

FIRE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Full guide

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Section One

Introduction

The Governors of Downside School recognise that this is a regulatory policy. This policy and its procedure will be reviewed regularly by a competent external specialist who will make recommendations based on the latest statutory guidance and advice. These reviews will take place at least annually and the recommendations will be reviewed by the Health and Safety Committee who are responsible for ongoing development of this policy.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that the risks associated with the outbreak of fire are managed such to provide a robust safety framework securing the protection and wellbeing of all pupils, staff and visitors as well as to protect the Trust's assets.

1.2 Approach

The approach set out in this document to achieve the purpose is to define the roles and responsibilities of everyone associated with the School such to support fire safety in the following areas:

- Prevention of fire
- Preservation of life
- Prevention of injury

Furthermore, this document aims to define the checks and learning mechanisms the School employs in order to assess the effectiveness of the policy and the policy implementation, and so feedback to contribute to continuous ongoing improvement with respect to the achievement of the purpose.

1.3 Legislation

The School recognises that the subject of fire safety is covered by legislation, primarily the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, and more generally by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The School is committed to managing the risk associated with fire in accordance with these statutory instruments.

1.4 Distribution

This document forms part of the compulsory induction for all senior managers. All other staff, contractors and volunteers will only be required to read Section 5. Visitors, being always escorted, will not need to be inducted.

Section Two

Fire Safety Roles

These procedures require various individuals to operate in a coordinated and structured way to best achieve the aims outlined in section one. Key roles are defined in this section.

2.1 Health and Safety committee

They are tasked with the ongoing review of the effectiveness of these procedures, making recommendations from time to time for alterations to better achieve the purpose set out in the introduction. See the Health and Safety policy for details.

2.2 Duty House Person (DHP)

The person who holds position of authority for a designated Boarding House with respect to response to an evacuation event. Authority is demonstrated by the holding of the House phone.

2.3 Incident Manager (IM)

The person who holds position of authority for the overall coordination of the School with respect to response to an evacuation event.

2.4 Fire Warden (FW)

The Person responsible for designated defined area with respect to the regular monitoring of items related to fire safety and to assist with the implementation of these procedures. They will need to have read and understand the guidance set out throughout this policy document including the appendices.

In addition to these responsibilities, they should interpret the guidance given with respect to their specific area and develop a detailed understanding as to the area they are assigned to. As a minimum be able to identify the:

- Path of escape routes and the location of fire doors
- Location and type of firefighting equipment
- Layout of the devices associated with the fire alarm

Fire wardens are encouraged to seek guidance from line management and other senior management as necessary in the fulfilment of the role where knowledge is lacking, or concerns exist.

2.5 Heads of Department and Managers (HODs)

It is the responsibility of those with line manager responsibility to ensure that:

- They have read and understand the guidance set out throughout this policy document including the appendices.
- Both direct and indirect reports and temporary workers are adequately inducted on site within 24 hours of role commencement onsite.
- Both direct and indirect reports are suitably informed and competent to fulfil roles assigned to them with respect to fire safety.
- They actively promote good housekeeping and with special attention made to:
 - the area specific rules set out in section 6;
 - compliance with the permitted electrical items list (see appendix B);
 - adherence to the policy of NO SMOKING anywhere on the site; and
 - prevention of misuse of fire equipment.

In addition to the above, it is the responsibility of those with departmental/house responsibility to ensure that:

- The role of FIRE WARDEN for the departmental area is being fulfilled by them or a suitable and competent individual in their absence

2.6 House Masters / Mistresses (HSMs)

As a result of the boarding houses being the most common spaces to have higher risk persons present and unsupervised additional controls for these spaces are required.

The role of the HSM incorporates, in addition to 2.5, responsibility to ensure that:

- All House staff are suitably informed and competent to fulfil roles assigned on behalf of the HSM.
- A nominated DUTY HOUSE PERSON is present throughout any period where house pupils are in residence who can always account for all house pupils.
- The SLT are notified as the DUTY HOUSE PERSON position is rescinded / reinstated (i.e. the start and end of holiday periods).

2.7 Health Centre Duty Manager (HCDM)

This role is fulfilled by the Head of Nursing or their nominated deputy in their absence. The HCDM holds position of authority for the overall coordination of the Health Centre with respect to response to an evacuation event. The Head of Nursing is responsible for ensuring this role is always fulfilled whilst pupils are in residence.

2.8

The Busar is responsible for:

- Liaising with the local fire authority and statutory bodies as required by the role.

- Processing internal and external fire safety related reports.
- Ensuring that firefighting equipment and fire alarm systems are maintained in line with the relevant Industry guidelines.

Section Three

Site Infrastructure

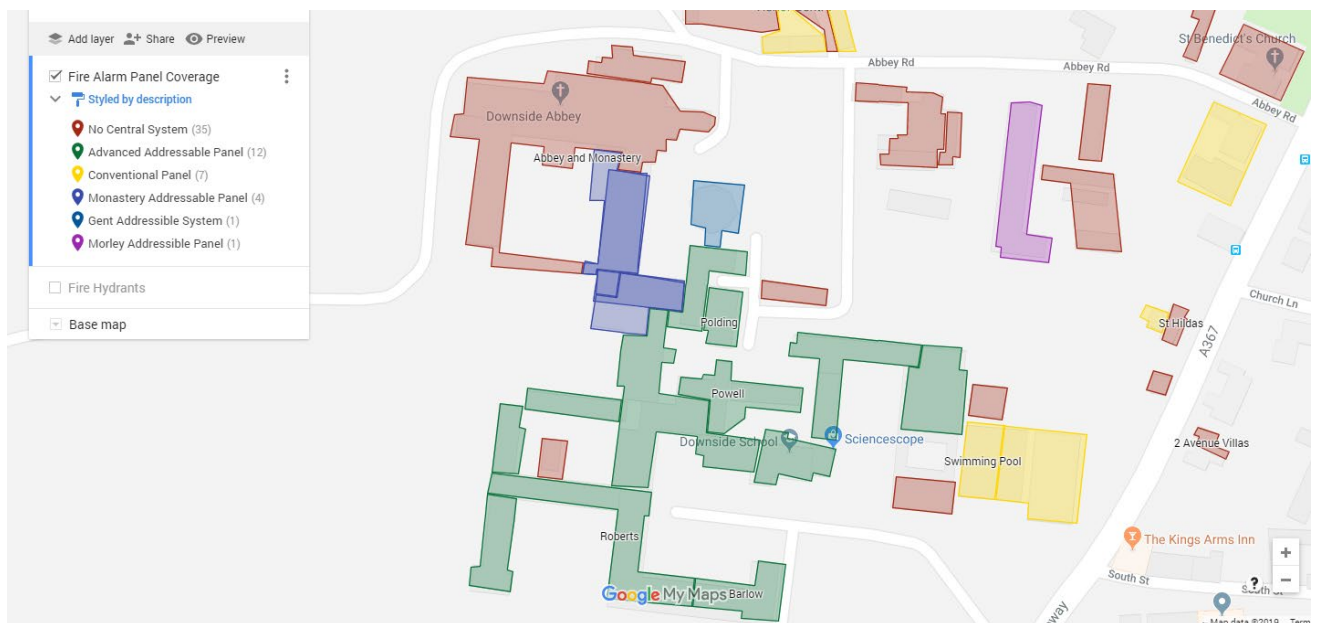
3.1 Firefighting Equipment

To assist in the detection, fighting and containment of fire, portable fire-fighting equipment is provided throughout the School.

3.2 Fire alarm systems

The nature of the site is such that various systems are present and detail on operation of the various types of system is given in section 6.12.

Automatic fire detection is available on the majority of the site and in all of the boarding houses as shown in the plan below:



Most of the School site is served by a fully addressable, audible fire alarm detection and warning system, shown by the areas highlighted GREEN.

The other School areas covered by a separate fully addressable, audible fire alarm detection and warning system are:

- Isabella House – shown highlighted in PURPLE – with the main panel located in the main reception of Isabella House.
- Refectory, Bede Centre, Weld and other areas shown highlighted in LILAC – with the main panel located in the East Wing in the lift lobby on the Second Floor.

Note that all three large addressable systems are independent of each other and are not interconnected, however, where they meet there is a degree of overlap:

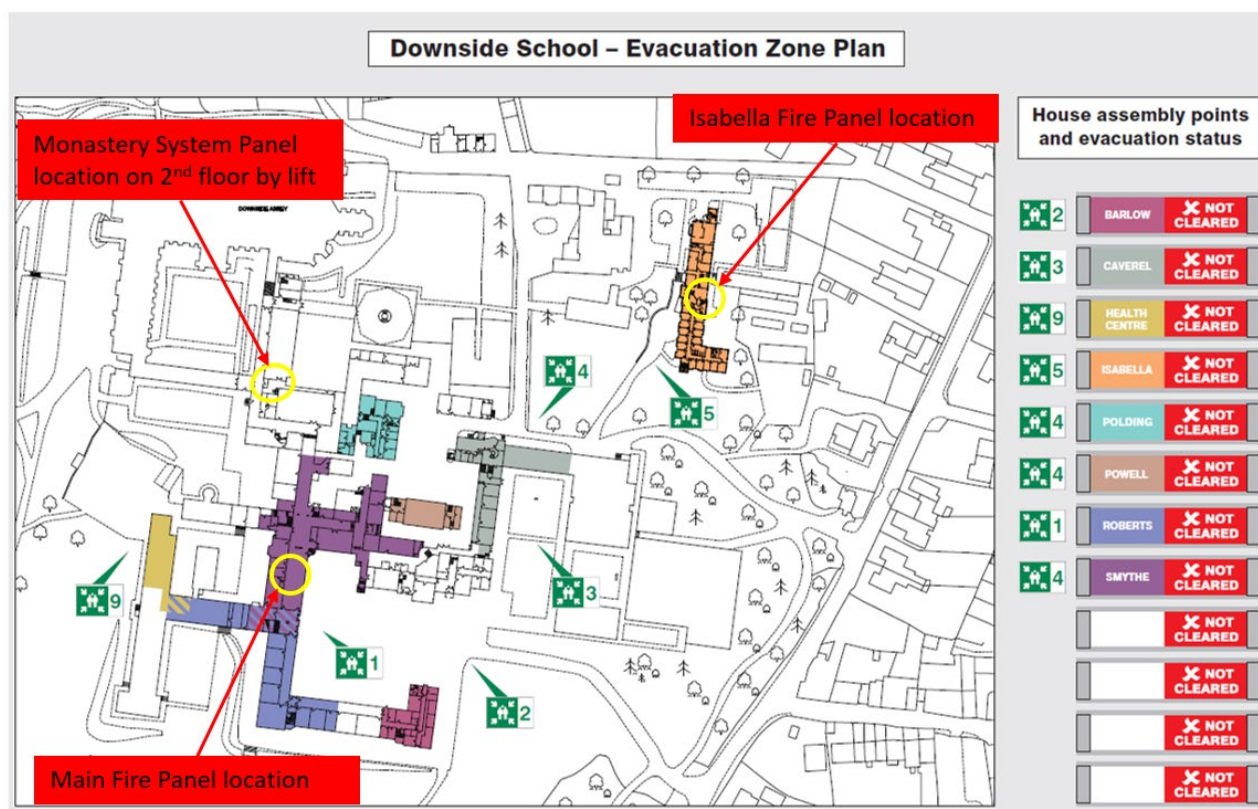
- Bede Centre – In addition to the above, the main School fire alarm (GREEN) has been extended into this area with extra detectors and sounders installed.
- The Weld – In addition to the above, the main School fire alarm (GREEN) has been extended into this area with extra sounders only

The areas highlighted in YELLOW are each independently covered by their own conventional standalone zonal fire alarm panel (not fully addressable).

The remaining areas highlighted in RED do not currently enjoy a central fire alarm detection system and are covered by either independent smoke alarms or a manual alarm raising system.

3.3 Fire alarm panels, assembly points and the Fire Control Point locations

The locations of the main School, Isabella and Monastery fire alarm panels, along with the various assembly points are identified below:



Assembly Points

Pupils and House staff

Barlow	Worth lawn	Assembly point	2
Smythe	Caverel Lawn	Assembly point	4
Roberts	Quad (by Roberts tower)	Assembly point	1
Caverel	Quad (Theatre terrace)	Assembly point	3
Powell	Caverel Lawn	Assembly point 4	

Isabella	Isabella Lawn	Assembly point 5
Polding	Caverel Lawn	Assembly point 4
Teaching staff		Assemble with their house

Non-House Staff & Volunteers

Teaching staff	Old House patio	Assembly point	3
Office staff	Old House patio	Assembly point	3
School Librarian	Old House patio	Assembly point	3
Domestic staff	Caverel Lawn	Assembly point	4
Kitchen staff	Caverel Lawn	Assembly point	4
Laundry staff	Caverel Lawn	Assembly point	4
Works staff	Caverel Lawn	Assembly point 4	
Health Centre	Ball Place	Assembly point 9	

Fire Control Point

The main School panel located in the main hall also serves as the Fire control point, which is the location from which the Incident Manager will conduct operations from in the event of an evacuation including the main School building. This location has been chosen on the following basis:

- Low risk area with respect to potential for fire to occur.
- Clear visibility to multiple escape routes.
- Access to Main School Fire Panel which serves most of the School and boarding areas.

In preparation of a major incident occurring the fire control point includes a fire phone, torch and safety information to assist the fire brigade in the event of fire.

Section Four

Specific Emergency Evacuation Plan

This section contains additional detail on the responsibilities of key senior roles during evacuations.

4.1 Duty House Person (DHP)

. The priority for the DHP is to undertake a roll call and identify who is missing. Following evacuation and roll call, if pupils or staff are unaccounted for, a sweep of the area can be undertaken ONLY if it is safe to do so. If it is not safe to do so, details of the missing individuals must be reported to the incident manager who can update the fire service.

Where the alarm activation occurs overnight, House staff should (where and when safe to do so) check boarding rooms to ensure all pupils have responded to the alarm and are evacuating the building.

On completion of their evacuation the DHP will undertake a roll call and identify any persons unaccounted for assigned to the specific house.

The roll call will be undertaken as soon as possible but should be completed no later than 8 minutes following the alarm being raised. The priority is to establish as quickly as possible who is missing at roll call so steps can be taken swiftly to identify their whereabouts. Roll call information must be reported immediately to the fire panel incident manager. The DHP, or house staff colleague nominated to do so, should be sent to the fire panel to report the roll call information immediately after roll call has been taken.

If the initial alarm has originated in Isabella House, the Isabella House DHP will also function as the INCIDENT MANAGER, unless relieved by a senior member of staff.

If the initial alarm has originated elsewhere, upon completion of the roll call the DHP will attend the Fire Control Point in the main School and relay the roll call outcome to the INCIDENT MANAGER.

If the DHP is the first person to the Fire Control Point, they will assume the role of INCIDENT MANAGER.

Only when the DHP has received the official “all clear” from the INCIDENT MANAGER can they dismiss the House.

4.2 Incident Manager (IM)

On the activation of an alarm an individual member of staff is designated as the INCIDENT MANAGER for the event. Due to the nature of the site, who this is depends upon location as per the following:

- For the main School, the first DHP to complete their roll call and that reaches the Fire Control Point will become the INCIDENT MANAGER. This will only not apply where

the SLT on Duty reaches the Fire Control Point before the DHP, in which case the SLT on Duty will become the INCIDENT MANAGER.

- For ancillary buildings (other than those served by the main School fire alarm) the most senior member of staff present will become the INCIDENT MANAGER.

The INCIDENT MANAGER is responsible for:

- Managing the evacuation event in accordance with this guidance.
- Interaction with the fire panel, ensuring alarms are only silenced once a false alarm has been verified and the building confirmed to be safe.
- Making contact with the Health Centre asap and confirming whether to delay evacuation to avoid unnecessary disruption to pupils that may be being treated.
- Pursuit of the confirmation of the veracity of the alarm so far as it is safe to do so.
- If any doubt remains as to the existence of a fire following attempts to verify it, then the INCIDENT MANAGER is responsible for making contact with the emergency services (999 or 9-999 from internal network phone) and making suitable access arrangements (unlocking of gates etc.).
- Liaising with the Emergency Services and providing support, as necessary.
- Contacting other site buildings including the SFC as necessary to ensure further evacuations occur if required.
Accurate completion of the full Appendix C report which is in the fire box and should then be sent to the HSC) within 48 hours of incident.
- Managing the response to any other unforeseen complication that presents during the event.
- Closing the event and updating all relevant parties confirming to DHPs event closure etc.

Under certain circumstances where either the fire alarm cannot be silenced or the cause verified within a reasonable time period, or in extreme weather conditions, the INCIDENT MANAGER may take the decision to instruct all staff and pupils to go from their designated assembly points to another location. Efforts will be made to keep individuals in their house groups.

The default location for such a move is the SPORTS HALL.

No group shall move from their assembly point to the sports hall without clear direction from the INCIDENT MANAGER.

4.3 Heads of Department and Managers (HODs)

On completion of their evacuation the HOD (or their nominated deputy) will undertake a roll call and identify any persons unaccounted for. The names of any missing persons will be reported to the incident manager.

4.4 Health Centre Duty Manager (HCDM)

The HCDM will always be available to receive urgent notification of an evacuation event.

In the event of a Fire alarm the Health Centre will evacuate to the ball place not to their houses.

The INCIDENT MANAGER is instructed to make contact with the HCDM on their duty mobile as soon as possible with respect to advising of the nature of the cause of the alarm and potentially with advice that evacuation can be delayed (i.e. where there is no perceived potential danger to the Health Centre). This action also provides facility for the HCDM to request any assistance that may be required with respect to evacuation of residents who are difficult to evacuate.

If at any time the HCDM should perceive a potential danger to be in the vicinity of the Health Centre or its occupants, the HCDM will proceed with evacuation. **This overrides any instruction given by the INCIDENT MANAGER to the contrary.**

4.5 Public Examinations

If the main School fire alarm activates during an examination, the regulator will assess the area. If any potential danger is perceived the regulator will give the order to proceed with the evacuation.

If no potential danger is perceived the regulator will give the instruction for the examination to proceed.

The regulator will then liaise with the INCIDENT MANAGER whilst continually assessing the area.

If at any time the regulator should perceive a potential danger to be in the vicinity of the examination area, they will give the instruction to postpone the exam and proceed with immediate evacuation. **This overrides any instruction given by the INCIDENT MANAGER to the contrary.**

If the Fire Alarm is continuing to sound after a duration of 5 minutes has passed since the initial activation, then the regulator will regardless move to proceed within immediate evacuation.

4.6 Additional supporting roles

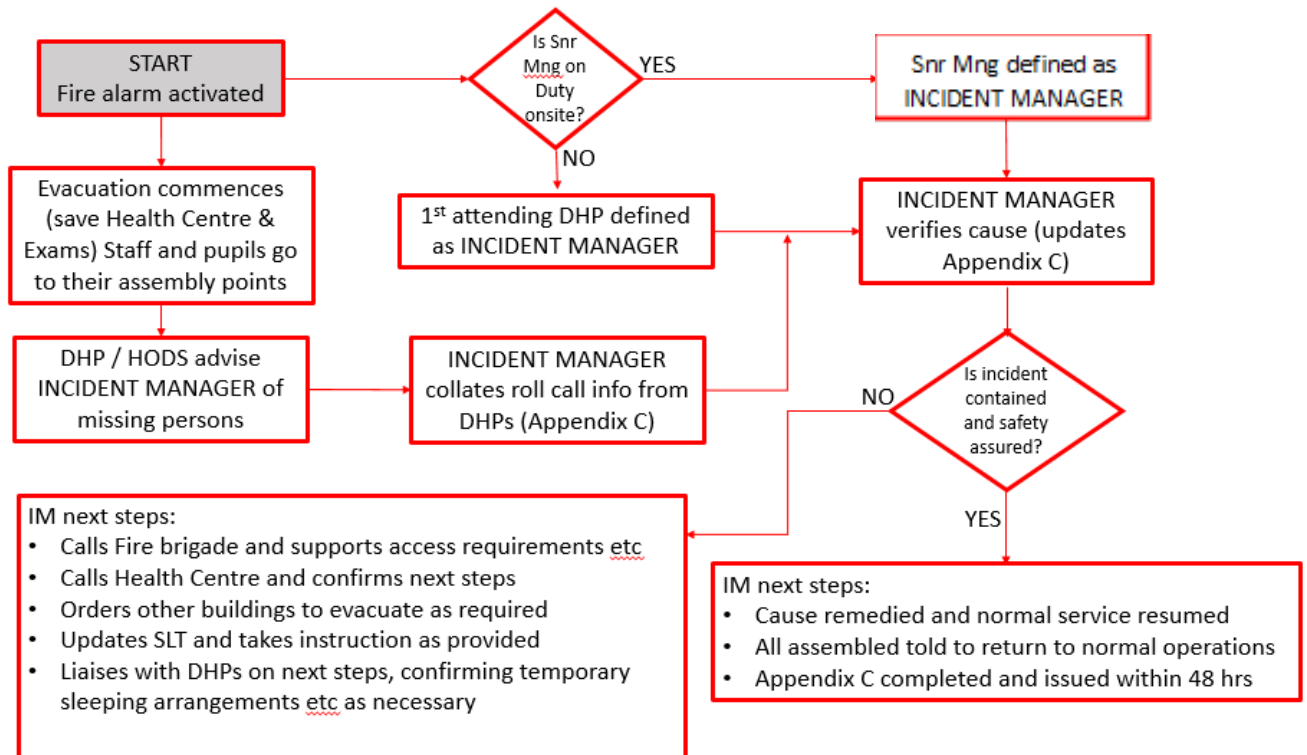
The following, selected due to their experience and knowledge, should report to the fire control point as soon as they have undertaken any evacuation duties required of them so that they can support the Incident Manager in the fulfilment of their duties:

- Duty SLT Member
-
- Bursar
- Head of Facilities Management
- Electrician – Works Dept

If they reach the fire panel before an INCIDENT MANAGER has arrived, then investigations may commence to verify the cause of the alarm but at least one person must remain at the panel to update the INCIDENT MANAGER upon their arrival.

The receptionist on duty will undertake a roll call of all visitors onsite, and report to the Fire Control Point after 5 mins to confirm the outcome of that roll call.

4.7 Evacuation Flow Chart



Section Five

General Induction

5.1 Introduction and hot works

This section comprises the basic guidance we believe all pupils, staff, contractors and volunteers should have in order to promote a safe environment.

To this end it is policy that all groups listed above will be presented with this information within 24 hours of arrival. Staff, contractors and volunteers will be expected to commit to following the guidance below as part of the fulfilment of their duty of care.

For the avoidance of doubt all activities involving naked flames or where a potential source of ignition exists are **strictly prohibited** unless authorised in advance by a staff member in a position of responsibility (i.e. Head of Department) having undertaken a suitable risk assessment

5.2 Escorting Duty of Care

Due to the security protocols in place it will be necessary regularly to escort pupils, visitors, contractors and others as part of day-to-day activities. Responsibilities always apply during periods of escorting including trips away from site and sessions taking place beyond the audible range of the main School fire alarm (i.e., Sports etc.).

A specific individual must be identified as LEAD ESCORT. Additional escorts may be employed to deal with larger groups etc. but they will serve to assist the LEAD ESCORT in the fulfilment of their duties.

The LEAD ESCORT:

- MUST know the names of those being escorted and be able to recall them rapidly should the need to undertake a roll call arise.
- MUST not leave those being escorted (however the LEAD ESCORT role can be transferred to another competent staff member with their consent).
- MUST be contactable by the INCIDENT MANAGER should an evacuation event arise.
- MUST assist those being escorted with any evacuation as required due to their being unfamiliar with alarm tones, escape routes and assembly locations, taking all visitors via the safest external route to their assembly point.

5.3 Special Hazards

5.3.1 Electricity and Electrical Supply

- All electrical appliances which require mains power will be connected to an authorised outlet by an approved correctly fused plug.
- The use of block adapter plugs is forbidden.

- Save to isolate, no unauthorised person is to attempt to repair or tamper with any part of any electrical appliance, fitting or part of the distribution system including plugs, sockets, switches, fuses or associated enclosures.
- All electrical appliances must be switched off and plugs removed from sockets when left unattended.
- Electrical cable, flexible leads and plugs are to be kept in a good condition. If any signs of damage, distress, excessive wear or any other weakness is observed then they must be put beyond use until their condition has been confirmed as safe to use by a competent person.
- Cables should not be laid under floor coverings, through or across doorways, or under soft furnishings.
- If a power failure is observed, you must switch off the associated electrical equipment and disconnect where possible.
- All suspected defects in electrical equipment must be referred to the Works Department.

5.3.2 Gas Appliances

- Save to isolate, no unauthorised person is to attempt to repair or tamper with any part of any gas appliance, fitting or part of the distribution system including hoses, pipework and associated equipment.
- Gas ring burners are to stand on a firm, fireproof, non-heat-conducting surface. The area is to be clear of other combustible material and never to be left unattended during use.
- Gas heaters must always be guarded and never used to dry clothing or materials.
- All non-essential gas appliances must be turned off when left unattended.

5.3.3 Gas Leaks

In the event of a gas leak the following action must be taken:

- Do not use naked light or operate any electrical appliances including lights.
- Turn off the supply at the isolator and / or the main.
- Ventilate the building.
- Leave the room and if necessary, evacuate the building.
- Contact the Works Department immediately and notify them of the suspected gas leak.
- Before the gas is turned on at the main, a registered fitter must carry out a check.

5.4 Waste and refuse

The accumulation of rubbish and waste material is a serious fire hazard and should be kept to a minimum. Rubbish should be removed at the end of the working day to a safe location for collection or destruction.

5.5 Smoking

For the avoidance of doubt the whole School Estate is a **NON-SMOKING AREA**, this includes the use of vaping devices.

5.6 Hazardous materials

All hazardous materials including chemicals, liquids, fabrics, packaging and waste must be appropriately stored and secured at all times.

5.7 Fire Alarm System

Each week the fire alarm will sound for a short duration. You are advised not to evacuate during these tests which are intended to allow you to become familiar with the alarm tone that signals to evacuate. At any other time and if in doubt you should treat the alarm as a real evacuation event and proceed with the guidance given in the evacuation plans

5.8 Firefighting equipment

There are, situated throughout the School, fire points that have pre-stationed fire appliances, they are:

- Extinguishers
- Fire blankets

Each piece of equipment has been specifically chosen to fight the most likely type of fire expected in the area. This equipment is only to be used for fighting fires. It must not be removed from the position in which it has been placed other than for use in firefighting.

Route to the equipment must always remain unobstructed. Extinguishers must not be used as door stops. When an appliance is used, or found to be defective, the location of that appliance is reported as per 5:11.

5.9 Escape routes and Fire doors

Care must be taken that escape routes are always kept free of hazards and unobstructed. When planned events require that an escape route be compromised then a suitable risk assessment and alternative means of escape must be put in place.

A system of lighting exists such that should we suffer a mains electrical failure the escape routes will be lit for a duration sufficient to enable emergency evacuation. This system will be checked by the Works department.

Fire doors are designed to slow down the progression of fire and the by-products of fire. Consequently, they are used to protect escape routes from becoming compromised. **KEEP FIRE DOORS CLOSED** unless a suitable door retaining system that releases in the event of an alarm activation is being used.

5.10 Vacant areas

When leaving an area, you should as so far as is reasonable practicable ensure the following:

- Rubbish receptacles are free of combustible materials
- Appliances have been turned off and disconnected
- Doors and windows are appropriately secured

It is understood that some appliances such as boilers will have to be left in operation and unattended regularly. These appliances will be kept serviced as per manufacturer's guidelines and disconnected if suspicion of any elevated risk is present.

5.11 Raising concerns

Should you have any concerns with respect to the condition or effectiveness of any element of the Fire prevention measures employed or equipment used you must make an immediate notification via email to: sfaloon@downside.co.uk and repairs@downside.co.uk

Where you believe there to be an immediate risk to the health, safety and welfare of individuals then in addition to the above, the concern should be immediately raised to the SLT on Duty so that appropriate immediate action can be taken.

5.12 General Emergency Evacuation Plan

The safety of you and others is dependent upon the compliance with the procedures given below. AT ALL TIMES:

- **KNOW** YOUR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ESCAPE ROUTES.
- **KNOW** THE POSITION OF THE NEAREST MANUAL CALL POINT.
- **KNOW** THE POSITION OF THE NEAREST FIRE-FIGHTING APPLIANCE.
- **KNOW** YOUR ASSEMBLY POINT.
- **KNOW** THE SOUND OF THE ALARM (two tone alarm or verbal "Fire Fire Fire").

Actions to take upon discovering a fire:

- Raise the alarm by shouting "FIRE FIRE FIRE".
- Activate the alarm at the nearest "manual call point" (MCP) triggering the Fire Alarm.
- If SAFE and trained in the use of extinguishers, attempt to put the fire out.
- Evacuate in accordance with guidance below.
- Contact the SLT Duty Manager (ext. 560) advising of the situation and provide information on the fire / actions taken.

Actions to take upon hearing the alarm (Evacuation):

- Respond immediately relaying the alarm to others as required.
- Assist visitors and others as required.
- If safe to do so, close doors and windows as you evacuate.

- Evacuate the building or area immediately by the quickest and most direct safe exit route.
- Report to your designated assembly point and follow all instructions issued by the INCIDENT MANAGER or FIRE BRIGADE personnel.
- **DO NOT** panic and run.
- **DO NOT** delay to collect personal belongings.
- **DO NOT** return to any buildings unless specifically instructed as safe to do so by the INCIDENT MANAGER / DUTY HOUSE PERSON / FIRE BRIGADE.

5.13 Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)

Anyone who suffers from (or develops) any issue or impediment that would impair their ability to complete a timely evacuation unaided (such as impairments to hearing, sight or mobility) **MUST** be allocated a PEEP.

If you think you may require a PEEP, you should highlight this to your HSM or Line Manager immediately.

The responsibility for ensuring that a PEEP is in place (where applicable) for staff, contractors and others will lie with the relevant Head of Department.

The responsibility for ensuring that a PEEP is in place (where applicable) for pupils lies with the relevant HSM.

As soon as the need for a PEEP becomes known to the Head of Department / HSM they will look to submit a draft PEEP for SLT review at the earliest available juncture. The PEEP must make suitable and sufficient provisions such as to ensure that individual safety is not compromised.

The construction of the PEEP maybe supported by other senior staff including the Deputy Head, the Director of Pastoral Care and the Head of Facilities Management - but regardless must be submitted for SLT review at the earliest juncture to ensure all aspects of the organisation are aware of the specific adjustments that are being made for the individual in question, and to ensure the PEEP is sufficiently comprehensive and robust.

Should you have any questions, or should you wish to clarify any of the points contained herein, please do so at once with your line manager.

Please read the Downside Evacuation procedures as part of induction. There are different procedures for out of term time that you may need to be aware of.

Section Six

Specific Induction for HODs / HSMs / Managers and Fire Wardens

To fulfil their roles, **all of those in a position of responsibility** will familiarise themselves with the information contained within this section along with the appendices.

6.1 Boarding Houses

6.1.1 Sleeping Accommodation

It is the responsibility of the HSM to ensure that the following safety precautions are observed within the house:

- No smoking.
- Corridors and fire escapes are clear of obstructions and potential trip hazards
- Refuse is not allowed to accumulate.
- Good housekeeping practices are promoted.
- Accommodation used for sleeping in should not be used for storage of any materials.
- Ensure that safety practices with reference to electrical and gas appliances are observed.
- Firefighting appliances are not misused, fire information signs are not defaced/removed, or any system tampered with.
- Roof space and luggage stores are clean and dust free.
- Furniture is fire retardant.
- Damaged fixtures and fittings or furniture is repaired or replaced.
- Fire doors are not wedged open at any time.
- Furniture and carpets do not obstruct doors of rooms or hinder rescue.
- Drapes, blankets, flags or any other combustible material must not be hung from the ceiling or cover electrical switches or sockets.
- Care is to be taken with heat output of light bulbs when permission is given to use paper lampshades.
- Students will only sleep in rooms allotted for this purpose.
- A duty manager must always be in the house if the kitchens are being used for cooking.
- Cooking in sleeping accommodation is forbidden.

6.1.2 Roof spaces and luggage storage areas

Roof spaces are to be kept clean and dust free. If they are used for storage of empty luggage, the rules for general storage apply. **ANY LUGGAGE STORED MUST BE EMPTY.** Access to these areas must be restricted to responsible persons.

6.1.3 Furniture and soft furnishings

In accordance with National Fire Precautions all furniture and soft furnishing should be manufactured from flame retardant materials and fitting should conform to current safety regulations

6.2 External areas

Residual cuttings and collected natural materials must not be stored within 10m of buildings and hazardous store areas.

6.3 Laboratories

- Correct storage of hazardous chemicals.
- Correct procedure for dealing with spillage.
- Check gas and electrical appliances are turned off when not attended.
- Chemicals are not taken from the laboratory area.
- Access to storage rooms is limited to members of the science wing staff.
- Students carrying out experiments with hazardous chemicals or apparatus are supervised.

6.4 Art and CDT

- Flammable substances i.e. paint and solvents are to be stored in a lockable steel cupboard.
- Access to flammable substances is to be limited to responsible staff.
- No naked lights are to be used near the flammable storage area.
- Care must be taken with regard to the accumulation of rubbish and dust, especially in areas where flammable substances are used or kilns operate.
- Students using hazardous equipment or substances must be supervised.
- All non-essential equipment is to be turned off when not in use.

6.5 Sports department areas

- Equipment that is padded should conform to regulations.
- Care is to be taken in the storage of hazardous chemicals.
- Spectators are limited to the authorised seating.
- Access to the area should be supervised.

6.6 Combined Cadet Force

- Fuel and explosives may be stored in limited quantities conforming to military regulations. These stores must be marked with the appropriate warning signs.
- Access to store areas is limited to Cadet Force Instructors.
- Cadets must be supervised.

6.7 Performing Arts Centre

- All entry, exit points, corridors, ramps and gangways to which the audience have access must be clear at all times.
- During performance / rehearsals all entry and exit doors must be unlocked.
- Fire escape doors can only be secured with “push bar” operated locks.
- All exit routes and stairs must be lit and have non-slip surfaces, stair treads should be conspicuous.
- Floor coverings should be securely fastened and in good serviceable condition.
- At all times when there are persons in the Theatre, there should be sufficient lighting to illuminate all escape routes.
- Sitting or standing in the gangway is forbidden and escape routes must remain clear.
- No flammable substances are to be used in the building.
- Hazards created by any temporary loose trailing cables must be adequately risk assessed by a competent person prior to install.
- All plugs are to be correctly fused.
- Only authorised storerooms are to be used for costume and props.
- No other area is to be used for storage i.e. vacant rooms, stairwells etc.
- The under-stage area is always to be kept in a clean and tidy condition.
- During any performance in this building there should be two nominated duty persons to assist and supervise the escape of the audience in an emergency.
- At the beginning and end of every performance, the person in charge should check the auditorium and adjoining rooms for fire hazards.
- When the Theatre is not in use, it is to be secured and entry restricted.
- Scenery is to be dismantled and stored as soon as possible.

6.8 Fires, bonfires and high-risk activities

The incineration of rubbish will only be undertaken by Grounds and Gardens staff. It shall be carried out in a designated burning area, which is to be at more than 30 metres from any building, and 50 metres from storage areas. Burning is always to be controlled and supervised.

All other high risk activities outside of the specific day-to-day roles of staff including bonfires, firework displays and barbecues will require the relevant senior manager to submit a request, along with a specific risk assessment and proposed safe system of risk management, to the Head for approval.

Without the express approval of the Head such high-risk activities will remain prohibited.

6.9 Kitchens

The principle fire threats are seen to be:

- Deep fat fryers
- Fat filters
- Unattended equipment
- Rubbish
- Gas leaks

The Catering Manager and deputy are responsible for training staff in the use of all kitchen equipment they are called upon to use. They must teach the immediate action drills to be carried out by the kitchen staff in the event of a fire and gas leak. In addition, the following precautions must be undertaken:

- Fryers are correctly filled and periodically emptied and cleaned.
- Filter units of the above equipment should be cleaned periodically and changed as recommended by the manufacturer.
- Rubbish is cleared to collection points.
- Trained personnel are on duty when the kitchen is in use.
- Faulty equipment or fittings should not be used but should be logged for repair.
- All equipment and associated flues / ducts etc. must undergo maintenance in accordance with relevant industry standards.

In the event of a kitchen fire, the following actions must be carried out if safe to do so:

- Turn off the source of heat to the equipment involved.
- Raise the alarm and make a quick attempt to put the fire out.
- In the event of a major fire, all incoming mains fuel services should be switched off.

The staff should be aware of the position of all firefighting equipment in the kitchen and have knowledge of how to operate this equipment. They should be aware of the position of all gas stopcocks, mains electrical switches and how to operate them.

6.10 Health Centre

The Head of Nursing is to ensure that the basic fire precautions are carried out. In the event of a fire, if possible, the last place to be evacuated will be the Health Centre because this would compromise the ability to administer treatment to any injured parties. In the event of evacuation efforts are to be made for a quantity of first aid equipment to accompany the nursing staff to their assembly point.

6.11 Stores

6.11.1 General

Storage areas are a fire hazard; in as much as the irregular or infrequent hours that they are visited prevent constant supervision. It is extremely important that “good housekeeping” practices are always observed in all storage areas.

6.11.2 Hazardous Stores

Hazardous material should be stored away from general stores. Each store must be supplied with firefighting equipment that is compatible with the hazard.

Hazardous stores i.e.,

- Fuel (petrol etc.)
- Oil based paint
- Oil
- Solvents
- Oxidising agents
- Acids
- Poisons and corrosives

Should all be stored in designated areas only, hazards must not be mixed. These areas must be properly marked with the nature of the hazard, and precautionary/treatment measures pertaining to the hazard must be available.

6.12 Fire alarm systems and equipment

6.12.1 Fire alarm systems

In general fire alarm systems are comprised of the networking of three types of device:

- Sounders – a device for creating an audible sound or tone, referred to as the ‘alarm’.
- Manual Call Point (MCP) – A switch used to manually indicate the need for evacuation.
- Detector – Sensor designed to change status upon the detection of one (or more) of the products of fire such as smoke or heat.

Automatic fire detection systems integrate all the above so that an audible alarm is broadcast across a designated area as a result of either a detector moving to a fire condition or an MCP being triggered. These systems usually have a user interface known as a panel which allows users to interact with the system and to provide helpful information etc.

Addressable systems incorporate technology such that each device enjoys a unique signifier so that the panel can provide the user with exact location of the device that has led to the alarm.

Conventional systems by contrast only provide indicative information on the cause of the alarm. These systems group a number of devices into zones and tend to only identify which zone is responsible for the alarm condition.

6.12.2 Alarm activations

If a MCP is operated or a detector is activated, the main panel associated will move into a ‘fire condition’ status and will activate all sounders on the system to raise the alarm. There may be other consequences of an alarm activation such as door locks (maglocks) releasing.

The alarm will continue to sound until the panel is silenced (only to be done on the instruction of the INCIDENT MANAGER).

6.12.3 Resetting the alarm system

Once the INCIDENT MANAGER is satisfied that the cause of the alarm is no longer a threat then they will look to return the system to its normal state.

To do this they will firstly need to address the original cause of the activation:

- MCP that have been activated can be reset with the use of a small black plastic reset key (multiple copies are available at the Fire Control Point).
- Detectors triggered will need to have the excess heat or air borne particulate in the vicinity local to the detector dispersed for the detector to go back into a normal state.

Following these steps, the panel can be silenced and reset in order to return the system back to normal operation. This is done by pressing the “silence” button followed by the “reset” button. The alarm should then confirm reversion to “Normal Operations” on the LCD display. If the original cause of the alarm has not been fully remedied the panel will once again activate the alarm.

Reset of the panel should only be done following the instruction of the INCIDENT MANAGER.

6.12.4 System faults

In rare instances faults can occur on the Fire Alarm system. In most instances the system can distinguish a fault from a genuine fire condition, and such faults are signified to the user by an intermittent or continuous tone along with a signifier of the fault on the panel itself.

All faults with must be immediately reported as per 5.11

6.12.5 Fire Alarm System Checks

A weekly check of each fire alarm system will be undertaken to confirm general system operation. This will be done by simulating a fire condition by the triggering of a MCP. This in turn should cause the sounders across the system to operate. Following a short duration of between 15 and 60 seconds the system will be reset. These checks will be undertaken every Tuesday during term time as per the following approximate schedule, and staff and pupils are advised not to evacuate when hearing the short duration alarm at these times:

Testing Schedule

Area	Test Time
Main School	08:10
Sports Hall and Swimming Pool	09:00
Isabella House	09:30
Plunkett House	09:45
CDT and Art Block	11:30
Works Yard	11:45
The Sports Pavilion	12:00

The purpose of such regular testing is to provide all staff with familiarity of the sound that signifies that an immediate evacuation is required without the negative impacts of conducting very regular full evacuation simulations. It provides an opportunity to all staff and pupils to highlight any issues or fault that may present from time to time. Any issues identified must be immediately reported as per the previous section.

In addition, the fire alarm systems will undergo detailed maintenance testing and checking via a specialist partner. This maintenance scope and frequency employed will be in line with industry guidance, covering the testing of individual devices and of the systems in general. Recommendations forthcoming from such assessments will be reviewed by the Director of Estates.

6.13 Water Supplies

Emergency water is available through the mains hydrant points. These are to be clearly marked with yellow paint. The locations of all hydrants are marked on the fire map kept at the fire control point. Fire hydrants and the immediate surrounding area are not to be obstructed.

6.14 Fire Drills

The Deputy Head and the Director of Pastoral care will decide on the appropriate time for fire drills to take place.

Fire drills are undertaken regularly (at least once per term) whilst pupils are in residence but outside of the normal School day (after lessons and outside of formal activity periods) including during the night, as these periods are considered the highest risk periods due to lack of direct supervision of pupils.

The aim of these events is to familiarise those onsite with the evacuation procedure and to assess the effectiveness of these procedures. The resultant Appendix C that follows from any drill will be reviewed by the Health and Safety committee at the next meeting with a view to considering any potential improvements that might be made.

6.15 Holiday periods and Exeats

Arson attacks against Schools are relatively common, particularly when the School is not in use. It is therefore important to ensure that buildings are secure, all windows and internal doors are shut and all locking doors are locked. It is therefore the responsibility of the relevant

senior manager to ensure the security of their designated area when transitioning to holiday periods.

6.16 Compulsory training

All permanent full time staff must have undertaken the online Educare course “Fire Safety in Education” within the previous 3 years. Responsibility for ensuring compliance lies with the relevant line manager.

The following staff must undertake the online Educare course “How to be an effective Fire Warden or Fire Marshall” within the previous 3 years in place of the basic course. Responsibility for ensuring compliance lies with the relevant line manager.

- All Pastoral staff including house parents
- All members of the SLT
- All those looking to fulfil the role of Fire Warden for their department
- All heads of department
- All those looking to fulfil role of Health Centre Duty Manager (HCDM)

Peripetetic and short term staff should read the Guide for contractors to ensure they have a basic level of how to raise and alarm and where to evacuate to. This is the responsibility of their line manager

FIRE POLICY & PROCEDURES – APPENDIX A

ELECTRICAL INFORMATION

Fuse ratings for different loads

0 watts - 700 watts	3 amp
700 watts - 1.2 k/watts	5 amp
1.2 k/watts - 1.6 k/watts	7 amp
1.6 k/watts - 2.4 k/watts	10 amp
2.4 k/watts - 3.1 k/watts	13 amp

FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR LIFE AND THE LIFE OF YOUR EQUIPMENT, FIT THE CORRECT FUSE.

Common faults in electrical plugs

- Loose connection to earth, live and neutral pins
- Incorrect fuse fitted
- Use of insulation tape to repair exposed or chaffed wire
- Cable-restraining device not properly used
- Damage to plug casings
- Incorrect size or rating of cable used

Portable Appliance Checks (performed annually during September)

- All items to be visually checked by competent persons for electrical integrity (i.e. no signs of distress/appropriate service quality markings/suitability for application/compliance with Downside list of permitted electrical appliances).
- In addition to the above CLASS II items containing higher risk components (i.e. heating elements) to have to have correct fuse sizing and insulation resistance > 1 M ohm.
- In addition to the above CLASS I items to be confirmed to have earth resistance < 0.1 ohms.

FIRE POLICY & PROCEDURES - APPENDIX B

LIST OF PERMITTED ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES FOR USE BY PUPILS

- Adapter or remote extension (fused, BS1363A) one per room
- Battery charger (for 1.5 volts cells)
- Laptop / Tablet
- iPod / Radio / Stereo
- Hair dryer / Curling tongs / Straighteners
- Razor
- Mobile phone charger
- Table lamp (maximum two per room)

LIST OF FORBIDDEN ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

- All non-fused, non-shrouded adapters or connectors
- All plugs which do not conform to British standard
- Boiling elements (one cup mini boilers)
- Coffee percolator or kettle
- Electric blankets
- Clothes iron
- Fans or fan heaters or any heating appliance not issued by the School
- Light bulbs greater than 60 watts
- Refrigerator or mini cooler
- Television
- Mains powered fairy lights
- Block adapters
- Rechargeable electric hover boards or similar devices
- Any items of electrical equipment older than 12 months that have not been PAT tested
- Hover board, Segway or iSwegway
- Rice Cooker

OTHER FORBIDDEN ITEMS

- Candles, joss sticks
- Incense or aromatic oil burners
- Any item which operates with a naked flame

FIRE POLICY & PROCEDURES - APPENDIX C

FIRE INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Incident Manager Name	
Date	
Time Alarm Raised	

Please tick relevant boxes or add 'other' details

LOCATION OF INITIAL ACTIVATION

Main School Isabella Other (detail where) _____

CAUSE OF ALARM

Manual Call Point Detector Other (detail what) _____

SPECIFIC LOCATION OF DEVICE (suspected fire location)

Name of location _____

HEALTH CENTRE (07870 919510 / ext. 128) advised to stand fast and prepare

PUPILS PRESENT IN THE HEALTH CENTRE? YES NO

VERIFICATION OF SUSPECTED AREA: FIRE False Alarm

EMERGENCY SERVICES CONTACTED: YES NO

CALL OTHER AREAS

Area	Contact Number/s
Health Centre	Ext 128 or 171 OR Mobile Number 07870 919510
Sports Hall	Ext 120 COR or 169 RJS 517 Pool (please make sure pool rung as there may be external users)
Art Block	Ext 189 or 157
Design and Tech	Ext 164 or 165
CCF	Ext 163 or 339
School Shop	Ext 138
6th form Centre	311
Works (8-4m-f)	07828973949 or via works whatsapp group

Persons unaccounted for at 8 mins following alarm activation (*note: it is imperative this section is completed to identify areas requiring improvement in either the alarm system or evacuation process*):

BARLOW (ext. 132)

CAVEREL (ext. 131)

ISABELLA (ext. 143)

POWELL (ext. 133)

ROBERTS (ext. 129)

SMYTHE (ext. 126)

NOTES

(others reported missing/cause of event/problems that occurred/time event closed etc.)

Version control list

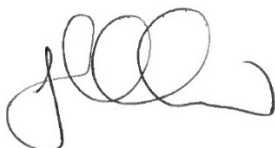
V4.01 – 04/05/2016	Hover boards added to list of banned items
V4.02 – 12/5/2016	Change for reception to do old house roll call
V4.03 13/5/2016	Change flow diagram to reflect waiting for HSM to confirm location of children before silencing the alarm
V4.04 01/09/2016	Add Rice cookers to Banned list
V4.05 21/11/11/16	Procedure for Boarding House staff changed by AFN to reflect practice
V4.06 30/01/2018	Banned items updated to include Plug in mini cooler
V4.07 02/02/2018	Added “where and when safe to do so “for boarding house sweeping
V4.08 30/5/2018	Added notes on Old House night-time roll call
V4.09 06/06/2018	Added” Where the alarm activation occurs overnight, House staff should (where and when safe to do so) check boarding rooms to ensure all pupils have responded to the alarm and are evacuating the building.”
V5 22/09/2018	Changed title from Fire Orders to Fire Policy & procedures Revised 4.02 to clarify Deputy Head’s role Added 4.09 to add the role of reception and visitors
V5.1 28/02/2019	Revised 3.08 Night responsibilities to reflect current practice 1.03 Fire officer renamed as Martin Holden and email contact updated
V6.1 Proposed	Various. Document reviewed by Martin Holden
V6.2 Oct 2019	Revamp and update of Fire Orders by Martin Holden
V6.3 May 2022	Updated to reflect organizational re-structure
V7 Nov 2022	Full policy review deferred until March 2023 in line with current risk assessment project.
V8 February 2024	Review of policy – no changes made.
V9 February 2026	1.5 changed wording to clarify 2.5 clarified HODS are fire wardens 2.8 removed ref to DOE and added Bursar 4.2 removed references to online forms to reflect current practice 4.6 removed DOE and ICT system manager and added Bursar 5.13 added reference to evacuation procedures 6.16 clarified training requirements Appx C – adjusted to reflect current form in use

Downside School Policy Approval Record

Reviewed by Bursar and Head of Facilities (Soft FM), Health and Safety Co-ordinator

Date 25th February 2026

Authorised by Chair of the Board of Governing Body



Date April 2026

Next Review March 2027

Circulation Governors / all staff / [volunteers] automatically

Parents on request

Published on the School's website

Status Complies with ISI regulatory requirements September 2025