



The Blue Coat School

# Emergency Evacuation: Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)

Approved by the Governors' Safeguarding, Health and Safety Committee

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(H Andrews – Chair of Safeguarding, Health and Safety Committee)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This Policy was devised by the Estates & Operations Manager in consultation with colleagues in the school.

Date of Next Review: Lent 2027

# The Blue Coat School Birmingham Limited

## Emergency Evacuation: Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1

The Blue Coat School Birmingham Limited welcomes staff and pupils with a range of disabilities, specific learning difficulties and chronic medical conditions. The School's objective is to provide an environment where people with disabilities are able to enjoy all the facilities comparable to any able-bodied person.

#### 1.2

The School and other employers on campus such as contractors, have a responsibility for ensuring that all people can leave a building safely in the event of a fire or other emergency. This means providing emergency evacuation plans for all people likely to be on the premises, including disabled people. It is recognised that failure to do so may breach fire safety and discrimination legislation. Where special arrangements are required, as outlined in this document, these are intended to provide a balance between the right of disabled people to participate fully in School / community life and the requirement to ensure their health and safety. This document provides practical guidance on how to help those who may need assistance to escape in the event of an emergency (normally a fire), and how to plan for this by developing Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs).

### 2. WHAT IS REASONABLE?

#### 2.1

Planning for means of escape is about planning for exceptional circumstances (i.e. not an everyday event). What a person is prepared to do in exceptional circumstances may differ significantly from what they can reasonably be expected to do or manage in their everyday activities.

#### 2.2

Evacuation plans should be prepared with the view that these may be needed for 'the real thing'. The same level of effort may not be acceptable for a practice or false alarm or in everyday activities. Procedures should take account of this and allow for simulation during fire drills or other emergency evacuation practices.

#### 2.3

It should be noted that evacuation plans should not rely on the Fire and Rescue Service to make them work – it is the employer's responsibility to ensure an effective evacuation in the event of fire.

### 3. REDUCING UNNECESSARY EVACUATIONS

#### 3.1

Some disabled people are put at risk when 'carry-down' procedures are used. It is therefore necessary to reduce or remove the need to escape for a false alarm. Good communication when a fire alarm sounds is essential in order to determine the cause of the alarm and reduce the need for emergency escapes.

### 4. WHAT IS A PEEP?

#### 4.1

In an emergency people may not react exactly as planned. Unless guided by trained staff (i.e. Fire Marshals), most people will make their way to the exit that they are familiar with, which may not be the most suitable escape route.

#### 4.2

A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is a plan that is jointly agreed **in advance of any emergency** between the person and the Estates & Operations Manager so that the person or their assistant knows what they must do, where to go, etc. in an emergency and the relevant staff as identified on the PEEP can ensure

that the correct assistance is available. If the disabled person is a child, the child's parents or legal guardians would agree any plan with the Estates & Operations Manager.

### **4.3**

Those preparing a PEEP should be aware that some disabled people may not wish to disclose personal information about their disability – discretion should be used in how this issue is approached.

### **4.4 Individual PEEPs**

On any part of the school site where a disabled member of staff or pupil (or a person in the later stages of pregnancy, or earlier if for medical or personal reasons) normally works or visits regularly, an individual PEEP should be prepared wherever possible. This is a plan tailored to the specific individual, for that specific site. If a person visits more than one building on that site on a regular basis, specific details should be included on the PEEP in relation to each building. Fire Marshals are trained to offer an appropriate option to people with a PEEP during an emergency. The process for devising a PEEP is set out in Appendix 1.

## **5. RESPONSIBILITIES FOR DEVELOPING THE PEEP**

### **5.1 People requiring a PEEP**

#### **5.1.1**

Anyone who may need assistance in an emergency evacuation should have a PEEP. This includes:

- Mobility impaired people – including wheelchair users, those who use walking aids such as sticks, and those who may be unable to exit via stairs, steps or narrow corridors.
- Sensory impaired people – who may not be able to hear audible, or see visual, alarm signals.
- Those who may have difficulty reading or understanding signage.
- Those people with medical conditions (e.g. asthma, heart disease) which may affect their ability to use the stairs, or to move quickly.
- Those with broken limbs or on crutches due to a temporary medical problem who may not be able to use the stairs, or to move quickly.
- People in the later stages of pregnancy (third trimester) or earlier in a pregnancy for medical or personal reasons.

### **5.2 Responsibility for preparing the PEEP**

#### **5.2.1 Staff**

Line managers are responsible through normal recruitment procedures for identifying a new member of staff who discloses a disability. Line managers and the Senior Leadership Team have a responsibility to identify existing members of staff who develop a disability. The PEEP should be written by the person's line manager, in consultation with the Estates & Operations Manager and the person requiring the PEEP. Sensitivity may be required, since the person may not want to 'have a fuss made' on his or her behalf.

#### **5.2.2 Pupils**

The Admissions Registrar is responsible for inviting the parent or legal guardian of a potential pupil to declare a disability during the pupil admission process. The Admissions Registrar will advise the Estates & Operations Manager of the potential recruitment of a disabled pupil. The Estates & Operations Manager, a member of the SLT and relevant member of staff are then responsible for making sure that a PEEP is developed for the disabled pupil, with input from people such as relevant teachers and the School Matron.

#### **5.2.3 Contractors**

It is the responsibility of the member of Blue Coat School staff who is managing the contract to make any fixed or visiting contractors aware of the system of PEEPs, where necessary. The contractor's management should be advised to liaise with the Estates & Operations Manager to find out if the building's standard arrangements will be suitable, or to prepare an individual PEEP.

## **5.2.4 Visiting members of the public**

### **5.2.4.1**

If the School is given sufficient prior notice of a disabled visitor, the first option should be to book rooms from which the disabled person can easily self-evacuate. If this is not possible, then the person who is organising the visit should liaise with the Estates & Operations Manager to identify suitable evacuation options. If necessary, an individual PEEP should be prepared.

### **5.2.4.2**

Where public or community events are organised, consideration should be given in advance to access/egress arrangements for disabled people who may choose to attend.

## **5.2.5 BCS residents**

The responsibility for evacuating people from tenanted accommodation rests with the tenant. However, they may be reliant on facilities provided by the School, such as communications, and it may be appropriate to co-ordinate and share resources.

## **5.3 Obtaining information and writing the PEEP**

### **5.3.1**

Any information regarding a disability declared by the parents of potential pupils during the admissions process, or declared by staff during the recruitment process or through discussion with the person's line manager, Headmaster or the Estates & Operations Manager should form the starting point for collecting information about the disabled person's capabilities. If a member of staff or pupil develops a disablement, it is the responsibility of the line manager or relevant member of teaching staff to inform the Estates & Operations Manager, who will advise on the need for a PEEP. It is important to consider that not all disabilities are visual. On that basis any concerns could also be raised by the School Matron. Women in the later stages of pregnancy should discuss a PEEP with their line manager or the Estates & Operations Manager.

### **5.3.2**

The PEEP should be devised by the line manager, Estates & Operations Manager, School Matron or relevant member of staff and be agreed with the person or the child's parent/guardian. Copies must be given to the person (if the child is old enough to understand it), their line manager (for staff), Class/Form Tutor and other relevant staff (for pupils) and the Estates & Operations Manager.

### **5.3.3**

The PEEP should be updated when an individual's circumstances change and should be reviewed at least annually (or more often for pupils where timetables or classes change).

### **5.3.4**

All personal data should be adequately safeguarded. When the person leaves the school, one copy of the PEEP should be retained for reference and all duplicates should be collected from nominated staff and destroyed. The Estates & Operations Manager is responsible for ensuring that an electronic register of all issued PEEPs is maintained. The Estates & Operations Manager is also responsible for collecting and destroying duplicate documentation as when and required, and in particular, when a PEEP is no longer required.

## **6. TYPES OF DISABILITY**

### **6.1**

The needs of people requiring a PEEP will vary, depending on the nature of their disability and their individual capabilities. This section outlines some of the relevant factors to be considered for these types of disability.

## **6.2 Hearing impaired and deaf people**

### **6.2.1**

Flashing beacon systems are installed in a limited number of locations around the School. If this system is required, then the member of staff devising the PEEP should check with the **Estates & Operations Manager** to find out if there is a suitable system installed. Flashing beacons may not be appropriate in all buildings, for instance where other lighting or alarm systems conflict with the beacon.

### **6.2.2**

The Blue Coat School Fire Evacuation information has both written and pictographic information.

## **6.3 Visually impaired and blind people**

### **6.3.1**

People who are visually impaired can be helped to evacuate by good signage and other orientation clues. It is helpful if the escape route can be via the normal circulation corridors/routes, with which the visually impaired person is already familiar (this assumes that the circulation route is protected and designated as a fire evacuation route).

### **6.3.2**

Where a person uses a guide dog, they may prefer the dog to assist them out of the building. The escape routes should be shown to the disabled person, with a view to training the dog in the safe route.

## **6.4 People with a mobility impairment**

### **6.4.1**

Some mobility impaired people will decide that they can facilitate their own evacuation using the existing systems within the building. Others will decide that they need assistance from one or more people. Options available may include:

- Making their own way down stairs slowly, walking
- Making their own way down stairs on their bottom, or after the main flow of people
- Carry down in own chair
- Horizontal evacuation to another, safer, part of the building.

### **6.4.2 Lifts**

The School currently only has two lifts on campus which should not be used in the case of a fire alarm as they are not evacuation lifts.

## **6.5**

Anyone can ask for a PEEP when one is thought to be required. They should be able to do this without feeling that it will affect the provision of the service, and without it resulting in restricted use of the building as far as is reasonably possible.

## **7. TRAINING**

### **7.1 Practical exercises**

To be effective, any evacuation plan depends on the ability of staff to respond efficiently. Staff must receive instructions, practical demonstrations and training appropriate to their role in the PEEP where required. This may include some or all of the following elements:

- Fire drills for staff and pupils (contact the Estates & Operations Manager).
- Specific training for designated persons involved in evacuating people with a PEEP which would typically include Fire Marshals.

### **7.2 Drills**

#### **7.2.1**

All evacuation procedures must be practiced and recorded. Fire drills should be conducted termly during the

academic year. As a rule, persons with a disability should be offered the opportunity to fully participate in a fire drill, so that procedures can be practiced. They should be provided with advance warning of a fire drill so that the disabled person, their buddy and any assistants are available to participate. However, it is not essential that they evacuate the building at the same time as other occupants. This should be the case if a person has mobility impairment and participation in a drill may result in the person suffering unnecessary exertion or stress.

## **8. RELATED POLICIES, MONITORING AND POLICY REVIEW**

### **8.1**

The Emergency Evacuation: Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) applies to all children in the school including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception).

### **8.2**

The Emergency Evacuation of Disabled People: Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) should be read in conjunction with other related whole school policies including: Fire Safety, Health and Safety, Disability Discrimination and Safeguarding and Child Protection.

### **8.3**

The Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it complies with statutory requirements and to ensure that any changes in practices are accurately reflected. It will be presented to the Governors' Safeguarding and Health and Safety Committee for approval in the Lent Term. The minutes of this meeting will be presented to the Governors.

## **RELATED ADVICE AND DOCUMENTS**

1. Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
2. HM Government Fire Safety Risk Assessment – Supplementary Guide for Means of Escape for Disabled People
3. British Standard 8300:2001 'Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people - Code of practice'.
4. Building Regulations Approved Document B Fire Safety.

## Appendix I – Process for preparing a PEEP

