



St Ives School

Emergency Evacuation Policy (Exams)

School Name: St Ives School

Consultation: This policy has been written in line with DfE legislation

Dissemination: Staff share

Date policy to be approved by Governors: 31st March 2023

Date policy becomes effective: Immediately

Review date: November 2023

Person responsible for Implementation and Monitoring: Exams Officer/Head of School

Links to other relevant policies: JCQ Policies, Examinations Policy, Fire Safety Policy, Fire Alarm Procedure, Invacation, Lockdown and Evacuation Policy.

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how St Ives School deals with an emergency evacuation of the exam room(s) by defining staff roles and responsibilities and confirming the emergency evacuation procedure.

When is an emergency evacuation required?

An emergency evacuation is required where it is unsafe for candidates to remain in the exam room. This might include a fire in the exam room, the fire alarm sounding to warn of fire, bomb alert or other serious threat.

In exceptional situations, where candidates might be severely disadvantaged or distressed by remaining in the exam room, the emergency evacuation procedure may also need to be followed. This might include situations where there is severe disruption in the exam room, serious illness of a candidate or invigilator or similarly serious incidents.

As each incident may be different, advice will be sought from the relevant awarding body as soon as it is safe to do so, particularly where the centre is concerned about the security of the examination(s). (ICE 25.4)

Where candidates are unable to return to the building to complete the examination, the relevant awarding body will be contacted immediately for advice. The awarding bodies have procedures in place to ensure that candidates are not disadvantaged where they are unable to complete the examination due to circumstances beyond their control. (ICE 24.5)

Emergency evacuation of an exam room

Roles and responsibilities:

Headteacher/Executive Headteacher

- ▶ Ensures the emergency evacuation policy for exams is fit for purpose and complies with relevant health and safety regulation
- ▶ Ensures any instructions from relevant local or national agencies are referenced and followed where applicable, including information from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office on the *Procedures for handling bomb threats*
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bomb-threats-guidance/procedures-for-handling-bomb-threats>
- ▶ Where responsible for the centre-wide emergency evacuation procedure, ensures all staff and appointed fire marshals are aware of the policy and procedures to be followed when an emergency evacuation of an exam room is required

Special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo)

- ▶ Ensures appropriate arrangements are in place for the emergency evacuation of a disabled candidate from an exam room where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for the candidate
- ▶ Ensures the candidate is informed prior to taking their exams of what will happen in the event of an emergency evacuation
- ▶ Where safe to do so, ensures candidates are given the opportunity to sit exams for their published duration

Exams officer

- ▶ Ensures invigilators are trained in emergency evacuation procedures and how an incident and actions taken must be recorded
- ▶ Ensures candidates are briefed, during the Exam Assembly (held prior to exams taking place), on what will happen in the event of an emergency in the exam room
- ▶ Provides invigilators with a copy of the emergency evacuation procedure for every exam room
- ▶ Provides a standard invigilator announcement for each exam room which includes appropriate instructions for candidates about emergency procedures and what will happen if the fire alarm sounds
- ▶ Provides an exam room incident log in each exam room
- ▶ Liaises with the SENDCo and other relevant staff prior to each exam where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate
- ▶ Briefs invigilators prior to each exam where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate
- ▶ Ensures appropriate follow-up is undertaken after an emergency evacuation reporting the incident to the awarding body and the actions taken through the *special consideration* process where applicable (in cases where a group of candidates have been disadvantaged by a particular event)

Invigilators

- ▶ By attending training and/or update sessions, ensure they understand what to do in the event of an emergency in the exam room
- ▶ Follow the actions required in the emergency evacuation procedure issued to them for every exam room
- ▶ Confirm with the exams officer, where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate they are invigilating
- ▶ Record details on the exam room incident log to support follow-up reporting to the awarding body by the exams officer (see below)

Other relevant centre staff

- ▶ Support the Headteacher, SENDCo, exams officer and invigilators in ensuring the safe emergency evacuation of exam rooms

Recording details

As soon as practically possible and safe to do so, details should be recorded. Details must include:

- ▶ the actual time of the start of the interruption
- ▶ the actions taken
- ▶ the actual time the exam(s) resumed
- ▶ the actual finishing time(s) of the resumed exam(s)

Further details could include

- ▶ report on candidate behaviour throughout the interruption/evacuation
- ▶ a judgement on the impact on candidates after the interruption/evacuation

EXAM EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

If the fire alarm sounds, all persons must evacuate the building.

The Lead invigilator with support from other invigilators as available **must** take the following action in an emergency such as a fire alarm or a security alert:

- Stop the candidates from writing
- Collect the attendance register **(in order to ensure all candidates are present)**
- Advise candidates to close their answer booklets, leave all question papers and scripts in the examination. Candidates must be advised to close their answer booklets.
- Evacuate the examination room, ensuring candidates remain in silence
- Ensure that the candidates are closely supervised while they are out of the examination room to make sure there is no discussion about the examination.
- Candidates should assemble on the field near the staff carpark away from other students and remain closely supervised by staff and invigilators.
- On return to the exam room, make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted.
- Allow the candidates the remainder of the working time set for the examination once it resumes
- The Exam Officer will make a full report of the incident and of the action taken, and send to the relevant awarding body.

A situation may arise where it is not possible for the examination to continue and candidates will be sent home. This decision will be made by the Headteacher/Head of School in conjunction with the Exams Officer.

In deciding whether to continue the examination, the following points will be considered:

- the length of time that has passed since the start time of the exam
- whether the minimum time for remaining in the examination has passed to maintain the integrity of the examination
- the amount of time left to complete the examination
- whether there is sufficient time to complete the examination before another session starts
- whether continuing the examination will take candidates over the session limit of 3 hours, taking particular care to consider candidates with access arrangements which include extra time.

In deciding to continue the examination, the Exams Officer must be satisfied that communication between candidates has not taken place outside of the examination room. **Only if completely satisfied that no communication whatsoever has taken place must candidates be allowed to continue the examination.**

If the session is to be abandoned, this will be either:

- because of consideration of the criteria above;
- because re-entry to the premises cannot be secured; or
- because the risk of communication between candidates, which would invalidate the examination, cannot be eliminated.

If the examination has to be abandoned:

- The Examinations Officer will take the first opportunity to contact the relevant exam board and then seek to apply for Special Consideration for all the candidates affected.