Fire Prevention and Fire Safety Policy

This Policy Relates to the following Legislation and Regulations

- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- the Fire Safety Act 2021
- The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
- Section 156 of the Building Safety Act 2022
- The Children's Homes [England] Regulations 2015 and especially regulation 25
- The Guide to the Children's Homes [England] Regulations 2015 including the Quality Standards April 2015

This Policy Applies To:

a) All those directly and currently employed by The Lioncare Group and who have received and accepted a statement of terms and conditions of employment from the company.

b) All visitors attending premises owned and operated by The Lioncare Group.

c) All contractors temporarily undertaking works at premises owned and operated by The Lioncare Group.

Responsibilities Associated with this Policy:

All employees, whether they are 'front-line' engaged directly in the task of caring for, educating, and supporting the children in our care, or 'ancillary' (e.g. house keeper, maintenance worker, administrator etc.), are personally responsible for managing their own conduct in relation to following this policy.

All employees whether they are 'front-line' or 'ancillary' are also responsible for supporting their colleagues and co-workers to follow this policy.

Members of the management team (senior therapeutic carers, therapeutic support team manager, deputy managers, school operations manager, business manager, training manager, registered managers, head teacher,) are responsible for ensuring all those employed directly are made aware of this policy and guidance, and for managing and monitoring its appropriate implementation, and for taking necessary action to guard against any breach of this policy.

The executive team (chief operations officer and chief executive officer) are responsible for reviewing this policy periodically, and for ensuring this policy remains fit-for-purpose.

Monitoring and Review of this Policy:

This policy and its implementation and including any corresponding guidance will be monitored periodically by the executive team and in consultation with relevant persons.

Policy Statement

All our homes and our school are registered with East Sussex Fire Authority, and fully conform to all regulations, standards, guidance, and recommendations. A record of fire prevention inspections is maintained in a single document titled 'Fire Test and Prevention and Safety Monitoring Log Sheet' held on the secure GDrive records management system used by The Lioncare Group. This document details;

- the routine checking and monitoring of fire prevention measures and strategies implemented in our premises
- testing of smoke and heat detectors and fire alarm points
- practice emergency fire drills and evacuations conducted periodically by the relevant designated fire wardens
- the dates and times of all practices evacuations and/or drills
- the names of all those present in the building at the time of each evacuation and/or drill
- the outcomes of evacuations and/or drills
- any learning to be gained from outcomes
- action to be taken to ensure safe practice are maintained.

Fire Safety and Emergency Evacuation Plan

The Lioncare Group believes that ensuring the health and safety of the children in our care, our employees, visitors, and all relevant persons, is essential to our success.

We are committed to:

- preventing accidents and work-related ill health.
- compliance with statutory requirements as a minimum.
- assessing and controlling the risks that arise from our work activities.
- providing a safe and healthy working and learning environment.
- ensuring safe working methods and providing safe working equipment.
- providing effective information, instruction and training.
- consulting with employees and their representatives on health and safety matters.
- monitoring and reviewing our systems and prevention measures to ensure they remain effective.
- setting targets and objectives to develop a culture of continuous improvement.
- ensuring adequate welfare facilities exist across The Lioncare Group.
- ensuring adequate resources are made available for health and safety issues, so far as is reasonably practicable.

We have devised and implemented a 'Fire Safety and Emergency Evacuation Plan' and system to ensure the above commitments can be met. Employees across The Lioncare Group are expected to play their part in the creation of a safe and healthy working environment for all.

All adults employed by The Lioncare Group are made aware during initial orientation of the procedure for emergency evacuation of the building, familiarised with fire exits, and trained in fire prevention and safety and including practical use of fire extinguishing apparatus through both face-to-face training and online training as part of their induction basic training.

All children living in our homes and (where applicable) attending our school, are made aware of the procedure for emergency evacuation of the building and familiarised with fire exits. Within the initial 2-weeks of a child's admission to the home or starting to attend the school, they have a casework session (in the homes) or a keywork session (in the school).

This casework or keywork session is focused on supporting the child to be aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire or an emergency evacuation event. This includes showing the child the evacuation route plans of the building, explaining what happens if the alarm sounds, where is the designated assembly point, listening to adults and following their instructions etc. It also included them 'practicing' what they would do if the fire alarm activated (i.e. going through the motions of evacuating the building) with their casework manager or caseworker (in the home) and/or keyworker (in school). There is a child-centred version of the fire safety and emergency evacuation plan in the children's welcome book/children's guide. Casework sessions are used to periodically remind and refresh children of the fire safety and emergency evacuation plan and procedures.

Visitors to the homes and/or school are made aware of the emergency evacuation routes and fire exits and designated assembly point, and what to do in the event of an emergency evacuation event occurring and the emergency alarm being sounded. Emergency evacuation route plans are placed in prominent areas around all premises to assist all (adults and children alike) in knowing and familiarising themselves with how to escape the premises in an emergency evacuation situation.

Fire detection, prevention and extinguishing appliances and equipment and systems are tested and maintained on a regular basis by an external professionally trained and experienced contract service in line with legislation and regulation and best practice. The design of the fire prevention and precautions recording and monitoring system used has been informed by an external and independent qualified fire systems specialist who also undertakes annual fire prevention and safety risk assessments of the premises owned and operated by The Lioncare Group. Recommendations arising from this report are used to continuously improve the quality of our fire prevention and precautions and safety measures.

The fire safety and emergency evacuation plan for each premises, and this fire prevention and fire safety policy, are accessible to employees on the organisation's GDrive records management system. They are available to other relevant persons on request to the business manager: celeste@lioncare.co.uk.

Procedure for Testing Fire Detection Apparatus

The organisation's administrative team, who have been suitably trained as designated fire wardens, have responsibility for testing in each home a different fire alarm point/testing the fire alarm and smoke detector/heat

detector and emergency lighting, on a weekly basis on a set day and set time and recording this on the fire test and prevention and safety monitoring log sheet. In the school, this responsibility is given to the school administrators and overseen by the school operations manager. In this way we ensure that fire detection apparatus in all premises are tested on a regular basis.

The entry made in the fire test and prevention and safety monitoring log sheet states the time of the testing of the apparatus, any fault recorded, any action that needs to be taken, and who is responsible for ensuring this occurs. This also applies to the testing of the emergency lighting. Detail of maintenance work carried out on the fire alarm system is also recorded on the fire test and prevention and safety monitoring log sheet.

The emergency evacuation procedure is contained in the fire safety and emergency evacuation plan for each premises; a digital copy of the fire safety and emergency evacuation plan is held on the organisation's record management system and a hard copy is made available to any relevant person requesting tis and including external contractors temporarily working at the premises.

Provision of Information to Children and Adults/Employees

The procedure to follow in the event of an emergency evacuation situation, as set out below, is explained to each child within the initial 2-weeks of a child's admission to the home or starting to attend the school (*see paragraph 1 above*), through a casework session (in the homes) or a keywork session (in the school). There is a child-centred version of the fire safety and emergency evacuation plan in the children's welcome book/children's guide. Casework (in the homes) and keywork (in the school) sessions are used to periodically remind and refresh children of the fire safety and emergency evacuation plan and procedures.

During a new employee's orientation week (i.e. their first week of employment), they are informed and have explained to them the matters set out in the regulatory reform (fire safety) order 2005 and specifically under the heading, 'provision of information to employees'. The comprehensible and relevant information to employees required by the regulations is as follows:

- the risks to them identified by the risk assessment
- the preventive and protective measures
- the procedures and the measures, including safety drills, to be followed in the event of serious and imminent danger to relevant persons
- the identities of those persons nominated as fire wardens or/and those persons responsible for measures for fire-fighting in the premises and implementing procedures relating to the evacuation of relevant persons from the premises
- the risks notified to him in accordance with article 22(1)(c)[1].

The comprehensible and relevant information to employees required by the regulations is provided by way of an information sheet the employee works through with their manager or line manager or the person allocated by their manager to go through this with them. This includes supporting the employee to practice what they would do if the fire alarm activated (i.e. go through the motions of evacuating the building).

Emergency Evacuation 'Drills'

We do not expect a full emergency evacuation 'drill' or practice to be carried out every time a new child arrives at or is admitted to the home or/and the school; we feel strongly that this would be inappropriate given that the child will already be in a high state of anxiety through moving to the home or/and school; being expected to then engage in and participate in a potentially distressing and anxiety-provoking full emergency evacuation 'drill' is not safeguarding and protecting the child's emotional wellbeing. It is also not required in legislation or regulation or statutory guidance.

Instead, we have a system in place whereby, in the child's initial 2-weeks of being in the home or the school, they have a casework session (in the home) or keywork session (in the school) focused on making them aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire. This includes showing the child the emergency evacuation route plans of the building, explaining what happens if the alarm sounds, where is the designated assembly point, listening to adults

[1] Article 22(1)(c): A person who is a responsible person in relation to any premises must take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ascertain whether any other responsible person shares, or has duties in respect of, the premises. Where two or more responsible persons share, or have duties in respect of, premises (whether on a temporary or a permanent basis) each such person must take all reasonable steps to inform the other responsible persons concerned of the risks to relevant persons arising out of or in connection with the conduct by him of his undertaking.

and following their instructions etc. It also includes the child practicing what they would do if the fire alarm is activated (i.e. go through the motions of evacuating the building) with their casework manager / caseworker / keyworker.

Similarly, we do not expect a full emergency evacuation 'drill' or practice to be carried out every time a new adult/employee begins their employment in the home or school. It is not required in legislation or regulation or statutory guidance, and has potential to cause and create unnecessary and avoidable disturbance and distress for the children we care for and educate and support.

Instead, we have a system in place whereby, in the new adult's/employee's orientation week (i.e. their first week of employment), they are informed of and guided through the matters in the regulatory reform (fire safety) order 2005 and specifically under the heading, 'provision of information to employees', by way of an information sheet they work through with their manager or line manager or person allocated by their manager to go through this with them. This includes asking them to practice what they would do if the fire alarm activated (i.e. go through the motions of evacuating the building).

The registered manager (in the homes) and the school operations manager (in the school) has responsibility for ensuring a full emergency evacuation 'drill' or 'live practice' is carried periodically; in the homes, the period is at least once every 3 months, and in the school the period is at least once every school term. The registered manager or school operations manager is at liberty to conduct a full emergency evacuation 'drill' or 'live practice' more frequently if they consider this to be necessary. Relevant details of the drill or live practice are recorded on the fire test and prevention and safety monitoring log sheet.

In this way, the registered manager or school operations manager has authority and autonomy and responsibility to plan the evacuation 'drill'/'live practice' event at the most appropriate time that doesn't cause children unnecessary distress (see above). The registered manager or school operations manager should aim to plan the evacuation 'drill'/'live practice' event in such a way as to include where possible any adult/employee who has joined that team within the previous 3-month period (in the homes) or term (at the school) and any child that has arrived within the previous 3-month period (in the homes) or term (at the school). The registered manager or school operations manager may decide that it is 'right' to do a 'drill'/'live-practice' soon after a new child or new adult/employee arrives, or that it is 'right' to wait a few weeks or a month or two to allow the child to feel settled and safe and start trusting the adults around them, and/or the new adult/employee to become familiar with the routines and practice and culture etc of the home or school.

The procedure for an emergency evacuation 'drills'/live practice', is the same as the procedure in the event of an emergency evacuation situation as set out below, with the following additions:

- The designated shift co-ordinator (other than the designated fire warden conducting the drill) is responsible for ensuring that the premises are evacuated.
- In the event of an emergency evacuation 'drills'/live practice', the fire warden joins the group at the designated assembly point, informs all that this was an emergency evacuation 'drills'/live practice', and that it is safe to return to the building. The fire warden is then responsible for recording full and necessary information fire test and prevention and safety monitoring log sheet.

Procedure in the Event of an Emergency Evacuation Situation

The procedure to follow in the event of an emergency evacuation situation is as follows:

- If you discover a fire in the building or immediate area adjacent to the building, **raise the alarm** immediately by operating the nearest fire alarm call point.
- If safe to do so and if you are not in immediate or imminent danger contact the emergency services (999); however, your primary duty is to **keep yourself and those around you safe**.
- Only try to tackle the fire if you have been trained in the use of the fire-fighting equipment and **ONLY** where it is appropriate and safe for you to do so.
- Where appropriate and safe to do, check toilets and close windows and doors on the way out.
- If you have responsibility for assisting persons with personal evacuation plans, respond as required following the actions as identified in the personal evacuation plans.
- Evacuate to the safe place, being the **designated assembly point** as shown on the fire safety and emergency

evacuation plan and the emergency evacuation route plans.

- Leave the building by the **nearest exit**.
- **Do not stop** or return to collect personal belongings.
- Ensure visitors are escorted from the building to the designated assembly point.
- Close any doors enroute without delaying your escape.
- Once at the designated assembly Point, the designated fire warden or their deputy or in their absence the most senior person present is responsible for contacting the emergency services (999) if this hasn't already been done by the person discovering the fire.
- You must remain at the designated assembly place.
- Return to the building only when authorised to do so by the chief fire officer.
- The chief executive officer (or chief operations officer in their absence) is to be contacted directly and without delay (01273 720424 during office hours or mobile numbers if outside office hours) after the emergency services have been contacted and once the building has been evacuated.
- The chief executive officer (or chief operations officer in their absence) is responsible for initiating the emergency planning procedures and the business continuity plan.

Important Points to Remember

- DO NOT stop to collect personal belongings
- DO NOT re-enter the building FOR ANY REASON
- REMAIN at the designated assembly point until such time as a person with authority (the chief fire officer or in a planned evacuation event the homes/school primary fire warden or their deputy) instructs you otherwise.
- If a person's clothing is on fire, wrap a blanket, rug or similar article closely round the person and lay them on the ground to prevent flames reaching their head.
- If electrical appliances are involved, switch off the current before dealing with the fire. Use a wooden broom or similar non-conducting implement to switch of the current, and also to move a person away from the source of the electricity if appropriate.
- Shut doors and, if possible, the windows of the room or area in which the fire is discovered.

All employees of The Lioncare Group are made explicitly aware, through the initial orientation process and periodically through individual practice-based supervision sessions and team meetings, of their duty and responsibility;

- to study this fire prevention and fire safety policy and associated procedures
- to know and understand the home's or school's fire safety and emergency evacuation plan
- to know what to do in the event of a fire
- to know how to use the available fire-fighting appliances
- to make themself familiar with all the means of escape in case of fire
- to be vigilant at all times to potential obstruction of staircases, landings and other escape routes and to take necessary actions to keep all means and routes of escape free from obstruction.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans

Where appropriate, an individual personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) must be developed for children or adults/employees who have known disabilities that will impact on their ability to evacuate the particular premises.

A PEEP is a bespoke 'escape plan' for individuals who may have difficulty responding to a fire alarm, may have difficulty escaping from a building unaided, may not be able to reach a point of safety unaided, or within an adequate amount of time, during an emergency.

A PEEP is tailor-made for an individual to secure their safety in the event of an emergency evacuation. The plan must be drawn up with the individual so that the evacuation method can be agreed upon. As well as detailing the escape

routes, the PEEP will identify the people who will assist in the evacuation and training.

PEEP's are particularly relevant for some children or adults/employees with mobility and/or sensory impairments (e.g. visual/hearing). Additionally, depending on the nature or severity of the impairment, in some limited circumstances it might be relevant to create a PEEP for children or adults/employees with other disability types. For example, severe PTSD or neurodivergence or an autism spectrum condition where an alarm could be triggering or distressing or disorientating.

There are two types of PEEP's: permanent and temporary. A permanent PEEP is needed for any person who has:

- mobility impairments
- sight impairments
- hearing impairments
- cognitive impairments
- other relevant circumstances

A temporary PEEP is for anyone with:

- short-term injuries (i.e., a broken leg)
- temporary medical conditions
- those in the later stages of pregnancy

Each PEEP must be specific to the individual, their needs and the buildings which they use. It must consider the following points:

- the individual: what is the issue and how can they be helped?
- how will they get to a place of safety (the designated assembly point)?
- what do we need to do in terms of equipment or procedures to help them?
- do they need help to aid their evacuation?
- do they agree with the plan?
- has it been properly communicated to all involved with the plan?

Not all risk can be completely mitigated, but it can be managed by identifying areas where evacuation might be problematic, and providing the child or adult/employee with information, instructions and helpful points of contact.

Where it has been determined that a PEEP is necessary and required, it should be completed within the initial 2-weeks of a child's admission to the home or starting to attend the school, and within the new adult's/employee's orientation week (i.e. their first week of employment).

The PEEP should be regularly tested to ensure all are familiar with the procedure and have adequate training and knowledge in the building's equipment and layout. The PEEP should be distributed to everyone involved and filed accordingly.

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