


Managing Performances and Events (SP-04)

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1. Introduction

This policy has been prepared to assist schools and other settings in the safe presentation of plays, performances and other entertainment in front of an audience. A performance is regarded as any collection of people observing children/performers or gathered together in the school/setting.

The standards contained within this document apply whether a Premises Licence exists for the premises or not, but where one does exist, this document should be read in conjunction with the Premises Licence and its conditions.

The Premises Licence standards take precedence when an event subject to the licence is taking place.

2. Licensing requirements

The Licensing Act 2003 provides a clear focus on the promotion of four statutory objectives:

- The prevention of crime and disorder.
- Public safety.
- The prevention of public nuisance.
- The protection of children from harm.

2.1 LICENSABLE ACTIVITIES

For the purposes of the Act, the following are licensable activities:

- The sale by retail of alcohol.
- The supply of alcohol by or on behalf of a club (school).
- The provision of regulated entertainment.
- The provision of late night refreshments (hot food or drink provided after 11pm), except where the food or drink is provided without a fee and no admission charge has been made to premises.

In the context of schools, 'Regulated Entertainment' would generally be the main focus.

2.2 REGULATED ENTERTAINMENT

Regulated Entertainment includes:

- Performance of a play.
- Performance of dance.
- Exhibition of film (except for education, training or demonstration purposes).
- Indoor sporting events.
- Boxing or wrestling entertainment.
- Performance of live music.
- Playing of recorded music (except where the music is 'incidental' to the main activity) other similar entertainment.

But **ONLY** where the entertainment takes place in front of an audience (or spectators) and is provided at least partly to entertain that audience.

For school settings, determining whether activities are 'regulated' depend greatly on whether the activity is provided for Private OR Public Entertainment:

Private Entertainment

School plays, Christmas productions, dance and gymnastic displays etc. organised in school for the entertainment of parents, grandparents, friends of the school etc. would be classed as Private Entertainment and is NOT regarded as 'Regulated Entertainment' so is therefore NOT licensable.

Public Entertainment

Where tickets are sold to the general public i.e. NOT just parents, grandparents, friends of the school etc. for similar productions as those listed above OR touring theatre groups or dance troupes for example provide entertainment in school where tickets are sold for the profit of that group OR other users of the school (i.e. private hirers) use the school for similar purposes, this would be classed as Public Entertainment and IS regarded as 'Regulated Entertainment' and would therefore be 'licensable'.

2.3 SUPPLY OF ALCOHOL

Where alcohol is provided as a refreshment (in schools, for staff or parents) free of charge and no admission fee has been made to enter the premises/attend the function, this would NOT be licensable and a Premises Licence or Temporary Event Notice (see Section 1.6 below) would NOT be required. However, where alcohol is provided as a refreshment (in schools, for staff or parents) and EITHER a charge is made for the alcohol AND/OR an admission fee has been made to enter the premises/attend the function, this IS a licensable activity and a Premises Licence or Temporary Event Notice (see Section 1.6 below) WILL be required.

Cockermouth School's Governors have a policy of no alcohol on the school premises.

2.4 PROVISION OF LATE NIGHT REFRESHMENTS

Where schools/settings intend to provide late night refreshments i.e. hot food and hot drinks after 11pm, either a Premises Licence OR Temporary Event Notice will be required UNLESS the food and drink is provided free of charge and no admission fee has been paid to enter the premises.

2.5 PREMISES LICENCE

If establishments are involved in any of the above licensable activities they should hold a Premises Licence. These can be applied for from the local District Council (Licensing Officer) and further guidance and relevant application forms etc. can be downloaded from the appropriate LA website; for Cumbrian Schools this would be [Cumberland Council - Licensing](#).

Schools

For schools, there is NO FEE involved – Premises Licences are free to schools. [Cumberland Council - Licensing](#) or [Westmorland & Furness Council - Licensing](#).

Schools

For schools, there is **NO FEE** involved – Premises Licences are free to schools. If, however, the licence also authorises the use of the premises for the sale or supply of alcohol or the provision of late night refreshment, a fee will be required for those activities. Once granted, the Premises Licence lasts the lifetime of the school – it does NOT have to be applied for annually.

Other establishments

Other settings (those other than schools) will be charged a fee that is based on the rateable value of the property. Application fees range from £100 to £1,905, depending on the fee band of the venue. If your premises doesn't have a rateable value it will fall into the lowest fee band.

Most premises licences have an unlimited duration but you will have to pay an annual fee.

All Settings

Although there is no fee involved in relation to the application for the Licence, schools/settings MUST advertise the application for a Premises Licence (there will obviously be an advertising cost implication to the setting). They must:

- Publish a notice in a local newspaper.
- Display your 'application notice' at or on the premises for 28 days from the day after it was submitted.

This gives neighbours etc. the opportunity to object if they so wish. Sample adverts and notices can be found on each District Council's website.

All schools/settings should have the premises electrical installation (fixed wiring) inspected by a contractor registered on the Electrical Safety Register for non-domestic work, at least every 5 years. It would be seen as good practice to have the main electrical wiring in the areas where the performances/regulated entertainment generally takes place inspected more regularly than the 5 year legal requirement.

2.6 TEMPORARY EVENT NOTICES

A Temporary Event Notice is a notification to the licensing authority that an individual intends to carry on licensable activities for a period not exceeding 96 hours.

There may be schools/settings that rarely conduct licensable activities. In these cases, if the school/setting does not wish to apply for a Premises Licence, they should complete and return a TEMPORARY EVENT NOTICE (TEN) to the Licensing Officer at their local District Council – again Temporary Event Notice forms can be downloaded from the relevant LA website. You will also need a TEN if a particular licensable activity is not included in the terms of your existing licence, e.g. holding a wedding reception at a community centre.

A Temporary Event Notice must be sent to the licensing authority and the police at least ten working days in advance of a planned event (although KAHSC recommends that where possible, two months' notice be given). Only the police can object to a Temporary Event Notice on crime and disorder grounds. The police have two working days after the receipt of the Temporary Event Notice to object, and (unless the premises user agrees to modify the Temporary Event Notice) the licensing authority must hold a hearing to consider any objection that has been received. If the licensing authority decides that the objection is valid, it must issue a counter notice to the applicant at least 24 hours before the beginning of the event to prevent it going ahead.

Restrictions

Your event must:

- have less than 500 people at any one time – including staff running the event
- last no more than 168 hours, or 7 days

Number of notices you can apply for

You will need a TEN for each event you hold on the same premises.

You can get up to five TENs a year. If you already have a personal licence to sell alcohol, you can be given up to 50 TENs a year.

A single premises can have up to 12 notices applied for in one year, as long as:

- the total length of the events is not more than 21 days;
- 1 person doesn't make more than 5 applications for the premises.

'Late TENs'

You can apply for a 'late TEN' up to five working days before the event. You can apply for up to ten late TENs per calendar year.

If you are organising separate but consecutive events, there must be at least a 24-hour gap between them.

If you don't hold a personal licence, you can serve up to five notices (of which up to two may be late).

If you hold a personal licence, the limit is 50 notices (of which up to 10 may be late).

Unlike a Premises Licence, there IS a cost implication with Temporary Event Notices. The fee for a Temporary Event Notice is currently around £21.00 per event. You must keep your TEN in a safe place where the event is held and also display a copy of the notice where it can be easily seen.

NOTE: In schools, Private Entertainment as discussed previously, would NOT require the completion of a Temporary Event Notice, as this is NOT licensable.

Many Cumbria Schools have opted to apply for a Premises Licence as a matter of course. This seems to be the most sensible policy as for a small, one-off advertising fee, schools can be assured that ANY entertainment carried out on school premises is licensed under the Act. This may, however, not be wholly appropriate for Nursery or Infant schools for example, depending on the activities being undertaken in those schools.

The issue of what is licensable remains a 'grey area'. If you are in any doubt about the activity you or any other users of your premises are planning to run or require further advice, please contact Kym Allan Safeguarding, Health and Safety Consultants Ltd., Tel: 01228 210152 and/or a Licensing Officer at your LA. In cumbria, these are:

Cumbria:

Council	Tel No.	Web Link
Cumberland Council	03003733730	Cumberland Council - Licensing
Westmorland & Furness Council	03003733300	Westmorland & Furness Council - Licensing

For more detailed information on the Licensing Act, please refer to the Home Office document 'Amended Guidance under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003'

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/209526/1167-A_Licensing_Act_2003_2_.pdf and Gov.Uk <https://www.gov.uk/premises-licence> or <https://www.gov.uk/temporary-events-notice>

3. General Arrangements

Prior to hosting an event a risk assessment should be carried out to ensure all areas of risk are identified and suitable and sufficient preventive and protective measures appropriate to the risk are formulated. The person acting as the 'Responsible Person' (which may be the Head teacher/Manager, senior teacher present/supervisor or production manager for example) should carry out the risk assessment covering all aspects of the performance to ensure all the foreseeable hazards have been prevented from arising or protected against. The Governing Body or head teacher acting on their behalf in schools, or Manager should ratify the assessment and the accompanying preventative and protective measures identified.

A Model Stage Risk Assessment can be found on the KAHSC website at: [Stage Use Risk Assessment](#).

3.1 ACCESS AND EGRESS

- There should be a separate entrance/exit for pedestrians signposted from the car park.
- The entrance/exit should be constructed to allow easy access for disabled people and the elderly/infirm.
- Entry of the public should be supervised by identifiable Stewards (wearing high visibility armbands, jackets or vests).
- Suitable and safe means of access to and egress from the hall/theatre and ancillary areas should be available. The school/setting should consider the needs of disabled participants and members of the audience.
- School/setting security measures may be compromised when hosting such events; adequate back-up arrangements should be made to prevent the possibility of a security breach.

3.2 NUISANCE

The school/setting should also consider the level of nuisance likely to be created to the community when deciding on an event; issues to consider include noise, parking, etc.

3.3 HOUSEKEEPING

- The area being used should exhibit suitable standards of cleanliness and housekeeping with the corridors, gangways and general circulation areas free of obstruction.
- All items of furniture and equipment not associated with the event should be removed or located and secured so as not to present any hazard to the audience, participants or staff.
- Seating provided for the audience should be suitable for the age and nature of the audience, clean and free of defect.
- All rubbish to be disposed of immediately in appropriate containers.

4. Specific Safety and Fire Arrangements

4.1 CROWD MANAGEMENT

- There should be an appropriate number of Fire Wardens (sometimes referred to as Stewards or Marshals) on site, who should be able to communicate with one another i.e. for larger sites, this may be via two-way radios.
- Fire wardens should determine (as public arrive) whether there are any elderly or disabled persons that may require assistance to evacuate in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Fire wardens will need to consider very carefully the seating position of these people and ensure that if these persons are not accompanied by an able bodied person that 'buddy' systems are set up whereby Specific Evacuation Assistants will assist them to evacuate in the event of fire (see Section on 'Assisting People with Additional Needs' – Section 5).

- Fire wardens should ensure that queues are controlled.
- Schools/settings should sell (or supply free of charge) tickets in advance with the option of paying on the door which enables higher numbers to access the venue more quickly.
- The person in overall charge of the event/performance should explain fire evacuation procedures to the audience at the very beginning of the performance including exit doors and routes, assembly point, role of Fire Wardens etc. (refer to Section 4).
- A Fire Warden must be allocated to each exit during performances/events and must clearly understand their function if there is a fire emergency. There must be sufficient numbers of staff on duty to ensure safety.

4.2 SAFE ACCESS TO/EGRESS FROM SITE AND STAGE/PERFORMANCE AREAS

- External entrances and car park areas should be adequately illuminated.
- External areas likely to be accessed by attendees should be cleaned regularly, and leaves, debris etc. removed.
- During inclement weather/winter conditions, external areas likely to be accessed by attendees including car park areas should be gritted/cleared of snow.
- Internal floor surfaces should be maintained in good condition and any spillages cleaned up swiftly.
- Bubble machines should not be used if the floor surface is such that any moisture on the surface should lead to increased slipping.
- Snow and smoke machines should only be used where manufacturer's instructions are strictly adhered to.
- Any walkways between back stage and performance area/stage to be kept clear at all times to prevent trip hazards.
- Clothes/costumes worn by children/performers during performances should be secured so as not to cause trip hazard.
- Walkways and 'back stage' areas should be well illuminated.

4.3 MAINS ELECTRICITY AND ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

- The fixed electrical installation should receive a Periodic Inspection by a contractor registered on the Electrical Safety Register for non-domestic work, at least every 5 years. It would be seen as good practice to have the mains electrical wiring in the areas where any regulated entertainment generally takes place inspected more regularly than the 5 year legal requirement i.e. annually.
- Permanent wiring between the mains intake and distribution boards, dimmers and patch panels should be protected from mechanical damage e.g. by screwed metal conduit or trunking.
- Portable or transportable electrical equipment used during the performance should be maintained and tested in line with HSE guidelines.
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg107.htm>.
- Temporary wiring, rigged for each production, should be either tough rubber-sheathed or PVC sheathed. Where likely to be subjected to excessive heat from lamps, dimmers or other heat-emitting equipment, heat-resisting cables should be used.
- Dimmer units should not be sited in confined spaces which may become over-heated. Lamps, lanterns or other heat-emitting electrical equipment should not be in contact with, or very close to, curtains, canvas scenery, plastics or other combustible materials.

- Lanterns or other hanging equipment should have a secondary means of suspension, e.g. safety chain or wire.
- Hired equipment should only be used in accordance with supplier's instructions.
- Equipment, plugs and cables should be visually checked to ensure they are in good condition, securely attached and undamaged.
- Only use multi-outlet devices which are designed for the purpose for which they are used and do not overload them.
- Electrical appliances should be unplugged by the plug, not the lead.
- Appropriate RCD circuit breakers should be used and their operation checked using the test button.
- Electrical adaptors must not be overloaded and reel extension leads should be fully extended prior to use but laid in positions so as not to cause trip hazards.
- Wiring should, as far as possible, be kept off the floor in backstage areas where staff and performers pass. Tough rubber matting or similar material should be used to protect cables and prevent tripping where such positioning is unavoidable.
- Cables should never be laid on the floor across exits or doorways.

4.4 FIRST AID

- A suitable number of qualified first aider's should be available including, in the case of schools, Paediatric First Aider(s) if early years and foundation stage (EYFS) children are involved in the performance/are present.
- Easy access to a landline telephone to summon emergency assistance if required should be maintained.
- Access to first aid facilities/kits should be maintained. A kit should be available front of house and back stage.
- Accident recording/reporting arrangements in line with the school/setting's procedures should also be in place.

4.5 SECURITY

- Designated entrance(s) should be clearly marked.
- Parental supervision – parents should be responsible for supervising any children they bring with them to watch the performance.
- Staff supervision – children/young people involved in the performance should NEVER be left unsupervised –adequate ratio numbers must be adhered to.
- Fire Wardens should be placed at exits during performances/events.
- Unauthorised areas of the building should, where possible, be secured to prevent inadvertent access.
- Schools/settings must ensure unobstructed access to a landline telephone.
- Children must not be allowed to leave the premises unless with parents/guardians.

4.6 SANITARY ACCOMMODATION

- Toilet facilities should be available that are only accessible to young people. Adult toilet facilities designated for supervisors/public should be available separately. Separate sanitary accommodation for both sexes should be available to audience and staff.
- The school/setting should consider the needs of disabled patrons when determining the availability of sanitary accommodation.
- Directional signs should be provided as necessary.
- Where required, emergency lighting should be provided in the main toilet areas.

4.7 PHOTO-SENSITIVE EPILEPSY

- Audiences should be informed prior to the performance commencing if strobe lighting is being used.
- The use of strobe lighting should be kept to a minimum and strobes used in short bursts only.
- Clear signs should be displayed at all points of entry indicating that strobes will be used during a performance.
- The use of strobes should cease if reasonably requested to do so.

4.8 ALLERGIES/ASTHMA

- Audiences should be informed prior to the performance commencing if snow machines or smoke machines are being used.
- The use of this equipment should be kept to a minimum.
- Clear signs should be displayed at all points of entry indicating that smoke or snow machines will be used during the performance.
- The use of such machines should cease if reasonably requested to do so.
- Snow and smoke machines must only be used in accordance with supplier's/manufacture's instructions.
- If snow/smoke machines are to be used, COSHH Material Safety Data Sheets (if relevant) should be obtained prior to use to enable COSHH Risk Assessments to be completed prior to the event (where necessary).
- Machines should be kept out of the general reach of young people – no young person should be able to get closer to the machine than 50cm.

4.9 HEATING AND VENTILATION

- The hall and ancillary areas should be adequately heated.
- Portable heaters should not be used.
- Fixed heaters should be fitted with proper guards. In dressing rooms great care should be taken to ensure that costumes and props are kept well clear of such heaters.
- The hall, stage and dressing rooms should be adequately ventilated. If windows only are provided, sufficient should be opened to permit a reasonable circulation, even if covered by curtains.
- If mechanical ventilation is installed it should be switched on prior to the admission of the audience.

4.10 EMERGENCY EXITS

Refer to KAHSC General Safety Series G35 – Fire Safety Management [KAHSC General Safety Series G35a – Fire Safety Management](#) for further guidance.

There must be a minimum of two operational emergency exits when performances are undertaken.

Maximum No. of Persons	Minimum Number of escape routes/exits
60	1
600	2 <i>(there MUST be more than one escape route from halls)</i>
More than 600	3

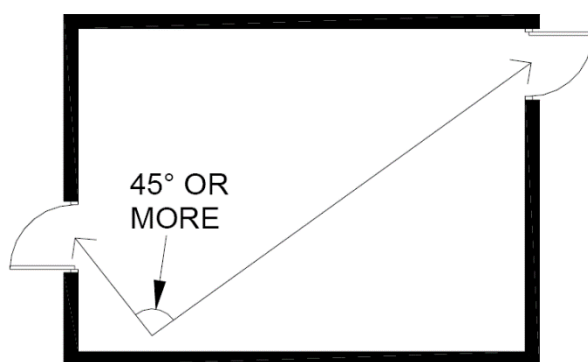
A width of at least 750 mm and 1050mm can accommodate up to:		
Max No. of Persons		Type of Premises
750mm	1050mm	
80	160	In higher risk premises
100	200	In normal risk premises
120	240	In lower risk premises

An additional 75mm should be allowed for each additional 15 persons (or part of 15).

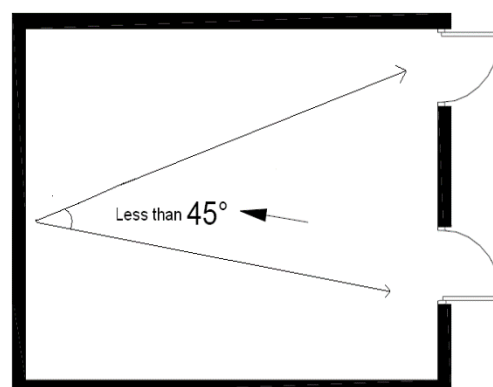
Note: Doors that do NOT open in the direction of travel i.e. open inwards, are only suitable for a maximum of 60 people.

Doors that are classified as suitable for disabled persons should be a minimum of 1200mm in width.

- An exit consisting of a double door is regarded as one exit.
- A number of exits which discharge into a common area cannot be regarded as alternatives to each other.
- If escape route doors are too close to one another and are likely to be simultaneously disabled by the same fire (e.g. within 45° of each other) you should consider whether the fire could affect both at the same time. If that is the case, it may be necessary to discount them both from your calculation. Escape routes that may be classed as 'true alternatives' should therefore be more than 45° apart when viewed from the furthest point in the room.



Doors to be counted as 2 separate exits



Doors to be counted as one exit

When calculating the overall available escape route capacity for premises that have more than one way out, you should normally assume that the widest is not available because it has been compromised by fire. Refer to the [Example Completed & Blank Hall Capacity Calculation Sheets](#) on the KAHub.

In line with BS 9999:2008 (Revised 2016):

General assembly/standing audience: In calculating figures for a standing audience a ratio of 0.5 m² per person should be used.

Seating at tables: For an event given before an audience seated at tables a ratio of 1.0 m² per person should be used. In such cases tables adjacent to exits should be secured in position to prevent them being moved or overturned in an emergency.

Seating in rows: In calculating figures for an audience seated in loose seats in rows a ratio of 0.75 m² per person should be used.

Seating on benched seating: In calculating figures for an audience seated on benched seating a ratio of 0.4 m² per person should be used.

The layout of audience seating and modular staging must NEVER obstruct fire exits in the hall. Similarly, trade stands etc. during fund raising events and the like must be laid out carefully to ensure none of the escape routes are blocked or obstructed in any way.

All exit doors/escape routes from the hall should be illuminated by emergency escape lighting OR Fire Wardens should be in possession of a working battery powered torch where emergency escape lighting is not available.

All exits and escape routes should be clearly identified by Fire Exit Signs and directional arrows where necessary. Signs should be positioned to highlight the escape route when the nearest exit is not obvious. The next sign should always be in sight. Signs should be fixed above doors in the direction of escape and not to the door (where they would not be visible if the door was opened). Signs should be mounted 2.0 - 2.5m from the floor when fixed above doors and 1.7 - 2.0 metres when fixed to walls. The location, number and type of fire safety signs, as required by the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996 should already have been determined previously by the formal fire risk assessment for the premises as a whole.

More detailed guidance can be found in the HM Government Guidance documents: [Fire Risk Assessment in Educational Premises](#), [Fire Risk Assessment - Small and Medium Places of Assembly](#), [Fire Risk Assessment - Large Places of Assembly](#), [HM Gov Supplementary Guide: Means of escape for disabled people](#) and [KAHSC General Safety Series G35a – Fire Safety Management](#).

4.11 DOOR FASTENINGS

Panic Release Devices

Exit doors should either be free of fastenings other than self-closing devices or be fitted with panic bolts/release devices. In the latter case the words "PUSH BAR TO OPEN" in 50mm block letters should be clearly visible above the operating bars.

Removable Fastenings

Barrel bolts fitted to exit doors should be made removable, which may be done by cutting off the stop or keep, thus enabling the shoot to be withdrawn. In cases where this is not practicable the bolt(s) should, at least, be rendered inoperable in the unbolted position.

Flush Bolts

Flush bolts should be rendered inoperative e.g. by plugging their sockets with wood or other hard material.

Chains etc.

Any security chains, cord, wedges, etc. should be completely removed from exit doors before the audience is admitted.

Door Curtains

Any curtains provided across access doors should be capable of being parted at the centre, be flame-retardant and able to be pulled right back so as not to reduce the exit width. They should not trail on the floor and the edges should be highlighted where two curtains meet across the doorway. When curtains are dry cleaned they need to be retreated to ensure they remain flame retardant. Establishments must keep evidence that treatment meets the required standard.

Maintenance of Clear Exits

At no time when the public are present should any exit door be fixed or shut other than by a panic bolt, nor be reduced in width by loose chairs, tables, counters or any other obstruction. Fire exits must be

kept clear and must be capable of being opened without the use of a key. Audience members must not be permitted to stand or sit in aisles or at exits during performances.

4.12 LIGHTING – PUBLIC AREAS

Two Systems

All parts of the premises to which the public have access, including halls/auditoriums, staircases, exit corridors and toilet facilities etc. should be provided with two independent systems of lighting. In the event of failure of the mains supply, the alternative emergency lighting system should be sufficient to enable the audience to see their way quickly and easily out of the premises.

Types of Emergency Lighting

The emergency lighting should be in the form of permanent or temporary lamps supplied from a central battery source. Self-contained battery units, sufficiently charged to give the necessary level of illumination for the duration of the performance plus one hour, are a further alternative.

Operation of the Emergency Lighting

Unless the premises are provided with an automatic change-over battery system which operates immediately upon mains failure, the emergency lighting system should be switched on before the public are admitted to the premises and remain on until they have left.

Relaxation on Emergency Lighting

An emergency lighting system need not be provided if:

- (a) performances take place out of doors and terminate before dusk, or
- (b) performances are given in ground floor premises with all exits opening directly onto an open way or space and terminate before dusk, provided the internal exit signs are clearly visible at all times, or
- (c) occasional performances are given in school halls for parents by students and where all exits are available and sufficient attendants to assist in an evacuation are present. Issuing Fire Wardens with torches should be considered.

4.13 FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT

Fire-fighting must always be secondary to life safety. A fire, other than one which can be readily extinguished, e.g. in a waste bin, should not be tackled unless safe to do so. Evacuating the premises is more important than fighting the fire. In dealing with a small fire, swift attack is essential if a hose reel or portable extinguisher is to be effective. It is important to know beforehand how to operate the hose reel or extinguisher and which type of extinguisher is appropriate.

Front of House

- A minimum of two fire extinguishers should be provided.
- The fire extinguishers should be conspicuously sited, preferably adjacent to exit doors. They should be wall mounted on brackets or otherwise positioned where they will not easily be over-turned.
- The extinguishers should be of the five or nine litre gas expelled water type.
- A CO2 extinguisher should be provided adjacent to any sound or lighting control desk.

Back Stage

A minimum of one, five or nine litre gas expelled water and one 2.5kg CO2 extinguisher should be provided in a readily accessible position on the stage.

Fire Blankets

- A folded fire blanket should be provided in a position adjacent to each extinguisher point (Fire Point) given above.
- A minimum of one fire extinguisher should be provided in or adjacent to every dressing room.

General

Tests and Checks

It should be ensured that extinguishers are charged and in proper working order and remain unobstructed. Annual servicing and monthly visual checks should be taking place as a matter of routine and appliances should be visually checked prior to each performance.

Fire and Rescue Service

For small premises, the requirements set out above are considered to be the minimum necessary where occasional events are held. However, the advice of the Fire and Rescue Service should be sought where large or complex premises are concerned or where special circumstances prevail.

Irrespective of any action taken, the Fire and Rescue Service should be immediately notified of the outbreak of a fire, no matter how small.

4.14 MEANS OF RAISING THE ALARM

Adequate arrangements for raising the alarm in an emergency are required. Ideally an electronic fire alarm activated by call points adjacent to the fire exits should be available.

Where an electronic fire alarm system is not available suitable alternative provisions should be made which when used, is audible throughout the occupied area.

4.15 STAGE

Stage Exits

A minimum of two exits from the stage should be provided, one of which may, if necessary, be via the hall/auditorium.

Note: This requirement would not be applicable to theatre-in-the-round or similar stages but is intended for proscenium and possibly end-stage halls.

These exits should be so arranged and maintained so as to afford easy means of escape from the stage area, free from obstruction by scenery or props. Whenever possible at least one exit should lead directly to the open-air.

Exit doors from the stage should be clearly indicated by fire exit signs. Signs should be fixed above doors in the direction of escape and not to the door (where they would not be visible if the door was opened). Signs should be mounted 2.0 - 2.5m from the floor when fixed above doors and 1.7 - 2.0 metres when fixed to walls. Exit doors should be unlocked, unless fitted with panic release devices, and readily available for use (see Section 4.10).

Front Curtains

If front curtains are provided (whether used or not) they should be flame-retardant. Unless inherently flame-retardant or durably-treated flame-retardant they should be satisfactorily treated and tested before each production.

Scenery

All scenery used or stored on the premises should be satisfactorily rendered flame-retardant. Limited quantities of timber of not less than 75mm x 25mm nominal cross-section, e.g. framing, and sheet materials, e.g. plywood, chipboard and block-board of not less than 18mm, need not be treated.

Flame-Retardant Treatment of Fabrics

Scenery, curtains, fabrics, etc. are required to be flame-retardant. These may be treated using one of the many proprietary solutions available for this purpose. This can be done with proprietary product or by a reputable Dry Cleaner.

4.16 USE OF REAL FLAME

Real flame (for candles, lamps, lanterns, flambeaux etc.) should not be used on a stage. Electrical substitutes should be used instead. Where lighted candles are used, the following precautions should be followed:

- Candles should be placed in a tin or suitable fireproof container surrounded by sand and lit whilst in the container.
- The container should have enough space so that if the candle falls it will be contained within the tin.
- The container must be stable so that it cannot be knocked over (a large biscuit tin is ideal).
- Candles must be positioned so that there is no danger of hot wax dripping onto people, furniture or fittings.
- Candles must be kept well away from costumes for example that are not flame retardant.
- Under no circumstances should a lit candle be moved.
- Children/young people must be warned of the dangers associated with lighting a candle, with a lit candle and with hot wax.
- Candles must NEVER be left unsupervised and must be extinguished when supervising adults leave the room.

Refer to the KAHSC model [Candle Use Risk Assessment](#)

4.17 USE OF FIREARMS

The use of firearms should be forbidden - replica firearms can be used; the suitability of use within a school setting should be considered carefully.

4.18 USE OF MAROONS/PYROTECHNICS

Only persons competent in the use of such effects should be allowed to employ them. Maroons required for explosion effects should be detonated electrically and must be contained within a bomb tank having a wire mesh cover. The tank should be sited in as isolated a position as possible but within the sight of the operator.

A large notice reading 'DANGER – EXPLOSIVES - KEEP CLEAR' should be displayed where it can be clearly seen adjacent to the tank when it has been loaded and charged e.g.



4.19 USE OF LASERS AND OTHER SPECIALIST EQUIPMENT

Special effects such as lasers should only be used where suitably trained and competent personnel will be on hand to set up the effect/equipment and throughout the production.

4.20 SCAFFOLDING

Scaffolding should only be used when constructed in accordance with the appropriate standards by a competent person. The structure should also be routinely checked to ensure it remains sound where the production run extends beyond two or three performances.

4.21 SMOKING

The school/setting No Smoking Policy must be rigorously enforced both within the building and on the grounds. "NO SMOKING" notices should be displayed at commonly used entrance points to the building.

4.22 SEATING AND GANGWAYS

The type of seating arrangements adopted will vary with the use to which the premises are put. Premises should only be used for closely-seated audiences if your risk assessment shows that it is safe to do so.

Seating and gangways in a hall or assembly space should be so arranged to allow free and ready access direct to the exits. Non-fixed seating should be situated on a level floor.

Persons seated in rows will first have to make their way to the end of the row before being able to use the escape routes provided. Seating and gangways in a lecture theatre or auditorium should therefore be so arranged as to allow free and ready access direct to the exits.

Temporary Seating

Many schools/settings use their biggest spaces, e.g. assembly halls and sports halls, as venues for performances and presentations. Seating for these events is very often provided on a temporary basis and consists of single chairs lined up in rows.

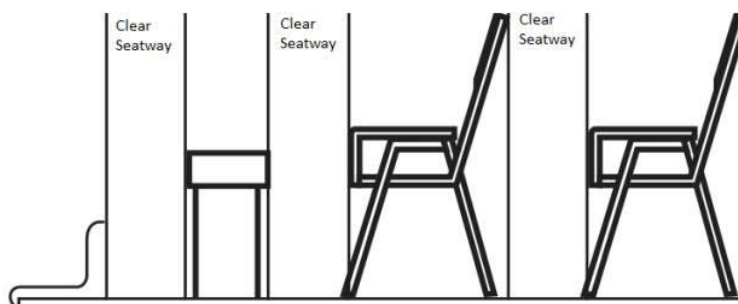
When seated in this way people will first have to make their way to the end of the row before being able to use the escape routes provided. This can be hazardous, as unsecured seating can be knocked over easily becoming a trip hazard and an obstacle for people making their escape from other rows. To avoid such problems, the government has provided detailed guidance covering the layout and design of temporary seating which schools should follow.

Temporary seating should conform to the following recommendations:

- Seating and gangways in a hall or assembly space should be so arranged to allow free and ready access direct to the exits - the layout of audience seating and modular staging must NEVER obstruct fire exits in the hall. Similarly, trade stands etc. during fund raising events and the like must be laid out carefully to ensure none of the escape routes are blocked or obstructed in any way.
- Seating laid out on the floor area for more than 50 persons should be secured together in lengths of not fewer than four seats.
- If seating for more than 250 persons is required, provision should be made for fixing to the floor the rows of seating flanking the front, the back and the cross gangways and the seats near exits, although only the end seats of the rows need to be fixed to the floor if all the seats are secured together.
- NOTE: Where the fixing of seating to the floor is impracticable or undesirable, floor bars instead of screws may be used. Floor bars should have a cambered top surface so as to avoid

the risk of tripping by persons using the seating. This form of securing seating is not recommended where a very lively audience is anticipated, such as at a pop concert.

- Where seats are secured together, it should not be possible to separate them, nor for a row to “snake”, merely by pushing one or more seats in a row.
- No seat should be further than seven seat widths from a gangway unless a gangway is provided at each end of the row (see table below).
- The spaces between each row of seats (the ‘seatway’) should also be of adequate width.



The table below shows the widths required and also the permissible number of seats in any one row.

Gangways should be adequate for the number of seats served and at least 1.05m wide. There should be no projections which diminish these widths.

Standing and sitting in gangways, or in front of any exit, should not be permitted. This includes adults standing by children.

Remember that the maximum permissible audience size is likely to be determined by the size of the fire exits available, not the number of seats that can be accommodated in the space.

Seatway width (mm)	Maximum number of seats in a row	
	Gangway on one side	Gangway on two sides
300 to 324	7	14
325 to 349	8	16
350 to 374	9	18
375 to 399	10	20
400 to 424	11	22
425 to 449	12	24
450 to 474	Maximum permitted in a single direction of escape	26
475 to 499		28
500 or more	Seek specialist advice	Limited by travel distance

4.23 TRAVEL DISTANCES

Having established the number and location of people and the exit capacity required to evacuate them safely, you now need to confirm that the number and location of existing exits is adequate. This is normally determined by the distance people have to travel to reach them.

The Table below gives guidance on travel distances and are based on those recommended in Approved Document B of the Building Regulations. It should be understood, however, that these distances are flexible and may be increased or decreased depending upon the level of risk after you have put in place appropriate fire-prevention measures.

When assessing travel distances you need to consider the distance to be travelled by people when escaping, allowing for walking around furniture or display material, etc. The distance should be measured from all parts of the premises (e.g. from the most remote part of a classroom or lecture theatre on any floor) to the nearest place of reasonable safety which is:

- A protected stairway enclosure (a storey exit).
- A separate fire compartment from which there is a final exit to a place of total safety.
- The nearest available final exit.

Where your route leads to more than one final exit, but only allows initial travel in a single direction (e.g. from a room or dead end), then this initial travel distance should be limited to that for a 'single escape route' in the Table below. However, your total travel distance should not exceed that for 'more than one escape route'.

On occasions where either additional fire risk is introduced e.g. trade stalls, or the occupancy is significantly high e.g. 150+ or seating in rows reduces the required travel distance to a maximum 15-18m for normal/low risk, the doors that open inwards will require additional actions i.e. any inward opening doors should be held open during performances or events involving more than 60 people in the hall/performance area.

Escape routes	Suggested range of travel distance: areas with seating in rows	Suggested range of travel distance: other areas
Where more than one route is provided	20m in higher fire-risk area 32m in normal fire-risk area 45m in lower fire-risk area	25m in higher fire-risk area 45m in normal fire-risk area 60m in lower fire-risk area
Where only a single escape route is provided	10m in higher fire-risk area 15m in normal fire-risk area 18m in lower fire-risk area	12m in higher fire-risk area 18m in normal fire-risk area 25m in lower fire-risk area

4.24 STEPS AND STAIRWAYS

All steps, ideally, should have treads not less than 290 mm and risers not greater than 150 mm. The front edge of each tread should be distinctly coloured so as to be visible in poor lighting conditions.

As a general rule stairways should be at least 1,050mm wide and in any case not less than the width of the escape routes that lead to them. In all cases the aggregate capacity of the stairways should be sufficient for the number of people likely to have to use them in case of fire.

Stairways wider than 2,100mm should normally be divided into sections, each separated from the adjacent section by a handrail, so that each section measured between the handrails is not less than 1,050mm wide.

4.25 EVACUATION PLAN

- A suitable Evacuation Plan for Performances/Events must be developed. It is acceptable to develop a 'generic' plan but this should be adapted as necessary for each performance/event if circumstances differ from event to event Refer to KAHSC example [Evacuation Plan for Performances/Events](#).
- Responsible adults trained in fire evacuation procedures and actions to be taken in the event of an emergency (Fire Warden) must be nominated (see Section 4 for responsibilities). A Fire

Warden must be allocated to each exit during performances/events and must clearly understand their function if there is a fire emergency. There must be sufficient numbers of staff on duty to ensure safety.

- The numbers of attendees at the performance (children/young people and parents/members of the public) along with the numbers of supervisors/staff must not exceed the pre-determined limit for the room in relation to evacuation (hall capacity Refer to the [Example Completed & Blank Hall Capacity Calculation Sheets](#) on the KAHub. For further guidance on determining hall/room capacity, KAHSC subscribing schools/settings can refer to [KAHSC General Safety Series G35a – Fire Safety Management](#).
- <https://www.kymallanhsc.co.uk/Document/DownloadDocument/7826>.
- Fire Wardens should determine (as the public arrive) whether there are any elderly or disabled persons that may require assistance to evacuate in the event of an emergency evacuation. Fire Wardens will need to consider very carefully the seating position of these people and ensure that if these persons are not accompanied by an able bodied person that 'buddy' systems are set up whereby Specific Evacuation Assistants will assist them to evacuate in the event of fire (see Section 5 on 'Assisting People with Additional Needs').
- Clear instructions must be given as early as possible to the audience/public as to the procedure to follow in the event of an emergency. At an indoor performance this should be before the event commences. The audience should be advised that the young people involved in the performance will be evacuated separately (supervised by staff on duty) and that parents should refrain from coming forward in an attempt to reach their children as this will hinder the flow of those trying to escape, including their own children. They should be instructed to follow the instructions of their appointed Fire Wardens.
- The muster (assembly) point, first aid point and missing person point should all be highlighted to the audience.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 RESPONSIBLE PERSON/EVENT FIRE SAFETY MANAGER

A responsible person should be nominated to act as Event Fire Safety Manager to ensure the well-being of the audience and be in control of the premises. This will usually be the Head teacher/Manager or most senior teacher present/production manager. Their duties include:

- Undertaking a risk assessment covering all aspects of the performance to ensure all hazards are identified and that suitable and sufficient preventive and protective measures appropriate to the risk they present are formulated.
- Appointing a sufficient number of appropriate persons to act as Fire Wardens, Traffic Controllers (if necessary) and Specific Evacuation Assistants.
- Ensuring a sufficient number of first aiders are available including Paediatric Trained First Aiders where EYFS children are involved in the performance and ensure first aid kits are available.
- Ensuring Fire Wardens, Traffic Controllers and Evacuation Assistants are fully aware of their responsibilities, all necessary safety procedures, positions of exits and fire appliances and how to use them.
- Ensuring emergency arrangements are made prior to the performance and the procedure for calling the Fire and Rescue Service, in the event of an outbreak of fire, is established.
- Ensuring the Hall/Room Capacity is not exceeded.
- The Fire Safety Manager and Fire Wardens etc. should understand that, in the event of an emergency, the main objective is to avoid panic and that should an evacuation be deemed necessary, this should be carried out in as quiet and orderly a manner as possible.
- Ensuring that all licensing requirements (where appropriate) have been complied with and be constantly available to deal with any problems that may arise.

- Additional duties including:
 - Telephoning the fire and rescue service.
 - Coordination of people.
 - Liaison with the emergency services on arrival.
 - Ensuring the evacuation is conducted effectively.
 - Delegating certain tasks to other suitable personnel (Fire Wardens and Traffic Controllers).
 - Initiating disaster recovery procedures.
- Ensuring a site plan is in place to cover the following:
 - Lost Children Point.
 - First Aid Point.
 - Emergency Exits.
 - Fire Assembly Point.

5.2 FIRE WARDENS

Designated Fire Wardens responsibilities include:

- Ensuring communication links between other fire wardens and the Fire Safety Manager are maintained at all times. Two-way radios OR mobile phones (to be used only for that purpose) may need to be available for use by fire wardens.
- Remaining vigilant at all times before, during and following a performance.
- Being clearly identifiable e.g. High visibility armbands, tabards or jackets to put on in the event of an emergency.
- Understanding any specific area/role they will be responsible for – these responsibilities should be delegated by the Fire and Safety Manager.
- Maintaining clear access and egress for people and emergency services.
- Manning exit doors during the performance and ensuring these remain unobstructed.
- Ensuring all exits likely to be required during a performance can be easily opened without the use of a key.
- Crowd and queue management.
- Determining (as the public arrive) whether there are any elderly or disabled persons that may require assistance to evacuate in the event of an emergency evacuation and ensuring that if these persons are not accompanied by an able bodied person that 'buddy' systems are set up whereby Specific Evacuation Assistants will assist them to evacuate in the event of fire.
- Considering very carefully the seating position of disabled persons.
- Be in possession of a working battery powered torch where fixed or portable emergency lighting is not available in the areas being used.
- Stopping the event immediately in an emergency situation and initiating evacuation procedures.
- Assisting with evacuating as many children/adults as possible sweeping the areas of the premises in use (i.e. Hall, corridors, toilets etc.) To ensure everyone has left, before taking up their designated position (i.e. Gate control/admission of emergency services or roll call duties at the fire assembly point).
- Remaining in their designated positions until the emergency services arrive and provide further instructions.
- Completing a roll call at the fire assembly point if part of their delegated responsibility and requesting that parents/members of the public do not leave until clear instructions are received from the Fire and Rescue Service.
- Encouraging everyone to keep calm and ensuring evacuation is conducted in an orderly fashion.

- IMMEDIATELY INFORMING EMERGENCY SERVICES/FIRE SAFETY MANAGER IF ANYONE APPEARS TO BE MISSING.

5.3 TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS

Where on-site parking is provided for members of the public/parents, it may be necessary to nominate suitable adults to act as Traffic Controllers. The duties of Traffic Controllers include:

- Managing the parking arrangements for parents/members of the public, ensuring emergency exits from the building are kept clear and ensuring vehicular access is maintained for emergency services.
- Wearing high visibility clothing.
- In the event of an emergency evacuation, reporting directly to the school entrance to be used by the emergency services and ensuring this is open and clear.
- Guiding the emergency services to the relevant areas of the premises as appropriate.
- Restricting access to only the emergency services where support has been requested.
- Ensuring parents/members of the public and other evacuees and vehicles do not impede access or egress by the emergency services.
- Requesting further assistance from the police in managing traffic if the need arises.

5.4 TEACHERS/STAFF/VOLUNTEERS/OTHERS DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN PERFORMANCE

Teachers/staff and others including volunteers directly involved with the performance will remain responsible for the children/young people involved in the performance. They must ensure that children/young people evacuate the building in a calm and responsible manner and undertake a roll call and head count of the children present. This information must be relayed to the Fire Safety Manager at the assembly point.

If any children/young people are found to be missing, this must be IMMEDIATELY reported to the Fire Safety Manager and/or the Fire and Rescue Service.

6. Assisting People with Additional Needs

In the event of a school play/performance, public event or open day etc. unknown visitors may enter the premises and it may be more difficult to gather the information prior to the need to escape. In addition, it may be impossible to know how many disabled people are present at any one time or their level of disability.

In these instances, a system of standard General Emergency Evacuation Plans (GEEPs) should be used and advertised. Refer to [KAHSC G35b - Emergency Evacuation Arrangements for People with Disabilities or Requiring Additional Support](#) which includes a model format [Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan \(PEEP\)](#) and [General Emergency Evacuation Plan \(GEEP\)](#).

When letters are sent out regarding events, a similar phrase to the one that should be posted in reception should be sent out to give advanced warning of anyone who may need assistance e.g. "We operate a system of assisted evacuation for disabled persons. Please telephone our reception staff prior to the event if you think you may need assistance in an emergency and we will provide you with a suitable strategy".

Training of staff is vital at such events as they may have to provide assistance and advice to disabled users of the building as the incident develops. The plans to enable disabled persons to safely leave the building need pre-planning. Staff will need to understand all the options and standard GEEPs and

be able to communicate these effectively to disabled people at the time of the escape. This will enable them to give maximum assistance to disabled people, irrespective of the nature of their impairment. Specific Evacuation Assistants must be nominated for each performance.

Training and information for staff should form part of the schools fire risk assessment. Training is very important and must be regularly carried out to ensure staff involved in the escape plans feel confident in their skills and disabled people should feel that they can trust the process.

Sometimes it can be difficult to recruit volunteers as they will want to be sure that their own safety is not compromised by helping the disabled person to escape. It may be necessary to raise the awareness of staff prior to the recruitment of volunteers so that they understand that their own safety will not be compromised.

Any children/young people involved in the performance who would require assistance to evacuate should already have Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) in place. These may need to be reviewed for each specific performance depending on individual circumstances. Refer to [KAHSC G35b - Emergency Evacuation Arrangements for People with Disabilities or Requiring Additional Support](#) which includes a model format [PEEP](#) and [GEEP](#).

People should never be left in a refuge point to wait for fire fighters to rescue them. It is the responsibility of the performance leader to ensure that all users of the school building are evacuated and not be dependent on the assistance of the Fire & Rescue Service. Persons can be left at designated refuge points while other people evacuate the building providing they are not left unaccompanied and every effort is then made to evacuate such persons from the building.

7. Dealing with the Media

As a larger emergency evolves the press may arrive at the school. All staff are instructed not to speak to the press, but to refer them to the press office/media team of the Local Authority. The press should not enter the school or photograph children under the Independent Press Standards Organisation (the independent regulator for the majority of the newspaper and magazine industry in the UK). You can find details of how to contact IPSO or how to make a complaint at www.ipso.co.uk.

A statement can be prepared jointly between the school and the Local Authority press office/media team for release.

More detailed guidance on Drama Productions can be found on the [Arts on the Move: Drama in Education](#) website or by contacting Kym Allan Safeguarding, Health & Safety Consultants Ltd., 3-4 Citadel Row, CARLISLE, CA3 8SQ. Telephone: 01228 210152, email kym@kymallanhsc.co.uk, website: <https://kymallanhsc.co.uk>.

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