

## **GUIDELINES FOR FIRE & EMERGENCY DRILL AND EVACUATION PROCEDURE FOR EDUCATIONAL BUILDINGS**

### **I. INTRODUCTION :**

Managements of Schools and other educational Institutions should develop emergency plans to ensure the life safety of school children/students during emergency and consult the local fire station for any special concerns. The emergency plans should reflect procedures for the reporting of emergencies as well as the occupant and staff response to such emergencies. The local fire station need to be made aware of the school's plan regarding evacuation of any students with disabilities or staff who might be incapable of self-evacuation. Areas of refuge should be easily identifiable from the exterior so that fire department personnel can readily access these areas. Emergency plans should be reviewed and updated periodically to reflect any new information or changes in conditions.

Frequent fire drills are critical in achieving the proper response by occupants during an emergency. Fire exit drills should include the assignment of staff or mature students to hold doors open in the line of march and to close doors where necessary to prevent the spread of fire or smoke; to search toilets or other ancillary rooms; to properly account for all occupants; and to achieve a prompt, quiet, and orderly evacuation of the building or relocation to designated areas of refuge. Occupants should not be allowed to retrieve clothing or take school bags after the alarm sounds due to confusion that would result in forming lines, student accountability, and the danger of tripping over dragging apparel.

### **2. FIRE DRILL PROCEDURE**

- When the fire alarm is given, the teacher shall give the warning Fire Drill. All instructions and activity shall cease, machinery should be shut down, gas and oil burning apparatus and appliances should be shut off, and the students should remain still and quiet to await further orders.
- The Teacher shall give the command STAND. Students should stand and remain silent. The teacher shall then take the class attendance register and keep in his/her possession until the end of the drill.
- The teacher will open the classroom door, determine the route to be taken, and give the command MARCH. The teacher will then supervise the class out of the building in an orderly manner, to a predetermined point of safety. Students will remain in formation until dismissed by the Principal/person in charge.
- Students outside the classroom and still in the building shall go the nearest corridor and join with any class, or, if close to an exit, shall leave the building and report to their particular class outside the building.
- Once assembled at the predetermined point of safety, the teacher shall check the names and the number of students. If there are any missing or additional students, the teacher shall report this to either the principal or person in charge, giving the names, the classroom numbers and the location.
- The Principal or person in charge shall make every effort to ensure that no student remains in the school.

### **3. PRE-FIRE DRILL ACTIONS**

#### **3.1 TABLE TOP EXERCISE :-**

- i) Table top exercise should be conducted before conducting actual mock drill to facilitate group analysis of an emergency situation in an informal, stress free environment.
- ii) The Table top exercise is designed for examination of operational plans, problem identification, and in depth problem solving.
- iii) The tabletop exercise is essentially a group brainstorming session centered on a scenario narrative and problem statements or message that are presented to members of the group.

#### **3.2 Fire Extinguishers/Fire-Fighting Equipment**

These must be checked, properly and maintained in serviceable condition.

#### **3.3 Staff Fire-Fighting team/s**

Staff will be Assigned duties including pool of male staff who will be trained to use the fire-fighting equipment/fire extinguishers.

#### **3.4 Sounding of the Alarm**

- i) All Key staff members must know how to operate the alarm and to sound it immediately when an outbreak of fire is discovered.
- ii) The alarm must be audible throughout the school.
- iii) The signal for ‘fire’ must be different from any other signal used in the school and must not be used for any other purposes.
- iv) Should the electric warning system/ the fire alarm fail, a school bell and/or any other improvised gong will be used.

#### **3.5 Evacuation routes**

- i) Every staff member must be acquainted with the evacuation routes of the class or classes he/she teaches or from the room he/she is occupying.
- ii) Office staff, laboratory staff and others must also be familiar with the evacuation routes.
- iii) Plans showing evacuating routes will be explained to pupils and will be prominently displayed at several strategic points in the school.

### **3.6 Record of Fire Drill**

Written record of fire drills will be maintained. These records will indicate the total evacuation time taken in each drill. (Total evacuation time is the time taken for the last person to leave the building from the time the fire alarm is initiated). The office staff will time the whole exercise.

### **4. NOTICES :**

**4.1** A thick white card approximately 20cm x 15cm will be clearly displayed next to the office telephone with the following boldly printed instructions.

**4.2 IN CASE OF FIRE -- DIAL 101/telephone No. of Local Fire Station/108 AND SAY:**

**FIRE AT \_\_\_\_\_**

**(keep calm, speak clearly)**

**Our next nearest telephone or Fire Alarm is at \_\_\_\_\_**

### **4.3 Evacuation of the premises**

- i) Upon detecting of a fire, the Principal/Vice Principal/HOD must be alerted to sound the alarm, the area on fire and its vicinity must also be evacuated immediately.
- ii) When the alarm sounds, all occupants must evacuate the premises Immediately in a calm and orderly manner, making use of all available exits. If a specific staircase is cut off or rendered unusable by smoke of fire, alternative staircases will be used. Re-entry is forbidden until permitted by the person-in-charge. (I.e. the Principal/VP/HOD).
- iii) School attendance registers, when in the classrooms must be taken out by the teacher In class, or if they are in the office, by the office attendant.
- iv) Classes will move in the following manner;
  - a) Pupils in each class are to line up in twos.
  - b) All classes will evacuate simultaneously with priority for access to staircase given to higher floors.

### **4.4 Assembly Area**

All occupants must proceed to predetermined assembly area on open grounds away from the buildings e.g. car park, school field, etc.

### **4.5 Roll Call**

At the assembly area, a complete roll call (for both pupils and staff members) must be carried out. Any pupil who cannot be accounted for must be reported at once to the Principal together with his/her last known whereabouts in the building.

## **4.6 Checking the Building**

Staff members who have no other specific duties to perform (teachers/HODs) are to check the evacuation of the building while the assembly and roll call are taking place.

## **4.7 Fighting the Fire**

Male staff will be mobilized and detailed to proceed to fight the fire from a safe distance with the available fire-fighting equipment and attempt to extinguish or control the fire without personal risk pending the arrival of the Civil Defence fire-fighters. (Pupils will not be expected to take an active part in the fire-fighting operation)

## **4.8 TESTING OF INSTALLATIONS AND EQUIPMENT:-**

- i. During the Drill, the real performance of all the available fire fighting installations and equipment, viz. Hose Reel, Wet Riser, Down comer, Yard Hydrant system, Fire Extinguishers, Emergency Lighting, Automatic Detection and alarm system, Sprinkler system, Smoke management system, Fire Doors, Water Tanks, Fire Pumps, etc. have to be tested and deficiencies if any shall be recorded in the Fire and Emergency Drill Check List.
- ii. It is the responsibility of the building management to rectify the deficiencies immediately to ensure fire and life safety.

## **4.9 DEMONSTRATIONS.**

It may be ensured to conduct demonstrations at periodic intervals so that all the inmates are familiarized with the usage / working of Fire Extinguishers, Hose Reel, Wet riser, Fire alarm System (manual and automatic) and Sprinkler System.

## **5.0 Frequency of Fire Drills**

5.1 A fire drill involving both staff and pupils will be held at least once in 3 Months/at the beginning of each term.

5.2 Several practices may be necessary to familiarize pupils with the correct procedures to evacuate from the buildings in an orderly manner in the minimum time.

## **6. All Clear Signal**

The person-in-charge i.e. the Principal/VP/HOD/ will give the all clear signal for re-entry to the building.