

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD DAY CENTRE LTD

Company Registered in England No: 1288177

Registered Charity No: 272688

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Community Centre Fire Safety/Fire Risk Management Policy and Fire Procedures

Policy Statement

The policy brings our fire safety and evacuation procedures into line with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO) to protect against the risk of fire occurring.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO) moves away from the previous more prescriptive legislative regime, which required the Fire Service to issue fire certificates. RRFSO introduces a risk assessment based approach. As fire certificates will no longer be issued, the emphasis is now on the employer to put suitable fire precautions in place.

This policy deals with how to prevent fires and how to ensure safety of people in the buildings if we need to evacuate them.

Our statement of general policy is:

- To provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our work
- To provide and maintain safe plant and equipment.
- To ensure safe handling and use of substances.
- To provide information, instruction and training.
- To prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health.
- To maintain safe and healthy working conditions.
- To review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals.
- To ensure the safety and well being of all staff, hirers and visitors
- To prevent accidental fires from starting within the premises and the uncontrolled spread of such fires.
- To ensure compliance with existing fire safety legislation.

- To minimise damage to property in the event of fire as far as possible without endangering lives.

The Centre in the Park has set out premises fire precautions that must be adhered to. These will help reduce the risk and spread of fire and help ensure safety of people within the premises.

- Never wedge open fire doors
- Never use Plant Rooms for storage
- Close all office doors when the office is empty
- Close all windows at the end of the working day
- Keep vision panels in internal fire doors clear
- Never place items on either side of the final exit fire doors
- Ensure combustible items are not placed within escape corridors
- Ensure hirers are made aware of their responsibilities regarding safety of the building and their event attendees
- Never use naked flames within the building (candles)
- Ensure fire call points and fire extinguishers are not obstructed
- Ensure waste materials are not left to accumulate externally to reduce the risk of arson
- Ensure portable heaters are switched off and removed from their sockets when not in use
- Ensure permit to works are in place for any hot works
- Co-ordinate the findings of the fire risk assessments with Permanent Hirers
- Ensure soft furnishings are fire retardant
- Ensure the no smoking policy is adhered to
- Ensure electrical tests are completed on all portable appliances brought into and used in the premises

Each person's primary responsibility in the event of a fire alarm being sounded is to their own safety. No person should deliberately or recklessly endanger themselves in an attempt to follow these Procedures or save the lives of others.

1 Basic Fire Prevention Methods

In order to prevent fire:

- All areas should be kept as clean and tidy as possible
- Where flammable substances need to be stored quantities should be minimised and they should be kept in locked storage areas. This storage will preferably be fire resisting.
- Action points identified by a Fire Risk Assessment and subsequently agreed with management must be addressed within an agreed time scale.
- All existing health and safety procedures of The Community Centre and such safe systems of work relating to fire safety must be adhered to.

2. Fire Risk Assessment

The building will undergo a Fire Risk Assessment which will be carried out by a suitably trained appointed nominee from Dacorum Borough Council annually.

Following each assessment the Assessor will make recommendations for action. These recommendations will form a Fire Improvement Action Plan.

A copy of each completed Fire Risk Assessment will be retained by Dacorum Borough Council. Copies of completed Fire Risk Assessments will be distributed to parties deemed appropriate by The Community Centre Manager and Dacorum Borough Council and will normally include

The Premises Building Surveyor (Dacorum Borough Council)
The Community Centre Committee
Permanent Hirers

It is their responsibility to complete the recommendations of the action plan within the agreed timescale.

Permanent hirers would be responsible for completing their own fire risk assessments and co-ordinating their findings with the Community Centre Manager.

3 Maintenance of Fire Fighting and Fire Detection Equipment

Fire Extinguishers

Dacorum Borough Council will appoint a supplier for fire fighting equipment in accordance with the Council's procurement procedure. This supplier will annually service all fire extinguishers within the Community Centre and will be authorised to order replacement extinguishers necessary, provided that the fault is identified and recorded. Community Centre Staff may report any defects in or missing fire fighting appliances to the Building Services Department at The Civic Centre.

All new or additional fire extinguisher purchases must be approved by the Building Services Department.

Fire Alarm

The Community Centre Manager will ensure that the fire alarm system in the building(s) under their care is tested weekly and that all alarm points in that building are used in rotation for the purposes of these tests. Fire Alarm testing should be conducted at a time when there are few people in the building to avoid unnecessary evacuation. This will normally be early morning or late evening.

Emergency Light Testing

Emergency lighting will be tested as part of the planned preventative maintenance regime. This function will be carried out by a responsible person on site as instructed by the Community Centre Manager (monthly tests) and a contractor appointed by the Building Services Department at The Civic Centre. (Six monthly tests)

Any defects will be reported to the Building Services Department at The Civic Centre who will ensure that these are addressed as appropriate.

Fire and Emergency Lighting Log Book, Maintenance and Testing Records

The following will define what will be recorded in the Fire Log Book (and may be duplicated where records are required elsewhere for maintenance records.

- Fire Warning systems weekly testing, false alarms, modifications and repairs.
- Fire Fighting Equipment additions and repairs.
- Fire Drills
- Emergency Lighting monthly tests, defects, additions and repairs.

The Building Services Department at The Civic Centre will also receive additional reports of periodic servicing from contractors of certain tests and forward copies for insertion in appropriate Fire log book.

- Fire Warning System.
- Fire Fighting Equipment.
- Emergency lighting test records.

The Community Centre Manager and Dacorum Borough Council will ensure that remedial action is taken to rectify any faults identified.

Copies of all reports relating to the testing and maintenance of fire fighting, detection and evacuation equipment must be retained for a minimum of three years.

4 Fire Alarm Activation and Investigation of Cause

Activation

The Fire Alarm may be activated should any emergency occur where the immediate evacuation of the building is required. Any person discovering a fire should activate the nearest fire alarm call point; call the emergency services, and then evacuate the building. Once out of the building, this person should attempt to make contact with The Community Centre Manger or person in charge to inform them of the reason for the activation.

Accidental Activation

Anyone who has accidentally activated the fire alarm either from a call point or by undertaking an activity which has resulted in an automatic detection device (for example, a smoke detector) being activated must inform The Community Centre Manager immediately.

Malicious Activation

Malicious activation of the fire alarm is defined as deliberately activating or causing another person to activate the fire alarm without suspecting a fire or other emergency. This action constitutes a disciplinary offence and should be dealt with by The Community Centre Manger accordingly. Any damage to the fire alarm system may result in charges to the hirers involved.

Investigation of the Cause of the Alarm after the Incident

Upon notification of a Fire alarm incident The Community Centre manager will investigate the reason for activation and progress any action to prevent a reoccurrence.

The Community Centre Manager will instigate an investigation into the cause of the alarm which will normally take place following consultation with the local fire service and Fire Maintenance Company.

5 Evacuation Procedure - General Responsibilities

Upon hearing the fire alarm, all persons except for nominated fire wardens and staff or personnel on a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan will evacuate the building by:

- Exiting via the nearest fire exit to themselves
- Proceeding in an orderly manner to their designated assembly point, and remaining until instructed otherwise.

Where possible, occupiers should take action to ensure that their immediate environment is left in a safe state before commencing evacuation procedures (Close windows and doors switch off equipment i.e. Kitchen equipment, electrical appliances)

5.1 Management Responsibilities

It is the duty of The Community Centre Manger to ensure that all persons under their control are made aware of their individual responsibilities under these procedures

Hirers Responsibilities

Hirers of the premises including permanent and temporarily should ensure their visitors commence building evacuation by the nearest available exit. They should ensure their own area is clear, close the door and exit the building.

If it is a fire incident ascertain circumstances and if safe to do so

- Utilise suitable Fire extinguisher to extinguish Fire
- If unable to attempt to extinguish ensure door closed to room.-Then exit the building and liaise with The Fire Service as required.

Duties of Fire Wardens (if applicable) N.B if there are no designated fire wardens these responsibilities will be passed over to Management and/or the Hirer.

Fire Wardens will check (sweep) their designated area of the building, to ensure that all persons are evacuating, room doors are closed and rooms are empty and note any hazards.

Fire Wardens must not proceed into areas of the building where there are signs of fire or where they feel to do so would place them in immediate danger. In addition, Fire Wardens should aim to have checked their designated area and be in a fire protected area within 3-4 minutes of the fire alarm being activated.

Fire Wardens should then report to the person in charge of the building at that time (Community Centre Manager, Hirer) and give details of their area, whether it is clear, any hazards observed, and any persons remaining in the building or areas they were unable to check.

6. Evacuation of People with Disabilities

Generic Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP) are in place for the evacuation of people who have disclosed any disabilities to the Centre Manager or Events Hirer which may impact on their ability to exit a building unaided.

Procedure

On activation of Fire Alarm the individual will be assisted by the pre nominated person to evacuate the building safely.

7. Evacuation of Contractors

All contractors must be asked to sign in the Visitors Book upon arrival at a building and sign out upon leaving. Visitors Books will kept at the main reception.

Contractors will be informed of the fire evacuation instructions receiving their by the representative that they are meeting. Members of Staff who are receiving a visitor are responsible for the safe conduct of persons in his/her care, and are expected to help the visitor find the nearest fire exit and appropriate assembly point where applicable.

8. Use of Fire Fighting Equipment

Portable fire fighting equipment is provided in premises for staff use.

Prompt use of equipment can prevent a small fire developing into a large one.

Do not attempt to fight the fire if you do not think it is safe to do so, (for example)

- The fire is large with a large amount of smoke being produced.
- Your escape route may be compromised
- You have not received appropriate training

No person, other than a member of the Fire Service should re-enter the building specifically to fight a fire.

9. Fire Drills

The Community Centre Manager will arrange for fire drills to be conducted in buildings under his/her care twice a year.

The Community Centre manager will make suitable arrangements to monitor the fire drill in terms of success of evacuation and performance of appropriate equipment.

10. Training

All persons with roles and responsibilities indicated on a Building Fire Action Plan, Fire Log Book or Personal Evacuation Plan will receive suitable and sufficient training.

All staff and permanent hirers will receive information on fire safety on induction and after any significant changes to the procedures.

You must:

- Report to supervisor if fire extinguishers are missing, damaged or obstructed
- Never obstruct escape routes or access to fire fighting appliances
- Report to supervisor if alarm is not heard when tested
- Report obstructed exit routes to the supervisor
- Always ensure that someone in your working area is notified when you leave the building
- Take responsibility for your visitors

Created September 2013

Reviewed and approved July 2017

Hemel Hempstead Day Centre Ltd is a non-profit making company 'Limited by Guarantee' the sole purpose of the company is to provide for the comfort and welfare of its members who are elderly residents of the Borough of Dacorum