

# Fire Safety Policy

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## Record of changes

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# Introduction

## General Statement

The Outdoors Group as a responsible employer takes its fire safety duties seriously. For this reason, this policy has been formulated to comply with legal obligations to staff and visitors under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

## Employees' duties

All staff have a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that they do not place themselves or others at risk of harm. They also have a legal requirement to co-operate fully in complying with any procedures that may be introduced to ensure the workplace is safe from fire and its effects and to protect the safety and well-being of staff and visitors. Further information can be found in the responsibilities section in this policy.

## Communications

Staff will be kept informed of any changes that are made to the fire safety procedures and fire risk assessments usually via their Line Manager, the Health and Safety Committee representatives or by the Health and Safety Officer. All visitors and contractors shall be informed of evacuation procedures as appropriate.

# Risk Assessments

A written fire risk assessment is to be undertaken of all significant buildings and reviewed annually. More frequent reviews are to be undertaken if there are changes that will impact on its effectiveness such as alterations to the premises or new work processes.

Each building which has a written fire risk assessment will be under the control of a designated "Responsible Person". This person, Site Lead, will be responsible for ensuring that all fire safety procedures set out in the risk assessment and fire logbook are undertaken as required. For a building where a written fire risk assessment is undertaken, a plan of the building is to be available at the point of entry. It is to show electrical, gas and water isolation switches and valves and, if there are any, materials at risk and sources of ignition.

# Staff training

Training is to be provided as necessary to any staff given extra fire safety responsibilities, such as fire marshals or equipment testing with all members of staff, temporary employees, and volunteers to be provided with induction training on how to raise the alarm and the available escape routes.

We expect all our staff to understand where the dangers lie, how to avoid the risks arising, and, how to handle a breakout should it occur.

Staff are expected to:

- Be alert to any fire hazards (listed further below, please familiarise yourself with them).
- Immediately report any concerns about hazards and/or fire safety to the Site Lead and the Health and Safety Officer.
- Ensure that you are not the cause of any fire hazard by:
  - Not leaving permitted electrical appliances plugged in when they are not being used.
  - Turning off your computer when not in use and disconnecting laptops entirely from any plug socket before you leave the building at the end of your working hours each day.
  - Being mindful of the use and positioning of portable electric heaters and ensuring they are unplugged when not in use.
  - Smoking on site other than in permitted smoking areas.
  - Using damaged plugs, cables, wiring, lights and/or lighting equipment.
  - Blocking fire escapes, e.g. by piling items in front of these exits.
  - Leaving papers, files and other flammable items piled on, in or around your workspace, rather than keeping them in suitable containers, (e.g. filing cabinets) or practising a paperless office strategy.
  - Handling or storing chemical or flammable goods unless you have the express knowledge and consent of the Head of Operations / Health and Safety Officer.
  - Tampering with any fire equipment.
- Report:
  - Any fire safety equipment, such as extinguishers, fire blankets, fire buckets or fire beaters that are missing or look damaged to [healthandsafety@outdoorsgroup.co.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@outdoorsgroup.co.uk)
  - Any plug sockets or other electrical interfaces that are not working or look damaged or that have been misused / look as if they have been to [healthandsafety@outdoorsgroup.co.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@outdoorsgroup.co.uk)
- Comply immediately and responsibly with any fire evacuation orders, whether practice drills or real evacuations
- Attend fire safety and any other health and safety training sessions that we request. Head of Operations/Health and Safety Officer will inform you what training is relevant to your role and contracted duties to The Outdoors Group
- Properly use any fire safety equipment that you have been trained and authorised to use by Head of Operations/Health and Safety Officer
- Sound the alert, evacuate, and call 999 - do not tackle any fire hazard on your own, unless you have been properly trained to do so. Ensure you are aware of the 'What Three Words' location finder to pass on to the Emergency Services call handler.

# Ensuring the safe use of Campfires

- Campfires are an important part of The Outdoors Group and are used in many of the sessions we provide. The Outdoors Group aims to ensure that all children and adults participating in sessions with fires will do so safely and with as little risk to their health as possible.
- During sessions children learn why it is so important to respect fire, the dangers of fire, to be safe and responsible around it and they will also learn about the fire triangle (oxygen, fuel, and heat) and what is needed to build a small fire successfully.

During some training sessions it is sometimes necessary for both Training and Forest School to have small fires directly on the ground with no fire pit. In this instance participants are briefed thoroughly on how to do so safely by avoiding tree roots, pathways, and high traffic areas, establishing a fire safety zone and being mindful of those we share the space with. This is always overseen by a member of staff who are monitoring the fire and will have suitable fire equipment nearby.

It is the responsibility of the instructor / member of staff to ensure that all fires are extinguished, and the area is made safe after the activity

We expect you to always follow the appropriate Fire Safety Procedures and consider the following:

- Location
  - Only agreed area will be used for campfire (fire square with large logs – built following all safety measures).
  - Kettles, pots and pans and other cooking utensils will also be used in this area.
  - All children and adults to be safety briefed before session begins.
- Positioning of Children and Adults
  - Fire areas are surrounded by large logs which are situated a safe distance from the fire pit.
  - When the campfire is in use, children are not permitted to access the area without permission. They need to ask, 'May I enter?'
  - There must always be a responsible adult (team member) to supervise the children or service users when the campfire is in use.
  - When allowed to access the campfire, children must walk around the outside of the logs and wait for permission to step over or sit around the outside. Once permission has been given, they must sit, ensuring legs are drawn into the log and not outstretched.
  - Once seated around the campfire, the children must remain seated until directed by an adult to move.
  - Children will be taught how to change seats by standing, stepping over the log and then walking around the outside of the seating area. They must never cross the inner area.

- Children will be taught the RESPECT position if they are cooking on the fire. This position allows children to move away from danger, quickly.
- No running near campfires
- Children are not permitted to throw anything onto the fire.
- If there is a clear wind direction, seating in the line of smoke is to be avoided.
- If wind direction is variable, the leader should rearrange the seating if possible.
- Safety and Responsibility
  - Tie back long hair
  - Lighting and keeping fires burning. When lighting a fire, the leader of the session will take control of the operation and all accompanying adults will be briefed before.
  - A lit fire will not be left unattended at any point.
  - A fire may not be lit until it has been confirmed to all that our fire safety equipment is in place.
  - Open fires will be built within a fire square.
  - All pots, pans and kettles should be placed on a clear flat surface and any woodchip or leaf litter must be brushed away before use.
  - No flammable liquids or plastics are to be used on the fire.
  - If sessions involve children adding fuel to the fire, this must be done with one-to-one adult supervision.
  - Water should always be to hand during campfire sessions.
  - At the end of the session, the fire must be extinguished with water until all smoke and steam has ceased.

These items will be essential whenever a fire is lit:

- If necessary, children's medical information to hand
- Heatproof gloves
- Fire alarm or horn
- Fire gloves
- Fire blanket
- Fire beater
- Fire bucket
- First aid kit / burns kit

# Fire Risk Assessment

## (see separate site fire risk assessments)

- The Leader of the session may teach a small group how to build a small fire.
- Fires are lit using tinder of various kinds, fire steels or matches.
- No flammable liquids are to be used to light or accelerate fires.
- No plastics are to be burnt.
- If sessions involve children adding fuel to the fire, this must be done with one-to-one adult supervision.
- Sticks/wood must be placed, not thrown, from the side of the fire.
- Hands should never go over the fire.

## Extinguishing fires

- All fires must be extinguished at the end of a session.
- Whenever possible, all fuels should be burnt off to ash.
- The leader of the session should ensure that any large remains of wood are separated from one another.
- At the end of the session, the fire must be doused down with water and stirred until all smoke and steam has ceased.

## Buildings

- All buildings have a legal requirement to be checked and maintained in line with the Regulatory Reform Order 2005. This legislation covers general fire precautions and other fire safety duties which are needed to protect persons in cases of fire in and around premises. The Order requires fire precautions to be put into place where necessary and to the extent that is reasonable and practicable. The site lead or designated person is responsible for ensuring that all escape routes are to be always clearly signposted and kept free from obstructions.
- Staff are not to store anything in escape corridors, stairways, and lobbies, even temporarily, which could cause an obstruction and hinder safe escape from the workplace.
- Staff are to ensure that there are no flammable materials, including rubbish and waste, in these areas.
- Staff are to ensure that potentially flammable materials, including paper and rubbish, do not build up in the vicinity of their place of work.

The Operations department shall be responsible for:

- Fire detection and fire warning systems and are to be tested weekly by a trained member of staff. Staff are to be informed when a test is scheduled. See separate instructions on the Testing of Fire Alarms. Defects are to be reported to Operations Department.

- Emergency lighting equipment is tested monthly by a trained member of staff. Defects are to be reported to Operations Department.
- Fire detection and fire warning systems are fully checked and tested annually by a competent service engineer.
- Emergency lighting equipment is fully checked and tested annually by a competent service engineer.
- Firefighting equipment shall be fully checked and tested annually by a competent service engineer.
- Ensuring that portable electrical equipment is tested annually by contractors. Equipment that fails the test or that has not been tested is not to be used.
- If any member of staff notices defective or missing equipment, they must report it to a manager.

### **Emergency Procedure in the event of Fire**

- In the event of fire, the safety of human life is to be the first consideration.
- The following procedure is laid down for guidance only, the circumstances prevailing at the time and type of fire may require alternative action.
- You are to familiarise yourself with the whereabouts of firefighting equipment, call points in the area in which you work.
- When a fire is first discovered raise the alarm by:
  1. Shouting "fire" and where the fire is located.
  2. Breaking glass at Fire Alarm Point or ringing the rotary fire bell to activate alarm.
  3. Informing another member of staff.
  4. Reporting the fire to the site lead by radio.
  5. If necessary, call the fire brigade by dialling 999
  6. Evacuate all buildings threatened by fire in an orderly manner and assemble at the designated fire assembly point.
  7. Should the fire be localised and controllable, use the appropriate fire extinguishers, only if doing so does not put your life in danger.



# Responsibilities

## Directors

- The Directors are the persons designated as the "Responsible Person" for the Company. He or she delegates duties to the Head of Operations, Health and Safety Officer, Senior Leaders and Site Leads but remains responsible for ensuring that:
- General fire precautions are taken to ensure the safety of staff, learners, contractors, visitors, and members of the public.
- Suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out and regularly reviewed.
- A positive fire safety culture is promoted across the Company and that arrangements are in place for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring, and review of the preventive and protective measures.
- Adequate resources are allocated to the management of fire safety.

## Senior Leadership Team

- The Head of Operations, Health and Safety Officer and the wider Senior Leadership Team have delegated duties from the Directors and are responsible for ensuring that a positive fire safety culture is promoted in their area of responsibility and that fire safety is managed appropriately within their business areas.

## Site Leads/Site Co-ordinators

- Promoting a positive fire safety culture in their area of responsibility.
- Appointing sufficient Fire Wardens to monitor fire safety within their Department/ Division and implement the relevant emergency plans.
- Acting on the recommendations of the Head of Operations/Health and Safety Officer set out in the Fire Risk Assessments for the buildings in which their department is located.
- Ensuring that all flammable materials are correctly stored, used and disposed of, and that in all cases the quantities involved are the minimum reasonably practicable. All potential fire hazards within their Department/Division must be clearly identified and the Head or Operations/Health & Safety Officer notified.
- Liaising with the Head of Operations/Health and Safety Officer before introducing new activities and/ or processes which may increase the fire risk.
- Ensuring that staff and learners within their department receive sufficient and appropriate fire awareness instruction and training.

## Staff, Learners, and Visitors

- All Staff, Learners, and Visitors are required to follow established procedures and cooperate with appointed Company staff to achieve the highest standards of fire safety. This includes minimising the amounts of combustible materials

present in buildings, ensuring the safe use, storage, and disposal of flammable substances, and avoiding misuse of fire safety equipment.

## **Contractors**

- Contractors must comply with the Company Fire Safety Policy and obey all fire safety instructions given to them by the Head of Operations/Health and Safety Officer and/or the Estates Rangers supervising the contractors.
- Contractors must also ensure that all personnel for whom they are responsible are adequately trained and instructed in fire safety procedures and know the local arrangements for the areas where they are working.
- Contractors are required to cooperate fully with Company procedures including the need to apply for Hot Work Permits when carrying out work that could present a fire risk or potentially result in activation of the fire alarm system.
- All work on Fire Alarm Systems is also subject to Permit-to-Work procedures and must be agreed, in advance, with the Head of Operations/Health and Safety Officer and the Site Manager responsible for the area covered by the alarm system