

St Mary's Catholic College



LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE 2018-19

Updated September 2018

Review October 2018 and bi-annually thereafter

(reviewed and accepted at Governors' meeting 16 October 2018)

Lockdown Procedure

This signifies an immediate threat to the College.

Lockdown manager (Deputy Head)



Signal



Lockdown Manager to dial 999
Dial once for each emergency service they require



All staff & students to remain in their classroom/office



All staff & students outside school buildings should be brought inside as quickly as possible



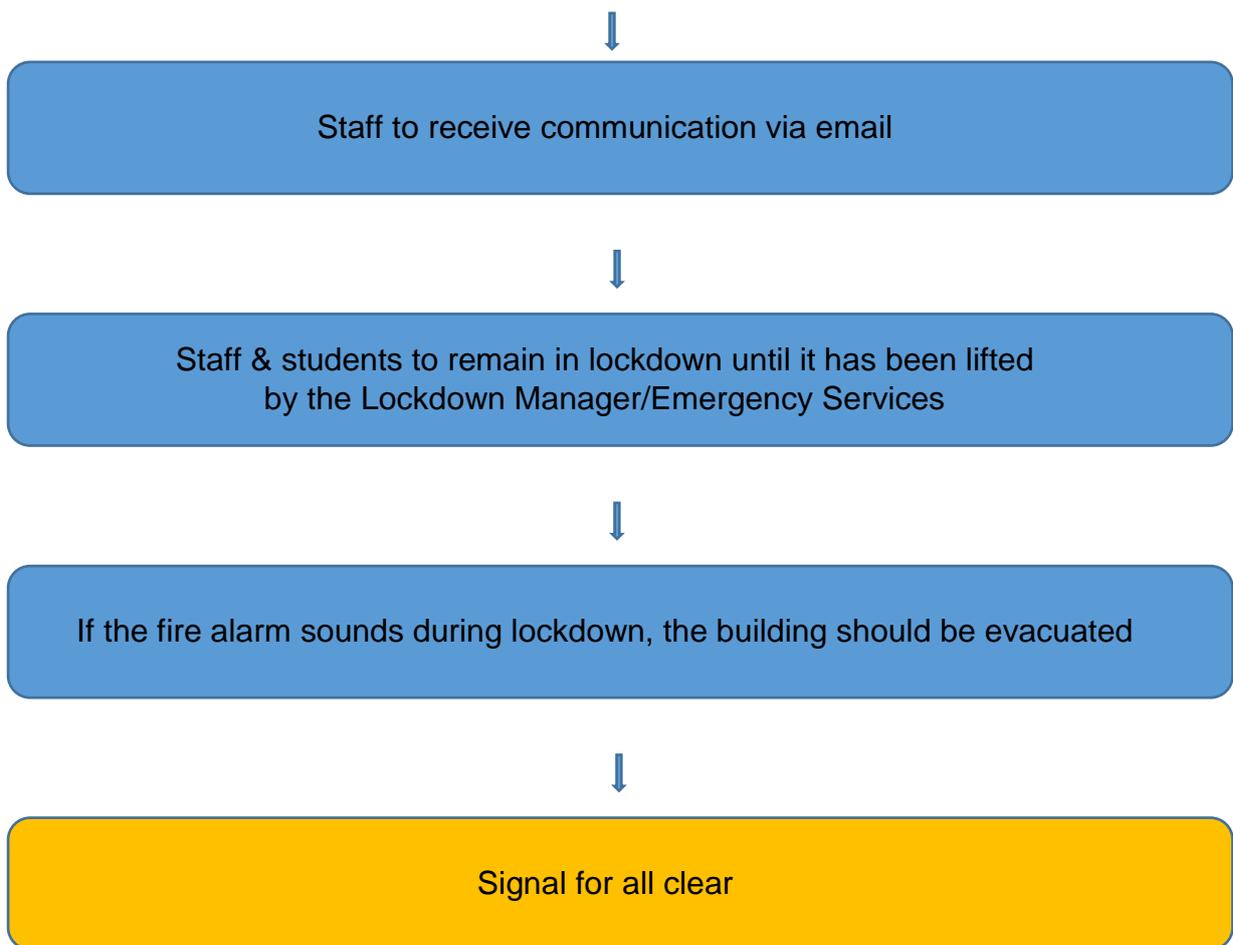
All external doors to be locked – main control office or ICT technicians



Blinds/Curtains drawn on windows in classrooms
and staff & students sit quietly, out of sight



Lights/Smart-boards turned off



Guidance for Schools on Creating Lockdown Procedures

All schools should consider the need for robust and tested **school lockdown procedures**. Lockdown procedures should be seen as a sensible and proportionate response to any external or internal incident which has the potential to pose a threat to the safety of staff and pupils in the school. Procedures should aim to minimise disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all pupils and staff. Lockdown procedures may be activated in response to any number of situations, but some of the more typical might be:

- A reported incident/civil disturbance in the local community (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils in the school).
- An intruder on the school site (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils).
- A warning being received regarding a risk locally, of air pollution (smoke plume, gas cloud etc) or chemical, biological or radiological contaminants.
- A major fire in the vicinity of the school.
- The close proximity of a dangerous dog roaming loose.

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.

Full Lockdown

Alert to staff: 'Full lockdown' – Three distinct rings on the school bell

This signifies an immediate threat to the school. 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 classroom.
- 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).
- 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.
- Communicate register of staff/pupils to a pre-agreed central office.
- Staff should await further instructions.

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.

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.

The agreed line of communication will be email.

- Staff should 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.
- A member of staff is nominated as lockdown manager (plus deputies in their absence) to initiate, manage and conclude the lockdown. They will also communicate with emergency services. Their roles and responsibilities should be documented.
- Staff are alerted to the activation of the plan by a recognised signal, audible throughout the school.
- The use of the fire alarm should be avoided to reduce the incorrect response to an incident.
- Pupils/staff who are outside of the school buildings should be brought inside as quickly as possible.
- Those inside the school should remain in their classrooms or proceed directly to the nearest classroom.
- All external doors and, as necessary, windows are locked (depending on the circumstances, internal classroom doors may also need to be locked).
- Blinds/curtains drawn and windows on internal doors covered.
- Once in lockdown mode, staff should notify the office immediately of any pupils not accounted for and any additional pupils/staff in their classroom via the agreed email communication channel.
- Staff should encourage the pupils to keep calm.
- As appropriate, the school should establish communication with the Emergency Services as soon as possible.
- If necessary, parents should be notified as soon as it is practicable to do so via the school's established communications system.
- Pupils must not be released to parents during a lockdown.
- If it is necessary to evacuate the building, the fire alarm should sound.
- Ensure procedures are in place for members of staff who do not have a regular office or classroom.
- Ensure visitors/volunteers/peripatetic staff are included in your school lockdown plan.
- Establish an official lockdown termination announcement/signal so that all staff know that it is authentic (3 distinct rings on the bell)
- Specific arrangements should be made for pupils/staff with different needs (i.e. hearing/visual impairment or mobility needs).
- Areas in the school that cannot be effectively locked down should be identified and the lockdown procedures should include instructions on removing staff and pupils from these areas to a place of safety (i.e. toilets/outbuildings).

- Establish agreed methods of communication from staff to the lockdown manager should a dangerous intruder be located on the school premises.
- An overview sheet outlining the school's procedures will be displayed throughout the school as appropriate (see Appendix A).

In the event a school is in lockdown and the fire alarm sounds, the school should contact the emergency services as in a normal fire alarm activation. A nominated member of staff who has a means of remote communication (e.g. a walkie talkie) should go to the fire alarm panel to establish what zone has been activated. Once the zone has been identified, the alarm should be silenced and another person sent to the area to investigate. They will need to approach with caution as there may be a fire or an intruder may have activated the alarm. If a fire is discovered this information should be communicated back to the person at the fire alarm panel, who should resound the alarm, update the emergency services and evacuate the school.

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 should 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. Depending on their age, pupils should also be aware of the plan. (Regular practices will increase their familiarity).

Staff's understanding should be regularly checked with regular training refreshers. A lockdown drill should 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.

It would also be good practice to:

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

Communication between parents and the school

Arrangements for communicating with parents in the event of a lockdown, should be routinely shared either via newsletter or the school website.

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.

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. Calling the school could tie up telephone lines that are required for contacting emergency support providers.
- Do not come to the school. They could interfere with emergency support providers' 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.

The 'communication with parents' section of the school lockdown plan needs to reassure parents that the school understands their concern for their children's welfare and that everything that can possibly be done to ensure children's safety will be done. However, it may also be prudent to reinforce the message that **'the school is in a full lockdown situation. During this period the switchboard and entrances will be un-manned, external doors locked and nobody is allowed in or out...'**

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

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 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.

Appendix A – Overview Sheet for Staff

St Mary's Catholic College

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 designated assembly points on the yard.

'Shelter in Buildings' Alarm

In the event of three distinct bells, stay indoors, in the room/classroom that you are in. If you are outside when this bell sounds, 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 pupils to read. It is therefore important that a computer is always logged on (and e-mail accounts opened) during teaching sessions. Internal phones may also be used for communication.

If you are with pupils it is important to:

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