# TABLETOP EXERCISE – Fire (Arson)

## Summary

This tabletop exercise aims to test the response of staff when faced with the decision to close the education setting during adverse weather.

This exercise is designed to last approximately 80 minutes.

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| **Approximate timings** | **Activity** |
| 5 minutes | Introduction to exercise |
| 5 minutes | Inject 1 |
| 15 minutes | Group discussion |
| 5 minutes | Inject 2 |
| 15 minutes | Group discussion |
| 5 minutes | Inject 3 |
| 15 minutes | Group discussion |
| 15 minutes | Debrief |

## Inject 1

Scenario time

Sunday, 7pm.

Phone call from South Yorkshire Police

“The Head Teacher has received a phone call from PC Nick Rowan stating he has been called to a fire at the school premises. SYFR are in attendance following a phone call from local residents who had seen smoke above the school.”

Information

A fire has been started in the bin storage area and has spread to the school structure itself. No one was in the building at the time of the fire and damage is contained mainly to the kitchen but there is

significant smoke damage throughout much of the building, as well as water damage in the areas near the fire. SYFR has extinguished the fire and determined that it is safe to enter the building but believe the cause was arson.

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| * What arrangements should staff make today in order to prepare for a possible closure tomorrow?
* When would the decision to close be taken?
* What plans, policies, or procedures would you implement in response to this scenario?
* Who is in charge?
* If that person is unavailable, who is next in the line of succession?
* Who would conduct an initial damage assessment?
* If you are closing the education setting, how will parents / carer givers and pupils be informed?
	+ Who else would need to be notified and are the necessary contact details available?
* Are any other actions required?
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## Inject 2

Scenario time

Monday, 7am.

Phone call from South Yorkshire Police

“PC Nick Rowan informs that there is an active case for arson, following police inquiries several witnesses have given statements that two individuals were seen in the area with a fuel container and seen running from the scene.”

Information

Initial damage assessments have been done, finding extensive damage to the kitchen. Power has been lost to the rest of the building. The building has smoke and water damage, especially concentrated near the kitchen. The building will be unusable for an undetermined amount of time. Further damage assessment is continuing along with forensics carried out by the Police and Fire Service.

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| * Does this new information affect decisions made up to this point?
	+ Do you have an alternate site you can provide services?
	+ Do any additional plans or procedures need to be implemented?
* How will staff, parents / care givers, pupils, the local authority and the media be informed of developments and kept up to date?
* What welfare and safeguarding measures would need to be put in place?
* What support is needed to recover from damage caused by the fire?
* How are repairs going to be co-ordinated?
* Are any other actions required?
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**Inject 3**

**Scenario time**

Monday, 4pm.

**Information**

A full damage assessment has been completed. Repairs will take 6 weeks, during which time your building will be unusable for normal operations

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| * Does this new information affect decisions made up to this point?
	+ Are there any new or supplemental plans or procedures needed now?
* How will staff, parents / care givers, pupils, the local authority and the media be informed of developments and kept up to date?
* How can you accommodate students/pupils during reconstruction?
* How can you maintain staff during reconstruction?
* What if this happened during the school day?
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School Emergency Plan

Using your school’s emergency plan as a guide, discuss and answer the following questions:

* Who is responsible for leading the evacuation?
* What are the assigned responsibilities for staff?
* Which agencies will you notify? What are their numbers?
* How would you communicate with your families; staff; facility

services/Local Authority/CEO?

* If your primary means of communication goes down, what is the alternate method?
* What actions would need to occur to secure the site, including school/pupil/staff records?

For the Debrief

* What strengths in your workplace’s emergency plans did this exercise identify?
* What weaknesses in your workplace’s emergency plans did this exercise expose?
* What unanticipated issues arose during the exercise?
* What gaps were identified?
* What are some high-priority issues that should be addressed?
* What are some new ideas and recommendations for improvement?