

26<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

The safety and welfare of our students and staff are our highest priority at St Mary's Catholic College. We practise safety procedures throughout the year to help our students know what to do in an emergency. These practices allow us to evaluate our emergency operation plans and improve our response skills. The aims of the training drills are to improve our ability to protect students, save lives and reduce injuries.

With this in mind, we will be conducting a **lockdown practice on Monday 29 April** which will enable students to become familiar with what they need to do should an emergency arise requiring lockdown procedures, (similar to the way we practise for a fire evacuation). All schools across the country have to have a procedure such as this.

A lockdown situation would be initiated when a situation arises that requires the isolation (rather than evacuation) of staff and students from an identified threat such as:

- Chemical pollution in the area
- Serious fire in surrounding area
- An aggressive or violent intruder
- Siege/hostage incident
- Lightning/severe storms

The purpose of a lockdown is to keep the students and staff safe from any danger outside or inside the building. In such an event, all of the perimeter doors to the school building will be locked and will remain locked until the danger or issue outside or inside the building is removed. To enable everyone to remain safe, no one will be allowed to enter the building or leave the building until the authorities authorise such a release.

In the event of a real threat to St Mary's, we would initiate lockdown in accordance with police procedures. Parents would be contacted at a suitable time to inform them that lockdown was in place and in this situation it would be vital that parents/carers do not:

- Contact the school via telephone in order to keep our phone lines clear.
- Contact your child/children directly by mobile phone even if they contact you.
- Come to school in person, unless we tell you it is safe to do.

We appreciate that this would be extremely difficult but if the above points are not followed, this could jeopardise the safety of students and staff in school.

We must stress that this type of event is extremely unlikely, however, it is important that students and staff practise the procedures throughout the year.

Yours sincerely



**Mr A Boyle**  
**Headteacher**