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| **Guidance document title:** | **Schools’ Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan**  **(PEEP Guidance)** |
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**What is a PEEP?**

A PEEP is a **P**ersonal **E**mergency **E**vacuation **P**lan. It is a bespoke 'escape plan' for individuals who may not be able to reach an ultimate place of safety unaided or within a satisfactory period of time in the event of any emergency (fire, flooding, loss of power, lock-out, etc).

**Who needs a PEEP?**

PEEPs may be required for those people (employees and students) with:

* Mobility difficulties
* Sight impairments
* Hearing impairments
* Cognitive difficulties
* Other circumstances

***A temporary PEEP may be required for:***

* Short term injuries (e.g., a broken leg)
* Temporary medical conditions (e.g., an eye patch after surgery)
* Those employees who are pregnant (usually in the latter stages of pregnancy but the need may arise sooner because of conditions such as SPD (Symphysis pubis dysfunction)

**How do I determine whether someone needs a PEEP?**

The main question in deciding whether a PEEP is necessary is **"can you evacuate the building unaided, in a prompt manner, during an emergency situation?"** If the answer is "no", then it is likely that a PEEP is needed.

**Does it have to be written down?**

Where an employee or pupil regularly uses a building, it is important that emergency

evacuation issues are properly identified, and arrangements documented in a PEEP. A copy of the PEEP should be held in the school office (on the pupil’s or staff member’s file) and if the PEEP is for a pupil, the teacher in charge of the class should hold a copy too. As with most SHaW documentation the need to have this in writing is both for clarity, evidence and communication.

**Who writes the PEEP?**

It is the responsibility of Headteacher to ensure that a PEEP is produced for those that need one, who are within their area of responsibility (i.e., employees and students). Where possible, it should be ensured that the **individual concerned is actively involved in the creation of their PEEP.** Clearly parents, carers, Occupational Therapists and other relevant healthcare workers all have a relevant part where students are unable to contribute to their PEEP. Premises managers or Premises Responsible Persons should also be involved where required, for instance to identify suitable refuge areas, or to discuss any concerns with Property Services, etc.

A copy of the agreed PEEP should always be sent to the manager in control of the premises, placed on individual’s risk assessments, care plans or HR files.

**What do I need to include in a PEEP?**

The following factors need to be considered when writing a PEEP. **A form for recording the**

**PEEP is posted on Suffolk Learning at:** <https://suffolklearning.com/safety-health-wellbeing/fire-precaution-information/> and also at <https://suffolklearning.com/safety-health-wellbeing/risk-assessment/> .

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| **Factor to consider** | **Points to note (not an exhaustive list – it may depend on the building and individual)** |
| **The individual** | * Nature of restricted mobility * Temporary or permanent? * If possible, discuss their PEEP with them – if this isn’t possible, bring in parents / carers, clinicians etc to assist with writing the document * What will help them evacuate safely? * What is there awareness of the alarm sounding? |
| **Where the individual usually works or studies** | It is likely to be more than one area, and therefore each area may need slightly different arrangements. |
| **The current provisions for fire evacuation in the building** | * Does the building have refuge areas in quickly accessible locations? * Are the Fire Wardens / Marshals aware of any potential problems evacuating the building? * Is the means of raising the alarm consistent with the individual? (e.g., a person with a hearing impairment may not be able to hear an audible alarm) * The exit routes that can be used * Any designated refuge points available |
| **The current evacuation arrangements for the person** | * Are there any people appointed to assist the individual in an evacuation (buddy systems)? * Is there adequate ‘cover’ **at all times** that the person is within the school? |
| **Communication and awareness** | * Means of alerting the individual to the alarm activation * Means of alerting the evacuation manager or fire wardens / marshals of any problems * Does the person, or their Buddy, need more awareness of procedures? * Do all the staff involved need refresher training on fire evacuation procedures? * Does everyone know how to report to the designated personnel (evacuation manager and wardens / marshals)? |
| **Equipment** | * What equipment is needed and where it can be found * If and when this equipment needs inspecting * If and when this equipment needs routine maintenance |

**Systems of evacuation**

The safe and effective evacuation of people with disabilities or restricted mobility needs to be undertaken with all due consideration. Management procedures need to be in place, which take account of the scenarios that could foreseeably arise. For example, the procedures adopted for disabled staff in a building, will be different to those for disabled people visiting the building who may be unfamiliar with its layout, or for students with restricted mobility.

Systems of evacuation that may be implemented include:

***Progressive horizontal evacuation***

This system can be used in buildings with a phased alarm system and is usually found in larger premises. It involves a person passing from one 'fire compartment' into another that is not part of the initial evacuation zone. A ‘fire compartment’ is a part of a building separated from other parts of the same building by fire-resisting walls, ceilings, floors and doors. **Your fire risk assessor can advise you on these areas and assist with compiling the PEEP, if this is appropriate.**

***Evacuation by lift***

This method is only possible where there are special ‘fire-fighting lifts’ with a secondary power supply/battery backup and a structurally protected lobby shaft.

***Evacuation by stairs***

This method involves the use of equipment such as 'Evac-Chairs'. It is usually only possible if people are being evacuated downwards, or horizontally. Where this method is used, it is the responsibility of the **premises responsible person (PRPs)** to ensure that an adequate number of employees are trained in the use of evac-chairs, and where necessary trained in assisting individuals into it. PRPs should also ensure that evac-chairs are readily available. If there are concerns about location or availability, the PRP should be made aware. Evac-Chair training can be sourced via your SHaW Advisor.

**Using refuges**

Refuges are defined as: *‘Relatively safe waiting areas for short periods. They are not areas where disabled people should be left alone indefinitely until rescued by the fire brigade, or until the fire is extinguished (this should not be confused with the use of refuges in progressive horizontal evacuation).’*

A refuge is an area separated from the fire, by fire-resisting construction. This area also has access to a final fire exit via a safe route. It provides a temporary space for disabled or mobility restricted people to wait for others, who will then help them evacuate.

**Visitors**

It would be difficult to create a ***written*** PEEP for every visitor who could require assistance during an emergency. However, general arrangements should be in place to consider and address any issues which arise:

* Check that exit routes from areas open to the public are easily accessible
* If a meeting or event is being organised, ensure that the location is suitable for the likely attendees
* When planning meetings or events (such as school plays etc), ask people to inform you beforehand if they require any assistance in an emergency
* Posting notices in reception areas asking visitors to contact a member of staff if they require any assistance in an evacuation
* Consider the multitude of potential reasons why someone may need a PEEP and plan for that action. A dynamic assessment of their needs may need to occur.

**Reviewing PEEPs**

A PEEP should be reviewed on an annual basis, or sooner if required, for instance:

* Changes to the layout of the building
* Changes to the health, disability or mobility of the individual
* Where a (real or practice) evacuation has revealed problems in the PEEP
* There have been changes in personnel providing assistance
* Following an office move or relocation to another building.