of responsibility or role, are made.
- 4.1.4 Pupils are reminded termly of the School's fire and evacuation procedures and what actions they should take.
- 4.1.5 Safe evacuation of everyone, staff and pupils alike, is our priority. Protecting property comes second. No-one should attempt to fight a fire at the expense of their own or anyone else's safety.

4.2. Summoning the Fire Brigade

- 4.2.1 The School Office is manned between 08:00 and 17:00 during weekdays throughout the school year and mostly at similar times during half terms and holidays apart from bank holidays and the Christmas shutdown.
- 4.2.2 The master panel that shows the location of all the alarm call points on the networked alarm system in the school buildings is physically located in the Marshal/Porter's office.
- 4.2.3 The School Head Marshal 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 as soon as the location and risk of the fire has been identified.
- 4.2.4 The School Marshal lives adjacent to the main site and would attend this or the Upper Junior School sites. Fire alarms are automatically registered with Churches Fire Alarm receiving centre (ARC) who liaise with the Fire Service and contact key PGS personnel via their PGS call-out list.

4.3. Visitors and Contractors

- 4.3.1 All visitors and contractors are required to sign in at Reception, where they are issued with a visitor's or contractor's badge which should be worn at all times when they are on school property. They are made aware of the emergency evacuation procedure and the assembly point (the Guide for Visitors to the Portsmouth Grammar School, requires (para 9) *Proceeding calmly to the Main Arch on the High Street in the event of a Fire Alarm and reporting to a member of staff from Reception.*
- 4.3.2 When large numbers of visitors are at the school for open events, plays, concerts, exhibitions or lettings, appropriate fire safety announcements are made advising them of the location of the emergency exits that they should use, and where they should muster in the event of the alarms sounding. Event owners are to ensure this verbal brief is done for every event.

4.4. Disabled Staff, Pupils or Visitors

- 4.4.1 The school offers a one-to-one induction on fire safety for disabled pupils, for disabled members of staff and for disabled visitors.
- 4.4.2 The school stairwells are designated safe refuge points.
- 4.4.3 When the fire alarm is sounded, it is the responsibility of the responsible member of staff to take the disabled person to the refuge point (and then report the location to the Surmaster in the Senior School and a member of JSSLT in the Junior School) whilst the disabled person waits for rescue by the Fire and Emergency Service. All pupils and staff with any disability or temporary illness or injury that would compromise swift evacuation will have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) drawn up and put into practice. Teachers of pupils with PEEPs are emailed by the Surmaster when issued and reminded of procedure.
- 4.4.4 The teacher will ensure that the name of the disabled person, together with the location of their safe refuge point, are passed to the Surmaster or their reserve as soon as they reach the assembly point. It is the responsibility of the Surmaster or their reserve to ensure that this information is passed as soon as possible to the Fire and Emergency Service.

5. Responsibilities of Teaching Staff

- 5.1. Teaching staff are responsible for escorting their pupils safely out of the building in silence and in an orderly fashion. The Tutors or Form Teachers 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 Head of Year, Head of the Junior School or UJS Secretary. With co-ordination via the Surmaster, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) (SS), the Head of the Junior School (JS) and the UJS Secretary (UJS) or their reserves should ensure that relevant information on any missing person is passed to the Fire and Emergency Service as soon as they arrive.

- 5.2. Staff are notified of their responsibilities in ensuring areas of the school site are clear and that they report to the Fire Warden Personnel on the main site or the Upper Junior School Secretary on the UJS site, as appropriate, who will act as liaison.

- 5.3. ***On no account should anyone return to a burning building***

6. Responsibilities of Fire Wardens

- 6.1. We have 3 appointed Fire Wardens: Fire Warden (Personnel – SS) – the Surmaster; Fire Warden (Estates) – the Estates Bursar; and Fire Wardens (Personnel – JS) – JS Deputy Head (Pastoral & Operations)/JS Head.
- 6.2. Fire Wardens are “competent persons” who have been trained to provide “safety assistance” in the event of a fire. Fire Wardens receive regular refresher training.
- 6.3. We also have additional staff who receive Fire Warden training and who are responsible for helping to manage an evacuation and for routine fire safety vigilance. These will usually include the Senior Deputy Head, the Maintenance Manager, Head of Year 1, the Head Groundsman (Hilsea) and the Head Marshal.
- 6.4. **Fire Evacuation emergency equipment packs are stored in the School Office:**
- 6.4.1 High Vis jackets x 4
 - 6.4.2 Buildings’ evacuation checklist and pen
 - 6.4.3 Emergency contact numbers
 - 6.4.4 Loud hailer
 - 6.4.5 Torch

7. Fire Alarm Procedure – Out of Hours

- 7.1. **Should the alarm sound outside of the normal school day of 0800 – 1545 or at weekends and during holidays, then the following applies:**
- 7.1.1 A member of SMT should assume charge, wherever possible. If there is no member of SMT, then a member of school staff or on-duty Marshal team should take responsibility for oversight.
 - 7.1.2 As far as possible, the principle of ensuring evacuation of buildings as our primary safety control still applies.

7.1.3 For Senior School events the main Quad is the muster point; for the Junior School the JS Quad is used. When cars occupy much of the space, the area in front of Cambridge House should be used (if safe).

7.1.4 It is the responsibility of the Duty Caretaker, Marshal or Deputy Marshal to:

- (a) Interrogate the Fire Panel
- (b) Establish the cause of the alarm
- (c) Help determine if the Fire Brigade should be called
- (d) Reset the call point so that the alarm can be rearmed if a false alarm
- (e) Contact the Bursar and Estates Bursar immediately should there be a threat to either personnel or property

7.1.5 Only when this is completed can people re-enter the buildings.

7.2. Staff responsible for an activity or event

7.2.1 For any activity or event, there must be a clearly identified member of staff responsible

7.2.2 It is their responsibility to ensure the evacuation of all pupils and staff

7.2.3 They should report to the member of SMT or other Senior Teacher in charge, who may be identified by wearing a high vis jacket. If no such person is present, the staff member responsible for the event should liaise directly with the duty caretaker supervisor in the Porter's Office.

7.3. Other staff

7.3.1 Assist with evacuation of pupils as required

7.3.2 As far as possible complete the sweep of the building that they are in, whilst at no time compromising their own safety

7.3.3 Report to the member of SMT or other senior teacher in charge, who may be identified by wearing a high vis jacket. If no such person is present, the staff should liaise directly with the duty caretaker supervisor in the security office

8. Fire Alarm Procedure – External Bookings (Lettings)

8.1. Should the alarm sound then the following applies:

8.1.1 The building must be evacuated. The main quad outside C Block is the muster point.

8.1.2 When cars occupy much of the space, the area in front of Cambridge House should be used (if safe).

8.1.3 It is the responsibility of the duty caretaker, Marshal or Deputy Marshal to:

- (a) Interrogate the Fire Panel
- (b) Establish the cause of the alarm
- (c) Help determine if the fire brigade should be called
- (d) Reset the call point so that the alarm can be rearmed if a false alarm

8.1.4 Only when this is completed can people re-enter the buildings

8.2. Adult responsible for an activity or event

8.2.1 For any activity or event there must be a clearly identified adult responsible

8.2.2 It is their responsibility to ensure the evacuation of all participants

8.2.3 They should report to the member of the school Senior Management Team, or other senior teacher in charge, who may be identified by wearing a high vis jacket. If no such person is present, the adult leader should liaise directly with the duty caretaker supervisor in the Porter's Office

9. Health and Safety Executive Group

9.1. The Estates Bursar maintains the Fire Safety Policy on behalf of the Health & Safety Executive group. The Health and Safety Executive Group comprises the Bursar, Estates Bursar, Senior Deputy Head, JS Head and Maintenance Manager. The group meets termly and in addition to reviewing actions from any fire alarms, complete a check of the following records:

9.1.1 Fire Risk Assessments

9.1.2 Fire Risk Policy

9.1.3 Training records

9.1.4 Fire practice drills

9.1.5 Maintenance records

9.1.6 Certificates for the installation and maintenance of fire-fighting systems and equipment

10. Fire Practices

At least one fire practice is held each term. This, combined with a programme of inducting new staff and pupils with emergency escape procedures and the presence of trained Fire Wardens, ensures that the school can be safely evacuated in the event of a fire.

11. Fire Prevention Measures

We have the following fire prevention measures in place:

11.1. Escape Routes and Emergency Exits

- 11.1.1 There are normally at least two escape routes from every part of the building
- 11.1.2 Fire notices and evacuation signs are displayed throughout the school, in classrooms, corridors and stairwells
- 11.1.3 Fire extinguishers of the appropriate type are located in every building in accordance with the recommendations of our professional advisors
- 11.1.4 The School is now L2 Compliant (this confirms that the School has in place a satisfactory automatic early-warning system). As regards manual fire alarm activation points, many are located at exit doors of buildings to assist the ease of raising the alarm
- 11.1.5 All stairs, passages and emergency exits are illuminated by emergency lighting
- 11.1.6 Automatic door closures that are activated by the fire alarms are fitted on doors where merited in or leading onto escape routes
- 11.1.7 The master panel for the alarm system is located in the Marshal/Porter's office and shows the location of a fire. It is fitted with a permanent power supply
- 11.1.8 Alarms sound in all areas of the school buildings
- 11.1.9 Keeping fire routes and exits clear at all times is a priority. The Marshal and caretakers (or in the Pre-School a member of staff) are responsible for unlocking the buildings in the morning. They remove bolts, padlocks and security devices from all emergency exits, check escape routes are not obstructed and the emergency lights work. They are to report defects to the Maintenance team

- 11.1.10 Testing all fire alarms weekly (and recording all tests and defects) is the responsibility of the Estates Bursar with the Maintenance Manager who also arranges for: monthly checks of fire doors, automatic door closures and emergency lights, six monthly competence check on fire detection and warning equipment, an annual service of alarms, smoke detectors, emergency lights, smoke control systems and fire extinguishers. Records of all tests are kept by the Estates Bursar's Office Team. Plans showing the location of the fire hydrants, gas and electricity shut off points are held in the Critical Incident Plan.

11.2. Electrical Safety

- 11.2.1 The School has current electrical test certificates for all its buildings. It uses qualified Electrical Engineers to inspect and maintain its electrical installations
- 11.2.2 Regular Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) takes place and is overseen by the Estates Bursar's Maintenance Team
- 11.2.3 Records of all tests are kept by the Estates Bursar's team, or by Heads of Department where individual departments conduct the PAT for their department's equipment
- 11.2.4 All scientific and design technology equipment is switched off at the end of the school day
- 11.2.5 All computers, projectors, printers and electronic whiteboards have where possible been set to switch off automatically every evening and switched off during holidays and weekends

11.3. Lightning Protection

- 11.3.1 All lightning protection and earthing conforms to BS 6651-1999 and is tested annually
- 11.3.2 Records of all tests are kept by the Estates Bursar's team.

11.4. Gas Safety

- 11.4.1 All gas appliances (boilers, kitchen equipment etc) are regularly maintained and serviced by Gas Safe Registered Engineers. Records of all tests are kept by the Estates Bursar's team
- 11.4.2 Landlord's gas safety certificates are held for all school domestic accommodation
- 11.4.3 All kitchen equipment is switched off at the end of service
- 11.4.4 All laboratories are checked daily to ensure that the central gas supply is turned off

11.5. Safe Storage

- 11.5.1 We ensure that flammable materials used in teaching or maintenance are locked in purpose-made, flame-proof containers at the end of every day
- 11.5.2 Weapons and ammunition used by the CCF are kept in a securely locked, fire resistant store that is located within a permanently locked room, the door of which is fitted with an alarm and is fire resistant

11.6. Rubbish and Combustible Materials

- 11.6.1 Flammable rubbish is stored as far away from buildings as possible
- 11.6.2 Combustible materials (excluding paper) used in teaching, catering, maintenance, grounds and caretaking are stored in flame proof cupboards.

11.7. Hot Work Permit & Kilns

- 11.7.1 The Insurance requirements state PGS must adopt a Hot Work Permit System for all operations which involve the application of heat. This applies equally to our own staff and outside contractors. The Permit to Work system must be in force when gas or electric welding, soldering or paint stripping using hot air guns is being carried out on site. This also applies to lead or pipework, general roofing, grinding and cutting and any other work involving the application of heat.

- 11.7.2 The recommended form you should use each time is
www.ecclesiastical.com/documents/Hot-Work-Permit.pdf

and all forms should be submitted to the Estates Bursar and a copy retained for your records, (this is to include all Kiln works)

12. Letting or Hiring the School

- 12.1. Our standard contractual terms that we use for letting and hiring the school cover fire safety and specify that the hirer should certify that they have read and understood the school's fire safety policy and procedures.
- 12.2. A school caretaker is always on duty/call when the school is let or hired for an outside function or event. The Estates Bursar will ensure the responsible nominated representative of the hirer is made known to PGS staff on-site during the hiring event.

13. Fire Risk Assessment

13.1. The School's Fire Risk Assessment meets the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the FSO). Specifically, it identifies:

13.1.1 The hazard

13.1.2 The people at risk

13.1.3 The measures to evaluate, remove, reduce and protect from the risk

13.1.4 The measures needed to record, plan, inform, instruct and train people in risk reduction of removal

13.1.5 The arrangements for reviewing the assessment

13.2. All risk assessments follow a standard procedure for evaluating risk, coordinated by Benfields Fire Services. The school is split into various areas, with generic risk assessments used where appropriate (eg. classrooms); however, individual risk assessments are needed for areas of higher specific risk - including for example, kitchens, laboratories and the DT workshop. Useful general guidance and information documents relating to fire safety in schools are as follows:

13.2.1 Workplace Fire Safety - Your Responsibilities – Fire Risk Assessment (gov.uk – 2025

13.2.2 Fire Safety Risk Assessment – Educational premises (gov.uk - updated September 2023)

13.2.3 Publicly Available Specification (PAS) 79: 2020

13.3. The school updates its fire risk assessments every two years, and more frequently if significant changes are made to the interior of buildings or new buildings are bought or added.

13.4. Copies of the school's fire risk assessments are updated by Benfields Fire Services during their regular FRAs inspections and these are held centrally by the Estates Bursar's team. They are also held in a central Benfields repository site.

13.5. Any comments or suggestions for improvement are always welcome; they may additionally be conveyed, for example, through departmental, health & safety, academic, pastoral, management, governor or other meetings, as well as through the formal annual policy review process. All Heads of Departments should ensure that they and their department read all fire risk assessments that are relevant to them.

Appendix 2

Allocation of Tasks

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	Estates Bursar	As required, and at least annually
Monitoring the implementation of the policy, relevant risk assessments and any action taken in response and evaluating effectiveness	Estates Bursar	As required, and at least termly
Maintaining up to date records of all information created in relation to the policy and its implementation as required by the GDPR	Estates Bursar	As required, and at least termly
Reviewing / receiving input from interested groups (such as pupils, staff, Parents) to consider improvements to the School's processes under the policy	Senior Deputy Head	As required, and at least annually
Formal annual review	Governing Body	Annually

Version Control

Date Approved	28 th March 2025 (Full Governing Body) (updated 1 st September 2025)
Date Reviewed	7 th March 2025 (Audit & Risk Governor Committee)
Next Review Date	Spring Term 2026
Policy author (SMT)	Estates Bursar
Status	Internal Staff, ISI requirement for Inspection
Report	Health and Safety Report

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