



Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment

Providers must take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children, staff and others on the premises in the case of fire or any other emergency, and must have an emergency evacuation procedure.

8.5 Fire Safety and Emergency Evacuation

Policy statement

Impact Montessori Nursery is committed to protecting children, staff, parents, visitors, volunteers, students and other persons on the premises from the risk of fire.

We maintain appropriate fire-prevention, fire-detection, warning, emergency evacuation and fire-safety arrangements in accordance with current legislation and the setting's fire risk assessment.

The safety of children is our highest priority. Our arrangements take account of the age, number and needs of the children attending, including babies, toddlers, children with SEND, children with mobility or communication difficulties and any child who may require additional assistance during an emergency evacuation.

The setting will appoint a **Responsible Person** in accordance with fire-safety legislation and will ensure that competent persons are involved in carrying out and reviewing fire-safety arrangements.

Where specialist advice is required, we will seek advice from a suitably competent fire-safety professional, the local Fire and Rescue Service where appropriate, or another suitably qualified person.

A Fire Safety Log Book and appropriate records are maintained to demonstrate the implementation, monitoring and review of fire-safety arrangements.

Our arrangements will be reviewed whenever there is a significant change to the premises, occupancy, staffing, equipment, activities or children's needs, and following any fire, significant incident or drill that identifies a weakness.

Fire safety legislation

Impact Montessori complies with applicable fire-safety legislation, including:

- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, as amended.
- The Fire Safety Act 2021, where applicable.
- The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022, where applicable.
- Relevant guidance issued by the Home Office and other competent authorities.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 places duties on the Responsible Person to carry out a suitable and sufficient fire-risk assessment, provide appropriate general fire precautions, maintain fire-safety arrangements and review the assessment when circumstances change. [Legislation.gov.uk](https://legislation.gov.uk)+1

Fire safety risk assessment

- A suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment is carried out by a competent person.
- The fire risk assessment is recorded in accordance with current fire-safety legislation.
- The assessment identifies fire hazards, people at risk and the measures required to prevent fire and protect people if a fire occurs.
- The assessment considers the particular risks associated with young children, including children who may require assistance to evacuate.
- The assessment considers, as appropriate:
 - o sources of ignition;
 - o electrical equipment, plugs, sockets and wiring;
 - o heating systems and boilers;
 - o cooking equipment;
 - o candles, matches, lighters or other ignition sources;
 - o combustible materials, furniture and furnishings;
 - o cleaning products and other potentially flammable substances;
 - o waste and waste storage;
 - o storage arrangements;
 - o means of escape;
 - o fire doors and compartmentation;
 - o emergency lighting;
 - o fire detection and alarm systems;
 - o fire-fighting equipment;
 - o access for the Fire and Rescue Service;
 - o outdoor areas;
 - o contractors and maintenance activities; and
 - o any other hazards identified by the assessment.
- The assessment identifies groups of people who may be especially at risk.
- The assessment is reviewed regularly and whenever:
 - o there is reason to believe it is no longer valid;
 - o there is a significant change to the premises;
 - o there is a significant change in staffing or occupancy;
 - o there is a significant change to activities or equipment;
 - o a child or adult develops a need requiring additional evacuation support;
 - o a fire or significant incident occurs; or
 - o a fire drill identifies deficiencies.
- Where the premises are rented or shared with other organisations, Impact Montessori will cooperate with the landlord, building owner and other Responsible Persons as required and obtain relevant fire-safety information.
- Where more than one Responsible Person has duties in relation to the premises, we will cooperate and coordinate fire-safety arrangements appropriately.

The Government's educational-premises guidance specifically includes crèches and provides guidance for those responsible for fire safety in educational settings. GOV.UK

Fire safety precautions

Impact Montessori will ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that:

- escape routes are kept clear and available for immediate use;
- fire exits are clearly identified and easily accessible;
- fire doors are not wedged or propped open where this would compromise fire safety;
- doors forming part of escape routes can be opened readily when required;
- fire doors and other fire-resisting construction are maintained appropriately;

- fire alarms and detection systems are maintained and tested in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and relevant requirements;
- emergency lighting is maintained and tested where provided or required;
- suitable fire-fighting equipment is provided, maintained and accessible;
- fire-safety signage is appropriate and maintained;
- electrical installations and equipment are appropriately maintained;
- defective electrical equipment is removed from use until repaired or replaced;
- combustible materials are stored safely;
- waste is managed to minimise fire risk;
- heating and cooking equipment is used safely;
- sources of ignition are controlled;
- flammable or hazardous substances are stored safely;
- children do not have unsupervised access to matches, lighters, electrical equipment or other potential sources of ignition; and
- access routes for emergency services are kept clear.

Fire detection and fire-fighting arrangements will be appropriate to the premises and the risks identified in the fire risk assessment. The Fire Safety Order requires appropriate fire detectors, alarms and fire-fighting equipment where necessary to safeguard relevant persons. [Legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk)

Fire alarm testing and maintenance

Fire alarm systems, emergency lighting, fire doors, fire extinguishers and other fire-safety equipment will be inspected, tested and maintained in accordance with:

- the manufacturer's instructions;
- relevant British Standards or other applicable standards;
- the fire risk assessment; and
- applicable legal requirements.

Records of testing, servicing, maintenance and remedial action will be retained in the Fire Safety Log Book or other appropriate record.

Any defect affecting fire safety will be reported immediately to the manager and appropriate action will be taken.

Where a defect means that the premises cannot be safely occupied, the setting will take appropriate action to protect children and adults, including restricting use of an area or closing the setting where necessary.

Staff training and fire safety information

All employees and regular volunteers will receive appropriate fire-safety information and training as part of their induction.

Staff will be familiar with:

- the fire alarm signal;
- the location of fire exits;
- primary and alternative escape routes;
- the assembly point;
- the location of fire-fighting equipment;
- procedures for raising the alarm;
- procedures for calling the Fire and Rescue Service;
- arrangements for evacuating children;

- arrangements for accounting for children and adults;
- their individual responsibilities during an evacuation; and
- arrangements for children or adults requiring additional assistance.

Staff will not be expected to fight a fire unless they have been appropriately trained, it is safe to do so and their actions are consistent with the fire risk assessment. The priority is always the safe evacuation of children and adults.

Emergency evacuation procedure

If the fire alarm sounds or a fire is discovered:

1. The alarm will be raised immediately.
2. Children and adults will evacuate using the nearest safe available exit.
3. Staff will follow the setting's agreed evacuation arrangements and take responsibility for the children in their care.
4. Children will be taken to the designated assembly point.
5. Staff will bring the appropriate attendance register or emergency information where this can be done safely without delaying evacuation.
6. Children and adults will be accounted for at the assembly point.
7. Any missing person will be reported immediately to the Fire and Rescue Service on arrival.
8. No person will re-enter the building until authorised by the Fire and Rescue Service or other appropriately authorised person.
9. Parents/carers will be contacted as soon as reasonably practicable where the incident requires the setting to remain closed or where children need to be collected.
10. The manager will ensure that the incident is recorded and that appropriate follow-up action is taken.

No one should put themselves or another person at risk in an attempt to retrieve belongings or re-enter the building.

Calling the emergency services

In a real fire or other serious emergency, the Fire and Rescue Service will be contacted by calling **999**.

Staff will provide the emergency operator with:

- the setting's full address;
- information that children are present;
- information about any known person missing or requiring assistance; and
- any other information requested by the emergency services.

The setting's full address and relevant emergency information will be readily available to staff.

Supporting children who require additional assistance

Impact Montessori recognises that some children may require additional support during an emergency evacuation.

This may include children who:

- have physical disabilities or mobility difficulties;
- have SEND;
- have sensory or communication needs;
- are very young or unable to walk independently;

- require specialist equipment;
- become distressed by alarms or unfamiliar situations; or
- have another identified need affecting their ability to evacuate safely.

Where necessary, an individual emergency evacuation plan or other suitable arrangement will be developed as part of the fire risk assessment.

Staff responsibilities will be clearly identified and arrangements will be reviewed when the child's needs change.

Any evacuation assistance must be planned so that staff do not create additional risks to themselves or other children.

Visitors, parents, contractors and volunteers

Visitors and contractors will be informed of the relevant emergency arrangements where appropriate.

Parents/carers visiting the setting must follow staff instructions during an evacuation.

Staff will ensure that visitors are accounted for where appropriate.

Contractors undertaking work that could affect fire safety will be required to comply with the setting's fire-safety arrangements and any relevant permit or risk-control arrangements.

Fire drills

Fire drills will be carried out at intervals determined by the fire risk assessment and will be sufficiently regular to ensure that children and staff become familiar with the evacuation procedure.

Because the setting cares for young children, Impact Montessori will normally undertake fire drills **at least termly**, unless the fire risk assessment identifies a different frequency as appropriate.

Additional drills may be undertaken:

- when significant numbers of new children or staff join;
- following significant changes to the premises;
- following changes to evacuation routes;
- following a significant incident;
- when an evacuation procedure changes; or
- where a previous drill identifies a need for additional practice.

Drills will, where reasonably practicable, vary the circumstances, including the evacuation route or location from which evacuation begins, so that staff do not simply rely on one familiar route.

Drills will be managed sensitively so that children are not unnecessarily frightened or distressed.

The setting will not deliberately place children or staff in danger in order to simulate a fire.

Fire drill records

A record will be kept of each fire drill, including:

- date and time;
- location or scenario;

- number of children involved;
- number of staff and other adults involved;
- evacuation time where useful;
- evacuation route used;
- whether all children and adults were accounted for;
- any difficulties or delays;
- any children requiring additional assistance;
- any equipment or alarm issues identified;
- actions required following the drill; and
- date when corrective actions were completed.

Fire drills will be reviewed by the manager and any identified weaknesses will be addressed promptly.

Fire Safety Log Book

The Fire Safety Log Book will contain or cross-reference relevant records, including:

- fire risk assessment;
- reviews and actions arising from the risk assessment;
- fire alarm testing;
- emergency lighting checks, where applicable;
- fire extinguisher servicing;
- fire door checks where applicable;
- staff fire-safety training;
- fire drills;
- incidents and false alarms;
- maintenance and remedial work; and
- other relevant fire-safety records.

Records will be retained in accordance with applicable legislation and the setting's record-retention arrangements.

After a fire or significant incident

Following a fire, suspected fire or significant fire-safety incident:

- the setting will cooperate fully with the Fire and Rescue Service and other relevant authorities;
- the incident will be recorded;
- the fire risk assessment will be reviewed;
- relevant parents/carers will be informed;
- Ofsted and other agencies will be notified where required;
- any damaged or unsafe areas will not be used until they have been assessed as safe; and
- lessons learned will be incorporated into fire-safety procedures and staff training.

Responsibilities

The **Responsible Person** has overall responsibility for ensuring that suitable fire-safety arrangements are established and maintained.

The manager is responsible for implementing the setting's day-to-day fire-safety arrangements, ensuring staff are appropriately informed and trained, and ensuring that records are maintained.

All staff are responsible for:

- following fire-safety procedures;
- keeping escape routes clear;
- reporting hazards or defects immediately;
- participating in fire-safety training and drills; and
- prioritising the safe evacuation of children and adults.

All staff must take immediate action where they identify a serious fire-safety risk.

Review of this policy

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner if:

- there is a change in fire-safety legislation;
- the premises or activities change;
- the fire risk assessment changes;
- there is a fire or significant incident;
- a drill identifies a significant weakness; or
- the needs of children or staff change in a way that affects evacuation.

Legal framework and guidance

This policy should be read alongside:

- **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005**, as amended.
- **Fire Safety Act 2021**, where applicable.
- **Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022**, where applicable.
- Home Office: **Fire Safety Risk Assessment: Educational Premises**.
- Home Office: **Making your small non-domestic premises safe from fire**.
- Relevant guidance from the local Fire and Rescue Service.
- Impact Montessori Health and Safety Policy.
- Impact Montessori Risk Assessment Policy.
- Impact Montessori Emergency and Business Continuity Procedures.
- Impact Montessori Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The Government's educational-premises fire-risk assessment guidance applies to premises including crèches and remains available as statutory guidance issued under Article 50 of the Fire Safety Order. GOV.UK

This policy was adopted by: Impact Montessori

On: _____

Date to be reviewed: _____

Signed on behalf of the provider: _____

Name of signatory: _____

Role of signatory: _____