Heart of the Forest

Community Special School

Fire Safety Policy

Approved by:	HoF Governing Body	**Date:**	08/07/2026
Signed by Chair of Governors:	Derek Cross	**Date:**	08/07/2026
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Fire Safety Policy

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Version Control

Version	Date	Summary of changes
1	March 2021	Reformatting and update to reflect new staffing structure, inclusion of assembly point map
2	Sept 2021	Updated to include hazardous areas map
3	March 2023	Updated to include new fire wardens
4	May 2024	Updated to include cordless telephones, admin team responsibilities, assembly points & fire wardens. Forest Pulse information removed
5	Nov 2024	Updated new fire wardens and removed leavers.
6	Dec 2024	Updated new fire wardens
7	August 2025	Updated to include responsibilities, vaping & pupil training. Added new wardens & removed leavers.
8	March 2026	Updated fire evacuation procedures
9	May 2026	Updated fire evacuation procedures – zoning of school. Added new wardens & removed leavers.
10	August 2026	Classroom name changes to Fire Policy and Fire Notices, fire wardens updated & updated staff roles.

Policy Statement

As a school we will strive to ensure our employees comply with the Regulatory reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. We will strive to ensure the safety of all persons in the school premises and grounds.

In the event of an outbreak of fire the saving and preservation of life takes precedence over the salvaging of property.

The Regulations

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO), implemented in October 2006 applies to both new and existing school buildings and imposes a number of duties relating to fire safety:

- To ensure that precautions against fire are taken as a matter of routine.
- To ensure that employees and others are aware of their own responsibilities with regard to fire safety.
- To carry out risk assessments.
- To apply the principles of fire prevention.
- To make arrangements for fire safety.
- To eliminate or reduce risks from dangerous substances.
- To have special procedures for serious and imminent danger and for danger areas.
- To have additional emergency measures in respect of dangerous substances.
- To have on the premises means of fire-fighting and fire detection.
- To have emergency routes and exits.
- To ensure that premises and equipment related to fire safety are kept in good repair and have regular maintenance.
- To ensure that the 'responsible person' has adequate support and assistance in carrying out the duties.
- To provide information on fire safety to employees, pupils and others on the premises at any time.
- To offer training on fire safety precautions to staff.

Responsibilities

The Headteacher is the designated Responsible Person for fire safety.
Site Manager oversees fire safety systems and maintenance.
Fire Wardens are appointed among staff and trained in evacuation procedures.
All staff are responsible for knowing fire procedures and ensuring pupils follow them.

Responsibility of the Business Manager

- Ensuring arrangements are made in respect of the maintenance of fire safety provision for the school, this will include:-

- Fire warning and detection systems are maintained in accordance with the relevant standard (annually) and any recommendations implemented as necessary.
- Fire fighting equipment is subjected to an annual maintenance programme.
- Means of escape are maintained as required.

- Ensuring that a fire risk assessment is carried out every 3 years and that any recommendations are responded to diligently.
- Ensuring that all works undertaken by contractors, relevant to areas of responsibility, are supervised and where "hot works" are to be carried out, that the appropriate approval is completed.
- Ensuring the fire alarm (including remote signalling/monitoring), emergency lighting and firefighting equipment are serviced by a competent person.
- Ensuring portable electrical appliances are maintained as required (PAT).
- Ensuring fixed electrics are inspected at least once every five years.
- Producing a Fire Safety Policy for the school every 3 years or sooner if changes are made to the building or procedures within that time.

Responsibility of the Site Manager:-

- Ensuring all emergency exits are unlocked, clear and useable during times people are in the premises (recommended daily).
- Ensuring every occupied room has a fire action notice.
- Firefighting equipment is in place and undamaged (seals intact - recommended weekly)
- The weekly fire alarm call point check and recording of the fire alarm – (Test key operation of different call point each week in rotation).
- Visual check of fire alarm panel for fault indications (Daily)
- Check that internal Fire Doors are closing fully (Weekly)
- Check fire exit doors are opening freely and operating correctly (Weekly)
- Checking the emergency lighting is in working order (recommended weekly and recorded in log book) and reporting any faults to a member of SLT.
- Check extinguishers (including tags) and fire blankets (Weekly).

Responsibility of all School Staff

All school staff are responsible for maintaining a high standard of fire precautions in areas under their control or influence. In particular, staff should ensure that they are fully aware of the fire procedure. They should ensure that door vision panels and fire exits are kept clear. They should also ensure that pupils for whom they are responsible are aware of the fire procedure.

In particular all staff are responsible for ensuring:-

- Their classroom exit doors are unlocked when the first person arrives. The site manager will lock the exits at night.
- Fire doors are kept shut and NOT propped open
- Tops and fronts of heaters are kept clear
- No items to be placed on top of microwaves or other electronic devices
- There is adequate clearance to the routes of exit doors

- Combustible materials (paper, card, fabrics etc) are not stored near to sockets or lights OR on top of radiators.
- Unnecessary lights or electrical appliances (Computers, printers, TV and video, fans, laminator etc.) are switched off at the end of the day and where possible unplugged.
- Remove all electrical items, plugs and cables from their storage areas when required for their annual PAT test.
- Toasters are only used in the designated areas around the school (Food Tech Room, Staff Room, Jay kitchen & Life skills room). In no circumstances should toasters be used in any other classrooms.

All staff have a responsibility for their own and others fire safety. They should report any possible dangerous issues to the Site Team and SLT for immediate action.

Staff must not carry out actions that could compromise their or others fire safety and where staff are found to carry out such actions they may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Fire Risk Assessments

Regular risk assessments will be made by the SHE (Safety, Health & Environment) team – a member of SLT and the Site Manager. These will

- Identify any person especially at risk in a case of fire,
- Review the evacuation plan and each rooms instructions for this
- Look at the past years records of fire practices etc
- Ensure the provision of adequate training
- Review the provision of instruction to students or visitors to the building

Smoking

Smoking and vaping is prohibited on the school premises.

Personalised Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)

As a special school all Heart of the Forest pupils have direct assistance from Teachings Assistants in their class team. Evacuation methods are included in each individual personalised emergency evacuation plan for those it is applicable.

Pupil Training

Pupils are taught fire safety awareness appropriate to their age.

Staff Training

Every member of staff will receive instructions in fire precaution during induction. All members of staff will receive regular updates and feedback after each practice to ascertain if any procedures need revising.
Students and visitors will be instructed at the beginning of their attendance.
Designated Fire Wardens will receive appropriate training and refresher updates. All staff will receive fire awareness sessions as part of their INSET every 3 years.

Fire Drills

Fire drills will be carried 3 times a year. This will include a simulated evacuation drill. When a fire drill is held it will be recorded in the fire logbook.

Advice on the procedure in the event of a fire

Discovering a fire

1. If you discover a fire operate the nearest fire alarm call point by pressing the emergency alarm point and exit the building by the nearest fire exit.
2. Do not attempt to fight the fire unless it is blocking safe exit or can easily be extinguished such as in the kitchen areas with a fire blanket.
3. Inform a member of Senior Leadership Team as soon as it is practical to do so.
4. Stay with your class in the designated assembly point until you are told it is safe to re-enter the building.

On hearing fire alarm

1. If you hear the fire alarm, evacuate your classroom to your playground immediately as detailed in the Fire Safety Notice for the school.
2. If you are not in your classroom, the Class Teacher or the leading TA will take responsibility for deciding on the safest means of escape from that room/corridor to the nearest playground.
3. Switch your radio to channel 6.1.
4. Stay with your class in your playground until you are told via radio or by a fire warden if:
    i If you need to evacuate to your designated whole school assembly point, where you stay with your class until you are told it is safe to re-enter the building
    ii Or it is safe to re-enter the building in the case of a false alarm

After the event

1. Do not re-enter the building until advised to do so.

Know

1. Your means of escape
2. The nearest fire alarm point
3. The assembly point

SAFE EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Class Playground Evacuation

Upon hearing the fire alarm

1. Evacuate the classroom immediately to the playground
2. Close and lock all doors behind you
3. Stay with your class in this designated assembly point until given you are told it is safe to return to your classroom or to complete a **whole school evacuation** (below) via radio or by a fire warden.

Whole School Evacuation

Upon being told it not safe to return to your classroom, a whole school evacuation is required:

1. Evacuate the playgrounds immediately
2. Close and lock all gates behind you
3. Proceed to your designated class assembly point on the field
4. Stay with your class in your designated assembly point until you are told it safe to re-enter the building.

Class groups

Escort all pupils from the building to your playgrounds via the classroom external door. From playgrounds, escort all pupils to your designated assembly point on the field.

Where the proximity of a fire may cause the most direct route to the Assembly point to be unsafe, the class teacher will make a considered decision as to the safest route.

If a child runs off or tries to run off it is important to prioritise the safety of the class. The class teacher should continue to take the class to the assembly point delegating a TA to watch the absconder. Upon arrival at the assembly point they should immediately let a member of SLT know. The groups with a high number of wheelchairs are Badgers and Finch.

Non-Mobile pupils

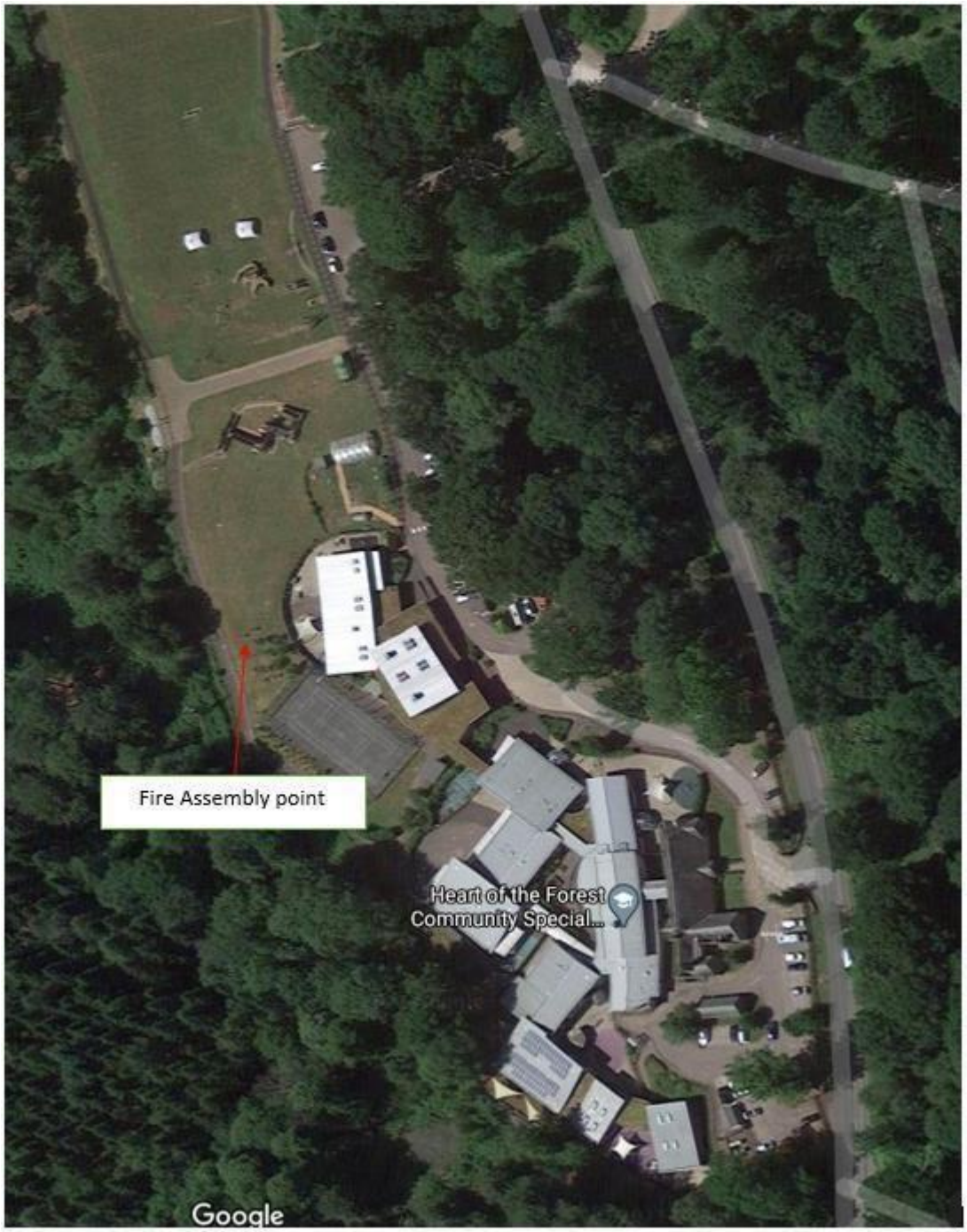
Where possible, non-mobile pupils will be evacuated in their wheelchairs. In the interest of a quick evacuation, if these pupils are on another wheeled piece of equipment they can be evacuated using this. If non mobile pupils are on the floor when the alarm sounds, staff will make a decision as to whether to use a hoist to return them to their chairs. Should they decide that the amount of time this will take will compromise safety then a two-man lift may be used to return the pupil to their chair for safe evacuation. Two males may lift a maximum of 35kg and two females, 22kg without specific training although individual staff will be risk assessed as necessary. Parents/carers will be informed that staff will make this decision and only staff who have agreed to and are appropriately trained will undertake any lifting over the above mentioned weights.

Hydrotherapy Pool Evacuation

Evacuation will be via the door to the corridor and then via the nearest safe emergency exit through Sparrow classroom external door. Blankets are provided to ensure that staff and pupils are kept as warm as possible. Persons evacuating from the pool area can remain under the cover of the canopy outside Sparrow classroom if it is deemed safe to do so. Non mobile pupils can be evacuated on the changing bed if it is deemed necessary due to time implications of returning them to their wheelchairs.

WHOLE SCHOOL EVACUATION ASSEMBLY POINT

After class playgrounds evacuation, take the path to the grassed area behind and to the side of the MUGA. Class Assembly Pictures are attached to the fence for whole school evacuation.



Moving down the path from the school exit road to the assembly point may be difficult for some pieces of equipment and may cause distress to the pupil involved. In this case a member of staff will remain with the pupil at the gate and a member of SLT or school administrator will be informed that the pupil has been safely evacuated.

Evacuation Roles and Responsibilities

Due to the limited mobile phone network coverage on site the following phones may be used to contact the emergency response centre/emergency services.

- Cordless telephones to be taken to the field
- Landline telephone located in the water plant room opposite the biomass building.

- Landline telephone located in the Pavilion.
- Any other landline telephone available in an area away from the main building.

A mobile signal is sometimes obtainable by the exit gate.

The admin team is responsible for taking the gate keys, iPad, cordless telephones, radios, second copies of the school registers and off-site visit forms to the whole school assembly point. Pupils should already be accounted for by the Class Teacher or Leader.

Class teachers are responsible for directing all other adults in their classes to ensure safe evacuation of all pupils as outlined above. In the case where a Teaching Assistant is the senior adult in the room they will take on this responsibility. Class teachers will take the registers once in the class playgrounds and again at the assembly point on the field and let SLT, admin team or fire warden know if any children or adults are missing.

Catering staff are responsible for their own evacuation. Initially they should report to reception and await confirmation if a whole school evacuation is required. They should always respond to the fire alarm and evacuate via their nearest emergency exit and assemble in the same assembly area as the rest of the school. The supervisor is responsible for checking that all catering staff or visitors are accounted for. If a member of the catering staff has activated the fire alarm accidentally, reception should be immediately informed.

Therapists on site are responsible for their own evacuation and that of any pupils they may be working with.

Appointment of Fire Wardens

The appointed fire wardens are the members of the SLT, the AHTs, the site team, the pastoral team and the admin team.

Responsibility of the Fire Wardens

In the event of an alarm sounding during the course of the school day, the fire wardens TOGETHER will:-

- Pick up walkie talkies to maintain contact.
- Attend the fire alarm panel in reception to ascertain the cause of the fire alarm and identify the activation zone.
- Check the address of the device in alarm and the descriptor (fire alarm is point addressable so only one room or area will need to be checked to confirm the cause)
- Proceed and investigate the reason for activation IF IT IS SAFE TO DO SO.
- Look for signs of a fire NOT A FIRE ITSELF. Most classrooms and teaching spaces can be viewed through door panels and windows so there will be no need to open doors if smoke is detected.
- Proceed along fire door protected corridor routes checking the top of doors with back of hand for signs of heat before opening.

If no fire is detected fire warden will contact the emergency remote response centre on 01752 204911 to inform them that it is a false alarm.

If fire is detected the fire wardens will evacuate by the nearest exit and await the arrival of the Fire Brigade.

Fire appliances will be despatched automatically if no-one at the school can be contacted.

Fire Warden	**Dates of qualification**
Mary Boustead	22/10/2024 – 22/10/2027
Denise Eaton-Ehrlich	14/03/2025 – 14/03/2028
Samantha Golding	14/03/2025 – 14/03/2028
Richard Grice	17/12/2024 – 17/12/2027
Kelly Lindenberg	22/10/2024 – 22/10/2027
Olivia Lord	02/05/2024 – 02/05/2027
Claire Manfield	22/10/2024 – 22/10/2027
Lucyna Mansfield	29/06/2026 – 29/06/2029
Clair O'Brien	17/12/2024 – 17/12/2027
Laura Small	13/06/2024 – 13/06/2027
Lizzie Spowart	02/05/2024 – 02/05/2027

Appendix 1 useful information

Meeting the brigade

The fire wardens will identify themselves to the fire brigade on their arrival. In doing so, vital information can be relayed to the fire officer which will dictate the necessary actions to be carried out by the fire brigade.

The fire brigade will want to know:

- Is everyone accounted for?
- If anyone is missing: How many? What is their usual location? Where were they last seen?
- Where is the fire? What is on fire? (It may not be apparent).
- Are there any hazardous substances involved in the fire or stored on site?

Events Taking Place Out of School Hours Such as School Prom or External Lettings

Where events are organised by the school outside normal school hours the fire evacuation procedures will be adjusted to suit the area of the school being used and the site manager will ensure the appropriate fire exits are unlocked and usable for the duration of the event. The adjustments will be arranged before the event and all key staff will be notified.

Where there are lettings of the school buildings by other organisations outside normal school hours, the Business Manager will discuss a suitable evacuation procedure with the group depending on what area of the school is being used. This procedure will include arrangements for evacuation. If there is evidence of fire from the outside of the building the group will dial 999 immediately. The group will remain in the agreed assembly point (if it is safe to do so), until a school fire warden/fire brigade attends. When alarms are activated out of school hours the emergency response centre will automatically contact the school fire wardens, who will attend school. They will talk to the group to ascertain where the alarm was activated. The fire warden will wait for the fire brigade to arrive and show them into the building by the Headteachers office (providing it is safe to do so) to check the fire panel in main reception. The fire warden will exit the building and leave the fire brigade to check the premises.

Checklist for persons hiring the school premises

Discuss with the *hirer* the fire safety procedure as displayed in school and agree any adjustments as required, in particular:

- Show them the location of the fire alarm call point and describe the way it operates.
- Emphasise that the first action on discovering a fire is to raise the alarm *even if the fire is small*.
- Describe the sound of the fire alarm and the action to be taken in when it sounds, in particular leaving the building (exits may need to be reviewed depending on what areas of the school are being used), with any *persons for whom* the *hirer* is responsible and going to the assembly point.
- Describe and walk the escape routes and alternative escape routes that *the hirer* is likely to need to use and show the operation of any push bars or exit fittings.
- Explain that an automatic call is made when the alarms are activated and where the nearest telephone point can be found. Give clear instructions of location of school for them to relate if necessary.

Appendix B - Hazardous area map



Pool plant room, Sodium Bi-Sulphate and Sodium Hypochlorite

Oil and gas and bin storage