



Community Services: Education

Argyll House
Alexandra Parade
Dunoon PA23 8AJ

To: Heads of all Educational Establishments

Dear Colleague

Fire precautions

Every establishment under the control of the Executive Director of Community Services must have a written evacuation plan for evacuating the premises in the event of a fire. The following points should be noted.

- 1 In schools the safety of children and young people must at all times be the first concern of the teacher.
- 2 There must be a fire-warning system and a fire drill which are known to all persons who are normally on the premises.
- 3 Fire alarm systems should be tested weekly. In the case of schools this should be carried out by the janitor or trained member of staff.
- 4 The evacuation plan must enable the occupants of any room or area to take, as far as possible, the most direct route to safety. Provision for alternative routes must also be part of the evacuation plan.

In schools each teacher should be responsible for his/her own teaching area while he/she has a class, and should check any area which may have been occupied on his/her way out, providing circumstances permit. Ancillary accommodation including toilets, cloakrooms and stores, should be checked also as outlined in the school evacuation plan.

- 5 Every door should be closed immediately the room or area is vacated.
- 6 Where smoke stop doors are provided in corridor or stair enclosures these should be kept closed at all times or where magnetic locks are in operation.

- 7 In schools each class teacher must verify, in accordance with the school's evacuation procedures, that all members of the class attending that day have reached the assembly point.
- 8 Exit routes should be kept clear at all times. Under no circumstances should desks or other equipment be stored in corridors or stair enclosures. In particular external fire exit doors must not be obstructed nor locked when the establishment is occupied. They must be kept in good repair, be able to be easily opened from the inside and be available at all times for the purpose for which they were designed.
- 9 The fire drill must be practised regularly in all establishments, at least three times per annum. This frequency should take account of the age of the occupants and the composition of the client group, and the timing should be varied to cover the full range of circumstances in which the establishment operates. The fact that it has been carried out and the time taken to complete the operation must be recorded in the premises fire log book.
- 10 In the event of fire, the fire service must be called immediately the alarm has been sounded. A notice giving the procedure for calling the fire service must be prominently displayed.
- 11 The instruction to return to the building should be given by the Head Teacher/Campus Principal or his/her duly appointed representative in the event of a drill, and by the senior fire service officer in attendance in the event of fire.
- 12 Storage of inflammable waste material within Council properties is prohibited (with the exception chemicals within secondary schools which fall under guidelines within circular 1.27). Head Teachers/Campus Principals must arrange to have such materials removed from the establishment.
- 13 Copies of this education management circular should be provided to all members of staff at the commencement of every school session and recorded.
- 14 Head Teachers/Campus Principals are required to submit full details of every fire drill practised via the return prior to the Spring, Summer and Christmas holidays.
- 15 Records should be kept in the fire register of all tests on the fire alarm system, of checks on fire fighting equipment, emergency lighting etc. within the workplace inspection return.
- 16 Advice on general fire precautions, specific information regarding individual establishments, use of fire equipment or publicity materials can be obtained from the health and safety section in the first instance.

The following notice should be displayed as appropriate throughout the establishment.

NOTICE TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND VISITORS

If you discover a fire

- 1) Remain calm
- 2) Operate the nearest fire alarm
- 3) Go to the nearest exit
- 4) Take your place at the assembly point outside the building

When you hear the fire alarm

- 1) Remain calm
- 2) If there is a teacher present obey instructions; if not WALK quickly to the assembly point outside the building.
- 3) Stay at the assembly point until told that it is now safe to return to the building.

Where notices are sited they will indicate the direction of the nearest exit by arrows.

Where a Head Teacher/Campus Principal is faced by intractable difficulties in implementing any part of the above advice he/she should discuss the situation with the health and safety section in the first instance or the relevant Head of Service.

Yours sincerely

Executive Director of Community Services

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