

Lockdown Procedure – January 2026

A school lockdown is a procedure that is initiated when the principal believes that there is a credible threat to students and staff safety. The procedure has two stages as follows:

1. (Amber)

Secure building (partial lockdown) – maybe used when someone is trying to use unauthorised access to damage property/low level confrontation

2. (Red)

Lockdown – use when the threat is serious and immediate e.g. if a weapon is suspected/visible

Procedure

- The Principal will determine the level of threat (Vice Principal in his/her absence).
- The Principal will decide if full or partial lockdown is necessary.
- Designated staff will have defined roles in line with our 'Critical Incident Policy Action Plan' according to the nature of the threat:
 - **Level 1** – Major incident involving a large number of children/adults e.g., bus/train crash, major violence.
 - **Level 2** – Incident involving death or serious assault, or other traumatic incident witnessed by children or staff.
 - **Level 3** – Distress/trauma resulting from an incident such as the sudden death of a teacher or classmate through a road traffic accident for example, but not witnessed by the students.
- Staff are alerted to the activation of the plan by a recognised signal audible throughout the school or through the schools Network via NETSUPPORT – Notify.
- Students who are outside of the school buildings are brought inside as quickly as possible.
- Those inside the school shall remain inside the classrooms.
- All external doors and, as necessary, windows are locked (depending on the circumstances – internal classroom doors may also need to be locked and or barricaded dependant on threat).
- Once in lockdown mode staff should notify the office immediately via email/message of any students not accounted for (and instigate an instant search for any missing students if safe to do so) – If network is down then this should be communicated via radio wherever possible.
- Staff should encourage the pupils to keep calm and quiet.
- As appropriate, the school should establish communication with the emergency services as soon as possible telephone: 999 or 112.
- Meridian Trust Head Office should be notified via 01223 491600
- If necessary, parents should be notified as soon as it is practical to do so via the school's established communication systems.
- Students will not be released to parents during a lockdown.
- If it is necessary to evacuate the building the fire alarm will be sounded.
- Staff should await further instruction. It is of vital importance that the school's lockdown procedures are familiar to members of the SLT, school administrators, teaching staff and associate staff.

Lockdown Arrangements

Partial Lockdown

Staff will be alerted to a partial lockdown via NOTIFY message 'Lockdown AMBER'. This may be a result of a reported incident/civil disturbance in the local community with the potential to pose a risk to staff and students in the school. It may also be a result of a warning being received regarding the risk of air pollution etc.

Immediate Action

- All outside activities to cease immediately.
- Students and staff return to building.
- Note: *Students and staff that are located off site/or in areas that cannot return safely should find safety in nearby agreed locations which should be referred to in the school specific plan.*
- All staff and students remain in buildings and all external doors and windows are locked.
- Free movement maybe permitted within the building dependent upon circumstances and controlled. This will be at the discretion of Principal and Senior Site Officer.

All situations are different, once all staff and students are safely inside, SLT will conduct an ongoing and dynamic risk assessment based on advice from the emergency services. This will then be communicated to staff and students.

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.

In the event of an air pollution issue, air vents can be closed (where possible) as an additional precaution. Emergency services will advise as to the best course of action in respect of the prevailing threat.

Full Lockdown

Staff will be alerted to a full lockdown via NOTIFY Message 'Full Lockdown - RED'. This signifies an immediate threat to the school and maybe an escalation of a partial lockdown.

Immediate Action

- All students return to classrooms, tutors' rooms or other agreed location e.g. sports hall, school hall).
- External doors locked.
- Classroom doors locked (where a member of staff with keys present if no keys then doors to be barricaded with tables and chairs).
- Windows locked, blinds drawn, students sit quietly out of sight (e.g. under desk or around a corner).
- Register taken – the Attendance Team will contact each class in turn for an attendance report via email. Staff and students remain in lockdown until it has been lifted by a member of SLT/emergency services. At any point during the lockdown, the audible alarm may sound which is a cue to evacuate the building. During the lockdown, staff will keep agreed lines of communication open and not to make unnecessary calls to the main office as this could delay more important communication. Examples of discreet communication channels are as follows:
- Staff access net support - NOTIFY internal system and await further instructions, if possible, it may depend on where the computer is located, or staff should take their laptops / phones with them when leaving site.
- School mobile phones- in line with Action Plan in the Critical Incident Policy, telephone numbers of key staff have been shared.
- Radio Communications – If able to do so, radio communications will be used to communicate to key members of staff. Be mindful of what is shared as this channel could be compromised.

Communication between Parents and the School

School lockdown procedures will be communicated with parents via the school website. In the event of an actual lockdown parents will be communicated with as soon as practically possible. It is obvious that parents will be concerned but by regularly communicating accurate information we will help to alleviate undue anxiety.

Information shared with parents will include:

- They do not need to contact the school - calling the school could tie up telephone lines that are needed for contacting emergency providers.
- Do not come to the school – they could interfere with emergency providers' access to the school.
- Wait for the school to contact them about when it is safe for them to collect their child and where this will be from.
- Reassure them that the school understands their concerns for their child's welfare and that school is doing everything possible to ensure their safety. It is important that part of the communication to parents includes:

'The school is in a full lockdown situation. During this period the switchboard and entrances will be unmanned, external doors locked, and nobody allowed in or out'.

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 upon the severity of the incident that has triggered a lockdown. Emergency services will support the decision of the Principal with regards to the timing of communication to parents. Identify School evacuation routes and gates etc.

Device Threat (e.g chemical, electrical, explosive)

Following a serious or malicious hoax communication in relation to a received threat to the school it is important that you are alert but not alarmed. The vast majority of bomb threats are designed to cause alarm and disruption. While many bomb threats involve a person-to-person telephone call, an increasing number are sent electronically using email or social media applications. No matter how ridiculous or implausible the threat may seem, all such communications are a crime and should be reported to the police by dialling 999 immediately.

In the event of a received threat, we must follow the lockdown procedures as outlined in the 'Partial or Full Lockdown Procedures' enclosed in this policy. If you receive a bomb threat communication, you should:

- Stay calm and listen carefully.
- Complete the check list as detailed in Appendix 1 of the full Critical Incident Policy.
- If practical, keep the caller talking and alert a colleague to dial 999.
- Record the calling by selecting *7 on the telephone if possible, to do so.
- If the caller number is on display take note of the number, otherwise dial 1471 to obtain the caller number once the call has ended.
- If the threat is a recorded message, save the message and write down as much detail as possible.
- If the threat is received by text message do not reply to, forward or delete the message.
- Note the number of the sender and follow the advice given by the police.
- If the threat is delivered face-to-face try to retain as many distinguishing characteristics of the threat maker as possible – press the panic button (if available) under the desk and help will arrive.
- If discovered in a written note, letter or graffiti treat as police evidence and stop other people touching the item.
- If the threat is received via email or social media do not reply to, forward or delete the message.
- Note the sender's email address or username.
- Preserve all web log files for your organisation to help the police investigations.

Evacuation

Only the Principal or Acting senior SLT member or Emergency services can authorise an evacuation:

Each class under supervision will be led from the school via an exit that is approved as part of the school specific plan. House staff to bring grab bag and house numbers/evacuation registers. It is essential that this action is carried out in a calm and professional manner.

When at the 'designated safe place' 'House Teams' must issue House numbers to form tutors along with registration details. Once numbers and students are confirmed as present form tutors will hold their registration numbers in the air (as in a school evacuation drill). Missing students will be reported to the Attendance Administrator and SLT. It is imperative that students are kept in their form group lines and not allowed to leave or to use their mobile phones.

Staff Responsibilities

STAFF MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITY	CONTACT DETAILS
Incident Manager	Matt Norris	mnorris@weldonva.org
Deputy Incident Manager	Esther Gray	egray@weldonva.org
Deputy Incident Manager	Hallam Cutmore	hcutmore@weldonva.org
Deputy Incident Manager	Leanne Turbett	lturbett@weldonva.org
Parent Liaison Officer	Esther Gray	
Deputy Parent Liaison Officer	Student Support Assistants	
Admin	Leanne Turbett	
Admin	Ellie McCay	
Admin	Krista Mitchell	
Communications Officer / Media Spokesperson	Sarah Wilson	
School Comms Officer	Matt Norris	
Student Welfare	Senior Tutors	
Deputy Student Welfare	Student Support Assistants	
Local Police Inspector	Steve Coles	
Other:		
Chair Academy Council	Trevor Toulson	
Offsite Support Contacts	Jason Thurnham Martin Haire Liam Hook	
Agreed safe locations	Classrooms / Offices / Toilets	

Other Responsibilities: people who:

Site Teams	Contact Emergency Services
Principal	Contact Local Authority
Attendance Administrator	Collect Registers
SLT WhatsApp Group	Contact SLT Members
Site Teams	Locking/Securing of buildings
Form Tutors	Taking of Registers
Admin Team / Reception	Keeping communication lines clear
VQU / Admin Team	Message to parents / social media once directed by senior person in control
Form tutors & teaching assistants	Keeping students in classroom quietly and calm