



COVID-19 – Protection – Schools

3 April 2020

Advice to Fire and Rescue Services containing generic information for schools during current COVID 19 outbreak

This information is in response to the current Covid-19 situation to support FRS, advising schools and other educational establishments, in managing fire safety, whilst open/partially open to enable key workers to continue their vital roles.

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on 23 March 2020, it is imperative that people living and working in the built environment are safe, and are kept safe, regardless of the current COVID-19 lockdown conditions. Currently there is no relaxation of fire safety legislation and it is the responsibility of the Responsible Person to ensure they are testing and maintaining all fire safety measures to maintain a safe premises, although it is acknowledged that a pragmatic approach to achieve compliance may be required.

To support FRS the NFCC Building Safety Programme Team are happy to discuss further, please contact BuildingSafetyTeam@nationalfirechiefs.org.uk.

Useful information for schools

If the fire safety measures rely on specified staffing levels, the responsible person (RP) may need to review them during this period. Many establishments will have procedures in place for out of hours use which may be suitable. The RP should review and update the current fire risk assessment and evacuation plan as necessary. We would take this opportunity to advise the RP of the need to ensure your fire risk assessor is competent. Advice on selecting a competent fire risk assessor can be located [here](#).

Government guidance to support the fire risk assessment and assessment of the premises can be located [here](#).

In addition to the review of the fire risk assessment and emergency procedures, the following questions may provide some assistance when considering fire prevention and protection of the building from factors such as the risk of arson, risk from electrical fire etc. while partially closed/closed.

Security measures

- Is there an intruder alarm installed?
- Is alarm remotely monitored?
- Is there a staffed security presence?
- Is there external security lighting?
- Is interior lighting in place?

Physical security if closing

- Have any potentially vulnerable access points been suitably protected?
- Are all perimeter barriers in good repair?
- Are existing doors and door hardware in good repair?
- Are existing windows in good repair?

Administration considerations

- Is there a plan for controlling the shutdown?
- Have the building's insurers been notified?
- Are routine inspections planned?
- Have keyholders been nominated?

Housekeeping and health and safety

- Has a risk assessment been done?
- Has the health and safety of security staff been addressed?
- Has all refuse been removed from the interior?
- Has all refuse been removed from the external site areas?
- Have any skips been removed from the site?
- Have all non-essential services been disconnected or isolated?
- Has electrical safety been assessed? (overloaded electrical sockets / appropriate use of extension leads etc.)

Interim measures addressing fire safety management will be of a temporary nature in response to the current Covid-19 situation. Once business as usual commences the fire safety measures should again be reviewed, and normal procedures implemented, if deemed appropriate or revise them to ensure they are suitable and sufficient for the establishment. The latest advice on Covid-19 and education establishments from Gov.uk is available [here](#). If establishments require further advice and guidance it is advised they contact their local Fire and Rescue Service.