



## 42. Fire - Evacuation & Drills - Sleeping Accommodation Evacuation Drill

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| Category:    | Fire                |
| Subcategory: | Evacuation & Drills |
| Frequency:   | Yearly              |
| Status:      | <b>Statutory</b>    |
| Type:        | Competent Person    |
| Priority:    | Core                |
| Commonality: | Rare                |

*Note: This document provides guidance to support compliance but is not a substitute for professional advice.*

### Why This Task Matters

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Your annual sleeping accommodation evacuation drills ensure that pupils and staff are familiar with night-time escape procedures in residential settings. By conducting these specialised drills in schools and colleges with boarding facilities, you protect vulnerable occupants who may be asleep during emergencies. Your expertise in coordinating these critical exercises demonstrates your essential role in safeguarding residential educational environments.

### Task Summary

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Statutory: Educational sites with boarding or residential accommodation must carry out at least one evacuation drill per year specifically for sleeping areas. This comprehensive drill involves simulating a fire emergency during sleeping hours, testing staff response procedures, verifying communication systems, and ensuring all occupants can evacuate safely. The drill includes activating the fire alarm system, mobilizing staff response teams, checking evacuation procedures for mobility-impaired individuals, and verifying assembly procedures. These drills are essential for safeguarding in FE colleges with halls of residence and independent schools. The drill includes documenting participation, timing evacuation completion, and reviewing lessons learned. Evidence produced includes drill report documenting the exercise execution and outcomes, attendance records showing participation by staff

and pupils, annotated photos of assembly points and evacuation routes, and any recommendations for procedure improvements.

## Relevant Legislation & Guidance

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- **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005:** Requires regular evacuation drills in premises with sleeping accommodation
- **Fire Safety: Approved Document B (Buildings other than dwellinghouses):** Provides guidance on evacuation drills in residential buildings
- **British Standard BS 9999: Fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings - Code of practice:** Includes guidance on evacuation drills and procedures
- **The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014** (for independent schools): Requires adequate emergency procedures
- **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999:** Requires emergency procedure training and testing

## Typical Frequency

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Sleeping accommodation evacuation drills must be conducted at least annually where boarding accommodation exists, with this comprehensive exercise typically scheduled during term time. In educational settings with residential facilities, annual drills are essential for maintaining emergency preparedness. The frequency cannot be reduced as it is a statutory requirement for premises with sleeping accommodation.

## Applicability

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This task applies to educational establishments with boarding or residential accommodation, which is rare as most schools do not have on-site sleeping facilities. It is a core statutory task where residential accommodation exists, essential for ensuring safe evacuation procedures. The task applies to independent schools, FE colleges, and other educational institutions with halls of residence.

## Responsible Persons

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- **Task Type:** Competent Person
- **In-House Requirements:** This task can be completed by trained facilities staff, fire safety officers, or designated drill coordinators who have received appropriate training in emergency drill procedures. Staff should be familiar with residential accommodation layout and evacuation procedures.
- **Permit to Work:** Coordination with residential staff and minimal disruption to sleeping occupants required.

- **Delivery Model:** Normally completed in-house by trained staff to ensure familiarity with residential procedures and minimal external involvement.

## Key Considerations

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- **Timing considerations:** Schedule during term time when accommodation is occupied, but consider resident comfort
- **Cost implications:** Minimal cost if completed in-house, though may require staff time for coordination
- **Resource requirements:** Access to residential accommodation and communication systems
- **Potential disruption:** Will disrupt sleeping occupants but essential for safety training
- **Risk assessment requirements:** Drill findings should inform the fire risk assessment

## Task Instructions

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### Prerequisites & Safety

- Ensure drill coordinator is familiar with residential layout and procedures
- Confirm participation of residential staff and emergency response teams
- Check that drill can be conducted safely without causing undue distress
- Prepare communication plan for residents and staff

### Tools & Materials

- Residential accommodation floor plans and evacuation procedures
- Communication devices and public address systems
- Timing equipment and observation checklists
- Attendance recording sheets and feedback forms
- Safety equipment and first aid provisions

### Method (Step-by-Step)

#### Phase A: Pre-Drill Planning

1. Review residential accommodation layout and evacuation procedures
2. Identify drill objectives and success criteria
3. Prepare drill scenario and communication scripts
4. Coordinate with residential staff and emergency teams
5. Inform residents about drill timing and procedures

### **Phase B: Drill Setup**

1. Position observers at key locations
2. Prepare timing equipment and attendance recording
3. Ensure communication systems are operational
4. Confirm emergency response teams are ready

### **Phase C: Drill Execution**

1. Activate fire alarm system to simulate emergency
2. Mobilize staff response and evacuation teams
3. Monitor resident evacuation from sleeping areas
4. Verify procedures for mobility-impaired individuals
5. Check communication and coordination between teams

### **Phase D: Drill Evaluation**

1. Time evacuation completion and record observations
2. Verify attendance and participation of all residents
3. Assess staff response and coordination
4. Check assembly point procedures and headcount
5. Gather feedback from participants and observers

### **Phase E: Documentation and Debrief**

1. Document drill execution and outcomes
2. Prepare detailed drill report with findings
3. Record attendance and participation data
4. Identify lessons learned and improvement recommendations
5. Conduct debrief session with staff and residents

### **Measurements & Acceptance Criteria**

- All residents must evacuate within target time (typically 2-3 minutes)
- Staff response must be coordinated and effective
- Communication systems must function correctly
- Assembly procedures must account for all occupants

### **If Results Fail**

Follow instructions on the Compliance Pod task completion form to record remedial/follow up actions and generate Reactive Task Tickets as required. Immediately review and update evacuation

procedures. Escalate significant issues to facilities management and residential leadership. Schedule additional training or procedure revisions.

### Reinstatement & Housekeeping

Reset alarm systems and restore normal residential operations. Ensure all documentation is securely filed.

### Completion Checks

Verify that the drill report comprehensively documents the exercise. Confirm that attendance records are complete. Ensure photographic evidence shows assembly procedures.

## Record-Keeping & Evidence

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- **Upload Process:** Upload any required statutory or supporting evidence to the corresponding task form in Compliance Pod.
- **Statutory Evidence:** Drill report and attendance records must be retained for at least 3 years.
- **Supporting/Good Practice Evidence:** Detailed observations and photographic records support audit readiness.

## Common Pitfalls & Best Practice Tips

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- **Common mistakes to avoid:** Not informing residents adequately, poor timing causing distress, or failing to evaluate staff coordination
- **Best practices for efficient completion:** Plan drills carefully with resident input, conduct debrief sessions, and maintain detailed records of previous drills
- **Pro tips for educational settings:** Coordinate with residential staff for optimal timing, use drills as teaching opportunities, and maintain clear records of procedure updates
- **Warning signs that indicate problems:** Slow evacuation times, poor staff coordination, or communication failures

## Quick Reference Checklist

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- Residential layout and procedures reviewed
- Drill objectives and success criteria established
- Staff and resident communication completed
- Drill execution monitored and timed
- Evacuation procedures and coordination verified
- Attendance recorded and headcount confirmed

- Detailed drill report prepared
- Evidence uploaded to Compliance Pod

### Grouped Tasks

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This task is not normally grouped with other tasks.

### Related Tasks

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- Fire - Evacuation & Drills - Emergency Evacuation Chairs Full Service & Inspection
- Fire - Evacuation & Drills - Emergency Evacuation Chairs Quarterly Inspection
- Fire - Evacuation & Drills - Building Evacuation Drill

### Disclaimer

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