Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment

Providers must take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children, staff and others on the premises in the case of fire or any other emergency, and must have an emergency evacuation procedure.

4.5 Fire safety and emergency evacuation

Policy statement

We ensure the highest possible standard of fire precautions are in place. The person in charge and our staff are familiar with current legal requirements, including the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the additional duties introduced under Section 156 of the Building Safety Act 2022. Where necessary we seek the advice of a competent person, such as our Fire Officer or Fire Safety Consultant. A Fire Safety Log Book is used to record the fire risk assessment, fire safety arrangements, the identity of any competent person who undertakes or reviews the assessment, actions taken, incidents that have occurred and fire drills. We ensure our policy is in line with the procedures specific to our building, making reasonable adjustments as required. We have 3 trained Fire Marshalls within the staff, to ensure there is somebody on site at all times, trained in fire safety.

Children with SEND, children known to social services and vulnerable children will have their own individual fire evacuation plans, developed with parents/carers and relevant professionals where appropriate. These plans will set out the support, communication arrangements, equipment, staffing and reasonable adjustments needed to evacuate the child safely and without relying on the Fire and Rescue Service to make the plan work.

Procedures

Fire safety risk assessment

- The basis of fire safety is risk assessment, carried out by a 'competent person'.
- Our Health and Safety Officer has received training in fire safety sufficient to be competent to carry out the risk assessment; this will be written where there are more than five staff and will follow the Government guidance Fire Safety Risk Assessment - Educational Premises (HMG 2006).
  - Our fire safety risk assessment focuses on the following for each area of the setting:
  - Electrical plugs, wires and sockets.
  - Electrical items.
  - Gas boilers.
  - Cookers.
  - Matches.
  - Flammable materials – including furniture, furnishings, paper etc.
  - Flammable chemicals.
  - Means of escape.

- Anything else identified.

- Where we rent premises, we will ensure that we have a copy of the fire safety risk assessment that applies to the building and that we contribute to regular reviews.
    - The fire risk assessment will identify children, staff, volunteers and visitors who may need additional support to evacuate safely, including children with SEND, children known to social services and vulnerable children. Individual evacuation arrangements will be recorded, kept up to date and reviewed when a child's needs, staffing arrangements, premises or evacuation routes change.

Fire safety precautions taken

- We ensure that fire doors are clearly marked, never obstructed and easily opened from the inside.
- We ensure that smoke detectors/alarms and fire fighting appliances conform to BS EN standards, are fitted in appropriate high-risk areas of the building and are checked as specified by the manufacturer.
- We have all electrical equipment checked annually by a qualified electrician. Any faulty electrical equipment is taken out of use and either repaired or replaced.
- Our emergency evacuation procedures are approved by the Fire Safety Officer and are:
    - clearly displayed in the premises;
    - explained to new members of staff, volunteers and parents; and
    - practised regularly, at least once every six weeks.
    - adapted where required so that individual evacuation plans for children with SEND, children known to social services and vulnerable children are practised sensitively and safely.
- Records are kept of fire drills and of the servicing of fire safety equipment.

Emergency evacuation procedure

Every setting is different and the evacuation procedure will be suitable for each setting. It must cover procedures for practice drills including:

- How children are familiar with the sound of the fire alarm.
- How the children, staff and parents know where the fire exits are.
- How children are led from the building to the assembly point.
- How children will be accounted for and who by.
- How long it takes to get the children out safely.
- Who calls the emergency services, and when, in the event of a real fire.
- How parents are contacted.
- How individual fire evacuation plans for children with SEND, children known to social services and vulnerable children are implemented, reviewed and shared with staff who need to know.

Fire drills

We hold fire drills termly and record the following information about each fire drill in the Fire Safety Log Book:

- The date and time of the drill.
- Number of adults and children involved.
- How long it took to evacuate.
- Whether there were any problems that delayed evacuation.

- Whether individual evacuation plans were followed effectively for children who need additional support, while maintaining confidentiality.
- Any further action taken to improve the drill procedure.

Legal framework

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Building Safety Act 2022, Section 156, which introduced additional duties for Responsible Persons from 1 October 2023, including fuller recording of fire risk assessments and fire safety arrangements.
- Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and others who may need additional support.

Further guidance

- Fire Safety Risk Assessment - Educational Premises (HMG 2006)
- Fire safety risk assessment: means of escape for disabled people, Home Office guidance, updated 12 September 2023.
- Fire safety: guidance for those with legal duties, GOV.UK, updated 4 October 2023.

This policy was adopted by	Stowey Bears Preschool	*(name of provider)*
On		*(date)*
Date to be reviewed	Reviewed annually	*(date)*
Signed on behalf of the provider	*Rachel Penny*	
Name of signatory	Julia Jameson	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Chairperson	

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Fire Safety Record (2015)