



# Fire Evacuation and Procedure

Ratified: September 2024

To be Reviewed: September 2026

## Introduction

In the event of fire, the safety of life overrides all other considerations, such as saving property and extinguishing the fire. If a fire is discovered, the alarm should be raised immediately by the operation of a “break glass” manual call point (Figure 1 refers). This should be the first action taken on the discovery of any fire, however small. All employees are empowered to take this action if they believe there is a fire. The school will always support employees who operate the fire alarm system in good faith, regardless of whether or not it is ultimately determined that a fire existed.

The school does not require persons to attempt to extinguish a fire, but this may be done if there is a clear means of escape and the employee is comfortable with using the extinguisher.

Immediate evacuation of the building must take place as soon as the evacuation signal is given (a continuous bell). **All occupants** must report to the designated assembly point at each site.

All employees have a duty to conduct their operations in such a way as to minimise the risk of fire, keeping combustible materials separate from sources of ignition, and avoiding unnecessary accumulation of combustible materials.

## Fire detection equipment

Manually operated fire alarm points are located at the exit doors of the building. Breaking the glass in the fire alarm point will immediately activate the fire alarm system. It is the responsibility of each employee to activate the alarm on discovering a fire, and to be conversant with the location of the fire alarm points.

Figure 1: Fire alarm point



## Fire fighting equipment

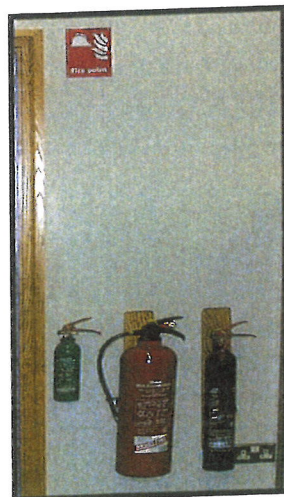
Fire extinguishers are located at strategic points throughout the workplace. A Fire Point sign denotes these (Figure 2 refers). All personnel should familiarise themselves with the positions of the fire extinguishers. Four different types of extinguisher are provided. These are:

Type	Colour	Use for	Not to be used on
Water	Red	Paper, wood	Electrical equipment, or burning oil
Foam	Red with Cream Band	Oils, fats, paints	Electrical or metal
Carbon dioxide Co2	Red with Black Band	Electrical fires	
Powder	Red with Blue Band	Flammable liquids and gases	Solvent, material, wood

A fire equipment supplier checks all fire extinguishers annually.

Employees are only expected to tackle a fire themselves if they feel suitably capable and a means of escape is always available to them and they are fully conversant and comfortable with extinguisher usage. The alarm should always be activated first.

Figure 2: Fire point



## Fire doors

Fire doors designed to slow the spread of fire and smoke, are installed at strategic points throughout the building. Fire doors must never be blocked, jammed or tied open.

Figure 3: Fire door sign



## Fire exits

Pressing downward on the quick release mechanism fitted on each door will open these doors (see Figure 4). **Exit doors and corridors must never be locked, blocked or used as storage space.**

Figure 4: Emergency exit doors



## Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in all areas of the internal workplace.

## Practice fire drills

Practice fire drills will be conducted at regular intervals to ensure staff familiarity with emergency evacuation procedures. All members of staff are encouraged to report any shortfalls they may observe in the evacuation arrangement in the course of practice fire drills.

## Staff with disabilities

The board supports a “buddy” system where colleagues alert and assist people with disabilities in an emergency.

## Fire Marshals

In an emergency situation they assume control. Their role is to clear the buildings as quickly and safely as possible. Their instructions to evacuate the building in both trial and real emergencies must be followed at all times.

**Evacuation control officer /Responsible Person –Mrs Wilson (Deputy – Colin Johnston)**  
**Fire Marshalls Kathy Browes / Diane Wright**

The evacuation control officer co-ordinates the evacuation of the building. The fire marshals report to them on leaving the building.

## Fire evacuation procedure

This site has a site specific fire evacuation procedure designed to safeguard staff /pupils and visitors to the building and must be observed in the event of an evacuation.

1. Activate the nearest alarm on discovery of any fire, however small, immediately by breaking the “push glass to break” alarm point. These are located at the exits of the building.
2. Inform the site office / responsible person or fire marshal of the fire location and type.
3. After raising the alarm, and only if your means of escape is clear & you feel competent, attack the fire using a suitable extinguisher.
4. Evacuate the building by the nearest safe route as soon as the evacuation signal is given. Do not wait to conclude meetings or telephone calls, or to collect belongings. Walk quickly and calmly closing all doors behind you..

5. Staff must escort their class out of the building bringing a register of those in attendance that day..
6. Stand well clear of the exits when you leave the building.
7. Go to the designated assembly point in the playground. **Under no circumstances should you leave the site assembly point during either a trial or real fire evacuation.**
8. Report to your responsible person and await further instructions.
9. Do not re-enter the building until informed it is safe to do so.
10. Staff/pupils should be told or shown how to activate the alarm
11. All exits from the building should be pointed out to staff/pupils within their first week in a building
12. The reason for closing doors should be explained during induction training
13. The assembly point should be indicated to staff/pupils within the first week of using a building.

• **DO NOT TAKE RISKS.**

• **DO NOT RETURN TO THE BUILDING FOR ANY REASON UNLESS AUTHORISED TO DO SO.**

#### **Fire Marshal role**

Fire marshals should be familiar with their allocated area and the alternative escape routes. They are authorised to assume control and;

- ❖ Report the cause of the emergency, if known, to reception/ school office.
- ❖ Direct personnel out of their allocated area.
- ❖ Check that all areas, including toilets, have been vacated.
- ❖ Report to the control officer to confirm that their area has been cleared, or state the sections that they were unable to check.
- ❖ Proceed to the assembly point, closing doors en-route, and liaising with colleagues to ensure that the building is vacated.

**Fire marshals are not to remain or argue with persons refusing to leave.** They should note the person's name and location and report the matter to the control officer.

#### **Security staff & Fire Marshals**

Security staff & Fire Marshals should:

- ❖ Refuse all entry to the building until the emergency is over;
- ❖ Check all remote rooms/areas for lone workers;
- ❖ Assist in directing the Fire Service to the location of the fire;

#### **ASSEMBLY POINTS**

Main school playground

## **EVACUATION DRILLS**

All drills will be held without prior warning at least once every six months.

'Notional' danger areas will be closed off prior to the drill to exercise staff/pupils in the use of alternative means of escape.

Drills will be carried out at different times of the day to monitor potential problems relating to the time and enable them to be remedied prior to a real emergency, e.g. lunch times etc.

Where possible all staff/pupils will be accounted for at the assembly point.

**A record will be kept indicating the following: -**

- Date
- Time
- Evacuation time
- Number of participants
- Remarks
- Signature

**This should be kept with building's fire logbook.**

## INDUCTION

Health and safety forms a significant component part of any induction training system. Fire safety and emergency evacuation procedures for new staff in the work place or new students in schools, should include the following: -

- Conducted tour of building indicating items worthy of note, e.g. emergency exits, break glass points, alternative routes, assembly point(s) etc.
- Fire warning system. The system should be explained with a demonstration of the audible warning. The use of continuous rings and intermittent rings should be explained if applicable.
- All means of escape should be indicated to building users. They should be signed appropriately to aid identification.
- Action on discovering a fire should be explained to staff/pupils and their attention should be drawn to the 'FIRE ACTION' placards on display.
- Location of fire fighting equipment should be pointed out to those taking part in the induction course. This can be done during the conducted tour. It is unlikely that training in its use will be available at the induction stage.
- Fire drill systems should be explained e.g. frequency of drills, target evacuation times, action at assembly points etc.
- The policy in relation to smoking at work should be explained and a copy of the policy made available to staff.
- Out of bounds, or restricted areas, should be indicated to those who will use the building. An explanation of why there is restriction would be helpful in most cases.
- A brief outline of good house keeping practices that aid emergency evacuation should be given, e.g. keeping corridors and emergency exits free from obstructions etc.
- The reasons why fire stop doors should be kept closed during normal occupation and while evacuating the building should be explained.
- A warning that all breakdowns or faults in the emergency evacuation system or procedures should be reported immediately to management for investigation and remedy.

## **TRAINING**

All staff will be familiar with the school Health and Safety Policy

The Principal will identify related training needs and be responsible for training of staff to ensure the site remains compliant. Specific training will be related to job function and nominated responsibilities.

Initial professional training specific to fire safety awareness will be delivered by EANI. This training, for all staff involved, will be provided by accredited personnel on behalf of EANI and records will be made of both attendance and successful completion.

Board employees in receipt of this awareness training will be required to have:

- a) Knowledge and competency in devising strategies and carrying out control measures as determined in any operational manuals

- b) Ability to interpret available guidance and perform their tasks in a safe and technically competent manner



# **Manual for Principals and Governors**

## **Fire safety**

**JANUARY 2023**

## Introduction

This document outlines the guidance required to minimise the risk of fire within school premises and to enable school management to comply with their legal obligations under the relevant legislation, The Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010 and The Fire and Rescue Service (Northern Ireland) Order 2006. Legislation is enforced by the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Services.

## Guidance

A fire risk assessment has been undertaken for all Education Authority (EA) schools to PAS79:2012 standard. The legislation requires that the fire risk assessment should be reviewed periodically or if there have been significant changes to the workplace. If any alterations are made to the building, the school should request that a new fire risk assessment is carried out.

The principal will receive a copy of the fire risk assessment report. The school should address any management recommendations or issues which come under LMS. The EA will be responsible for the implementation of those maintenance and minor improvement recommendations that are its responsibility.

The chance of a fire occurring at a school can be minimised by ensuring that there is:

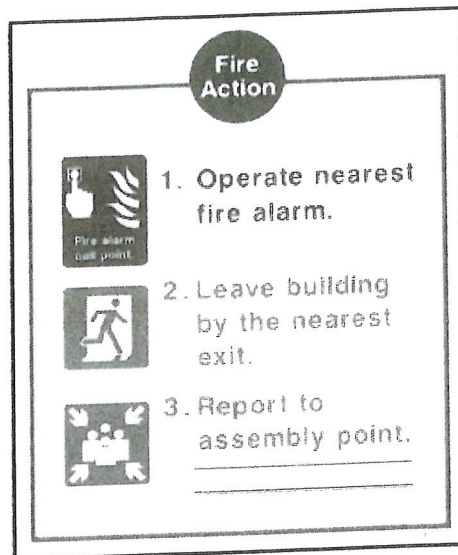
- adequate provision of equipment;
- management of fire safety issues;
- appropriate training and instruction to staff and pupils including induction training;
- provision of a sufficient number of emergency routes and exits;
- clear indication of emergency exits by signage; and
- clear and unobstructed emergency exits.

## Action to be taken when discovering a fire

Any person discovering a fire should:

- activate the fire alarm;
- ring 999 (even if your system is connected to an external control room); and
- evacuate the building.

To enable staff and pupils to become familiar with the building, a fire action notice should be displayed in every occupied room. The fire action notice should be printed on A4 laminated card. It may be appropriate to show a plan of the school highlighting the escape routes and assembly point. This is especially useful if your school is used for evening classes or other activities that bring in people who would not otherwise be familiar with the building layout.



On hearing the alarm, all staff, pupils and visitors must stop their what they are doing and evacuate the building in an orderly manner.

Where possible and if it is safe to do so, teachers should ensure that any equipment in use in their classroom is turned off, and windows and doors are closed to prevent the spread of fire and smoke to other parts of the school. All cloakrooms, stores and toilets should be checked to ensure that no one is left inside. Lifts should not be used as a means of escape in the event of an evacuation.

### Emergency routes and exits

There should be a sufficient number of emergency exits in a school. The routes to emergency exits must be kept clear at all times and where necessary open in the direction of travel. Emergency doors should be indicated by signage and must not be locked or fastened in such a way that they could not be opened in the event of an emergency.

### Evacuation of pupils and staff

Each room, department or block should have a pre-determined point where both staff and pupils will assemble immediately after evacuating the building. Places of assembly should be away from the building and not allow those evacuated to act as an obstruction to emergency service vehicles such as fire engines. Where possible the school should have one assembly point. Staff and pupils must remain there until they receive further instruction.

For staff or pupils who need assistance to evacuate, a Personal Emergency Egress Plan also known as a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan, (PEEP) may be required. Please consult your EA health and safety officer for guidance on this matter.

Teachers should check that all pupils are present at the assembly point and report to the principal either that all pupils have been accounted for or that some are missing. The

principal can then provide this information to the Fire and Rescue Services on their arrival including the last known location of those who are missing.

## Fire drills

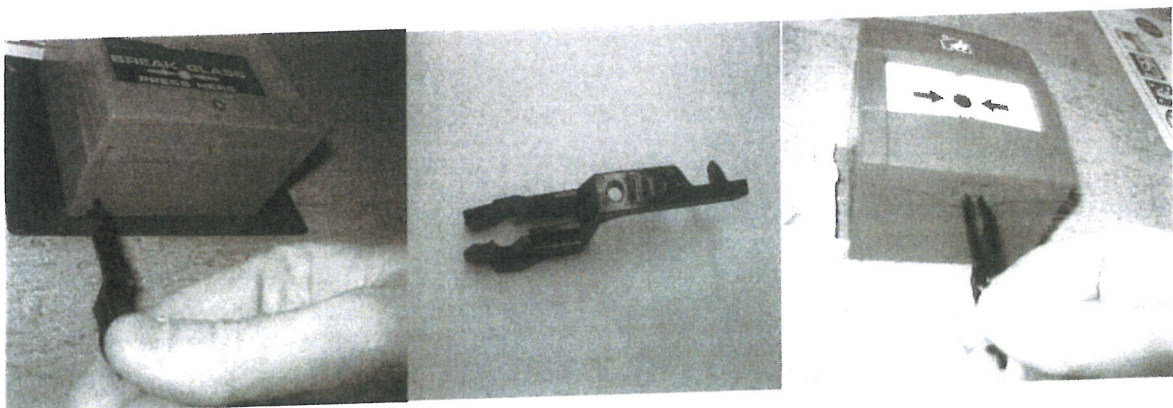
To test the evacuation procedure, a fire drill should be held once per term. Information such as the date, time taken to evacuate, etc. should be recorded on the appropriate fire safety measures log book sheet. The building should be evacuated in a target time of 2½ minutes.

## Fire alarm systems

The purpose of an alarm system in the event of a fire is to alert occupants to evacuate the premises quickly and summon the Fire and Rescue Services, if linked to an external control room. In all schools a system should exist for alerting occupants of the occurrence of a fire. This will vary from a hand operated bell, or horn, to an electronically operated bell or siren. Whichever system is available within the school, this should be recognised by pupils and staff and should not be confused with any other signal. The alarm must be audible in all parts of the building so that the warning is given to pupils and staff immediately.

The alarm system should be tested weekly and a record kept of the test detailing the date, call point tested, and any deficiencies noted. A different manual call point should be tested each week. This should be recorded in the appropriate section of the fire safety measures log book. In addition to this, a regular comprehensive inspection of the fire alarm system is carried out by a qualified engineer to the standard required in BS 5839-1:2013.

## How to test your call points



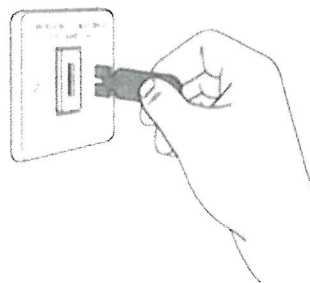
*Plastic key required*

## Emergency lighting

The purpose of emergency lighting is to provide sufficient illumination in the event of a failure of the normal electric lighting. This will allow the building to be evacuated quickly and safely. Emergency lighting should be tested on regular basis (normally once a month)

with the details recorded in the fire safety measures log book. The EA will also maintain an external inspection and test regime for this equipment which will be carried out as prescribed in the appropriate guidance (BS EN 50172:2004, BS 5266-8:2004), normally annually.

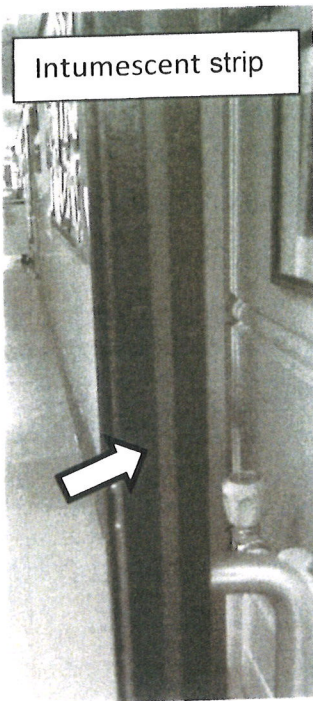
### Types of emergency lighting



Testing Emergency Lighting

### Fire/smoke doors

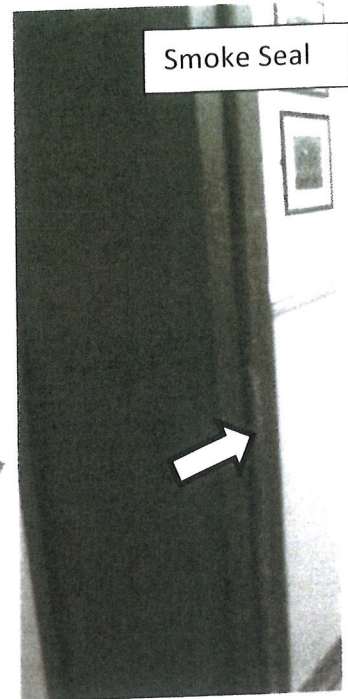
These must be retained in the closed position unless they are fitted with an automatic 'hold open' device. Smoke seals, intumescent strips and door closers should be inspected on a regular basis with any defects reported to the EA help desk. Where automatic hold open devices are fitted to doors and are linked to an automatic fire detection system, the EA will maintain an external servicing and preventative maintenance regime which will be carried out as prescribed in the appropriate guidance, normally every six months (see BS 5839-1:2013 and BS 7273-4:2015)



Intumescent strip



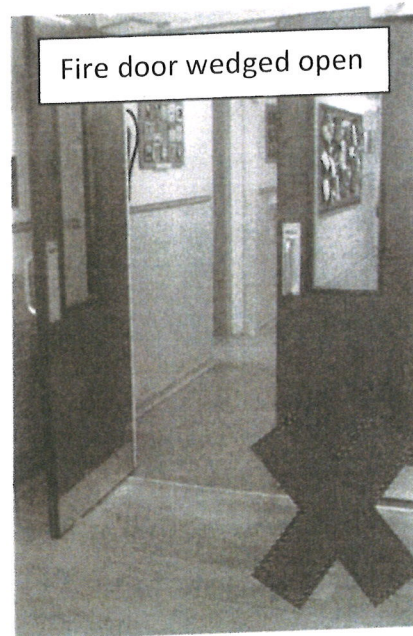
Fire door closed with no gaps



Smoke Seal



Fire door with gap







Fire door wedged open

## Fire extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are located to assist with escape. There are 4 main types of fire extinguisher:- Water, Foam, Dry Powder and Carbon Dioxide. Fire extinguishers have now mainly red bodies with a zone of colour up to 5% to indicate the type of extinguisher.

# Fire Extinguisher Chart

Extinguisher		Type of Fire				
Colour	Type	Solids (wood, paper, cloth, etc)	Flammable Liquids	Flammable Gasses	Electrical Equipment	Cooking Oils & Fats
	<b>Water</b>	✓ Yes	✗ No	✗ No	✗ No	✗ No
	<b>Foam</b>	✓ Yes	✓ Yes	✗ No	✗ No	✓ Yes
	<b>Dry Powder</b>	✓ Yes	✓ Yes	✓ Yes	✓ Yes	✗ No
	<b>Carbon Dioxide (CO2)</b>	✗ No	✓ Yes	✗ No	✓ Yes	✓ Yes

Fire extinguishers should be sited in conspicuous positions, on the exit routes, adjacent to doors and in similar positions on each floor. A competent person should make a monthly check for discharged extinguishers. If any extinguishers that have been discharged, this should be reported to the EA helpdesk to arrange for recharging, and a record should be made in the fire safety measures log book. A more rigorous inspection and maintenance of fire extinguishers is required every 12 months and an adhesive label showing the details of this should be affixed to each extinguisher. This is carried out by an EA appointed contractor as per the appropriate guidance (BS 5306-3:2009). Governors must ensure that there is a contract for the annual inspection of this equipment and also a procedure whereby used or empty extinguishers are refilled. A cross section of staff should receive training in the selection and use of fire fighting equipment. The number and type of basic extinguisher required will be determined by the completion of a fire risk assessment.

## Training

Fire safety training within a school is required at a number of different levels. Certain members of staff will have specific duties in the event of the fire. It is important that these are communicated clearly to staff and that everyone understands their responsibilities.

Principals	Manage and co-ordinate the evacuation
VP's/teachers	Check that all equipment in use has been turned off and all doors closed.
Receptionists/ office staff	Collect class registers so that an effective system of roll call be administered at the assembly point. Contact emergency services.
Fire wardens/marshalls/building supervisors	Check specific area, zones or blocks have been evacuated.
Catering supervisor	Ensure catering staff evacuate, and services to kitchen are isolated e.g. gas.

As a result of these responsibilities, the aforementioned staff should receive comprehensive training in fire safety to include:

- fire safety;
- fire prevention;
- duties of fire wardens/marshals;
- operating fire drills and managing assembly points;
- maintaining a fire safety measures log; and
- operation of and periodic checks of fire alarm, emergency lighting and fire extinguishers.

The EA has a contract in place for the provision of fire safety training, which schools can buy into. Relevant information covered in this training should be cascaded to the remaining staff in a school by the principal at a staff meeting or during induction for new staff, including supply teachers. It should include:

- fire prevention;
- action to be taken on discovering the fire;
- how to raise the alarm and location of call points;
- action to be taken on hearing the fire alarm;
- location of escape routes;
- evacuation procedure;
- the evacuation of visitors and disabled persons;
- location of assembly point and roll call;

- how to call the Fire and Rescue Services; and
- the location of fire fighting equipment and selection of fire extinguishers.

The training for pupils consists of their participation in fire drills once per term.

## Signage

All escape routes need to be signed with the running man, open door and arrow pictograms. Escape routes should no longer be signed FIRE EXIT without the pictograms. Fire doors should be labelled as 'Fire door keep shut'. (See BS 5499 for further guidance).



## Good fire prevention practices

There are a number of actions which can be taken to prevent a fire. The following are examples:

- identify all materials that are combustibile within the school and ensure that these are not stored on escape routes or close to sources of ignition;
- avoid the use of multi point adapters where possible. Ensure that electrical equipment has undergone user checks, visual inspection and testing as appropriate. Keep an up to date inventory of electrical equipment. Any faulty equipment should be taken out of use immediately;
- only competent persons should wire plugs etc.;
- waste is removed on a regular basis. All large bins, skips etc., should be sited at least 6 metres away from the building. They should be secured in an enclosure or locked to a metal post; and
- unplug all electrical equipment when not in use.

Please refer to the fire safety audit inspection sheet later in this section.

## Glossary of terms and acronyms

BS	British Standard, a compliance standard.
BSI	British Standards Institution – An organisation that provides compliance standards.
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government (GB).

PAS79: 2012	A Publically Available Specification for fire risk assessment used extensively in schools and last amended in 2012.
PEEP	Personal Emergency Egress Plan. A requirement for those who need assistance during an emergency evacuation.

## Associated documents

BS 5266-1:2016 Emergency lighting – Part 1: Code of practice for the emergency escape lighting of premises. British Standards Institution.

BS 5499-10:2014 Safety signs, including fire safety signs. Code of practice for the use of safety signs, including fire safety signs. British Standards Institution.

BS 5839-1:2013 Fire detection and alarm systems for buildings. Code of practice for system design, installation, commissioning and maintenance. British Standards Institution. ISBN 978 0 580 78332 6. <http://shop.bsigroup.com/en/SearchResults/?q=BS%205839-1>

BS 9999:2017. Fire safety code of practice for the design, management and use of buildings. British Standards Institution.

<http://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=000000000030158436>

Fire safety measures log book  
[www.eani.org.uk/schools/health-and-safety](http://www.eani.org.uk/schools/health-and-safety)

PAS (Publically Available Specification) 79: 2012  
<http://shop.bsigroup.com/en/ProductDetail/?pid=000000000030251919>

The appropriate DCLG Guide  
[www.eani.org.uk/schools/health-and-safety](http://www.eani.org.uk/schools/health-and-safety)

The Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2012/192/contents/made>

The Fire and Rescue Services (NI) Order 2006  
[www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2006/1254/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2006/1254/made)

The Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2010/325/made>

## Fire safety audits/inspections (to be completed by the school)

Are combustible materials close to light bulbs or fittings?

YES/

Are portable heaters used?

YES/NO

Are there multi point adapters in electrical sockets?

YES/NO

Are plugs fitted with the correctly rated fuse?

YES/NO

Has portable electrical equipment been routinely inspected and has it been deemed safe to use?

YES/NO

Is there any evidence of damage to portable electrical appliances, frayed leads etc.?

YES/

Is someone designated to switch off electrical equipment and to remove plugs before closing the building at night? *CLASS TEACHER.*

YES/NO

Are gas appliances regularly checked and faults rectified?

YES/NO

Are gas systems regularly isolated at the end of the day?

YES/NO

Is there any evidence of smoking?

YES/

Are bulk quantities of textiles and furniture stored within the school?

YES/

Are there displays, notice boards containing combustible materials on escape routes or elsewhere?

YES/NO YES.

Are flammable liquids kept stored in fire resisting stores away from sources of ignition?

YES/NO

Are stores capable of being secured against unauthorised entry?

YES/NO

Are aerosols stored within the premises close to sources of ignition?

YES/NO

Are flammable and oily rags disposed of separately from other combustible materials?

YES/NO

Are housekeeping standards good?

YES/NO

Is waste and rubbish disposed of on a regular basis?

YES/NO

Are outside bins secured away from the building?

YES/NO

Are all members of staff aware of the risk of fire and measures to be taken to reduce the risk?

YES/NO

Are members of the Public who use the premises made aware of what to do in case of a fire?

YES/NO

Is someone designated to check that all doors and windows are closed last thing at night?

YES/NO

Are exits and escape routes kept free from obstructions, tripping and slipping hazards? /NO

Are emergency exits kept unlocked? /NO

Are internal fire doors labelled as such and kept in the closed position? /NO

Are 'Push Bar To Open' signs on Fire Doors fitted with a Push Bar? /NO

Are Fire Action Notices displayed in all areas of the building? /NO

Have fire extinguishers undergone routine testing? /NO

Are all extinguishers wall mounted? /NO

Have any extinguishers been discharged? YES/

Are there fire extinguisher guides fitted beside each fire extinguisher? /NO

Red responses require a risk assessment and appropriate corrective action

Green responses are indicators of safe conditions, however, vigilance is usually required.

Fire exits particularly in mobile classrooms should be inspected weekly for ease of opening.

**Comments**

---