

Widford Lodge

PREPARATORY SCHOOL



12b

Fire Risk Prevention Policy

This policy applies to all pupils at Widford Lodge School including those in the EYFS

Reviewed and Approved by the Proprietor: September 2025

Next Review: September 2026

Fire Risk Prevention Policy

Widford Lodge recognises and accepts its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable the health and safety of pupils, staff and others using or visiting the school premises. To this end the following measures have been put in place.

The school's primary focus is for the safety of its children, employees and visitors, to that end the fire safety management of the school is based around "life safety". To achieve this, the school will ensure:

- Appropriate advice, competence and resources are provided to carry out the preventive and protective measures required by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order.
- A suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment is completed annually or when significant changes occur.
- A management framework to support the Proprietor and Headteacher to fulfil the role of the Responsible Person is in place to ensure the above objectives are met.
- Appropriate information, instruction and training is provided to all staff and to people who may be affected by the school's activities.
- The school is a safe environment and promotes fire prevention at all times.
- The school is aware of the importance of eliminating or reducing the risks from dangerous substances and takes appropriate action to limit their presence on site and to control their storage and use as necessary, including having a register and COSHH sheets.

The school has put procedures in place to protect records but this is not the primary focus.

The school aims to provide an environment which is safe and which promotes fire prevention at all times. To suitably manage the fire risk within the school environment the management has designated responsible people with specific tasks.

The Proprietor and Headteacher are ultimately the recognised responsible people. In practice responsibility for fire safety is delegated to the Headteacher who manages the school and its fire safety on a day to day basis. The Headteacher has specific areas of responsibility but has delegated defined duties to support staff. The Headteacher acts as Head Fire Warden in the event of an evacuation: in her absence, the Deputy Head Academic is Head Fire Warden and should both be offsite, the Deputy Head Pastoral is Head Fire Warden. The Proprietor as the employer is held by strict liability under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order where the premises are to any extent under their control.

This policy applies to all relevant school activities, is written in compliance with current UK health and safety legislation, is provided to staff and reviewed annually. It sets out clear objectives in respect of fire prevention

There is a clear fire management system in place to ensure that the school suitably manages the fire risk. The system seeks to anticipate and proactively identify the impact of any proposed changes. The management of the school identify any alternative protection and management measures that will be required as a result and ensures that they are implemented. The implementation of corrective actions is ongoing following each risk assessment review with priority given to the highest risks.

The staffing level provided is specifically appropriate to the fire safety requirements of a primary school and training ensures that there are sufficient numbers of staff trained in all aspects of fire prevention, fire

protection and evacuation procedures at all times, with provision for contingencies, sickness or holiday absences, to ensure that all occupants are assisted or supported to make their way out of the building effectively in an emergency.

Fire Risk Assessment

A fire risk assessment is carried out annually in all areas of the school by Paul Blacketer of Assured Fire Safety Ltd. Control measures have been put in place according to need. These assessments are recorded and are open to re-examination on a regular basis or when circumstances change that affect the risk of fire in an area. These changes include, but are not limited to: structural changes which may affect the spread of fire, change to the use of the premises which may affect the risk rating, change to work processes or equipment which may introduce new fire hazards or a change in the number of people using the premises to ensure escape routes can safely accommodate numbers. The Proprietor is responsible for ensuring that the control measures identified in the fire risk assessment are in place. The implementation of corrective actions is ongoing following each risk assessment review, with priority given to the highest risks.

Fire Management Responsibilities

The Proprietor is responsible for ensuring that:

- legislative requirements are met
- testing, maintenance or repairs are initiated and funded as required
- the school has a fire safety management policy (called fire risk prevention policy) and this policy is reviewed annually
- a Fire Risk Assessment is completed and reviewed annually by a competent person
- recommended actions derived from the fire risk assessment are completed
- fire safety systems and equipment are inspected and tested to ensure they remain in good working condition and the maintenance / testing of all fire fighting systems and equipment is completed, up to date and recorded in the fire log book
- arrangements are in place to inspect fire safety management of the premises
- the school emergency plan and evacuation procedures are in place and regularly reviewed
- the school has a major incident evacuation plan
- there is provision of suitable fire safety systems i.e. fire alarm, automatic detection and emergency lighting
- there is provision of suitable fire safety equipment such as fire doors, fire signs and fire fighting equipment
- any fire prevention officer's recommendations and/or enforcement notices are complied with
- the activities of contractors are adequately monitored and controlled and in instances where contractors create hazardous conditions and refuse to eliminate them or take action to make them safe, such actions will be taken as necessary to protect the safety of school staff, pupils and visitors

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that:

- this policy is clearly communicated to all relevant persons
- Staff are notified of the significant findings of the fire risk assessment

- All pupils, employees, visitors and others who use the building are made aware of the fire safety precautions and the fire evacuation procedures
- Fire awareness training and fire safety management information, instruction and training is provided to all staff and appropriate consultation arrangements are in place for staff
- Fire warden training is provided for designated staff
- An emergency fire drill is undertaken every term
- Specific personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPS) for staff and/or pupils with special needs and or disability are prepared, agreed with pupils' parents and communicated to all relevant staff, as well as being reviewed following significant changes to the infrastructure or the building or substantial events. Where necessary, suitable emergency evacuation equipment will be available and staff will receive appropriate training in its use
- All servicing and maintenance records are held on file and the fire safety logbook is maintained up to date
- Fire safety is a standing agenda item for the health and safety committee, attended by the Proprietor and fire safety procedures are reported to the Proprietor as part of the termly Board meetings

When acting as the **Head Fire Warden**, the Headteacher or Deputy Heads are responsible for:

- Collecting all information from teachers
- Controlling the assembly points
- Ensuring that fire and rescue service access gates are opened
- During a practice noting escape times and general observations for improvement and after the drill, logging details and any follow up actions: debriefing staff on this as necessary
- Liaising with the fire and rescue service to ensure that all relevant information is communicated effectively
- Providing the fire and rescue service with a detailed (laminated) plan of the building
- Ensuring that no one re-enters the building until deemed safe to do so by the fire and rescue service
- Implementing the major incident site evacuation plan if required.

The Site Manager is responsible for:

- Ensuring that there is dynamic monitoring of the fire safety systems and the equipment is kept fully functional at all times when the building is in use
- The formal maintenance and regular testing of the fire alarm
- The formal maintenance and regular testing of the emergency lighting
- The formal maintenance and organising of testing for the automatic detection system
- The maintenance and inspection of the fire fighting equipment
- The maintenance of exit/escape routes and signage
- The completion and upkeep of the school fire log
- Controlling work and maintaining safety systems and maintenance

- Supervision of contractors undertaking work on the premises, including hot work and that hot work permits are in place where required
- Ensuring that fire compartmentation is sound
- Reporting any hazards (which cannot be dealt with) to the Headteacher
- Ensuring that access can be gained at all times to the electric and gas shut off devices
- Ensuring that fire critical plant such as gas boilers are annually serviced in line with the school's planned preventative maintenance regime
- Ensuring that electrical equipment is suitably maintained and that fixed electrical wiring is inspected at least every five years in line with the school's planned preventative maintenance regime.

The **School office staff** are responsible for:

- Calling the fire and rescue service to ensure that they have been notified of the alarm
- Ensuring that class and absence lists are always available and are taken to the assembly points in the event of an evacuation
- Taking emergency medication such as inhalers and epipens to the assembly points and laminated site plans for the emergency services
- Ensuring that visitors and contractors are signed in to the building and are notified as to the evacuation procedures and other appropriate risks information
- Where appropriate escorting visitors and contractors from the building
- Collecting information such as contact details of parents and taking it to the assembly points for use in a major incident / site evacuation.

TEACHERS – ACTING AS FIRE WARDENS

The **Teachers** are responsible for:

- Acting as fire wardens when evacuating their class from the school and closing all fire doors (not on automatic closers) before leaving their area
- Ensuring that their particular classrooms are kept free of hazards which may block escape routes
- Taking an active day to day role in fire prevention and hazard spotting, including reporting fire safety issues and ensuring any exits and escape routes are not blocked
- Ensuring that all electrical equipment used within the classroom has been suitably maintained
- Reporting any hazards (which cannot be dealt with) to the Site Manager
- Ensuring that new pupils are suitably trained in evacuation procedures
- Ensuring that pupils who attend class with a prohibitive injury are assessed and that a personal emergency evacuation plan is put in place
- Following school evacuation procedures including reporting to the head fire warden with the results of the register check
- Controlling their class at the assembly point, ensuring that no pupil re-enters the building or leaves the premises until the head fire warden announces that the school is safe

- If required, being aware and trained in the major incident evacuation plan which may require escorting the class away from the premises to a safe site
- Taking part in any fire safety training provided by the school.

Pupils, in accordance with their age and aptitude, are expected to observe the school's safety rules and the instructions of staff given in an emergency and not wilfully misuse, neglect or interfere with equipment provided for their safety, as well as exercising personal responsibility for the safety of themselves and others.

Contractors are responsible for:

- identifying and controlling any risks arising from their activities and informing the Proprietor of any risks that may affect staff, pupils and visitors;
- being aware of this policy and emergency procedures and complying with these at all times; and
- liaising with the site manager and ensuring any faults are reported.

Staff Training

Evacuations and fire drills are carried out termly, and staff receive training on the location of extinguishers at induction and at intervals thereafter. All staff have the evacuation procedure explained to them as part of their induction, together with a site tour pointing out the location of fire alarm call points, the location of the fire alarm and the location of escape routes, exits and assembly points. The annual September inset training always includes fire safety. Staff have also completed Judicium's eLearning fire safety modules.

Fire Detection System

An automatic fire detection system is in place throughout the main building. This consists of smoke or heat detectors. Activation of any one of these detectors will automatically sound the fire alarm. The system is serviced yearly by MPE under routine maintenance and an emergency call out system is maintained. The system is tested every Monday morning by the site manager by means of activating a call point on a rotation basis.

Portable Fire Fighting Equipment

Appropriate firefighting equipment is placed around the site. Water, Foam, Powder, Carbon Dioxide and Wet Chemical extinguishers are located in areas appropriate to their use. A fire blanket is situated in the kitchen. A specialist contractor, Tennals, services all firefighting equipment annually. It is routinely inspected by the Site Manager and used or misused extinguishers are refilled when required. Extinguishers are accompanied by the regulation signage.

Means of Escape

Certain doors are routinely held open to facilitate the movement of pupils around the building. These doors are closed as part of the evacuation procedure should the fire alarm be activated; doors leading to a fire escape route close automatically when the fire alarm system is activated. Routes are kept free from obstruction and all required pictogram signage is in place to direct persons to a place of safety.

Emergency Lighting

The emergency lighting is inspected on a regular basis and tested to full run down annually.

Fire Procedures

Strict fire procedures are in place. All new members of staff and all new pupils are informed of these procedures on arrival. The procedures are reinforced with set fire drills every term. Fire assembly points are established and their locations and the fire procedure are published throughout the school.

Essex Fire Service

The school aims to have proactive liaison with Essex County Fire and Rescue Service as required, including effective arrangements for notifying changes to occupancy, fire growth characteristics and other relevant factors. The arrangements allow for routine meetings with the fire and rescue service and additional meetings where a change in the building or its occupancy is proposed.

Fire Log Book

All records of inspection, maintenance, termly fire drills and minor incidents, such as false alarms, are kept in a fire log book located in the school office.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

The emergency evacuation procedure detailed as Appendix 1 is made available and explained to all staff and is reviewed following significant changes to the building's infrastructure or following significant events such as fire. Staff are given information on the location of fire alarm call points, the location of the fire alarm and escape routes, exits and assembly points as part of their induction and at annual inset training. The plan is proactive and takes into account a wide range of possible emergencies and incidents, such as shelter, communications, transport, weather, time of day/week/year and traffic, as well as power failures or floods.

The Headteacher will ensure the preparation of specific personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) for staff and/or pupils with special needs and/or disability. All persons with the responsibility of ensuring the safe evacuation of staff and/or pupils with special needs and/or disabilities will be made aware of the personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) in place. The Headteacher will ensure parents are consulted during the preparation of the personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) for their child. All personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) will be reviewed following significant changes to the infrastructure of the building, following substantial events such as fire or changes to the user's individual needs. The Headteacher will ensure emergency evacuation equipment is available, maintained and suitable for the user.

Appendix 1 - Evacuation Procedure

Emergency Evacuation Plan Widford Lodge School	
Academy address and contact number	Widford Lodge Prep School Widford Road Chelmsford Essex CM2 9AN 01245 352581
Plan date	1/9/25
Review date	1/9/26

Fire Alarm Information
The fire alarm panel is located just inside the front door of the main school building. An automatic fire detection system is in place throughout the main building. This consists of smoke or heat detectors. Activation of any one of these detectors will automatically sound the fire alarm, which will then activate the 9 automatic self closing fire doors in the main building. The alarm sound is a continuous warning siren.

Raising the alarm
On discovering a fire, the alarm will be raised by activating the nearest call point.
Action to take on hearing the alarm
The following actions will be taken upon the fire alarm being sounded/raised: • The Headteacher will take charge and lead in the fire evacuation, acting as Head Firewarden. In the event of the Headteacher being absent, one of the Deputy Headteachers will take the lead. • The Head Firewarden will: - o Make sure that the children they are supervising are taken to the assembly point by another adult. - o Take mobile phone and whistle/bell. - o Control the assembly points - o Ensure that fire and rescue service access gates are opened - o Ensure that the inward opening exit door outside Room 3 is hooked open. - o Make a circuit of the school. Shout into each room that there is need for an evacuation. - o Begin at Henry's House, then Reception. - o Check the black gate is open. Pass through and proceed on circuit. - o Pass through Hall gate, which should be open - o Check Laura's Lodge, Art &DT room. - o Continue circuit, checking rooms along the veranda & Science lab. - o Check Hall and changing rooms/toilets - o Arrive at Fire Assembly Point 1 – Prep Lawn. Check with each teacher – Are all children accounted for? Are all staff accounted for? - o Walk down back alley. Check room 7 and changing rooms/toilets. - o Walk to Fire Assembly point 2 – Tennis Court. Check with each teacher – are all children accounted for? Are all staff accounted for?

- o Check all staff are accounted for.
- o Check with office staff that visitors are accounted for.
- o Ask someone to phone emergency services (if not already called).
- o Alert Fire Services of anyone still in building/not accounted for.
- o Everyone accounted for – wait for further instructions from Fire Service
- o Liaise with the fire and rescue service to ensure that all relevant information is communicated effectively
- o Provide the fire and rescue service with a detailed (laminated) plan of the building
- o **Ensure that no one re-enters the building** until deemed safe to do so by the fire and rescue service
- o Implement the major incident site evacuation plan if required.
- o During a practice note escape times and general observations for improvement and after the drill, logging details and any follow up actions: debriefing staff on this as necessary

- **The School Office team** will take the following outside:

Person 1	Person 2
Class registers & absent pupils sheet	Class registers & absent pupils sheet
Staff list	Staff list
Mobile phone	Mobile phone
Green Fire drill box	First Aid kit
Black Playground gate key (in green box)	Timetables
Laminated site plans	Visitor book

- o **Person 1:** Manually open the Playground Gate fully using the Gate Key, go to Tennis Court Assembly point
- o **Person 2:** Go to Prep Lawn Assembly point
- o Ensure that class and absence lists are always available and are taken to the assembly points in the event of an evacuation
 - o distribute Registers to Teachers (correct Register for the class they are taking)
- o Take emergency medication such as inhalers and epipens to the assembly points
 - o distribute pupil medication to teachers, if it is required
 - o take any pupil medication for pupils on the other side of the School (providing it is safe to do so) and distribute to teachers if required
- o Ensure that visitors and contractors are signed in to the building
 - o where appropriate escort visitors and contractors from the building
 - o Collect visitor sign-in book and take it to the assembly points for use in a major incident / site evacuation.
 - o Give the Head Fire Warden the numbers/names of visitors
- o Ascertain whether the emergency services have been called and if not, make the call
 - o Call the fire and rescue service to ensure that they have been notified of the alarm and request attendance by the Fire Service giving their name, name of the building, building address (as detailed above), contact number and details of fire
 - o Be available to assist the Fire Officer until the Fire Brigade make the situation safe and give the all clear
- o Ensure the Playground Gate is closed at the end of a drill or fire alarm
- **Teaching staff acting as Fire Wardens** will:
 - o evacuate the students – ensuring this is done in a calm and orderly manner and providing assistance to those needing additional help. Use the nearest available fire exit

- o sweep the areas of their responsibility to ensure all areas are clear, if safe to do so, and ensure all doors are closed on the way out.
- o Ensure that the first person to reach the exit via the door outside classroom 3 hooks the door open
- o Teacher in room 6 or staff room/library checks that the medical room is empty
- o Fire doors in the main building that close automatically on fire alarm activation can be opened for the purposes of evacuation and must then be closed again
- o take their laptop/ipad with them if they are using them at the time
- **Pre-School:**
 - o unlock the Pre-School main door
 - o Anyone having difficulty evacuating from the 1st floor via the main stair should be taken to the Pre-School balcony, through the main Pre-School door. The Pre-School balcony is a point-of refuge
 - o meet at assembly points. Roll call will be carried out by the class teachers who will confirm all pupils are accounted for to the Head Firewarden.
 - o When the Head Fire Warden confirms it is safe, accompany children back to their lessons
- o **Site Manager will:**
 - o switch off the electrical mains and gas supplies before leaving the building, if safe to do so. The location of these are detailed below
 - o Open Verandah Gates

Disabled and temporarily injured persons

Any students or members of staff with a disability will have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) that would set out how they will be evacuated in an emergency situation. At present we require no PEEPs.

The Office team will discuss evacuation with all visitors on arrival. Visitors will be asked to inform teaching staff of any additional help that they may need to evacuate safely.

School pets and PAT-Dog

The member of staff with the school dog will ensure the dog is on her lead and evacuated via the nearest exit. The school dog and this member of staff will go to the nearest assembly point.

Escape routes

The escape routes from the main building are:

1. Pre-school via the external fire escape
2. Other upstairs rooms via the main staircase and side door
3. Room 3 & 5 via the side door
4. Room 4 via the external door
5. Kitchen and Jolly room via the corridor to the external door
6. Hall via either external door

Means of escape plans have been attached.

Fire assembly point

The assembly points are:

Fire Assembly Point 1 – Prep Lawn

Fire Assembly Point 2 – Tennis court

Fighting fires – Extinguisher use

Fire extinguishers will only be used where:

- Staff have received training and feel confident in their use
- It is deemed safe to do so, e.g. there is a clear means of escape, fire is small or is impeding escape

Personal safety always takes priority and, if, in any doubt, staff should not attempt to extinguish a fire

Location of key safety hazards or other fire-related equipment

- Gas supply shut off: Gas intake
- Mains fuse box: Electrical intake
- Location of fire alarm panel: Inside front door of main school building

Variations to plan

Out of hours arrangement:

Upon hearing the fire alarm, evacuate via the nearest exit and make your way to the assembly point. Dial 999 for the fire brigade. Do not make your way back into the building or collect personal belongings.

School events

Should an evacuation be needed during other times (after school clubs, evening events, weekend events etc.), the adults in charge of the activity are responsible for evacuating participants safely, and the fire service is called. The fire brigade MUST be made aware of any missing persons.

Back up arrangements

In the event the fire alarm system is not operational in any way, all staff will be made aware and back up arrangements implemented.

All staff will ensure they inform staff/students as they evacuate the buildings.

Alternative arrangements will be made to cover staff absences/ leave etc. to ensure there are always a sufficient number of trained staff available on site

Responsibilities

Review emergency procedures:

Headteacher/Proprietor

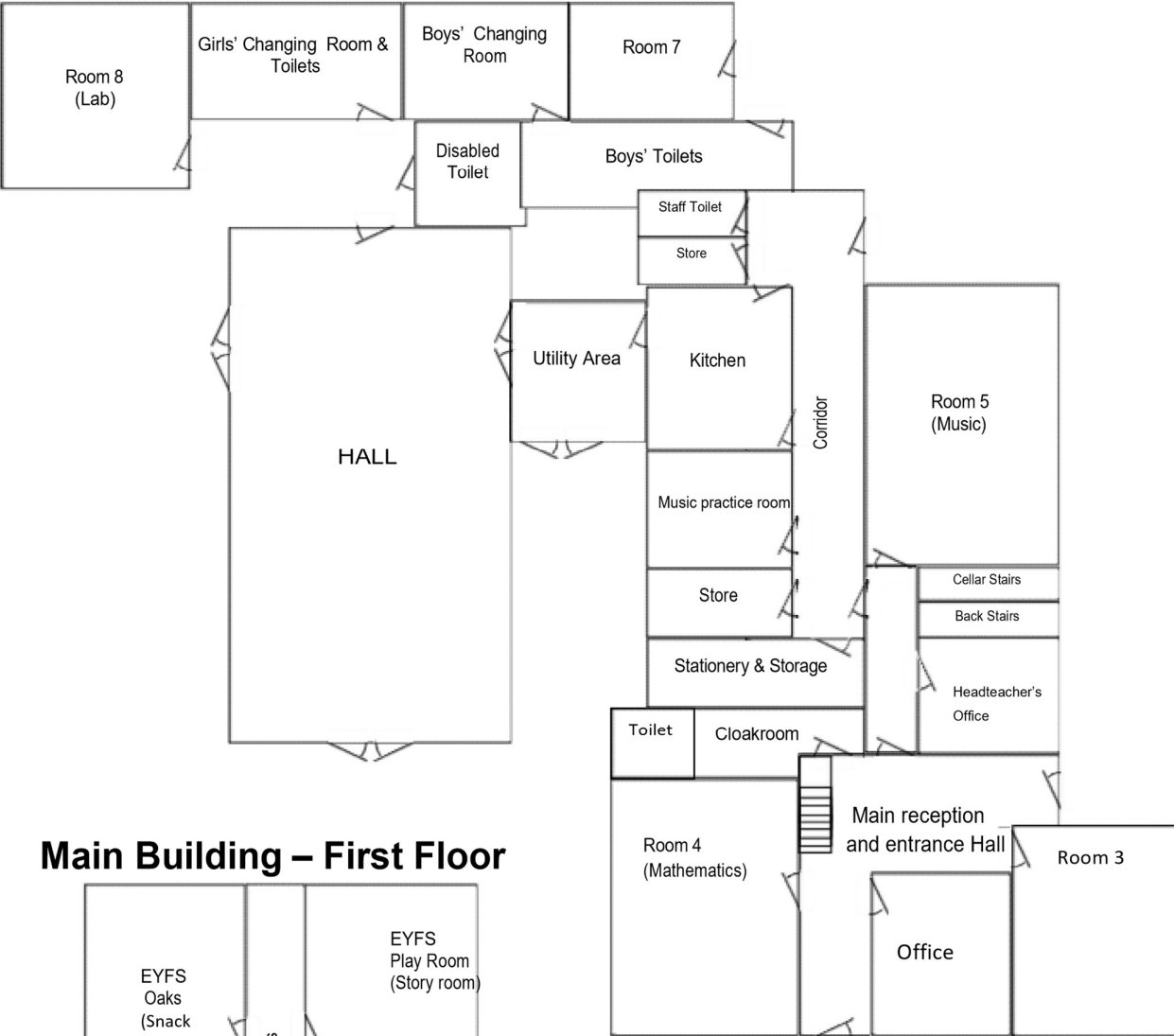
For ensuring adequate staff are on duty to carry out the evacuation plan

Headteacher

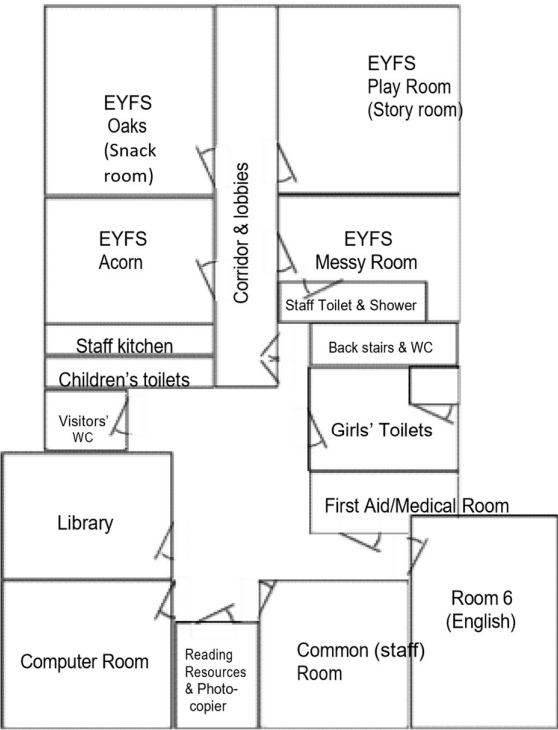
For training staff on the evacuation plan and in their roles and responsibilities

Headteacher

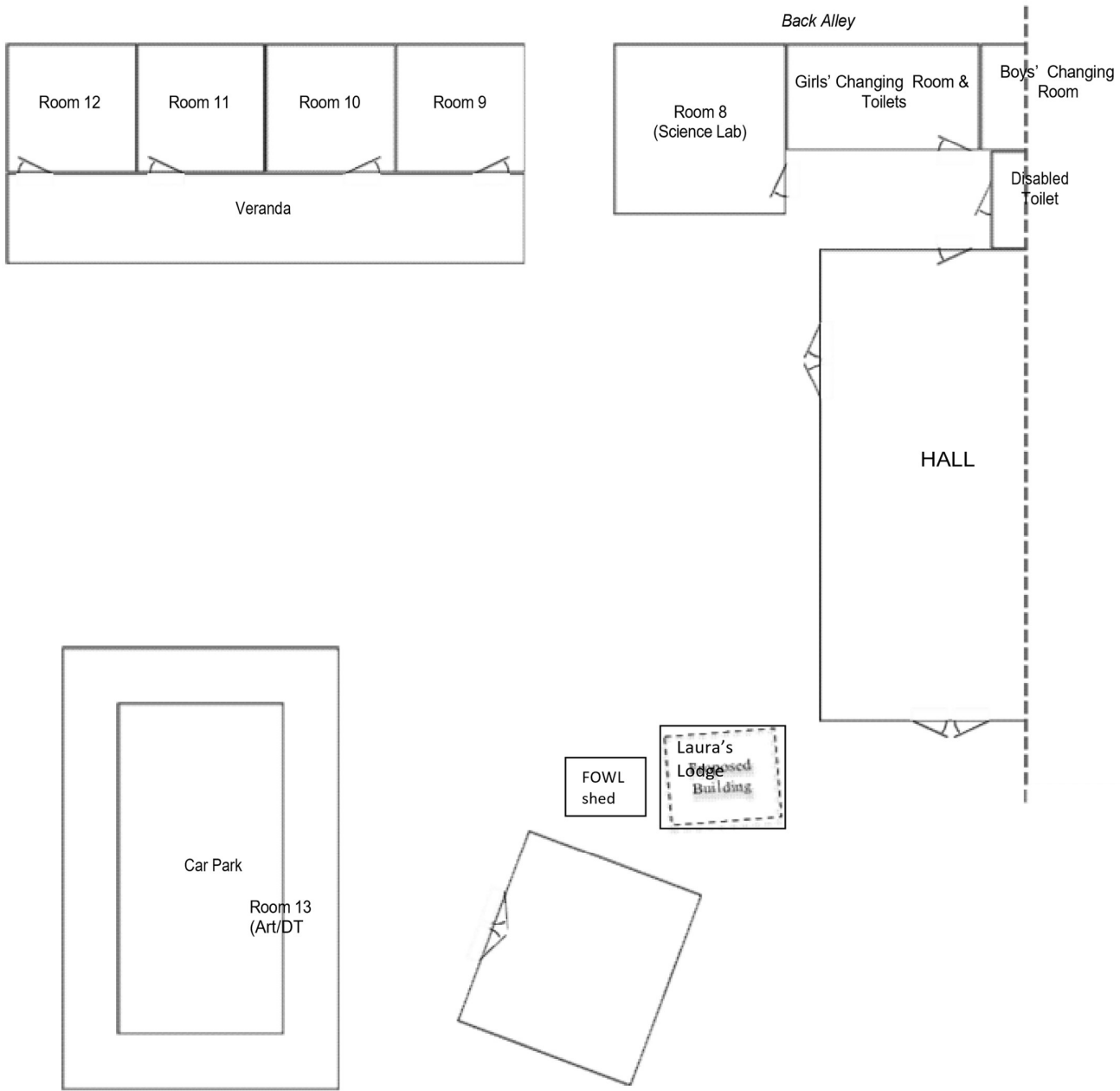
Main Building – Ground Floor



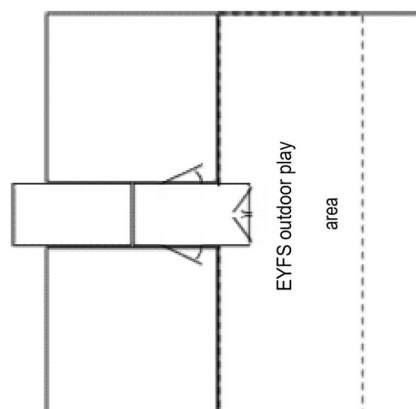
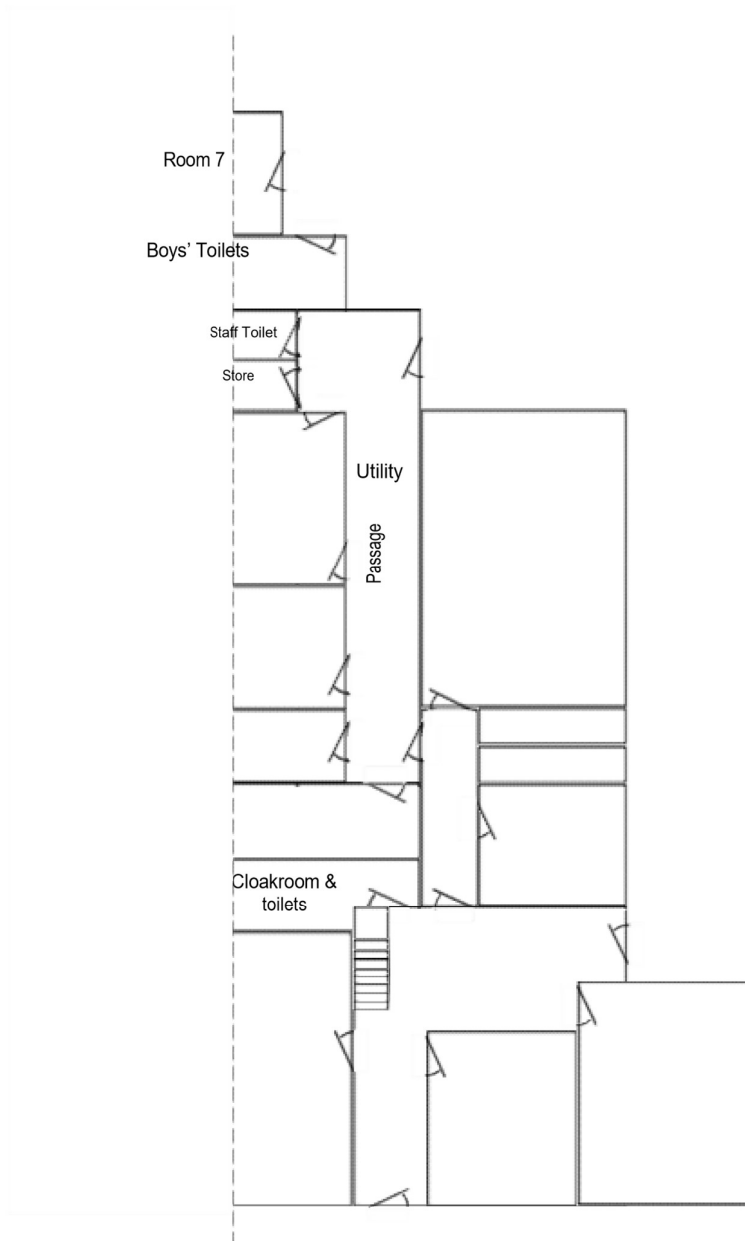
Main Building – First Floor



Outside Classrooms 1



Outside Classrooms 2



Further Guidance

Further guidance can be obtained from organisations such as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) or Judicium Education. The following are some examples. The H&S lead in the school will keep under review to ensure links are current.

- HSE
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/>
- Education and Skills Funding Agency – Fire Safety in new and existing school buildings
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-in-new-and-existing-school-buildings/fire-safetyin-new-and-existing-school-buildings>
- National Education Union (NEU) – Fire Safety <https://neu.org.uk/advice/fire-safety>
- National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) <https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/>
- Local Fire and Rescue Service <https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/Fire-and-Rescue-Services>

Further Resources

- HM Government Fire Safety Risk Assessment – Educational Premises
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/14887/fsra-educational-premises.pdf
- CFOA (Chief Fire Officer Association) – Fire Safety in Schools
<http://www.cfoa.org.uk/download/65172&usg=AOvVaw2fwVya49L0beZPSEmwGOQ0>