

Emergency Lighting Advice

The following advice has been provided by the Risk Management Team after discussion with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service. It is aimed specifically at emergency lighting in school buildings.

Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the responsible person has a duty to ensure that: *“Where necessary (whether due to the features of the premises, the activities carried on there, any hazard present or any other relevant circumstances) - emergency routes and exits requiring illumination must be provided with emergency lighting of adequate intensity in case of failure of the normal lighting.”*

As part of your fire risk assessment you will need to consider whether emergency lighting is required. You should assess all areas which are used outside normal daylight hours including those parts of the school which are used;

- for after school activities such as evening classes;
- for governors meetings
- by community groups;
- by cleaners;
- by staff.

Many schools within Shropshire have emergency lighting in circulation spaces and in halls and gymnasias. However, you may find that the escape routes in certain parts of your school are not adequately equipped. Published guidance on fire risk assessments in educational premises states that in a small, simple premises (and depending upon the particular circumstances), borrowed light – for example from nearby street lighting may be adequate. The provision of torches for use by a small number of trained members of staff may also be acceptable in some circumstances. In larger and more complex premises, a comprehensive system of automatic emergency lighting is likely to be needed.

In those parts of your school which do not have emergency lighting, you will need to assess whether the lighting from other sources is adequate to enable people to escape in the event of a fire and if the normal lighting system fails. If the available lighting is found to be inadequate and it is not feasible for you to either provide emergency lighting or extend an existing system to cover the affected areas, you may need to think about whether it is possible to confine the out of hours activities to areas of the school which do have adequate lighting.

Whatever decision you reach, it is vital that you keep a record of the factors that you have taken into account and that you carefully document your decision in your fire risk assessment.