



## Lockdown Policy

*Ratified by Chairman's Actions Autumn 2017*

*Date of next review Autumn 2019*

### 1. Introduction

Parents and carers trust our school to keep their children safe. Schools in the UK normally remain a safe haven for children; but as tragic events both overseas and at home have shown, they can become involved in an emergency at any time.

The Department for Education recommends that schools create and maintain an emergency plan and, as an outstanding school, we not only comply with this, but also want to go one step further and be ready 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.

The document is designed to help us:

- Develop and review a lockdown plan,
- Provide information to all staff who could become involved in an incident,
- Help staff to educate and inform the pupils and indeed their parents about what to do in such a situation,
- Detail actions and procedures not only for use during such an incident but also for testing our readiness for such an incident.

The advice from the Department for Education and the Cabinet Office reminds us “planning for emergencies can save lives. It can prevent an incident getting worse, provide confidence to staff, governors, parents, carers and pupils and enhance your school’s reputation as a safe place to learn and work. Plans which deal with the consequences of large-scale emergencies also help staff to deal with the smaller (but nevertheless potentially distressing) incidents that schools can experience on a regular basis”.

This is a document that every good school needs, every member of staff needs to understand, and no one ever wants to use.

### 2. Purpose

The purpose of a lockdown is to prevent an intruder or other threat outside the school from causing harm to pupils and staff. It means that the entrances to the school must be secured in an effort to prevent any threat entering, and staff and pupils must find a suitable place to protect themselves.

In the case of a fire or similar emergency the children and staff are taught how to leave the building quietly and safely. In a lockdown, they need to learn almost the opposite, to actually get inside the building as quickly and safely as possible and to stay there until the threat is removed, or - in extreme circumstances - to leave if an intruder gains entrance to the building. A distinct policy is needed because it is so different from the standard emergency drills, and is so extreme in nature that everyone needs to be thoroughly well versed in its contents and the role they are to play during such an incident.

Lockdown arrangements depend heavily on the size and layout of the school, and as a small school, with a split site, and relatively open fields to the rear we have a number of challenges to overcome. Any procedures we establish must be realistic; in an incident staff and pupils will not have much time to seek an appropriate place to hide and there is likely to be widespread

confusion or panic. It is very unlikely that our school will ever need to implement a real lockdown but it is important for us to have arrangements in place to deal with such a situation.

### 3. Guidelines for Implementation

#### A) Safe places:

- a. Sapphire Class Year R - Cloakroom with all doors locked and blinds closed
- b. Emerald Class Year 1- Cloakroom with all doors locked and blinds closed
- c. Ruby Class Year 2- Cloakroom with all doors locked and blinds closed
- d. Amethyst Class Year 3 - Cloakroom with all doors locked and blinds closed
- e. Garnet Class Year 4 - Under table under the window with blinds down and doors locked
- f. Amber Class Year 5 - Under table under the window with blinds down and doors locked
- g. Topaz Class Year 6 - Under table under the window with blinds down and doors locked
- h. Creative Arts Room - Under table under the window with blinds down and doors locked
- i. Group Room - Under table under the window with blinds down and doors locked
- j. Staff Room - Under table under the window with blinds down and doors locked
- k. Library - evacuate to a classroom then hide under table under the window with blinds down and doors locked
- l. Playground - come into school and into a room - hide under table under the window with blinds down and doors locked
- m. Hall - Hide, blinds down and doors locked - possible store cupboard
- n. Kitchen - under the window with doors locked
- o. Lunchtime - blinds down, lock doors, children under tables
- p. Rainbow Room - lock doors, children under tables

- Checklist for staff when planning their lockdown:

- I. Keys available to lock pupils and staff inside class by the door on a labelled hook.
- II. Blinds cover windows to outside and cover for classroom doors.
- III. Telephone Alert: Lockdown in progress “Code Badger” and then “All clear” at the end with no communication in between.
- IV. All staff to know that between “Code Badger” and “All clear” there must be radio silence unless critical emergency.
- V. A way out if someone comes in to the class; Class teachers will consider this during lockdown practice; paddock key and green gate key available in each class.

#### B) Suitable signal for a lockdown

The signal for a lockdown should be clearly distinguishable to that of an evacuation (fire drill). Any confusion may result in pupils and staff congregating at an assembly point, thus potentially making them more vulnerable to an intruder or outside threat.

The person who is alerted to the Lockdown will send the alarm to the whole school by saying:

**“This is a Code Badger” three times**

**- then “This is not a drill” in the event of an actual emergency Lockdown.**

#### C) Communication during the incident complete silence must be maintained until the “All Clear” has been given unless there is a life threatening emergency.

#### D) Who gives the signal? Any member of staff could be the first to raise an alarm for a lockdown so it is important that all employees are aware of the plan and instructions are available in every room. Office staff or senior leaders are responsible for calling the emergency services. Any staff if they are not able to.

Once the signal is initiated who does what?

**Headteacher** - Check the halls and clear of students, inform emergency services.

**Teachers** - Detain students in the classroom, keep pupils calm and keep them secure by locking windows, closing blinds and doors

*Take a register all pupils and staff and update when safe to do so.*

**Support staff** - direct pupils inside or run and hide as appropriate. Assist teachers inside the classrooms.

**All staff** Not allow anyone in or out until given the “*All clear*” by an appropriate authority.

**E) Dealing with the concerns of the children**

Class teachers will tell children that a ‘Badger’ has entered the building and we need to take precautions to lockdown and be silent. It is important that pupils know what action to take if a lockdown happens at school. Becoming familiar with lockdown drills will improve the likelihood of these procedures being implemented swiftly and effectively (which could prevent injury and even save lives).

At Thorpe Church of England Primary School each class will have a discussion with Class teachers and undertake an exercise of the drill. Some of the issues outlined during the drill are sensitive and may potentially upset pupils, especially the youngest. Staff are well placed to assess what level of information should be provided to pupils on the reasoning behind implementing a lockdown.

The lesson plan could include:

- Risk assessment
- The role of pupils in the school emergency plan (e.g. emergency drills, communicating with parents/carers).

Elements of these tasks could be included in one teaching session or spread over several during a term.

**F) Dealing with the concerns of parents/carers**

Parents/carers need to be informed when teaching is taking place on this subject so they can prepare for any possible impact this may have on their children.

Routinely informing parents/carers of the procedures can reassure them that your school is prepared and able to look after their child. Methods of informing parents/carers about preparing for emergencies could involve:

- Including information within the school newsletter
- Posting the Lockdown Policy onto the website
- Distributing information at parent/carer evenings
- Sending a letter home via pupils including information within the school prospectus.

**Practice drills**

At Thorpe Church of England Primary School each class undertakes a live exercise in the Autumn and Summer Term. A whole school live exercise will be undertaken in the Spring Term involving whole school physically acting out the response to a scenario.

**Staff training**

Senior Leaders will discuss this policy and staff will walk through the Lockdown Procedure to ensure that everyone knows what to do in the event of a Lockdown situation.

### **Reasons for a lockdown to be initiated:**

- Someone who is out of control and threatening the safety of our pupils, staff, or himself/herself;
- Someone who has a gun or weapon;
- An intruder;
- Hazardous chemicals outside the building;
- An extreme weather related event;

When an incident occurs the priority is to safeguard those on-site (i.e. pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors) and alert the emergency services if necessary. Other organisations, such as the local authority, can then be informed as appropriate.

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/carers are likely to visit the school immediately upon hearing of an incident. Parents need to be requested to stay away from the school, as they could otherwise worsen the situation and the police services would be the best resource in ensuring this.

Plans should emphasise the importance of locking down as quickly as possible. At the first indication of a major incident or potential threat, the signal for lockdown should be given and the lockdown begin immediately. If pupils are outside when the signal for a lockdown is sounded, staff members need to take pupils to the nearest possible safe area that can be secured.

### **Raising the alarm**

**All staff** (especially those working in the main office) should be trained that when information is received in the office of a situation requiring a lockdown, whoever receives that information, will immediately activate the school's lockdown system. There should be no hesitation in announcing the lockdown, and the decision to call the lockdown should be made immediately by whoever receives the call to the office, and should not be delayed.

It is recommended that the actual method of announcing a lockdown, is displayed at fixed points, is clearly visible and can be read by any person announcing the lockdown. In emergent stressful circumstances even the most composed individuals may have difficulty remembering exact procedures. By pre-printing the announcement and practicing it, the person delivering the message can ensure that the content is delivered accurately.

**Classrooms and other secure areas :** Before locking a door, staff should gather everyone in the immediate vicinity into their classroom or other secure area, if it is safe to do so.

Once inside a secure area, staff and students will;

- Stay away from doors and windows; turn off lights; close blinds;
- Beware of sight lines if there is a window in the classroom door,
- Consider covering window;
- Take cover if available (get behind something solid);
- Remain absolutely quiet ;
- No mobile phone and walkie talkies used unless in an emergency.
- Mobile phones should be shut off or put on vibrate.

**Toilets:** As the door into the toilet area cannot be locked children need to evacuate toilets if at all possible and get to an area that can safely be locked down.

**Designated adults** who work in close proximity to toilets need to check them before locking down themselves, if it safe to do so, and take any students found in the toilets, into their classrooms to lockdown.

As a last resort, staff or children trapped in a toilet, should attempt to somehow secure the door, enter a stall, lock the door and climb on top of the toilet.

#### **Open Areas**

Open areas including hallways and other open areas 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, everyone understands what to do and where to go in the event a lockdown is called and they are in an open area: staff should direct children to the nearest safe place or run and hide.

#### **Terminating a lockdown**

Plans to conclude a lockdown will vary by location. A general announcement via telephone "All Clear", or it may be a room to room visit from police/school personnel so that the occupants of a locked room know in fact that whoever is giving them the all-clear is in fact authentic. In all cases where police have responded, the decision to end a lockdown can only be made after approval of the on-scene police.

#### **School recovery following a lockdown**

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 and will be via ParentPay from the school office.

### **4. Implementing and Monitoring this Policy**

Governors will be presented with information regarding our procedures and any drills that occur.

Class teachers will practice their Lockdown twice a year and Senior Leaders will instigate a whole school Lockdown once a year. This will be reported to Governors and Parents/Carers.