

## Schools Forum

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2017

### School Buildings – Grenfell follow-up

#### 1. Summary

A full fire safety review of all Council buildings has made schools a low priority because of their low height and because they are non-residential. All nursery, primary, secondary and special schools were contacted to complete the survey. Since the Grenfell tragedy the council has been working with partners, West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service and property owners (including but not limited to social housing providers) to provide information and to assess potential fire risks from building cladding. Schools and academies are in the main below 18 metres in height and have no sleeping taking place. The cladding, where applied, to these premises will be assessed following the above review. Schools and academies each have their own specific fire risk assessment and fire evacuation procedures and testing / alarm and evacuation in place. The Council is also separately responding to the Education & Skills Funding Agency with information about education stock in response to their national survey sent on 23 June 2017 (see details below).

#### 2. Detail

Following the Grenfell Fire tragedy, the Education and Skills Funding Agency sent a fire safety survey to all authorities and also to each academy individually.

The details requested were as follows

School	Type	1. Confirm that you have a Fire Risk Assessment specific to your school	2. Confirm that you are currently undertaking an urgent review of your Fire Risk Assessments to ensure that they are up to date and cover all of your buildings	3. Confirm the date that the review will be completed by	4. Confirm the frequency of the fire alarm tests for your schools	5. Confirm the frequency of fire drills for your schools	6. When was the last fire drill carried out?	7. Does your school have buildings that are used for residential accommodation?	8. Does your school have non-residential buildings that are 4 storeys high or more?	Notes
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School, Type (academies responded direct to Education and Skills Funding Agency),  
 Fire Risk Assessment record  
 Any urgent reviews of fire safety  
 When will the review be completed  
 Frequency of fire alarm tests  
 Frequency of Fire drills  
 Is there any residential accommodation in any of your schools  
 Do any schools have non-residential buildings that are 4 storeys high or more

3. **What have we done so far (phase 1)?**

A schools fire safety survey was completed by Walsall and returned on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2017 shortly after the Grenfell Fire Tragedy. The information shown in section 2.1 above was returned to the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

4. **What are our next steps?**

We need to follow-up Bloxwich and St. Francis of Assisi schools on an urgent basis as both have 4-storey buildings; this makes them a higher priority among school buildings.

Follow-up with schools as they return on w/c 4<sup>th</sup> Sep 2017 to ensure any actions have been completed (e.g. any increase in fire safety checks etc.) and to sample-check records. Check any schools that have not provided full details in the survey.

Council will offer fire safety audits to all schools and nurseries on a trade basis.

5. **Citizen Impact**

If additional safety work is needed, this could cause partial closure of school(s) and so parents need to be kept informed of this. Any additional work (e.g. removal of cladding) needs to be done in a safe manner.

6. **Equality Implications**

None anticipated. Need to ensure Council checks are targeted in schools where most help is needed (especially council-maintained schools and those in areas of deprivation) but offer checks to all schools including academies.

7. **Further Reading**

Table of school fire safety survey returns sent 23<sup>rd</sup> June.

8. **Recommendation**

To note the report

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