

Aspirational Futures Multi Academy Trust



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Fire Safety Policy

Aspirational Futures Multi Academy Trust Wide Policy

November 2025

Document Control

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Statement of intent

Aspirational Futures Multi Academy Trust is committed to protecting and preserving the health and safety of all our pupils, staff and visitors – this includes our dedication to mitigating the risk of fires. We will achieve this by educating our pupils, training our staff, and ensuring the trust's fire safety measures are checked regularly and in full working order.

In the event that a fire breaks out, we have put in place procedures to ensure all risk is minimised and the trust's premises can be evacuated quickly.

The board of trustees is responsible for overseeing the review of this policy, as well as other relevant fire safety information, e.g. risk assessments and evacuation procedures.

As a trust, we acknowledge our duty under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to take all necessary steps, as far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure the safety of all pupils, staff, volunteers and visitors in the trust from the dangers of fire. The procedures in this policy apply to all staff and pupils of the trust, as well as all visitors, guests, lettings and contractors present – there are no exceptions. All the foregoing will take part in evacuation and/or invacuation procedures, whether implemented during a drill, real incident or false alarm. The procedures are the same for all evacuations and invacuations, whether a drill, real incident or a false alarm.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended)
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Department for Communities and Local Government (2006) 'Fire safety risk assessment: educational premises'
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'
- DfE (2022) 'Good estate management for schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Bomb Threat Policy
- Invacuation, Lockdown and Evacuation Policy
- Evacuation Procedure
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)
- Fire Safety Risk Assessment
- Fire Safety Training Plan

2. Roles and responsibilities

The board of trustees will:

- Ensure personal and whole-trust familiarity with the requirements of the appropriate legislation and codes of practice.
- Create and monitor a management structure responsible for health and safety in the trust, including, but not limited to, fire safety.
- Ensure there is a detailed and enforceable policy for fire safety, and that the policy is implemented by all.
- Help to put in place measures to identify risks relating to possible accidents and injuries, suggesting reasonable adjustments to prevent them occurring.

The board of trustees will provide:

- A safe place for all users of the trust's premises, including staff, pupils and visitors.
- Safe means of entry and exit for all site users.
- Equipment, grounds and systems of work which are safe.
- Safe arrangements for the handling, storage and transportation of any articles and substances.
- Safe and healthy working conditions that comply with statutory requirements, codes of practice and guidance.

- Supervision, training and instruction, so that all staff can perform their duties in a healthy and safe manner. All staff should complete the National College 'Annual Certificate in Fire Safety for Academies'.
- Protective equipment and clothing, where necessary, alongside any necessary guidance and instruction.
- Adequate funds to ensure the training of the fire safety officer and all other staff. At the present time this is funded via The National College.

The headteacher of each constituent academy will be responsible for:

- Overseeing the day-to-day development and implementation of safe working practices and conditions for all staff, pupils and visitors.
- Taking reasonably practicable steps to ensure this policy is implemented by all members of staff within their academy.
- Employing or designating a fire safety officer to be responsible for the day-to-day implementation of this policy.
- Taking steps to ensure all members of staff, pupils and visitors are familiar with this policy.
- Working with the fire safety officer to review and update this policy accordingly, every 3 years or sooner if legislation dictates.
- Identifying risks relating to possible accidents and injuries, and making reasonable adjustments and suggestions to prevent them occurring.

Fire safety officers (who MUST complete the National College 'Annual Certificate in the Role of a Fire Warden for Academies') will:

- Take responsibility for the academy's fire safety matters, in collaboration with the headteacher.
- Coordinate the implementation of all fire safety measures, ensure staff and pupil training takes place, and monitor the standard of the academy's fire detection and protection equipment.
- At least once per annum, undertake a fire evacuation drill to ensure staff members, pupils and visitors know what to do in the event of a real fire.
- Review relevant and updated legislation to ensure the academy is working within the parameters of the law and as safely as possible.
- Ensure new and existing staff members undertake training sessions at least once per year, in line with the Fire Safety Training Plan. This training is available online via The National College.
- Communicate relevant correspondence regarding fire safety to all members of staff and, where necessary, the board of trustees.
- Review and, if necessary, update the Fire Safety Training Plan and other relevant procedures once per year.
- Conduct risk assessments and ensure necessary procedures are in place to mitigate the risks of fires.
- Draw up a plan of the premises, including the locations of all fire extinguishers, hosepipes and fire exits.

- Create an individual Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) for each person who will require assistance during fire drills.
- Work with the headteacher to nominate a temporary fire safety officer in their absence.
- Take steps to ensure the appropriate precautions, including the communication of this policy, are put in place where events are organised outside of normal operational hours, or by third party organisations.
- Review activities to ensure specific restrictions on events, such as setting capacities and limiting the types of activity.

All staff across the trust will:

- Cooperate with their colleagues, the fire safety officer and headteacher on all fire safety matters.
- Carry out their work in accordance with fire safety training and instructions.
- Inform the fire safety officer of any work situation representing serious and immediate danger, so that remedial action can be taken.
- Familiarise themselves with all their responsibilities as set out in this policy, and aspects of their work relating to potential fire hazards.
- Follow, and help to carry out, relevant risk assessments to ensure the safety of themselves and other staff members, pupils and visitors.
- Ensure that all staff, pupils and visitors are applying fire safety regulations and adhering to all rules, routines and procedures in place.
- Ensure all equipment is in good working order and safe to use, including adequate fire safety guards. Staff will also not entertain all improper use of such equipment.
- Use the correct equipment and tools for their work and any protective clothing supplied.
- Ensure any toxic, hazardous or flammable substances are used correctly, and stored and labelled as appropriate.
- Report any defects in equipment or facilities to the designated fire safety officer and/or the designated health and safety officer.
- Exercise good standards of housekeeping and cleanliness.

Instructions for pupils, volunteers, visitors, and staff members who are not trained fire marshals

If you discover a fire, do not attempt to tackle the fire. Activate the alarm by means of the nearest alarm call point and leave the building following the procedure below:

- When you hear the fire alarm, follow the exit signs and leave the building by the nearest exit
- Assemble at the assembly point.
- Do not delay in leaving the building
- Stay at the assembly point – do not move around the site unless instructed
- Remain silent at the assembly point
- Await further instruction
- Do not return to a building until told it is safe to do so – the alarm no longer sounding is not the 'all clear' signal

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3. Risk assessments and checklists

The board of trustees, in cooperation with headteachers of constituent academies, will ensure all fire-related hazards are identified and risk assessments are completed for all trust buildings, in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's 'Fire safety risk assessment: educational premises' guidance.

Termly assessments of high-risk areas across the trust, such as kitchens, will be undertaken. Annual risk assessments will be conducted for all other lower-risk areas. The fire risk assessments will be reviewed by the fire safety officer in each academy and will be amended after:

- Any structural changes, e.g. alterations to the layout of the trust's premises or refurbishment, have taken place.
- Any change to the use of grounds within the trust which may affect the risk rating.
- Any change to work processes or equipment which may introduce new fire hazards.
- Any change to the number of people using trust premises to ensure that fire escapes and fire assembly points can accommodate the numbers safely.

Risk assessments will be used to ensure that the premises and facilities are maintained to a standard that ensures the health, safety and welfare of pupils, staff and visitors.

The trust will maintain a Fire Safety Risk Assessment for all premises under its control and will include the procedures that are in place to:

- Reduce the likelihood of fire.
- Maintain fire detection and alarm systems.
- Familiarise staff and pupils with emergency evacuation procedures.

The Fire Safety Risk Assessment for each constituent academy will be regularly reviewed and updated, particularly in circumstances where there is reason to suspect it is no longer valid or where significant changes to the premises take place.

Fire safety officers will have the appropriate qualifications and experience required to competently carry out the Fire Safety Risk Assessment.

4. Preventative measures

Fire safety officers will inspect the premises fire prevention measures once per month to ensure the trust is achieving maximum fire safety.

Fire hazards, such as hot surfaces, naked flames, electrical equipment and flammable liquids, will be identified by fire safety officers within each academy and measures will be put in place to ensure these risks are mitigated and controlled.

Stocks of flammable liquids, materials and gases will be kept to a minimum and, where possible, outside, to ensure the risk of fires can be mitigated. If storing materials outside is viable or possible, they will be kept locked in secure cupboards, away from pupils. Flammable liquids, materials and gases will be kept separate from each other in storage, and stored properly in suitable containers or cages.

All curtains, upholstered furniture and other soft furnishings used across the trust will be fire retardant, or will be treated to ensure their safety.

Fire safety officers at each academy will ensure that regular checks are carried out on the following:

- Fire doors
- Extinguishers
- Fire blankets
- Hose reels
- Fixed systems, e.g. sprinkler systems
- Facilities for the fire service, including:
 - Dry risers
 - Access for emergency vehicles
 - Emergency switches for installations
 - Firefighting lifts
 - Information in respect of the premises and its contents
- Emergency lighting
- Signage and exit routes
- Lightning protection

Good housekeeping

The risk of fire can be greatly reduced by a regime of good housekeeping within the workplace, and the need for good housekeeping cannot be overemphasised; if good housekeeping is not maintained, the risk of fire spreading is vastly increased. The trust recognises the importance of good housekeeping, including not obstructing fire routes, fire doors and general tidiness. Pupils will also be made aware of the importance of good housekeeping.

The trust's housekeeping rules will include:

- No smoking anywhere within any of the buildings across the trust.
- Spillages will be cleaned up as soon as possible.
- Rubbish will be cleared away and will not be left in fire routes or against the building fabric.
- Flammable waste and contaminated rags will be kept in separate metal bins with close fitting metal lids.

Provision and maintenance of emergency routes and exits

As part of the fire safety inspection, fire safety officers will ensure that:

- All fire escape routes are clear of obstruction.
- Emergency routes and exits lead as directly as possible to a place of safety.
- Emergency routes and exits are identified by suitable fire signs.
- Emergency fire doors open in the direction of escape wherever possible and are unobstructed.
- Emergency fire doors are not locked, and can be easily and immediately opened by any person who may need to use them in an emergency.

- Emergency fire escape routes and exits are provided with emergency lighting, of adequate intensity in case of failure of their normal lighting.
- No items are stored under stairways.

All fire doors will be regularly checked by a competent person to ensure that they remain in efficient working order. A record will be kept of any maintenance.

The inspection of fire doors will check that:

- Self-closing devices operate properly.
- Hold-open devices release when the fire alarm operates.
- Glazed panels are intact and undamaged.
- Warning signs are in place, e.g. 'fire door keep closed'.
- Doors open and close freely and are not damaged.
- There is no distortion or warping of the door or frame.
- Intumescent strips and smoke seals are in place and not damaged.
- Hinges and locks are properly lubricated.
- Fire doors are not propped open.

5. Educating pupils

At least one PSHE lesson, per year group, per academic year will be dedicated to fire safety and mitigating the risk of a fire. Fire safety officers across the trust will invite the local fire service to perform a presentation to pupils should the need arise.

Pupils across the trust will be reminded to remain vigilant to fire and fire hazards, including flammable materials, during fire drills and other times where there is a heightened risk of fire, e.g. cooking lessons and science experiments.

6. Measures for disabled people

The board of trustees and headteachers across the trust will be notified of anyone who may be unable to evacuate the premises unassisted – this person will be subject to a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP), created by the fire safety officer in their academy.

To avoid serious injury, extra measures, such as editing timetables and moving classes, will be taken to ensure disabled pupils, members of staff or visitors do not attend lessons up flights of stairs, unless reasonable provisions, e.g. lifts, are in place.

Staff across the trust will be taught to modify evacuation routes for people with disabilities as part of their annual training.

Refuge areas are located around buildings within the trust; in the event of a fire, and if there is no alternative escape route, people with physical disabilities will go to the nearest refuge area with a member of staff and wait for assistance to evacuate. Visitors, pupils and staff with disabilities will be informed of the location of the site's refuge areas on their arrival at the academy.

Visual alarms, such as flashing lights and beacons, will be placed in all corridors throughout the trust's buildings to ensure those with hearing difficulties are aware should a fire break out.

7. Cooking facilities

To ensure potential fire hazards are mitigated whilst cooking, as part of the curriculum and in the canteens across the trust, extra measures will be taken to ensure the safety of staff members, pupils, visitors and contractors within the trust.

Canteens across the trust will be thoroughly cleaned at the end of each day by each academy's cleaning team, to ensure potential fire hazards, such as excess grease, are mitigated. Any additional cooking rooms on the trust's premises, e.g. for food technology lessons, will be cleaned after each lesson by the cleaning team. Cleaning teams/teaching staff across the trust will undertake a thorough clean weekly.

Site managers across the trust will check all electrical equipment in their academy's canteen and classrooms termly, to ensure their usability and safety. An electrical engineer will check all electrical equipment in canteens and classrooms across each academy annually, to ensure their usability and carry out any maintenance.

8. Fire hazards

Relevant risk assessments will be conducted by headteachers and representatives from the board of trustees for each constituent academy to ensure areas for concern are identified and addressed.

Waste paper bins are emptied daily to mitigate risks. To minimise the risk of a fire, outdoor waste containers and refuse bins will be kept at least five metres from the trust's premises at all times.

Lighters, matches and other sources of ignition are kept in locked store cupboards, away from pupils and can only be accessed after gaining permission from fire safety officers. Electrical equipment will be reviewed in accordance with relevant school policy, and steps will be taken, e.g. regular checks by fire safety officers, to ensure equipment is maintained to a high standard.

9. Procedure in the event of a fire

In the event of fire, the person who discovers the fire and/or smoke will sound the nearest fire alarm within their academy. As soon as the fire alarm sounds the fire brigade will be called, either automatically by the automated fire alarm system, or by the fire safety officer.

All pupils, volunteers and visitors across the trust will be advised never to fight fire; instead, they will simply sound the alarm and exit the building via the nearest route out to a safe area.

On hearing the alarm, the building will be evacuated without delay and all pupils, staff members and visitors will proceed to their designated fire evacuation point for a register called by the fire safety officer (for staff and visitors), or for pupils, by their class teacher. Lifts will not be used during an emergency evacuation.

People will only be allowed to re-enter the building once it has been deemed safe by the fire safety officer or other responsible person, e.g. member of the fire brigade. If the building is not safe to re-enter all staff members, pupils and visitors will be sent home until further notice. Pupils may be sent to another building if it is deemed fit for purpose by the fire safety officer and a trained professional, e.g. member of the fire brigade.

In the event someone is injured in the fire, the fire safety officer will ring for an ambulance immediately. Whilst waiting for the emergency services, the designated first aider will administer any first aid required.

Measures such as multiple fire escapes and exits will be put in place to ensure all staff members, pupils and visitors can escape the premises. Fire exits will be kept clear and are clearly signed.

To ensure fire alarms are heard throughout the trust's buildings, manual call points will be fitted on numerous floors and throughout the premises.

Each academy has a relevant and up-to-date Evacuation Procedure in place. The Evacuation Procedure will be reviewed by the board of trustees and the headteacher within each academy once per year, to ensure it is accurate and relevant. A copy of the Evacuation Procedure is kept in every classroom. As part of their training, all staff members within the trust will familiarise themselves with their academy's Evacuation Procedure. Details of fire evacuation points are available in the Evacuation Procedure.

10. Detection equipment

All areas and rooms, including offices and cupboards, across the trust are fitted with a smoke detector. Larger rooms, such as halls, are fitted with heat and smoke detectors. Areas with a greater risk of fire, such as kitchens and science labs, will be fitted with two smoke and heat detectors. The trust acknowledges that some older properties may not be covered in all areas and priority CIF bids will be applied for to rectify these issues. If the school bids are unsuccessful this issue will be re-addressed and funding made available as a matter of urgency.

Fire detection and alarm systems in each academy will be tested each week. A competent person will test the smoke and fire detectors in each academy at the start of every term; any required maintenance will also be carried out by the engineer.

All work on the fire alarm system, including routine testing, will be recorded and accessible to the fire service.

Zone diagrams will be available at the main control panel to enable the fire services to determine the location of the incident and devise the most appropriate methods for fighting the fire.

11. Protection equipment

Fire protection equipment will be available and easily accessible all around the trust's premises.

There are six recognised classes of fire as follows:

- Class A: Fires involving solid materials, e.g. wood, paper or textiles
- Class B: Fires involving flammable liquids, e.g. petrol, diesel or oil
- Class C: Fires involving gases
- Class D: Fires involving metals
- Class E: Fires involving electricity
- Class F: Fires involving cooking oils, e.g. deep fat fryers

The fire warden will ensure that the type of fire extinguisher provided is suitable for the risks involved around the premises, that they are adequately maintained, and that appropriate records are kept of all inspections and tests.

One fire extinguisher will be placed in each room; the type of fire extinguisher will need to be relevant to the need of the room or area, e.g. water extinguishers in textile and technology workshops. Sand buckets will be provided in each science laboratory. Fire blankets will be available in all kitchens, laboratories and workshops. Hosepipes are fitted to walls in corridors and halls around the premises.

All fire protection equipment will be checked by fire safety officers across the trust termly.

Fire safety officers across the trust will keep a checklist of all service by dates on fire extinguishers, to ensure they are not kept beyond their shelf life.

Protective clothing, such as lab coats and goggles, will be provided and funds will be made available to replace or purchase additional equipment from the trust's budget.

12. Fire drills

Within each academy, the fire safety officer will carry out random fire drills at least once per annum. All staff members, pupils, visitors and contractors will be expected to take part in the drill.

Pupils will go to their class's designated evacuation point for a registration call. Class teachers and pupils will only be allowed to return to their lessons or activities once all registers have been called. Visitors, contractors, and non-teaching staff will be allowed to return to their work once the headteacher has finished the registers.

The fire safety officer will make notes based on the evacuation, e.g. speed and organisation. Depending on the success of the fire drill, e.g. how long the evacuation took, the fire safety officer may make suggestions based on how the academy can ensure the safe and quick evacuation of the premises. Any improvements will be recorded.

13. Staff training

Staff across the trust will undergo mandatory fire safety training after joining the trust. This will be led by fire safety officers and include details about the fire precautions in the workplace and emergency procedures, in accordance with The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (as amended).

Fire safety officers across the trust will undergo annual training from fire safety professionals, to ensure they are capable of carrying out their role.

Refresher training will be undertaken by all staff across the trust at least annually and in accordance with each academy's Fire Safety Training Plan, to ensure staff are reminded of the procedures in place, and know what to do in the event of a fire.

To help ensure staff members across the trust are knowledgeable about fire safety, fire safety officers will communicate regular updates and correspondence.

