



Evacuation Policy

Approved by	Mrs C Snowden		
Date	01.09.2026	Next review due	01.09.2027

Summary of Changes

Version	Date	Summary of Changes	Approved By
1.0	June 2020	Final Document	No changes; initial baseline.
-	June 2021	Annual Review	No changes; procedures confirmed current.
-	June 2023	Annual Review	No changes; procedures confirmed current.
-	June 2024	Annual Review	No changes; procedures confirmed current.
1.1	September 2025	Annual Review (v0.4)	No changes; minor drafting corrections.
2.0	September 2026	2026/27 Full Revision	Fully updated to incorporate Section 156 of the Building Safety Act, Jan 2026 DfE Technical Manual standards, Ofsted Safeguarding logs, and Martyn's Law (2025) emergency integrations.

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1. Document Control & Administration

This policy details the operational procedures and emergency evacuation directives for Western House Academy. It has been thoroughly revised for the **2026/2027 academic year** to align existing local school procedures with updated national UK fire safety legislation, Department for Education (DfE) technical frameworks, and safeguarding codes.

1.2 Governance and Document Control Notes

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Continuous Improvement	To facilitate continuous improvement, readers are strongly encouraged to report any identified errors, omissions, or process bottlenecks directly to the policy author or Principal.

2. Introduction & Statutory Context

2.1 Principal's Executive Statement

In order to comply with our statutory and legal obligations, it is mandatory that all members of staff, volunteers, and regular contractors thoroughly familiarise themselves with these emergency procedures. In an emergency, individuals can quickly become disorientated or experience panic. Western House Academy is fully committed to fire safety, ensuring that all staff receive robust, comprehensive training on an annual basis.

Furthermore, we ensure that full evacuation drills are executed on a termly basis, with the designated 'seat' or starting point of the alarm rotated each time to simulate diverse emergency scenarios. Please actively familiarise yourselves with these pathways, review refuge locations, and visit the assembly points with your classes. During any real emergency, children look directly to adults for calm guidance and leadership. Historically, our drills demonstrate that Western House Academy manages evacuations with a high degree of order and efficiency; however, we cannot allow complacency to compromise pupil safety.

Coral Snowden
Principal, Western House Academy
September 2026

2.2 Primary Statutory Drivers for the 2026/2027 Policy

This policy is formally structured around four primary statutory pillars to guarantee full compliance with UK law and Department for Education standards for the 2026/2027 school year:

- **The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 & Section 156 of the Building Safety Act 2022:** Under Section 156, the academy is legally required to formally record its entire Fire Risk Assessment (FRA), explicitly list the designated 'Responsible Person', and maintain robust records of cooperation and coordination with other building controllers or trust authorities.
- **DfE Technical Manual (January 2026):** Replacing older non-statutory BB100 recommendations on DfE-funded projects, this manual imposes mandatory contractual standards on school fire protection and detection. This policy aligns emergency protocols with modern zoned detection specifications (Category L2/L3 minimum) designed to pinpoint fire seats and prevent disruptive false alarms.
- **Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (Safeguarding Compliance):** Under Ofsted's current inspection rules, fire safety, logbook records, evacuation drills, and emergency training are directly integrated into the 'Safeguarding' judgment. Any significant gap in fire safety compliance or failure to document drills will result in an ineffective safeguarding judgment, impacting the school's overall rating.
- **Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyn's Law):** As a Standard Tier venue, Western House Academy is legally required to implement Public Protection Procedures and register with the Security Industry Authority (SIA). This policy coordinates traditional fire evacuation procedures with security lockdown (invacuation) protocols to ensure staff can safely manage both fire and security threats without conflicting responses.

3. Fire Alarm Evacuation Procedures

3.1 Discovery of Fire and Immediate Notifications

1. Discovery of Fire: Any person (staff, pupil, visitor, or contractor) who detects a fire must immediately activate the nearest **Fire Alarm Call Point (Break Glass)** located along escape corridors or exit doors. Do not attempt to tackle a fire unless you are trained to do so and it is safe.

2. Alarm Sound: Upon the activation of any call point, the alarm will emit a continuous, high-pitched warning signal. All persons present on site must immediately stop all activities and prepare to evacuate the building in accordance with this policy.

3. Contacting Emergency Services: The Principal's PA (or designated administrative deputy, typically the Receptionist) must contact the **Fire and Rescue Service (999)** immediately. This contact is mandatory for all genuine alarms and must only be bypassed during pre-notified, controlled drills where fire brigade bypass has been scheduled.

3.2 Control Panel Check & Incident Command

Immediately upon alarm activation, the Premises Team (or designated staff member) will, if safe and practicable to do so, attend the central **Fire Alarm Control Panel** to identify the triggered detector, zone, and specific location. This system has been updated in line with **DfE Technical Manual (2026)** specifications to provide zoned visual indicators, showing exactly which sector of the academy has triggered the alarm. The team will also inspect the visual panel status of the automatic sprinkler system to verify if it has activated. This diagnostic information must be immediately relayed to the **Incident Lead** (the Principal, or in their absence, the Deputy Principal or designated Senior Leadership Team member) to inform emergency services and direct the evacuation.

3.3 Classroom Evacuation and Teacher Commands

1. Teacher Command for Silence: The classroom teacher must immediately command the class to be completely silent. Silence is a critical safety requirement to ensure children can hear emergency commands, and to maintain a calm, orderly evacuation. All supporting adults in the room

(teaching assistants, volunteers, visitors) must immediately assist the teacher in supervising the pupils.

2. Securing the Room: As the class exits, the teacher (or designated adult) will **close all windows and doors** behind them. This is vital to create a fire break, preventing the rapid spread of oxygen, smoke, and fire through corridors. Closing doors must not, however, delay evacuation speed or endanger safety.

3. No Collection of Possessions: All occupants must evacuate immediately. The teacher will instruct children and adults **not to collect personal possessions, including bags, coats, or lunchboxes**. Any delay to collect personal items is strictly prohibited and carries a high risk to life.

3.4 PEEPs and Specialist Assistance

1. Individualised Support: Any pupil or staff member with a physical, sensory, or cognitive disability must have a documented **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)**. Designated support staff are assigned to assist these individuals, ensuring they are safely and rapidly escorted along designated accessible escape routes.

2. Refuge Areas and Emergency Liaison: If a person with limited mobility cannot be immediately evacuated down stairs or across compromised zones, they must be safely escorted to the nearest designated, fire-rated **Refuge Area** (such as fire-protected stairwells). The escort must remain with them. The Premises Team and Incident Lead must be immediately notified of the person's exact location, which must be communicated directly to the arriving Fire and Rescue Service by the Principal's PA at the entrance gate.

3.5 Evacuation Routes and Walk Conduct

1. Leading the Exit: The class teacher will lead the class out of the building via the designated fire exit route. Any supporting adults must bring up the rear of the class line, ensuring no children fall behind. If a primary evacuation route is blocked by fire or smoke, the teacher must exercise leadership and redirect the class along the most appropriate safe alternative route.

2. Evacuation Conduct: All occupants must walk quickly and sensibly in absolute silence. Running, pushing, or overtaking other classes is strictly prohibited. Only supervising adults may speak to give necessary safety instructions. **Lifts must not be used under any circumstances** during a fire alarm as power failure could trap occupants inside.

4. Assembly, Accountability & Roll Call

4.1 Movement to and Conduct at the Assembly Point

Classes must proceed directly to the officially designated **Assembly Point: Main Playground**. Teachers must ensure their lines do not cross or intersect with other classes to avoid bottlenecks. Once assembled, children must stand in a straight line, completely silent, and face away from the school building to remain focused on the teacher.

Alternative Assembly Point: If the primary playground or safe route to it is blocked or compromised, the alternative evacuation protocol is to exit via the front of the Main Building and assemble in the car park or along the opposite road (**Richards Way**). Staff must ensure pupils are kept safe from passing traffic in this scenario.

4.2 Sweep and Fire Warden Duties

Designated Fire Wardens are assigned specific zones across the academy. Immediately upon hearing the alarm, and only where safe and practicable, Fire Wardens must systematically sweep their allocated areas—paying particular attention to **toilets, cloakrooms, changing rooms, and specialist spaces**—to ensure that no individuals have been left behind. Once their zone is clear, Fire Wardens must immediately evacuate and relay an **'All Clear'** message to the Incident Lead (Principal or senior SLT member) at the Assembly Point.

4.3 Roll Call, Reconciliation, and Missing Persons

1. Roll Call Execution: Upon reaching the Assembly Point, the class teacher must immediately perform a head count and call the class register in complete silence. Supporting classroom adults must also be verified and accounted for. Once completed the teachers or staff member who has taken the register must hold it above their head so a member of SLT can collect it.

2. Staff and Visitor Accountability: The Receptionist and Administrative Team will call and mark the registers for all non-classroom staff, premises personnel, lunchtime supervisors, IT support, contractors, and registered visitors at their dedicated assembly location.

3. Reporting Discrepancies (Critical Step): Once a class teacher has successfully accounted for every child, they must **raise their hand**. A designated member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will collect the registers, at which point the teacher will lower their hand. If any individual is missing, the teacher must **not raise their hand** and must immediately report the discrepancy to the collecting SLT member.

4. Emergency Liaison for Missing Persons: The collecting SLT member will immediately record the full names and last known locations of any missing individuals. The Principal's PA (or Receptionist) must communicate this critical information to the Fire and Rescue Service immediately upon their arrival at the school entrance to direct search and rescue operations.

4.4 Post-Incident and Re-entry

1. Authority to Re-enter: If the evacuation was triggered by a genuine incident or unannounced alarm, all staff and pupils must remain at the Assembly Point. Under no circumstances may anyone re-enter the school buildings. Only the responding **Fire Officer** (or the Incident Lead upon direct instruction from the Fire Officer) is authorised to declare the buildings safe and grant permission for re-entry.

2. Post-Drill Evaluation & Logbook Entry: At the conclusion of every evacuation (whether a scheduled practice drill or a genuine alarm), the Incident Lead, Premises Team, and Fire Wardens will hold an immediate debrief to identify operational bottlenecks and lessons learned. The details of the drill—including evacuation time, date, seat of alarm, and any equipment performance issues—must be formally recorded in the school's physical and digital fire logbooks to maintain compliance under the **Ofsted Safeguarding Framework**.

5. Statutory Compliance & Legislative Updates (2026/2027)

5.1 Section 156 Duties: Responsible Person & Record Keeping

In strict compliance with Section 156 of the Building Safety Act 2022, which is fully enforced for the 2026/2027 academic year, the following legal duties are established:

- **Identity of the 'Responsible Person':** The legal 'Responsible Person' for fire safety at Western House Academy is the Principal (Coral Snowden) and the Governing Body, acting on behalf of The Park Federation Academy Trust.
- **Formal Recording of Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs):** The academy's Fire Risk Assessment must be formally recorded in full, regardless of school size or employee count. This FRA must outline all identified fire hazards, persons at risk, general fire precautions, and specific action plans.
- **Information Sharing and Cooperation:** The Responsible Person must formally share the FRA and fire safety records with all relevant co-occupants, contractors, and the Trust. This includes coordinating safety measures with shared service providers, premises teams, and community users of the school site.

5.2 Maintenance Testing and Logbook Compliance (Ofsted Alignment)

Under the current Ofsted inspection framework, comprehensive maintenance and detailed testing records are a central component of effective safeguarding. The Premises Team must perform and log the following mandatory checks:

- **Weekly Fire Alarm Testing:** Every week, the fire alarm system must be tested using a different call point on each occasion. The test must be executed at a set time, and the call point ID, time, and system response must be logged in the Fire Safety Logbook.
- **Monthly Emergency Lighting:** A monthly functional check of all emergency escape lighting units and illuminated exit signs must be executed. Any defective lamps or batteries must be replaced immediately and logged.
- **Annual Equipment Servicing:** All portable fire extinguishers, fire blankets, fire doors, and automatic sprinkler systems must undergo thorough annual inspection and servicing by BAFE-certified contractors. Certification records must be retained on the Admin Server.
- **Ofsted Safeguarding Auditing:** During any routine or unannounced Ofsted inspection, inspectors will review these maintenance files, drill records, and staff training logs. Failure to demonstrate an active, up-to-date logbook will be cited as a safeguarding failure, which immediately compromises the academy's overall inspection rating.

5.3 Martyn's Law Compliance & Emergency Response Integration

To satisfy the statutory requirements of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyn's Law) for Standard Tier educational venues, Western House Academy has integrated fire safety with wider security protocols:

- **SIA Registration:** The Academy must register its premises with the Security Industry Authority (SIA), confirming that active emergency security plans are in place.
- **Coordinating Evacuation vs. Invacuation (Lockdown):** Emergency plans must clearly differentiate between Fire (Evacuation - escaping the building) and Security Threats (Invacuation/Lockdown - securing the building). In a security incident (e.g., active intruder on site), pupils and staff must not evacuate. Instead, they must secure classrooms, lock doors, close blinds, and remain completely silent. The lockdown alert must use a distinct, intermittent tone that cannot be confused with the continuous fire alarm.
- **Drills and Preparedness:** In addition to termly fire drills, staff and pupils must participate in periodic emergency lockdown drills to build response confidence and ensure seamless operational coordination during multi-threat scenarios.

6. Appendix A: Site Layout & Assembly Points

In the event of an emergency evacuation, all classes and personnel must move directly to the **Main Playground Assembly Point**. Occupants must assemble in the specific linear order detailed below. This visual grid ensures that emergency responders can quickly scan the playground and identify missing cohorts.

SITE LAYOUT (ASSEMBLY POINT MAIN PLAYGROUND NEAR THE PLAYGROUND)



