



Great Schools Trust

# Lockdown Policy

June 2019

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All schools should consider the need for robust and tested school lockdown procedures. Lockdown procedures should be seen as a sensible and proportionate response to any external or internal incident which has the potential to pose a threat to the safety of staff and students in the school. Procedures should aim to minimise disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all students and staff. Lockdown procedures may be activated in response to any number of situations but some of the more typical might be:

- A reported incident/civil disturbance in the local community with the potential to pose a risk to students and staff
- An intruder on the school site with the potential to pose a risk to students and staff
- A warning being received regarding a risk locally of air pollution (smoke plume, gas cloud etc)
- A major fire in the vicinity of the school
- The close proximity of a dangerous dog roaming loose

## **Lockdown Arrangements**

There are two types of lockdown; partial and full

### **1. Partial Lockdown**

Issue recognised-alert to staff via bells.

In a partial lockdown staff and students should remain in the school building and all doors leading outside should be locked. No one should be allowed to enter or leave the building; however teaching and work can continue as usual. This may be as the result of a reported incident/civil disturbance in the local community with the potential to pose a risk to staff and students in the school. It may also be as a result of a warning being received regarding the risk of air pollution, etc.

### **Immediate action**

- All outside activity to cease immediately, student and staff return to the building
- All staff and students remain in the building and external doors and windows are to be locked
- Free movement may be permitted within the building dependent upon circumstances
- In the event of an air pollution or chemical, biological or radiological contaminants issue, air vents, fans, heating and air conditioning systems should be closed or turned off

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- Use anything to hand to seal up all the cracks around doors and any vents into the room to minimise the possible ingress of pollutants
- Staff should await further instructions

Once all staff and students are safely inside, senior staff will conduct an ongoing and dynamic risk assessment based on advice from the emergency services.

A Partial Lockdown may also be a precautionary measure, but puts the school in a state of readiness (whilst retaining a degree of normality) should the situation escalate.

Emergency services will advise as to the best course of action in respect of the prevailing threat.

## **2. Full Lockdown**

Issue recognised alert to staff via bells and message on projector screens.

This signifies an immediate threat to the school and may be an escalation of a partial lockdown. The aim of a full lockdown is for the school and its rooms to appear empty.

### **Immediate action**

- All students and staff stay in their classroom or move to the nearest classroom
- Office staff should remain in their office. All other staff should move to the nearest office or safe room.
- External doors to be locked by Site Staff. Classroom doors to be locked from the inside.
- Windows to be locked, blinds drawn and internal windows covered if feasible (so that an intruder cannot see in).
- Students/staff sit quietly out of sight and where possible in a location that would protect them from gunfire. This would be under the desks in a normal classroom. Individuals with mobility problems should be seated out of view from the windows.
- Lights, computer monitors and projectors to be turned off.
- Mobile phones to be turned off or on to silent.
- A register to be taken of all students/staff in each classroom/office.
- Communicate register to student services
- Staff should await further instructions. Bells will be rung again to signal end of lockdown.

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Staff and students are to remain in lockdown until it has been lifted by a senior member of staff/emergency services. At any point during the lockdown, the fire alarm may sound which is a cue to evacuate the building.

During the lockdown staff will keep agreed lines of communication open but not make any unnecessary calls to reception/office as this could delay more important communication. Communication lines could be email, iPad display or text messages via the Tucasi system.

## **School Lockdown Plan**

- The Principal is nominated as lockdown manager (Vice Principal in his absence) to initiate, manage and conclude the lockdown. They will also communicate with emergency services.
- Staff are alerted to the activation of the plan by a recognised signal, audible throughout the school.
- Pupils/staff who are outside of the school buildings should be brought inside as quickly as possible.
  - Those inside the school should remain in their classrooms or proceed directly to the nearest classroom.
- All external doors and, as necessary, windows are locked (depending on the circumstances, internal classroom doors may also need to be locked).
- Blinds/curtains drawn and windows on internal doors covered.
- Once in lockdown mode, staff should notify Student Services immediately of any pupils not accounted for and any additional pupils/staff in their classroom via the agreed communication channel.
- Staff should encourage the pupils to keep calm.
- As appropriate, the school should establish communication with the Emergency Services as soon as possible.
- If necessary, parents should be notified as soon as it is practicable to do so via the school's established communications system.
- Pupils must not be released to parents during a lockdown.
- If it is necessary to evacuate the building, the fire alarm should sound.
- Any visitors in reception at the time of the alarm sounding will be taken into the Admin office.
- Establish agreed methods of communication from staff to the lockdown manager should a dangerous intruder be located on the school premises.
- An overview sheet outlining the school's procedures will be displayed in the staffroom and other places throughout the school as appropriate (see Appendix A).

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In the event a school is in lockdown and the fire alarm sounds, the school should contact the emergency services as in a normal fire alarm activation. A nominated member of staff who has a means of remote communication (e.g. a walkie talkie) should go to the fire alarm panel to establish what zone has been activated. Once the zone has been identified, the alarm should be silenced and another person sent to the area to investigate. They will need to approach with caution as there may be a fire or an intruder may have activated the alarm. If a fire is discovered this information should be communicated back to the person at the fire alarm panel, who should resound the alarm, update the emergency services and evacuate the school.

Due to the fast moving nature of incidents that require lockdown it is important that all staff are able to act quickly and effectively. Staff should have clear roles and responsibilities and it is of vital importance that the school's lockdown procedures are familiar to members of the senior management team, school administrators, teaching staff and non-teaching staff. Depending on their age, pupils should also be aware of the plan. (Regular practices will increase their familiarity).

Staff's will receive regular training refreshers. A lockdown drill will be undertaken at least once a year and thoroughly debriefed to monitor the effectiveness of our arrangements.

### **Communication between parents and the school**

Arrangements for communicating with parents in the event of a lockdown, should be routinely shared either via newsletter or the school website. In the event of an actual lockdown, it is strongly advised that any incident or development is communicated to parents as soon as is practicable. It is obvious that parents will be concerned but regular communication of accurate information will help to alleviate undue anxiety. Parents should be given enough information about what will happen so that they:

- Are reassured that the school understands their concern for their child's welfare, and that it is doing everything possible to ensure his/her safety.
- Do not need to contact the school. Calling the school could tie up telephone lines that are required for contacting emergency support providers.
- Do not come to the school. They could interfere with emergency support provider's access to the school and may even put themselves and others in danger.
- Wait for the school to contact them about when it is safe to collect their children, and where this will be from.
- Are aware of what will happen if the lockdown continues beyond school hours.

The 'communication with parents' section of the school lockdown plan needs to reassure parents that the school understands their concern for their children's welfare and that everything that can possibly be done to ensure children's safety will be done. However, it may also be prudent to reinforce the message that 'the school

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is in a full lockdown situation. During this period the switchboard and entrances will be un-manned, external doors locked and nobody is allowed in or out... Should parents present at the school during a lockdown under no circumstances should members of staff leave the building to communicate directly with them.

### Emergency Services

It is important to keep lines of communication open with Emergency Services as they are best placed to offer advice as a situation unfolds. The school site may or may not be cordoned off by Emergency Services depending on the severity of the incident that has triggered the lockdown. Emergency Services will support the decision of the Principal regarding the timing of communication to parents. In the event of a prolonged lockdown or more severe scenario, emergency services, local authorities and voluntary sector organisations will work together to co-ordinate practical and emotional support to those affected by any emergency, also referred to as humanitarian assistance. A reception centre for friends and family could be set-up outside of the cordoned area.

## **Emergency Procedures**

### **Fire Alarm**

In the event of the fire alarm sounding (which is specify school's alarm) please leave the school buildings by the nearest fire escape route and assemble following the fire evacuation procedures.

### **Lockdown Alarm**

In the event of explain school's own recognised signal, stay indoors, in the room/classroom that you are in. If you are outside when this bell sounds, make your way to the nearest classroom or hall.

Specify how staff will be informed if it is a partial or full lockdown and how further information will be shared. E.g: An e-mail will be sent to 'All Staff' giving instructions as to what to do – please ensure this is checked and not on the screen for the children to read. It is therefore important that a computer is always logged on (and e-mail accounts opened) during teaching sessions. Internal phones may also be used for communication. If you are with children it is important to:

- remain calm
- reassure them
- remind them to follow your instructions

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