



## FIRE SAFETY POLICY

<b>DATE APPROVED</b>	4 June 2024	<b>DATE OF NEXT REVIEW</b>	June 2025
<b>POLICY OWNER(S)</b>	CEO		
<b>DESIGNATION</b>	All Staff		

<b>Purpose of policy</b>	The Policy sets out the framework of organisational arrangements which all employees, contractors, agency staff, volunteers and visitors, will be expected to adhere to in order to meet their fire safety responsibilities.
<b>Intended audience</b>	All Staff
<b>Links to other policies</b>	Health & Safety Policy

## Introduction

St Elizabeth's Centre Fire Safety Policy ('Policy'), complements and supports the objectives of St Elizabeth's Centre ('St Elizabeth's') Health and Safety Policy.

## Part 1 – Policy and Objectives

### 1.0 Application

- 1.1 The Policy applies to all premises and activities falling, in part or in full, under the control of St Elizabeth's.
- 1.2 The Policy sets out the framework of organisational arrangements which all employees (hereinafter, for the purposes of this policy and where the term employee is used, this includes St Elizabeth's bank workers), contractors, agency staff, volunteers and visitors, will be expected to adhere to in order to meet their fire safety responsibilities.

### 2.0 Statement of General Policy

- 2.1 St Elizabeth's takes fire safety, the potential threat to life, of serious injury, and of ill health, extremely seriously.
- 2.2 St Elizabeth's will ensure that appropriate organisational arrangements for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring, and review, of fire safety are implemented.
- 2.3 Where responsibility for fire safety is shared, St Elizabeth's will work and co-ordinate its fire safety arrangements with others, to ensure its responsibilities are met.
- 2.4 In the event of a fire, life safety is paramount. All other considerations, such as saving property and extinguishing a fire, are considered secondary.
- 2.5 Persons discovering a fire are empowered by St Elizabeth's to raise the alarm immediately and without delay. St Elizabeth's will always support those persons who operate the fire alarm in good faith, regardless of whether or not it is ultimately determined that a fire existed.
- 2.6 On hearing the fire alarm, emergency plans/procedures will be initiated and occupants will be moved, or evacuated, to a place of safety. This will vary from area to area and it is imperative that local safety arrangements and personal emergency evacuations are followed.

2.7 In the event of an emergency evacuation, no person will re-enter the affected premises, until it is declared safe by a person with the authority to do so.

2.8 Staff must report any fire safety concerns, however small, to their Line Manager, Safety Manager, or Local Safety Manager.

### **3.0 Overall Responsibilities**

3.1 St Elizabeth's will ensure that adequate resources are made available to enable compliance with:

- The requirements of current fire safety legislation, and applicable standards of best practice;
- Fire safety requirements associated to the care and education sectors.

3.2 Ultimate responsibility for all matters of health and safety including fire safety within St Elizabeth's, rest with the Board of Trustees (hereinafter referred to as 'Trustees').

3.3 The Trustees will:

- Establish and approve the Policy;
- Take reasonable steps to support the implementation and review of the Policy;
- Ensure a full review is carried out in the event of a fire with lessons learned disseminated throughout St Elizabeth's.

3.4 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), authorised through the Trustees, will act as the 'Responsible Person', as defined by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The Responsible Person will ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to reduce the risk from fire, and that:

- Trustees are fully appraised of any compliance concerns and the timescales for taking corrective action;
- Fire safety is managed effectively and consistently in compliance with all legislative requirements, and best practice standards;
- As far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of no person will be put at risk.

The Responsible Person has delegated day-to-day responsibilities for specific fire safety duties. These delegated responsibilities are detailed throughout the policy.

### **4.0 Organisational Responsibility**

4.1 The Executive Team will ensure that the Policy is implemented, monitored, and reviewed.

- 4.2 The Health and Safety Advisor will coordinate/audit fire safety arrangements, and provide regular fire safety reports to the 'Responsible Person'.
- 4.3 Line management responsibility for fire safety is defined within St Elizabeth's Health and Safety Policy, and Safety Reps will be consulted with as members of the Staff Forum.
- 4.4 Heads of Department have responsibility for appointing a sufficient number of their staff as Safety Managers and where appropriate, Local Safety Managers, to cover their area of responsibility.
- 4.5 Safety Managers (as defined within St Elizabeth's Health and Safety Policy) have responsibility for the implementation and effectiveness of the fire safety arrangements within their designated department(s) or service area(s).
- 4.6 Local Safety Managers (as defined within St Elizabeth's Health and Safety Policy) have responsibility for the implementation and effectiveness of the fire safety arrangements within their designated building(s)/section(s)/area(s), and have the same duties as Safety Managers.
- 4.7 All St Elizabeth's employees have a duty of care with respect to fire safety, and must not do anything that will place themselves or others at risk. All employees, contractors, agency staff, volunteers, and visitors, must co-operate with other persons so far as is necessary, to allow those persons to comply with their fire safety responsibilities.
- 4.8 All staff are expected to practice and promote fire safety at all times and assist with the day to day management of the building, implementing emergency procedures and applying Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP) where applicable.
- 4.9 The Head of Estates and Facilities has responsibility for fostering and maintaining positive relationships with the Fire and Rescue Service, and other emergency services, as well as any general/non-emergency communications.

## **5.0 Administrative Arrangements**

- 5.1 The Executive Team has responsibility for ensuring that a copy of the latest Policy is accessible to all employees at all times.
- 5.2 The Head of Estates and Facilities has responsibility for retaining copies of all building fire risk assessments, associated action plans, and details of corrective actions taken. These documents will be held electronically, and will be available to view on request.

- 5.3 Administrative arrangements for fire safety within location specific service areas is the responsibility of the relevant Safety Manager.
- 5.4 Safety Managers have responsibility for ensuring that fire strategy and emergency plans (including Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans) are up to date at all times.
- 5.5 The Head of Estates and Facilities has responsibility for issuing building '*Fire Safety & Maintenance Log Books*'. Details added to these log books are a crucial record of fire safety compliance i.e. tests, drills, checks, inspection, servicing, and maintenance activities, as such, Safety Managers have responsibility for ensuring that the sections of the log book that are applicable to them, are kept up to date.
- 5.6 Safety Managers have responsibility for ensuring that fire safety & maintenance log books are stored in the associated premises red fire box at all times. Red fire boxes are normally located adjacent to the premises fire panel.
- 5.7 The Head of Estates and Facilities has responsibility for ensuring that all information relevant to inspection, testing, servicing, and maintenance, of fire safety systems and equipment, is retained on file for information, reference and record.

## **Part 2 – Preventative and Protective Measures**

### **1.0 Building Fire Risk Assessments**

- 1.1 The purpose of a building fire risk assessment is to ensure that people and workplaces are protected from the effects of fire and smoke, and that the risk of fire is reduced to as low as reasonably practicable.
- 1.2 Building fire risk assessments will be carried out by a competent external organisation, and will be subject to regular review. Any deficiencies identified, will be incorporated in to an action plan and prioritised for corrective action.
- 1.3 The Head of Estates and Facilities has responsibility for ensuring:
- Building fire risk assessments are carried out;
  - They are regularly reviewed;
  - The development, implementation, monitoring, and completion of action plans;
  - Control measures and general fire precautions are subject to regular inspections and audits.

### **2.0 Fire Strategy and Emergency Plans**

- 2.1 Each building shall have a fire strategy and emergency plan.

2.2 Fire strategy and emergency plans will provide specific building information to ensure a clear understanding of the fire safety measures provided in the relevant building, the emergency procedures that are in place to ensure the safety of all persons in the event of a fire, to assist responsible persons with meeting the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, and to provide information for the fire and rescue service.

2.3 Fire strategy and emergency plans will be developed and regularly reviewed with the assistance of a competent person/external organisation.

2.4 Safety Managers have responsibility for ensuring:

- A fire strategy and emergency plan is in place for each of the buildings, and/or each areas of a building, under their control;
- Fire strategy and emergency plans (including Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans) are suitable and sufficient, so as to facilitate the safe evacuation of all staff, service users, contractors and visitors, from the associated premises;
- All staff, service users, contractors, and visitors, in the associated premises, understand the hazards relevant to their workplace, and what action they must take in the event of a fire alarm/evacuation;
- That plans are specific to each premises, its use, its occupants, and the number of persons present;
- Fire drills are carried out at their designated premises, at a minimum of 6 monthly intervals, and where appropriate, that fire drills are carried out at different times of the day/night, to demonstrate that the associated plan/procedures are robust and effective.

### **3.0 Fire Detection and Warning Systems, and Firefighting Equipment**

3.1 St Elizabeth's will install fire safety systems and provide fire safety equipment that meets current requirements, and will maintain high standards of life safety and property protection at all premises.

3.2 The Head of Estates and Facilities has responsibility for ensuring that:

- Internal emergency communications systems are fit for purpose and maintained in an operational state;
- All premises are, to the extent that is appropriate, equipped with the necessary fire safety equipment and fire safety systems;
- All fire safety equipment and fire safety systems are installed, commissioned and maintained, in accordance with the relevant British Standards and the manufacturer's instructions;

- All service and maintenance records are recorded in the associated fire safety and maintenance log book.

3.3 Safety Managers have responsibility for ensuring that all fire safety equipment and system checks, tests, drills, and inspections, within their designated service areas, are recorded in the associated fire safety and maintenance log book.

#### **4.0 Emergency Escape Routes/Exits**

4.1 The Head of Estates and Facilities has responsibility for ensuring that emergency lighting, fire escape route directional signage (and other signage related to fire safety), fire doors, fire lobbies, fire bulkheads, and other parts of exit routes, will be installed where required and maintained in working/functional order.

4.2 Safety Managers have responsibility for ensuring that fire escape routes/exits within their designated service areas, are kept clear and are kept free from obstructions at all times, and that use in an emergency is not/cannot be impeded in any way.

#### **5.0 Removal or Safe Storage of Dangerous Substances**

5.1 Safety Managers have responsibility for ensuring that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out, and that risks associated to the presence of dangerous substances within their designated service areas, are eliminated or reduced as far as reasonably practicable.

#### **6.0 The Needs of Vulnerable People**

6.1 Safety Managers will ensure that a suitable and sufficient risk assessment is carried out, that takes full account of all difficulties within their designated service areas that staff may encounter when moving vulnerable people in the event of an emergency. Safety Managers must ensure staff are aware of and adhere to Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans.

6.2 Sufficient staff will be designated to assist vulnerable people in the event of an emergency.

6.3 Sufficient staffing levels will be maintained on site at all times to ensure all vulnerable people can be moved, or evacuated, to a place of safety in the event of an emergency.

#### **7.0 Provision of Information to Employees, Contractors and Visitors**

7.1 All employees are required to read, and keep up to date with the Policy.



- 7.2 Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that their staff are aware of, and understand the Policy.
- 7.3 Safety Managers duties include ensuring that responsibility for fire safety management arrangements, including procedures and safe systems of work are in place, suitably communicated, and complied with.
- 7.4 Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that on arrival, visitors (including contractors) to the service areas under their responsibility, are provided with clear guidance about what to do and where to go in the event of a fire alarm/emergency evacuation.

## 8.0 Training

- 8.1 St Elizabeth's acknowledges that fire safety training is an essential aspect of fire safety, and that it is a legal requirement under the Health and Safety at Work Act, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order.
- 8.2 All staff must complete the fire safety training provided for them and within designated time scales, whether it be classroom based or delivered remotely e.g. via St Elizabeth's Learning and Development System.
- 8.3 St Elizabeth's will provide fire safety training that will be appropriate for the role performed. Examples of training appropriate to St Elizabeth's roles includes:
- 'Responsible Person' presentation – Heads of Department and above
  - Tailored fire safety training (including practical use of extinguishers) – Safety Managers and Local Safety Managers
  - Use of evacuation aids (including training the trainer) – designated staff
  - Tailored fire safety awareness (including video presentation of the use of extinguishers) – All staff
  - Fire safety awareness induction training – All staff.
- 8.4 All new employees must complete a minimum of fire safety awareness training as part of an induction.
- 8.5 Heads of Department have responsibility for ensuring that their staff (including agency workers and volunteers) complete the appropriate level of fire safety training, and that this training is kept up to date.
- 8.6 All employees are required to take an active role in both understanding and complying with their individual fire safety training needs.

8.7 St Elizabeth's HR Department has responsibility for recording the completion of employee fire safety training, and for reporting to Heads of Department on noncompliance with training requirements.

8.8 St Elizabeth's HR Department has responsibility for ensuring that employee fire safety training records are maintained on the relevant system.

## **9.0 Information**

9.1 The Head of Estates and Facilities has responsibility for ensuring that a file of relevant information, including plans and details of the location of dangerous substances on site, is maintained up to date and held in a readily accessible location for use by the Fire and Rescue Service, and other emergency services.

9.2 The Head of Estates and Facilities has responsibility for ensuring that fire action notices, and where necessary evacuation plans, are posted in prominent locations within each premises.

## **Part 3 – Monitoring, Review, and Approval**

### **1.0 Communication and Reporting**

1.1 The Executive Team have responsibility for ensuring that the outcomes of Policy reviews are appropriately communicated to all staff.

1.2 Safety Managers will report all fire safety incidents to the Health & Safety Advisor.

1.3 The Health and Safety Advisor will provide regular fire safety reports to the 'Responsible Person', who will ensure that appropriate action is taken to prevent any reoccurrence.

1.4 The CEO will ensure that Trustees are informed of any concerns in relation to compliance as an urgent matter whilst taking appropriate corrective action.

### **2.0 Process**

2.1 The Policy will be reviewed annually i.e. every 12 months, and/or following any changes in legislation or guidance.

2.2 The Executive Team have responsibility for ensuring the Policy is reviewed and updated as necessary.

### 3.0 Version and Revision Status *(example entries only)*

Version	Approved	Reviewed	Remarks
V1.0	May 2021	May 2022	No changes required
V1.0		May 2023	Revisions required to reflect new organisational structure
V1.1	June 2023		Part 1.3.0 revised to reflect new organisational structure

### 4.0 Review and Approval

Reviewed By	Position	Signature	Date
Jill Rankin	CEO	<i>Jill Rankin</i>	30 June 2023

Approved By	Position	Signature	Date