

FIRE EMERGENCY & EVACUATION POLICY

Company Operations

ADO Services C.I.C

Incorporating ADO River Valley

Version 3.0 ©2024

2023-2025

Last Ratification By Management Committee	March 2024
Next Review By Management Committee	March 2025
Latest Update by ADO River Valley	March 2024

1. Fire Evacuation Overview

The Fire Emergency and Evacuation Policy is an important part of ensuring the safety of our stakeholders located on our sites. This policy is closely linked to recommendations from *The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005*.

This policy is valid for the following sites:

ADO River Valley, Poets Centre Corner, 19a Keats Road, Welling, DA16 3NB

Main Administrative Office, 126 Upper Wickham Lane, Welling, Kent, DA16 3DP.

This policy links directly with the **Fire Risk Assessment** document for each site which is reviewed annually. This policy is closely linked to the **Health and Safety Policy**.

2. Induction Standards

What to do in the event of fire or emergency will form a part of the induction of all new members of staff, and visitors. Similarly, students will also be subject to a short site induction before proceeding with us, noting safe routes to muster points and safe evacuation routes. All students are advised about evacuation routes.

All ADO River Valley Sites have a strict **no smoking policy** anywhere within their demise or borders.

3. Site Specific Procedures

3.1 Poets Corner Centre Site Overview

Poets Corner where our school is based is 6.5 acres of timber buildings, woodland, grazing and open land. The timber buildings are less than 50m² in each case.

The main primary risks at Poets Corner have been identified, but not limited to, natural woodland bush fires in extremely hot and dry periods, accidental spread from lighting campfires as part of bushcraft activities, wood stores or spreading fires from neighbouring properties or utilities. Within the 6.5 acres of mainly open land, a fire could almost start anywhere. The site has no mains gas supply directly plumbed in. There are no naked flames from bottled gas sources.

The site is used exclusively by **ADO River Valley School**, and our sister company **ADO Therapy**.

For a complete analysis of risk, please review the **Fire Risk Assessment Report**. This will be available upon request by asking the senior leadership team.

3.1.1 Assembly Muster Points

The main fire assembly muster point for **ADO River Valley** is located in the Neutral Zone in open ground near to the hardstanding storage area in front of the Horse Arena. The area is known as Zone D on the Zonal Site Map. This area of the land is away from the main buildings and is considered the least risk for staff and students in the event of an emergency. This would typically be used in an amber alert.

A temporary short term muster area for **ADO River Valley** can be found in Zone J for yellow alert incidents.

*(The main fire assembly muster point for **ADO Therapy** is located in Zone K by the activity area. A temporary short term muster area for **ADO Therapy** for those isolated in Zone Q, is in the same zone but located on the North-Western boundary away from the basecamp).*

An emergency muster point if the main ADO River Valley designated fire assembly point is unavailable due to horse arena plant activity will be a secondary position a short distance away in Zone D in front of the Reptile Centre.

More information on the level of alerts can be found in section 5.

3.1.2 Signage

Clear signage is displayed at key points within the land, displaying the main routes to the muster point. Rules are clearly displayed within each area where fires are lit for bushcraft educational activities.

3.1.3 Fire Equipment

Each area where there is a basecamp and or fire making facilities or wood stores, has a water-based fire extinguisher for class A category fires, a large fire blanket and 20 litre jerry cans of water specifically labelled for each location name. Each basecamp has a map of its position and the main muster point. These areas are located as follows:

- Roxy basecamp at Zone C – Therapy Garden
- Betty basecamp at Zone K – Therapy Well-Being Zone
- Velvet basecamp at Zone J – Outdoor Kitchen Area
- Bella basecamp – in Zone U – Hazel Woods
- Jarvis Basecamp- Zone Q – Therapeutic Day Zone

Fire equipment is also located in the following buildings:

- Elder Classroom – Powder for general class fires
- Blackthorn ICT Classroom - Powder for general class fires
- Staff Office - CO² for electrical and Powder for general fires
- Managers Office - CO² for electrical and Powder for general fires

A fire extinguisher can also be located in the following storage area:

- Land Supervisors Area in Staff Zone f for the large petrol-powered garden equipment storage shed equipment

3.1.4 Water Sources

Within the site there are a number of standpipe taps supplying fresh drinking water but can also be used with the 25m hose reels available at each location. Each of these locations has a small map denoting where the other water sites are located.

- Standpipe in close proximity to staff and managers office – Zone F
- Standpipe close by Zone H – Paddock-Pigs-Goats
- Standpipe x 2 – In the main Classroom and ICT building complex and Herb Garden – Zone J
- Standpipe in Zone K – Therapeutic Well-Being Zone
- Standpipe in Zone L – Horse Stables
- Standpipe in Zone R – Cycle Path & Bridleway

In addition, Bella basecamp is located next to the River Wogebourne, a small stream running through the land as a water source in emergency.

3.1.5 Audible Warning Equipment

In the event of a fire or emergency scenario, staff have access to warning equipment as follows:

- 2 x compressed air horns (fire klaxons) distributed in key areas for coverage across the site. One is situated in our staff area, and the other is situated in zone L.
- 1 x rotary wall mounted bell, located near the main buildings

3.1.6 Smoke Detectors

There are smoke detectors located in each timber building in Zones F, J & K

3.2 Main Office – Upper Wickham Lane Overview

The office is located in a high street location on Upper Wickham Lane. It is a small office of less than 650 m² with one entry and exit onto the high street. It is shared by both ADO River Valley staff and ADO Therapy staff.

The main primary risks associated to the site will be electrical fires. The site does not have a mains gas supply. A tertiary risk to the site has been identified as the neighbouring fish and chip shop next door. For a complete analysis of risk, please review the [Fire Risk Assessment Report](#).

3.2.1 Assembly Muster Point

The assembly muster point will be to leave the building through the main front door and wait on the pedestrian path on Upper Wickham Lane. A secondary emergency muster point, only if leaving the building through the front door is dangerous, is located out a back entrance into a small yard. This yard is enclosed by a tall wall, therefore safe until there is a chance to call the emergency services. There is an aluminium ladder located in this area if there are no other means of escape.

3.2.2 Signage

Clear signage is displayed within the building on the fire exit routes

3.2.3 Fire Equipment

The office has a CO² and water fire extinguisher

3.2.4 Audible Warning Equipment

In the event of a fire or emergency scenario, staff have access to warning equipment as follows:

- A rotary wall mounted bell, located in the back room

3.2.5 Smoke Detectors

There are smoke detectors located in the front and rear of the building

4. Staff with Fire and Emergency Roles

The overall person in charge of Health and Safety incorporating fire and emergencies is the **ADO Business Operations and Support Executive, Gary McHolland-Pilcher**.

The operational day to day fire officer roles are as follows:

Fire Safety Officer – Michelle Brodie. Main responsibilities for quality assurance ensuring that equipment, locations and signage is in order and liaising with the fire wardens, through monthly checks. Overall responsibility for staff training and ensuring that regular updates are disseminated through staff meetings.

Fire Wardens – Joe Greenwood – Land Supervisor at Poets Corner, and at the main office – **Kyle McHolland-Pilcher**. Leading fire drills and real time emergencies at their respective locations. On occasion other senior staff will step in with these duties to cover holidays and absence.

Any one of these roles can call emergency services on 999 if in a red alert situation.

5. In the Event of An Emergency

All staff at Poets Corner Centre keep in communication contact with a walkie-talkie radio system at all times. These devices are with them all day in person. This means that in the event of an emergency, help or advice can be summoned immediately without delay.

As the land is large in context, with many potential flash points, we have designated levels of alert so as to not create a panic situation or close the operation down when the situation can be controlled. A staff member raising concern should quickly assess the situation and determine their first thoughts as to raise an alarm.

The levels are as follows:

Yellow Alert – This alert can be raised by staff who fear a situation may be about to occur and need help or advice immediately. The staff member will immediately radio the fire warden on the wardens' different channel so not to raise concern to other staff. This situation may typically be, but not limited to:

- The smell of smoke, but no visible source
- An electrical burning smell
- A visual of smoke, but no apparent flame source
- A smoke detector alarm, but no obvious sign of smoke or burning
- The basecamp fire has got very large very quickly and looking as though it may lose control unless action is taken
- A power cut to the building and lights and power is lost.
- A wood store is smouldering

In all these situations the fire warden will automatically respond to the location of concern to investigate the incident and support the member of staff if necessary.

If a staff member is on their own, they will safely vacate the area and wait in the Zone J Muster Point. If they are in a building, they will vacate the building closing the door behind them until help arrives, waiting away from the buildings in Zone J Muster Point at Poets Corner or outside on the pavement at the main office.

If a staff member has students with them, they should vacate the area immediately and by default head towards Learning Zone J Muster Point and wait until the all-clear is given by the fire warden.

Once the incident source has been discovered or identified and has been dealt with safely, the all-clear can be given by the fire warden in conjunction with the fire safety officer agreeing. An incident form will be created documenting the alert.

If there is an obvious or lingering electrical smell in the building, the fire warden will open the electrical distribution box outside of the premises and shut off the power breaker for that building. An investigation can then begin.

At the main office the power is located in the upstairs dwelling, so cannot be turned off quickly.

The fire warden will report the incident to the Health and Safety officer in the case of the main office.

All details should be reported as part of the Incident procedure on the Incident Form. The form requires sign-off by the Health and Safety officer in this case.

Amber Alert

If after investigation the incident has got worse or there is an apparent visual danger that it may get worse, escalation to Amber Alert is necessary. This can happen quite quickly, so vacating the area is the first priority, using the temporary muster point in Zone J if the incident is on open land or woodland or the main muster point in Zone D if within the buildings complex. At the main office, the exit should be throughout the front door onto the High Street.

An amber alert should be called if there is an obvious visual fire, where flames and smoke are prevalent, without any previous escalation.

This situation may typically be, but not limited to:

- A basecamp fire has got out of control and is in danger of spreading
- A wood store has caught alight with leaping flames
- An electrical device has caught fire and is visibly smouldering or burning in a building.
- There is a neighbouring house or garage fire outside the site demise and perimeter near to an activity in progress and there is a danger that it may spread onto ADO River Valley property or facilities.

In an amber situation at Poets Corner, vacating the area or buildings is a priority for staff and students. In this case all staff and students in buildings should immediately vacate to the main muster point in Zone D only. The staff member at the incident should radio on all channels to alert staff and call the fire warden and or fire safety officer for immediate assistance. The fire warden or senior managers will then use the audible warning equipment to officially raise the alarm to alert all staff and students in adjoining or nearby buildings. All staff and students will walk carefully and safely to the Zone D Muster Point.

At the main office the rotary bell can be sounded alongside verbal warnings to staff who may not be aware of the danger or on the telephone with headphones connected.

At Poets Corner, when raising the audible alarm, the fire klaxon must be sounded immediately. Site walkie-talkies should be used to communicate between staff to ensure the second klaxon is sounded at its different location on the site if necessary. Three short bursts should be used in a sequence, with short delays a total number of three times.

Staff onsite are to only tackle small fires themselves using the appropriate fire appliances and where there is no risk to themselves or any students. Staff with students looking the tackle the incident, should immediately first direct the students out the building and advise to meet and stay at the Zone D Muster Point, where they will be met by a member of staff. The designated Fire Warden onsite at the time should be contacted on the site walkie-talkies, if not directly involved in the incident at the time.

If the staff decide to safely tackle to incident, but quickly realise that it is becoming dangerous they should vacate the area immediately and escalate to Red Alert, using site communications.

The Fire Warden or management staff must take the daily register, located in the Staff Zone F to Zone D Muster Point with them along to account for numbers of staff and students.

If the incident is under control and eliminated, a risk assessment will be used to identify the impact and safety of operations throughout the remainder of the day.

Red Alert

In all cases of a red alert, all staff and students must all meet at Zone D Muster Point without delay following audible warnings. A register will be taken.

The Fire Warden or Fire Safety Officer will telephone the fire brigade or other emergency services if necessary.

The Fire Warden will contact the main office in order that they can implement contacting the emergency contacts for collection of any students as required.

Staff and students will not be allowed to return to their activity areas until informed it is safe to do so by the emergency services in all cases and site locations.

On the sounding of the alarm, staff should lead students calmly and quietly to the muster points, following their safe passage and await further instruction from the designated fire warden. Take care if the ground is wet and muddy and do not rush, which may result in accidents. Provide reassurances and leave all possessions behind.

6. Fire Drill

Each site will ensure that regular fire drills are performed without announcing the date or time. The Fire Warden and the Fire Safety Officer will organise the practice fire drill. The drill should be carried out at least twice a year and a record shall be kept of each experience.

7. Training Staff

Other than discussing the emergency policy within a new staff members induction, the Fire Safety Officer will once annually provide 2 hours refreshment training for all staff members. This will ensure that all staff are updated with any changes to policy or procedures or any additional guidelines we wish to implement. This is normally done in February, before the policy is updated under change control.

8. Review

All ADO River Valley policies and procedures follow ITIL guidelines to ensure version control, change control and release management of any documents. As a matter of policy, documents can be updated at any time to reflect changes to ADO River Valley procedures, legal changes, OFSTED directives or any other reason to ensure the policies and procedures are accurate and correct. This involves consultation with stakeholders, the ADO River Valley Governance Committee and approval from the directors. All policies and procedures are reviewed at the very least on an annual basis. Regular communication through newsletters, social media, text systems and through our website within the ADO River Valley Library is part of our Release Management.

9 Contact

This document was produced by the ADO River Valley Operations team. This version supersedes any previous versions and will be reviewed annually.

All correspondence with regard to this policy, or any other operational policy and procedure should be directed to the ADO River Valley by e-mailing education@adorivervalley.co.uk or calling 0208 855 6778, requesting to speak to the School Business Manager or in writing c/o School Business Manager, ADO River Valley School, 126 Upper Wickham Lane, Welling, Kent, DA16 3DP.