Gateways Education & Wellbeing Ltd
Paving the Way to Success

Fire Drill and Evacuation Policy

Policy owner:	Director
Gateways fire lead:	Carly Mason
Host setting contact:	Claire Redman (Steeton Primary School, 8:30am - 4:10pm)
Date approved:	21/04/2026
Review date:	21/04/2027
Applies to:	All staff, tutors, volunteers, learners, contractors, parents/carers and visitors

1. Statement of intent

Gateways Education and Wellbeing Limited is committed to providing a safe, calm and well-organised environment in which children and young people, staff and visitors can learn and work safely. This policy sets out the arrangements for fire drills and emergency evacuation during Gateways provision.

Gateways recognises its duties under fire safety law to plan for emergencies, provide appropriate information and training, and ensure that evacuation procedures are understood and practised. As Gateways operates from the annexe at Steeton Primary School and may also deliver online, home-based or other commissioned provision, fire safety arrangements must be read alongside the relevant site-specific fire procedures, risk assessments and emergency plans.

Many learners supported by Gateways may have special educational needs and disabilities, anxiety, sensory differences or communication needs. Fire evacuation arrangements must therefore be implemented in a way that is safe, calm, proportionate and responsive to individual need, while maintaining the priority of immediate evacuation.

2. Aims of this policy

- protect the safety of learners, staff, visitors and contractors in the event of fire or another emergency requiring evacuation;
- set out clear, consistent evacuation procedures for Gateways sessions;
- ensure staff know how to respond when the alarm sounds or a fire is discovered;
- support the safe evacuation of learners who may need additional help, including through individual arrangements where required;
- ensure fire drills are completed, recorded and reviewed; and
- support compliance with statutory UK fire safety requirements.

3. Legal and guidance framework

This policy should be read alongside Gateways' Health and Safety Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Risk Assessments and any individual support plans or personal emergency evacuation arrangements. It reflects current UK requirements and guidance, including:

- the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005;
- the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974;
- the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999;
- government guidance on workplace fire safety, including fire risk assessments, evacuation plans, staff training and fire drills; and
- fire safety guidance relevant to educational premises and host settings.

Gateways will cooperate with the host setting and any responsible person for the premises to ensure that evacuation arrangements during Gateways sessions are aligned with site procedures and are reviewed where provision or learner needs change.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Director / Gateways fire lead

The Director has overall responsibility for ensuring that appropriate fire evacuation arrangements are in place for Gateways provision. This includes ensuring that this policy is implemented, that staff receive fire safety information and instruction, that drills and incidents are recorded, and that any concerns are followed up.

4.2 Staff, tutors and volunteers

All staff, tutors and volunteers must familiarise themselves with the relevant site fire procedure before working with learners. They must know the alarm signal, the nearest escape routes, the assembly point, who to report concerns to, and how to support learners to evacuate promptly and safely.

4.3 Host setting / site contacts

Where Gateways operates from Steeton Primary School or another commissioned site, Gateways staff will follow the host setting's site-specific fire arrangements. During the hours of 8:30am to 4:10pm at Steeton Primary School, immediate site concerns should

be reported to Claire Redman. Outside these hours, Carly Mason is the Gateways lead contact.

5. Fire prevention and preparedness

- A suitable fire risk assessment and emergency plan must be in place for the premises being used.
- Escape routes, exits, alarm points and firefighting equipment must remain unobstructed and available for use in line with site procedures.
- Registers or attendance information for each Gateways session must be accurate and accessible. TutorBird is the primary attendance reference for Gateways sessions.
- New staff must be told what to do in the event of fire and all staff must receive appropriate fire safety instruction and updates.
- Any learner who may need additional help to evacuate must have arrangements identified in advance, recorded where necessary, and shared with relevant staff.
- Visitors and contractors must be informed of basic evacuation arrangements when attending Gateways provision.

6. Action to take if fire is discovered or the alarm sounds

6.1 If a fire is discovered

- Raise the alarm immediately using the nearest available alarm point or by following the site emergency procedure.
- Only call the Fire and Rescue Service if this has not already been done and it is safe to do so, in line with the site procedure.
- Do not attempt to tackle a fire unless trained, it is safe, and doing so does not delay evacuation.

6.2 On hearing the fire alarm

The fire alarm signal is a prolonged sounding of the fire alarm. On hearing the alarm, all Gateways staff and any supporting staff on session must:

- stop the session immediately and instruct learners to leave calmly;
- direct learners to the nearest safe exit, using an alternative exit if the usual route is unsafe or blocked;
- walk - not run - and avoid delay, collecting coats or personal belongings;
- check, where safe to do so, that the teaching room and any nearby areas used by Gateways learners are clear, including toilet areas, corridor spaces, sensory spaces or other rooms being used during the session;
- close doors behind them where this can be done quickly and safely, unless the site procedure requires otherwise; and
- proceed immediately to the assembly point.

No one should re-enter the building until authorised by the Fire and Rescue Service or the responsible person/site lead.

7. Assembly point, headcount and missing persons

The assembly point for Gateways sessions at Steeton Primary School is the car park at the front of the school, unless an alternative assembly point is directed by the host setting or emergency services.

- Learners should remain with their session group and supervising staff.
- Where appropriate and practical, learners should line up in a consistent, recognisable order to support a prompt headcount.
- The lead Gateways staff member for the session must count learners immediately and check against the session register or attendance list.
- If numbers do not match, a roll call must be conducted straight away.
- Any missing learner, uncertainty or other discrepancy must be reported immediately to the person in charge on site.
- Staff must not leave the assembly point to search the building unless specifically directed to do so by the emergency services or responsible person.

8. Learners with additional needs and individual arrangements

Gateways recognises that some learners may need additional support during evacuation because of mobility needs, sensory processing differences, anxiety, autism, ADHD, communication needs or other vulnerabilities. In these cases:

- reasonable adjustments and evacuation arrangements will be identified in advance where possible;
- staff should use calm, clear and concise instructions and familiar routines;
- visual prompts, trusted adults and pre-agreed strategies should be used where this supports safe evacuation;
- any personal emergency evacuation plan or equivalent arrangement must be shared with relevant staff and reviewed regularly; and
- the need for additional adult support must be considered within risk assessments and staffing arrangements.

No adjustment should delay the overall evacuation of others; arrangements must support swift and safe evacuation for all.

9. Fire drills, recording and review

- Fire drills will be carried out in line with the host setting's schedule and Gateways' internal compliance arrangements. Gateways expects at least one fire drill to be undertaken and recorded each year, and more often where needed because of changes in provision, staffing, environment or learner profile.
- A written record will be kept of fire drills, evacuations, false alarms and any significant issues identified.

- Following each drill or incident, Gateways will review timings, supervision, learner response, accessibility, communication and any barriers encountered, and will update practice, risk assessments or support arrangements where needed.
- This policy will be reviewed annually, sooner if guidance changes, there is a significant incident, or there are changes to the premises or delivery model.

10. Policy approval

Approved by: CARLY MASON

Role: Director

Date: 21/04/2026

Next review due: 21/04/2027