

Schools – what you need to know

Following on from the Grenfell tower fire you will be aware that the Government are seeking further assurance over fire safety measures in a number of public buildings including schools. As part of this process those responsible for the maintenance of schools have been asked to complete an online survey by the Education & Skills Funding Agency.

Are schools being treated the same as high rise residential blocks?

No - there are very different risks associated with a high rise block with residential sleeping risks and a school environment. The scrutiny in terms of increased external fire loading is rightly for higher risk (multi storey) buildings and those with residential roles.

The majority of schools have short distances of travel and many exit doors direct to fresh air. Termly fire drills are routinely carried out to test this response and should be able to evidence prompt evacuation times and effective response of occupants.

The make-up of external panels is a contributory factor but will not significantly alter the risk to our occupants in normal use.

What are HCC doing as a result of the Grenfell Tower incident?

We're supporting schools, local authorities, housing associations and landlords to ensure that fire risk assessments are up to date and being properly implemented.

Should the national advice change then we will advise accordingly, however at this time school's should simply continue with their existing fire safety management procedures (weekly call point testing, termly drills etc.) and ensure any controls identified via their fire risk assessment are being actioned.

Advice on fire safety including a template for fire risk assessments, emergency evacuation procedures and routine fire maintenance and test procedures are available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/14887/fsra-educational-premises.pdf

These FAQ's are not intended for residential premises (e.g. university halls of residence); the guide for premises providing sleeping accommodation should be used in this case, found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/422192/9281_Sleeping_Accommodation_v2.pdf