

Meadow High School



1.5 EXAMS - EMERGENCY EVACUATION OF THE EXAM ROOM DURING AN EXAM POLICY 2023/2024

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with JCQ requirements.

Policy Owner: **Exams Department**
Last Review: February 2024
Next Review: February 2025

Key staff involved in an Emergency Evacuation Policy / Procedure

Head of Centre	Mrs J Rigby
Deputy Headteacher	Ms C Caddell
Assistant Headteacher KS5 Deputy Assistant Headteacher KS5 Assistant Headteacher KS4	Miss M Taylor Mrs A Fabisch Ms J Richards
Exams Officer	Mrs A Norris
Facilities Manager	Mr A Manning

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Meadow High 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 25.4).

Where candidates are unable to return to the building to complete the examination, the relevant awarding body will be contacted immediately for advice. The awarding bodies have procedures in place to ensure that candidates are not disadvantaged where they are unable to complete the examination due to circumstances beyond their control. (ICE 24.5)

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 regulation
- Ensures any instructions from relevant local or national agencies are referenced and followed where applicable, including information from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office on the *Procedures for handling bomb threats*
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bomb-threats-guidance/procedures-for-ha>

[ndling-bomb-threats](#)

- Where safe to do so, ensures candidates are given the opportunity to sit exams for their published duration

Senior leader

- 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

Assistant Head KS5

- 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, following the Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) for that pupil (if they have one). If any pupils are unable to access the usual fire assembly point because of their PEEP an invigilator should stay with pupils throughout the evacuation to ensure that they do not discuss the exam with anyone.
- In the event of an emergency evacuation invigilators should position themselves so that they can ensure that pupils are not able to talk to one another both during the journey to the assembly point and when waiting. If necessary the invigilator should alert a senior member of staff if additional support to supervise pupils is required
- In order to ensure that pupils do not talk to one another the pupils should maintain social distance throughout the evacuation including when travelling to the assembly point.
- 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 fully aware of the emergency evacuation procedures and how an incident and actions taken must be recorded.
- Ensures candidates are briefed at the start of every exam that in the event of an emergency they must listen carefully to the invigilator and follow their instructions.
- 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
- Ensure the invigilator knows the location of the assistance alarm and that, should an emergency situation occur during the exam, they should activate the assistance alarm to alert senior staff to attend and assist with the emergency.
- Ensure the invigilator has a mobile phone (switched to silent) in case of emergency and the contact numbers of Reception and the Exams Officer.

- Provides an exam room incident log in each exam room
- Liaises with the Assistant Head and other relevant staff prior to each exam where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate.
- Liaises with the Assistant Head and/or Senior Leadership to determine whether any candidates have sensory issues which may be adversely impacted by the noise of an alarm or other disruption.
- Briefs invigilators prior to each exam where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate or a candidate with a serious medical condition. If a candidate has a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan ensure that a copy of that is available to the Invigilator.
- Ensures appropriate follow-up is undertaken after an emergency evacuation reporting the incident to the awarding body and the actions taken through the *special consideration* process where applicable (in cases where a group of candidates have been disadvantaged by a particular event).

Invigilators

- At Meadow High School, invigilators are permanently employed TAs or Team Leaders and are familiar with the general needs of the pupils.
- 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)

Other relevant centre staff

- Support the senior leader, exams officer and invigilators in ensuring the safe emergency evacuation of exam rooms

Recording details

As soon as practically possible and safe to do so, details should be recorded. Details must 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:
 - report on candidate behaviour throughout the interruption/evacuation
 - a judgement on the impact on candidates after the interruption/evacuation

Emergency evacuation procedure

Invigilators are trained in this procedure and understand the actions they must take in the event of a fire alarm or other emergency that leads to an evacuation of the exam room.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure
Actions to be taken
Stop the candidates from writing and note the time the exam was interrupted.
Collect the attendance register (in order to ensure all candidates are present)
Advise candidates to close their question/answer booklet or turn over their papers and leave scripts and exam papers in the examination room.
Evacuate the examination room in line with the instructions given by the appropriate authority
Candidates should leave the room in silence and remain in silence throughout the evacuation.
Make sure that the candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to make sure there is no discussion about the examination.
In the case of an evacuation because of a <u>fire alarm or bomb threat</u>, see procedure below.
In the case of an evacuation because of a <u>medical emergency within the exam room</u>, see procedure below.
Allow the candidates the remainder of the working time set for the examination once it resumes.
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 (Candidates must be given the opportunity to sit the examination for its published duration)
Make a full report of the incident and of the action taken, and send to the relevant awarding body

Make a Special Consideration application for all candidates who are adversely affected or disadvantaged by the evacuation.

In the case of an evacuation because of Fire or Bomb Threat, escort the candidates out to the field - there is a section away from other pupils where exam candidates can assemble and maintain social distancing and ensure that they are not able to talk to one another. The candidates should be asked to remain silent and be closely supervised throughout the evacuation to ensure they do not speak to one another or discuss the exam. Await instructions from Senior Leadership, Fire Wardens and Exams Officer. If the appropriate authorities instruct that it is safe to return to the exams room then the exam should be restarted and the full amount of allotted time given to finish the exam. If the exam room is unsafe to return to then consideration should be given to whether another room is available away from the danger.

In the case of a medical emergency within the exams room, whereby other candidates need to be evacuated from the exams room, escort the candidates to the Sixth Form Common Room to await further instructions. Candidates should be asked to be silent and supervised closely to ensure they do not discuss the exam. If there are a small number of candidates who can be accommodated in the Sixth Form Common Room, the exam can be resumed in the sixth form common room. The exams officer will ensure sufficient signage and appropriate equipment is transferred to the new room. Candidates should be given the full amount of allotted time to complete the exam. The time the exam stopped, and restarted, should be recorded.

In the event of a lockdown alert.

Pupils will hide within the exam room if practical and safe. Alternatively, they will be escorted to a safe place by the invigilators. By nature, a lockdown procedure would necessitate silence but invigilators would try to ensure that pupils were not in a position to discuss the exam. Pupils and staff safety would be the key priority in this situation.