

## Fire Station Education Packs - Guidance

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Reviewed as current: **29 September 2021**  
Owner: **Assistant Commissioner, Prevention and Protection**  
Responsible work team: **Education Team**

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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The London Fire Commissioner (LFC) receives many requests for fire station staff to visit schools or requests for children to visit fire stations. Additionally, many stations across the LFC carry out visits to schools as part of their Borough work plan. This policy has been produced to support this Community Safety activity.
- 1.2 This policy should be used in conjunction with a **Fire Station Education Pack**, each station has been provided with a pack, alternatively electronic versions of these resources can be located on hotwire under the Education Team. These educational packs are for use in primary schools or when children are visiting a fire station.
- 1.3 The policy outlines aims, objectives and considerations prior to the visit, and a risk assessment to be carried out once at the school. This formalises existing practices and ensures that fire safety messages are delivered to children in primary schools in a consistent way and using resources and key messages that reinforce and complement the targeted workshops delivered by the Brigade's Education Team across London.
- 1.4 Depending on the risk of accidental dwellings fires occurring in the ward where the school is located, each primary school is given a risk prioritisation category by Information Management. The Education Team deliver a service to those primary schools with a risk category of 'Very High' or 'High'. The Education Team service is not available to those schools with a 'Medium' or 'Low' risk category due to their limited resources being targeted to those most at risk; therefore the lower risk priority schools will benefit most from an educational visit from the local fire station instead.
- 1.5 Further information on the Education Team can be found on the Community Safety pages of Hotwire.

# 2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 The LFC is committed to reducing the number of fires and the number of deaths and injuries caused by fire. There are current targets to reflect this in the London Safety Plan (LSP).
- 2.2 One of the ways the LFC is reducing the number of fire deaths and injuries in the home is through educating children about the dangers of fire, how to prevent fires, how to detect fires and how to escape should a fire happen. The knowledge the children gain can then be used throughout their lives and therefore reduce the number of fires and the effects of fire on a much wider scale. The children are encouraged to share this information with their friends and families to help make them safer too.
- 2.3 The activities contained in the **Fire Station Education Packs** have been developed to ensure that fire safety messages are delivered by fire station staff in a consistent way across all stations and watches so that every child receives the same level of fire safety education. The activities also link the learning outcomes to operational equipment and appliances used by station staff.

# 3 Planning a visit

- 3.1 Stations may choose to carry out visits to schools as part of their station or borough planning processes, or in response to a request received from a school. The number of visits and the amount of time spent on each visit by fire station staff will be dependent on the time and resources available to each watch for this work. This should be planned, managed and recorded using the Station Diary. Visits should only be conducted at local schools in their area to reduce transportation.

- 3.2 Before agreeing to carry out a visit, stations should check the 'risk priority' category of the school. This information can be obtained through hotwire under the education team or by contacting the education team directly through [educationteam@london-fire.gov.uk](mailto:educationteam@london-fire.gov.uk). In order to avoid duplication of visits, where a school has a risk priority category of 'Very High' or 'High' they should be referred to the Education Team for a visit by an Education Officer. If, however the school has a 'Medium' or 'Low' risk priority category then the watch can make arrangements to visit the school themselves using the **Fire Station Education Pack**.
- 3.3 All visits should be planned to take place during an allocated period of second line availability in line with Strategic Resource (SR) scheduling procedures. The SR schedule is available through the 'Training Support' desktop icon. Additional slots may be requested by application to the Training and Release Team (email: [StrategicResource@london-fire.gov.uk](mailto:StrategicResource@london-fire.gov.uk)). Requests will only normally be authorised when a minimum of three months notice is given.
- 3.4 More than one member of staff will be needed to deliver the presentation for it to be most effective and engage the audience. The presentation should last no longer than 60 minutes per session. Whenever possible this time should be divided equally between delivering:

- (a) Preventing, detecting and escaping (from fire in the home) messages.
- (b) The tour of the appliance.

Travelling time to and from the school should also be considered when planning a visit.

- 3.5 To make the most effective use of time available to stations for Community Safety activities and ensure resources are targeted where most needed, consideration should be given to the following:
- Where the visit is taking place in response to a request from the school, fire station staff should consider the reasons for the request. If the visit has been requested as the result of a recent fire involving a member of the school or local community an Education Team Activity Day visit may be more appropriate (refer to Paragraph 4.8).
  - When using a pack, the watch is responsible for ensuring items in the pack are not mislaid and the content is maintained in a suitable condition. The inventory should be used to check the pack is complete before the watch leaves the school premises.
  - Before a visit the watch should ensure they are familiar with the packs and the resources provided by watching the "fire station education pack video guidance" available to view on hotwire.
  - If further support is required when using the pack for the first time, the watch should contact the Education Team ([EducationTeam@london-fire.gov.uk](mailto:EducationTeam@london-fire.gov.uk)) so that an experienced Education Officer can be made available to help deliver the visit. In most cases, four weeks' notice will be required.
  - In the unlikely event that a Fire Station Education Pack isn't available at the fire station you can find the contents of the pack in a digital format on hotwire under the Education Team. Requests for a replacement fire station education pack should be sent to the Education team ([EducationTeam@london-fire.gov.uk](mailto:EducationTeam@london-fire.gov.uk)).
  - Resources such as smoke alarms for demonstration during the visit and fire safety and leaflets/literature (including those in languages other than English) can be obtained from the relevant Area Admin Team - CS if not available from station stock.
  - Child-specific literature can also be obtained from the Area Admin Team - CS. If available, every child should be given an age-appropriate 'Fire Plan' to take home after the visit. In addition, each **class** should be provided with **one** age-appropriate 'Activity Book' (which the teacher will use to photocopy activities for the pupils).

## 4 Booking a visit

- 4.1 Fire station staff should contact the Medium or Low risk school they are planning to visit to arrange a suitable date and time for the visit to take place. Each school will have a programme of events for the coming year and may want the visit to be timed to link with a specific lesson or activity.
- 4.2 Suitable access/egress should be arranged with the school and consideration given to timings of the school day when booking a visit. Visits that take place at the beginning or end of the school day may coincide with the 'school run' which may impact on access/egress.
- 4.3 Arrange with the teaching staff for a suitable area within the school grounds that can be used for the presentation and demonstrating the fire appliance. Consideration should be given to whether any of the children have mobility difficulties that would mean they are unable to access the appliance. In these circumstances, it may be more appropriate for the presentation to take place in a suitable area within the school such as a classroom or assembly hall so that all of the children are able to participate.
- 4.4 Use of the appliance may also depend on space available in the school grounds and weather conditions on the day. Where the presentation is held in a classroom or assembly hall personal protective equipment (PPE), breathing apparatus (BA) and items of equipment may be taken from the appliance for demonstration. This is subject to the approval of teaching staff and a risk assessment to be carried out by the officer in charge (OIC) on the day using the form provided (refer to paragraph 6.4).
- 4.5 Children with special educational needs, learning difficulties, disabilities or where English is not their first language may need additional support from teaching staff to fully participate. To assist the teaching staff with planning, arranging and providing this support discuss the activity plan with them prior to the visit. If further support is required, the watch can contact the Education Team ([EducationTeam@london-fire.gov.uk](mailto:EducationTeam@london-fire.gov.uk)) for advice and guidance.
- 4.6 It will also be necessary to ask if there are any other issues to be aware of such as recent fires involving a member of the school. In these circumstances and especially if the fire resulted in a fatality, fire station staff may encounter some distress among both pupils and staff. In such circumstances it may not be appropriate to carry out a visit or the presentation may need to be adapted in consultation with the teaching staff. It may be appropriate to arrange an 'Education Team Activity Day' visit (see paragraph 4.8).
- 4.7 Teaching staff should be made aware that they are required to be present during the entire visit as they are responsible for safeguarding and maintaining discipline at all times. They will also be needed to supervise the children during the demonstration of the appliance and equipment.
- 4.8 Where there has been a **fatal fire** involving a pupil or teacher of the school, station staff should contact the Education Team ([EducationTeam@london-fire.gov.uk](mailto:EducationTeam@london-fire.gov.uk)) who will then contact the headteacher and the Borough Commander to discuss carrying out an 'Education Team Activity Day' visit. The format of these visits differs from standard schools' visits with station staff and education officers working together to deliver fire safety education to all year groups if required.

## 5 Safeguarding children

- 5.1 All LFC staff must be conversant with and comply with [Policy number 0305](#) – 'Safeguarding children at risk policy'. **It is mandatory that this policy be discussed on an annual basis during watch core skills lectures as part of the Borough Training Plan.**

- 5.2 Additionally, fire station staff should pay particular attention to the following guidance.
- Under no circumstances should fire station staff use the toilet facilities designated for the use of the children.
  - Station staff should never be left alone with a child. A member of teaching staff should be present at all times during the visit.
  - A member of teaching staff should be available at all times to assist/supervise children into and out of the appliance.
  - Teaching staff are responsible for maintaining discipline during the visit. Fire station staff should not discipline the children in any way - request that a teacher deal with any bad behaviour. In the event that a child's behaviour is disrupting the session, stop the activity with that group.
  - If a child raises a question or divulges information that causes concern about their safety or welfare, the officer in charge on the day must ensure they speak with the headteacher before leaving the school. In accordance with [Policy number 0305](#) - Safeguarding children at risk policy. It will also be necessary to discuss and record these concerns with the most immediate manager, who will take responsibility for your concerns and liaise with the officer of the day (OOD). In the absence of an available manager you may contact the OOD (via Control Operational Resourcing and Event (CORE) team).

## **6 Health and safety**

- 6.1 All LFC staff must be conversant with and comply with [Policy number 597](#) – Health and Safety policy.
- 6.2 All safety and environmental accident events (including avoided incidents or 'near misses') should be reported in accordance with [Policy number 368](#) - Health, Safety and Environmental Event Investigation policy.
- 6.3 A generic risk assessment has been carried out and the appropriate control measures identified. The risk assessment record for station visits to schools is attached as Appendix 1.
- 6.4 In addition, on arrival fire station staff should consider any hazards specific to the school being visited. A risk assessment should then be carried out by the officer in charge on the day and appropriate control measures put in place before starting the presentation. A record of this should be made using the form provided in Appendix 3. The following points should be considered when carrying out the risk assessment:
- Area used for demonstrating appliance and evaluation activity free of slip, trip and fall hazards.
  - Child safety and welfare.
  - Weather conditions on the day.
  - Use of computer and Interactive Whiteboard equipment.

## Appendix 1 - Risk assessment record

**Activity/task assessed:** Visits to primary schools by station staff

**Date assessment undertaken:** 7 June 2007

**Assessment review date:**

A dynamic risk assessment is to be carried out on the day of the visit and the form below completed by the officer in charge on arrival at the school. Any necessary control measures should be put in place before starting the presentation.

OUTDOOR HAZARD	RISK	GROUP EXPOSED	CONTROL MEASURES APPLIED/COMMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collision with members of the public and/or objects</li> </ul>	L	Primary school children, school staff, station staff.	<p><b>Station staff to comply with current Brigade policies on movement of vehicles; <a href="#">Policy number 21</a> (for safe reversing and other vehicle manoeuvres) to be strictly adhered to.</b></p> <p>Station staff to arrange best point of access/egress prior to visit.</p> <p>All visits should be carried out during an allocated period of second line availability in line with strategic resource scheduling procedures. Arrangements for ending visits and leaving school grounds safely should be discussed with school staff prior to the presentation. This should include instructions for moving away from the appliance if/when responding to an emergency call.</p> <p>Safe areas to be agreed with school staff and explained to children prior to the presentation.</p> <p>Vehicles to be positioned prior to children being given access and only to be moved when all children are within the agreed safe areas.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appliance becoming 'bogged down'</li> </ul>	L	Primary school children, school staff, station staff.	<p>Suitable area for the appliance within school grounds to be agreed with teaching staff prior to visit. Parking on hard standing is preferable to parking on grass. Risk assessment to be carried out on the day taking into account the type of event.</p>

OUTDOOR HAZARD	RISK	GROUP EXPOSED	CONTROL MEASURES APPLIED/COMMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguarding children and young people</li> </ul>	L	Primary school children.	<p>All Brigade personnel must be conversant with and comply with the LFC's Safeguarding Children <a href="#">Policy number 0305</a>.</p> <p>Ensure a member of the school staff is allocated to the event and remains present during the entire visit. They are responsible for maintaining discipline at all times and any discipline issues with regard to the children are to be referred to them.</p> <p>At least one member of teaching staff should be available at all times to assist/supervise children into, out of and around the appliance.</p> <p>Children with special educational needs or mobility issues may need additional support from school staff. Additional support to be arranged with and provided by school staff.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Damage/loss to appliance/equipment impairing operational performance</li> </ul>	H	Brigade	<p>Appliance and equipment including PPE to be checked prior to leaving the venue. All defects/losses to be reported on return to station.</p> <p>Children are to be prevented from using/playing with the appliance main scheme radios.</p> <p><b>Under no circumstances should children be permitted to touch the BA sets.</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadvertent use of the appliance engine/handbrake.</li> </ul>	H	Primary school children, school staff, station staff.	Vehicle to be parked in gear. Master switch to be turned off.

INDOOR HAZARD	RISK	GROUP EXPOSED	CONTROL MEASURES APPLIED/COMMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trips, slips and falls</li> </ul>	L	Primary school children, school staff, station staff.	All personnel to be aware of the Health and Safety ( <a href="#">Policy number 597</a> ) and ensure the area does not have any obstacles or trip hazards. Area to be checked and monitored.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unsafe use of Display Screen Equipment</li> </ul>	L	Station staff.	All personnel to be conversant with and compliant with the DSE procedure (422).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential exposure to intense levels of light (produced by older models of Interactive Whiteboard projectors) and the associated risk of eye damage</li> </ul>	L	Primary school children, station staff.	Presenter to avoid staring directly into the beam at all times. Standing in the light of the beam, whilst facing the projector, to be minimised. Pupils and students to be adequately supervised when they are asked to point out something on the screen.



## Document history

### Assessments

An equality, sustainability or health, safety and welfare impact assessment and/or a risk assessment was last completed on:

EIA	21/09/2021	SDIA	L - 24/08/2021	HSWIA	29/09/2021	RA	NA
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### Audit trail

Listed below is a brief audit trail, detailing amendments made to this policy/procedure.

Page/para nos.	Brief description of change	Date
Page 2 para 1.2, Page 3 para 3.5	Reference to each station being allocated their own Station Education Pack.	14/11/2017
Throughout	Terminology changes made to the content.	01/09/2020
Throughout	Reviewed as current with minor changes made throughout.	29/09/2021
Page 5, para 5.2	Reference to RMc changed to CORE team.	31/07/2025

## Subject list

You can find this policy under the following subjects.

Community fire safety	Fire safety
Schools	Visiting non LFB premises

## Freedom of Information Act exemptions

This policy/procedure has been securely marked due to:

Considered by: (responsible work team)	FOIA exemption	Security marking classification