

Whetstone Field Primary School

Lockdown Policy February 2023



As part of a government directive we have a plan for "lockdowns". Lockdown procedures are important and would be used in response to an internal or external incident which could be a threat to the safety of staff and pupils in the school.

Lockdown procedures may be activated in response to any number of situations, these may be:

1. A reported incident, disturbance in the local community
2. An intruder on the site
3. A warning being received regarding a local risk of air pollution (smoke plume, gas cloud etc.)
4. A major fire in the vicinity of the school
5. The close proximity of a dangerous dog roaming close

In the event of an actual lockdown parents will be notified by a text message as soon as it is reasonably possible.

Whetstone Field Primary 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 pupils in the school. Procedures should aim to minimise disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all pupils and staff.

The school's lockdown plan is as follows

Signals	
Signal for lockdown	Alert to staff: 'Full lockdown' via a ring that is a different, (recognised) sound to the fire alarm. The bell will sound continuously for approximately 30 seconds.
Signal for all clear	Same bell sound as alert to "Full lockdown"

Lockdown	
Areas/rooms for lockdown	All classes to remain in own classrooms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lock the door ● Lock windows ● Draw blinds ● Take a head count ● If possible cover up the glass on the door/s ● Keep pupils calm and reassure ● Be alert for further communication
Entrance points (e.g. doors, windows) which should be secured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Main External doors ● Fire Doors ● Internal doors ● All windows
Communication arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Radio / Mobile phones if accessible
Notes	If someone is taken hostage on the premises, the school should seek to evacuate the rest of the site.

Initial Response Lockdown	
All available staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all pupils are inside the school building
Class Teachers SLT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lone pupil, e.g. those who may be going to the toilet or delivering a message to the office etc. are advised to make their way to the nearest lockable area, i.e., office/s toilet cubicle or if safe to do so return to class • Pupils and staff that are on the school field (separate from the school) when a lockdown occurs are to remain where they are until further notice • To take cover, if necessary under tables (Nursery and Reception to sit on carpet in front of screen)
Office staff SLT All staff Site Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lock / secure entrance points (e.g. doors, windows) to prevent the intruder entering the building • If evacuation of the school is necessary: office staff to take the green emergency bag to a safe area. Bag should contain, emergency medication, first aid kit, up-to-date contact details for all parents
Office staff SLT Site Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dial Emergency Services • Contact Walsall CS <p>School's Emergency phone number: 07738 616121 (Head Mobile) Other Contact Numbers: 07413 537131 (Deputy) 07415 286940 (Caretaker)</p>
All staff Class Teachers SLT Office staff Site Manager SLT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure people take action to increase protection from attack: • Block access points (e.g. move furniture to obstruct doorways) • Sit on the floor, under tables or against a wall • Keep out of sight, draw curtains / blinds • Turn off lights • Stay away from windows and doors • Ensure that pupils, staff and visitors are aware of an exit point in case the intruder does manage to gain access. • If possible, check for missing / injured pupils, staff and visitors • Remain inside until an all-clear has been given, or unless told to evacuate by the emergency services

Procedures

- Staff will be alerted to the activation of the plan through a specific ring which will ring for approximately 30 seconds/ radio contact
- Pupils who are outside of the school buildings are brought inside as quickly as possible, unless this endangers them and others.
- Those inside the school should remain in their classrooms
- All external doors and, as necessary, windows are locked (depending on the circumstances, internal classroom doors may also need to be blocked)
- Once in lockdown mode, staff should notify the office immediately of any pupils not accounted for by radio/ mobile phone and instigate an immediate search for anyone missing, (if reasonably possible)
- Staff should encourage the pupils to keep calm
- As appropriate, the school office will establish communication with the Emergency Services and Walsall Council via mobile phone
- Parents will be notified as soon as it is practicable to do so via text messaging
- Pupils will not be released to parents during a lockdown
- If it is necessary to evacuate the building, the fire alarm will be sounded

Partial Lockdown

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.

Immediate action:

- All outside activity to cease immediately, pupils and staff return to building.
- All staff and pupils remain in building and external doors and windows locked
- Movement may be permitted within the building dependent upon circumstances but this must be supervised by a member of staff

All situations are different, once all staff and pupils are safely inside, senior staff will conduct an on-going and dynamic risk assessment based on advice from the Emergency Services.

This can then be communicated to staff and pupils.

'Partial lockdown' is a precautionary measure but puts the school in a state of readiness (whilst retaining a degree of normality) should the situation escalate.

In the event of an air pollution issue, air vents can be closed (where possible) as an additional precaution. Emergency Services will advise as to the best course of action in respect of the prevailing threat.

Radio system information

The school has purchased an extensive radio system that is throughout the school. All classrooms have a radio. This system uses 2 channels. The first channel is the emergency lockdown, this is the preset channel. Channel 2 can be switched to by staff if required, but the radio must be switched back to 1 immediately afterwards. The office and SLT monitor both channels in the event of an incident.

- All teachers have a radio that should always be set on channel 1. This is the emergency channel. Channel 1 is never used for non-emergency communication.
- The office and Headteacher will each have a radio
- The headteacher, deputy and assistant head for behaviour have radios set to both channels. The exam officer also has 2 channel radio. All teaching staff will carry their radios whenever they are supervising children.
- Radios are left to charge in the teachers room overnight, they are not removed from the building.
- As staff radios are preset to channel 1, you will not receive any communication other than from an emergency code on this channel.

Use of APP enabled technology to assist with Lockdown procedures.

- All staff are requested to download WhatsApp to their phone.
- They are added to an encrypted closed group named "Emergency Lockdown Procedure".
- This group will have information sent to it during a lockdown to update staff on top of radio communication. This practice is recommended in circumstances where radio silence is required.
- The application isn't the primary communication method and would only be used in an emergency situation, it is also a backup system in the event of a breakdown of equipment in your possession.

It is of vital importance that the school's lockdown procedures are familiar to all members of the school staff. To achieve this, a lockdown drill should be undertaken at least once a year. Depending on their age, pupils should also be aware of the plan. (Regular practices will increase their familiarity).

Specific instructions for individual classrooms in addition to generic instructions

- Nursery - children to sit on the carpet in front of screen
- Reception - children to sit on carpet in front of screen
- Year 1 - under tables - doors to den area closed
- Year 2 - under tables
- Year 3 - under tables
- Year 4 - under tables
- Year 5 - under tables
- Year 6 - under tables

Communication between parents and the school

- School lockdown procedures, especially arrangements for communicating with parents, will be shared via the school website.
- In the event of an actual lockdown, any incident or development will be communicated to parents as soon as is practicable.

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 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 come and get their child and where this will be from.

In the event of a lockdown parents will be informed that:

Whetstone Field Primary School is in a full lockdown situation. During this period the phones and entrances will be un-manned, external doors locked and nobody allowed in or out.

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, Walsall Council has the capacity to provide humanitarian assistance by establishing a Reception Centre for friends and family outside of the cordoned area.

Date: February 2023

Review date: February 2025 or as required by legislation