FIRE POLICY

POLICY	PROCEDURE	REFERENCE	FORMS
SHPo1 - Health & Safety (incorporating Risk Assessment) Policy		SHR4 – Fire Safety Risk Assessment: Educational Premises	SHF4 – Emergency Evacuation Practice Record
SHPo29 - First Aid Policy			SHF8 – Weekly Fire Safety Inspection
SHP08 Accident- Incident Policy			SHF9 – Fire Alarm Maintenance Record
			SHF12 – Weekly Alarm Sounder Test Record
			SHF13 – Boiler Maintenance Record
			SHF14 – Fire Extinguisher Training
			SHF15 – Fire Extinguisher Service
			SHF32 – Fire Risk Assessment

About the Policy

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the school's Health & Safety (incorporating Risk Assessment) Policy SHPo1. All staff employed by LHAA are able to attend the annual external Fire Warden training and receive a certificate upon completion that will be in their personnel file.

The combustion process

Fire is a chemical reaction known as combustion.

Three elements have to be present for combustion to take place

- **FUEL** - The substance that burns. This can be solid (i.e. paper), liquid (i.e. liquid) or gas (i.e. propane).
- **OXYGEN** - In other words "air". Air is 20 % oxygen. A fire can't start without a good supply of air, and depriving a fire of oxygen can prevent it spreading.
- **HEAT** - The attainment of a certain temperature. This can be from a naked flame or a spark from electrical equipment.

Fire classification

Fire are classed according to what is burning:

Class A - Ordinary solid combustible material e.g. paper, wood and textiles

Cooling with water is the most effective medium for extinguishing this type of fire.

Class B - Flammable liquids e.g. petrol, diesel, oil, alcohol and fats.
Smothering (i.e., depriving of oxygen) with foam, CO_2 (carbon dioxide) or a fire blanket is effective here.

Class C - Flammable gases such as propane or natural gas.
The most effective way of dealing with this class of fire is to turn the gas supply off at source. CO_2 or dry powder extinguishers can be used. These fires can be very dangerous, gas cylinders can explode even after the fire has been put out. Staff must not try to tackle this class of fire but move to evacuate as quickly as possible.

Class D - Flammable metals such as sodium or magnesium.
It is very unlikely that this class of fire would ever occur in a primary school. These materials are more likely to be found in a factory or laboratory.

Class F – Cooking oils such as deep-fat fryers.

The hazards of fire

- smoke can cause suffocation (oxygen deprivation) and can impair visibility.
- toxic fumes can be produced by fire, depending on what is burning.
- burning by heat or flames.
- collapse of building structure.

Fire prevention

This is achieved through:

- fire risk assessments
- fire inspections
- miscellaneous fire prevention policies
- maintenance of equipment
- training
- fire log and documentation

Fire risk assessments

It is a legal requirement that every school must carry out a Fire Risk Assessment. Once an assessment is completed, it will remain valid until something changes to the nature of the activities carried out in the building. However, even if there have been no changes the document will be reviewed every year. The document is be clearly marked with the date of the last review and the date the next review is due.

There are no national standards or regulations that specify a single correct way of completing the risk assessment.

Langley Hall Arts Academy uses Fire Risk Assessment **SHF32** for its fire risk assessment which considers the following points:

- Who is at risk?
- What are the fire hazards?
- What is the level of risk?
- What are the controls in place?

- Are the control measures adequate?
- If not, what new control measures are necessary?

Who is at risk?

Staff, children and parents as well as visitors or contractors.

Children and others with mobility or sensory impairment are obviously the most vulnerable because they may not be able to get out of the building unaided.

What are the fire hazards?

The three elements required to start a fire are fuel, heat and oxygen.

It is impossible to prevent oxygen from being present (although by restricting airflow we can prevent a fire from spreading - see Fire Control later in this policy). However we can identify potential heat sources and fuel. The main heat source will be in the kitchen but electrical equipment such as the kettle in the staff room could also cause a fire. Fuel is everywhere in the building but this risk is managed through the timely, safe disposal of waste materials as well as ensuring proper storage and tidying away of resources and equipment.

What is the level of risk?

Fire is always be treated as a high risk incident as the consequences of a fire starting and getting out of hand could be catastrophic for building damage and injury to people, as well as the long-term viability of Langley Hall Arts Academy.

What controls are in place?

Examples of control measures are:

- emergency evacuation procedures
- miscellaneous fire policies
- staff training
- equipment maintenance

Do the current control measures adequately control the risk?

We take seriously our responsibility to ensure that the controls in place are sufficient to ensure Langley Hall Arts Academy is safe from fire however we will continue to assess the risk and adapt our control measures as necessary.

New control measures

If the risk assessment identifies a weakness that is not covered by existing measures then new measure will be put in place. These might include:

- a new policy to control an activity such as rubbish storage
- the instigation of a weekly check to ensure that a policy is being carried out
- a structural change to the building

Fire inspections

An inspection is different to a risk assessment. It is an examination of the building to identify any hazards that have arisen on a temporary basis. The inspection will involve every room, lobby, cupboard, corridor and outside area.

A fire inspection will be carried out every week and the result recorded using Weekly Fire Safety Inspection **SHF8**. The time of day and the time of the inspection will be varied each week and members of staff will not be warned in advance. The document will be made available to all members of staff and discussed at staff meetings before being filed in the Fire Log File.

Typical items that might be noticed during an inspection are:

- boxes in corridors that people could trip over during evacuation or catch fire and block the route
- paper or paint stored in the boiler room
- exit door difficult to open or obstructed
- fire doors propped open
- fire extinguishers missing, moved or badly labelled
- missing or inappropriate signs and evacuation route notices
- decorative materials (Christmas decorations etc.) attached or close to lights or heaters
- self-closers on fire doors not working

Although the staff should not be given notice of an inspection they should be consulted during it. People working in a room might be more aware of hazards that occur when working, that would not be obvious when standing in the room and looking. Conversely, people working in a room over a period of time can get used to things that a fresh pair of eyes will spot.

Miscellaneous fire prevention policies

Smoking
Smoking, or more specifically, the discarding of used smoking materials is a frequent cause of fire. Langley Hall Arts Academy has a no smoking policy. This applies to the grounds as well as the building.

Storage of materials
The school will always have a certain amount of combustible materials such as paper for artwork, books etc. This should be kept to a minimum and stored away from any source of heat or electrical appliance. Waste paper and resources must be disposed of and not allowed to build up in the rooms. Combustible material should never be stored in a boiler room. Combustible materials should not be stored along the pathway of an evacuation route.

Tidiness
The school should be kept as tidy as is practical at all times. In the event of a fire it will be important to find registers and get out of the building as quickly as possible. Tripping over boxes and toys that are not being used could slow the evacuation process. Rubbish must be taken out of the building every day to reduce the availability of fuel for any fire.

Equipment maintenance

Fire extinguishers
Langley Hall Arts Academy has a contract with an organisation for the service of fire extinguishers. The Fire Extinguisher Service Record **SHF15** is used to record the servicing and this is kept in the Fire Log File.

Boiler
The boiler is serviced once per year. This will always be carried out by a registered and qualified engineer. The service report date is recorded on Boiler Maintenance Record **SHF13** and a copy is kept in the Fire Log File.

Fire alarm system
The fire alarm system is serviced at least every year. This will be carried out by a reputable company and recorded on the Fire Alarm Maintenance Record **SHF9**, kept in the Fire Log File. This maintenance will also include servicing of the emergency lighting

Training

Each member of staff will be trained in the correct use of fire extinguishers every two years. The training will cover how to use the extinguishers, the circumstances under which the different extinguishers should be used and include a practical session enabling every member of staff to experience using a fire extinguisher.

The training will be organised via the Fire Service or other private training company specialising in extinguisher training and recorded on Fire Extinguisher Training Record **SHF14**.

Emergency evacuation of the premises (whether for fire or other reason) is regularly practised by staff, children and visitors in accordance with the Emergency Evacuation Procedure displayed around the school and Emergency Evacuation Policy **SHPo26**.

The Fire Log File

The Fire Log File is a ring binder containing all the information required to manage fire safety at Langley Hall Arts Academy. This is kept in the school office and made available for any fire service or Ofsted inspection.

The Fire Log File includes:

- Fire Risk Assessment **SHF32**
- Weekly Fire Safety Inspection **SHF8** reports for the previous eight weeks
- Details of the company who services the alarm system (copy of the contract)
- Fire Alarm Maintenance Record **SHF9**
- Details of the company who service the fire extinguishers and emergency lighting (copy of the contract)
- Fire Extinguisher Service Record **SHF15**
- Fire Extinguisher Training Record **SHF14**
- Boiler Maintenance Record **SHF13**
- Weekly Alarm Sounder Test Record **SHF12**
- Details of evacuation routes from each room / area
- Plan of the school with the following identified:
    - evacuation routes
    - alarm call points
    - alarm sounders
    - fire extinguisher locations
- Emergency Evacuation Practice Record **SHF4**

Fire control

There are two methods by which fire can be controlled and contained. These are fire doors and extinguishers.

Fire doors

The aim of fire doors is to divide the building into smaller areas and these must be able to resist fire for at least 30 minutes so that the fire can be contained in one area while emergency evacuation can take place.

All fire doors must always be kept closed except when actually being used for access (i.e. never wedged open) to restrict the airflow through the building, and therefore the oxygen, which the fire needs to thrive.

In the event of changes to the layout of the building a fire officer will be consulted to advice on where fire doors are required to effectively divide up the building.

Fire extinguishers

Fire extinguishers should be used under the following two conditions:

- When the fire is small and the operator is confident that it can be dealt with quickly.
    - There is no need to evacuate the building unless the extinguisher is not effective and the fire continues.
    - Extreme care must be taken and a necessary evacuation not delayed.
- When an evacuation has been called but an evacuation route is blocked.
    - The extinguisher is used only to clear the route so evacuation can be affected, not in an attempt to put the fire out.

Positioning of fire extinguishers

Guidelines issued by the Fire Service about fire extinguishers include:

- extinguishers should be positioned along escape routes.
- there should be at least one extinguisher per floor.
- no one should be no more than 30 metres from an extinguisher.

Langley Hall Arts Academy seeks advice from a qualified person (i.e. Fire Service or fire extinguisher company) regarding the positioning of fire extinguishers.

Types of extinguisher

There are five types of extinguisher which are for use in different circumstances. All of the extinguishers are red but display a label on the front with a coloured square to indicate the type of extinguisher and therefore where it can be appropriately used.

Water - RED square

- for use on:
    - combustible material e.g. paper, cardboard or fabric (Class A fires)
- Water extinguishers should not be used on:
    - fires started by an electrical fault

- flammable liquid fire such as burning oil.

Foam - CREAM square

- for use on:
  - combustible material e.g. paper, cardboard or fabric (Class A fires)
  - can also be used on liquids such as burning oil (Class B fires)
- Foam extinguishers should not be used on:
  - electrical fires as foam can conduct electricity
  - deep-fat fryers or chip pans

Carbon dioxide (CO_2) - BLACK square

- for use on:
  - burning liquids (Class B fires)
  - gases (Class C fires)
  - fires started by an electrical fault or when electrical equipment is nearby

Dry powder - BLUE square

- for use on:
  - burning liquids (Class B fires)
  - gases (Class C fires)
  - fires started by an electrical fault or when electrical equipment is nearby
- Dry powder extinguishers are not generally suitable for:
  - confined spaces

NB - powder extinguishers can create a loss of visibility and may affect people who have breathing problems

Class 'F' (Wet chemical)

- for use on:
  - cooking oils e.g. deep fat fryers (Class F fires)
  - combustible material e.g. paper, cardboard or fabric (Class A fires)

Fire blankets

- For use on:
  - all types of fire - they work by depriving the fire of oxygen