



Thameside Primary School: Lockdown Procedure

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Policy reviewed by:	Sophie Greenaway and Vicki Lucas
Key Changes:	<p>Section added Page 6 - In the event that the Fire Alarm sounds during full lockdown</p> <p>Minor additions to PEEPs under Immediate action in Pages 4 & 5.</p> <p>The rest of this policy remains fit for purpose.</p>



Lockdown is the ability to restrict access quickly, prevent staff and pupils from moving towards danger, or frustrate or delay the identified risk from entering or moving within the school. Lockdown procedures enable a school to close down and protect itself and those within it from an identified and urgent risk very quickly, such as the following:

- An intruder on the school's site or nearby
- A local incident, such as a civil disturbance or risk of air pollution
- A fire adjacent to the school
- A dangerous dog or another animal which is nearby
- A firearms or weapons attack.

The school's Lockdown Manager is: Sophie Greenaway (Head teacher)

The Lockdown Manager's specific responsibilities are as follows:

- Activate the lockdown procedure
- Implement the internal communication system as detailed below
- Activate the panic / lockdown buttons located in the main office
- Contact Emergency Services asap
- Brief the Emergency Planning Team on the initial incident asap
- Inform the LA asap

In the event that the Headteacher is off-site, the Deputyhead will act as the Lockdown manager, then the Assistant Head, then the School Business Manager.

Lockdown Arrangements

Lockdown arrangements should be determined by schools on an individual basis, as they will be dependent to a large extent on local circumstances such as premises design and layout, class arrangements, resources available, etc.

Thameside Primary has two types of lockdown; 'partial' and 'full'. Staff are alerted to any type of lockdown via their walkie-talkies (or email).

Lockdown procedures will be regularly supported with staff training refreshers (INSET days). Practices will also be implemented.



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).

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 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. Pupils at Thameside are aware of the plan. (Regular practices will increase their familiarity).

Staff's understanding will be regularly checked with regular training refreshers. A lockdown drill will be undertaken at least once a year and thoroughly debriefed to monitor the effectiveness of your arrangements. Parents too should know that the school has a lockdown plan and that it will be regularly tested. However, it is not advisable to share the school's full lockdown plan.

Thameside believes that it is good practice to:

1. Conduct a number of table top exercises with the senior leadership team to test the procedures against various scenarios.
2. Rehearse lockdown arrangements with all staff and pupils.
3. Display lockdown drill (shelter drill) information in every classroom alongside information relating to fire drills.

Thameside's Lockdown Plan

The following procedures MUST be followed:

1. Partial Lockdown

Alert to staff: 'Partial shelter now' will be said across the walkie talkies (and also via a member of SLT, if possible, circulating school asap)

In a partial lockdown staff and pupils 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 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. Staff supervising children should get children to line up immediately and walk into the school building via the nearest door. This may mean two classes coming through the same classroom doors.
- All of these people are likely to need special arrangements to help them in emergencies, arrangements which should be described in a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP). Local fire wardens may need to play a role in PEEPs. Those who need assistance may include disabled people, young children with SEN, or someone with a temporary condition which might hinder their escape (e.g. broken leg). The reason they need



assistance could be they are unable to hear the lockdown alarm or move quickly enough. Some people (for example children or people with learning difficulties) may not fully understand the rules lockdown. Well thought through PEEPs are important in making our workplaces safe for everybody and demonstrate our commitment to improving accessibility.

- All staff and pupils remain in building and external doors and windows 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.
- Use anything to hand to seal up all the cracks around doors and any vents into the room – you aim to minimise possible ingress of pollutants.
- Children need to remain quiet and calm (remind them of the acronym PAL).
- Staff should await further instructions.

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 the Emergency Services. The Head teacher will inform the Local Authority.

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

Alert to staff: 'Full shelter now' will be said across the walkie talkies (and also via a member of SLT, if possible, circulating school asap)

A pulsating alarm will sound, signifying 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 pupils/staff stay in their classroom or move to the nearest indoor classroom.
- Children with a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) may need to be lifted or carried by school staff if there is imminent danger to life. Local fire wardens may need to play a role in PEEPs.
- Staff MUST block internal classroom doors using door wedges – a piece of furniture should be moved in front of the door, for example, if wedges are unavailable.
- Staff must keep their walkie talkies with them and switched to the main channel, keeping the volume quiet, but loud enough so that they can hear any further messages and safety instructions. Staff should also keep their personal mobile phones with them, switched to silent, in order to allow communication via text from the Head teacher.
- Office staff should remain in their office.
- External doors locked. Classroom doors locked (where a member of staff with key is present).
- Windows locked, blinds drawn, internal door windows covered (so an intruder cannot see in).
- Pupils/staff sit quietly out of sight and where possible in a location that would protect them from gunfire (bullets go through glass, brick, wood and metal. Consider locations behind substantial brickwork or heavy



reinforced walls). Ideally they should congregate together close to an alternative exit, so that if necessary to evacuate this can be carried out quickly and quietly. They could sit underneath their desks if this is possible.

- Lights, smartboards and computer monitors turned off.
- Mobile phones turned off (or at the least turned onto silent so they cannot give away your position).
- A register to be taken of all pupils/staff in each classroom/office (recorded on paper). Once in full lockdown mode, staff should notify the office immediately of any pupils not accounted for and any additional pupils/staff in their classroom.
- Communicate register of staff/pupils to the Head teacher using a discreet communication channel (see below).
- Children need to remain quiet and calm (remind them of the acronym PAL - Pause; Adult; Listen).
- Staff should await further instructions.

A lockdown will remain in place until it has been lifted by a member of the school's senior leadership team or by the emergency services. The official lockdown termination announcement to be used is 'stop shelter' (so that all staff know that it is authentic).

Staff and pupils remain in lock down 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 (a fire alarm will always trump the lockdown).

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.

Examples of discreet communication channels might be:

- Where staff have access to an internal e-mail system, they could access their account and await further instruction. In practical terms, staff would need to be familiar with accessing their account through a variety of means eg laptop, smartphone or tablet.
- Where a school uses 'Parentmail' then staff could be put into a defined user group. This could then be used to communicate instructions via text message in an emergency.

My suggested action relies upon thorough communication within the school and in an ideal world via a 2 way radio system such that all teachers can communicate with all other via one button push.

In the event that the Fire Alarm sounds during full lockdown

- 1) A Fire Alarm usually means "get out and stay out" as you are moving from a place of danger (inside) to a place of safety (outside)
- 2) A lockdown means "get inside, lock doors and windows, turn off ventilation and get out of sight of the danger outside of the building.

These are 2 totally opposite responses.

If whilst in full lockdown the fire alarm goes off, each member of staff should assess 3 options/scenarios:

- a. Confirm the fire is real, then get out and go to normal fire evacuation point (we would not recommend this if the danger is outside and visible)



b. Confirm the fire is real and get out and go elsewhere away from the cause of the lockdown (the person/persons representing the danger) – This also has inherent dangers, especially when dealing with children as general advice is to run/hide/tell from the danger and with children this is problematic, however it may well be the best course of action. The member of staff should assess the situation and base their decision on imminent risk of life. They should use the radio to communicate the decision.

c. Confirm the fire isn't real and stay inside the building under lockdown conditions (look for signs of a real fire, smell of smoke, actual smoke- if you can't see any signs then might be better to wait until you spot signs if the danger is outside and visible.)

The main issue with all of the above? The ability to confirm that the fire is/isn't real swiftly and communicate this simultaneously to all staff across the building.

All staff in classrooms would have a 2 way radio at all times. One button push communicates with all staff simultaneously. So as soon as the alarm goes off, each teacher could confirm one by one that their area is clear and in theory this would cover the entire building. Once the fire has been ruled as a false alarm the lockdown can continue. I would suggest at all stages keeping the emergency services informed via a 999.

In summary there aren't many simple off the shelf one size fits all answers for these scenarios.

In part it will rely upon prior planning

In part it will reply upon prior staff training

It may in part rely upon equipment (2 way radios)

And a large element will rely upon dynamic risk assessments by staff at the time of the incident.

Communication between parents and the school

Arrangements for communicating with parents in the event of a lockdown are shared either via newsletter or the school website.

In the event of an actual lockdown, any incident or development will be 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 will 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. Contacting the school will block the school's telephone lines when they are needed to communicate with the outside world.
- 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.

Where possible information will be sent via text message.



Should parents present at the school during a lockdown under no circumstances should members of staff leave the building to communicate directly with them. Pupils should not be released to parents during a lockdown.

Finally, parents should wait for the school to contact them about when it is safe to collect their children and where this will be from; parents should also be made aware of what will happen if the lockdown continues beyond school hours.

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 Head teacher with 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.

Communication

This lockdown procedure is published and made available on the school's website. Lockdown (shelter) drill information is also to be displayed in each classroom alongside the school's fire evacuation procedures. Brief but specific information for rooms will also be published next to where door wedges are located.

The School Business Manager is designated to account for visitors on-site in the event of a lockdown.

Useful contacts

School, in event of Lockdown:

Onsite Caretaker school mobile number: 07498762232

Local authority:

Brett Dyson
Emergency Planning & Risk Management Officer
0118 937 2235
brett.dyson@reading.gov.uk

Support for staff and pupils

In the event of a prolonged or particularly challenging lockdown, emergency services, local authorities and voluntary sector organisations will typically work together to coordinate practical and emotional support for those affected by the lockdown events. A reception centre for friends and family could also be set up away from the affected area.



Thameside Primary School

Emergency Procedures

Fire Alarm

In the event of the fire alarm sounding please leave the school buildings by the nearest fire escape route and assemble on the playground.

Lockdown

Partial Lockdown Alert to staff: 'Partial shelter now'

Full Lockdown Alert to staff: 'Full shelter now'

In the event of a lockdown alert, stay indoors, in the room/classroom that you are in. If you are outside when the alert is raised, make your way to the nearest classroom or hall.

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, mobiles or walkie talkies 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

Appendix B – Preparing pupils for lockdown

The Script

Every day, we do things to keep ourselves safe. Let's think of some examples. What do you put on before you start riding a bike? What do you do before walking across the road? Another way we stay safe is by practicing for things that probably won't happen but it is good to be prepared for just in case. One way we do this at school, for instance, is by practicing fire drills. Practice helps us know what to do just in case of an emergency.

Another kind of situation we can prepare for is when we need to keep you safe from a stranger while you are at school. This would probably never happen but just like a fire drill, we can practice our response so we are prepared.

Sometimes, will practice this in a drill called a "Shelter Drill." During this drill, the teachers lock us inside for safety. Your teacher will tell you when we are having a shelter drill.

Here are the steps of what we do during a shelter drill: The acronym is PAL.

P is for PAUSE: First, pause and take a deep breath. Breathing helps your mind work.

A is for ADULT: Wherever you are, find a trusted adult. If you are in the classroom, stay there and find your teacher or other adult in the room. If you are outside, look for the teacher or other adult closest to you to tell you what to do and where to go.

L is for LISTEN: Listen to the adult's instructions. The adult will know what to do and will tell you. This is trickier than a fire drill because depending on where you are, you won't always go to the same place each time. You will know what to do if you listen. Also during this time, the teachers will lock the doors to their classrooms. When everything is safe, the adult will tell you that everything is all clear and we can go back to our regular school day.

We are all here to keep you safe. Practice means we are prepared and can feel confident that we all know what to do just in case. Having a plan like this and practicing what to do in a shelter drill



means that we don't have to worry about these concerns and instead we can focus on having fun and learning at school.