ST CUTHBERT'S
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Emergency Evacuation Policy (Examinations)

for the Academic Year 2026 – 2027

Approved by:	Local Governing Committee	**Approved on:**	
Review date:		**Revision approved:**	
Version No:	1	**Originator(s):**	JCQ Policy

1. Purpose of the policy

This policy details how St Cuthbert's Catholic High School deals with an emergency evacuation of the exam room(s) by defining staff roles and responsibilities and confirming the emergency evacuation procedure.

2. Key Staff involved in this policy.

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Daniel P. Murray
Exams officer line manager (Senior leader)	Karl Stuart
Exams manager/officer	Carol Wetherell
ALS lead/SENCo	Richard Collinson
Senior leader(s)	David Swindells, Juliana Blackie, Jenni Westwood, Matt Turner, Michael Donnelly and Paul Burrows

3. 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. (ICE 25.6)

- Where candidates are unable to return to the building to complete the examination, the relevant awarding body will be contacted immediately for advice.

4. Emergency evacuation of an exam room

4.1 Roles and responsibilities

(a) 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.

(b) 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.

(c) Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- 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.
- Ensures the candidate is informed prior to taking their exams of what will happen in the event of an emergency evacuation.

(d) Exams manager/officer

- Ensures invigilators are trained in emergency evacuation procedures and how an incident and actions taken must be recorded.
- Ensures candidates are briefed in exam assemblies prior to exams taking place, on what will happen in the event of an emergency in the exam room.
- 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.
- Provides an exam room incident log in each exam room.
- Liaises with the SENCo and other relevant staff prior to each exam where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate.
- Briefs invigilators prior to each exam where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate.
- Ensures appropriate follow-up is undertaken after an emergency evacuation, reporting the incident to the awarding body and the actions taken.

(e) Invigilators

- 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 manager/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 manager/officer (see below)

(f) Other relevant centre staff

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

4.2 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

4.3 **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. (as detailed in current JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations
Instruct the students/pupils to stop writing
Make a note of the time you stopped the students/pupils
Collect the attendance register and seating plan (in order to ensure all candidates are present)
Advise students/pupils to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room Students/pupils must be advised to close their answer booklet
Evacuate the room one column at a time, in silence with an invigilator, informing the students/pupils not to go and collect their bags or coats
Inform the students/pupils that they are still under exam conditions and that they must leave the room in silence
Ensure the students/pupils are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room so that there is no discussion about the examination
Once outside at the designated fire assembly point do a register to check you have all students/pupils out of the building.
Once back in the building note the time of the interruption and how long it lasted
Allow the students/pupils the remainder of the working time set for the examination once it resumes
Make relevant changes to the displayed finish time
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 – EO to discuss
Make a full report of the incident and of the action taken (to be retained on file if required by an awarding body)

On Hearing the Fire Alarm - the invigilator must take the following action in an emergency such as a fire alarm:

Stop the students from writing and to close their answer/question booklet tell them to sit quietly – exam conditions still apply, until the Fire Alarm stops then re-start the exam adding the time difference to the end.

If the room needs to be evacuated, you will be informed by a member of the SLT and the following instructions will apply:

- **Tell the students to leave the question papers and scripts on their desks.**
- **Evacuate the room in an orderly fashion without talking. The students must not attempt to collect bags or coats.**
- **The Lead Invigilator should collect the exam register and the seating plans, evacuate the students by following the emergency exit signs.**

- **<u>DDA</u> – CANDIDATES WHO HAVE A DECLARED DISABILITY WILL BE SUBJECT TO THE Personal Evacuation Procedures in place.**

- **The separate exam fire assembly points are:**

Main Hall, MFL Classes, Savio & IT Rooms: Assemble on the grassed area in front of the MUGA.

Exam Room, Classrooms and Meeting Rooms in Bede Block: Assemble on the grassed area outside the pupil/student entrance in front of the MFL Department

Sports Hall: Assemble on the Sports Field.

- **When assembled check the students against the exams register.**
- **The examination students must not have contact with other pupils and must not have mobile phones in their possession.**
- Make sure that the students are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room.
- Make sure there is no discussion about the examination. Inform the students that they are still under examination regulations.
- Make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted.
- At the end of the emergency the Examinations Officer or a senior member of staff will inform you when to return to the examination venue.
- On return to the examination venue allow the students **the full working time** set for the examination.
- Change the finish time for all to view.
- Make a full written report of the incident to the Exams Officer who will report the incident to the relevant Awarding Body.

For on-screen examinations:

- candidates must be closely supervised if an emergency evacuation of the assessment room occurs
- invigilators should refer to any software specific instructions to safeguard the security of the assessment content and candidates' responses (For example, pausing the assessment for all candidates and locking the evacuated assessment room without closing down the software)
- invigilators should understand the procedures for re-starting an assessment after an unplanned break (i.e. an emergency or a technical failure) controlling the re-starting of the assessment, re-setting the timing (where necessary) and ensuring, where this is technically feasible and permitted by the assessment regulations, candidates can reaccess their previous responses