

# Our Lady of the Wayside Catholic Primary School

## Lockdown Policy and Procedures



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## 1. Introduction

The safety and wellbeing of our pupils, staff, and visitors is our highest priority. While emergencies are very rare, it is important that our school is fully prepared to respond calmly and effectively should one occur. A **lockdown** is a precautionary response designed to keep everyone safe if there is a potential threat inside or near the school grounds.

This policy sets out the procedures for initiating, managing, and ending a lockdown. It provides guidance for staff, pupils, parents, and visitors so that everyone understands what to expect and how to act. By knowing the procedures and working together, we can ensure that our school community remains safe and reassured in any situation.

## 2. Definitions

An 'evacuation' is the orderly removal of pupils, staff members and visitors from the school building; this can be as a result of a fire or other incident within the building.

The term 'invacuation' refers to the process of making staff members aware of an emergency and moving pupils, staff members and visitors to the most sheltered areas within the building. This procedure is employed if moving outside would increase the risk of harm to people, e.g. toxic fumes in the air.

'Lockdown' refers to the procedure of locking external doors and windows before taking immediate shelter in a secure location. This procedure is typically invoked as a response to a security threat.

## 3. Situations requiring Lockdown

There is a wide variety of scenarios which may trigger a school's lock down procedures. Some examples may include:

- A reported incident/civil disturbance in the local community (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils in the school).
- An intruder on the school site (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils).
- 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 or other dangerous animal.

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

### Headteacher (Security Lead)

- Appoint a Security Lead (Headteacher or a designated senior leader) who oversees protective security and preparedness, maintains the lockdown policy, ensures communication with emergency services.
- Ensure risk assessments are up to date and include security threats, vulnerabilities.
- Ensure plans cover all response options: lockdown, invacuation, evacuation.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to protective security and preparedness, including ensuring that staff are appropriately trained on security protocols, including how to handle emergencies
- Liaise with external agencies, such as police and emergency services, to ensure effective communication and collaboration, and engaging with the local community to build relationships and improve the overall security environment
- Manage and delegate the response to an incident. The security lead will normally become the 'incident lead'.

- Ensure a member of SLT is available to deputise during any absence.
- Ensure a Grab Kit is in place.

### **Incident Lead**

This role becomes active during an incident and should be responsible for, or should delegate the following responsibilities:

- leading the initial response to the incident within the setting including determining the most appropriate course of action for example, whether to lockdown, invacuate or evacuate etc
- liaising with the police to incorporate their advice into an overall site response
- making fast, clear decisions under pressure, to get people to safety
- helping individuals to remain calm, which is especially important for younger learners
- responding appropriately to any safety concerns, for instance people reported missing
- communicating about the incident to parents and carers of those affected
- leading any responses to interest on social media and in the mainstream media, if required
- managing resources effectively, including consideration for the wellbeing of staff, learners and families affected

### **Staff**

- participate in training and awareness programmes related to protective security and preparedness measures
- be vigilant and reporting any suspicious activity to the security lead or appropriate authorities
- support the security lead in implementing and maintaining the protective security and preparedness plan
- be familiar with incident response plans, such as lockdown, invacuation and evacuation options, exit routes, methods of communicating in an incident
- providing additional support to those who are particularly vulnerable for instance, staff or learners with SEND.

During an incident, staff should:

- be prepared to call 999 unless they are certain that someone else has already called the emergency services (members of staff should not assume that someone else has called 999)
- keep track of the learners, who they are with and report any concerns about the safety of any learners to the Incident Lead and/or police
- escalate the incident to the Security Lead or to another senior member of staff, so that an Incident Lead can be delegated
- be responsible for their own safety, but also be aware of the duty of care they owe to all learners within their setting
- be aware of the incident response plan for the setting and undergo relevant incident response training
- make dynamic decisions using their best judgement based on the information available to them
- staff should advise any other adults on site how to respond, particularly visitors who are not aware of the incident response plans
- if a lockdown is the safest option, all staff should help secure the building by locking doors if safe to do so, closing windows, and ensuring everyone moves away from sightlines e.g. windows and doors. Non-teaching staff may need to assist with securing the perimeter or directing others to safe locations.

## 5. Invacuation Procedures

### Signal

- The warning system will be a **stop/start siren**. This signal informs colleagues to prepare for an internal invacuation.
- During break time, the '**playground bell**' will be rung as a prompt for children and staff to come inside; Senior Staff will move quickly through the playground instructing all staff and children to move indoors.

### Actions

- Pupils, staff members and visitors outside the school building will move quickly and quietly through the nearest entrance to the building.
- When everyone is inside, main entrances, external doors, and windows are to be securely locked.
- All staff members should be aware that the only identified designated 'safe rooms' throughout the school building are classrooms and the staffroom.
- Each class is guided towards their designated 'safe room' by their classroom teacher or staff member, ensuring that all pupils, staff members and visitors are accounted for.
- Staff members will instruct pupils to stay away from windows and doors.
- Pupils and staff members are to remain in their designated rooms/positions until told to do so by the emergency services, or the headteacher has given an announcement to declare the risk has gone.

## 6. Lockdown Procedures

### Partial Lockdown

This may be a result of a reported incident / civil disturbance in the local community with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils in the school. It may also be as a result of a warning being received regarding the risk of air pollution, etc. Partial lockdown is a precautionary measure which ensures that the school is in a state of readiness should a situation escalate, whilst also enabling a degree of normality to continue.

### Partial Lockdown Procedures

- Once the Headteacher or Deputy Head has decided to instigate a partial lockdown, the partial lockdown alarm will sound, **this is a stop/start siren**.
- The office staff will phone the Nursery to advise them that the school is in partial lockdown.
- The office staff will send a short, internal email to all staff advising of the situation. All teachers during partial lockdown should be logged into their email system.
- If required, the office staff will contact the Our Lady and All Saints MAC, Local Authority, Emergency Services and will inform the Site Manager if they are off site.

### **Partial Lockdown Immediate action:**

- All outside activity to cease immediately; pupils and staff return to the main building closing doors behind them.
- Headteacher or Deputy Head will walk around the outside perimeter of the school and ensure that any staff and children working outside are alerted to the partial lockdown status.
- If it is break time, the school will firstly decide if the instigation of partial lockdown can be delayed until the end of break; this will help to avoid confusion. However, if it must be instigated during break time, the '**playground bell**' will be rung as a prompt for children and staff to come inside; Senior Staff will move quickly through the playground instructing all staff and children to move indoors.

- On hearing the partial lock-down siren teaching staff will undertake a headcount (or register) to ensure all pupils are accounted for. They will email the school office ([office@ol-wayside.solihull.sch.uk](mailto:office@ol-wayside.solihull.sch.uk)) immediately if a pupil is unaccounted for.
- The office staff will send a short, internal email to all staff advising of the situation; all teachers during partial lockdown should be logged into their email system as this will be a discrete tool for circulating non urgent information.
- All staff and pupils remain in the main school building and external doors and windows closed – but not locked.
- No pupils are to access the school reception area or school office during a partial lockdown.
- Free movement will be permitted within the building unless circumstances are such that this is not possible. Staff will be advised via email.
- All situations are different, once all staff and pupils are safely inside, senior staff will conduct an ongoing and dynamic risk assessment based on advice from Local Authority and Emergency Services and changing circumstances. Senior staff will advise school staff when lock down procedures are lifted.

## **Full Lockdown**

This signifies an immediate threat to the school and may be an escalation of a partial lockdown. There is no attempt to continue normal business inside the school building and no movement around the school unless absolutely necessary and in response to changing circumstances.

## **Full Lockdown Procedures**

- Once the Headteacher or Deputy Head has decided to instigate a full lockdown, **the lockdown siren will ring continuously.**
- The office staff will send a short, internal email to all staff advising of the situation; all teachers during full lockdown should be logged into their email system as this will be a discrete tool for circulating non urgent information.
- The office staff will contact the Our Lady and All Saints MAC, Local Authority, Emergency Services and will inform the Site Manager if they are off site.

## **Full Lockdown Immediate action:**

- All pupils and staff return immediately to their classrooms or, if there is a risk associated with accessing any particular classroom, go into another nearby room.
- Site Manager and Headteacher or Deputy Head will walk through the school and ensure that all external doors are **closed and locked**. The main entrance into the school will also be locked and a note will be displayed advising visitors that the school is currently locked down.
- Where possible, classroom doors will be locked by class teachers. Classroom windows will be locked and blinds will be drawn.
- Pupils sit together, quietly and out of sight as much as possible (eg under desk or around a corner).
- Each teacher to do a head count of the children in their class. If this suggests that not all children are accounted for, take a register. Email the office immediately if a child is missing. HT and Emergency Services should be made aware of any children not accounted for; staff should not search for a missing child unless it is certain where that child is, the location is nearby and there is not apparent risk to that vicinity.
- School remains in full lockdown until it is lifted by a senior member of staff. The lifting of full lockdown – or the downgrading to partial lockdown – will initially be shared via the school email system.

### **Evacuation:**

- At any point during a lockdown, we may need to evacuate the building. The fire alarm will signal to evacuate. Please follow fire alarm procedures.
- If it is unsafe to return to the school building the school will evacuate to Our Lady of the Wayside Church or to Shirley Heath Junior School.
- For the majority of incidents, the safest option will be for children and staff to remain in the building. **This may not always be the case** and in some circumstances staff will need to make their own decision – for example, there is an intruder in the building with a firearm trying to access their classroom. In circumstances such as these staff will follow national guidance of – Run, Hide and Tell. Staff receive regular training to support them in this decision making process.

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

School lockdown procedures, especially arrangements for communicating with parents, will be on the school website and parents will be signposted to this information periodically in routine communication such as newsletters.

In the event of the full lockdown, the incident or development will be communicated to parents as soon as is practicable. Parents will be concerned but regular communication of accurate information will help to alleviate undue anxiety.

The office staff, once secure themselves and have instigated all other processes outlined above will send a text message and email stating *'The school has gone into full lockdown. This is because.....Every effort is being taken to keep the children safe. During this period, the switchboard and entrances will be unmanned, external doors locked and nobody allowed in or out. Do not contact the school as this will tie up emergency telephone communications. Do not come to the school as your child cannot be released to you. Wait for the school to contact you when it is safe to come and collect your child'*.

This message may be modified depending on the circumstances.

## **8. Training and drills**

Regular training takes place for all staff (including non-teaching and volunteers) so everyone understands the policy, their role, and how to respond.

Drills are carried out regularly when pupils are not present.

## **9. Supporting Pupils with SEND**

School takes into consideration the needs of pupils with of SEND: mobility, communication, sensory issues. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) are put into place for those children requiring one.

## **10. Key Protective Security Concepts**

### **See, Check and Notify (SCaN)**

Staff and pupils are encouraged to be vigilant:

- a. **See** – Remain alert to suspicious activity or behaviour.
- b. **Check** – If safe, consider what might explain the behaviour/item.

- c. **Notify** – Report concerns immediately to the school office, safeguarding lead, or police if urgent.

**HOT Protocol** (for unattended items):

- d. **Hidden** – Is the item concealed or placed where it should not be?
- e. **Obviously suspicious** – Does it have wires, batteries, or emit unusual smells/sounds?
- f. **Typical** – Is it something you would reasonably expect in that location?  
If the item is *Hidden and/or Obviously suspicious and not Typical* → treat as suspicious, move people away, and notify emergency services.

**RUN, HIDE, TELL** (terrorist/armed attack guidance):

- g. **RUN** if safe to do so.
- h. **HIDE** if you cannot escape – stay out of sight, silence phones, barricade entry points.
- i. **TELL** police and emergency services as soon as it is safe.

## 11. Policy Review

This Lockdown Policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there's a relevant incident or change in threat level.