



## **GFM Fire Safety Policy February 2022**

# **REVIEW completed DRAFT policy**

### **Policy statement**

The GFM Fire Safety Policy sits as part of the GFM Health and Safety Policy to provide structure and expectations for each of the GFM sites.

This policy follows risk assessment and mitigation in line with the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order (2005) and focuses on the prevention of and protection from risk of fire for children, students, staff and visitors.

Step 1 Identifying fire hazards

Step 2 Identifying people at risk

Step 3 Evaluating, removing, reducing and protecting from risk

Step 4 Recording, planning, informing, instructing and training

Step 5 Ongoing regular review

### **Policy aims**

The GFM Fire Safety Policy is explicit in its aims:

- no life be put in jeopardy
- possessions and equipment are replaceable and no person's life or an injury to a person is worth their rescue
- regular testing and risk assessment is systematised and robust
- testing and risk assessment leads to follow up and action so appropriate fire safety measures are in place
- responsible persons are appropriately trained and supported in their roles and responsibilities
- all staff are informed, trained and supported in their responsibilities with fire safety
- evacuation and fire safety practices and drills are systematised and robust review processes
- fighting any fire is only undertaken when the alarm has been raised, when there is no risk to a person or persons and that person to have received appropriate training.

## **Other relevant documents and policies**

Please also read the following GFM policies:

- Health and Safety
- Health and Safety Risk Assessment
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Visitor Protocols

## **Introduction**

It is our priority to minimise the risk of fire, and in doing so, minimising risk to life or injury by maintaining the fire safety of each GFM school and each GFM site.

The fire safety policy with associated procedures and risk assessments are designed to help our community mitigate risk, and respond calmly and purposefully in the event that fire breaks out in a GFM building.

## **Persons responsible Review:**

To ensure the effectiveness of this policy into practice the following responsibilities and accountabilities:

- All staff

Staff in each GFM setting are informed, trained and supported and as a result see it as the responsibility of each member of staff to take appropriate actions to mitigate risk of fire, to act in a calm and purposeful way in the event of a fire and support and enable young people to do the same.

- Staff with responsibility for visitors

The named 'Person of Contact' for a visitor is responsible for their safety when on the school site (see GFM Visitor protocols.)

- GFM Executive and The GFM Board

The GFM Executive and The GFM Board has the ultimate responsibility for fire safety in the School to review this policy and to monitor the effective working procedures of each School and site (including reviewing the reports of incidents, near misses or concerns raised by any member of the School.)

Schools Executive will assist the responsible persons in the carrying out of their responsibilities.

- School Leadership

The School Leadership, assisted by the Associate Headteachers are responsible to The Executive for fire safety within each school and GFM sites.

The School Leadership consults with colleagues at least once per term and are responsible for ensuring agreed actions are completed within agreed timescales.

- Responsible Persons: Health and Safety, Fire Safety (see appendix TWO)
  - Ensures this policy is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that any new risk or alteration to the relevant regulations is addressed, including a formal annual review with a range of stakeholders
  - GFM Executive and the Audit and Risk Committee are regularly updated on lessons learned from reviews and drills, and how policy is working in practice
  - Oversees with SLT clear procedures in place during the school day and out of hours in the event of a fire (see appendix ONE for details in full for each GFM site BH in this example)
  - Ensures records are kept of the fire induction training given to all new staff, children and students
  - Ensures procedures and arrangements for emergency evacuation are regularly tested and reviewed
  - Ensures Fire Risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated
  - Ensures records are kept of all fire practices, including a record of 'lessons learned' and agreed reviews and actions in follow up
  - Ensures certificates for installation and maintenance of fire-fighting systems and equipment are kept
  - Ensures Fire risk assessments are regularly reviewed and incorporate any alterations to the layout, systems installed or operational use of the premises. As part of the regular review of the school's risk assessment, the school's arrangements for ensuring fire safety will be kept under continual review
  - Ensures appropriate liaison takes place with third parties; the emergency services and the School's insurers to ensure that best practice for fire prevention and procedures is in place · the integrity of all fire prevention systems and equipment in place is maintained in good working order
  - with the Learning and development team ensures the Fire Safety Policy is communicated to the entire school community, appropriate basic fire training is provided at least annually, specifically ensure that fire training is provided to all new employees on starting work at the School and that throughout each academic year staff receive information and training around mitigating fire risk.

- Estates Manager

Assists the responsible persons and School Leadership with all aspects of the Fire Safety policy into practice.

Ensures that contractors working for the GFM are given written documentation detailing the procedures that they should follow whilst working on a GFM site, and also informing them of the school's procedures in an emergency situation.

- Union representatives

Supports, assists and acts as a critical friend to the SLT and persons responsible for the implementation of all aspects of fire safety

- Audit and Risk Committee of The Board

Holds to account the Executive and SLT for the effective implementation of all aspects of the

### **Procedure in the Event of a Fire**

In the event of a fire, safety and preservation of life will override all other considerations. The safe evacuation of all pupils and staff is our priority. Buildings and property come second and no one should attempt to fight any fire at the expense of their own, or anyone else's, safety. It is the duty of all staff to study and make themselves familiar with the school's emergency evacuation procedures. As part of the regular review of the school's risk assessment, the school's arrangements for ensuring fire safety will be under continual review.

Children, students and staff with a disability should be identified, with a Personal Emergency Plan in place for each (see example Appendix THREE)

### **Fire Warning Equipment**

Each GFM site is equipped with fire warning devices designed to activate the school's alarm system in the event of a fire. The warning of a fire is outlined in each site specific plan (as appendix ONE example: BH).

This equipment will be maintained regularly.

### **Fire-fighting Equipment**

Fire-fighting equipment (commonly known as "fire extinguishers") are located throughout each GFM site. Different appliances are designed for different applications and conditions; this will have been taken into account with respect to their siting. The main purpose of fire extinguishers is to clear a path to an exit.

Staff will receive training in the safe operation of portable fire-fighting equipment and the appropriate applications for particular items.

No attempt should ever be made to tackle a fire unless it is very minor and poses no significant threat to the occupants of the building.

This equipment is to be maintained regularly.

### **Evacuation Drills**

An evacuation drill will be carried out, where appropriate, on a termly basis either in the form of an accidental or planned practice evacuation. After each evacuation, staff are required to provide information and observations on positive and negative aspects. The conditions and timings of the practice will be varied, such that sometimes no notice will be given to either Staff or Students, and sometimes a false fire will be used to block a major exit route to test how people cope when required to deviate from the normal route.

### **Fire Prevention Measures**

Staff are informed, supported and expected to follow good housekeeping practices, including those listed below, which can eliminate or reduce many fire risks:

Sources of ignition should be controlled. Heaters should not be covered up and electrical sockets should not be overloaded;

Electrical appliances are tested by an NICEIC qualified electrical engineer;

Catering equipment is switched off at the end of every day;

Lightening and earthing protection conforms to BS 6651-1999. This is tested annually by a specialist contractor;

All gas appliances are tested and serviced by Gas Safe Registered Engineers;

Portable electrical equipment should be checked regularly;

Rubbish should not be left lying around;

Care should be taken to avoid large flammable displays along escape routes;

Escape routes should always be kept clear and fire exit doors never blocked;

Outside rubbish storage (bins) should always be located away from buildings;

The safe storage areas for flammable chemicals (such as for Science, Art and Design, cleaning, the pool) will be used whenever necessary;

Exit routes are regularly walked by the Responsible persons with Associate head teachers at each site to ensure that they are, and remain, clear of obstruction;

External doors and internal corridor doors are kept open whilst the school is occupied to maximise the airflow through the building (COVID 19 measures) and are closed at the end of the school day or when the building is secured.

## **Outside Security**

In the knowledge that most school fires occur when school is not in session, the GFM places a high priority on outside security.

## **Risk Assessment**

The Health and Safety Risk Assessment policy guides the responsible persons with the Associate Headteachers, SLT and Estates Manager in their processing of risk analysis and mitigation.

The Learning and development Team will coordinate training for these identified colleagues.

## **Record Keeping**

All records relating to Fire Safety are retained by the responsible officer in liaison with the Estates Manager:

- Gas Safety Certificates
- PAT Testing Certificates
- Lift Service and Statutory Inspection Reports
- Fire Log Book which contains records of fire safety issues at each site and includes details of fire drills, hot works permits, the storage of hazardous materials
- Lightning Conductor Testing
- Fire Fighting Appliances Service Records
- Electrical Installation test certificates including 5 year fixed wiring test certificates

## **Appendix ONE (to add - Procedure in the event of a fire - each GFM School.)**

### Appendix Two

#### **Role: GFM Leader of health and safety (culture and management)**

Children, students, staff and visitors should be safe on a GFM site or in a GFM school, and when engaging in any activity out of school.

Risk management is to keep everyone safe and should be proportionate to the nature of the activities. The GFM should be able to engage pupils and the community in a wide range of exciting activity to broaden horizons and aspirations.

All in the GFM community should be able to use GFM facilities, take part in a range of activities safely.

We need a leader with the disposition, skills, knowledge and experience to:

- lead and manage a culture of health and safety and mitigation of risks in each of our schools and on our GFM sites
- lead and manage how the organisation takes a proportionate and relevant approach to all aspects of health and safety
- significantly contribute to how we learn and develop as an organisation in our leadership and management of health, safety and risk

#### **What the role requires:**

- Work in close liaison with the SLT and Executive to secure starting leadership of all aspects of Health and Safety in the GFM

- Work in close liaison with the Estates Manager on all aspects of health and safety relating to estates, sites and maintenance
- Be driven by recognition of the value of full and meaningful stakeholder engagement in all aspects of health and safety practice (include Union liaison and engagement in these processes ([consulting and involving employees](#)))
- With the Learning and Development Team co-designing the delivery of staff health and safety training, including [assessment of risk](#)
- Oversee with Executive and Associated Heads proportionate control measures for COVID-19
- Oversee periodic site inspections with systematised feedback and action
- Overseeing the recording and reporting of accidents to staff, pupils and visitors on each of the GFM schools/sites – including [Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 \(RIDDOR\)](#)
- Working in liaison with the Community Team, and Trips and Visits leads to review and revise [policy and procedures for off-site visits](#), including residential visits and any school-led adventure activities and ensuring policy into practice
- Working in liaison with the Inclusion team, SLT and executive to review and revise the Pupils with Medical Condition and First Aid policy, and the policy into practice. Including with this the support operationally for staff dealing with [health and safety emergencies](#), [first aid for staff and pupils](#)
- Liaison with line managers and HR when referrals are made to occupational health, and supporting enabling consistent follow up to recommendations
- Co-designing protocols for how the organisation will investigate accidents and incidents to understand causes and use the learning process to inform future policy and protocol updates
- Co-designing protocols for how the organisation will monitor and report performance and effectiveness of the health and safety policy
- Work closely with members of the Executive, SLT, DSLs, Estates Managers and identified 'others' in how the organisation identifies and mitigates risk and hazard, including a health and safety focus on how risk/hazard may cause harm to people and the control and mitigation that can be put in place.
- Work closely with members of the Executive, SLT, DSLs, Estates Managers and identify 'others' in how the organisation records assessment of risk so these are simple, focused on controls and can be implemented and monitored operationally.

This role may fulfil the **role of 'competent person'** or will be responsible for securing the services of a 'competent person' to address need.

#### ***What a competent person does***

*They should have the skills, knowledge and experience to be able to recognise hazards in your business and help you put sensible controls in place to protect workers and others from harm.*

#### ***Qualifications and training***

*It's not usually essential for them to have formal qualifications and they're not required by law to have formal training, although it can help.*

#### ***Who you can appoint***

*You could appoint (one or a combination of):*

- yourself
- one or more of your workers
- someone from outside your business

Usually, managing health and safety isn't complicated and you can do it yourself with the help of your workers. You know your workplace best and the risks associated with it.

If there's a competent person within your workforce, use them rather than a competent person from outside your business.

As an employer, you must appoint a 'competent person' to help you meet your health and safety duties.

A competent person is not someone who simply has the competence to carry out a particular task safely. In general terms, the definition of a competent person is someone who has the necessary skills, experience and knowledge to manage health and safety. For more details on appointing a competent person, go to - [Decide who will help you with your duties](#).

Some health and safety law describes the training, skills and experience, that someone should have to be a competent person to perform a specific task in a particular industry or work environment.

A range of HSE guidance, including information that will help you to understand the competence required to work in specific industries or work environments, can be found here - [industry-specific guidance](#).

Information on the competence required for different industries and work activities can also be found at the [National Occupational Standards website](#) or at the [Federation for Industry Sector Skills and Standards](#) (previously known as the Alliance of Sector Skills Councils) which is the designated Certifying Authority for Apprenticeships in England..

### **Additional information:**

It is our aspiration for a policy that is reviewed and revised through engagement with a wide range of stakeholders so that GFM policy becomes practice; health and safety is an integral part of the Trust and each school's culture, values and performance standards.

Detail to be explored from:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools/responsibilities-and-duties-for-schools>

Further reading at this stage:

[guidance on the risk assessment process](#)

[Coronavirus: latest information and advice - HSE news](#).

[accountability for health and safety in a school](#)

[sources of competent guidance](#)

[further guidance from HSE](#)

[Association for Physical Education \(AfPE\)](#)

[leading health and safety at work](#)

[guidance on leading health and safety at work](#)

[Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\) guidance on working safely](#)