



**South Manchester  
Learning Trust**

**Altrincham College**

## **FIRE SAFETY POLICY**

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## **BACKGROUND**

Altrincham College will ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that all staff, students, contractors and visitors are protected from the risks of fire whilst on the premises.

## **PRINCIPLES**

### **Legal Requirements**

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (commonly referred to as the FSO) came into force on 1st October 2006. The purpose of the legislation is to place a greater emphasis on fire prevention by ensuring that all persons responsible for premises comply with their statutory duties and implement the general fire precautions which are needed to protect all persons from death or injury in the case of fire.

This Policy explains how Altrincham College complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to ensure that, where possible, fire is prevented and that any fire risks are adequately controlled.

## **AIMS**

- To safeguard all persons from death or injury in the event of fire by the effective management of fire safety.
- To minimise the risk of fire and to limit fire spread.
- To minimise the potential for fire to disrupt services, damage buildings and equipment, or harm the environment.

## **PRACTICE**

### **Managing Fire Safety**

The school has delegated day to day responsibility for managing fire safety to the 'duty holder'/Fire Warden [the Site Manager and Housekeeper].

The School's nominated Fire Wardens will:

- Ensure that all means of escape are properly maintained, kept free from obstruction and available for safe and effective use at all times; and that the means of escape have adequate emergency lighting.
- Provide and maintain in working order all fire-fighting appliances and devices including:
  - fire detection and alarm systems
  - emergency lighting systems
  - fire-fighting equipment
  - notices and signage relating to fire procedures
  - means of escape, taking into account the needs of any disabled users.
- Carry out or arrange to have carried out a fire safety risk assessment on each of the school buildings to ensure that the school's facilities are compliant; and reduce the risk of fire incidences by carrying out appropriate task risk assessments.
- Along with the DSL, provide appropriate instruction and training for all school staff on the action to be taken to protect people and property including regular fire evacuation practices for all the school.

- Ensure that all staff, students, contractors, visitors and third-party hirers are made aware of and comply with the school's fire procedures.
- Identify any special risks, e.g. the storage of hazardous materials, and put in place appropriate procedures to minimise the risks.
- Liaise with third parties; the emergency services, and the school's insurers to ensure that best practice for fire prevention and procedures is in place.
- Monitor and review this policy on a regular basis so as to ensure that any new risk or alteration to regulations is addressed.

### **Fire Risk Assessment**

The school has carried out a comprehensive fire risk assessment for each of its buildings. These assessments are kept in the Site Office and on the School Network.

The fire risk assessment identifies who will be at risk if there is a fire, where people may be working and who else may be at risk, either in the premises or nearby, such as members of the public, visiting contractors, etc, and where these people are likely to be located.

The fire risk assessment will be reviewed and amended annually (as a minimum). The risk assessment should also be updated if it is either no longer valid or if any changes are planned, such as:

- Any structural changes (alterations to the layout of the premises, erection of partitions, refurbishment etc) which may affect the spread of fire;
- Any change to the use of the premises which may affect the risk rating;
- Any change to work processes or work equipment which may introduce new fire hazards;
- Any change to the numbers of people using the premises to ensure that escape routes can accommodate the numbers safely.

### **Fire Safety Training**

Fire Safety Training will be provided as follows:

- All staff receive basic fire safety induction training on starting work at school, and attend refresher sessions during inset days [usually September].
- Key staff in the individual school buildings receive more detailed instruction and training.
- Students are given instruction/reminders by their form teachers during the first week of the Autumn term on their actions to be taken in the event of a fire.
- Fire drills are planned each term to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's evacuation procedures. The findings of the drill are reported to SLT. Any conclusions and remedial actions are recorded and implemented.

Training should include:

- Awareness of how quickly fires can start and develop.
- Importance of fire doors in containing fire and fumes.
- Importance of evacuation and roll call.
- Procedures for evacuating visitors.
- Procedures for evacuating disabled students/staff/visitors.
- Procedures for evacuating the building out of hours.
- Action to be taken on discovering a fire including raising the alarm.
- Location of fire-fighting equipment.

- How to switch off machinery/appliances (e.g. gas in Science Labs, catering equipment in Canteen/Food classrooms).

### **Maintenance work including repairs and alterations**

When any work takes place in school, it is important that fire precautions are not compromised during the work, or by the completed work.

Approved Method Statements and Hot Work Permits should be provided by external contractors, and adhered to.

Special care should be given to ensure fire exits and escape routes are available, and free from obstructions.

Combustible materials should be safely monitored and stored.

Skips and waste containers containing combustible material/potentially combustible material, should be secured and located at least 8 metres from buildings.

Scaffolding should be secured when not in use, to prevent unauthorised access into or onto school premises.

A review of the Fire Risk Assessment should be carried out annually, and/or after any material changes to the building, personnel or procedures.

A further Risk Assessment may be required if any of the following changes have taken place in school:

- ❖ Building extensions.
- ❖ Structural alterations.
- ❖ Significant change of use to any room/area.
- ❖ Additional fire hazards have been introduced.
- ❖ Change to use out of hours (e.g. before/after school clubs; hire/use by non-school users).

### **Fire Safety: maintenance and testing**

Arrangements should be in place for the regular inspection, maintenance and testing by a competent person of the following:

- ❖ Portable electrical equipment (PAT): Annually
- ❖ Wiring of electrical installation: Every 5 years
- ❖ Fire-fighting equipment: Weekly (to ensure extinguishers are in place, not discharged, not damaged)  
and Annually (by contractors)
- ❖ Fire Alarm: Every 6 months in accordance with B.S. 5839  
and Annually (by contractors)
- ❖ Emergency Lighting: Bi-annually in accordance with B.S. 5266 (by contractors)

### Fire Alarm

The fire alarm should be checked daily to ensure the system is operative.

The fire alarm should be tested each week, each test from a different call point (each call point should be tested twice a year). A visual inspection should then be carried out of all call points and smoke/heat detectors to make sure they are not obstructed/covered. Any defects should be reported and rectified.

### Fire Doors / Escape Routes

Weekly fire inspections should be carried out taking into account:

- ❖ Identification of fire hazards.
- ❖ Ensuring means of escape are accessible e.g. clear of waste and other obstructions.
- ❖ Ensuring fire exits are not blocked, locked, or sticking.
- ❖ Ensuring fire-resisting doors are effectively self-closing.
- ❖ Ensuring fire-resisting doors have effective intumescent strips and cold smoke seals.
- ❖ Ensuring electro-magnetic door mechanisms are checked weekly in conjunction with the fire alarm test, to ensure their correct operation.
- ❖ Ensuring doors, walls, floors and glazing required to be fire-resisting are not damaged (e.g. no broken glass, no holes in doors).

Any defects should be reported and rectified.

### Emergency Lighting

The emergency lighting should be checked/tested as follows:

- ❖ Check every lamp in a maintained system is lit: Daily
- ❖ Test the lighting on a non-maintained system by simulating a power failure: Monthly

### **Signage**

Essential signs which must be displayed are:

- Fire Exit: signs should be above fire exits (illuminated if area is dark)
- Evacuation routes: building users should be able to see a direction sign/fire exit sign from anywhere in the building
- Fire Door - Keep Shut or  
Fire Door: Keep Locked: fitted to all fire-resisting doors
- Fire Exit – Keep Clear: fitted to outside of fire doors which may be obstructed
- Release signs  
e.g. Push Bar to Open: fitted to all secured exit doors
- Fire Extinguishers: signs to indicate type of extinguisher
- Fire Action Notices: adjacent to all fire alarm call points and in all classrooms

Missing/inadequate signage to be reported and rectified.

### **Fire Log Book**

The fire log book is maintained by the Fire Warden(s) and records:

- ❖ Evacuation drills.
- ❖ Fire Alarm tests.
- ❖ Inspections of fire-fighting equipment.
- ❖ Inspections of premises.
- ❖ Emergency lighting (checks/tests).
- ❖ Fire Training.

### **Evacuation Procedures**

The evacuation procedures which are to be followed in the event of a fire alarm are annexed to this Policy (Appendix 1). This document details the responsibilities of staff and individuals during an evacuation and subsequent roll call.

The document also includes specific Guidance on the Evacuation of Disabled Persons from the School Buildings (Appendix 2).

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The School Fire Safety Policy forms part of the School's Health and Safety Policy and in common with that policy extends through the whole school, with specific responsibilities as below.

The FSO places duties on the 'Responsible Person'. The Headteacher is the 'Responsible Person'. Certain day to day responsibilities can be delegated down to a 'duty holder'/Fire Warden(s).

### Governors

- Ensure that an appropriate policy is in place in the school and that arrangements are made for its effective implementation.

### The Headteacher

- Has the ultimate responsibility for the implementation and management of this Policy.
- Is responsible for ensuring the School's Fire Risk Assessment is updated every year and an Action Plan is completed for any work highlighted. Work should be completed within the set time-frame.
- Liaises with other organisations/services who occupy/use the school building in ensuring their activities are compliant with the school's Fire Risk Assessment, or ensuring an additional risk assessment is carried out.
- Makes suitable arrangements for the weekly testing of the fire-alarm system, regular inspection of equipment and means of escape.
- Ensures induction for new staff includes fire evacuation and procedures.
- Ensures that new staff are made familiar with evacuation procedures/fire safety on their first day of work.
- Ensures that staff receive regular training on fire safety.
- Ensures Fire Wardens and Fire Marshalls receive appropriate training.
- Ensures there is a Fire Emergency Plan, and all staff are conversant with their roles within the plan.
- Ensures there is a Fire Log Book for the building and inspections and that tests and drills are recorded.
- Makes suitable arrangements for a fire drill to be carried out each term; drills should be held as soon as possible at the start of each term, especially if there has been a new intake of students. Fire Drills should be held at times which challenge staff and students e.g. lunchtimes, before the start of the school day.
- Acts as the Incident Controller and as such:
  - In the event of an alarm, liaises with the Fire Warden(s) to check the location of the fire on the indicator panel.
  - Receives information on the evacuation areas from staff/visitors/students, including those not accounted for.
  - Liaises with the Fire Service, giving details of the fire, evacuation state of the building, and the location of any staff/students unable to evacuate (e.g. due to disability).

### Fire Wardens

- The nominated Fire Wardens [Site Manager and Housekeeper], along with the Fire Marshalls, are responsible for the effective implementation of this policy and its role within the School's Health and Safety Policy.
- Carry out weekly testing of the fire-alarm system, regular inspection of equipment and means of escape.
- Facilitate the termly fire drill, as well as supporting unplanned evacuations.
- Are responsible for updating the Fire Log Book, including recording tests and drills.
- Are responsible for weekly fire inspections.
- Are responsible for the daily checking of the fire alarm (to ensure the system is operative).
- Are responsible for the weekly checking of the fire alarm.
- Are responsible for the daily/monthly checks/testing of emergency lighting.
- Are responsible for the monitoring/maintenance of appropriate signage.

### Fire Marshalls

- Along with the Fire Wardens, are responsible for the effective implementation of this policy and its role within the School's Health and Safety Policy.
- Facilitate the termly fire drill, as well as supporting unplanned evacuations.

### All Staff

- Have the responsibility to cooperate and to ensure that the workplace is safe from fire and its effects and must not do anything that will place themselves or other people at risk, including:
  - Adhering to the school's no-smoking policy.
  - Complying with the expected standards of good housekeeping around school (e.g. not accumulating rubbish).
  - Securing flammable items in secure containers.
  - Keeping the use of extension cables to a minimum.
  - Being familiar with the fire evacuation plan for the school.
  - Keeping themselves apprised to any changes in evacuation procedures.
  - Taking responsibility for visual checks of fire hazards/electrical equipment in their own working areas.
  - Reporting concerns immediately to Fire Wardens/Fire Marshalls.
  - Ensuring that fire exits are kept clear.
- If required, supervise and control evacuated students during a drill/alarm, until the all-clear has been given.
- Attend Fire Safety Training when it is provided.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The school utilises the services of various outside personnel to carry out effective monitoring of its duties.

The school fire detection and alarm system is maintained and checked by Dante [every 6 months]. The alarm sounders are tested on a weekly basis by the Site Manager (Fire Warden).



The school emergency lighting is checked weekly by the Site Manager (Fire Warden).

Notices and Signage are updated as and when required and checked annually by the Site Manager (Fire Warden).

Fire-fighting equipment is visually checked weekly by the Site Manager (Fire Warden) and extinguishers are replenished or replaced annually by Walker Fire.

A Fire Log Book which contains records of fire safety issues is maintained by the Site Manager (Fire Warden) and located in the Site Office. These issues include:

- fire drills
- the inspection and testing of:
  - fire detection and alarm systems
  - emergency lighting systems
  - fire-fighting equipment.

## **APPENDIX 1: EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

### **THE FIRE ALARM**

PERSON DISCOVERING FIRE should break glass of nearest alarm.

The fire alarm is linked directly to the local Fire Brigade. The Site Manager liaises with the alarm monitoring firm [Chubb] to confirm if the evacuation is due to a genuine fire. Chubb then contact the Fire Brigade to confirm if a call out is required.

#### On hearing the fire alarm

#### **ALL PERSONS PROCEED TO ASSEMBLY POINT**

- Where appropriate, ensure master switches for gas and electricity are off and windows closed.
- In the event of a gas leak, when evacuation is likely to be as a result of verbal instructions rather than a fire alarm sounding, leave windows open to dissipate gas where possible and no electrical switches should be used.
- In classrooms, students nearest windows should be told to close them. Staff assemble students in silence and instruct them to proceed to the Assembly Point [Tennis Courts] in silence, walking rapidly not running.
- Classroom door(s) should be closed behind the last person to leave.
- Use the directed route - the quickest fire escape route is displayed in each room - unless a blockage makes this impossible. Be prepared to find an alternative route if necessary. Should the alarm ring during break or lunchtime, students should be instructed to leave the building by the nearest safe fire exit and proceed to the Assembly Point. Staff should assist this process where possible without putting themselves at risk.
- Under no circumstances should staff or students return to their form/class rooms.
- Lead Fire Marshalls [Danielle Shields and Sharron Diffley] collect registers, and student/staff/visitor signing out records, before proceeding to the Assembly Point].
- The Site Manager liaises with the Headteacher re: identifying the source of the fire/alarm from the master panel. The zone triggered by the alarm will be noted.
- The receptionist on duty will await the Fire Service arrival, gates open automatically when the fire alarm is triggered.
- No visitors will be allowed to enter the premises.

**Anyone who has a named responsibility should ensure that they have a deputy to take over if they are absent and that the deputy is aware of their role in the event of an emergency evacuation.**

PROCEDURE FOR ASSEMBLY AND ROLL CALL (refer also to plan at Appendix 1a)

#### Students' Reporting Procedure:

- Classes line up in alphabetical order at Assembly Point.
- Lead Fire Marshall/Attendance Officer distributes registers to Form Tutors.
- Once roll call is completed, report absences to [SDY/DSS] and return register to DSS and take appropriate action.

Staff/Visitors Reporting Procedure:

- Form Tutors report to Tennis Courts to take registers.
- Non-form Tutors, Support Staff and Visitors report to area behind Maths Block.
- Once registered, non-form tutors may be directed to the Tennis Courts to assist with managing students.
- Lead Fire Marshall(s) will check with the Headteacher (or with the most senior teacher or member of staff in their absence) that all persons are accounted for, and will await the arrival of Fire Service and respond to and relay Fire Officer's instructions.
- No-one should leave the Assembly Point until instructed to do so by the Headteacher [or deputised member of SLT in the Headteacher's absence].
- Unsupervised visitors/contractors should be made aware of the emergency procedures and actions to be taken.

Procedure Out of Hours for Visitors/Independent Users:

Those using the school for independent activities out of hours should:

- Know all the emergency exits available during the period of hire.
- Know where/how to raise the fire alarm.
- Know the assembly area allocated to their location/period of hire.
- Know how to take the roll call of users in their group(s).
- Explain how to raise an alarm and evacuate the building to their users prior to the start of the period of hire.
- Have a lead member of staff and a nominated deputy for each session.

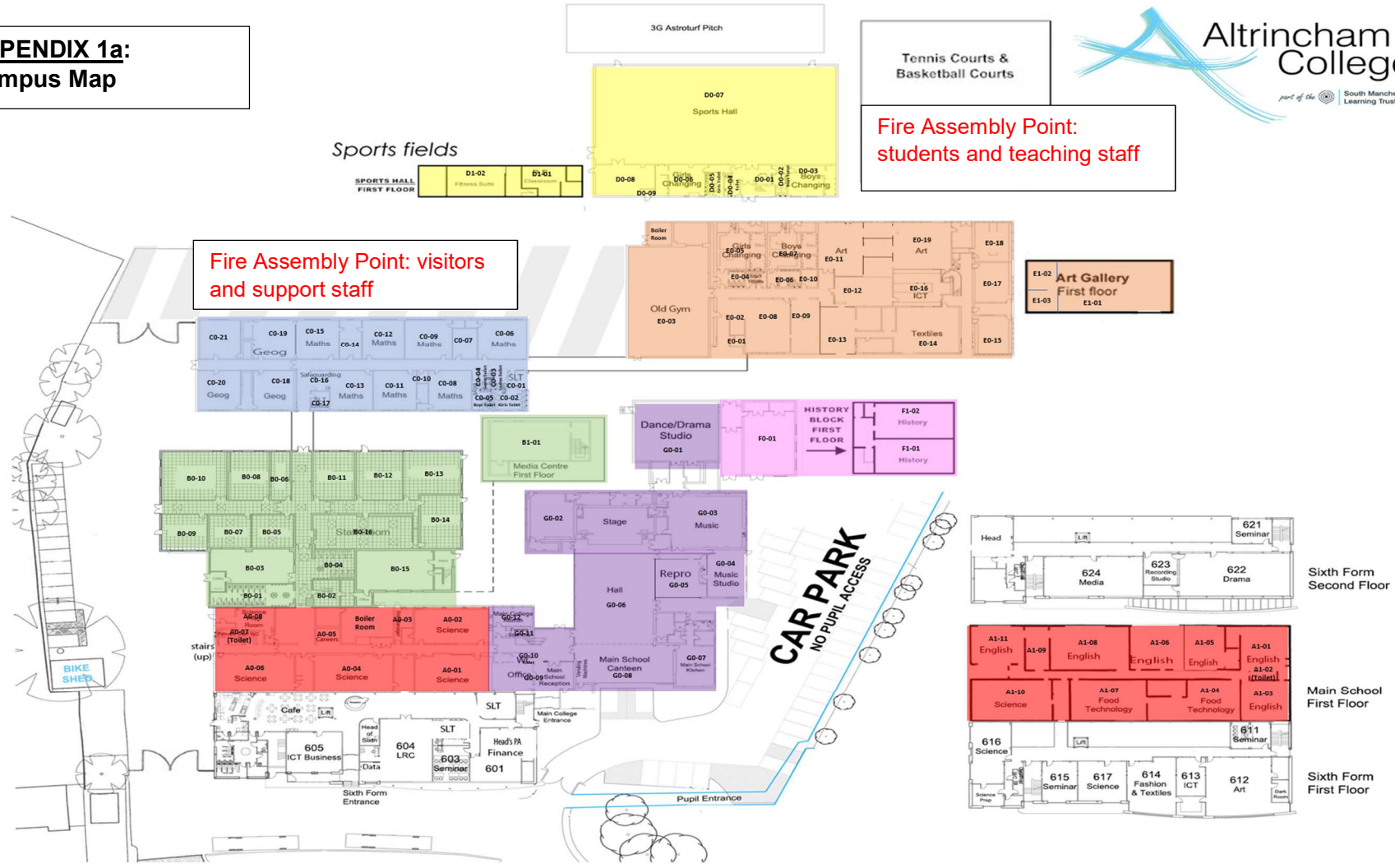
Procedure Out of Hours for School Events:

This procedure covers out of hours events such as parents' evenings, school productions, after-school events, where visitors, students, staff, or any combination, may be present.

Staff and volunteers leading the event should:

- Know all the emergency exits available and be aware that visitors are most likely to use the exit by which they came in, even if this is not the nearest fire exit.
- Know the exact address to provide to the fire service.
- Know how to raise the fire alarm.
- Know where fire-fighting equipment is located.
- Know the location of the assembly area.
- Know who is responsible for co-ordinating the evacuation.
- Know to alert the member of staff responsible for the evacuation if anyone is suspected of being inside the building.
- Know the 'refuge' areas for disabled staff/students/visitors.
- Know how to make the area being used safe once the event has finished.

**APPENDIX 1a:  
Campus Map**

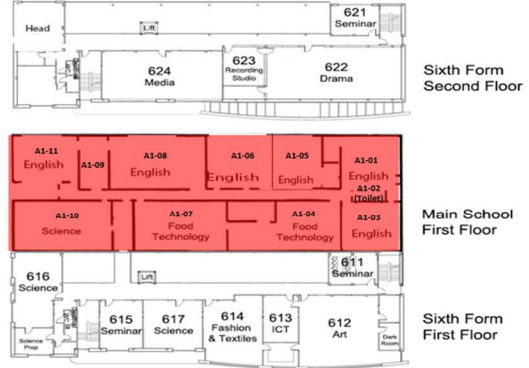


Tennis Courts & Basketball Courts

**Fire Assembly Point:  
students and teaching staff**

**Fire Assembly Point: visitors  
and support staff**

**Art Gallery  
First floor**



## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Guidance on the Evacuation of Disabled Persons from the School Buildings**

Students and employees with a disability should already have been identified and information held with the Health & Welfare Officer/Student Services Assistant.

The Health & Welfare Officer/Student Services Assistant is responsible for producing and maintaining Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) for the relevant students/employees.

Having considered the risks, the Health & Welfare Officer/Student Services Assistant will propose specific procedures for assisting in the evacuation of persons with a known disability. A “buddy” will be appointed for any student or employee requiring assistance in an emergency evacuation. Where teachers have a student with a known disability, they must ensure that that student is aware that the alarm has been triggered and that they follow the evacuation procedure accordingly.

Disabled staff must have identified themselves to the Headteacher and any specific requirements must be addressed as soon as they are known.

### **Specific Evacuation Requirements**

#### **Wheelchair users/Persons with Mobility Difficulty**

Wheelchair users or any person with difficulty walking (e.g. anyone temporarily using crutches) should wait until everyone else has left the room before making their way to the exit, assisted by their “buddy” or other third party if required.

#### **Visitors with disabilities**

On arrival, disabled visitors to the School should be asked to identify any special requirements in the case of an emergency evacuation. The person hosting the visitor should ensure the visitor’s safety in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Wherever possible (i.e. when on the ground floor) all persons, including wheelchair users, should make their own way out of the building by utilising the fire escape routes. Whenever the route is blocked or the person is above ground floor, wheelchair users must be either assisted by their “buddy” or other third party.

When evacuating the upper floors of the buildings, anyone unable to leave without assistance should wait for assistance in the refuge areas [usually at the top of staircases, behind a fire door].

Visitors/Staff/Students in the ‘refuge’ area should be accompanied by a member of staff with a walkie-talkie.

The use of the term “Refuge” is intended to mean a place where people can safely wait for a period of time whilst the evacuation process is being undertaken. It is not a place to leave people for the duration of the alarm, but it has been selected for its additional protection from fire, meaning that it will remain a safe place to wait.

Lifts must not be used during an emergency evacuation.