

Sheffield Lower School

Lockdown Procedures 2023-24

Lockdown procedures act 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 pupils in the school. The procedures aim to minimise disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all pupils 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 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

Partial Lockdown

'Partial lockdown' is a precautionary measure but puts the school in a state of readiness (whilst retaining a degree of normality). An alert to staff will be given by senior leaders: 'Partial lockdown'. All outside activity to cease immediately, pupils and staff return to building. Walkie Talkies will be used to communicate the alert to duty staff at break times All staff and pupils remain in building and external doors and windows locked. Free movement may be permitted within the building dependent upon circumstances. This may be as 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. All situations are different, an alarm may not be necessary, SLT will ask all staff to keep the children inside. Once all staff and pupils are safely inside, senior staff will conduct an ongoing and dynamic risk assessment based on advice from the Emergency Services. In the event of an air pollution issue, air vents can be closed (where possible) as an additional precaution. A message will be sent to classes once the lockdown is deemed to be over. Emergency Services will advise as to the best course of action in respect of the prevailing threat.

Full Lock Down

Full Lockdown Alert to staff: 'Full lockdown' This signifies an immediate threat to the school and may be an escalation of a partial lockdown.

Immediate action

- On receipt of information necessitating lockdown, the School Reception to contact the senior member of staff on site to alert them to necessity to **Lockdown**.
- Headteacher or Senior Member of staff on site to call emergency services and CBC, as relevant, with details of the threat and request immediate assistance.
- Once the decision to lockdown has been taken by the senior member of staff, reception staff to raise the alarm by turning the INVACUATION key to the right (blue box located directly above the fire panel).
- Staff are alerted to the activation of the lockdown procedure by a recognised alarm signal audible throughout the school building (continuous bell).

- All outside activity to cease immediately, pupils and staff to return to their classroom, or other designated area as quickly as possible.
- Those pupils inside the school to remain in their classroom or other designated area (hall, library, Poplar, dining hall).
- All external doors and windows, as necessary, are to be locked, blinds drawn and pupils encouraged to sit quietly out of sight (depending on the circumstances) where a member of staff with a key is present.
- Non classroom based staff/SLT will lock the external doors in the corridor and close blinds.
- Once in lockdown mode, registers to be taken. The office will in turn contact each class and staff to notify office immediately of any pupils not accounted for. SLT to instigate an immediate search for anyone missing if relevant to do so, including visitors.
- During the lockdown, staff will keep agreed lines of communication open but not make unnecessary calls to the central office as this could delay more important communication.
- In a lockdown situation, it may be necessary for staff to use their mobile phones to notify office and senior staff of any gaps in their registers. This is within the mobile phone policy and the rest of the mobile phone policy still applies.
- Staff and pupils to remain in lockdown until it has been lifted by SLT or emergency services.
- At any point during the lockdown, the fire alarm may sound which is a cue to evacuate the building.
- Classroom staff to direct and reassure children (e.g. explaining that we are practising our hide and seek skills), encouraging them to remain calm and quiet.
- Reception to contact the Children's Centre and Acorn Pre School to advise what is happening if necessary.
- Central Bedfordshire Council should be notified via the 'School Emergency' phone number on **07964 111942**
- Visitors – Visitors attending the school will be made aware of lockdown procedures on arrival. They will engage with the lockdown and the office will provide SLT with a register of visitors. Reasonable efforts will be made to account for all visitors.
- Staff will alert any visitors due to attend the school if it is practicable to do so.
- If it is necessary to evacuate the building, the fire alarm will be sounded
- SLT will notify staff when it safe to end the lockdown.

If appropriate senior and office staff will walk the building and let staff know what is happening and check that external doors are locked. Depending upon the situation, staff may be advised that they can carry on teaching as normal but just not to let anyone go outside.

The lockdown alarm will not sound throughout the lockdown but the building will remain in lockdown until you are advised otherwise by phone or by senior member of staff.

Communication between parents and the school

If the situation is ongoing and lockdown is going to continue for some considerable time, it is strongly advised that any incident or development is communicated to parents as soon as 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 they:

- Are reassured that the school understands their concern for the 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 needed for contacting emergency providers.
- Do not come to the school. They could interfere with emergency 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 for them to get their children and where this will be from.
- Pupils will not be released to parents during a lockdown
- If practicable, a message will be sent to parents stating that '...the school is in a full lockdown situation. During this period the switchboard and entrances will be un-manned, external doors locked and nobody allowed in or out...'

Rehearsal

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. To achieve this, a lockdown drill should be undertaken at least once a year. Pupils should also be made aware of the plan through regular practice to increase familiarity. Parents too should know that the school has a lockdown plan, and a copy will be placed on the school's website. The site team will display lockdown drill information in every classroom alongside information relating to fire drills. Staff will have the opportunity during INSET time to hear the lockdown alarm so that it can be recognised and not confused with the fire alarm. School lockdown procedures, especially arrangements for communicating with parents, will be routinely shared with parents either by newsletter or via the school website.

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 Headteacher with regarding the timing of communication to parents. In the event of a prolonged lockdown or more severe scenario, Central Bedfordshire Council has the capacity to provide humanitarian assistance by establishing a Reception Centre for friend and family outside of the cordoned area.