

Heads of School Letter re: Lockdown Procedures

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are writing to remind you about the lockdown emergency procedures that we have in place, should our school ever need to go into 'lockdown'. A school lockdown is the opposite to an evacuation. In a 'lockdown' children and staff remain inside the building for their safety. 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 the school.

It is part of the health and safety practice for schools to have lockdown procedures in place as it is important to prepare for all situations, regardless of how unlikely their occurrence may seem.

Lockdown procedures enable a school to close down and protect itself, and those within it, from an identified and urgent risk. This list illustrates some of causes which could lead to a school lockdown:

- 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 that is nearby

Our lockdown procedure is published on our school website, and lockdown drill information is displayed in each classroom alongside our fire evacuation procedures.

Parents will be informed of a school lockdown procedure if pupils cannot be safely dismissed at home time or admitted to school. This communication will come via text message using the school's normal communication routes. Parents will also be informed not to contact the school as doing so will block the telephone lines when they are needed to communicate with the outside world. Pupils will also not be released to parents during a lockdown.

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

All staff are familiar with the school's lockdown procedures and a lockdown drill is practised at agreed intervals.

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.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Newman & Miss Corcoran
Co- Heads of School