

The Gower School
Fire Safety Policy and Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Legal Status:

- The Independent School Standards Guidance for independent schools April 2026
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work (Amendment) Regulations 2006
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Fire Safety Order 2005

Applies to:

- This policy applies to the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), all staff (teaching and non-teaching), and volunteers working at The Gower School (TGS).

Related Documents:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- First Aid & Sick Child Policy
- Supervision of Children Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Fire Safety Audits

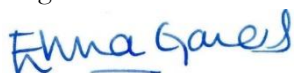
Availability

- This Policy is available to parents, staff, volunteers and children via the office from where a request for a copy can be obtained.
- The Fire Safety Policy and Emergency Evacuation Procedures are available to staff on the staff portal on the school website along with relevant procedural documents, is also provided either in hard copy or electronically to all new employees and volunteers before commencing work at TGS. They are required to state that they have read and understood such documents and confirm this by signing the induction checklist.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal/Proprietor.
- The Principal will undertake a formal annual review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:



Date reviewed: April 2026

Date of next review: April 2027

Miss Emma Gowers
Principal and Proprietor

Fire Safety

The Gower School has established a fire safety policy and procedures, which are designed to protect children, staff, visitors, contractors and school assets. The effectiveness of these policies depends not only on physical precautions designed to prevent the occurrence and spread of fire, but also on the co-operation of every member of staff, children and visitors.

Compliance with fire safety policies and procedures is a legal requirement. All staff will have duties and responsibilities in respect of fire safety. Ultimate responsibility for this policy rests with the employer. The Principal will ensure that the Fire Safety Policy and the Fire Safety Procedures are effectively applied and brought to the attention of the staff and are observed by them at all times. As with all matters relating to health and safety, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have devolved responsibility for the application of this Fire Safety Policy.

The Government published the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order in 2005. It applies to the vast majority of premises. The aim is to create a simple fire safety regime applying to all workplaces and other non-domestic premises. It is based on risk assessment, a duty to maintain fire precautions, which are for the use of fire fighters and new duties on fire authorities for fire safety, investigation and testing. The provisions of the Fire Safety Acts have dictated the fire safety arrangements at The Gower School, where, in such premises, there are at any one time either:

- a) more than twenty people at work; or
- b) more than ten people at work elsewhere than on the ground floor, then the owner or occupier of the premises is required to apply for a fire certificate.

Responsible Persons

The designated person for fire safety at The Gower School (both North Road and Cynthia Street sites) is the Premises Manager who has completed the Educare Fire Safety training.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 states the meaning of 'Responsible Person' as being:

- The employer, if the workplace is to any extent under their control; or
- The person who has control of the premises (as occupier or otherwise) in connection with carrying out their trade, business, or undertaking.

The main requirements of the above legislation include:

- Fire risk assessment and fire precautions to minimise the risk of fire.
- Design of buildings to prevent the spread of fire.
- Means of detection and giving warning in the event of fire.
- The provision and maintenance of means of escape.
- Emergency evacuation procedures and means of fighting a fire.
- The training of staff in fire safety and the management of fire safety.

The main objectives of our school Fire Policy are:

- to safeguard persons who may be affected by fire at any of the school premises;
- to safeguard the physical assets of the school, its staff, children and visitors;
- to reduce the incidence of fires;
- to minimise the potential for fire to disrupt the work of the school;
- to minimise the incidence of unwanted fire alarm signals and false alarms and
- to protect the environment.

The Premises Manager ensures compliance and this is viewed as a minimum standard to be achieved. The Principal will ensure any further modifications required as a result in changes in legislation or established best practice are approved by the local fire authority. In accordance with legislation, there is an annual Fire Safety Risk Assessment.

In compliance with both regulations and best practice, the Principal has ensured that:

- all fire call points are identified and weekly call point tests (different call point every week) undertaken and recorded;
- adequate and suitable fire extinguishing appliances are provided and maintained;
- suitable means of fire detection and signalling of the presence of fire is provided and maintained;
- adequate means of escape are provided and maintained;
- suitable signs designating firefighting equipment and means of escape are provided and maintained;

- a fire record is provided and maintained;
- fire training is provided to employees;
- evacuation drills are undertaken at all the premises at least termly and the results recorded;
- suitable fire procedures are published in respect of:
 - Action to be taken on discovering a fire.
 - Action to be taken on hearing the alarm.
 - Responsibility of key personnel in the event of a fire.

The Management of Fire Safety

The Principal, on the advice from the Premises Manager is responsible for the ongoing management and maintenance of fire safety arrangements within the areas that come under their control. This will include:

- appointing a sufficient number of Fire Marshals
- ensuring that all appointed Fire Marshals are appropriately trained
- ensuring that all staff, children, contractors and visitors are made aware of basic fire safety procedures
- ensure that fire emergency practices or fire drills are carried out each school term, to familiarise staff, children and other users of the school with the school evacuation procedures in the event of a fire emergency
- ensuring that all means of escape are kept clear of obstructions, and free of combustible material and any potential sources of ignition
- ensuring that that good standards of housekeeping are maintained at all times
- ensuring that all statutory instructions relating to fire doors are observed
- reporting any defects with the fire alarm system, emergency lighting, fire doors, portable fire extinguishers or fire signs etc. to the appropriate persons and
- reporting any incidents of fire

Emergency Contact

A registration form for emergency contact telephone numbers is issued to parents on entry to school. Notification of any change to these details must be reported to the relevant offices. Every employee at the school has been asked to complete a form giving details of next of kin, emergency contact numbers, and relevant details about medication. If they do not wish to do this, a “disclaimer” must be signed. Were there ever to be a disaster or crisis affecting the staff and/or children of the school, there would be need for easy access to certain data. It would also be essential for considered procedures to be pre-determined to avoid the risk of ill-considered action being taken during a time of stress. The school has in place a Crisis Management Plan.

- The primary aim of our Fire Safety Policy is to safeguard life and to this end, the Principal will assume this responsibility. Policies and procedures are available for all staff who are required to be familiar with and apply them.
- Problems will be noted, prioritised and acted upon appropriately.
- Outside teachers, visitors and contractors will be required to take note of and follow our emergency procedures.
- Public events are assessed for all risks including fire.
- Fire drills are held regularly, at least once a term and timed. Records of fire drills are kept in the fire folder in the respective offices.
- Escape routes are clearly labelled and lead to a safe assembly point.
- All staff and children are instructed on action to be taken in the event of an emergency.
- Every room has prominently displayed clear notices describing the action to be taken.
- Fire doors are clearly labelled and unlocked.
- Clear and prominent signage directs visitors to the nearest evacuation route.
- The Fire Marshal for each floor checks that areas are evacuated and is on hand to assist those with a disability.
- Arrangements are in place for summoning the Fire Brigade.
- The designated assembly point is at a safe distance from the building and not on a route, which may be used by the emergency services.
- A roll call is taken using registers, staff signing in book, visitors’ book and children signing in and out records.
- The alarm system is tested weekly, and is audible in every part of the premises.
- The alarm is never switched off and is routinely serviced.
- All the firefighting equipment is recommended by the Fire Services and checked on a regular basis.
- Electrical equipment is regularly checked and maintained by an approved electrical.
- Regulations concerning the control and storage of flammable liquids are followed.

- All appropriate risk assessments are in place and checked by the Premises Manager.

Fire-fighting equipment will be regularly serviced and clearly labelled. There is a fire drill/emergency evacuation procedure every term. Neither staff nor children are warned of an impending practice. It is essential, therefore, that each member of staff is aware of what the evacuation arrangements are for each area of the school. These are detailed in to this document. In case of a fire or bomb threat, evacuation procedures will be tested at least once each term. The evacuation and safety of visitors and contractors will be the responsibility of the person who they are visiting or working for.

In accordance with statutory requirements, there is an annual fire safety audit, which includes checking all firefighting equipment and records are maintained. The fire alarm will be tested weekly from different points when the site is not in use and records maintained. All emergency lighting is tested monthly and records maintained.

Responsibility of Staff

The effectiveness of the Fire Safety Policy will depend on the full co-operation of every member of staff, without exception. Co-operation should be encouraged from the highest level. Complying with the fire safety procedures must be regarded as a basic duty by all the staff and an essential obligation for all management responsibility. Senior members of staff are responsible for coordinating the fire evacuation of the school buildings in the event of a fire emergency.

Fire Marshals

























Fire Marshal training should be made role-specific, to include:

- how and when to check areas to ensure that people have evacuated;
- an overview of the School's emergency plan; the role of the First Response Team and Fire Marshals;
- the location of the 'Control' and 'Assembly' Points;
- understanding of the fire detection and alarm system and the fire equipment available;
- reporting procedures for non-compliant issues.

Portable fire-fighting devices

Fire-fighting equipment is sited in corridors and in relevant rooms within easy reach. All devices must be easy to use, clearly displayed and available for use. Staff should be made aware of the methods of operation and limitations of every fire extinguisher in school. All devices are tested regularly to meet the required standard under the site staff's responsibility. All fire extinguishers should be red in colour and give clear instructions on how to tackle certain types of fire. A colour-coded reference guide should display which extinguishers are suitable. It is essential that you know which type of extinguisher to use on which type of fire (see chart below).

KNOW YOUR FIRE EXTINGUISHER COLOUR CODE

Classification of Fire Risk	Cylinder Colour Coding and Contents				
	WATER	FOAM	CO ₂ CARBON DIOXIDE	DRY POWDER	VAPORISING LIQUIDS
↓					
	Unsafe all voltages Wood, Paper Textiles etc.	Unsafe all Voltages Flammable liquids	Safe all voltages Flammable liquids	Safe all voltages Flammable liquids	Safe all voltages Flammable liquids
A Paper, Wood, Textile and Fabric					
B Flammable Liquids					
C Flammable Gases					
 Electrical Hazards					
 Vehicle Protection					

COLOUR CODING IN ACCORDANCE WITH BS EN3: 1996 - PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS
FLAMMABLE GAS FIRES MUST BE EXTINGUISHED BY THE EMERGENCY SERVICES ONLY

Fire Drill

Staff must make themselves aware of the location of the fire extinguishers. All employees and voluntary helpers are shown where the evacuation procedures are displayed to show the procedure to evacuate the premises. They can be provided with a paper copy if they require one.

- exit routes;
- checking the children are present;
- their responsibilities regarding the children they are supervising.

A copy of these procedures are displayed throughout all of TGS sites.

Execution

Our fire safety policy regime mirrors closely The Gower School Health and Safety Policy (H&S) systems and procedures. Fire safety is by definition a subset of the current H&S systems and procedures. Our School's H&S Policy includes a statement that the Principal of the School has a duty to take reasonable precautions to safeguard the lives of employees and other visitors. In this case, children at our school are included as employees rather than visitors to the site. Responsibilities are as follows:

	Tasks	Comments
The Proprietor/Principal	Responsible in law for what happens on the premises	Takes professional advice
Responsible Person (Premises Manager)	Plans, implements, monitors and reviews the policy	Ensures annual audits are in place
Admin Team	Assists the Responsible Person in the Management of H&S including fire precautions	Premises Manager supports The Principal in this
Employees	Comply with H&S policy and take reasonable steps to protect themselves and colleagues at work.	SLT with all staff
Visitors	Should be briefed on any H&S issues that will affect them, as required, when they are on site	Clear instructions provided to visitors and contractors

Risk Assessment.

Named office staff assist the Responsible Person to produce the risk assessment for the purpose of identifying the general fire precautions that she needs to take. The risk assessment is based on an understanding of the relevant legislation, guidance and good practice in the fire prevention field.

Building Design

The Proprietor/Principal will be responsible for ensuring that the design of the buildings complies with all relevant fire safety legislation. The schools' Architect and Buildings Inspector will advise the Proprietor/Principal on building design matters and applicable Construction Design and Management (CDM) Regulations, which may be relevant to, or affect school fire safety.

Design of Fire Alarm Systems

The office staff in conjunction with the Premises Manager are responsible for the weekly testing of all fire alarm systems within the school buildings.

Maintenance of Fire Alarm Systems

The Premises Manager in conjunction with the Maintenance and Operations Manager will be responsible for ensuring the ongoing maintenance of all the school's fire alarm systems, within the school buildings.

Emergency Lighting

The Premises Manager and office staff will ensure the routine testing and ongoing maintenance of the emergency lighting systems, is carried out in all the school premises.

Fire Precautions Maintenance

The following arrangements have been made for maintenance:

	Item	By whom
Ongoing	Check signage, safety clips on fire extinguishers, ensure that fire doors are not wedged open	Premises Manager
Weekly/monthly	Test fire panels on Tuesday at 11am at nursery and Thursday at 10am for Cynthia Street Test Emergency lighting (monthly)	Office Staff
Once a term	Fire drills	Premises Manager and Office staff
Six monthly	Test all fire panels & alarms	External Contractor

Annually	Test all fire extinguishers, check all fire blankets. Replace any missing fire evacuation signs.	External Contractor and Premises Manager
----------	---	--

Smoking & Vaping

Smoking can be a major source of fires. Smoking and/or vaping on the school's premises is prohibited.

Good Housekeeping

This involves managing the accumulation, storage and removal of sources of fuel and ignition. It ensures that these sources are kept separate and to an absolute minimum. To contribute to good housekeeping:

- Remove waste boxes, paper, card, aerosol cans, chemical containers and other flammable waste materials from the premises
- Follow waste management procedures
- Remove faulty equipment or equipment with signs of damage from use immediately, such as frayed wiring or burn marks. Report to senior staff and/or office.
- Never cover up equipment while it's switched on or overload plug sockets, as this could lead to overheating and create an ignition source. Extension cables should not be plugged into one another.
- Never store flammable waste in hallways, near fire escape routes or against heaters and electrical equipment
- Clean up spills immediately e.g. cleaning chemicals, cooking oils and baking substances such as flour
- Consider the safety of hanging items such as classroom displays – make sure they are not put up near ignition sources or ventilation grilles.
- Do not bring electrical items into the school from outside, such as mobile phone chargers or vape chargers which plug into electrical sockets. All electrical items used must be provided by The Gower School and are subject to yearly Portable Appliance Testing.

Storage

- Minimise how much paper you use, store and dispose of
- Cleaning chemicals, chemicals and art supplies should be kept in appropriate fire-resistant cupboards or storerooms.
- All cupboards/storerooms/containers which hold flammable materials must be locked
- Avoid storing large quantities of flammable materials against walls, such as gym mats, as this would enable fire to spread rapidly.

Training

SLT will arrange annual training for staff.

Practice Evacuation

There will be a number of practice evacuations each term. The aim of the practices is to familiarise children and staff with evacuation procedures, a full evacuation is considered successful when a building is evacuated within 4 minutes. The Premises Manager will set off the fire panel and monitor the time it takes to evacuate the buildings; these details are to be passed to the Responsible Person for record keeping purposes. The following practices should occur every half term.

	Detail	By whom
Whole School and Nursery	One daytime evacuation practice	Premises Manager / Fire Marshal, in conjunction with the Principal

The Gower School has an Emergency Evacuation Plan which is displayed throughout all of our buildings.

Overview of hazards, people at risk, level of risk, records and review

Identification of hazards.

- **Sources of ignition.** Sources of ignition include: electrical sockets and equipment, maintenance, items covered under COSHH; and specific rooms such as science room, boiler room and kitchens. These areas are kept under review to minimise risk, and to ensure that there are few chances of mechanically generated sparks. Contractors are supervised and have to comply with The Construction (Design & Management) Regulations (CDM 2015) and school policies in relation to Fire Safety and Health and Safety.
- **Sources of fuel** Mains, gas and electric.
- **Sources of oxygen.** All fire doors must be kept shut to reduce the levels of draft (an accelerant) and slow the spread of fire; there are no stored oxygen containers on site. All doors are fire doors and **must not** be wedged open.

People at risk.

- **By day** - children, staff and visitors.
- **By night** - there is nobody in the school.
- **During school holidays** - there are occasions when the school is used for activities and continuing professional development but these numbers are low. Contractors may also be present.
- **People especially at risk** - child or adult with a physical disability on the school site.

Evaluation of risk

- **Overall evaluation of risk.** The overall evaluation of the risk of a fire starting is assessed as Low to Medium because there are few ignition sources and combustible materials are kept away from them. Smoking and/or vaping is not permitted anywhere on the school premises or the entrance area. Electrical equipment is inspected regularly and tested, and the chance of arson is assessed as low due to the security arrangements of the school.
- **Evaluation of risk to people from fire.** Risk to people from fire is low.
- **Reduction of fire hazards.** All adults are briefed on induction and annually on the importance of good housekeeping to prevent the build-up of combustible material.

Reduction of risk to people.

- **Detection and warning** - The premises are well protected with fire detection equipment, emergency lighting and warning bells.
- **Firefighting** - Certain staff are trained Fire Marshals. The school policy is not to fight fire unless it is to ensure a safe evacuation.
- **Fire Marshals** - All Fire Marshals will receive regular training.
- **Escape routes** - The school follows the principal that main escape routes are all appropriately sign posted.
- **Signs and notices** - Signs and notices comply with H&S (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996.

Fire Prevention and Control - Fire Marshals

Introduction

The Principal, assisted by the Premises Manager is responsible for ensuring that all procedures, precautionary measures and safety standards are clearly understood and complied with.

The fire marshals are as follows:

18 North Road: Jacqui Chittoi, Becca Lewis, Laura Gethin, Sediqa Omar, Klaudia Majdosz, Yanet Abraham Haile, Ebru Kaya, Morgan McKendry Brown, Monique Tamang

28 North Road: Tajana Baldwin, Mehtab Fazel, Debbie Nell, Christine Byrne, Charlotte Bedford

Primary School: Bruna Costa, Cristiana Tavares, Elizabeth Gabbidon, Asha Basith, Lucy Wragg, Charles Mole, Joey Haigh, Katie McDermott, Sylvia Peternell, George Day, Rui Tang, Stephen Lane, Lia Frasn, Lucy McDermott, Akira Rock, Guiliano Cinotti, Luca Bishop, Daniel Salmon, Laura Jones, Amita Morton, Rebecca Falloon, Ellie Fieldsend

Afterschool Club: Akira Rock, Elizabeth Gabbidon, Christine Byrne, Lia Frasn, Rajaa Sajil, Sharon Holland

Holiday Fun Club: Akira Rock, Elizabeth Gabbidon, Katie McDermott, Lia Frasn, Rajaa Sajil, Sharon Holland, Samira Hatamizadeh

The Fire Marshals will have completed the "How to be an effective Fire Warden of Fire Marshal" in Educare training.

Tasks

Fire Marshals have the following tasks (in priority order):

1. To ensure that all occupants of a building evacuate the building in an orderly manner using the recognised evacuation routes.
2. To assist with the control of children, staff and visitors in the fire assembly area
3. If there has been a false alarm, the Principal/Senior member of staff will decide when to silence all fire panels and re-enter the building.
4. Reporting faulty firefighting and fire detection equipment to the Principal/Senior member of staff.
5. To make recommendations to improve fire safety.

Appropriate procedures are in place for ensuring that safety precautions are properly managed, formulated and disseminated to all staff. These procedures include fire drills and the use of fire extinguishers. A copy of the school evacuation procedure is available in all key areas. On leaving the room, the exit routes are clearly displayed. All staff, visitors and volunteers should be fully conversant with the evacuation procedures in the case of a fire/bomb threat. The procedure for this purpose at The Gower School is in full at the bottom of this document.

Bomb Threats

The aim is to prevent bomb or incendiary attacks, or when this is not possible, to minimise their effects in buildings to which members of the public must have access. This must be done without imposing unacceptable restrictions on them and the Principal must weigh the seriousness of the threat against the need to maintain business as usual and decide the extent to which counter measures should be adopted.

Public Access

Consideration should be given to dividing the areas to which the public usually require access from the rest of the building. The rest of the building can then be made a secure area.

Package Bombs and Hoaxes

Postal bombs are unlikely to be in large parcels, rather in flat packages. Staff should be on their guard for:

- The post mark
- Stains – these could be sweating explosives.
- The smell – usually an aroma of marzipan or almonds indicate an explosive.
- The sound – listen for unusual sounds

Telephone Calls

These are more of a common occurrence than parcels. All members of staff should be aware of the necessary procedures should they receive such a call:

- Alert security/police immediately.
- Above all, be calm, listen carefully, and report exactly what is said.

Fire and Bomb Alerts

If an alert is a practice, then the fire brigade must be informed before the evacuation of the premises takes place.

Prevention of Arson

Arsonists in schools often start their first fires by chance.

There is no planning or organisation. This chance element in arson makes some people believe that arson is the hardest of all the security risks to control. With the number attacks on schools rising rapidly and the number of large fires also rising fast, some credence is given to this view.

Larger scale attacks – a serious attempt to burn the whole school down – normally come after the smaller-scale events. Some arson is aimed at hiding the details of another crime – although this is rare in schools. The school policy on arson prevention is therefore:

- As far, as is practicable inflammable materials are locked away.
- All waste bins are emptied.
- The Principal makes occasional unannounced checks that the procedure is being adhered to.

Fire and Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Evacuation Procedure	<p><u>ACTION ON DISCOVERING A FIRE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On discovering a fire, break the nearest fire glass and proceed to the nearest safe fire exit. • If you hear the fire alarm proceed to the nearest safe fire exit. • The school administrator will call the Fire Brigade (999). The address is 10 Cynthia Street, N1 9JF. • It is important that children are evacuated to safety, do not stop to collect your belongings, go straight to fire exit and assembly point. Each teacher is responsible for their class. • If possible, close the door behind you to prevent the spread of fire. • The school administrator will collect the mobile phone, parent contact file, staff contact file, staff signing sheet, visitors book, office diary and keys and take them to the assembly point. • Fire equipment is provided on each floor. Fire equipment is to be used for safe evacuation only. • Fire Marshals sweep their designated areas and will report to the Evacuation Coordinator (nominated office member wearing lanyard) at the Control Point to confirm they have swept their area • In the event of casualties, these will be looked after by the designated first aid persons. • Any incidents will be recorded in the incident book. <p>SUMMONING THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school administrator will dial 999 to call the fire service. Other emergency services will be called if necessary. • In the event of casualties, these will be looked after by the designated first aid staff. • Any incidents will be recorded in the incident book. <p>FIRE DRILLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evacuation drills are carried out at least once a term. • The first drill should be carried out as soon as the new academic year begins so that all new children and staff are aware of the procedures.
Raising the Alarm	Press fire call points until alarm sounds
Calling the Fire Brigade	Dial 999
Fire Call Points	Located throughout the school, will sound the alarm which is connected to local fire station.
Fire Exits	Are signed
Emergency Lighting	There is emergency lighting in the school.
Smoke Detection	There are smoke detectors throughout the school
Portable Fire Fighting Appliances	Different types all over the school plus fire blankets.
Fire Doors	All doors are fire doors and must be kept shut at all times.
Fire Signage	Displayed all over the school
Visitor Responsibility	Visitors sign in and staff are responsible for visitors
Meeting Point	CS: On the pavement by the courtyard or Grimaldi Park depending on the severity of the fire or if a terrorist evacuation