

# Fire Safety Policy, Strategy & Management Procedures

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## **1.0 Fire Safety Policy Statement**

### **1.1 Policy Statement**

Propeller Academy Trust (PAT) confirms its commitment to a management framework, which incorporates all the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO) and all subordinate regulations, and the responsibility to provide suitable and sufficient guidance so Managers can meet their obligations so far as is reasonably practicable.

Without detracting from the responsibility of PAT member school headteachers and SLT to ensure safe conditions of work, the Site Manager will seek to provide or secure competent advice, information, and training on fire safety matters.

All employees are reminded of their duties under the RRFSSO to take care of their own safety and that of other employees and persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions, and also to co-operate with their employer to enable them to carry out their own responsibilities successfully.

Those persons having control of the premises whether as headteacher, SLT or Site Manager, act as the Responsible Premise Manager (RPM). The RPMs are responsible for meeting the duties within their control imposed by the RRFSSO.

PAT member schools adopt a 'Fire Safety Logbook' to aid those in control of premises (RPM) to carry out their statutory duties.

## **2.0 Introduction**

### **2.1 Purpose of Policy**

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 places a duty on Fire and Rescue Authorities to promote fire safety by providing information and giving advice on how to prevent fires, restrict fire spread, and ensure the safe escape from properties if a fire was to occur. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 also places a duty on Fire and Rescue Authorities to enforce the fire safety duties placed on employers, occupiers, or owners of premises to protect employees or the general public from fire.

The purpose of this policy and manual is to communicate to site staff the importance of fire safety, their responsibility for maintaining the fire safety logbook, the role of the PAT, the precautions which both the PAT and site staff are required to implement, and the responsibility for record keeping.

It is important that the Premises Manager and site users fully understand the actions necessary to control the risk, and their role in the control process.

Failure to adopt appropriate measures for the minimisation of fire risk (in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974) renders the headteacher, SLT, Site Manager and others liable to prosecution.

**There is a legal duty to adopt measures of the type presented in this policy document.**

## **2.2 The 5 steps of a risk assessment**

The following is a summary of the 5 steps that will be adopted for fire risk assessment at PAT premises:

Step 1 - Identify fire hazards

- Sources of ignition
- Sources of fuel

Step 2 - Identify people especially at risk

- Members of staff
- People not familiar with the premises
- People working alone

Step 3 - Evaluate, remove, reduce, and protect from risks

- Measures to prevent fires
- Measures to protect people from fire

Step 4 - Record, plan, instruct, inform and train

- Record significant findings and actions taken
- Prepare an emergency plan
- Inform relevant people, provide instruction, co-operate and co-ordinate with others
- Provide training

Step 5 - Review

- Keep assessment under review
- Revise where necessary

## **3.0 Legal requirements**

### **3.1 Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005**

The PAT has adopted the '*Fire Safety Logbook*' which helps to meet the PAT's duties under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

This legislation is usually referred to as "the Fire Safety Order", or simply "the R R FSO". It applies to virtually all non-domestic premises and covers nearly every type of building, structure, and open space.

### **3.2 Enforcement and internal monitoring**

As the local enforcing authority, Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service have a duty to enforce the Fire Safety Order in all PAT premises. Officers will inspect and audit the fire safety management systems in premises in accordance with their enforcement policies and

procedures.

Compliance with the Fire Safety Order's requirements and prohibitions will also be monitored in accordance with the PATs normal departmental procedure and may be monitored/audited by OCC Health and Safety Team.

### **3.3 Duties of the “responsible person” (PAT)**

As the Fire Safety Order places the primary responsibility for fire safety in premises on the 'responsible person'. Where PAT is an employer or occupier (and in some circumstances the owner) of premises, it is the 'responsible person' and as such the main duty holder under the RRFSO. Headteachers, SLT and the Site Manager will ensure that the PAT meets its statutory responsibilities in this regard.

### **3.4 Duties of other “person(s) in control” (Site Manager)**

It should also be noted that the duties of the responsible person are extended to include “*every person.....who has, to any extent, control of those premises so far as the requirements relate to matters within his control*”. The Board of Trustees has delegated responsibility for H&S and fire safety to each member schools head teacher, SLT and Site Manager. Persons in Control could be held liable for their own acts or omissions.

This also includes persons who, by virtue of any contract or tenancy, have an obligation in relation to the fire safety of the premises or the maintenance or repair of the premises or anything in or on them.

### **3.5 General fire precautions**

The responsible person has a general duty under the RRFSO to “*take such general fire precautions as will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of any of his employees*”. However, the RRFSO applies not only to persons at work but also to all “*relevant persons*”.

These are defined as any person “*who is or may be lawfully on the premises and any person in the immediate vicinity of the premises who is at risk from a fire on the premises*”.

In relation to such non-employees, the responsible person has a general duty to “*take such general fire precautions as may reasonably be required in the circumstances of the case to ensure that its premises are safe*”. In both cases, these “*general fire precautions*” are a combination of:

- the “*preventive measures*” designed to reduce the risk of fire occurring on the premises and to reduce the risk of the spread of fire on the premises, and
- the “*protective measures*” provided to protect relevant persons in the event of a fire occurring (i.e., the fire detection and alarm system, the means of escape, the

emergency lighting system, signs, fire-fighting equipment, staff training, the emergency plan etc).

### **3.6 Fire safety arrangements**

The responsible person must make arrangements for “*the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventive and protective measures*” identified by the risk assessment.

This means that the fire safety arrangements implemented at each premises must:

- comprise fire safety systems and procedures that actually work - taking account of the risk, nature of the activities and size of the premises
- be planned to use a systematic approach which identifies priorities and sets objectives. (Whenever possible, the elimination of any risk of fire should be planned through the careful selection and design of facilities, equipment, and processes. If the risk cannot be avoided, then it should be minimised by the planning of effective control measures applying the principles of prevention specified in the RRFSo)
- be organised with a coherent structure of responsibilities, communication, and accountability
- include controls to ensure that decisions for achieving the reduction and management of the residual risk from fire are actually implemented as planned
- be reviewed, tested, and modified as necessary and new control measures introduced where required.

### **3.7 Records**

The responsible person has a duty to ensure there are records made and kept of:

- the significant findings of the fire risk assessment (including any group of persons identified as especially at risk), and
- the fire safety arrangements for the premises

The complete Fire Safety Order is available from the internet at:

**<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2005/20051541.htm>**

### **3.8 Building Regulations 2010 approved document B**

All projects irrespective of whether submission for building regulations approval is required, must wherever possible comply with the guidance included in approved document "B" (ADB) of the Building Regulations 2000 (as amended).

### **3.9 Building Bulletin 100**

All projects irrespective of whether submission for building regulations approval is required, must wherever possible comply with the guidance included in Building Bulletin 100 (BB 100) - Design for fire safety in schools.

### **3.10 British standards**

A fire safety strategy statement is to be prepared for all projects and must include all aspects of the design with particular reference to any issues that do not comply with the guidance included in ADB and for schools BB 100. The reasons for non-compliance must be clearly identified together with the proposed alternative engineered solutions be it BS 7974 - Application of Fire Safety Engineering Principles to the Design of Buildings or BS 9999: 2017 Code of practice for fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings selected for adoption to compensate for the non-compliance with the above guidance. Be advised of evolving updates and editions.

### **3.11 Dangerous Substance and Explosive Atmosphere (DSEAR) 2002, L139 (second Edition)**

This is the Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) and guidance provide practical advice on how to comply with the Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmosphere regulations (2002). These regulations require the elimination or reduction or risk of fire and explosion from substances connected with work activities.

### **3.12 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH)**

These regulations require employers to control exposure to hazardous substances to prevent ill health. These include Explosive and Flammable substances.

See for Health and Safety A-Z guidance and requirements. [Health and safety toolkit | Schools \(oxfordshire.gov.uk\)](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/health-and-safety-toolkit/schools)

A PAT Risk Assessment Form COSHH is available to schools to download.

## **4.0 PAT Strategic Approach**

### **4.1 Fire Safety Logbook**

All PAT sites will be issued with a Fire Safety logbook. It will be the responsibility of the member schools Site Manager to ensure that the requirements of the logbook are fully complied with and that all records are kept up to date. They will also ensure that all users of the site are aware of their responsibility as part of the Fire Risk Assessment and action plan.

### **4.2 Fire safety strategy**

All locations within the trust will undergo external inspection by a qualified fire officer every two years.

### **4.3 Fire risk assessment**

To identify the nature and extent of the general fire precautions necessary, the Site Manager will carry out a fire risk assessment of the premises and of any “*dangerous substances*” that are, or are liable to be, present in or on the premises. This will be carried out by completion of the PAT Fire Risk Assessment on Smartlog.

### **4.4 Fire safety action plan**

A Fire Safety Action Plan will be developed to assist in planning the actions necessary to rectify any identified deficiencies in the preventive and protective measures so as to ensure their continued effectiveness.

The action plan will be informed and developed from a number of sources of information including:

- the significant findings of the fire risk assessment and any subsequent review
- fire incidents, near miss and fire hazard reports
- routine maintenance inspections and checks
- routine day to day checks of the premises
- fire safety training records
- debriefs following fire drills
- directorate instructions
- reports from visiting inspectors from the Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service and from the County Council Health and Safety Team

### **4.5 Plan of premises**

A plan(s) of the premises will be kept in this section of the Fire Safety Logbook as a practical way of recording the preventive and protective measures that have been taken. The plan(s) need only be a simple line drawing of the premises.

#### Fire Evacuation Floor Plan

This is a plan of the factors to aid any evacuation. The plan can be used to support the premise emergency plan, below in 4.6. This should be displayed on all escape routes.

#### Fire Strategy Plan

This is a complete plan of the fire safety measures that will be supplied within the premise fire strategy. This is usually supplied by the building contractor. Facilities management will review the requirement for this with a full fire strategy review.

Where building work is carried out that affects fire safety, the person carrying out the work will

be required to provide the responsible person for the building with sufficient information to operate and maintain the building in reasonable safety in accordance with Building Regulations requirements.

#### **4.6 Emergency plan (including evacuation plan)**

All PAT premises will adopt an emergency plan to ensure that the people in the premises know what to do if there is a fire and that the premises can be safely evacuated. All emergency plans must be recorded, and a copy kept in the premises Fire Safety Logbook.

The emergency plan will be based on the outcome of the fire risk assessment and be available to employees, their representatives (where appointed) and the enforcing authority.

Everyone who uses the premises will be made aware of the evacuation procedures to be followed in the event of fire. Systems will be in place to deal with the various issues presented by visitors, contractors and members of the public who may access the site.

In simple premises the emergency plan may need to be no more than a fire action notice.

In multi-occupied and more complex premises, the emergency plan will need to be more detailed and compiled only after consultation with other occupiers and other responsible persons e.g., owners, who have control over the building. In most cases this means that an emergency plan covering the whole building will be necessary. It will help if one person is delegated to co-ordinate this plan.

Emergency plans should be appropriate to the premises and could include:

- how people will be warned if there is a fire
- what people should do if they discover a fire
- how the evacuation of the premises should be carried out
- where people should assemble after they have left the premises and procedures for checking whether the premises have been evacuated
- identification of key escape routes, how people can gain access to them and escape from them to a place of total safety
- arrangements for fighting the fire
- the duties and identity of employees who have specific responsibilities (such as fire marshals/wardens) if there is a fire
- the arrangements for the safe evacuation of people identified as being especially at risk, such as young children and babies, lone workers, contractors, members of the public and visitors and those with disabilities.
- any machines/appliances/processes/power supplies that need to be stopped or isolated if there is a fire
- specific arrangements, if necessary, for high fire risk areas and dangerous substances.

- arrangements for an emergency plan to be used by a hirer of part of the premises.
- contingency plans for when life safety systems, such as evacuation lifts, fire detection and warning systems, sprinklers or smoke control systems are out of order.
- how the fire and rescue service will be called and who is responsible for doing this. These arrangements must take account of whether the premises has an automatic fire detection and alarm system connected to an Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC).
- procedures for meeting the fire and rescue service on their arrival and notifying them of any special risks, e.g., the location of highly flammable materials and/or other dangerous substances.
- what training employees need and the arrangements for ensuring that this training is given.
- Phased evacuation plans where appropriate (i.e., where some areas are evacuated while others are alerted but do not evacuate at that stage).
- plans to deal with people once they have left the premises.

**It is important to note that an evacuation plan should not rely upon the intervention of the Fire and Rescue Service to make it work**

#### **‘Action in case of fire’ notices**

Printed notices must be exhibited at conspicuous positions in all parts of the premises. They must state, in concise terms, the essentials of the action to be taken upon discovering a fire and on hearing the alarm. (They are commonly displayed adjacent to the fire alarm break glass call points).

Where considered necessary, notices giving more detailed instructions should be exhibited in staff rooms and on other notice boards.

#### **4.7 Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS)**

As part of the risk assessment process, persons in control of county council premises should consider the need for “Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans” (usually referred to simply as “PEEPS”).

PEEPs can be designed either as personal plans for individual employees (or regular individual visitors), or as a series of standard plans which are made available to casual users who may visit the premises infrequently or only on one occasion. Where people with special needs use or work in the premises, their needs should, so far as is practicable, be discussed with them. These will often be quite modest and may require only minor changes to premises or modifications to existing procedures.

In premises with a simple layout, a common-sense approach, such as offering to help a blind person or helping an elderly person down steps may be enough. In more complex premises, more elaborate system may be required.

The government has published a supplementary guide entitled “Fire Safety Risk Assessment – Means of Escape for Disabled People” which is free to download on the <http://www.firesafetylaw.communities.gov.uk/> page of the Fire Gateway web portal.

This guide provides examples, considerations and information to help in the drawing up of individual and standard PEEPs in a practical, equality-based manner. It includes sections on the following:

- mobility impaired people
- wheelchair users
- carry-down procedures
- electrically powered wheelchairs
- hearing impaired and deaf people
- visually impaired and blind people
- people with cognitive disabilities
- people with less apparent requirements (for example, epilepsy).
- visitors and customers

#### **4.8 Fire safety training**

It is the delegated functional responsibility of each PAT member school headteacher to ensure that all members of staff are provided with adequate fire safety training:

- at the time they are first employed, and
- on their being exposed to new or increased risks because of their being transferred; given a change of responsibilities; the introduction of new work equipment, new technology or a new system of work; or a change affecting existing work equipment or systems of work already in use that alters the fire risks

In all premises a competent person will be nominated to have overall responsibility for organising staff training and coordinating the actions of employees in the event of fire. The name of the nominated person(s) will be recorded in the ‘Schedule of appropriate and premises contacts’ (F.1) at the front of the Fire Safety Logbook.

Training will include suitable and sufficient instruction on the fire precautions and actions necessary to safeguard employees and other relevant persons on the premises. Every member of staff will receive instruction in fire precautions during induction. After the initial instruction, all members of staff will complete online Fire Awareness training through Smartlog annually. Renewal is automatically sent via email. Fire wardens will also complete an online module and undertake practical fire extinguisher training.

Training will normally take place during working hours and be:

- repeated periodically where appropriate (but at least annually)
- adapted to take account of any new or changed risks

- provided in a manner appropriate to the risks identified by the fire risk assessment
- The aim is to ensure that all employees receive instruction, practical demonstration, and training appropriate to their responsibilities in the event of an emergency and will include employees on flexible or shift duties who work outside the normal working hours.

#### **4.9 Fire safety tests and routine checks**

Regular testing, maintenance and servicing of fire safety facilities, equipment and procedures will be undertaken. The nature, frequency and recording of the tests/inspections carried out will be set down in the Fire Safety Logbook. These tasks will be carried out either internally by PAT Site Managers or by external contractors/service engineers and will include -

- Fire extinguishers
- Fire alarm systems, including sounders, detectors, call points and panel
- Emergency escape lighting
- Fire safety drills – Evacuation procedures
- Visual inspections of fire escape routes

#### **5.0 Management Procedures**

##### **5.1 Action to be carried out by Site Managers**

Member school Site Managers will ensure that all work carried out at PAT premises is carried out in accordance with current legislation and the Fire Safety Strategy set down in the Providers Manual Document Fire Safety Strategy.

##### **5.2 Action to be carried out at schools by OCC Health and Safety Team**

The OCC schools H&S team will carry out annual H&S monitoring to include review of Fire Safety Logbooks. The PAT buys in to their service.

##### **5.3 Action to be carried out by Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service**

OFRS will only visit PAT sites to carry out fire safety audits when invited to do so or following a fire at the property. OFRS will review projects submitted for building regulation approval to ensure that work carried out complies with the requirements of the Fire Safety Order.

##### **5.4 Action to be carried out by Site Manager**

General duties include:

- Comply with Fire Safety Duties including the completion of: -
- **Fire Safety Risk Assessment** completed reviewed, signed, and dated annually or as required.
- **Fire Safety Action Plan** to address and record defects identified in the Fire Safety

## Risk Assessment.

- **Plan of premises** annotated with Fire Safety data (call points, escape routes, fire doors etc).  
**Emergency Evacuation Plan** giving details of duties and responsibilities of all employees to ensure safe evacuation. *Safe evacuation of all site users from the site to a designated place of safety is the primary consideration*
- Signs and Notices are suitable and sufficient to assist safe evacuation.
- **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan.** Particular attention will need to be paid to people with special needs, including those with a disability. Persons in control of county council premises should consider the need for “Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans”.
- Employees are provided with clear and relevant information on the risks to them identified by the fire risk assessment including the measures that have been taken to prevent fires and how these measures will protect them if a fire breaks out.
- Employees (and their health and safety representatives) are consulted about nominating people to carry out particular roles in connection with fire safety and about proposals for improving the fire precautions
- The necessary co-operation and co-ordination with other responsible persons who also have premises in the building takes place, and that they are informed of any significant risks found, and how those risks, which might affect the safety of their employees, will be reduced, or controlled.
- The employer of any person from an outside organisation who is working in the premises is provided with clear and relevant information on the risks to those employees and the preventive and protective measures taken
- **All Fire Safety Training** (at least annually)
- **Evacuation Drills** – To be held at differing times; at least once per year and once per full term.
- A debrief following an evacuation drill is an essential element of the drill and must be recorded separately as evacuation training.
- **Alarms (Panel only)** – Visual check, required daily to ensure no faults are indicated. Any *defects* need to be recorded.
- **Alarms (Call points)** must be tested weekly on a rotational basis making sure every call point is tested termly. Annual inspection and tests by a qualified engineer must also be recorded.
- **Emergency Lighting** – Must be tested monthly to ensure these lights illuminate. Six monthly visual and annual tests to be carried out by a qualified electrician and recorded.
- **Fire Extinguishers** require a visual check monthly, to ensure they are in position, have not been tampered with/used and there is no sign of leakage, and that signage is till visible. They must be serviced annually by a competent person.
- **Self-contained smoke/heat detectors** must be tested weekly, by operation of test button. Batteries must be changed annually.

- **Escape routes** should be checked daily, to ensure they are clear, and any *defects* need to be recorded.
- **COSHH (including Radiation sources) or DSEAR** – An up-to-date list of all hazardous substances, amounts and places of storage needs to be kept in the Fire Safety Logbook.

## **THESE ACTIONS NEED TO BE RECORDED IN THE FIRE SAFETY LOGBOOK**

### **5.5 Additional duties regarding the hiring/leasing of premises and out of hours/additional use**

The person responsible for hiring or leasing out a venue or premises must ensure that the legal duties and responsibilities of those hiring or leasing the premises are clearly established and documentation for each unique, occasional, or separate event or function is completed.

### **5.6 Employees Duties**

It is the statutory duty of all PAT employees at work to:

- Co-operate with the PAT as their employer to ensure the workplace is safe from fire and its effects and not do anything that will place themselves or other people at risk.
- Remain vigilant to the risk of fire and report any defects in the fire safety arrangements to the Facilities Manager when first identified.

### **6.0 Reporting/recording fire incidents, near misses and other fire safety hazards**

All occasions where a fire has, or could have occurred, will be properly recorded and the cause investigated so that the effectiveness of the preventive and protective measures can be reviewed and, if necessary, revised.

To ensure this is done in a systematic way, all such occurrences must be recorded in the Fire Safety Logbook. Near misses must be recorded on Smartlog.

### **7.0 Changes to Premises and Occupation of New Premises**

#### **7.1 Building change of use**

Where a change of use of building is planned a risk assessment must be carried out to determine if any added fire risks will result from the new activity.

#### **7.2 New build, alterations, extensions, refurbishment, and maintenance**

All work carried out to PAT premises will be managed by the COO in conjunction with the principal designer and lead contractor and commissioned through service providers with the exception of self-funded work carried out by schools.

#### **7.3 Acquisition of buildings**

The COO will be required to request a copy of the Fire Safety risk assessment and action plan for any property to be purchased. Where this information does not exist, the vendor should be required to provide it. If the information is not forthcoming, they must discuss with the commissioning officer action should be taken. The COO will be required to comment on the content of the information provided and any action that will be required to ensure that the property is safe to occupy.

#### **7.4 Disposal of buildings**

A copy of the current Fire Safety Logbook will be included with the sale details of any PAT properties that are to be sold. Any request from the purchaser for further information will be dealt with by the COO.

#### **7.5 Self-funded projects (SFA)**

Schools carrying out work to the premises including planned maintenance projects will be required to submit a Self-Finance Application (SFA) to Corporate Landlord with details of the proposed work. A completed SFA form must be submitted at least 6 weeks before work is planned to start.

The application will be checked to ensure compliance with building regulations / bulletins and the Fire Safety Order.

#### **7.6 Handover procedure:**

##### **7.6.1 New build**

On completion of new buildings, prior to handover, the COO in conjunction with the principal designer and lead contractor is to ensure that a copy of the policy document and the fire safety logbook is provided and that details of the fire precaution systems are recorded in the Fire Safety Logbook. The Site Manager and appointed representatives of the site are to receive full training in the operation of new fire safety systems to include smoke/heat detectors, fire alarms, emergency lighting, extinguishers, and procedures to include means of escape. The headteacher will ensure that this process has been carried out appropriately and that a Handover Checklist is completed by the contractor and signed as received by the Site Manager.

##### **7.6.2 Extensions, alterations, refurbishment, and maintenance**

On completion of the above work and prior to handover the COO in conjunction with the principal designer and lead contractor will ensure that details of any additions or alterations to fire precaution systems in existing establishments are recorded in the Fire Safety Folder. The Site Manager and appointed representatives of the site are to receive full training as detailed in 7.6.1 to cover alteration and additions to equipment and/or procedures. The COO will ensure that this process has been carried out appropriately and that a Handover Checklist is completed by the contractor and signed as received by the Site Manager.

#### **8.0 Procedures for premises with automatic fire alarms**

## 8.1 During periods when the premises are occupied

When the automatic fire alarm is activated for any reason, the following actions must be included in the premises emergency action plan:

- All non-essential persons are to be evacuated from the building.
- Nominated persons with the relevant training should check the fire alarm panel to determine the location of the suspected fire. On discovery of a fire the nominated person will return to the fire panel and confirm whether there is a real fire or a false alarm. Nobody will put themselves at risk at any time – if in doubt get out.
- If fire or smoke, smells of burning or any other indications of a fire are discovered, or there are suspicions of a fire, then the fire and rescue service must be called by dialling 999. We have a fully automated system with smoke and heat detectors which should activate and give pre-warning to fire discovery.
- A nominated person will await the arrival of the fire and rescue service to provide relevant information including details of any persons who may be missing and the extent, location, and nature of the fire, along with details of any hazards and dangerous substances.
- If the nominated persons can find no evidence of a fire or smoke, then the fire and rescue service should **not** be called but the alarm system reset (whilst the people evacuated remain outside the building). **If the alarm resets satisfactorily** the building can be reoccupied.
- **If the alarm will not reset** for any reason, the nominated persons should leave the building, dial 999 and inform the fire and rescue service that the premises have been checked, that no signs of fire were found but the fire alarm will not reset. If the fire service attend site for a fire, our service engineers must attend and inspect the system fully to ensure the system is in full working order prior to re-occupancy.

**NOTE** – The fire and rescue service will not automatically respond to alarms received via an Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) during periods that the premises are occupied. If they are unable to make contact with someone on the premises then the ARC will ask the fire service to respond. If there is a fire or signs of a fire it is therefore essential that a nominated person at the premises calls the fire and rescue service by dialling 999.

## 8.2 During periods when the premises are unoccupied

When the premises are unoccupied and the fire and rescue service receive a 999 call from a passer-by or automatically via an Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC), an emergency attendance will be made. Whilst awaiting the attendance of the key-holder, the fire and rescue service will carry out an external check of the premises.

If the key holder does not attend within 20 minutes to provide access, depending on a risk assessment at the scene, the fire and rescue service may force entry to allow an internal search of the premises or return to their base station. If the fire and rescue service have left the scene by the time the key-holder arrives, it will be the key-holder's responsibility to make a check of

the premises and to dial 999 if they discover a fire or smoke, smell burning or suspect there is a fire.

The fire and rescue service cannot be held responsible for any damage to the premises as a result of these procedures.

## **9.0 Signs and notices**

### **9.1 Signs**

Fire safety signage must be used, where the fire risk assessment deems necessary, to help people identify escape routes, find fire-fighting equipment and fire alarm break glass call points, etc. Where required, the signs must comply with the provisions of the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and signals) Regulations 1996 and be consistent in type and design throughout the premises. Such signage must be in pictogram form and may be supplemented by text if considered necessary to make the sign more easily understood.

### **9.2 Notices**

Notices should be used, where the fire risk assessment deems necessary, to provide:

- instructions on how to use any fire safety equipment
- the actions to be taken in the event of fire
- information to assist the emergency services, e.g., location of dangerous substances, locations of sprinkler valves etc.

### **9.3 New buildings and alterations**

As part of any new building construction or alteration to existing buildings, the COO, in liaison with OFRS and the local authority building control, ensure necessary signage is provided to comply with the current Building Regulations/ Building Bulletin requirements.