

3.12 Fire Safety and Fire Procedure

3.12.1 Fire Safety

Our priority is to minimise the risk of life and to reduce injury by maintaining the physical fire safety integrity of the school in ensuring that staff, pupils and visitors do not add to the fire risk and through safe evacuation of our buildings if a fire breaks out. The fire safety policy, procedures and risk assessments at Sussex house are designed to help our community to respond calmly effectively in the event that fire breaks out in one of our buildings. In order to draw on expertise in this important field we engage the services of a professional service provider to complete our Fire Risk Assessment.

3.12.1.1 Role of the School Fire Safety Officer

The Deputy Headmaster is the designated School Fire Safety Manager and receives Fire Marshal training to keep his certification current. His present certificate is valid from 14th June 2022 to 13th June 2025. He is responsible for ensuring that:

- The fire safety policy is kept under regular review by Governors and the SMT.
- The fire safety policy is promulgated to the entire school community.
- Everyone in the school (including visitors and contractors) are given clear instructions on where they should go in the event of fire.
- Procedures for emergency evacuation are regularly tested and lessons absorbed.
- Fire risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated.
- Fire prevention measures are meticulously followed.
- Fire procedures and risk assessments are reviewed on each occasion that a building is altered, extended or rebuilt, or when new buildings are acquired.

He is assisted in this post by the School Marshal who has also received training, his certificate is valid from 11th September 2023 to 10th September 2026.

3.12.1.2 Emergency Evacuation Notice

All new staff and pupils, all contractors and visitors are shown the following notice:

1. If you discover a fire, break glass in the nearest alarm point to set off the alarm. Leave the building by the nearest exit.
2. If you are responsible for a class, make them leave quietly with you. No-one should talk or run. Make your way to the assembly point at The Nicholls Hall.
3. If you are teaching a class, take your register with you. Do not take anything else, and do not allow pupils to take anything. Shut doors and windows behind you.
4. The School Marshal will summon the Emergency Services if the alarm sounds.
5. If you have a disabled pupil, direct them to the nearest safe refuge.
6. Take the register of your class as soon as you reach the assembly point.
7. Report anyone who is waiting to be evacuated from a designated refuge, or who is missing immediately to the Deputy Headmaster or the School Marshal, who will inform the Fire Brigade. *On no account should anyone return to any building until given permission by the Fire and Emergency Services.*
8. Remain at the assembly point with your pupils until the all clear is given.

3.12.2 Fire Procedure

3.12.2.1 Briefing New Staff and Pupils

All our new staff (teaching and non-teaching alike) and all new pupils are given a briefing on the school's emergency evacuation procedures on their first day at Sussex House. We show them where the emergency exits and escape routes are located, and tell them where the assembly point is. Fire action notices are displayed on the walls of all rooms and in all corridors, and we make certain that everyone knows what they look like, and where they should go on hearing the fire alarm.

The 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. We offer staff training in the basic use of fire extinguishers to all staff during their first term. We also offer regular refresher training.

3.12.2.2 Summoning the Fire Brigade

The School Office is manned between 8.00am and 5.00pm during weekdays in term-time. Sgt Khim, the School Marshal, is on duty until 5.00pm. The master panel for the alarm system in the school buildings is physically located in the School Office. The School Office is always given advance warning of fire practices. If the alarm goes off for any reason, the staff have standing instructions to summon the Fire and Emergency Services at once.

3.12.2.3 Visitors and Contractors

All visitors and contractors are signed in at the School Office. They are made aware of the emergency evacuation notice (see 3.12.2.6) and are shown the way to the assembly point.

When large numbers of visitors are at the school for open day, plays, concerts, exhibitions &c a brief announcement is made advising them of the location of the emergency exits that they should use in the event of the alarms sounding.

3.12.2.4 Disabled Staff, Pupils or Visitors

We have a special one-to-one induction on fire safety for disabled pupils and their carers and for disabled members of staff.

3.12.2.5 Responsibilities of Teaching Staff

Please ensure that you and all boys in your care are fully, conversant with the Fire Drill.

- On discovering a fire:
Evacuate any persons in immediate danger. Do not attempt to extinguish the fire.
- On hearing the alarm:
All teachers in charge of classes must evacuate the building in a calm and orderly manner via the prescribed routes. An alternative route should be used if smoke or fire prevent the use of the primary escape route.
- Once outside, direct and supervise all pupils to the Nicholls Hall where the Deputy Headmaster will arrange for the school to assemble (Seniors in the Gym, Juniors in the Music School).
- Check with registers provided by the office staff to ensure all boys are present.
- Report any absence to a Deputy Headmaster or the Headmaster.
- In the event of a fire at break or lunchtime, supervisory staff must instruct pupils to proceed to their assembly point. Other staff on the premises should hurry to assist their colleagues with this task.
- Except for a few cases, where common sense permits, no attempt should be made to control the fire. The first essential is to clear the building completely so that the efforts of the fire brigade are not hampered by having to search for missing people.
- The Headmaster or Deputy Headmaster, in consultation with the fire service, will decide when it is safe for pupils to re-enter the school or when the fire drill shall be terminated. Forms will be dismissed in turn and return to school in an orderly manner.
- The fire alarm may also be sounded in the event of a Bomb Scare.
- Fire drills will take place regularly unannounced. A familiarisation fire drill for the benefit of newcomers will take place during the first two weeks of each new academic year.
- Whenever the fire bell rings it must be treated as an emergency.
- The efficiency with which this procedure is carried out may determine whether or not a life is lost.

On no account should anyone return to a burning building.

3.12.2.6 Staff Instructions for Fires and for Fire Drills

- Teachers escort boys from the room ensuring that doors are left closed. They lead boys in single file (walking on the left-hand side of staircases) to the most suitable fire exit. They should appoint a responsible boy to bring up the rear.
- Choice of exits:
If at all possible, exit for all should be made via the Front Door or via the basement door for those already in the basement.
If this is not possible, exit should be made via the basement front door.
If this is not possible, exit should be made via the Art Room Fire Exit.
If this is not possible, exit should be made via the rooftop Fire Escape.
- Calmness should be encouraged at all times
- On leaving the building, groups assemble in the Nicholls Hall where a full roll call will be taken. A Deputy Headmaster, or in his absence the Headmaster, or in his absence the Executive Head will administer the roll call. All three should have school lists to hand in such an eventuality. The Headmaster will make a final check of the building.
- If the rooftop exit is used, boys wait in the yard of the house next door which is where they will find themselves after descending the Fire Escape. Similarly from the Art Room Fire Exit. Access from the street will be arranged for them by the Headmaster or his Deputy.

EMERGENCY EXITS IN ANNEX.

If possible, exit as normal through the Front door. If not:

GYM

Take emergency exit door in corner staircase leading to the Music Room.

MUSIC ROOM

Take emergency door leading to garden of the flats next door.

3.12.2.7 Fire Prevention Measures

We have the following fire prevention measures in place at Sussex House:

- There are at least two escape routes from every part of all buildings (four at 68, Cadogan Square and two at the Nicholls Hall).
- Fire notices and evacuation signs are displayed in every room and corridor.
- Fire extinguishers (of the appropriate type) and smoke/heat detectors are located in every building in accordance with the recommendations of our professional advisors.
- All stairs, passages and emergency exits are illuminated by emergency lighting.
- The master panel for the alarm system is located in the Deputy Headmaster's office and shows the location of a fire.
- The alarms sound in all parts of the building.
- Keeping fire routes and exits clear at all times. The School Marshal checks that escape routes are not obstructed and that the emergency lights work, and for reporting defects.
- Testing all fire alarms weekly (and recording all tests and defects). This is the responsibility of the Clerk of the Works, who also arranges for an ISO9001 certified/BAFE approved contractor to carry out:
 - Monthly checks of fire doors and emergency lights,
 - Tri-annual professional checks on fire detection and warning equipment,
 - An annual service of alarms, smoke detectors and emergency lights
 - Tri-annual maintenance of fire extinguishers
- Records of all tests are kept in the School Office.
- Displays in corridors, theatre scenery, stage curtains and props and gym "crash" mats are treated with fire retardant spray.

- Plans showing the location of gas and electricity shut off points are displayed in fire proof glass fronted display boards next to the entrance of each building.

3.12.2.8 Electrical Safety

- The school has current electrical test certificates for all its buildings. It uses NICEIC qualified Electrical Engineers to inspect and maintain its electrical installations, all of which are RCB protected and meet the requirements of BS 7671 IEE wiring regulations.
- Regular portable appliance testing takes place.
- Records of all tests are kept in the School Office.
- The School Marshal checks that all Scientific and DT equipment is switched off at the end of the school day.

3.12.2.9 Lightning Protection

- All lightning protection and earthing conforms to BS 6651-1999. It is tested annually by a specialist contractor. Records of all tests are kept in the School Office.

3.12.2.10 Gas Safety

- All gas appliances (boilers, kitchen equipment etc.) are regularly maintained and serviced by Gas Safe Registered Engineers. Records of all tests are kept in the School Office.
- All laboratories are checked daily to ensure that the central gas supply is turned off.

3.12.2.11 Safe Storage

- We ensure that flammable materials used in teaching or maintenance are locked in purpose-made, flame-proof containers at the end of the day.

3.12.2.12 Rubbish and Combustible Material

- Flammable rubbish is stored away from buildings in the secured rubbish compound.
- Combustible materials used in teaching, catering, maintenance, grounds and caretaking are stored in flame-proof cupboards.

3.12.2.13 Letting or Hiring the School

Our standard contractual terms that we use for letting and hiring the school covers fire safety and specifies that the hirer should certify that they have read and understood the school's fire safety policy and procedures. The School Marshal is always on duty when the school is let or hired for an outside function or event.