St Andrews CE Primary School

Lockdown Policy and Procedures
About This Document

Parents and carers trust our school to keep their children safe. Thanks to the efforts of staff and governors, St Andrews is a safe haven for children, but as tragic events both overseas and at home have shown, we can become involved in an emergency at any time. This document has been created to deal with the sort of emergencies that no one really wants to think about – the situation where the children and staff are endangered by the threat of deliberate harm.
In emergency planning terms this is called Lockdown, a description that will be used throughout this document.

What is Lockdown

On extremely rare occasions it may be necessary to seal off the school so that it is not able to be entered from the outside. This will ensure that pupils, staff and visitors are safe in situations where there is a hazard in the school grounds or outside the school in the near vicinity.
A lockdown is implemented when there is a serious security risk of the premises due to, for example, nearby chemical spillage, proximity of dangerous dogs, serious weather conditions or attempted access by unauthorised persons intent on causing harm/damage.
In the case of a fire or similar emergency, the children and staff will leave the building quickly and safely; in a lockdown they need to do almost the opposite i.e. to actually get inside the building as quickly and safely as possible and to stay there until the threat is removed.

Lockdown Training

All staff will receive regular lockdown training throughout the year; it will also be included as part of the induction package for new members of staff. Although lockdown training cannot fully replicate the pressure and stress of a real incident, the training will give confidence and the necessary knowledge for staff to respond to any emergency.
St Andrews has been fitted with an audible electronic alarm that sounds throughout the school to warn staff of a lockdown situation. Potentially, any member of staff could be the first to raise the alarm for a lockdown, so it is important that all members of staff are aware of the procedures and printed instructions will be posted in all classrooms.
A termly alarm practice will be held for staff only to ensure they can differentiate between the lockdown alarm and the fire alarm.
Raising the Alarm

When information is received in the office of a situation requiring a lockdown, whoever receives that information will immediately activate the schools lockdown alarm. There should be no hesitation in announcing lockdown and the decision to call lockdown should be made immediately by whoever receives the call and should not be delayed.

If a situation arises where a member of staff discovers possible danger from an intruder and no alarm has been sounded, then they must seek to remove children from the imminent threat by taking the best course of action available at that moment. They should alert the office as quickly as possible, who will then activate the lockdown alarm and call the emergency services.

Action to Take Upon Hearing the Alarm

Upon hearing the lockdown alarm, staff should gather everyone in the immediate vicinity into their classroom or other secure area, if it is safe to do so, and lock the door.

Once inside the secure area, staff should:

• Stay away from doors and windows, turn off the lights and close the blinds.
• Beware of sight lines in classroom door windows and consider covering them.
• Take cover if available i.e. get behind something solid.
• Remain absolutely quiet.
• Teachers to take attendance.
• Mobile phones should be put on silent and should not be used unless it is necessary to communicate regarding the incident.

Children will need to evacuate the toilets and get to an area that can be safely secured. Staff who work in close proximity to toilets need to check them before locking down themselves, if it is safe to do so, and take any children found in the toilets into their secure area with them.

Open areas, including assembly halls, corridors, playgrounds and school fields, are the most vulnerable, making them the most likely location for a threat and the most difficult areas to quickly and effectively secure. It is very important that everyone understands what to do and where to go in the event a lockdown is called and they are in an open area. They need to be aware of other options in the event that access to their normal secure area is not available.
**Communication**

In the event of a lockdown, senior staff will take advice from the emergency services about when to communicate the situation to parents. The school will be mindful of the need to reassure parents that all efforts are being made to keep their children safe and to provide regular updates, via the St Andrews app and twitter, as the incident progresses.

When responding to an incident, the emergency services will need unrestricted access to (and egress from) the school site. This can sometimes prove difficult as parents are likely to visit the school immediately upon hearing of an incident. With this in mind, parents will be requested to stay away from the school as they could otherwise worsen the situation.

During lockdown, senior staff will conduct an on-going and dynamic risk assessment based on advice from the emergency services.

A debriefing should occur in all situations following a lockdown. The nature and severity of the incident will dictate who should be included in the debriefing. In all cases, communication with parents is vital. A letter to parents will be sent home on the nearest possible day following the incident to inform parents of the context of the lockdown.

**Terminating a Lockdown**

A lockdown may be terminated by either a room to room visit from police/senior management, or by telephone to each classroom. In all cases where police have responded, the decision to end a lockdown can only be made after approval of the senior on-scene police officer.