



## Emergency Evacuation Policy (exams) 2023/24

**Date of Policy:** September 2023

**Date of Review:** September 2024

**Member of staff with overall responsibility:** Mr O. Chadbond

**Governing Body Sub-Committee with reviewing responsibility:** Standards & Curriculum

### **Purpose of the policy**

This policy details how Stretford Grammar School deals with an emergency evacuation of the exam room(s) by defining staff roles and responsibilities and confirming the emergency evacuation procedure.

### **When is an emergency evacuation required?**

An emergency evacuation is required where it is unsafe for candidates to remain in the exam room. This might include a fire in the exam room, the fire alarm sounding to warn of fire, bomb alert or other serious threat.

In exceptional situations, where candidates might be severely disadvantaged or distressed by remaining in the exam room, the emergency evacuation procedure may also need to be followed. This might include situations where there is severe disruption in the exam room, serious illness of a candidate or invigilator or similarly serious incidents.

As each incident may be different, advice will be sought from the relevant awarding body as soon as it is safe to do so, particularly where the centre is concerned about the security of the examination(s). (ICE 25.6)

Where candidates are unable to return to the building to complete the examination, the relevant awarding body will be contacted immediately for advice. (ICE 25.6)

# Emergency evacuation of an exam room

## Roles and responsibilities

### Head of Centre

- Ensures the emergency evacuation policy for exams is fit for purpose and complies with relevant health and safety regulations
- Ensures any instructions from relevant local or national agencies are referenced and followed where applicable
- Ensures any breach of question paper security or malpractice is reported to the awarding body **immediately** (ICE 25.5)

### Senior leaders

- Where responsible for the centre-wide emergency evacuation procedure, ensures all staff and appointed fire marshals are aware of the policy and procedures to be followed when an emergency evacuation of an exam room is required

### Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Ensures appropriate arrangements are in place for the emergency evacuation of a disabled candidate from an exam room where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for the candidate
- Ensures the candidate is informed prior to taking their exams of what will happen in the event of an emergency evacuation

### Exams Officer

- Ensures invigilators are trained in emergency evacuation procedures and how an incident and actions taken must be recorded
- Ensures candidates are briefed (via Assembly presentations), prior to exams taking place, on what will happen in the event of an emergency in the exam room
- Provides invigilators with a copy of the emergency evacuation procedure for every exam room
- Provides a standard invigilator announcement for each exam room which includes appropriate instructions for candidates about emergency procedures and what will happen if the fire alarm sounds
- Provides an exam room incident log in each exam room
- Liaises with the SENCo and other relevant staff prior to each exam where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate
- Briefs invigilators prior to each exam where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate
- Ensures appropriate follow-up is undertaken after an emergency evacuation, reporting the incident to the awarding body and the actions taken
- Ensures a full report of the incident is produced and retained on file if required by an awarding body (ICE 25.4)
- Ensures an online application for special consideration is submitted to the relevant awarding body where candidates have been disadvantaged (ICE 25.7)

## Invigilators

- ▶ By attending training and/or update sessions, ensure they understand what to do in the event of an emergency in the exam room
- ▶ Follow the actions required in the emergency evacuation procedure issued to them for every exam room
- ▶ Confirm with the Exams Officer, where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate they are invigilating
- ▶ Record details on the exam room incident log to support follow-up reporting to the awarding body by the Exams Officer (see below)

In the event of an emergency where an evacuation of the building is necessary e.g. fire alarm, a bomb alert, flooding etc. and examinations being in progress, invigilators at Stretford Grammar School have been trained to take the following action (in accordance with JCQ [Instructions for conducting examinations](#) section 25.3, **Emergencies**)

1. Stop the candidates from writing and instruct them to close their answer booklets.
2. Advise students to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room
3. Collect the attendance register (in order to ensure all candidates are present).
4. Evacuate the examination room in line with the instructions given in detail below. \*
5. Ensure candidates leave the room in silence.
6. Ensure the candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room so that there is no discussion about the examination. Check with the register that all are present.
7. When instructed, supervise the return of students to the exam room.
8. Make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted.
9. Allow the candidates the remainder of the working time set for the examination once it resumes.
10. If there are only a few candidates, consider the possibility of taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination
11. Make notes of the incident to enable the Exams Officer to produce a full report of the incident and of the action taken. A report will have to be forwarded to the relevant awarding body.

### \* **Evacuation details:**

- Leave from the **HALL**, via the wooden doors at the back, through the foyer, exiting via the fire doors by the staircase, crossing the grass and proceeding to the right hand, unfenced, tarmac play court. (The rest of the school will assemble on the adjacent left hand, fenced play court). Students **must be in silence at all times** and line up in examination seating plan order as far as is possible. Students will be registered and then separated from each other and contact with the rest of the school body will be prevented. Invigilators will closely supervise them to make sure there is no discussion about the examination and will **remind them that they are still under examination conditions.**

- Leave from the **GYM**, via the external gym door at the front (for exams of up to 60 students) **and also** via the internal back door and then external outer garage door (for exams of 61 – 120 students), down the play court, down the steps and right, past the demountables, to the grassed area. Students will proceed to the unfenced, tarmac play court. (The rest of the school will assemble on the adjacent left hand, fenced play court). Students **must be in silence at all times** and line up in examination seating plan order as far as is possible. Students will be registered and then separated from each other and contact with the rest of the school body will be prevented. Invigilators will closely supervise them to make sure there is no discussion about the examination and will **remind them that they are still under examination conditions**.
- Leave from **ELSEWHERE**, via the nearest fire exit according to the fire evacuation instructions for that room and at the invigilators' discretion. Students will proceed to the unfenced, tarmac play court. (The rest of the school will assemble on the adjacent left hand, fenced play court). Students **must be in silence at all times** and line up in examination seating plan order as far as is possible. Students will be registered and then separated from each other and contact with the rest of the school body will be prevented. Invigilators will closely supervise them to make sure there is no discussion about the examination and will **remind them that they are still under examination conditions**.
- The Exams Officer will assist with supervision. At their own discretion, Progress Leaders for the year group in question may also assist.
- The Exams Officer and Lead Invigilator will make a note of how long the interruption lasts.
- If there are only a few candidates, the Exams Officer may consider the possibility of taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination.
- The Headteacher will give instructions for students to return to their examination as soon as the building is safe.
- If the exam resumes, candidates are allowed the remainder of the working time set for the examination.

## **NB**

- In the event of a known false alarm, the examination rooms will be notified of this **only by** the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Heads or the Examination Officer. Students must then remain seated but close their question and answer booklets. They will only resume their examination once the alarm has stopped sounding and the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Heads or the Examination Officer have approved the resumption.
- In the event of an evacuation examination students will only return to the examination rooms after direction from the Headteacher. Having returned to their seats they must not resume work until the alarm has stopped sounding and the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Heads or the Examination Officer has approved the resumption.
- If the designated route is blocked by fire, the invigilators will use professional judgement to instruct students to evacuate the building by the quickest route. An invigilator will leave the room last.
- If the building is not safe to return to, the Headteacher will decide on appropriate action.
- When an examination resumes after a fire alarm, the invigilators will put a new finishing time on the information board so that altogether the full examination time will be allocated.

- A full report of the incident and of the action taken will be sent to the relevant Awarding Bodies and an application for Special Consideration will be made. The incident will be reported on the incident log for each room as evidence of procedure.

### Criteria

In assessing whether to continue the examination, the following factors need to be taken into consideration:

- The length of time that has passed since the official start time
- Whether the minimum time for remaining in the examination has passed to maintain the integrity of the examination
- The amount of time left to complete the examination(s)
- Whether there is sufficient time to complete the examinations before another session starts
- Whether continuing the examination takes candidates over the session limit of 3 hours, taking particular care to consider candidates with access arrangements which include extra time.

The Head of Centre, or their nominated deputy, will decide whether it is appropriate to continue the session using the criteria set out above. In making this decision, the Head of Centre, or their nominated deputy, must be satisfied that communication between candidates has not taken place outside of the examination room. **Only if completely satisfied that no communication whatsoever has taken place must candidates be allowed to continue the exam.**

If the session is to be abandoned, this will be either:

- Because of consideration of the criteria above
- Because re-entry to the premises cannot be secured; or
- Because the risk of communication between candidates, which would invalidate the examination, cannot be eliminated.

If the exam has to be abandoned:

- The Exams Officer will take the first opportunity to contact the Awarding Bodies and then seek to apply for Special Consideration for all the candidates affected.
- Partially completed papers will be sent to the Awarding Bodies as usual, unless they have specifically requested that papers should not be submitted.

### Recording details

As soon as practically possible and safe to do so, details will be recorded. Details will include:

- the actual time of the start of the interruption
- the actions taken
- the actual time the exam(s) resumed
- the actual finishing time(s) of the resumed exam(s)

Further details could include

- a report on candidate behaviour throughout the interruption/evacuation
- a judgement on the impact on candidates after the interruption/evacuation