



North Curry

C of E

Primary School

Arson Prevention Policy



Signed by:

H Morley Headteacher

G Slocombe Chair of governors

Date: 23rd September 2025

Date: 23rd September 2025

Review date: September 2026

Contents:

Statement of intent

1. What is arson?

2. How serious is the problem?
3. Premises vulnerability
4. Roles and responsibilities of all staff
5. Action against arson

Statement of intent

At North Curry C of E Primary School, we are committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment that inspires and supports academic achievement in line with our Christian vision and values.

At North Curry CE Primary School:

We believe that every child is unique and valued. We aim to provide an environment in which all pupils feel safe and can flourish. We will respond to individuals in ways which take into account their varied life experiences and particular needs. We are committed to providing an education with aspirational outcomes, which enables all pupils to make progress, become confident individuals living life in all its fullness (John 10,10).

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do. Our vision is underpinned by the Christian values of Koinonia, Kindness, Respect, Joy, Hope and Happiness.



This procedure sets out the actions the school will follow in order to prevent arson.

The purpose of this policy is to enable the school to determine what measures should be taken to comply with the duties under the relevant statutory provisions.

This action plan will be adhered to by all staff members and the governing board at all times.

1. What is arson?

Adapted using extracts from the Arson Prevention Bureau's publication 'How to Combat Arson in Premises'

Arson is a criminal act whereby someone wilfully and deliberately sets fire to property. Arson attacks commonly involve buildings, but this criminal act also refers to the intentional burning of other things such as vehicles etc.

2. How serious is the problem?

Each year in the UK an estimated 1,400 – 1,800 arson attacks occur in schools, with one in eight schools suffering a serious arson attack. The incidence of arson in all types of premises is increasing and is recognised as a major cause of fire. This policy is addressed primarily at the person who has overall responsibility for premises. It aims to alert those responsible and working in the premises to the possible dangers of arson attacks and suggests means by which such a potential risk can be reduced.

3. Premises vulnerability

Premises may be vulnerable to arson attacks due to:

- The ease of access to sites
- Vandalism
- Poor housekeeping

Reduction in the incidence of arson will benefit everyone by:

- Providing a safer environment for staff and visitors
- Ensuring that buildings and facilities are not lost due to the effects of fire
- The damage done by fire can be very costly, taking financial resources away from the provision of other needs
- Not all arson is preventable but where possible its effects will be minimised.

4. Roles and responsibilities of all staff

Staff are obliged to adhere to this policy. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the staff for whom they are responsible are aware of and adhere to this policy.

- This policy is available to view on the North Curry C of E Primary School website.
- The Headteacher will recognise the cause and effects of arson and will encourage measures recommended to combat arson and will promote good practice.
- Combustible materials will be stored securely and waste not allowed to accumulate.
- Staff will ensure that a high level of security is maintained to prevent unauthorised access and that legitimate visitors can be identified and access controlled.
- The Headteacher will ensure an investigation is completed into any outbreak of fire and if there is any suspicion that arson could be the cause, any material evidence will be safeguarded for the attention of the Police/Fire Service.
- A fire risk assessment of the premises will consider the risk from arson and the measures to minimise the risk.

5. Action against arson

1. Deter unauthorised entry onto the site

Discourage unauthorised entry onto the site using signs and by delineating where practicable the boundary of the premises by use of a robust fence and/or shrubs.

Ensure the premises are adequately lit externally during the hours of darkness.

Remove any graffiti that appears on the premises without delay. If left to accumulate, vandals and arsonists will begin to view the site as being a legitimate target of little or no value.

Foster good relationships with neighbours, they can observe unlawful activity at the

Adapted using extracts from the Arson Prevention Bureau's publication 'How to Combat Arson in Premises'

premises when closed. Neighbours are asked to contact the Police if they witness such activity. Alternatively contact...

Crime stoppers on Tel: 0800 555 111,

Calls are free (except for some mobiles)

And the caller will remain anonymous.

Consider getting involved in local neighbourhood watch schemes. Vandals are less likely to attack a school if there are strong ties with the local community.

Where sustained vandalism or deliberate fire setting occur at premises, the installation of a monitored CCTV system should be considered.

Be aware that it is common practice for car thieves to deposit stolen vehicles on playing fields if accessible, before setting fire to them.

2. Prevent unauthorised entry into the building

The weakest points of entry into the premises are the windows and doors. Their vulnerability needs to be regularly reviewed and replaced as considered necessary.

Ensure all external doors are fitted with approved locks and secured as the building is vacated.

Ensure door frame construction is sound and of good quality.

Consider fitting letterboxes with metal enclosures on the inside to prevent damage arising from the introduction of burning materials.

Regularly check all external glazing for damage both on security and safety grounds.

Make regular checks of areas where there are flat roofs to ensure there are no breaches of security, in particular skylights.

Consider the installation of an intruder alarm system.

3. Reduce the opportunity for an offender to start a fire. If an arsonist cannot enter the premises the opportunity to light a fire outside is often exploited.

There are some common-sense steps that you can take to reduce the risk of combustible material being ignited outside.

Take every opportunity to eliminate combustible material on the outside of the building.

Place refuse/ recycling bins in a secure compound or alternatively secured by padlock and chain no less than 6 metres (where possible) from buildings to prevent them being moved against the building. Ensure regular collections of such materials.

Lock sheds and other external buildings and site them at least 8 metres away from the premises.

Ensure that any waste bins are not fixed to walls or under roofs constructed of combustible materials but secured to the ground away from the building.

Avoid placing combustible materials on windowsills as a common method of attack is to break a window and set fire to combustibles within reach.

Check that shrubs and undergrowth aren't encroaching against buildings as they are a source of ignition when dry.

Remember! Rubbish is an ideal fuel for an 'Arsonist'

4. Reduce the scope for potential fire damage

Schools of open-plan design are more difficult to protect than those with traditional layouts with separate classrooms. With the latter, compartmentalisation (firestops in the roof/ceiling voids) is an essential element of the design even though the classroom construction may not be fire-resisting.

During alterations and maintenance, give consideration to providing additional fire-break walls and fire doors to separate the building into compartments, including protecting concealed spaces such as roof voids. This should be designed and carried out with the assistance of professional advice.

Adapted using extracts from the Arson Prevention Bureau's publication 'How to Combat Arson in Premises'

Inspect partition walls regularly, particularly when any maintenance, repair or alteration has been finished.

5. Reduce subsequent losses and disruption resulting from a fire by preparing a disaster recovery plan.

Have the correct type of fire extinguisher installed to use in an emergency by your trained staff.

Members of staff should be trained in fire procedures, including how to summon the Fire Service, how to evacuate the building and how to use fire extinguishers. They should also be aware of the location of high-value materials and equipment, particularly school records which may be irreplaceable and have knowledge of a salvage plan to recover these items.

6. Monitoring and review

- 6.1. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2026.
- 6.2. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all staff members by the headteacher.
- 6.3. All staff members are required to familiarise themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.