



BANDONBRIDGE N.S.

FIRE & EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

Safe • Calm • Accounted For

PRIMARY ASSEMBLY AREA
Grass area to the rear of the school

Document Control	Details
School	Bandonbridge National School
Policy status	In operation
Approved by Board of Management	21/06/2006
Reviewed	19/12/2022 and September 2026
Next review	Annually, or sooner if legislation, risk or school infrastructure changes

EMERGENCY: CALL 112 OR 999

Emergency Evacuation – Immediate Actions

On hearing the fire alarm, everyone must evacuate immediately. Do not delay to collect belongings.

- Raise/activate the fire alarm if it has not already sounded.
- Teachers direct pupils to stand, push chairs under tables where this can be done without delay, and leave calmly in single file by the designated safe exit.
- No pupil or adult stops to collect coats, bags, devices or other belongings.
- Maintain silence while evacuating so that instructions can be heard.
- Teachers check class toilets/adjacent areas only where this can be done quickly and without placing themselves at risk.
- Close windows and doors on leaving only where safe and where doing so does not delay evacuation. Do not lock doors.
- SNAs assist pupils in accordance with their assigned roles and any individual evacuation arrangements.
- Proceed directly to the allocated position at the grass assembly area to the rear of the school.
- The teacher takes the laminated class list from beside the classroom exit and immediately calls the roll at the assembly point.
- Support teachers/SNAs return pupils in their care to the relevant class teacher at the assembly area and explicitly confirm their presence.
- Visitors and contractors evacuate with the nearest staff group and report to the person designated to account for visitors.
- Report any missing person immediately to the Principal/person in charge. No one re-enters the building to search.
- The Principal/school secretary contacts and liaises with the emergency services as required.
- No person re-enters any building until the all-clear is given by the Principal/person in charge or, in a real emergency, by the Fire and Rescue Service.

IMPORTANT: The priority is evacuation and life safety. Fire-fighting equipment should only be used by a trained adult if it is safe to do so, a clear escape route remains available, and evacuation is not delayed.

1. Introduction

This Fire and Emergency Evacuation Plan has been developed through consultation with staff in response to the changing circumstances and physical layout of Bandonbridge N.S. Additional buildings have been added to the school grounds since the original school building was constructed in 1960, and evacuation routes and assembly arrangements have therefore evolved over time.

The plan sets out the procedures to be followed in the event of fire or another emergency requiring evacuation. It should be read alongside the school Safety Statement, relevant risk assessments and any individual Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs).

2. Aims

- Provide for the immediate safety needs of pupils, staff, visitors and contractors in the event of fire or another emergency.
- Maintain appropriate emergency procedures in accordance with Irish safety, health and welfare legislation and relevant fire-safety guidance.
- Ensure that evacuation is calm, rapid, orderly and fully accounted for.
- Promote a safe and secure school environment for learning and work.

3. School Ethos

Bandonbridge N.S. is committed to the care of the whole school community and to providing a safe and secure environment for learning. This plan reflects that commitment by placing the protection, dignity and wellbeing of pupils, staff and visitors at the centre of emergency planning.

4. Objectives

- Use appropriate external expertise, including the local Fire and Rescue Service/fire-safety professionals, for advice, training and staff development where appropriate.

- Maintain a clear, practised and trusted framework for evacuation.
- Ensure staff understand their roles and that pupils are familiar with age-appropriate evacuation routines.
- Review each drill and use the findings to improve procedures.

5. Legislative and Good-Practice Context

This plan is informed by the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) guidance for primary schools. HSA guidance emphasises emergency planning, clear escape routes, staff instruction and training, provision for people who may require assistance, identified assembly points, testing/maintenance of fire systems, and the recording and review of fire drills.

6. School Fire-Safety Arrangements

Area	School arrangement
Alarm and detection	Fire alarm bells, break-glass call points and smoke detector units are situated throughout the buildings and are checked regularly.
Main alarm panel	Located on the wall beside the school office, near the main entrance doors.
Additional alarm panel	Located in the upstairs staffroom in the standalone block.
Servicing	Fire alarm systems and fire-safety equipment are serviced at the required intervals by competent service providers; school records are retained.
Escape routes	Emergency exits and routes must remain unobstructed and readily usable at all times.
Assembly area	Grass area to the rear of the school.
Emergency access	The Principal and Deputy Principal park their cars in consistent designated places so that vehicles can be moved promptly if necessary to facilitate emergency-service access.
Emergency contact	Principal/school secretary contacts emergency services as required: 112 or 999.

7. Evacuation Routes by Class

Class / Group	Designated evacuation route	Assembly position
Junior Infants	Use the emergency exit and cross the courtyard/basketball court.	First tree / nearest designated class position to the school building.
Senior Infants / 1st Class	Use the emergency exit, walk through the passage, then cross the courtyard/basketball court.	Allocated position in class order.
2nd–5th Classes	Exit through the exterior classroom doors and cross the courtyard/basketball court.	Allocated position in class order.
6th Class	Use the emergency exit, walk along the path by the garden, then cross the basketball court.	Far end of the assembly line.
Pupils with Support Teachers / SNAs	Evacuate with the adult with whom they are working, using the nearest safe designated route.	Adult returns each pupil to the relevant class teacher and confirms the pupil's presence.

Assembly order: Junior Infants are positioned nearest the school building, with classes arranged in sequence and 6th Class at the far end.

8. Accounting for Everyone

- A current laminated class list is displayed near the exit in each classroom and is taken by the teacher during evacuation.
- Class teachers call the roll immediately on reaching the assembly area and keep pupils together.
- Any pupil who was working elsewhere is returned to the relevant class group by the Support Teacher/SNA, who confirms this directly to the class teacher.
- A system for accounting for staff, visitors, contractors and substitute personnel must operate alongside class rolls.
- Any discrepancy or missing person is reported immediately to the Principal/person in charge. Staff must not re-enter the building to search.
- Pupils remain with their class and under supervision until further instructions are given.

9. Pupils or Adults Requiring Assistance

The school will identify any pupil, staff member or regular visitor who may require additional assistance to evacuate safely because of mobility, sensory, medical, communication, cognitive or other needs. Where required, an individual Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) will set out the safest route, assistance required, responsible adults, communication arrangements and any necessary equipment. Temporary needs, such as an injury affecting mobility, will also be considered.

10. Visitors, Contractors and Events

Visitors and contractors should be made aware of the evacuation arrangements appropriate to their location. Staff hosting visitors are responsible for directing them to safety where practicable. For assemblies, performances, meetings or other events involving larger numbers or altered room use, the school will ensure that exits remain clear, occupancy is appropriate, and adults know the applicable evacuation routes and assembly arrangements.

11. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Board of Management	Has overall responsibility for managing safety, health and welfare in the school and for ensuring that appropriate emergency arrangements, risk assessments, resources and remedial actions are in place.
Principal	Has overall operational responsibility for ensuring procedures are in place; maintains the fire register with the Safety Officer; arranges staff fire-safety training; coordinates emergency response; ensures emergency services are contacted and briefed.
Deputy Principal / In-School Management	Supports implementation of the plan. Fire-drill scheduling forms part of the relevant post of responsibility within the in-school management structure.
Staff Safety Officer	Monitors compliance with safety procedures; checks that extinguishers/fire equipment have not been tampered with; monitors servicing records and reports concerns; supports maintenance of the fire register.
Class Teachers	Keep classrooms tidy; maintain a clear route to exits; ensure fire equipment is accessible; know evacuation routes; take the class list; supervise evacuation; call the roll and report concerns immediately.
Support Teachers	Evacuate pupils in their care, account for them, and return them to the relevant class teacher at the assembly area with a clear verbal handover.
SNAs	Assist pupils to evacuate safely in line with assigned responsibilities and any PEEP; support calm movement and accountability at the assembly area.
Secretary / Office	Supports emergency contact and liaison arrangements; brings or accounts for visitor information where this is safe and practicable and does not delay evacuation.

Role	Responsibilities
All Staff	Know alarm signals, routes and assembly arrangements; report hazards; keep exits clear; follow instructions; never take unnecessary personal risk.
Pupils	Follow adult instructions, leave belongings behind, walk calmly and silently, remain with their class and do not re-enter the building.

12. Fire Drills, Training and Records

Bandonbridge N.S. will carry out a fire drill once each term. This exceeds the HSA checklist benchmark of a minimum of two drills per year and supports regular practice across the school year. Drills may be announced or unannounced where appropriate, taking account of pupil needs and the risk of accidents during practice.

- Drills should test evacuation from the school's different buildings and normal occupied areas.
- The evacuation time and any significant observations should be recorded in the fire register.
- After each drill, staff should review what worked well, delays, congestion, accountability issues and any support needs.
- Corrective actions should be assigned, completed and recorded.
- New, substitute and temporary staff should receive appropriate information on emergency procedures.
- Staff designated to carry out specific emergency duties should receive suitable instruction/training.
- Alarm systems, emergency lighting and fire-fighting equipment should be inspected, tested and serviced in accordance with applicable requirements and competent-person advice.

13. Fire Prevention and Daily Readiness

- Keep corridors, passages, doorways, stairs and emergency exits clear at all times.
- Maintain a clear path to the emergency exit in every classroom and teaching/support area.
- Do not obstruct or interfere with fire extinguishers, call points, detectors, alarm panels, signage or emergency lighting.
- Report defects in alarms, exits, doors, emergency lighting or fire equipment promptly.
- Manage combustible materials and displays so that they do not create avoidable fire risk or obstruct escape routes.
- Ensure electrical and other identified fire risks are addressed through the school Safety Statement and risk-assessment process.

14. If the Normal Route Is Unsafe

No person should move towards smoke, flames or another obvious danger. If the designated route cannot be used safely, the supervising adult should use the nearest safe alternative exit and proceed to the assembly area, keeping the group together. Emergency services must be told promptly if any area could not be checked or if anyone is unaccounted for.

15. After Evacuation

- Keep access roads, gates and approaches clear for emergency vehicles.
- Do not allow pupils, staff or visitors to leave the assembly area without authorisation and appropriate accountability.
- In a real emergency, follow the instructions of the Fire and Rescue Service and other emergency services.
- Re-entry is prohibited until formally authorised.
- Where re-entry is not possible, the school's wider emergency/critical incident arrangements will be activated as appropriate, including parent/guardian communication and safe collection arrangements.

16. Fire Drill / Evacuation Record

A copy of this record may be completed for each drill and retained in the school fire register.

Record item	Details
Date	
Alarm time	
Evacuation completed	
Total evacuation time	
Buildings/areas included	
Weather / ground conditions	
Were all persons accounted for?	Yes / No
Any route obstruction or congestion?	
Any alarm/equipment issue?	
Support/PEEP observations	
What worked well?	
Actions required	
Person responsible / target date	
Review completed by	

17. Termly Readiness Checklist

Check	Yes / No / N/A	Action / Notes
Emergency routes and exits clear and usable		
Assembly point identifiable and usable		
Directional/emergency signs visible		
Class lists current and located beside exits		
Visitor-accounting arrangements understood		
Alarm/call points/panels appear unobstructed		
Fire extinguishers/equipment accessible and untampered with		
Emergency lighting/service records current		
PEEPs/temporary evacuation assistance reviewed where required		
New/substitute staff briefed on procedures		
Emergency access for Fire and Rescue Service clear		

18. Evaluation and Review

The effectiveness of this plan will be evaluated through:

- Feedback from staff, pupils and other relevant stakeholders.
- Maintenance of required safety standards and readiness.
- Coordinated, calm and orderly evacuation in the shortest safe time.
- Recorded review of drills and completion of identified actions.
- Annual policy review, and earlier review following a significant incident, change in legislation/guidance, change in pupil/staff needs, or physical change to the school buildings or grounds.

19. Implementation

This plan is currently in operation. It will be communicated to staff and incorporated into induction and emergency-practice arrangements. Relevant evacuation instructions and route information will be displayed in appropriate locations throughout the school.

20. References and Useful Guidance

- Health and Safety Authority (HSA), Guidelines on Managing Safety, Health and Welfare in Primary Schools.
- Health and Safety Authority, Primary School Resources and Interactive Risk Assessments (including Fire – Classroom/Office and General Access/Egress templates).
- Health and Safety Authority, Emergency Escape and Fire Fighting; Fire Detection and Warning; Fire Prevention.
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, including duties relating to risk assessment, training and emergency plans/procedures.
- Relevant advice from the local Fire and Rescue Service and competent fire-safety professionals.