



Press Release

Press release from **Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service** and **Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Authority**
Making Derbyshire Safer Together

9 NOVEMBER 2020

CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL SIGN STATEMENT OF INTENT TO FIT SPRINKLERS INTO SCHOOLS

Derby City Council and Derbyshire County Council have both signed a Statement of Intent committing to fit sprinklers and the right fire safety measures in new build schools and primary and secondary schools undergoing significant renovation, refurbishment or extension.

Derby City Council Leader, Councillor Chris Poulter and Derbyshire County Council Leader, Councillor Barry Lewis supported Derbyshire's Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive (CFO) Gavin Tomlinson's call for schools to be fitted with sprinklers following three devastating school fires in 2020, all signing a Statement of Intent showing their commitment to protecting schools across Derby and Derbyshire from the devastating impact of fire.

CFO Tomlinson, who is also the national lead for sprinklers for the National Fire Chiefs Council, has been campaigning for a change in legislation to mandate that all new build and refurbished schools be fitted with sprinklers as part of adequate fire safety measures.

Speaking following the joint commitment from both the city and county council leaders, CFO Tomlinson said: "The impact of a school fire has far reaching consequences; not only do they have a large economic cost, but they also rip into the heart of a community. This year I have witnessed three separate schools destroyed by fire despite the best efforts of my firefighters.

"Sadly I cannot change the outcome of these particular school fires, but through my work locally in Derbyshire and as the lead for the National Fire Chiefs Council, I am able to campaign and help protect other schools from the impact of fire in the future.

"Sprinklers are an effective fire safety measure that can extinguish a fire, or contain it until the arrival of fire crews. With this in mind, I am delighted that both the City and County Council have joined me in signing a Statement of Intent to protect all new build schools and those undergoing refurbishment. This really is a step in the right direction to safeguard our

email: enquiries@derbys-fire.gov.uk
www.derbys-fire.gov.uk

Gavin Tomlinson MBA MIFireE
Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive



children's education, our economy and protect firefighters and front line emergency services from the impact of such devastating fires."

Councillor Chris Poulter the Leader of Derby City Council said: "Our schools are at the heart of our communities, and we are proud to be supporting this Statement of Intent.

"Losing a school has an enormous community impact, as we've seen recently with not one but two fires at Derby schools no thanks to some abhorrent individuals who chose to set fires in them.

"There is currently no legal requirement for existing schools to have sprinkler systems, and we believe this needs to change, and the Government needs to act.

"Fires that cause such devastation should never happen when there are fire safety measures that can prevent them."

Councillor Barry Lewis, Leader of Derbyshire County Council, said "Fire devastates lives. School fires, even if there is no loss of life, have huge impacts on education and communities. It is vital that we use every defence measure possible and Derbyshire County Council has no hesitation in playing our part in this commitment to protect our children and our schools."

You can read more about Derbyshire's 'Think Sprinkler' Campaign and read the [Statement of Intent](#) by visiting www.derbys-fire.gov.uk You can also follow the Service on its social media channels to hear more about the work undertaken to Make Derbyshire Safer Together @DerbyshireFRS

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NOTE TO REPORTERS

The three school fires referred to are:

28 May 2020	Harrington School, Long Eaton
3 October 2020	St Mary's School, Darley Abbey
5 October 2020	Ravensdale Infant School, Micklevoer