

St Alban's Catholic High School



Emergency Evacuation Policy (exams)

Approved by Student Committee on: 05 February 2024

Recommission Date: January 2025

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how St Alban'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.

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.

Emergency evacuation of an exam room

- ▶ In the event of a fire alarm, evacuate the exam room immediately
- ▶ Evacuate the room by the nearest fire exit
- ▶ Escort candidates to the assembly point
- ▶ When/if allowed back to the exam room, allow candidates time to settle down, reminding them that they are still under formal exam conditions, and that they must not restart writing their answers until instructed to do so
- ▶ Announce clearly to the candidates when they may begin to write their answers (the exam will formally resume at this point) and specify the remaining time allowed for the paper(s).
- ▶ Record the time the exam (s) resumed and amend the displayed finishing time(s).
- ▶ Record as much detail as you can on the exam room incident log and ensure the exams officer is fully briefed at the end of the exam to enable a full report to be submitted to the awarding body.
- ▶ Where not allowed to return to the exam room, or the decision is made that the exam cannot be resumed, the Centre's Exam Contingency Plan will be invoked and you will be briefed accordingly at the time

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-handling-bomb-threats> - see Lockdown Policy (exams)
- ▶ 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

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 (see Exam Policy for Evacuation of Disabled Students)
- ▶ 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 trained in emergency evacuation procedures and how an incident and actions taken must be recorded
- ▶ Ensures candidates are briefed (*assembly prior to exam season/email*), 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 through the *special consideration* process where applicable (in cases where a group of candidates have been disadvantaged by a particular event)

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 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, SENCo, 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.

Signed by P.Dance, Chair of Governors:

Date: 05 February 2024
