

Durham County Council

Premises Fire Safety Risk Assessment.

The Willows - Ferryhill

September 2025

What is the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO)?

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO) came into force on 1 October 2006, and replaced other separate pieces of fire safety legislation. Under the RRFSO a 'responsible person' (usually the owner, employer or occupier of business or industrial premises) must carry out a fire risk assessment. Responsible persons under the order are required, following a risk assessment, to implement appropriate fire safety measures to minimise the risk to life from fire; and to keep the assessment up to date.

What does a fire risk assessment involve?

There are five key steps in a fire safety risk assessment:

1. **Identify fire hazards** - e.g. how could a fire start? What could burn?

In Durham County Council's risk assessment Pro forma this has been split down into specific fire hazards. The assessor needs to identify the types of fire hazards, their location and quantities i.e.

- Sources of fuel – paper, textiles, flammable liquids, gases etc.
- Sources of Heat / ignition – Smoking materials, hot processes, cooking etc.
- Sources of Oxygen – O₂ cylinders, chemicals etc.
- Work processes – Boiler works, maintenance 'Hot works' etc.
- Structural features – Damage to fire compartmentation, large atria, blocked staircases etc.

2. **Consider the people who may be at risk** - e.g., employees, visitors to the premises, and anyone who may be particularly vulnerable such as children, the elderly and disabled people. You also need to refer to any Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) that may be in place on the premises for people who need assistance evacuating the building.

3. **Evaluate, remove, reduce, protect and act** - think about what you have found in steps 1 and 2 and remove and reduce any risks to protect people and premises. Consider the fire precautions that have been provided within the building i.e. fire alarm and detection systems, fire fighting equipment, signage, maintenance etc.

4. **Record, plan, inform, instruct and train** - keep a record of what risks you identified and what actions you have taken to reduce or remove them. Make a plan of how to prevent fires and, should a fire start, what actions you will take. Make sure all staff know what to do in the event of a fire and if necessary that they are trained for their roles.

5. **Review** - regularly review your risk assessment to ensure it remains up to date and reflects any significant changes that may have occurred. Do not amend the risk assessment for every trivial change. It is recommended that a fire risk assessment is reviewed annually at the very least.

Can I do it myself?

Yes. Those with the responsibility for premises are likely to be best placed to conduct a fire risk assessment, maintain fire safety precautions and understand and address the risk to lives and property that fire represents to those working there or visiting.

Under the RRFSO, the duty to carry out and implement a fire risk assessment lies with the responsible person. Achieving fire safety is often a matter of common sense, and in many cases

there may be no need for specialist or formal knowledge or training, providing the responsible person makes enough time available to go through all the necessary steps.

In carrying out a risk assessment, however, the responsible person may decide that, given the nature of the premises or the people involved, they do not have the necessary competence to discharge their duties under the RRFSO. If this is the case they should seek guidance from their Service H&S provider.

How often should I do a risk assessment?

You should keep your fire risk assessment under regular review as risks may change over time.

If you make changes to your premises that have affected the fire precautions, you should ensure that the fire risk assessment and risk management plan are updated.

What happens if I share my premises with others?

If you share a building with others, you will need to co-operate and co-ordinate the findings of the fire risk assessment and risk management plan with them.

If your plan changes as a result of a review or changes you made to your premises over time, you will need to share the revised risk management plan with others who share the premises.

Does the fire risk assessment require measures such as fire escapes, fire alarms, fire doors or sprinklers to be in place?

There are likely to be a range of prevention and protection measures possible in an individual premises and the RRFSO allows the responsible person to decide which would be most appropriate in the light of the premises and those who may be in them at any one time.

Providing the fire safety measures are adequate to mitigate the potential risk, it is for the responsible person to decide from the range of available options.

Am I responsible if my fire safety equipment fails?

Under the RRFSO the 'responsible person' is usually the owner, employer or occupier of business or industrial premises who must ensure that all equipment provided for the purpose of fire safety or for the protection of fire fighters is maintained and kept in good order.

Who enforces the RRFSO?

Fire and Rescue Authorities are the enforcing authorities for the RRFSO and will develop appropriate risk based inspection regimes.

What happens if I don't comply with the legislation?

Fire and Rescue Authorities will, where necessary, offer support and advice on how best to improve fire safety arrangements. In doing so, they will take account of measures which are proportionate and reasonable to the identified risk.

In cases where a serious risk exists and is not being managed, Fire and Rescue Authorities have a statutory duty to enforce compliance with the RRFSO.

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10. Firefighting equipment
11. Means of escape (Horizontal & Vertical)
12. Fire safety signs and notices
13. Fire evacuation plans
14. Schematic floor plans
15. Training
16. Significant findings and action plan
17. Signatures
 - Appendix A – Schematic floor plans showing fire safety equipment.

1. Premise details	
Name and address of premise / site: The Willows Dean Road Ferryhill DL17 8ET	If the premises are not owned by DCC: Name, Address and Contact details of the owner or letting agent.
Date of Risk Assessment: September 2025	Assessment Review date: Sept 25 May 2024 May 2025
Name of Person conducting the Risk Assessment: Lesley Candler Executive Headteacher Andrew Scarr DCC Fire Safety Advisor	Name of Person responsible for Fire Safety on the premises: Gemma Ferguson
Use of the premises: Educational for children with SEMH	Times premises in use: Monday – Friday 07:00 – 17:00
Description of the Premises. <i>I.e. Age and size of the building, construction type any particular hazards that may be cause for concern in relation to fire safety. A plan of the premises should be included in the appendices.</i> Single storey building using a traditional building technique with brick external walls and a pitched tiled roof. Means of escape is via either the main entrance door or the rear escape via the kitchen /dining area. The building comprises of a main circulation space that has five rooms off this space, one of which is the kitchen/dining area, the other four rooms are used for educational purposes. There is one other room that provides the toilet accommodation and a storage room that is kept lock shut. The building is heated by a gas boiler that is located externally along with a separate gas meter room and an electrical intake room. The site is secured by a 1.5m palisade fence and anti climb devices fitted to vulnerable soffits.	
Is the premises Multi Occupied: <i>Building used by The Woodlands only.</i>	

2. Identifying who might be at Risk		
List the numbers of persons who would normally be in the premises and their usual locations, i.e. staff, clients, pupils, visitors, contractors etc.		
Persons	Number	Location
Staff	6	Throughout building
Pupils	8	Throughout building
Contractors	As and when required	Throughout building when carrying out maintenance
Other visitors eg. Parents, Health Professionals, Social Workers, Therapists	As and when required	Specific areas
<i>Additional Comments.</i> Currently no staff or pupils required the preparation of a PEEP, pupil needs are identified when referred to the Woodlands. Any visitors, contractors etc. are required to sign in. In the event of the activation of the fire alarm staff will direct visitors to the nearest exit.		

When considering the risks to persons with Disabilities you may need to discuss their individual needs with them. The details of these discussions should be recorded using the Personal Emergency Evacuation plan documentation (PEEP's).

Further information on PEEP's can be obtained from the Corporate H&S unit policies and procedures page: SMP/PEEP/001

Any significant findings during the PEEP's process should be recorded and copies kept in a safe location. Specific information, instruction and training should be given to the appropriate people e.g. fire marshal, buddy to ensure safe evacuation of the building.

3. Identify any significant sources of FUEL within the building, their location and quantity where possible.

Examples include:

- Flammable liquids / solvents / oils etc
- Flammable chemicals i.e. cleaning chemicals.
- Wood / paper / cardboard etc.
- Plastics / rubber/ foam etc.
- Furniture and fixings / textiles / display materials etc.
- Flammable gases i.e. liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), aerosols.
- Waste materials i.e. shredded paper, wood shavings, dust etc.

- Combustible materials are mainly those commensurate with a school environment, with the building containing large quantities paper/ textiles/ furniture etc.
- Internal shredding bin stored in inner office, locate away from sources of ignition
- Wall displays are located away from sources of ignition and monitored for good condition

4. Identify any significant sources of HEAT / IGNITION within the building and their location where possible.

Examples include:

- Smoking materials / matches / lighters etc.
- Naked flames / hot works processes etc.
- Heaters – fixed / portable, gas / electric etc.
- Plant – boiler, electrical etc.
- Lighting equipment.
- Friction / static / sparks etc.
- Arson.

- The ignition sources are mainly those commensurate with a school environment, these being electrical equipment such as computers and printers. A photocopier located in the main circulation space. The kitchen is provided with an electric oven and hob.
- The site is a no smoking site.
- A laminator is kept on site and is only used in staff office; when not in use it stored in the office and is unplugged
- PAT testing of all electrical equipment carried out annually
- The periodic electrical installation was last carried out in 2018
- There have been no reported incidents of arson

5. Identify any significant sources of OXYGEN within the building, their location and quantity where possible:

Examples include: Cylinders e.g. for medical use, Oxidising Chemicals, Natural or Mechanical air flows.

Natural airflow only

6. Identify any significant WORK PROCESSES that may increase the risk of fire.

Examples include: Cooking, Welding, Grinding etc.

Any contractors used are DCC approved Some cooking takes place in the kitchen, this is supervised by staff.
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7. Identify any significant STRUCTURAL FEATURES that may increase the risk of fire.

Examples include: Damage to fire stopping, Open Staircases etc.

None identified during the assessment.
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8. Fire Detection and Alarm System

In small buildings it may be sufficient to simply shout fire, in other more complex premises a suitable electrically operated fire detection and warning system should be installed to comply with BS5839.

Type of fire alarm system. Please tick which system is installed.			
Rotary Gong / Air horn or similar		Type M: Manual Break Glass only.	
Type L System: (Life Protection)		Type P System: (Property Protection)	
L1: System installed throughout all parts of the building.		P1: To provide the earliest possible warning of fire.	
L2: As L3 but with additional detection in high risk areas.		P2: Detection provided in high risk or valuable areas.	
L3: Detection in escape routes and rooms that open onto escape routes.	✓		
L4: Detection provided in circulation areas and escape routes only.			
L5: Detection installed to satisfy a specific fire safety objective.			

A plan of the fire alarm system should be attached to this risk assessment in Appendix A.

Additional Information regarding the fire alarm systems:

The fire detection and warning system is subject to two service visits per year by Honeywell. The fire alarm system is adequate for the premises. The fire alarm is tested weekly by the Caretaker and the findings of the test are recorded in the Fire Safety Log Book located in the inner office.

There is a zonal plan located by the fire alarm panel.

Fire Alarm points to consider: *To be indicated in the box above.*

- Is it suitable for the premises type / size?
- Can the alarm be heard throughout all parts of the building?
- Is a break glass call point tested weekly in strict rotation (if applicable)?
- Is the fire alarm maintained by a competent contractor?
- Where are the test records held?

Have there been any false alarms? Consider the location of detection and activation devices.

9. Emergency Lighting System.

If the premises are used during the hours of darkness (consider winter months) emergency lighting should be considered.

In smaller premises hand held torches may be sufficient, in larger more complex premises an emergency lighting system should be provided.

Areas of the premises with no natural light should be provided with escape lighting.

Additional Information regarding the Emergency lighting system:

The emergency light fittings are located in the entrance, main teaching area and kitchen.

The emergency lighting system is subject to an annual service visit carried out by Honeywell.

The emergency lighting is tested monthly by the Caretaker.

Emergency lights points to consider: *To be indicated in the box above.*

- Is it suitable for the premises type / size / use of the premises?
- Is the emergency lighting system regularly tested?
- Is the emergency lighting system maintained by a competent contractor?
- Where are the test records held?

A plan of the emergency lighting should be provided.

10. Fire Fighting Equipment.

What automatic fire fighting equipment is available?	Location.
<i>Sprinkler system / Gas suppression system / Dry powder system</i>	<i>IT suite ground floor</i>
	N/A

What portable fire fighting equipment is provided?	Yes / No
Water Extinguisher	1
Foam Extinguisher	1
CO2 Extinguisher	2
Dry Powder Extinguisher	N
Wet Chemical Extinguisher	N
Fire Hose Reel	N
Fire Blanket.	1

Additional information regarding fire fighting equipment

The fire extinguishers are serviced annually by Peterlee Fire Company.

Staff are advised not to tackle a fire and to evacuate the premises immediately and to call 999 to summon the Fire and Rescue Service.

Staff are advised of the location of fire-fighting equipment upon induction.

Fire fighting equipment points to consider:

- Are extinguishers suitable for the purpose?
- Are there sufficient extinguishers located throughout the premises?
- Are specific extinguishers / fire fighting equipment located in close proximity to fire hazards?
- Are the locations of the extinguishers obvious so that users can gain immediate access to them?
- Have people been given information, instruction and training in the use of extinguishers / fire fighting equipment?
- Is equipment maintained and records held?

11. Means of Escape

Consideration should be given to how people will escape from the premises in the event of a fire both horizontally and vertically. Some bullet points have been provided at the bottom of the page but this is by no means exhaustive.

Additional information regarding the means of escape:

The means of escape provided in the premises are considered to be suitable for the size of the premises and the numbers using it.

Both exit doors are fitted with mag locks which deactivate upon activation of the fire warning system which allows staff and pupils to make good their escape. These are checked alongside the fire alarm checks.

Means of escape points to consider: *To be indicated in the box above.*

Horizontal Escape

- The number of occupants in the area/room/floor and their familiarity with the premises.
- The likely spread of fire?
- How long will it take people to evacuate the building (2-3minutes?)
- Do escape routes lead to a place of safety?
- Do emergency doors open in the direction of travel, and can they easily be opened i.e. not locked?
- Do fire doors close properly i.e. are not chocked open / self closing devices are operational?
- Dead –end conditions – is there only one way out?
- Is signage clear and visible from all parts of the building?
- Sufficient number of escape stairways?
- Is the escape route suitable for the number of people using it?
- Is the travel distance to the nearest escape route excessive?
- Inner room situations. Is the exit only available through another room?
- Housekeeping – is there storage of combustibles or obstructions in escape routes?
- Provisions for people with physical or sensory impairments or special needs etc.

Vertical Escape

- Are there sufficient stairways to get all occupants out of the premises even if one is inaccessible due to fire?
- Are the doors, walls and partitions to the stairways fire resisting (i.e. could a fire spread to the staircase(s) before occupants have evacuated taking into account the fire hazards present)?
- Are the escape route / stairs kept clear of combustible items?

Are staircases wide enough to allow all people to escape?

12. Fire Safety Signs and Notices.

Fire safety signs must be provided in a premise, they can provide information on safe escape routes, the location of fire safety equipment and information on what actions to take in the event of a fire.

Additional Information regarding fire safety signage:

The directional signage identifying the route to the final exit doors is considered suitable, however the premises does not contain any fire action notices. **Action 12.1**

Signage points to consider: *To be indicated in the box above.*

- Are signs the same throughout the building?
- Are they suitable i.e. pictogram, pictogram and text (**Not text only**)?
- Are general fire actions notices displayed stating what actions to take in a fire?
- Is signage placed on fire doors stating 'Keep shut'?
- Are final exit doors clearly marked? Information should also be provided on how to open the door i.e. 'Push bar to open'?
- Can emergency signage clearly be seen throughout all areas?

13. Fire Evacuation Plan.

Has a fire evacuation plan been completed?	N
Does the evacuation plan cover the following points:	
a. The actions staff should take if they discover a fire?	Y
b. How staff are informed if there is a fire incident?	Y
c. How the evacuation of the premises will take place?	Y
d. The location of the fire assembly point?	Y
e. The identification of escape routes?	Y
f. How the fire brigade will be informed?	Y
g. The specific fire duties of staff with additional responsibilities i.e. Fire Marshal, Caretaker, Facilities Manager etc.	Y

Currently there is no emergency action plan in place.

GF is seeking advice from H and S around an Emergency plan

14. Schematic Floor Plans.

Has a schematic floor plan of the premises been developed and included in the fire risk assessment/emergency plan.	Y
Does the floor plan include:	
a. The layout of the workspace and escape routes?	Y
b. The fire fighting equipment provided on the premises?	Y

c. The location of fire alarm equipment ie., break glass points etc?	Y
d. The location of the emergency lighting system?	Y
e. The location emergency shut off valves ie., Water, Electricity, Gas etc?	Y
f. The location of any asbestos containing materials?	Y
There is a floor plan available identifying the location of fire safety systems etc. and is attached to this document	
An asbestos management plan for the building is available for inspection	
Schematic floor plans should be included as an Appendix to this risk assessment.	

15. Training

All staff should receive fire safety training including the significant findings from the fire risk assessment and emergency plan.	
Are staff given a fire safety awareness induction? This should include: • <i>How to raise the alarm?</i> • <i>Evacuation routes out of the building?</i> • <i>The location of the fire assembly point?</i> • <i>How to stop machines/equipment (where appropriate)?</i> • <i>The importance of fire doors?</i> • <i>The importance of good housekeeping?</i>	Y
Is this information repeated annually or when significant changes occur i.e. a change in premises / working procedures etc?	Y
Is additional training given to employees who have a specific role to play in the event of an emergency i.e. fire marshals etc.	Y
Are fire drills undertaken regularly i.e. all people involved in at least one fire drill per year?	N
Have staff been made aware of the contents of the fire risk assessment?	Y
Is information given to visitors, contractors, temporary workers etc?	Y
Any other information relating to fire safety training: (Consider the nature of the task being carried out in the premise i.e. Hot work) Fire Marshall refresher training to be conducted in October – certificate to be displayed once complete. Fire drill complete 18.9.2025	

16. Significant Findings and Action Plan.

Significant findings of the fire risk assessment should be included and actions taken to remove or reduce the hazard and protect people.

Significant findings should include details of

- The fire hazards identified
- The actions taken or to be taken to remove or reduce the chance of a fire occurring (preventive measures)
- Persons at risk
- The actions taken or to be taken to reduce the risk to people from the spread of fire and smoke (protective measures)
- The actions people need to take in the case of fire including details of any persons nominated to carry out a particular function (emergency plan)
- The information, instruction and training identified that people need and how it will be given.

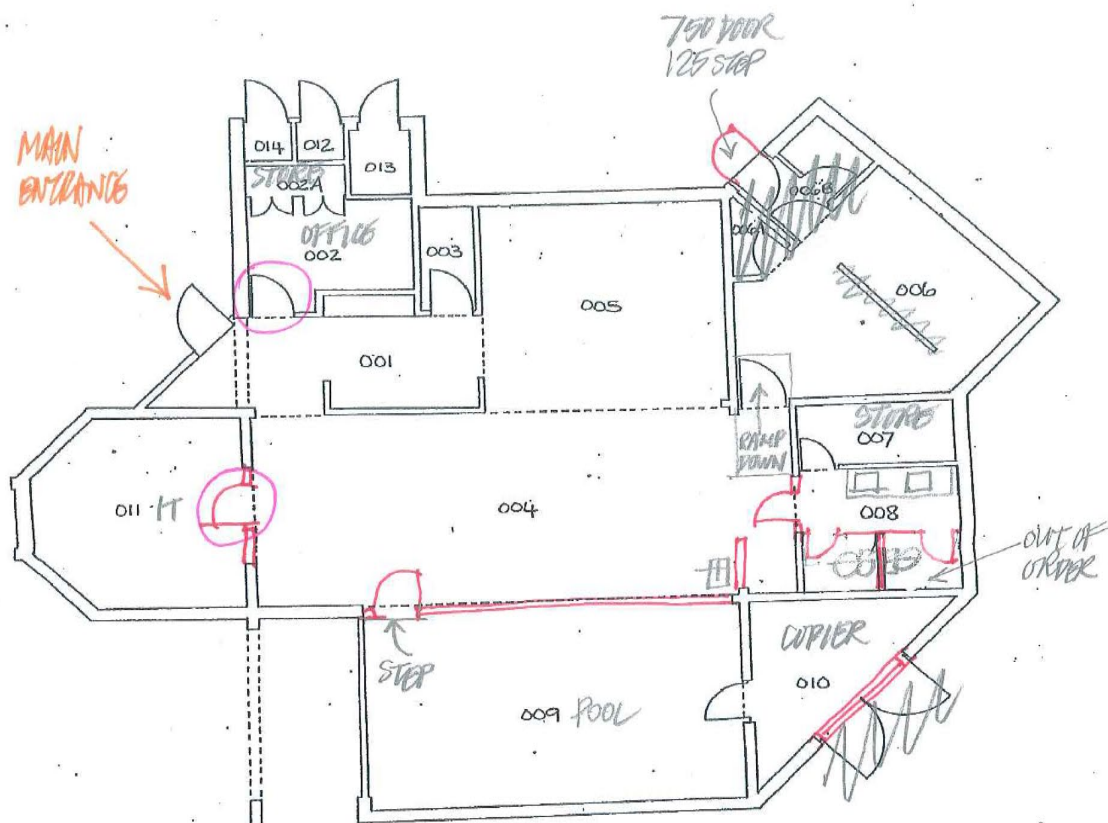
Significant Finding	Priority Low, Medium, High or Immediate.	Details of Remedial Action (if any)	Person Responsible	Completion Date
Action 12.1	High	Conspicuous notices detailing the action to be taken by persons in the event of fire should be provided by the break glass points by the front and rear exits.	Sharon Henderson	31 st May 2023
Action 13.1	High	There should be an effective emergency plan for the premises. The purpose of an emergency plan is to ensure that people know what to do if there is a fire and that the premises can be safely evacuated.	Sharon Henderson	31 st May 2023

17. Signatures.

Date of Assessment	Signature
Sept 25	G
Review Date	Name / Signature

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WINDLESTONE HALL - SNAP



N NARROW DOORS

Title: FERRYHILL DEAN ROAD NURSERY SCHOOL (FORMER)		Cost Centre N ^a
Block: MAIN UPRN 0580		Area N ^a 3
Floor: GROUND		Date
Contractors Copy	File Copy	
DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL LAND AND PROPERTY DEPARTMENT		

PLAN 1 OF 1