

# Coleham Primary School



## Lockdown Policy & Procedures

Date of Policy: January 2018



## **Introduction**

On very rare occasions it may be necessary to seal off the school so that it cannot be entered from the outside. This will ensure that all staff and pupils are safe in situations where there has been any external or internal incident which has the potential to pose a serious threat to the life and safety of persons in the school. Procedures should ensure a swift response is taken and minimise the disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all staff and pupils.

A Lockdown is the opposite of an evacuation – students and staff remain in their classrooms/offices. Lock down is split into two phases ‘Partial Lockdown’ and ‘Full Lockdown’. A full Lockdown should give the appearance that the school is closed.

## **Circumstances that would trigger a lockdown**

- a disturbance in the local community which poses a risk to the school,
- a threat from an individual,
- local risk of air pollution, such as a smoke plume or gas cloud,
- a major fire in the vicinity of the school,
- close proximity of a dangerous dog roaming loose,
- instruction from the emergency services,
- an intruder on site with the potential to pose a risk to the school,

## **Partial Lockdown**

**Alert to staff:** ‘Partial lockdown’ Amber Alert

In a partial lockdown staff and pupils should remain in the school building and all doors leading outside should be locked. Entrances and exits to the school are monitored closely and all staff are aware and alert to be vigilant; however school activities continue as usual. Children may not be aware of the situation in this instance.

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, a dangerous dog roaming loose, a threat from an individual, major fire in the vicinity, direct instruction from emergency services, it may also be as a result of a warning being received regarding the risk of air pollution.

Partial Lockdown will be communicated by the Senior Leadership Team/available staff to all classes. The Reception office will contact all school outbuildings or staff on playground duty via walkie talkie and telephones.

## **Immediate action:**

- As appropriate, the school should establish communication with the Emergency Services as soon as possible. (In principal phone 101)
- All outside activity to cease immediately, pupils and staff return to building as quickly as possible.
- All staff and pupils remain in building and external doors and windows locked.
- Free movement may be permitted within the building dependent upon circumstances.
- Learning activities will continue as normal within the school.



- Wait for instructions from Senior Leadership Team.

All situations are different, once all staff and pupils are safely inside, members of the Senior Leadership team will conduct an ongoing and dynamic risk assessment based on advice from the Emergency Services.

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. Partial Lockdown may in some cases escalate to Full Lockdown.

## **Full Lockdown**

**Alert to staff:** 'Full lockdown' Red Alert

This will be communicated via the 'Full Lockdown' signal, via an air horn to clearly distinguish it from the fire alarm.

Air horns are kept in the Reception Office (Emergency box), SLT office, Year 2 (Mr Larkham) and Year 6 (Mr Edwards)

This sound signifies an immediate threat to the school and may be an escalation of a partial lockdown.

Due to the unpredictable nature of the event, it may not be safe or practical to alert the office or Headteacher of an immediate threat. Members of staff should sound the air horn if necessary.

### **Immediate action:**

- The school should establish communication with the Emergency Services as soon as possible. In principal use panic button/phone 999. (Administrative staff/HT/available staff in school will action)
- All pupils/staff return to designated classrooms or closest room/building of safety as quickly as possible.
- External doors locked (where it is possible to remain safe)
- Inside doors and windows locked (where they are able to)
- Blinds drawn and windows on internal doors covered to prevent intruder from seeing inside.
- Pupils sit quietly on the floor out of sight lines. Minimal movement and noise.
- Lights and smartboards turned off.
- Mobile phones turned to silent.
- Block access points.
- The school should appear closed. Administrative staff should draw blinds, and exit to more secure office (Headteacher or SLT office) where it is safe to do so.



- NO ONE SHOULD MOVE ABOUT THE SCHOOL.
- The designated central office for HT, Deputy Headteacher, Business Manager and Administrative staff will be the Headteacher's office although this will depend entirely on the circumstances and location of individuals.
- The communication channel will be the internal email system:  
Staff should access their account and await further instructions. In practical terms, staff would need to be familiar with accessing their account through a variety of means eg laptop, smartphone or tablet. The central office may email out Full Lockdown Procedures.
- Register or headcount taken –any missing pupils or additional pupils/staff should be immediately notified to the central office-Headteachers Office. (via text message or internal email system)
- During the lockdown, staff will keep agreed lines of communication open but not make unnecessary contact to the HT/office team as this could delay more important communication.
- In the event a school is in in Lockdown and the fire alarm sounds, the school should contact the emergency services as in a normal fire alarm. However staff and pupils should remain in lockdown and assess the situation before evacuating. Approach with caution as there may be a fire or an intruder may have activated the alarm.
- Staff and pupils remain in lock down until it has been lifted by a senior member of staff / emergency services. Consider 'password' so staff know this is authentic, if signal is given by email.
- If necessary, parents should be notified as soon as it is practicable to do so via the school's established communications system. (The protocol for this will be an update to the school website and text alert. Standard messages to parents and press are saved so they are ready to use.
- Pupils will not be released to parents during a lockdown.

## **Communication**

Staff, children and parents should be informed of the Lockdown procedures and the reason for these.

**Parents-** will be informed of the new Lockdown procedures via letter and the policy is available on the website.

**Children-**will be told about School Lockdown during assembly initially and regularly reminded through future assemblies and lessons. We will term this as 'Shelter in Buildings' alarm.

**Staff -**will be trained and their understanding regularly checked with meeting refreshers. Lockdown procedures will be included in Induction for all staff and volunteers. The school will rehearse partial lockdown arrangements with all staff and pupils and thereafter at least annually and these

thoroughly debriefed to monitor the effectiveness of arrangements. Lockdown procedures will be displayed in every classroom alongside information relating to fire drill (**See Appendix 2**)

### **Communication during Lockdown**

In the event of an actual lockdown, it is strongly advised that any incident or development is 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.

**SLT will assess the situation and decide what public statements will be made and what information will be disclosed.**

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. The main phone line will not be answered in the event of a full lockdown.
- 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 announce or contact them about when it is safe for you to come get your children, and where this will be from.

A text alert message may be sent to advise of the emergency and a note will be posted on the school website. It may also be prudent to reinforce the message **'the school is in a full lockdown situation. During this period the switchboard and entrances will be un-manned, external doors locked and nobody allowed in or out'** Coleham Primary School has a prepared statement for parents, ready to use. **See Appendix 3.**

Should parents present at the school during a lockdown under no circumstances should members of staff leave the building to communicate directly with them or any pupils to be released.

### **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 regarding the timing of communication to parents. In the event of a prolonged lockdown or more severe scenario, The Priory School may establish a reception centre on their site for friends and family outside of the cordoned area.

### **Suspicious Incidents Protocol & Guidance**

Following a whole town partial lockdown in Shropshire the Police and Local Authority have produced this guidance in collaboration. **Please see Appendix 1.**

This gives guidance on suspicious incidents or suspicious individuals and attempts of kidnap and abduction, the protocol for contacting the police and for releasing information to the public.

This guidance will need to be followed in conjunction with the Lockdown Policy.

For contacting the police in a partial lockdown you would in principal phone 101 and for full lockdown incidents in principal phone 999. However every situation is different and will need to be assessed. When contacting 101 you need to ask to speak to the Police Duty Inspector in Shrewsbury. In the event that the Duty Inspector is not available then advice should be obtained from the 'Force Operations & Communications Centre Inspector (OCCI)'.

### **Lockdown Drill**

Coleham Primary School will practice the Partial Lockdown procedures annually and will continue to monitor the risks nationally and locally.

### **Full Lockdown Drill Procedures**

- An airhorn will trigger the signal for Full Lockdown
- All pupils are to move inside to their designated classroom or room of safety and stay INSIDE the classroom.
- All external doors and, as necessary, windows are locked, internal doors locked.
- Close windows blinds/curtains.
- Switch off lights and screens.
- Move away from external windows/classroom door.
- Children and staff to sit quietly on the floor out of sight.
- Encourage students to keep quiet and stay calm.
- Any pupil not in a classroom will be ushered to the nearest safe place.
- Teachers to access internal email system and wait for instructions.
- Reception staff to draw blinds and retreat to Headteacher's office.
- Once in lockdown mode, staff should notify the Headteacher in the first instance or office team, immediately of any pupils not accounted for or additional pupils/staff (and instigate an immediate search for any missing)
- The practice should last no more than 10 minutes.
- The Headteacher/Senior Leadership Team will give the 'all clear' for the end of drill.
- Please take Lockdown practice seriously.
- We are not expecting the process to be perfect – the idea is to identify areas of weakness and address them accordingly.
- Please feedback any comments you have to help us develop the process.
- SLT will debrief after each Lockdown Drill and any remedial points will be communicated to all staff via email and team meetings.

### **Policy Review**

This policy and procedures will be reviewed regularly by the Business Manager following debrief from Partial Lockdown Drills, changes to communications and building layouts and as part of ongoing Health and Safety and Emergency Planning reviews.

## Appendix 1

### Communication advice to schools following suspicious incidents

Suspicious incidents surrounding Schools occur on a regular basis in Shropshire, most of which end up being explained entirely satisfactorily.

Such incidents of strangers acting suspiciously have included excessive or inappropriate attention of premises, students or staff and even approaching pupils on their way to or from school, although the incidence of harm being experienced is actually rare.

Across the county, a co-ordinated partnership approach to dealing with such incidents is essential. Social media and publicity has hindered the Police in the past. **In respect of any suspicious incident, confirmed or suspect kidnap or abduction (or any attempted), schools should not release information to the public, neighbouring schools, parents/carers, pupils/students, the Press or neighbouring houses without first consulting the Police Duty Inspector in Shrewsbury. In the event that the Duty Inspector is not available then advice should be obtained from the 'Force Operations & Communications Centre Inspector (OCCI)'.**

The reasons for this are as follows:

- The Police hold primacy for investigating any crime where life is at risk and may opt to deliberately withhold information from the public domain. In such circumstances, there is a risk that the unauthorised release of information by another agency could jeopardise the life of the victim.
- To reduce what is known as deviancy amplification, which is a media hype phenomenon, defined as a cycle of increasing number of reports leading to panic.
- To reduce the risk of false or misleading information diverting public attention from where it needs to be, which could have a critical impact in the immediate stages of a Police investigation.
- To reduce the possibility of spreading false or inaccurate information that leads to the fear of crime.

### School procedure in response to a suspicious incident – step by step

A school is alerted to an issue/incident near to or on the school site. This could also include incidents/issues relating to pupils/students travelling to/from school.

School to telephone the Police by dialling 101. Two stages:-

- Initially record the incident with the Police and obtain an incident number.
- Secondly, ask for the **'Police Duty Inspector'** at **Shrewsbury Police Station** or the **'Force Operations & Communications Centre Inspector (OCCI) if the Duty Inspector is unavailable**. This is to obtain advice on publicising the incident to pupils/students and parents/carers ONLY. Information regarding a kidnap or abduction (or attempted) should not be made public before consulting the Police Inspector.

**Please note. For all incidents or emergencies requiring an immediate Police response, telephone 999 or use a Police response panic alarm, if the school has the facility.**

School to supply the 'Police Duty Inspector' or 'OCCI' with as much factual information as possible regarding the incident.

School to ask the Duty Inspector or 'OCCI' for next-steps communication advice. The response from the Inspector could include:-

- School to take no further action and do not inform pupils/students/parents/carers.  
or
- School to inform students/pupils, parents/carers. If this is the advice from the Police Duty Inspector/OCCI, the school is to gather from the Inspector, the information that they should be informing their pupils/students/parents/carers and Local Authority (LA).



School to inform their pupils/students, parents/carers if advised by the 'Police Duty Inspector' or 'OCCI'.

The following are the roles of the agencies:

**Police and School/Trust**– handle the public and Press publicity.

**Schools** – to inform their parents/carers and pupils/students if directed by the Police.

Following guidance from the Police, please note that the LA response to schools will be proportionate to the issue and area affected. This may mean that schools in neighbouring areas are not informed of incidents.

As indicated above, schools should not communicate with parents/carers/students/pupils before acquiring advice from the Police and it is the role of the Police/school/trust to liaise with the Press. However, if for any reason following an incident a school is not able to seek any immediate advice from the 'Police Duty Inspector' or 'Force Operations & Communications Centre Inspector (OCCI) and the school is pressured for information by parents/carers or the Press, the school can provide a holding Press release/statement with the words to the effect of:-

***'The Police have been informed and are actively dealing with the issue/matter. Any further requests for information should be directed to the Press Officer of West Mercia Police by dialling 101. When we have any further information, we will publish it'.***

For guidance and advice, please contact Ian Bartlett, Crime Prevention Officer, tele (01743) 252819 or mobile 07990 085941.

## Appendix 2

**Emergency Procedure****'Shelter in Buildings' Alarm****Partial Lockdown**

Alert to staff: Instruction from Senior Leadership Team

**Full Lockdown**

Alert to staff: Air horn

**In the event of an air horn signal stay indoors, in the room or classroom that you are in. If you are outside when this noise sounds, make your way to the nearest classroom or building as quickly as possible.**

**CLOSE Procedure**

- **Close all doors, windows, blinds, lights off**
- **Lock up**
- **Out of sight and minimise movement**
- **Stay silent and avoid drawing attention**
- **Endure – be aware you may be in lockdown for some time**

Further information will be shared via the internal email system. Log on and await for instructions or the 'All Clear' from Senior Leadership Team for end of Lockdown.

If you are with Children it is important to:

- remain calm
- reassure them
- remind them to follow your instructions

## Appendix 3

### Coleham Primary School

#### Lockdown Procedures

SLT will assess the situation and make a decision regarding any public statements and what they will disclose. Below are some example templates which may be used depending on the situation.

#### Message to parents-Partial Lockdown.

**Following instructions from the Emergency Services** Coleham Primary School has gone into 'Partial Lockdown' at **Time** due to **Incident**.

We are in contact with our Health and Safety Advisor and the Emergency Services and are awaiting further information and instructions.

Whilst the school doors are locked, normal learning activities are taking place in school and staff and children can move about freely in the building.

Please be assured that our overriding concern is for the safety and well-being of your child and school staff.

Therefore it is important that you please:

- Do not contact the school. This will deploy staff from dealing with the emergency.
- Do not come to the school. This could interfere with emergency service's access to the school and may put yourselves and others in danger.
- Check our website and wait for us to announce when it is safe for you to come get your children, and where this will be from.

**FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL CONCERNED, IN NO CIRCUMSTANCE WILL WE RELEASE CHILDREN TO PARENTS DURING A LOCKDOWN SITUATION.**

#### Message to Parents-Full Lockdown.

Coleham Primary School is now in a full lockdown situation.

or

Coleham Primary School went into a full lockdown situation at **Time** due to **Incident**.

To ensure the safety of all children and pupils during this period the switchboard and entrances will be un-manned, external doors locked and nobody allowed in or out.

Emergency Services have instructed that you do not come to the school. **A Reception Centre for parents and carers will be held at The Priory School.**

Please wait for further updates.

#### Shropshire Council Suspicious Incidents Press Release statement

***'The Police have been informed and are actively dealing with the issue/matter. Any further requests for information should be directed to the Press Officer of West Mercia Police by dialling 101. When we have any further information, we will publish it'.***

