



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

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**Freedom of Information request reference number:** 6895.1

**Date of response:** 06/10/2022

**Request:**

*Please provide the fire inspection report for Gravel Hill Primary School, Watling Street, Bexleyheath, DA6 7QJ.*

**Response:**

Please see the Fire Safety Audit Report attached to the response below.

Personal data has been removed from the attached document under [section 40 of the FOIA – Personal Information](#).

We have dealt with your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. For more information about this process please see the guidance we publish about making a request on our website: <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/about-us/transparency/request-information-from-us/>



## Fire Safety Audit Report

### Audit Information

**Audited By** [REDACTED]  
**Audit Completed** 11 July 2022

### Location summary

**File No** 93/000337  
**UPRN** 100022922574  
**Building Name** GRAVEL HILL PRIMARY  
**Address** GRAVEL HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL  
 WATLING STREET  
 BEXLEYHEATH  
 DA6 7QJ  
**Borough** Bexley  
**Use** M - School  
**Responsible Team** FSD SOUTH-LEW-GREEN-BEX  
**Station Ground** E28 - Bexley  
**Site Risk Score** 9.00  
**Total Floors** 3 **Basement floors** 0  
**Estimated number of sleeping** 0  
**Special Features** Common Curtilage  
**Additional detail** Petrol stored in a metal container away from children on the playground.

#### Premises Description

School comprised of four separate buildings, ranging from one storey nursery & library to three storey main building.

Two buildings constructed in 2010s, library approx. 1980s & main building approx. 1950s. New building is timber frame and timber floors. Original buildings are traditional brick built.

Good access for fire and rescue services via Watling street.

Car park on site. Linked detection and warning system throughout.

External paved playground and lawned area to north of building.

**Exterior Wall Cladding** N/A

**Exterior Wall Insulation** N/A

**Cladding/Insulation details confirmed by** NOT CONFIRMED

**Environmental Risks** NONE

**Features assisting fire spread** NONE

**Site Reinspection date** 4 April 1991

**Heritage Building** No

**Balconies present?** No

**Gas Supply present?** No

**Petroleum redevelopment?** No

**Known firesetting in area?** No

## Site lone worker risk

## Property Detail (OCCUPIER PROPERTY)

<b>Occupier Contact</b>	Gravel Hill Primary School
<b>Address</b>	GRAVEL HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL WATLING STREET BEXLEYHEATH DA6 7QJ
<b>Responsible team</b>	FSD SOUTH-LEW-GREEN-BEX
<b>Occupancy Type</b>	Sole Occupier
<b>Property Use</b>	M - School
<b>Valuation Office</b>	EL - School
<b>Original Risk Score</b>	4.00
<b>Reinspection Date</b>	N/A (SAMPLE)
<b>Last Inspection</b>	20 June 2022
<b>Total Capacity</b>	0
<b>Maximum number of people</b>	>100
<b>Property Size for use</b>	Large 2501m <sup>2</sup> to 6000m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Environmental Risks</b>	NONE
<b>Occupant Mobility</b>	Average
<b>Fire Loading</b>	Average

## Additional detail

## Specific lone worker risk

**Primary Authority Partnership** N/A

## Protection Data (SHARED)

<b>Fire Protection &amp; Warning</b>	Adequate
<b>Unwanted fire signals count</b>	0
<b>AFD remote monitoring</b>	YES
<b>Smoke ventilation</b>	None
<b>Covers MOE/Common areas?</b>	Yes
<b>Sprinklers Installed?</b>	Yes
<b>Sprinkler Type</b>	None
<b>Coverage %</b>	0
<b>False activations in past 3 years</b>	0
<b>Fire activations in past 3 years</b>	0
<b>Access for fire-fighting</b>	Average
<b>Water supplies</b>	Average
<b>Special Features</b>	
<b># Fire fighting shafts</b>	0
<b>Engineered solution?</b>	No
<b>Trade off measures?</b>	No
<b>Evacuation type</b>	Simultaneous Evacuation
<b>History of fires?</b>	No

## Contacts

### Occupier

<b>Name</b>	Gravel Hill Primary School
<b>Responsible Person</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>Position</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>Address</b>	GRAVEL HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL WATLING STREET BEXLEYHEATH DA6 7QJ
<b>Telephone</b>	01322 521343

### Managing Agent - NEW

<b>Name</b>	Cygnus Academies Trust
<b>Responsible Person</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>Position</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>Address</b>	Cygnus Academies Trust, London Road, Stone, Dartford, Kent, DA2 6BA

### On Site Representative

<b>Name</b>	Gravel Hill Primary School
<b>Responsible Person</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>Position</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>Address</b>	Gravel Hill Primary School Watling Street Bexleyheath DA6 7QJ
<b>Telephone</b>	01322 521343
<b>Email</b>	[REDACTED]

## Enforcement history

## Articles

### Article 9 - Risk assessment

**SAFETY CRITICAL**  
**Safety Evaluation**  
Broadly Compliant

#### Observations

At the time of the audit, there was a comprehensive Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) conducted by [REDACTED] on behalf of the primary school. The assessment was 25/02/2022. The FRA made note of many significant findings throughout the premises, including compartmentation issues, maximum capacity of certain areas and remedial works which needed to be actioned. Significant findings had been actioned within the school.

Dangerous substances (petrol) and the young age of users had been considered throughout the assessment.

## Article 11 - Fire Safety Arrangements

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**SAFETY CRITICAL**  
**Safety Evaluation**  
 Low Risk

### Observations

At the time of the audit, the RP had not:

- Planned a suitable means of escape from the main assembly hall by exceeding the maximum occupancy of the room
- Controlled the means of escape throughout the premises as there were damaged strips and seals, and broken self closing devices throughout the premises
- Monitored and organised a compartmentation review of the premises

### FAILURE

#### Article 11 FS arrangements not maintained

At the time of the audit your preventative and protective measures had not been planned, organised, controlled monitored or reviewed where required. It was found that RP had not:

- 1)Planned a suitable means of escape from the main assembly hall by exceeding the maximum occupancy of the room
- 2)Controlled the means of escape throughout the premises as there were damaged strips and seals, and broken self closing devices throughout the premises
- 3)Monitored and organised a compartmentation review of the premises

### REMEDY

Arrangements identified as not suitably addressed must be effectively planned, organised, controlled, monitored or reviewed.

## Article 13 - Detection and warning

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**SAFETY CRITICAL**  
**Safety Evaluation**  
 Broadly Compliant

### Observations

At the time of the audit, there were two different levels of detection on each individual building, with an L3 system within buildings 2 & 3 (main school building, library) and an L2 system being present within buildings 1 & 4 (secondary building, nursery). There is a difference in levels of detection due to the age of each building, with all buildings being compliant with regulations for the period of time they were constructed.

It is important to note that all buildings detection systems are linked, with the main panel being located in the main building near the receptionist area.

## Article 14 - Emergency routes and exits

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**SAFETY CRITICAL**  
**Safety Evaluation**  
 Low Risk

Verbal Advice Given

### Observations

At the time of the audit, escape routes were not suitable for the purpose of the premises. This was highlighted in the assembly hall, where there was currently an excess amount of users for the intended capacity. There were three doors total within the hall, due to having to discount the largest door in the event of a fire, and the remaining two doors both being inward opening, the total maximum capacity was 60 users. Currently, the school were allowing 80 users, both for lunch time and for an upcoming end of year performance. After conversations with the RP, interim mitigating factors were able to be agreed upon; by having the presence of trained staff staying on these doors to assist

**Article 14**  
(continued)

an evacuation procedure, 80 users maximum was allowed until the end of the school year. This is to make preparations to change the doors to outwards opening for the new school year, or continue with a maximum occupancy of 60 occupants.

Throughout the inspection, it was noted on multiple times that there were damaged strips and seals on fire doors, or that they were missing altogether. This was often the case on fire doors leading onto the stairwells. Furthermore, self-closing devices were damaged or broken on the staff room door. Due to this, a review of fire doors throughout the premises is necessary.

During the inspection, portable laptop charging stations were found to be blocking relevant persons escape route out of two class rooms within the secondary building, verbal advice as given to ensure that these stations are kept in the wider part of the corridor at all times ensuring there is enough width to allow the high number of children and staff to escape at all times.

Verbal advice was given to install additional directional signage at the rear of the main building. The RP stated that this area was due to be renovated in the summer and it was confirmed that the signage would be installed.

**FAILURE****Article 14 Issues with emergency routes or exits**

At the time of the audit the emergency routes or exits were inadequate. It was found that:

- 1) The assembly hall usage currently exceeded the maximum occupancy allowed
- 2) Fire doors had damaged, or missing intumescent strips and seals
- 3) Self closing devices found on fire doors were broken

**REMEDY**

Ensure adequate emergency routes and exits, for use by relevant persons in the premises, are available and can be safely and effectively used at all relevant times. This can be achieved by:

- 1) Ensuring that the maximum occupancy of the assembly hall is not exceeded
- 2) Completing a review of fire doors found on the premises.

**Article 15 - Procedures for serious and imminent danger and for danger areas****SAFETY CRITICAL**  
**Safety Evaluation**  
Broadly Compliant

## Verbal Advice Given

**Observations**

At the time of the audit, there is a suitable simultaneous evacuation strategy in place for the premises.

A fire drill is conducted every term

System in place to automatically call the fire rescue services however there is also an internal seek & search implemented

Although not currently in use, there is the capacity and potential for PEEPS to be introduced if ever necessary

The head teacher is the designated fire marshal in the event of a fire and receives assistance from senior members of staff

**Article 15**  
(continued)

There is one assembly point located on the playground near the side entrance gate. Receptionists duties include to pick up first aid bag, fire bag and all registers for both the class rooms & visitors in the event of fire.

Verbal advice was given to update some fire action notices around the school to include where the assembly point is located, it was noted that the majority of the notices are correct and suitable, however it is necessary to ensure that all notices are fit for purpose.

## Article 17 - Maintenance

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**SAFETY CRITICAL**  
**Safety Evaluation**  
Broadly Compliant

**Observations**

At the time of the audit, Facilities, equipment and devices provided in connection with general fire precautions are maintained in an efficient state, working order and in good repair. Documentation was provided at the beginning of the inspection in regards to maintenance of fire extinguishers, the fire alarm system, electrical PAT testing, emergency lighting and staff training.

There is regular testing and maintenance carried out by competent persons.

Fire alarm was last serviced 09/05/2022 - 25% of the system was serviced.  
Emergency lighting was last serviced 27/08/2021  
Firefighting equipment was last serviced February 2022  
5 year electrical installation is due to be updated in 2022  
Gas safety certificate was produced for December 2021  
TR19 records for the ducting system was last conducted February 2022  
Maintenance manager conducts weekly inspections of both the fire doors and escape routes, whilst completing monthly checks of emergency lighting, firefighting equipment.

## Article 21 - Training

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**SAFETY CRITICAL**  
**Safety Evaluation**  
Broadly Compliant

**Observations**

At the time of the audit, there was a suitable system of training throughout the premises. All staff members who were questioned were aware of their duties in the event of fire, with some staff taking sole care of individual pupils, with others leading the rest of the children to the assembly point. Refresher training happens at regular intervals, along with termly fire drills to assist in ensuring all members of staff are aware of their duties.

## Article 8 - General fire precautions

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**Safety Evaluation**  
Low Risk

**Observations**

At the time of the audit, there were compartmentation issues found throughout some of the buildings.

In the secondary building, there were:

- visible vertical holes found in storage cupboards on the first and ground floor
- Compartmentation issues found within the plant room on the ground floor outside of the main structure of the building

**Article 8**  
(continued)

In the main building, there were:

- Excessive foam found to be used whilst attempting to rectify compartmentation issues found within the boiler room in the basement, this needs to be replaced with suitable fire resistant materials.
- Visible holes found within the electrical intake room, with excessive expanding foam also found on the doorframe within this intake room

**FAILURE****Article 8 FR Separation**

At the time of the audit the FIRE RESISTING separation in your premises was inadequate. It was found that:

- 1) There were multiple breaches of compartmentation found within the premises.
- 2) Excessive expanding foam had been used whilst attempting to fill in visible holes within the plant room, and around the door frame of the electrical intake cupboard.

**REMEDY**

Provide suitable FIRE RESISTING separation by:

- 1) Reviewing the compartmentation within the premises.
- 2) using suitable fire resistant materials to complete necessary fire stopping works within the plant room and electrical cupboard

**Article 10 - Principles of prevention to be applied**

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**Safety Evaluation**

Broadly Compliant

**Observations**

At the time of the audit, there was no smoking policy implemented throughout the premise.

There was installation of emergency escape lighting throughout escape routes and necessary places.

There was self-closing devices on fire doors.

**Article 12 - Elimination or reduction of risks from dangerous substances**

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**Safety Evaluation**

Broadly Compliant

**Observations**

At the time of the audit, petrol was being stored in a metal container along with petrol lawnmower for housekeeping purposes. This container is locked and sectioned off in the playground away from the children who cannot gain access.

**Article 13 - Fire Fighting Equipment**

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**Safety Evaluation**

Broadly Compliant

**Observations**

At the time of the audit, the premises was equipped with appropriate fire fighting equipment.

All fire fighting equipment provided was easily accessible, simple to use and indicated by signs



## Article 16 - Measures for dealing with dangerous substances affecting general fire precautions

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### Safety Evaluation

Broadly Compliant

### Observations

There were no additional measures necessary as the petrol present was stored appropriately stored and signed.

## Article 18 - Safety assistance

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### Safety Evaluation

Broadly Compliant

### Observations

At the time of the audit, there were competent persons employed by the RP to ensure that the fire safety systems with the premises were tested and maintained in accordance with regulations. The RP has ensured that there is a competent Fire Risk Assessor a well as registered engineers for all other integral systems

## Article 19 - Provision of information to employees

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### Safety Evaluation

Broadly Compliant

### Observations

At the time of the audit, employees are provided with comprehensible and relevant information based on the risks highlighted on the FRA

## Article 20 - Provision of information to employers and the self employed from outside undertakings

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### Safety Evaluation

Broadly Compliant

### Observations

The employees from any external company, or organisation are provided with appropriate instructions and relevant information regarding any risks to that person. All visitors are required to sign in upon arrival to the store and are clearly told both points of assembly and precautionary measures which must be adhered to.

## Article 22 - Co-operation and co-ordination

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### Safety Evaluation

Broadly Compliant

### Observations

At the time of the audit, there were was no coordination necessary as the school is fenced off and is on its own grounds with no exterior parties to cooperate with.

## Article 23 - General duties of employees at work

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### Safety Evaluation

Broadly Compliant

### Observations

At the time of the audit, it was confirmed that employees take reasonable care for the safety of themselves and other relevant persons who may be affected by their actions and measures they take whilst at work.

Employees ensure to inform responsible persons of any fire safety issues which are identified whilst at work.

<b>Article 23</b> (continued)	This was confirmed when asking an employee about their duties in an event of a fire, with the staff member being able to give a detailed description of what they would do including informing management of any emergencies and where the assembly point was situated.
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### **Article 37 - Fire fighters switches for luminous tube signs**

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<b>Safety Evaluation</b> Not Applicable	<b>Observations</b> Article not applicable
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### **Article 38 - Maintenance of measures provided for protection of fire fighters**

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<b>Safety Evaluation</b> Not Applicable	<b>Observations</b> Article not applicable
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### **Article 24 - Power to make regulations**

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<b>Safety Evaluation</b> Not Applicable	<b>Observations</b> None
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### **Article 27 - Powers of inspectors**

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<b>Safety Evaluation</b> Not Applicable	<b>Observations</b> None
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### **Article 29 - Current alterations notices**

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<b>Safety Evaluation</b> Not Applicable	<b>Observations</b> None
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### **Article 30 - Current enforcement notices**

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<b>Safety Evaluation</b> Not Applicable	<b>Observations</b> None
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### **Article 31 - Current prohibition notices**

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<b>Safety Evaluation</b> Not Applicable	<b>Observations</b> None
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### **Article 32 - Offences**

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<b>Safety Evaluation</b> Not Applicable	<b>Observations</b> None
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## **Overall safety standard**

Low Risk

**Management compliance level**

<b>Management Compliance Level</b>	1 - Well above average
<b>Initial Expectation</b>	Verbal action
<b>Considered EMM?</b>	Yes
<b>Confirmed Action</b>	Verbal action

## Audit Conclusion

### Date audit carried out

24:06:2022

### Time of audit

09:00

### Reason for audit;

Demand led inspection

### Conclusion

This was a demand led audit which took place on 24/06/2022. I attended this audit with [REDACTED]

The systems I used in order to carry out my pre audit research are as follows:

- Farynor
- E-FSS Portal
- Imapping
- IMS
- Companies House
- Google Maps

It was agreed before entering that it was going to be an extensive audit, looking at the means of escape, compartmentation and any other general fire safety arrangements which were present throughout the premise.

Premises attended was a primary school consisting of four individual buildings, ranging from one storey library and one storey nursery to a three storey main building. There were 17 class rooms throughout, kitchen, staff room, office, store rooms & plant rooms.

The audit was split into three sections, at the beginning of the audit I went through relevant documentation in regards to the inspection. The RP was able to produce a comprehensive fire risk assessment, along with documentation In regards to fire alarm maintenance, firefighting equipment servicing, staff training and emergency lighting maintenance. There were significant findings found within the risk assessment which had been acted on with issues being resolved prior to the audit. Regular in house safety checks were also presented, highlighting the proactive management system which was in place.

As the inspection progressed, it was clear that fire safety was acted upon, with emergency lighting present, as well as measures such as directional exit signage at final exits and all escape routes being clear with no obstruction. It was clear that the management was effective in regards to fire safety, with staff taking preventative measures to take based on risks highlighted in the risk assessment which was conducted in house by the store manager. All members of staff questioned were well versed on the evacuation strategy within the premises, including their role e.g. office staff taking registers, some staff being responsible for only one child etc.

There were some deficiencies which were found whilst conducting a walk around of the premises. The biggest cause for concern was the assembly hall currently exceeding its maximum occupancy allowed. Due to inward opening doors, the maximum capacity was 60 users. Currently, the school were allowing 80 users, both for

lunch time and for an upcoming end of year performance. After conversations with the RP, interim mitigating factors were able to be agreed upon; by having the presence of trained staff staying on these doors to assist an evacuation procedure, 80 users maximum was allowed until the end of the school year. This is to make preparations to change the doors to outwards opening for the new school year, or continue with a maximum occupancy of 60 occupants.

Other deficiencies found were issues such as damaged or missing strips and seals, damaged self closing devices, additional directional signage necessary in some areas, compartmentation issues found within the cupboards, electrical intake room and plant room. Verbal advice was necessary for some of these issues, and all have been scored accordingly after conversations with [REDACTED] who was present during the inspection.

All areas of the premises was inspected, firefighting equipment was also suitable and sufficient along with a fire alarm system which was suitable for the size and type of premises inspected. There was also a suitable simultaneous evacuation strategy in place for the premises.

A debrief was had at the end of the inspection with [REDACTED], along with [REDACTED]. It is noted that this took place after extensive conversations where [REDACTED] was present. During this discussion, the positive aspects of the inspection and general day to day management of the school in particular was highlighted. Deficiencies, specifically the issue regarding the assembly hall was once again discussed, before giving an insight into the next steps involved post inspection. An overview of how the inspection would be scored was given before the audit was concluded.

### Extent of premises audited

full inspection of the premises, including class rooms, offices, staff room and plant rooms.

### Justification of audit outcome

discussions with [REDACTED] about the present deficiencies assisted appropriate scoring of the premises.

### Verbal Advice Given

None recorded

### Other Authorities to notify

None

### Weeks to Complete Work

N/A

### Specific instructions for Admin to Action

None

### Compliance calculation & signature

Compliance Level	1 - Well above average
Property Risk Group	C - Public unfamiliar
Life Risk	1
Actual Risk Score	4.04
Risk Score	4.00

**Audit Timings**

**Audit Duration**

180

**Travel Time**

45

**Post Audit Processing Duration**

180