

# COGNITA

## St Margaret's Preparatory School



## Fire Risk Strategy

September 2021

# UK

### Our Ethos

The **ethos** of St Margaret's is to provide a high-quality all-round education, in a happy and caring family atmosphere, so that each child is well prepared for the opportunities and challenges that they will face in life.

### Our Aim

Our **aim** is for every child to enjoy their learning journey, achieve their very best and to become responsible global citizens who can work together co-operatively and with respect for others.



## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 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.

- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 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.
- 1.7 This document and fire safety management policy will also be subject to future development and legislative requirements.
- 1.8 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

## 2 Purpose

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 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 should be held in with the **Fire Safety Management File** [Log book, Manuals & Registers]. The nominated Fire Safety Assistant is responsible for maintaining these files;
- Integrated risk management plans.
- Audits, Monitoring and Reviews.

### 3 Planning And Responding To A Fire Emergency

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 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;

3.4 **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.

## 4 Evacuation Strategies

4.1 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.

4.2 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.

4.3 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.

4.4 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.

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

## 5 Fire Safety And The Equality Act 2010

5.1 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.

5.2 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.

- 5.3 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.

### 6 Fire Safety Training

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

- 6.2 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.

- 6.3 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.

- 6.4 The person in charge, in liaison with the Fire Safety Advisor, H&S Advisor and Training Co-ordinator and the Head of Risk Management (Where in post), will develop a training programme.

- 6.5 The training programme will reflect the staff responsibilities for fire safety, including:

- Recording and monitoring of attendance;
- Course evaluation;

### 7 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.

- 7.1 **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.

- 7.2 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;

### 8 Fire Safety Log Book

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

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

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8.3 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

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

## 9 Procedures For Reporting Fire Incidents

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

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

9.3 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).

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