

**June 2024**

**Security & Fire Safety**

## Fire/Security Vigilance – Education Establishments.

There is a need to be vigilant around the prevention of potential wilful fire-raising and vandalism/security breach events and minimising / controlling the risks to our Primary, Secondary and ASN School estate.

## What can we do?

Under fire safety law, there are proactive measures you can take to reduce the probability of wilful fire raising occurring. This is a “team” approach. School SLT’s, FM, Security, Fire Safety, Corporate Health and Safety at CEC and Let holders all have a part to play in this.

* Keep vigilant to any unusual activity with any unauthorised persons seen in the confines of the external areas.
* Ensure waste is disposed of in an appropriate way ready for regular uplift.
* Wheelie bins and refuse bins are secured for access.
* Ensure there are no combustibles placed against any part of the fabric of the building.
* Adhere to good fire safety practices.
* Have a proactive fire safety management system that includes measures to reduce the probability of wilful fire raising.
* Report all incidences of wilful fire raising and near miss incidents in connection with wilful fire raising.
* Report any fire devices / fire systems that are not working /faulty promptly.
* Increase fire safety awareness among staff in your provision. This includes community groups.
* Ensure any faulty external lighting / CCTV on site is reported promptly.
* Make sure all security systems are activated and doors/windows are secured when leaving establishments at the end of each day

**Appendix 1** sets out a checklist of questions to consider

**Locks**

Windows, doors and gates fitted with appropriate locks that are secure.

**Secure storage**

High value items such as IT equipment and musical instruments shouldn’t be visible from the outside, and empty packaging must be discretely disposed so that it doesn’t entice opportunist criminals.

**External storage of waste, combustible items, and location of storage units**

Deliberate, or accidental fires are a significant risk to our buildings. Fires can spread through direct contact with flames, conduction, convection and radiation. The closer the source of fire is to a building the greater the intensity of radiated heat. The risk of fire is increased if combustible items such as pallets, tyres, loose parts play and waste receptacles containing flammable materials are stored in close proximity to buildings. Current Fire Insurance requirements are that sheds, wooden boards, etc are sited at least 10 metres away from any building and fixed to the ground. We appreciate that some school playgrounds may not meet the 10 metre rule so the guidance would be to locate the above items as far away from the building as possible and secured to the ground. Consideration should be given to painting wooden sheds and decking/ boarding with fire resistant paint. Tyres need to be locked away in secure units when not in use during the school day or fixed to the ground and weighted down with sand.

**Secure the grounds**

Any identified issues with fencing around the school site should be reported to ensure that it’s fully intact with no damaged bolts, hinges or handles, and with no potential access points that could work as a foothold for easy access to thieves.

Appendix 1. Fire Raising Checklist – Education settings

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| Question | Answer | Comment |
| 1 Are all waste and recycling bins, including any for the main kitchens, at least 10 metres from buildings and in a secure compound or fixed via chains/padlocked together? |  |  |
| 2 Are any external waste materials e.g. pallets or cardboard from deliveries, regularly cleared and kept within allocated waste storage areas? |  |  |
| 3 Are all small external litter bins positioned a minimum of 5 metres from buildings, anchored in place, and emptied daily? This includes courtyard areas as these can be accessible via the roof. |  |  |
| 4 Do any demountable buildings have protected bases e.g. steel sheet or close gauge wire mesh to prevent the accumulation of combustible materials underneath the building? |  |  |
| 5 Are combustible structures such as timber or plastic sheds located 10 metres from buildings? |  |  |
| 6 Is there a secure, non-combustible, overnight storage unit or compound where moveable combustible play equipment pieces (tyres, pallets, cable reels etc) are kept? |  |  |
| 7 Does the site have adequate security lighting? |  |  |

