



# Sleepovers in School Buildings - Safety Guidance

Sleepovers in schools can be a great alternative to a residential trip, especially when school and family budgets are squeezed or as a taster of being away from home for young people. If your school is considering a sleepover in a school building, the following safety aspects should be reviewed as well as any additional safeguarding, communication, parental permission and educational requirements.

## Fire Safety

Generally, during the day, everyone in school is awake, aware of their surroundings and able to understand the action to take in the event of a fire, or they are accompanied by others and offered assistance where necessary.

School buildings were designed for daytime occupancy and as such do not have adequate protection measures for the increased risk of inhabitants being asleep.



To ensure the building is suitable for sleeping from a fire safety perspective, the following actions should be undertaken.

- ✓ There **MUST** be at least one competent adult who remains awake throughout the sleepover, to monitor potential risks and raise the alarm if needed.

- ✓ Identify people who may need help to evacuate in the event of a fire. Prepare a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) for anyone requiring assistance to evacuate, if not already in place.
- ✓ School staff should be familiar with the fire alarm panel and know what actions to take if the fire alarm sounds.
- ✓ Sleepover leaders should confirm with school site staff that there is sufficient emergency lighting in the areas that will be used during the event (including external) and that it is operational.
- ✓ Check that the escape routes are available and free from obstructions and, that the doors can be easily opened. Fire resisting doors should be kept closed.
- ✓ Rooms used for sleeping should have a final exit directly to fresh air, preferably the school hall or similar. High risk areas such as kitchens should be avoided.
- ✓ Ensure staff are aware of the locations of the firefighting equipment and that there are some staff present who have received practical fire extinguisher training during the last three years.
- ✓ Prepare an evacuation plan to include the actions to be taken in the event of a fire, including calling the fire and rescue service and taking a roll call at a designated assembly point.
- ✓ Train staff and volunteers in fire safety procedures for the premises prior to the sleepover taking place.
- ✓ Sleepover organisers should carry out a risk assessment covering temporary fire safety measures in relation to the sleepover which can be attached to the fire risk assessment.

- ✓ Complete fire drills during sleepovers to ensure fire safety arrangements are adequate and practised.
- ✓ Sleepover leaders should have access to any gate keys, and these must be taken out as part of an evacuation.
- ✓ Sleepover leaders should know the actions to be taken if the fire alarm sounds during the event (emergency plan).

All schools should have an up-to-date fire risk assessment, which details fire safety measures in place during normal occupancy. The fire risk assessment should be referenced when creating a temporary sleepover fire risk assessment.

Fire Risk Assessments for LEA schools can be found on P2 <https://p2.concerto.co.uk/>

A fire risk assessment addresses the following.

- Identifies fire hazards
- Reduces the risk of those hazards causing harm to as low as reasonably practicable
- Decides what physical fire precautions and management arrangements are necessary to ensure the safety of people in your premises if a fire starts.

When reviewing temporary measures required for a school sleepover, all of the above should be considered.



All future fire risk assessments conducted by the Council (via Arc Partnership) will include a section about temporary arrangements that may be suitable to accommodate a sleepover,

however as risk assessments should be dynamic, the sleepover organiser should still review temporary fire arrangements for all planned sleepovers to ensure they remain suitable and sufficient for the proposed event.

Please inform Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service of the school's intention to hold a sleepover, to enable them to notify their control room and visit the site to review arrangements if required.

## Risk Assessment

A risk assessment should be completed specifically relating to the sleepover. All risks should be reduced as far as reasonably practicable.

Risks to consider include

- Pupil information in relation to sleeping e.g., prescribed medicines, behavioural aspects, allergies and intolerances, night-time tendencies (sleepwalking, bedwetting) and special needs
- Security of the site and occupants. It is advised to inform local police that a sleepover is taking place
- Disruption to neighbouring properties
- Access to hazardous equipment and substances
- Supervision ratios

## Prohibited Materials and Activities

It is the school's responsibility to ensure all materials and activities usually prohibited during school hours are adhered to during the sleepover, including smoking, knives, vaping and alcohol.



## Insurance

Please contact the school's insurer to ensure school sleepovers are covered in the policy. RPA have informed the Council that sleepovers fall under educational purposes and hence are a permitted activity at the school, however it is the school's responsibility to make sure that sleepovers are a permitted activity in accordance with the insurer.

## First Aid

Schools should ensure there is adequate first aid provision including people suitably trained to complete first aid and equipment available for use.

## Welfare

Schools should ensure that welfare is adequate for the sleepover, giving staff and students access to toilets, drinks and food. Room temperatures should be considered, and heating systems adjusted if required. Sleeping equipment should be appropriate.



If shower facilities will be used, ensure they have up to date water monitoring in place for example temperature checks, flushing completed and recorded if this is an infrequently used outlet and an up-to-date water risk assessment.

## Further Information

### Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Guidance

[NFRS Sleepovers Guidance - Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service \(notts-fire.gov.uk\)](https://www.notts-fire.gov.uk)

### Services for Schools

Arc Partnership can provide support in ensuring your fire risk assessment covers sleepovers at schools

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/schoolsportal/services/premises-and-facilities/property-related-statutory-compliance>

## Contact Information

### Property Services

[PropertyServices@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:PropertyServices@nottsc.gov.uk)

### Health and Safety

[Hands@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:Hands@nottsc.gov.uk)