Fire Safety Policy & Procedures

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Key References: In addition to this policy Cobham Montessori School takes due regard for, and refers to, any additional details found in the following publications:

- Independent School Standards Guidance
- Advice on Standards for School Premises
- Fire Safety in New and Existing School Buildings
- Fire Safety Risk Assessment – Educational Premises
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Health and Safety Executive

For further information please refer to our full policy list for related policies.

1.0 Introduction

It is Cobham Montessori School's policy to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees and others who may be affected by its undertaking, in compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

The aim of this Policy is to ensure that all children, staff, parents, visitors, and contractors are protected from the risks of fire whilst on the premises.

To achieve this aim, the Policy explains how to achieve compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to ensure that fire is prevented and that any fire risks are adequately controlled.

2.0 Aims

The main aims this Policy are:

- to safeguard all relevant persons from death or injury in the event of fire
- to ensure that, should any emergency incident occur such as fire, explosion, leak of gas or harmful substances, flood etc, that the means are in place to effect a safe and organised evacuation of the building, so far as is reasonably possible
- to minimise the risk of fire and to limit fire spread
- to minimise the potential for fire to disrupt services, damage buildings and equipment or harm the environment

This Policy sets out the management of fire safety at Cobham Montessori School and states the basic principles of general fire precautions that must be implemented on the premises.

The Policy Guidance is intended to be used as a reference manual on fire safety issues for all staff but particularly those with fire safety responsibilities.

Specific advice on fire precaution matters can be sought from the Responsible Person, (who will liaise with the local Fire Authority: Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, where relevant).

3.0 Responsibilities

The 2005 Order places a responsibility on the 'Responsible Person' (the person who owns or controls the business or premises) and specifies the activities that must be taken to ensure the safety of all the people he or she is directly or indirectly responsible for. This will include:

- Undertaking fire risk assessments,
- Developing and documenting a fire policy with the aim of minimising the risk of fire, reducing the spread of any fire, providing means of escape, and taking preventative action,
- Developing and documenting procedures for dealing with a fire and evacuating the building,
- Training staff,
- Undertaking fire drills,
- Providing and maintaining escape routes, fire doors, fire signage, emergency lighting, and fire detection & alarm systems and extinguishers.

Cobham Montessori School lease the premises at 21-23 Spencer Road, Cobham, Surrey, KT11 2AF; and as such the landlord's representative assumes the role of Responsible Person in relation to use of the premises by all users.

The Fire Officer: Shona Dolan takes responsibility for the following in addition to the measures taken by the "Responsible Person"

- Completion of Fire Risk Assessments pertaining to the use of the premises by Cobham Montessori School.
- Developing and documenting procedures for dealing with a fire and evacuating the building,
- Training for Cobham Montessori School staff
- Undertaking fire drills for Cobham Montessori School

- Ensuring all Staff, Parents and Visitors are aware of evacuation procedure in the event of an emergency.
- Firefighting duties where appropriate
- Contacting the Emergency Services in the event of a fire.
- Assisting in Evacuations.

4.0 General Guidance

The Fire Officer should ensure that all members of staff are aware of the relevant standing orders for fire control and procedures for fire and emergency evacuation. They must ensure that the following are brought to the attention of all staff:

- The steps to be followed as stated in any standing orders
- The procedures for evacuating the building, where to assemble and who to report to. These procedures must be recorded, and training given. The assembly point for each work area must be filled in on the standard "Fire Safety Plan" sign.
- A copy of the site emergency evacuation plan should be readily available at all times

4.1 Fire Training

Every new member of staff must be given training on fire safety at the start of their first day of work and during any subsequent induction training unless that induction training took place prior to commencement of work.

Refresher training should be carried out at least every 6 months for all staff and quarterly for live-in or night staff. Training notes for fire safety training must be kept up to date.

4.2 Visitors/Contractors

All visitors to the site should, before being allowed access, be given information outlining the procedures to follow in the event of the alarm being raised and the location of the relevant assembly points. This is included in the general guidance note for all visitors.

All visitors and non-permanent contractors arriving at the premises should sign-in at the main reception. The visitor's book is both a safety and security document therefore it is necessary for all non-employees having access to the premises to register both their arrival and departure times.

Members of staff, at all levels, should be responsible for the safety of their visitors at all times.

4.3 Fire Drills

We undertake bi-termly fire drills, one with prior warning for teachers, and another "surprise" Fire Drill which only the Fire Officer has prior knowledge of.

Dates of all fire drills and evacuations must be recorded on the "Fire Drill Log

4.4 Fire Prevention Equipment

Arrangements are made to regularly monitor the condition of all fire prevention equipment. This includes the regular visual inspection of fire extinguishers and the smoke alarm system. The responsibility for testing of and certificates for the equipment falls to the Responsible Person.

5.0 Fire Risk Assessment

To comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, Cobham Montessori School must ensure that a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment is carried out identifying the risks to which relevant persons are exposed and for the purpose of identifying the general fire precautions that are needed to ensure the safety of all children, staff, service users, contractors, and visitors whilst on premises.

In addition to the Landlord's comprehensive Fire Risk Assessment for the premises, the School's Fire Risk Assessment identifies:

- The Hazard

- The people at risk
- The measures to evaluate, remove, reduce, and protect from the risk
- The measures needed to record, plan, inform, instruct, and train people in risk reduction or removal
- The arrangements for reviewing the assessment

5.1 Identifying people at risk

The comprehensive fire risk assessments identify who will be at risk if there is a fire. It is necessary to consider where people may be playing and working and who else may be at risk, either in the premises or nearby, such as children, members of the public, service users, visiting contractors, etc., and where these people are likely to be located.

Particular attention must be paid to the safety and evacuation procedures of vulnerable people who may be especially at risk e.g. children and disabled persons.

Please see Emergency Evacuation Procedure below.

5.2 Reviewing the Fire Risk Assessment

The school's Fire Risk Assessment is updated annually and considered termly in line with the Health and Safety Risk Assessments and is treated as a "live" document.

If a fire or 'near-miss' occurs, this could indicate that the existing assessment may be inadequate, and a re-assessment should be carried out.

There is a legal requirement to review the landlord's Fire Risk Assessment if a child (under 16 yrs) or a Young Person (aged 16-18) is employed.

5.3 Changes to the premises

The Fire Risk Assessment will also be reviewed if it is no longer valid or if any changes are planned, such as:

- Any structural changes (alterations to the layout of the premises, erection of partitions, refurbishment etc) - this may affect the spread of fire.
- Any change to the use of the premises - this may affect the risk rating
- Any change to work processes or work equipment - this may introduce new fire hazards
- Any change to the numbers of people using the premises - to ensure the escape routes can accommodate the numbers safely

These changes must be recorded as hazards in the assessment and the controls or recommendations noted, actioned, and dated.

6.0 Fire Procedures

In case of fire, the first priority must be for the safety of the children. The following procedures should be adhered to at all times including the fire drill practice.

6.1 On Discovering a Fire

1. Whoever discovers the fire must alert everyone else verbally; state "FIRE FIRE" in a firm, clear voice; remain calm.
2. Blow one of the Fire Whistles which are located:
    a. Between the two classrooms
    b. In the Children's House kitchen
    c. In the Elementary kitchen
3. No child should then be allowed to go towards the area of the fire.
4. Follow the Evacuation procedure
5. NB. A small fire in its early stages can be successfully extinguished using a fire extinguisher; if you feel confident to tackle the fire then do so. However, even a small, contained fire

can quickly spread, producing harmful smoke and fumes. **Do not put yourself or others at risk; If in doubt, get out, call the Fire Service and stay out.**

6.2 Emergency Evacuation Procedure

1. On being alerted to an emergency make your way to the nearest Emergency Exit, these are as follows:
   - Rear fire door into the garden
   - Main front door next to the Children's House kitchen
   - "Blue door" the front door with the ramp leading to the Elementary corridor.
2. Do not stop to take anything with you.
3. Guide all the children to the designated evacuation point as quickly as possible:
   - If the hazard is at the front of the building the best exit is to the back and into the "Big Garden"
   - If the Hazard is blocking the rear door then instructions will be given to exit via the main front door. The assembly point is by the wall which forms the 'dead-end' to Spencer Road.
   - If the Hazard is blocking the front door and the rear door then the exit will be via the "blue door" and the assembly point is the same.
4. Follow any instructions given by the Head of School or Fire Officer.
5. The Fire Officer is responsible for checking that the toilets, office, classrooms, kitchens and hallways are clear.
6. The class teacher is responsible for taking any care plans and emergency medication for children in their care.
7. The Head of School will take the register, emergency phone and visitors' book outside to the assembly point. The emergency phone will be used to contact the Fire Department.
8. A rollcall will be taken of pupils, staff and visitors.
9. Do not re-enter the building until informed it is "all clear" by the Fire Officer or member of the Fire Service.
10. All fire drills or emergency evacuation should be written up and reported in the fire safety records.