



# **Fire Risk Safety, Prevention & Emergency Evacuation Policy & Procedures**

## **PART 1.1: FIRE SAFETY**

### **Introduction**

Our priority is to minimise the risk to life and to reduce injury by maintaining the physical fire safety integrity of the College in ensuring that staff, students and visitors do not add to the fire risk and through safe evacuation of our buildings if a fire breaks out. The fire safety policy, procedures and risk assessments at Thornton College are designed to help our community to respond calmly and effectively in the event that fire breaks out in one of our buildings.

**The safe evacuation of everyone - staff and students alike, is our priority.** Protecting property comes second. No one should attempt to fight a fire at the expense of their own, or anyone else's safety.

All employees should familiarize themselves with the emergency evacuation plan procedures operating on Thornton College's premises.

The evacuation tests combined with a programme of inducting new staff and students with emergency escape plan procedures and the presence of trained Fire Marshalls, help to ensure that the College can be safely evacuated in the event of a fire.

This document forms part of a legal requirement in relation to The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which came into effect in 2006, and The Management of the Health and Safety at Work Regulation 1999. Where the premises is shared between more than one occupier every effort should be made to co-operate and co-ordinate with them, to ensure a consistent approach to implemented systems is adhered to.

Thornton College is regularly inspected by the Fire & Rescue Service and any recommendations are acted upon promptly.

Thornton College is committed to providing a safe environment for its employees, students and visitors. We take our duties in relation to fire safety very seriously. For this reason, we have formulated this policy to help us comply with our legal obligations to staff, students and visitors under The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. These include the provision of a safe place to work and learn, where fire safety risks are minimized, information is provided, and a system is operated to consistently monitor and review our fire safety arrangements. This policy includes fire risk prevention by aiming to eliminate or reduce risks from dangerous substances where possible. Due to its importance, this fire safety policy will work in conjunction with our overall Health and Safety Policy.

## **Role of the College Fire Safety Manager**

The Bursar is the designated College Fire Safety Manager, who is responsible for ensuring that:

- The fire safety policy is kept under regular review by Governors.
- The fire safety policy is promulgated to the entire College community.
- Everyone in the College (including visitors and contractors) is given clear written instructions on where they should go in the event of fire.
- Records are kept of the fire induction training given to new staff by the Head's PA & Head of Estates & Operations.
- Procedures for emergency evacuation are regularly tested and lessons absorbed.
- Fire risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated.
- Fire prevention measures are meticulously followed.
- Fire procedures and risk assessments are reviewed on each occasion that a building is altered, extended or rebuilt, or when new buildings are acquired.

## **Responsibilities of All Employees**

All employees have a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that they do not place themselves or others at risk of harm. They are also expected to co-operate fully with the College in complying with any procedures that we may introduce as a measure to protect the safety and well-being of our staff, students and visitors.

If any employee notices defective or missing fire fighting equipment, they must report this to the Bursar. All employees are responsible for ensuring that fire exits are not obstructed and that doors are closed in empty rooms.

All staff are expected to turn off any electrical item at the end of the school day. They must ensure that all flammable liquids or chemicals should be locked away in appropriate storage. The evening chef must ensure that the catering equipment is switched off at the end of service.

## **Responsibilities of Teaching Staff**

During a fire alarm evacuation teaching staff are responsible for escorting their students safely out of the building in silence and in an orderly fashion. They are responsible for conducting a head count on arrival at the assembly point, and for ensuring that the name of anyone who cannot be accounted for (and, if possible, their likely location) is passed immediately to the Head.

All teaching staff are responsible for turning off the central gas supply in the laboratories at the end of each day.

## Responsibilities of Fire Marshals

We have 14 trained Fire Marshals, with 5 who work in Boarding. Fire Marshals are generally members of the non-teaching staff, such as Technicians, Housemistresses, Maintenance, and administrative staff who do not have specific duties in the event of fire or other emergency for looking after students, although members of the teaching staff may also opt to be trained as Fire Marshals. All Fire Marshals are “competent persons” who have been trained to provide “safety assistance” in the event of a fire. Fire Marshals receive regular refresher training – last carried out on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2026, with a new session booked for all staff on 2nd September 2026 INSET, by UK Fire Training. It is the responsibility of the Head of Estates & Operations to list and record all training. Some staff have been trained through High Speed & National College online training. In the event of a fire, Fire Marshalls may need to give clear instructions as required to keep all persons as safe as is possible. All Fire Marshalls need to be on channel 16 on hearing the Fire alarm to enable clear and direct communication between all Fire Marshalls that require radios.

The responsibilities of the Fire Marshals are to:

1. Ensure all persons have been safely evacuated
2. Assess location of fire activation (Estates Team only)
3. Give any necessary safety instructions
4. Meet fire brigade and assist as necessary

The current Fire Marshals are:

Estates Fire Marshalls:

Mark Leggett  
Chris Mayhew  
Shaun Bluck  
Jarred Chapman  
Jack Atkinson

Security Fire Marshalls:

Joe Travers  
Mark King  
Peter Bayliss  
Denise Curtis

Boarding Fire Marshalls:

Georgina Puchal Carrillo  
Alice Winter  
Elizabeth Dixon  
Erin Macintosh  
Phoebe Wykes

Fire Wardens will have specific duties in relation to evacuation of the building when the fire alarm is activated.

- The Maintenance Fire Marshalls will respond to the fire alarm activation and take the appropriate action as detailed in our Emergency Evacuation Plan. Out of hours the Security Fire Marshalls will be contacted by the Securitas monitoring station in the first instance.
- Security Fire Marshalls will ensure no persons enter the building and suitable access is available to the emergency services. The shift Security Officer is the first call response to the

alarm and should meet the fire brigade on arrival. They are responsible for reporting the situation and the zone of fire activation on the panel.

- Boarding Fire Marshalls are responsible for the safe evacuation of all students and staff and for supervising the students for the duration of time whilst evacuated from the buildings.
- The Trustees are responsible overall for Fire Safety.

### **Responsibilities of Security Officers**

During a normal school day, in the event that a Fire alarm sounds, one of the Grounds Team should remain at the front entrance gates restricting access to the site. They should direct the Fire Brigade to the front entrance. Monitoring the alarm will be actioned by the Estates Team as they are on site.

Outside normal school hours (including during school holidays), the Security Team will be responsible for attending to the activation appropriately until a member of the Estates team arrives on site. This involves identifying the location of the activation on the panel and assessing whether a fire is present. The fire brigade should be called by dialing 999. The Security Team will wait at the front entrance to the College building for the fire brigade and advise them appropriately.

### **Role of the Head of Maintenance**

During a normal school day, in the event that a Fire alarm sounds, the Head of Maintenance should check the fire panel and call 999 if necessary. The Estates team will be ascertaining the cause of why the alarm has sounded. Care should be taken to protect themselves.

The Head of Maintenance will have responsibility for carrying out any necessary maintenance checks on fire-related equipment in line with the current standards and maintaining the appropriate documentation and records. These will include:

- Daily monitoring of access and egress to and from escape routes, exit doors, and general housekeeping with regard to Health & Safety
- Daily ensuring fire escape doors are unlocked and escape routes are not obstructed
- Weekly inspection of maintenance department's chemical storage and flammable liquids
- Weekly fire alarm point testing and recording
- Maintaining the records of fire evacuation times and dates.
- Organising a six-monthly professional check and service of fire detection and warning equipment
- Organising an annual inspection, servicing and maintenance of fire extinguishers
- Organising monthly emergency lighting testing, by way of simulated mains failure, and recording in line with rolling maintenance programme and recording
- Organising yearly inspection and maintenance of fire doors and automatic door closures in line with rolling maintenance programme and recording
- Organising 6 monthly checks for the emergency lights by an outside contractor
- Monthly visual inspections of portable fire fighting equipment in line with rolling maintenance programme and recording
- Organising PAT testing annually
- Organising Dust Extraction Equipment Testing
- Organising in conjunction with the Bursar the fixed wiring testing
- Organising a visual inspection of the fire escape and recording annually
- Maintaining the emergency lighting, fire fighting equipment, automatic door closure and fire escape route registers

- Keeping a list of all flammable liquids and chemicals
- Ensuring fire escape route signage is in line with current standards
- Organising 'on-call' cover for when the College is let or hired for an outside event or function
- Supporting the Bursar in her role in relation to Fire Safety

Where maintenance is undertaken it will be actioned by a 'competent' person (for example, ISO9001 certified or BAFE approved)

Our existing Fire Alarm Provider is Oakpark Alarms Security Services Ltd - BAFE Registered Organisation ID: 302932

- BAFE SP203-1 Fire Detection and Alarm Systems (Design, Installation, Commissioning, Maintenance): Third-Party Certificated by NSI

The Head of Maintenance will also have responsibility in relation to waste management and storage to reduce the risk of arson against the College whether deliberate or accidental.

None of our buildings are clad with Aluminium Composite Material (ACM). This has been checked and verified with professionals.

## **PART 2: EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN**

There are currently two types of siren alarms:

- 1. An intermittent siren indicates a fire warning and advises those present in the building to evacuate the premises.**
- 2. A continuous pulse siren indicates that a lock down of the buildings is required.**

Fire/evacuation practice drills are carried out at least once a term, day and night time for day students and boarders, and during school holidays for residential or Summer School visits. These sirens are played to the College staff and students termly during an assembly, to ensure all can identify the difference in sounds. Details of evacuation practices are arranged between the Head and the Bursar/Head of Maintenance. A log is recorded and kept by the Head of Maintenance.

If you discover a fire, break the glass in the nearest alarm point to set off the alarm. Leave the building by the nearest exit.

On hearing the fire alarm sound, all persons should leave their belongings and evacuate the building immediately in silence, using the nearest fire exit route and make their way to the designated Assembly point in the central playground area (called the 'Quad'). Signs for nearest fire exit routes are shown in each room and appropriate fire exit route signage is displayed. The means of escape will be regularly inspected by the Fire Marshals to ensure they are kept clear of obstructions and tripping hazards.

- Silence should be kept at all times to enable Fire Marshalls to issue instructions.
- Teachers should escort the students in their charge to the designated Assembly Point in the central playground area (Quad). No one should talk or run.
- Listen out for instructions by Fire Marshals.
- Registers should be brought to the assembly point by the Office Manager.

- The Receptionist is responsible for hanging a no entry sign on the front door and bringing to the Assembly Point the visitor's book, the staff checklist sheets & the signing out books. The Receptionist hands the staff checklists to the Head's PA and checks the student sign out sheets, upon which she notifies the form tutors of any girl's who are off site.
- There are a number of appointed staff who are responsible for checking the presence of staff. These appointed persons should retrieve their checklist sheets from the Head's PA at the Assembly Point. These appointed staff should check the presence of those members of staff on their list and report any absences to the Head.
- The Bursar will wait at the front door entrance to greet the fire brigade & liaise with the Executive team from there.
- Staff are expected to stand in their groups in silence, unless they are a form tutor.
- Students line up in forms in surname alphabetical order. Registers are checked by the form teachers, who then holds the register in the air if they have any issues. These are reported to the Deputy Head, who in turn will pass the information on to the Head.
- Any missing persons are reported to the Head, who in turn informs the Bursar/fire brigade via a radio on channel 16. Throughout the evacuation process the maintenance team will be responsible for investigating the cause for the activation. Out of normal school opening hours, this responsibility is delegated to the Security Team to accompany the fire brigade if required. **Please note: a single security officer on duty outside of a normal school day should not investigate the fire activation point but leave this to the fire brigade. Lone working in this regard would be considered dangerous.** Radios are switched to channel 16 to aid communication. They will meet in the front office area and take the following action:
  - Check the panel for the location of the activation.
  - Two of the Estates team go to investigate the fire activation point and assess whether this is a genuine fire activation. If there is any evidence of smoke or fire, then they have to leave the building immediately. Communication should be made by radio at all times for safety reasons.
  - One member of the Estates team and the Bursar will remain outside the front entrance to meet the fire brigade.
  - A member of the Estates team will wait in the front car park area to ensure that arriving visitors do not access the buildings.
  - Any evidence of fire or smoke then one of the Estates team is to telephone the Emergency Services on 999. Outside normal school times this is delegated to security.

No-one should re-enter the building until the Fire Officer advises it is safe to do so.

### **Invacuation**

"Invacuation" is a term that is sometimes used to describe the process of bringing individuals or groups from an external location into a specific building or a facility for safety or security reasons. It is the opposite of evacuation, which involves moving individuals out of a building or area to a safer location outside.

In the context of schools, during a fire alarm sounding, invacuation may be implemented in response to severe weather, security incidents, or other emergencies where it is safer to bring individuals inside a building rather than evacuate them.

Before a decision is made in relation to invacuate into the Sports Hall the following steps must be followed:

- ✓ If the fire alarm sounds, a member of staff should immediately check the fire alarm panel located just outside the main Sports hall door.
- ✓ In the Sports Hall if Zone 34 & 36 is highlighted in red, this indicates activation within the Sports Hall and alternative options will need to be considered [such as St Claire Building/Dining Room/ Assembly Hall] and no-one should remain in the Sports Hall. If any other zone is indicated, this confirms that the activation is elsewhere on site.
- ✓ Silence should be kept in the Sports Hall to allow the hearing of any instructions to relocate.

#### **During Public Examinations:**

Students are managed by the invigilators in line with examination board regulations.

However, in the event of inclement weather the following action will be taken:-

#### For students in the Sports Hall

The evacuation process above will apply and invigilators should take the following actions:

#### **Immediate Actions:**

- Stop the examination immediately and instruct candidates to stop writing.
- Ensure all candidates remain silent and seated.
- Maintain full exam conditions at all times – no communication between candidates.
- One invigilator to do a rapid fire panel check (approx. 20 seconds) where possible, unless instructed otherwise to confirm the alarm location via the fire panel.

#### **If the alarm is confirmed in the Sports Hall (Zone 34 & 36):**

- Evacuate immediately without delay.
- Escort candidates in an orderly manner to the designated assembly point.
- Maintain full supervision and exam conditions during evacuation.
- Ensure candidates leave all exam materials on desks unless otherwise instructed.

#### **If the alarm is in another zone:**

- Keep candidates seated, calm, and silent.
- Await further instructions from the fire marshal or senior staff.
- Be prepared to initiate immediate evacuation if the situation escalates.

#### **At All Times:**

- Safety takes absolute priority over the examination.
- Follow instructions from fire marshals or senior leadership immediately.
- Take the register if provided and account for all candidates.
- Report any missing individuals to the person in charge without delay.
- Ensure emergency routes are kept clear at all times.

#### For students in other examination areas (Not Sports Hall):

Invigilators should follow the guidance and group students under the arch between the St Claire Building and the Main Building to shelter from the rain. This must be in silence.

- ✓ Candidates should be escorted to the **covered arch area adjacent to the St Claire Building**
- ✓ Maintain clear groupings by exam room to preserve order and identification.
- ✓ Continue supervision to prevent communication between candidates.
- ✓ Avoid unnecessary exposure to severe weather while ensuring safety is not compromised.
- ✓ Maintain exam conditions and supervision throughout.
- ✓ Ensure candidates remain in their exam groups and do not mix.

## Boarding Evacuation Plan

It is the responsibility of the Housemistresses to ensure that Boarding Students at the beginning of each term must walk through emergency exit procedures from each boarding area. They leave by the nearest exit, orderly and in silence. The exit routes should be displayed in every boarding dormitory and boarding corridor. They line up, in dormitory numbers, on the quad (playground area).

- House staff check areas are clear and doors are closed.
- Registers are collected; names are called and one of the Housemistresses must let security know that all students are accounted for and agree with the Security Officer where the students will be moved to whilst waiting for the fire services to arrive. The Community Sisters present & Security Officer will wait in the Front Office or at the front of the building whilst waiting for the Fire Brigade to arrive.
- The Coffee shop or Sports Hall [only if safe to do so dependent on alarm activation point] can be used for evacuation once the source of the alarm has been established and the alarm silenced.
- No-one may enter other buildings until the chief fire officer has given permission.
- External fire doors are checked they are secure after each alarm by the security officer.
- Boarding staff should be clear on their exit route before they retire for the night as this could be dependent on who is on duty and where their accommodation is located.

*[If the fire alarm is activated in the main College building the Villa housemistress must be radio'd to ensure all her students are within the Villa. There is no need for the Villa residents to meet in the quad if the alarms in the main College are sounding]*

Boarding staff are informed in advance of fire practices - two per term, one for boarding and one whole College. For evening practices girls wear dressing gowns and slippers which must always be by their beds.

### For the Villa Boarding Accommodation:

The Year 13 Villa accommodation is not on the same fire alarm system as the rest of the College as they are in a supervised separate building with their own fire alarm detection system installed within. This system is connected to a monitoring station.

1. In the event of an alarm sounding all students are to leave the building by the nearest available exit and accumulate at the Fire Evacuation Point near the gate by the Villa.
2. The Housemistress should take the following action:
  - a. Dial 999 and call the fire brigade giving the Villa postcode: MK17 0HG
  - b. Radio our 24-hour security on channel 16; A Radio is located by the main fire exit door in the Boarding villa and is set to channel 16. In the event of an alarm sounding, this needs to be used when outside the building, as it gives a direct call to security on the College site. Security will be the first call by the central monitoring station.
  - c. Check all students are accounted for and inform by radio the other Housemistresses on duty.
  - d. Stay at the evacuation point until the fire brigade arrives. If all students are accounted for, they can be sent over to the main College building for shelter.
3. Security should dial 999 and be armed with radio and a torch run over to the Villa to ensure all students are present.
4. Once the fire brigade has confirmed it is safe to re-enter the building all students may return to their accommodation.

## Summoning the Fire Brigade

The School Office is staffed between 7.45am and 6.30pm during weekdays throughout the school year and 9.00am and 5.00pm during school holidays apart from Bank Holidays and the Christmas closedown. The master panel that shows the location of all the alarm call points on the networked alarm system in the College buildings is physically located in the Front Office/Reception area. The Front Office is always given advance warning of fire practices. If the alarm goes off at any time, other than for a fire practice, Securitas monitoring station will automatically be contacted via the fire alarm system. If there is evidence of a real fire the staff have standing instructions to summon the Fire and Emergency Service at once dialing 999. This would normally be undertaken by one of the Estates Team but out of hours is delegated to Security. Securitas will contact security in the first instance, who will need to confirm if it is a false alarm or real fire, in consultation over radio contact with the Head of Maintenance; the fire brigade will not attend site unless they are called, as Securitas monitoring station have been instructed to contact College site callout numbers in the first instance to avoid unwanted fire signals. Securitas will not call the fire brigade whilst they are in communication with the site; however, if no contact can be made they will instruct the fire brigade to attend. This is how we manage a 'double knock' system at the College.

One of the Maintenance team is on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year, including public holidays and we have onsite security. The Security Team will be contacted by the Securitas monitoring station if the alarms go off outside the hours that the College Office is staffed (unless warned of a planned fire practice). There is no need to call the Security or Estates Team or Bursar within the 1<sup>st</sup> 10 minutes of activation by phone as this will prevent Securitas reaching them by telephone. The response order that Securitas calls are made is as follows: Security, Shaun Bluck, and Mark Leggett. **The Head and Bursar should have been informed by text of any alarm activation, whether false or real. The Estates Team should also be emailed with a full update. If you wish to contact them please use a Whatsapp message in the first instance, so as not to block telephone lines.**

*There is a small-time window between 6am and 7am where there are not security or Estates Team on site. Boarding staff and Head/Deputy Head have been trained in understanding the fire panel and how to manage the fire brigade attending site. Once the activation point has been identified then the sports hall will be used in the case of inclement weather for students and staff on site (as per this policy). Someone is to remain in the front of the College to allow access to the fire brigade on arrival until Estates Team arrive. If JS gets called by Securitas monitoring station, then she will WhatsApp SLT. Whoever responds to Securitas monitoring to quickly text Exec to say 'on way'.*

## Disabled Staff, Students or Visitors

We have three designated safe refuge points in the St Clare Building, with signs advising of their location. These are located in the 1<sup>st</sup> floor lift area, the top of the alternative staircase at the other end of the first-floor corridor and in the connecting area to the old building. When the fire alarm is sounded, it is the responsibility of the carer/teacher/TA of a disabled person to take him/her to the nearest safest refuge point and to leave the disabled person to wait for rescue by the Fire and Emergency Service. The carer/teacher/TA should wait with the disabled person. Safe evacuation should be carried out if possible, using the safety evacuation chair; certain staff are trained for this purpose. If safe evacuation is not possible by the carer/teacher/TA then, the carer/teacher/TA must ensure that the name of the disabled person, together with the location of their safe refuge point, is passed to the Headteacher by another person or the refuge telephone. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that this information is passed as soon as possible to the Fire and Emergency Service, via the Bursar.

For children or staff on crutches, they should wait until the other students have evacuated down the stairs and then they should come down the stairs safely; it may be safer to come down on their bottom. A member of staff should wait with the student to assist her down the stairs.

Visitors will be catered for by the Bursar / Head of Estates & Operations when notified.

***On no account should anyone return to a burning building.***

### **PART 3: FIRE SAFETY AWARENESS AND TRAINING**

#### **Training Staff in Fire Safety Awareness**

All staff are given fire safety awareness as part of the INSET programme, including the basic use of fire extinguishers. This training is periodically carried out every 3 years.

#### **Briefing New Staff and Students**

Additionally, all our new staff (teaching and non-teaching alike) and all new students are given a briefing on the College's emergency evacuation procedures on their first night/day at Thornton College by the Bursar/Head of Estates & Operations. We show them where the outside assembly point is and ask that they check with another member of staff where the nearest emergency exit and fire alarm point is in relation to the rooms in which they teach or work. Fire action notices and evacuation routes are displayed on the walls of all rooms and in all corridors, and we make certain that everyone knows what they look like, and where they should go on hearing the fire alarm. All new staff are shown how to activate the fire alarms and should make themselves aware of the nearest 'break glass' fire activation point.

We offer fire awareness training to all new staff during their induction programme. No one should attempt to use a fire extinguisher before he or she has been trained in its use.

#### **Visitors and Contractors**

All visitors and contractors are required to sign in at Reception, where they are issued with a visitor's badge, which should be worn at all times that they are on College property. They are made aware of the emergency evacuation notice (see above) and are directed to the assembly point; this information is displayed in reception and on the rear of their badges. Car number plates of visitors are recorded in the visitor's book in the case the Fire and Emergency Services need to move vehicles.

When large numbers of visitors are at the College for open days, plays, concerts, exhibitions etc a brief announcement is made advising them of the location of the emergency exits that they should use in the event of the alarms sounding. This notice should also include details of the fire assembly point and where parents or visitors should congregate there. It is the responsibility of the person organizing the event to ensure that this notice is available and that fire wardens are present; any questions surrounding this should be directed to the Bursar prior to the event.

#### **Emergency Evacuation Notice**

All new staff and students, all contractors and visitors are shown the following notice:

1. If you discover a fire, break the glass in the nearest alarm point to set off the alarm, unless the alarm is already sounding. Leave the building by the nearest exit – various signs showing the nearest route are displayed in corridors and fire exit signage indicates exit points.
2. If you are responsible for a class, ensure they all leave quietly with you. No one should run and silence must be kept at all times. Make your way to the assembly point in the central playground area (Quad).
3. If you are registering a class, take your register with you. Do not take anything else, and do not allow the students to take anything. Shut doors behind you.
4. The Emergency Services will be contacted automatically if the alarm sounds.

5. If you have a disabled student in your class that cannot be safely evacuated from the building, you should direct her to wait for the Fire and Emergency Service in the nearest designated safe refuge or at the top of fire escape staircase.
6. Take the register of your class as soon as you reach the assembly point.
7. Report anyone who is waiting to be evacuated from a designated refuge, or who is missing immediately to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will advise the Bursar normally by radio on channel 16, who will notify the Fire Brigade.
8. Remain at the assembly point with your students until the all clear is given. The Bursar will be responsible for liaising with the Fire Brigade. No one should re-enter the building until the Fire Officer advises it is safe to do so and the alarms have been silenced.

### **Disabled Staff, Students or Visitors**

We have a special one to one induction on fire safety for disabled students and their carers and for disabled members of staff. Personal evacuation plans are in place for these persons and are the responsibility of the College's Well-being Officer.

## **PART 4: FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURES**

Our fire alarm is at a certified L1 rating.

### **Fire Practices**

We hold at least one fire practice every term at Thornton College, during the daytime. We also practice night-time evacuation of the boarding houses every term. The normal time taken to evacuate all buildings into the Assembly Point is under three minutes. Staff and students alike take these practices seriously. The Head of Maintenance records and keeps records of these evacuations which are registered on the central document held within the Estates folder on MS Teams.

### **Fire Equipment and Escape Routes**

All equipment and fire escape routes are documented in a register located in the Head of Maintenance's office and are in the process of being uploaded into MS Teams. We have the following fire prevention measures in place at Thornton College:

- There are at least two escape routes from all buildings. The condition of these is checked, cleaned and monitored by the Head of Maintenance annually.
- Fire notices and evacuation signs are displayed in every boarding bedroom, and adjacent to every Manual Break Glass call point. Covers are on all high traffic areas to prevent accidental activation.
- Fires extinguishers (of the appropriate type) and smoke/heat detectors are located in every building in accordance with the recommendations of our professional advisors. The fire alarm activation call points can be manually activated by breaking a glass panel and heads are automatically activated when smoke/heat builds up. Smoke monitoring systems are also located in all boarding accommodation to L1 rating.
- Fire doors are recorded on our fire door survey and are on a rolling maintenance programme of improvements and upgrades at the college; the boarding areas have been prioritized.
- All stairs, passages and emergency exits are illuminated by emergency lighting
- All areas where there are potential sources of ignition are regularly inspected to ensure that flammable materials are not stored close by
- Consult regularly with the Fire marshals
- Automatic door closures that are activated by the fire alarms are fitted on doors inside the building or leading onto escape routes.
- The master panel for the alarm system is located in the Front Office/Reception Area and shows the location of a fire. It is fitted with an uninterrupted power supply (UPS). 2 secondary panels are located on the St Clare building to the right of the main entrance door on the ground floor and in the Sports Hall main entrance lobby. All 3 panels have integrated access.
- Alarms sound in all parts of the building as an intermittent siren.
- Keeping fire routes and exits clear at all times. The Head of Maintenance checks that escape routes are not obstructed regularly in the course of the week.
- Testing fire alarm points weekly (and recording all tests and defects is the responsibility of the Head of Maintenance, who also undertakes to organise:
  - Six monthly checks of emergency lights,
  - Six monthly professional check on fire detection and warning equipment,
  - An annual service of fire extinguishers.
- Records of all tests are uploaded to the Estates MS-Teams files.

- Fire Brigade holds plans showing the location of fire hydrants on the site.
- The gas and electricity main shut off points are displayed in the fire panel cupboard. A plan of the fire hydrants is on the reverse. A copy of this information is held by the Head of Maintenance.
- Pay close attention to the activities of contractors as appropriate, particularly during maintenance and building works.

### **Electrical Safety**

- The College has current electrical test certificates for all its buildings. It uses qualified Electrical Engineers to inspect its electrical installations. This testing is carried out every 5 years. All recommendations are actioned as appropriate.
- Regular portable appliance testing takes place. An approved outside contractor is appointed to undertake this process annually and a mop-up session is organized to include new equipment.
- Records of all tests are uploaded onto the Estates MS-Teams files.
- It is the Lab technician's and the Head of Departments' respective responsibilities to check that all Scientific and DT equipment is switched off at the end of the school day.

### **Gas Safety**

There is no mains gas on the College site. The gas is calor gas with oil fired boilers.

- All gas appliances (boilers, kitchen equipment etc) are regularly maintained and serviced by Gas Safe Registered Engineers. Records of all tests are kept in the Head of Maintenance's Office.
- Landlord's gas safety certificates are held for all College domestic accommodation.
- It is the evening chef's responsibility to ensure that all kitchen equipment is switched off at the end of service.
- All teaching staff should turn off the central gas supply in the laboratories at the end of each day.
- In the St Claire Building we have gas solenoid detection alarms within the Science labs. Staff have been trained that when hearing these alarms sound, the following steps are taken:

### **GAS ACTION PLAN**

WHEN THE GAS SOLENOID ALARMS GO OFF:

**YOU MUST TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTION:**

1. Activate the nearest fire alarm using the call point (The Gas To The Lab Will Be Automatically Switched Off When Activating The Fire Alarm)
  2. All students & staff to evacuate to the quad and line up at Fire Assembly point.
- Don't operate electrical switches (Including turning light switches on or off or using phones)
  - Join your class at assembly point ensuring that all students are accounted for

## **Safe Storage**

- We ensure that flammable materials used in teaching, housekeeping or maintenance are locked in purpose-made, flame-proof containers or in the Estates workshop at the end of every day.
- A list of flammable liquids and chemicals stored in the Science laboratories is kept by the Head of Maintenance and is updated by the Laboratory Technician. These chemicals are stored in appropriate storage and locked away.

## **Rubbish and Combustible Materials**

- Corridors and fire exit routes are to be kept clear of all combustible materials.
- Flammable rubbish is stored in a metal container, away from buildings in the rubbish compound. This container is emptied weekly.
- Combustible materials used in teaching, catering, maintenance and grounds are stored in flameproof cupboards or in the maintenance workshop at the end of each day.
- Domestic cleaning chemicals are stored in locked cupboards throughout the College.

## **Letting or Hiring the College**

Our standard contractual terms, that we use for letting and hiring the College, covers fire safety and specifies that the hirer should certify that he/she has read and understood the College's fire safety policy and procedures. A member of the maintenance team is always on call when the College is let or hired for an outside function or event.

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed and amended annually in line with the Governors' meeting programme.

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## **Part 5: Fire Risk Assessment**

Our fire risk assessment will be conducted by Oakleaf Surveying Ltd in July 2025 - BAFE Registered Organisation ID: 301310

- BAFE SP205 Life Safety Fire Risk Assessment: Third-Party Certificated by NSI

The College's Fire Risk Assessment meets the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the FSO). Specifically, it identifies:

- The Hazard
- The people at risk
- The measures to evaluate, remove, reduce and protect from the risk
- The measures needed to record, plan, inform, instruct and train people in risk reduction or removal
- The arrangements for reviewing the assessment

All risk assessments follow a standard grid procedure for evaluating risk. Generic risk assessments are used for classrooms; but individual ones are needed for corridors, stairs, kitchens, laboratories, workshops etc.

Thornton College has a professional fire risk assessment which is updated every 3 years, more frequently if significant changes are made to the interior of buildings, or new buildings are bought or added. This risk assessment is reviewed and updated continually and discussed at various meetings; with the Bursar & maintenance team, the Executive team review this, the H&S committee and at Governors Finance & Premises meetings who then feed back to the full Board.

A copy of Thornton College's fire risk assessment is held by the Bursar and is located on the Estates folder within MS Teams, with the signed and updated version being held by the Head of Maintenance. A Risk Assessment Action plan has been implemented and is monitored and reviewed by the Bursar in conjunction with the Head of Maintenance.

The FRA is benchmarked against the relevant guidance being used by the fire risk assessor.

Suitable examples include:

- DCLG 9281 Sleeping Premises – for the sleeping buildings
- DCLG Educational Premises – for the non-sleeping buildings (such as Science Block)
- DCLG Offices and Shops – for the office buildings (such as Bursary)

All Heads of Department should ensure that they and their Department read the full Fire Policy and understand the sections that are relevant to them.