



EYFS Emergency Evacuation Policy

St Anne's Catholic Primary School Nursery and Reception

Policy established	September 2026	Approved by Headteacher	
Approved by Chair of Governors		Review date	September 2027 or on change of guidance from the DfE.
Applies to	Nursery and Reception	Status	School policy
Primary assembly point	KS2 Playground	Alternative assembly / relocation point	St. Anne & Blessed Dominic Church

1. Purpose

St Anne's Catholic Primary School is committed to protecting the safety and welfare of all children, staff and visitors. This policy sets out the specific arrangements for evacuating Nursery and Reception children in the event of fire or another emergency that requires people to leave the EYFS area, school building or site.

It should be read alongside the school's whole-school fire, emergency, security, safeguarding and health and safety arrangements. The school's site-specific fire risk assessment and emergency plan take precedence where they contain more detailed instructions.

The policy reflects the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, Department for Education emergency-planning guidance and government fire-safety guidance for educational premises.

2. Scope

An evacuation may be required because of:

- fire, smoke or activation of the fire alarm;
- a suspected gas leak or hazardous substance;
- serious structural damage or risk of building collapse;
- flooding or another environmental hazard;
- a bomb threat or suspicious item where evacuation is directed;
- loss of essential services where remaining in the building is unsafe;
- an incident in or near the school that makes a particular area unsafe; or
- any other emergency where the Headteacher, senior leader or emergency services direct evacuation.

Some emergencies are safer to manage through lockdown, shelter or invacuation rather than leaving the building. Staff must follow the signal and instructions given for the incident and must not automatically evacuate during a security incident unless directed to do so.

3. Principles

During any evacuation, staff will:

- place the immediate safety of children above property or personal belongings;
- remain calm and give children simple, clear and reassuring instructions;
- evacuate promptly by the safest available route;
- maintain appropriate supervision and account for every child, staff member and known visitor;
- give additional assistance to children who need it;



- never re-enter an evacuated building until authorised by the Headteacher, senior leader or emergency services; and
- continue safeguarding and supervision arrangements until the incident is formally ended and children are safely returned or released.

4. Responsibilities

Headteacher / Senior Leaders

- has overall responsibility for the school's emergency response unless command passes to the emergency services;
- determines, where appropriate, whether evacuation, relocation, lockdown or shelter is required;
- ensures emergency services are contacted and provided with relevant information;
- authorises re-entry, relocation or dismissal in consultation with emergency services where applicable; and
- ensures the incident is reviewed afterwards.

EYFS Leader / class teachers

- ensure Nursery and Reception staff know evacuation routes, assembly arrangements and individual children's needs;
- organise children to leave promptly and calmly;
- ensure registers or an agreed means of checking attendance are available at the assembly point where practicable and safe;
- confirm the whereabouts of children, staff and visitors and report discrepancies immediately; and
- ensure individual evacuation arrangements are implemented.

All EYFS staff

- know the alarm signals and evacuation routes relevant to the areas in which they work;
- guide children to safety without delay;
- check areas only where this forms part of their assigned role and can be done without delaying or endangering evacuation;
- close doors behind them where safe to do so, without locking them;
- do not stop to collect personal possessions; and
- report immediately to the person in charge at the assembly point.

5. Raising the alarm

Any person discovering a fire or other immediate danger must raise the alarm in accordance with school procedures and alert staff nearby. The emergency services will be contacted in accordance with the school's emergency plan.

Staff must treat every alarm as genuine unless they have been formally told otherwise. Children will not be asked to investigate an alarm or emergency.

6. Evacuation procedure - fire

On hearing the fire alarm or being instructed to evacuate, EYFS staff will:

- stop activities immediately and gain the children's attention;
- give a clear instruction to line up, walk with an adult or follow the agreed class evacuation routine;
- use the nearest safe designated exit and an alternative route if the normal route is unsafe;
- take children directly to the designated assembly point;
- leave bags, coats, toys and other belongings behind;
- take essential emergency medication only where it is immediately accessible and doing so does not delay evacuation;
- ensure adults position themselves to supervise the front, middle and rear of the group where staffing allows;
- keep children together and prevent them from returning to the building;
- carry out an immediate roll call/headcount at the assembly point; and
- report the class status, including any missing person, to the designated incident lead without delay.



Staff must never delay evacuation in order to search a dangerous area. The location where a missing child or adult was last seen must be passed immediately to the incident lead and emergency services.

7. Accounting for children, staff and visitors

Accurate attendance information is essential. The school will maintain arrangements that enable Nursery and Reception children to be accounted for during an emergency, including children who arrive late or leave early.

- Class registers and signing-in/out information will be kept up to date.
- Staff will know when children are working in another area, attending intervention, receiving personal care, using toilets or taking part in another activity.
- Known visitors, volunteers and contractors working within EYFS will follow staff instructions and be included in accountability checks.
- At lunchtime, breaktime, outdoor learning and other periods when classes are dispersed, staff will follow the school's arrangements for accounting for children from the location they are occupying.

If numbers do not reconcile, staff will immediately recheck information and report the discrepancy. No child should be assumed absent without verification.

8. Nursery and Reception children using toilets or other nearby areas

Emergency planning will take account of children who may be in toilets, cloakrooms, intervention spaces, outdoor areas or other nearby locations when an alarm sounds.

Staff assigned to check an area may do so only if this can be completed safely and without delaying their own evacuation. A child found away from their class will be escorted to the nearest safe exit and then reunited with their class at the assembly point.

9. Outdoor provision

If children are already outdoors when an alarm or emergency occurs, staff will not take them back into the building to collect belongings or join their usual indoor route. They will move children by the safest route to the designated assembly point or other location directed by the incident lead.

Outdoor gates and exits required for emergency escape must remain available in accordance with the school's security and fire-safety arrangements.

10. Children with SEND, medical needs or mobility needs

The school will identify children who may require additional support to evacuate safely. Where necessary, a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) or equivalent individual arrangement will be prepared and shared with relevant staff.

Individual arrangements may address:

- mobility, balance or physical assistance;
- sensory needs or distress caused by alarms, crowds or noise;
- communication or understanding difficulties;
- medical equipment or emergency medication;
- visual or hearing impairment;
- the need for an identified adult or additional staffing;
- safe use of specialist evacuation equipment where applicable; and
- alternative routes or refuge arrangements identified by the school's fire risk assessment.

Plans will promote independence where possible but must ensure that assistance is immediately available when needed. Arrangements will be reviewed when the child's needs, staffing, room use or building layout changes.

11. Sleeping children and children receiving personal/intimate care

Although St Anne's Nursery and Reception provision is for older EYFS children, emergency arrangements will ensure that any child who is asleep, resting, receiving first aid or receiving personal/intimate care is not overlooked.

Staff supervising such a child remain responsible for ensuring that the child is evacuated promptly. Care procedures must stop immediately where necessary to achieve safe evacuation, while preserving the child's dignity as far as the emergency permits.

12. Medication and emergency equipment

Life-saving medication and essential medical equipment should be readily accessible during the school day. Where it can be collected immediately without delaying evacuation or placing anyone at risk, it should accompany the child.

No member of staff should re-enter an unsafe building to retrieve medication, registers, phones, emergency bags or other equipment. Emergency services must be informed promptly if essential medication is inaccessible.

13. Assembly point procedure

At the assembly point:

- children remain with their class/group and are closely supervised;
- staff conduct a register, headcount or agreed attendance check immediately;
- staff report 'all accounted for' or provide details of any missing child, adult or visitor;
- children are kept away from emergency vehicles, access routes, smoke and other hazards;
- staff continue to monitor children for distress, injury or medical needs;
- no one leaves the assembly point unless authorised; and
- no one re-enters the building until the all-clear is given by the appropriate person.

Staff should provide calm reassurance without making promises about the incident that they cannot verify.

14. Evacuation for emergencies other than fire

For a non-fire emergency, the safest route and assembly point may differ from normal fire procedures. Staff will follow instructions from the Headteacher, senior leader or emergency services.

Where there is a suspicious item, security threat, gas leak, structural hazard or environmental danger, staff may be directed to move children to a different part of the site or to an alternative off-site location. Staff must not approach, touch or investigate a suspected hazard.

15. Off-site relocation

If the school site cannot be safely occupied, Nursery and Reception children may be moved to the school's identified alternative place of safety.

During relocation:

- children will remain under staff supervision and appropriate staffing arrangements will be maintained as far as practicable;
- attendance will be checked before departure, on arrival and at appropriate intervals;
- essential medical and safeguarding information will be made available where practicable;
- parents and carers will be informed through the school's agreed communication system when it is safe and appropriate to do so; and
- children will only be released in accordance with the school's authorised collection procedures.

Alternative place of safety / relocation site: St Anne's and Blessed Dominic Church



16. Parents and carers during an emergency

Parents and carers should not enter the school site or approach the building during an evacuation unless directed by the school or emergency services. This could obstruct emergency access and make accounting for children more difficult.

The school will communicate with families as soon as reasonably practicable. Children will not be released directly from an assembly point unless the incident lead has authorised collection and appropriate identity/collection checks can be maintained.

Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that the school holds current emergency contact details. Parents and carers will provide at least 2 emergency contact numbers for their child.

17. Visitors, volunteers and contractors

Visitors, volunteers and contractors must follow staff instructions and the school's emergency procedures. Adults working directly with EYFS children must not leave children in order to collect personal belongings or vehicles.

Where a visitor is responsible for a child or small group as part of an authorised activity, a member of school staff retains oversight of evacuation and accountability arrangements.

18. Fire drills and emergency exercises

Fire drills and other appropriate emergency exercises will be carried out in accordance with whole-school procedures. Drills will help children become familiar with leaving the building calmly and promptly without causing unnecessary fear.

EYFS staff will use age-appropriate language and routines. Children will be taught that alarms are important and that they must listen to adults, walk quickly and calmly, leave belongings behind and stay with their group.

Drills will be recorded and evaluated. Any delay, confusion, blocked route, staffing difficulty or issue affecting a child with additional needs will be addressed.

19. Staffing, ratios and unexpected circumstances

Emergency evacuation takes priority over normal routines. Staff will deploy themselves to achieve the safest possible evacuation and supervision of children. Where staffing is temporarily reduced, adults will call for assistance and follow the school's contingency arrangements.

Staff must remain alert to occasions when normal class groups are split, including lunchtimes, transition activities, assemblies, intervention work, outdoor learning and visits from parents or professionals.

20. Communication and emergency contacts

The school's emergency plan will identify key internal and external contacts. Emergency contact information should be accessible to senior staff without relying solely on access to the school building or one electronic system.

Information shared externally during an emergency will be coordinated by the Headteacher or nominated senior leader. Staff should not post information, photographs or speculation about an incident on social media.

21. Safeguarding and wellbeing

Safeguarding remains paramount throughout an emergency. Staff will maintain supervision, confidentiality and safe collection arrangements as far as circumstances permit.

Following a significant incident, the school will consider the emotional impact on children and staff. Nursery and Reception children may require additional reassurance, familiar routines, opportunities to talk through what happened and support from parents, carers or appropriate professionals.

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22. Training

All EYFS staff, including temporary and supply staff where relevant, will be made aware of:

- alarm signals and emergency instructions;
- primary and alternative escape routes;
- assembly and relocation arrangements;
- how children and adults are accounted for;
- their individual responsibilities during evacuation;
- arrangements for children requiring additional assistance;
- the location of emergency medication and equipment; and
- how to report hazards, defects, incidents and near misses.

23. Risk assessment and review

The school's fire risk assessment will consider the needs of young children and people who may require assistance to escape. Emergency procedures will be reviewed following drills, incidents and significant changes to the premises, staffing, room use or children's needs.

This EYFS policy will be reviewed as part of the school's normal policy cycle and sooner if national guidance, legislation or school emergency arrangements change.

24. Post-incident review

Following a significant evacuation or emergency, the Headteacher/EYFS Leader will contribute to a debrief and lessons-learned review. This should consider:

- speed and effectiveness of evacuation;
- whether all children, staff and visitors were accounted for promptly;
- communication and leadership;
- the effectiveness of SEND/medical evacuation arrangements;
- access for emergency services;
- parent/carer communication;
- children's and staff wellbeing; and
- any changes required to risk assessments, training, equipment or procedures.

Related school policies and plans

- Whole-School Emergency Plan / Critical Incident Plan
- Fire Safety Policy and Fire Risk Assessment
- Lockdown / Invacuation Procedure
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- SEND Policy and individual PEEPs where required
- Educational Visits Policy
- EYFS Safer Sleep and Rest Policy
- EYFS Personal and Intimate Care procedures
- Visitor procedures and site security arrangements

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Key national guidance

- Department for Education: Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers (version applying from 1 September 2026).
- Department for Education: Emergency planning and response for education, childcare and children's social care settings.
- Department for Education: School and college security guidance and emergency-planning templates.
- Home Office: Fire safety risk assessment - educational premises.
- Government guidance: Fire safety in the workplace - fire risk assessments.
- Department for Education: Fire safety in new and existing school buildings.