



FIRE PRECAUTIONS POLICY

PREVENTING AND MANAGING FIRE POLICY

Designated Contacts

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1. APPLICATION

1.1 This policy applies to all Cameo Learning Centre Ltd buildings and premises. It does not apply to:

- Venues that staff may hire from other organisations;
- Other employers premises used as a place of work by Cameo Learning Centres Ltd. employees.

2. POLICY

2.1 The Company is committed to ensuring that so far as is reasonably practicable there are suitable arrangements in place for preventing the outbreaks of fires, and for the safe evacuation of people in the event of fires within its buildings and premises.

3. AIMS

3.1 The Company aims to ensure that:

- Suitable and sufficient fire risk assessments are undertaken for all of its buildings and premises, and that regular and recorded fire safety inspections taken place;
- Other employers sharing the workplace are involved in the fire risk assessment and inspection processes and are informed of the fire arrangements;
- Up-to-date written emergency plans exist for buildings or premises, where appropriate, and that all relevant workers are informed of the contents of the plans at regular intervals;
 - Workers are informed of the fire arrangements during the induction process and at regular intervals thereafter;



- Regular fire drills are held, where appropriate, and that records of drills are kept at each of its buildings or premises;
- Fire detecting and fire-fighting equipment is maintained and tested at suitable intervals and that records are kept;
- The suitability of fire routes, fire detection and fire fighting equipment is considered following any reorganisations;
- The hiring out of premises or parts of premises includes information about the safe number of people that can attend, and the fire warning arrangements and escape routes; and
- Contractors entering the workplace manage the fire risks that might arise from the work they undertake and are informed of the fire evacuation arrangements for the building or premises

4. REVISION AND AUDIT

4.1 This policy will be regularly reviewed when there is any significant change in legislation or best practice.

4.2 All employees who are responsible for the prevention and management of fire shall monitor compliance with this policy within their areas.

5. GUIDANCE

5.1 *Fire Prevention*

A fire occurs when a source of ignition, fuel and oxygen combine in the correct quantities. If any of these is missing, a fire cannot start. Taking steps to prevent these coming together will therefore reduce the chances of a fire occurring.

5.2 Reducing sources of ignition

5.2.1 - Heaters

Naked flame and radiant heaters should be replaced with fixed convector heaters wherever possible. Heaters that require paraffin should not be use, and those that require liquid petroleum gas should only used in extreme circumstances and as a last resort e.g. when the central heating system breaks down. Heaters should be located away from flammable materials. Staff should turn of portable heaters before going to lunch, meetings or home, and should not locate them under their desks. Managers must supervise arrangements adequately.



5.2.2 – **Electricity**

Only competent people should install, maintain or otherwise work on electrical systems or equipment. Portable electrical appliances should be regularly tested, and the practice of plugging one extension lead into another prohibited as it can lead to electrical overloading and fires (see policy of provision and use of work equipment).

5.2.3 – **Smoking**

Local smoking policies should allow people to smoke only in authorised areas. Areas where it is unsafe to smoke should be identified and clearly marked. Metal waste bins, ashtrays etc should be provided and emptied regularly in areas where smoking is permitted.

5.2.4 – **Building and Repair Work**

Any building or maintenance work should consider the fire risks that may inadvertently be created. Particular attention should be paid to work involving hot processes e.g. welding or grinding. Care should be taken when restoring gas and electricity supplies to ensure that equipment has not inadvertently been left on.

5.2.5 – **Arson**

Appropriate arrangements should be put in place against the risk of arson, either by clients, members of the public or ex-employees. Early signs might be a series of unexplained small fires. Arrangements could include CCTV, protection of stored materials and the prompt removal of rubbish.

5.3 Reducing sources of fuel

5.3.1 – **Flammable Materials and Substances**

All flammable materials and substances should be removed, or reduced to the minimum necessary. This could be achieved by replacing flammable materials with less flammable alternatives. Highly flammable substances should be stored in fire resisting cabinets and/or stores.

Flammable linings e.g. curtains, chairs used in smoking rooms, should be removed or treated to be fire resistant.



5.3.2 – Housekeeping

Good housekeeping standards must be maintained at all times, with waste materials being removed quickly. Particularly bad practices include:

- Combustible items stored under stairs, which are not fire resistant
- Loose papers, food wrappers, bag of clothing etc building up under staff desks, over cables and near portable heaters
- Loose papers behind photocopiers blocking ventilation points
- Flammable cleaning chemicals and equipment stored in use cupboards and on top of fuse boards

Christmas decorations should be avoided or kept to a minimum on escape routes.

5.3.3 – Displays

Displays using paper, textiles and cotton wool materials should be avoided wherever possible as they can allow fire to spread rapidly. Any permanent or semi-permanent wall displays should ideally be placed behind glass, unless clients who self harm could be injured on the glass.

5.3.4 – Notice Boards

Notice boards should be kept as small as possible and should be fixed securely in position. They should not be continuous along a length of wall, not sited above heaters or contain excessive amounts of paper (e.g. overlapping and multi-sheet notices).

5.4 – Reducing sources of oxygen

Doors, windows and other openings not required for ventilation should be kept closed, particularly outside working hours and during fire evacuations.

Chemicals should not be stored near heat or flammable sources. Oxygen cylinders, used for medical reasons, should be stored in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.



5.5 – *Fire Evacuation*

5.5.1 – **Fire Warning Systems**

There needs to be an effective means of detecting any outbreak of fire and for warning people quickly. In small workplaces, the shout of “fire” may be all that is needed.

In larger premises, particularly multi-storey premises, an electrical fire warning system with manually operated call points is likely to be required. The alarm must be audible in all parts of the building, including storage rooms and inner rooms (i.e. rooms within rooms).

If there are unoccupied areas where a fire could start and affect escape routes automatic fire detection should be considered.

5.5.2 – **Means of Escape**

Means of escape should be easily identifiable, free from obstructions, adequately illuminated, and lead to a place of safety. Corridors should be 1.2 metres wide.

Unacceptable means of escape include revolving doors (except those specifically designed for escape purposes), ladders, window exits, wall and floor hatches, rolling shutters and folding, sliding or up-and-over doors.

Open plan floors should have clearly demarcated escape routes, and equipment should not be allowed to encroach on the routes.

5.5.3 – **Fire and Escape Doors**

Fire doors should be fitted with self-closing devices and labelled “Fire Door – Keep Shut”. Staff must be prohibited from propping fire doors open, or obstructing them with equipment. Fire doors should be periodically inspected to ensure that they provide a reasonable seal from fire and smoke, and are not damaged or misaligned. Smoke strips may be required where there is a gap or no intumescent seal.

Doors people have to pass through in order to escape from the workplace should open in the direction of travel where:



- More than 50 people may have to use the door
- The door is at the foot of a stairway
- The door serves a high fire risk area
- The door is on an exit route from a building used for public assembly.

5.5.4 – **Security**

Where fire or escape doors are locked for security reasons, the lock must be a single form of release device such as a panic latch, a panic bolt or a push pad. Locks, which require the use of a key, are not acceptable.

Where escape or fire doors are held locked by a magnetic catch, the system must “fail safe” and unlock the door immediately that fire alarm sounds. If staff needed to “double back” through the doors, they should not have to rely on card keys to do so.

5.5.5 – **Signs**

Emergency escape routes and exit doors that are not in common use should be clearly indicated by suitable signs. All exit doors in places of public assembly should be indicated by suitable signs. The use or non-use of lifts should be clearly signed.

Signs should be in positions where they can be clearly seen and of a size suitable for the viewing distance and the type of people likely to read them. For example, larger signs might be required for sections dealing with the elderly or visually impaired.

All signs must comply with the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996 and contain a pictogram and, where necessary, a directional arrow.

5.5.6 – **Fire Notices**

Fire action notices should be prominently posted in key locations throughout the workplace, for example by the alarm call points. Where appropriate, the notices should include a translation into other languages.

5.5.7 – **Emergency Escape Lighting**

Emergency escape lighting may be needed if areas of the workplace are without natural daylight or are used at night. The relevant parts of the workplace should be checked with the lights off to see whether there is sufficient borrowed light from other sources to illuminate escape routes e.g. street lights or unaffected lighting circuits. Where there is insufficient light, some form of emergency lighting should be provided. Emergency escape lighting should:

- Indicate the escape routes clearly
- Provide illumination along escape routes to allow safe movement towards the final exits
- Ensure that the fire alarm call points and fire fighting equipment can be easily located.

In smaller workplaces and outdoor locations with few people, the emergency escape lighting could take the form of battery-operated torches placed in suitable positions.

5.5.8 – **Building and Repair Work**

Any building and repair work should consider the risks that could inadvertently be created to the fire evacuation arrangements. Such risks could include:

- Obstruction or loss of exits and exit routes
- Obstruction of fire doors
- Openings created fire resisting partitions
- Fire signs taken down and not put back
- Wrong types of extinguisher available for the fire risks
- Disconnection of telephones and inability to summon emergency help

5.5.9 – Hiring out of Premises

The hiring of premises or parts of premises should include details of the fire arrangements. The safe capacity of halls and rooms should be known (the safe capacity is based upon the number and size of doors to the final exit, and not floor area. Information should include:

- How to sound the fire alarm
- The tone of the fire alarm (as opposed to other alarms e.g. security alarms)
- How to call the emergency services
- The means of escape
- Smoking arrangements
- Parking arrangements (ensuring escape routes are not blocked and access for the fire brigade is maintained)

In addition to regular workspace inspections, local management should check the fire doors on the day a premise is to be hired to ensure that they are in full working order and not locked.

5.5.10 – Assisting People with Impaired Vision

Good lighting and the use of simple colour contrasts can help the visually impaired. Advice can be sought from the Royal National Institute for the Blind or the National Federation of the Blind of the United Kingdom, where necessary.

Staff with impaired vision should be shown the fire escape routes, especially those routes that are not often used.

During an evacuation, a sighted person should lead visually impaired staff, clients or members of the public to safety. A normally sighted person should remain with those with impaired vision until the emergency is over.

5.5.11 – Assisting People with Impaired Hearing

People with impaired hearing may experience difficulty in hearing a fire alarm, but may not be completely insensitive to sound. Some may be able to hear a fire alarm and require no special provisions.

Where staff, clients or members of the public are known to have difficulty, thought, someone should be given the responsibility of alerting the individuals concerned. Cover will be required for times when staffs are on away on courses, leave and so forth. Further advice can be obtained from the Royal National Institute for Deaf People, where necessary.

5.5.12 – Assisting Staff with Impaired Vision or Hearing who work after hours

Where staff with impaired vision or hearing is required to work on their own after hours, the advice of the Departmental Safety Adviser or the Corporate Safety Section should be sought.

5.6 – Management of Fire

5.6.1 – Contacting the Fire Brigade

Where the fire brigade needs to be contacted, local management should contact the fire brigade direct.

5.6.2 – Fire Certificates

The Company must apply for a fire certificate for offices when more than 20 people are at work at any one time or more than 10 are at work any one time elsewhere than on the ground floor.

The Company should hold the originals of fire certificates at the premises to which they relate.

5.6.3 – Emergency Plan

Each premise must have a written emergency plan to ensure that people in the workplace know what to do if there is a fire, and to ensure that the workplace can be safely evacuated. In small workplaces the plan may be some simple instructions covering the points on a fire action notice. In large or complex workplaces, the plan will need to be more detailed, and may include a floor plan.

In workplaces shared with other employers or occupiers, the emergency plan should be drawn up in consultation with those employers and owners.

The emergency plan should give clear instructions on:

- The action employees should take on discovering a fire
- How people will be warned if there is a fire
- The sound of the alarm (as opposed to other alarms e.g. security alerts)
- How the evacuation of the workplace should be carried out
- Where people should assemble after they have left the workplace and procedures for checking whether the workplace has been evacuated.
- Identification of key escape routes, how people can gain access to them and escape from them to places of safety
- The fire-fighting equipment provided
- The identities and duties of employees who have specific responsibilities in the event of a fire
- Arrangements for the safe evacuation of people identified as being especially at risk, such as contractors, those with disabilities, illnesses or mobility problems, the profoundly deaf, blind, members of the public and visitors.
- The arrangements for stopping members of the public re-entering the building
- The reason for not using lifts (except those specifically installed or adapted for the evacuation of disabled people)
- Where appropriate, any machines, processes, power supplies which need stopping or isolating in the event of a fire
- Specific arrangements, if necessary, for high fire risk areas of the workplace
- How the fire brigade and any other emergency services will be called and who will be responsible for doing this
- Procedures or liaising with the fire brigade on arrival and notifying them of any special risks e.g. the location of highly flammable materials
- What training employees need and arrangements for ensuring that this is given

5.6.4 – Training

On their first day, employees, including cleaners and ancillary workers, should be given information about:

- the location and use of the escape routes from where they are working; and
- the location, operation and meaning of the fire warning system where they are working.

The information needs to be given in a way that employees can understand, and should take account of those with disabilities such as hearing or sight impairment, those with learning difficulties and those who do not use English as their first language.

Employees should receive further training on the details contained in the emergency plan. This should be repeated as necessary (usually once or twice per year).

5.6.5 - Fire Drills

Full evacuation fire drills should be held at least once every 6 months in all buildings and premises. I

All fire drills should be recorded, with a debriefing held by the manager after every drill. Appendix A provides a form for recording fire drills.

5.6.6 - Fire Safety Inspections

Fire safety inspections must be undertaken every 3 months. A record of the findings and remedial actions taken should be made on the checklist at Appendix B.

5.6.7 Reorganisations

Fire safety issues must be reassessed following any local reorganisations. While not exhaustive, the following points should be considered:

- Can the fire alarm still be heard in all parts of the premise?
- Are fire escape routes clear and unobstructed?
- Is fire signage clear?
- Are there sufficient fire extinguishers?
- Are the fire extinguishers of the correct type?

5.6.8 Fire extinguishers

Appropriate staff should be familiar with the information on the side of extinguishers in their workplaces.

Fire extinguishers should normally be located in conspicuous positions on escape routes, preferably near exit doors. Where workplaces are uniform in layout, extinguishers should normally be located at similar positions on each floor.

If for any reason extinguishers are hidden from direct view, the location should be indicated by a sign and, where appropriate, directional arrow.

5.6.9 - Maintenance

All fire detection and fire fighting systems must be suitably maintained. Appendix C provides details of the frequency and type of maintenance.

5.6.10 – Notifications

The Company management must be notified of the following:

- Outbreaks of all fires, no matter how small; and
- Triggering of an automatic detection system

For outbreaks of fires, the notification should be followed up by a report of a dangerous occurrence (please see the appropriate accident reporting book).

Appendix B: Fire Safety Inspection Checklist

FIRE SAFETY CHECKLIST – to be completed every 3 months

PREMISES:..... **DATE:**.....

COMPLETED BY (PRINT NAME):.....

Tick the appropriate column. If you tick “yes” to all the questions, fire safety is being well managed. If you tick “no” to a question, you will need to take action to improve fire management.

ITEM	YES	NO	ACTION
MANAGEMENT			
Is fire alarm tested weekly ?			
Has a fire drill been held within the past 6 months?			
Is there a means for calling the emergency services?			
Are fire doors kept closed?			
Are escape routes clear of storage?			
Are escape routes well signed?			
Are fire notices completed & near the call points?			
Are suitable fire extinguishers available?			
Have extinguishers been serviced in past year?			
Has electrical equipment been tested in past year?			
Are extension leads kept to a minimum?			
Are multi-adaptors avoided?			
Is the smoking policy followed?			
Are flammable substances kept to a minimum?			
Is the workplace tidy & free from unnecessary combustible items?			
PEOPLE			
Can disabled staff or clients escape easily?			
Are contractors shown fire escape routes?			
Are people hiring venues inducted & shown the fire alarm & escape routes?			

ACTIONS REQUIRED:

Fire Alarm: The fire alarm should be tested each week from a different call point on a rolling programme and should be heard throughout the building.

Means of calling the emergency services: A nominated worker, and deputy, should have responsibility for calling the emergency services in a fire.

Fire Doors: Fire doors should be kept closed, unless they are held open on magnetic catches. If they are held open on magnetic catches, they should automatically release and close when the fire alarm sounds. There should be a reasonable seal between the doors when they are closed to prevent smoke and heat from spreading.

Escape Routes: The following items should not be on escape routes: portable heaters, upholstered furniture, beds, laundry, coat racks, gaming / vending machines, photocopiers and displays using paper, textiles and cotton wool. Escape routes should be clearly signed and ideally 1.2 metres wide.

Signs & Notices: All signs must conform to the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996 and contain a pictogram and, where necessary, a directional arrow. Signs should be of a suitable size to allow for the viewing distance, and those who are visually impaired. Fire notices should be prominently posted in key locations, for example, by call points.

Extinguishers: Fire extinguishers should normally be located in conspicuous positions on escape routes, preferably near exit doors. A competent person should have inspected all extinguishers within the past year, as indicated on the label on the side of each extinguisher.

Electricity: Portable electrical appliances should be on a testing regime by a competent person. The frequency of testing depends on the level of use of the equipment, but a general rule would be yearly. Extension leads and adapters should be included in the regime. The plugging of one extension lead into another should be prohibited.

Smoking: Staff should smoke in designated areas. Signs of smoking in unauthorised areas (e.g. cigarette stubs) should be identified.

Flammable Substances: Flammable substances should be kept to a minimum and stored in flame proof (metal) cabinets away from sources of ignition.





Appendix C: Maintained of systems

Equipment	Period	Action
Fire detection & warning systems including self-contained smoke alarms and manually operated devices	Weekly	Check all systems for state of repair and operation. Repair or replace defective units. Test operation of systems, self-contained alarms and manually operated devices.
	Annually	Full check and test of system by competent service engineer. Clean self-contained smoke alarms and change batteries.
Emergency lighting equipment including self-contained units and torches	Weekly	Operate torches and replace batteries as required. Repair or replace any defective unit.
	Monthly	Check all systems, units and torches for state of repair and apparent working order.
	Annually	Full check and test of systems and units by competent service engineer. Replace batteries in torches.



<p>Fire fighting equipment including hose reels.</p>	<p>Weekly</p> <p>Annually</p>	<p>Check all extinguishers including hose reels for correct installation and apparent working order.</p> <p>Full checks and test by competent service engineer.</p>
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