Academy Policy on Emergency Evacuation Procedures During Examinations

Name: Ormiston Venture Academy
Date of Policy: October 2026
Date of Review October 2027

Key Staff Involved in Examinations

Head of Centre – Mr S Gilbert-Barnham
Vice Principal - Mr D Richards
Examinations Officer - Mrs L Abbotts-Freeman
Senco – Mrs P Richards
Site Manager – Mr Leigh Dury

Purpose of policy

This policy details how Ormiston Venture Academy 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.
As each incident may be different, advice will be sought from the relevant awarding body as soon as it is safe to do so, particularly where the centre is concerned about the security of the examination (s) (ICE 25.4)
Where candidates are unable to return to the building to complete the examination due to circumstances beyond their control. (ICE 24.5)

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

Examinations Officer

- Ensures invigilators are trained in emergency evacuation procedures and how an incident and actions taken must be recorded
- Ensures candidates are briefed prior to exams taking place, on what will happen in the event of an emergency in the exam room this will take place in assembly and through a trial run-through the mock block
- 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
- Ensures a full report of the incident is produced and retained on file if required by an awarding body (ICE 25.4)
- Ensures an online application for special consideration is submitted to the relevant awarding body where candidates have been disadvantaged (ICE 25.7)

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

Prior to the examination period and again at the beginning of each examination,
Candidates will be informed of the emergency evacuation procedures to follow
Should an incident arise whilst in the Hall or other designated examination room.

On hearing a fire alarm or Bomb Alert before an examination:

- Students and staff to follow normal evacuation procedures as per regular fire alarm drills
- Students and staff including Invigilators to make their way to the assembly points on the field and stand in PL groups.
- Invigilators to join the administrative staff who congregate immediately in front of student lines in the playground (concreted surface). Register to be taken by exams officer/administrative staff member responsible for visitors signed into the Academy

On hearing a fire alarm during an examination:

Examination Invigilators will note the time and then instruct the candidates to:

- Stop writing immediately, close the question paper and turn it face down on the desk
- Remind the candidates that they are still under examination conditions and must refrain from talking
- Await confirmation from the Examinations Officer or a senior member of staff that the exam room should be evacuated
- Candidates should leave all question papers and answer scripts in the exam room
- Candidates must follow the evacuation instructions given by the Examination Invigilators and leave the room in silence; there must be no talking or communicating with any other candidates.
- Candidates should not be allowed to collect personal possessions or coats and must be taken to the assembly points as swiftly as possible
- Examination Invigilators must take the attendance register with them and use this to check all candidates are present
- Examination candidates are to proceed to the Examination Assembly point through the identified evacuation route and assemble in the exam area in the playground standing 1.25 metres apart from each other. Candidates must wait in silence with the invigilators. At this time the invigilators will have to do a register
- When told to re-enter the examination room, candidates must go directly to their allocated seat and wait in silence until told to restart the examination
- A note must be made of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted
- Candidates will be allowed the correct amount of time for the Examination and must not be disadvantaged due to any disruption
- If there are only a few candidates, consider the possibility of taking candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination.

- A full report of the incident will be sent to the examination board and a request for special consideration for the disturbance will be submitted

Name……Mr Simon Gilbert-Barnham…….

Signed……

Date……

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

Ormiston Venture Academy

Invigilators are trained in this procedure and understand the actions they must take in the event of a fire alarm, or bomb alert, or other emergency that leads to an evacuation of the exam room.

Emergency Evacuation Point

Actions to be taken (as detailed in the current JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations chapter 25.3 Emergencies)
The evacuation meeting point for any exam taking place is the at the Back of E block on Grass away from the other candidates in school to maintain the integrity of the exam

- Stop the candidates from writing and tell them to close their answer booklet
- Advise candidates to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room
- Collect the attendance register (to ensure all candidates are present)
- Evacuate the examination room in line with the instructions given by the appropriate authority and
- lock the door
- Ensure the candidates leave the room in silence, candidates are to line up in the order they were sat
- in
- Ensure candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room so
- that there is no discussion about the examination
- Students remain, in exam conditions, until PHP or a member of SLT advises it is safe to return
- Update the incident log of the time of the interruption and give full details of how long it lasted,
- outlining the time the exam resumed
- Allow the candidates the remainder of the working time set for the examination once it resumes with
- additional time added for time lost

Additional centre-specific actions to be taken
If school is in lockdown – Lock the door. Turn the lights off and barricade the door. If possible, cover windows. Update the incident log accordingly.