



R.E.A.L. Education Limited

Fire Safety Policy

**(R.E.A.L. Education Ltd.)
(R.E.A.L. Independent Schools, Hinckley)
(R.E.A.L. Independent Schools, Mansfield)**

Last Reviewed: 27/12/2024



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

R.E.A.L. Education Ltd and R.E.A.L. Independent Schools (Hinckley and Mansfield), hereinafter referred to as 'the Company', attaches the greatest importance to the health, safety and welfare of its employees and others affected by its undertakings and accepts fully its duties and responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO).

The Company is committed to ensuring that all reasonable steps will be taken to prevent or minimise the probability of all cases of fire and acknowledges, that despite these measures, it cannot be assumed that fire will never break out. The Company will therefore ensure that suitable fire detection, warning, means of fighting a fire and escape routes are provided and maintained to the highest standard. Appropriate procedures and systems will be put in place to ensure that in the event of suspecting or finding a fire the occupants of a building will be able to raise the alarm and evacuate efficiently and safely. This will be underpinned by robust information, instruction, training and supervision so as to ensure the safety of all. In the event of a fire the safety of human life shall override all other considerations such as saving property; vehicles, animals and the extinguishing of the fire.

2. INTRODUCTION

This policy along with the stated procedures and documentation to be used sets out the arrangements for fire safety management, determines the degree of responsibility at all levels and the channels of communication to be used.

As this policy forms part of the overarching Health, Safety and Welfare Policy and in light of the legislative responsibilities placed upon the organisation and its employees any non-compliance by any member of management or employees with the stated statutory regulations or the more local fire safety policies and procedures laid down may result in disciplinary action being taken. Legal action by the appropriate enforcing authority may also be taken.

3. SUPPORTING/RELATED DOCUMENTS

Health, Safety and Welfare Policy
Visitors Procedures
Control of Contractors Policy
Safeguarding Policy
Fire Safety Log Books
Risk Assessment Policy

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Directors

The Directors have overall responsibility to ensure compliance with statutory fire safety legislation and in line with the RRFSO are deemed as the 'responsible persons'. This responsibility includes ensuring that fire safety matters are seen as an important priority for the Company, addressed through comprehensive policies and procedures that are effectively implemented and appropriately resourced within the overall financial position of the Company.



Due to the size, location and complexness of the Company venues along with the relevant level of authority required to effectively manage fire safety the Directors will appoint other Managers to take day to day control of specific areas and /or buildings in the capacity of a **Fire Safety Manager** and **Duty Managers** – the appointment of such Managers does not discharge the Directors from overall responsibility but rather serves to ensure compliance with the statutory duties imposed whilst also demonstrating compliance with the Company's overarching Health, Safety and Welfare Policy.

On behalf of the Company and in the capacity of the 'responsible persons' the Directors will ensure that:

- A competent **Fire Safety Manager** is appointed.
- Responsible persons are appointed to act as **Duty Managers** for specific venues and that suitable arrangements will be put in place to ensure that the Duty Manager is known to all staff, learners, contractors and visitors.
- A clear and defined fire safety policy is developed and implemented.
- All Company premises (owned or leased) comply with statutory requirements in relation to fire safety.
- Fire risk assessments and fire safety strategies are undertaken, shared and appropriately reviewed for all buildings/areas of the Company.
- A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is undertaken in order to support any person/s that are identified as requiring additional support/measures to aid evacuation in the event of a fire situation.
- A programme for installing and satisfactorily maintaining adequate levels of both passive and active fire precautions exists in every building - these precautions should be designed to prevent the occurrence of fire, to ensure its detection and to stop its spread.
- A means of raising the alarm in case of fire is in place Company wide.
- There exists adequate provision of suitable fire-fighting equipment across the Company.
- The movement or evacuation of staff, learners, visitors and contractors in an emergency is adequately communicated and controlled Company wide.
- The local Fire and Rescue Service are aware of any significant hazards associated with the Company venues e.g. storage of petrol, gas cylinders etc.
- Effective arrangements are in place for contacting the emergency services.
- Appropriate and periodic staff training (including fire drills) is undertaken.
- A system of comprehensive record keeping is maintained and readily available to all relevant enforcing authorities.

4.2 Board of Governors (R.E.A.L. Independent Schools)

The Board will set a high personal example for fire safety management standards and will ensure that:

- Implications in respect of fire safety management are addressed in all business decisions and that adequate resources and financial provision for putting the Fire Safety Policy into effect are made available.
- It is informed of and alerted to all risk management issues including fire safety management by:



- Being kept informed about significant fire safety management failures and of the outcome of the investigations into their causes at Board of Governors meetings and an annual report.
- Reviewing the Company's overall health and safety performance (including fire safety management) regularly by receiving updates at Board of Governors meetings.

4.3 Fire Safety Manager

On behalf of the 'responsible persons' the Head of Health, Safety and Environments will assume the role of Fire Safety Manager and will be responsible for providing advice, guidance and support to all Company staff in relation to fire safety management and ensuring that all fire safety management systems and procedures are appropriate, fit for purpose and compliant with legislative requirements.

The Fire Safety Manager will undertake periodic and unannounced inspections (each half term as a minimum requirement) and will devise reports on the findings of inspections and the development of action plans with the responsible managers for continuous improvement.

4.4 R.E.A.L. Leadership Team

Each member of the R.E.A.L. Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that the Fire Safety Policy is implemented within their designated areas of responsibility. This responsibility extends to ensuring that all persons who report directly to them and have Duty Manager/Site Responsible Person responsibilities in relation to fire safety are clearly able to evidence that they have undertaken and recorded all daily, weekly and monthly fire safety checks as stated within the Fire Log Book.

Members of the R.E.A.L. Leadership Team may, at any time, be requested by a Director to fulfil the role of **Duty Manager**.

4.5 Duty Managers

In order to support the Directors in fulfilling their legal obligations, staff appointed as Duty Managers will have delegated responsibility for the day to day safety management of a designated building or part of a building and with this the appropriate level of authority including the powers of sanction e.g. closing a building or restricting its use, shutting down normal operations, denying use of equipment and machinery, preventing unsafe work to continue etc. Duty Managers will be provided with assistance from the Fire Safety Manager in order to fulfil their duties.

All Duty Managers and those members of staff appointed and/or delegated as the site responsible person must ensure that all checks (daily, weekly and monthly) required within the Fire Safety Log Book are undertaken and recorded as required.

During a fire related incident e.g. an evacuation of the building due to the activation of a fire alarm the Duty Manager will assume the role of **Emergency Co-ordinator**. It shall be the responsibility of the Duty Manager to ensure that suitable arrangements are in place to ensure that their absence from site is appropriately covered i.e. their role is covered by another competent member of staff who also understands their role as Emergency Co-ordinator which also includes the undertaking and recording of all checks (daily, weekly and monthly) within the Fire Log Book.



4.6 Emergency Coordinator

The Emergency Co-ordinator's role is fundamentally to take control of an emergency situation e.g. an evacuation of a building during a fire related incident and to be responsible for key decisions. This role will normally be undertaken by a Duty Manager who has sufficient delegated authority as described above but in any absence from site the Duty Manager will delegate the role to another competent member of staff.

The Emergency Coordinator will be responsible for coordinating the actions of all persons on-site including appointed **Fire Marshals** until such time that they are relieved of their duties by a senior manager.

The Emergency Coordinator will also be responsible for liaising with any emergency services if they arrive on site until such time that they are relieved by the delegated Duty Manager; a member of the R.E.A.L Leadership Team or a Director. More local instructions and information specific to the building/area will be made available within the local Fire Procedures and Fire Safety Log Book (Appendix 1).

4.7 Fire Marshals

Fire Marshals will be appointed and trained as per the findings of each individual Fire Risk Assessment and will primarily be responsible for the following:

- In the event of a fire alarm undertaking a sweep of a designated area (if safe to do so). During this sweep they will check that all areas are clear of all persons; direct and instruct occupants to fire exits and the fire assembly point; pass on any significant information to the Emergency Coordinator; maintain good order at the fire assembly and following instructions given by the Emergency Co-ordinator or emergency services in attendance.

Due to the fluid nature of business operations throughout each working day it is essential to note that a designated and appointed Fire Marshal may not always be on site (unless specifically stated with the local Fire Risk Assessment) during a fire related incident and therefore, in line with Health and Safety Induction Training, all staff must take responsibility for learners, colleagues, contactors and visitors under their direct control by:

- Conducting a sweep of their immediate work area and alerting others of the need to evacuate immediately
- Direct/instruct all persons under their direct control to the nearest emergency exit and the fire assembly point
- Maintain good order and control of persons under their direct control at the fire assembly point
- Only allow re-entry to a building upon authorisation from the Emergency Coordinator.

4.8 Managers

All levels of line management are responsible for ensuring that the Fire Safety Policy is implemented within their own areas of responsibility and with all staff that they manage/supervise. They must monitor the workplace to ensure that safe conditions are maintained and fire hazards are appropriately identified. Where fire hazards are identified they must ensure the risks are controlled in so far as is reasonably practicable. General duties in relation to fire safety management include the following:



- Ensuring that all employees, learners, contractors and members of the public are made aware of local fire safety information and specifically what to do in the event of discovering or suspecting a fire or upon activation of the fire alarm.
- Compliance with the Fire Safety Manager in rectifying any discrepancies identified as a result of incident investigations, fire safety inspections and audits.
- Ensure that anyone requiring a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) within their area of responsibility has one developed that is fit for purpose, documented and communicated accordingly.
- Establishing that all equipment, plant and substances used are suitable for the task and are kept in good working condition; this includes the regular maintenance, testing and servicing of equipment and the reporting of any defects that could potentially impact upon fire safety.
- Arranging for the reporting of all fire related incidents (including the malfunction, damage and unavailability of fire alarm systems, manual call points and portable fire fighting equipment) to the Fire Safety Manager.
- Ensuring adequate access to fire fighting equipment is maintained at all times.
- Adherence to the Control of Contractors Policy and procedures.

4.9 Employees

All R.E.A.L. employees are responsible for and have a legal duty in respect of fire safety in accordance with the RRFSO and their more general obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act. All staff are personally responsible for complying with local fire safety arrangements and instructions and in particular must:

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety (including that which relates to fire safety) and ensure that the health and safety of others is not affected by their acts or omissions.
- Cooperate with all aspects of health, safety and welfare (including that which relates to fire safety) as prescribed within Company policies; procedures and guidance documents and as instructed by managers.
- Report to their manager any instances where correct fire safety procedures are not being followed or the appropriate standards are not being maintained e.g. fire doors wedged open; escape routes blocked by furniture or accumulation of rubbish, hazardous or flammable materials adjacent to escape routes, faulty electrical equipment and gas appliances.
- Undertake mandatory fire safety training upon induction and thereafter at intervals specified by the Fire Safety Manager (including following any significant changes to location, building, tasks, activities and processes).
- Ensure good housekeeping and limit the amount of fire loading materials in their area of work.
- Visually check all electrical equipment or appliances prior to use. Any equipment found to be defective must be removed from service, labelled to identify that it must not be used and reported to the relevant Line Manager.
- Report to their Line Manager any issues which may require the need for assistance during an emergency evacuation e.g. mobility, hearing or sight impairment.
- Refrain from intentionally misusing or recklessly interfering with anything that has been specifically provided for fire safety purposes.



5. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

All new members of staff will be made aware of the policy and procedures during the formal staff induction process. Updated and amended procedures will be disseminated and reinforced in training sessions, team meetings and via email communications. All staff will have access to this policy on the Staff Hub.

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Head of Health, Safety and Environments will monitor the effectiveness of all health and safety policies and procedures implemented within the Company, in order to ensure legal compliance.

The Health, Safety & Welfare Policy and all associated policies and procedures, including the Fire Safety Policy are subject to an annual review. In the event of any significant changes within the organisation e.g. changes in legislation and/or changes to management arrangements within this timeframe the Company reserves the right to make whatever changes it deems appropriate.

Any updated policies and procedures will be made available on the Staff Hub.

Appendix 1

Fire Log Book