

St Swithun's C of E Primary Academy Lockdown Procedure

Rationale

All schools are required to have Lockdown procedures in the case of dynamic emergencies. Although these instances are **extremely rare**, it is important that we have a plan that we practice ensuring everyone knows how to respond in such an emergency. A lockdown procedure is our plan.

A school lockdown is where the building is secured, and no pupils, parents or community enter or leave the building. It is therefore important that parents have guidance on what they could expect if there were a Lockdown in progress. Obviously, such emergencies would all present unique challenges, and the school would be obliged to follow guidance from the relevant emergency services which may differ from the information below. However, we hope the procedures below are helpful to you in knowing what you could expect.

Information for Parents

Should a Lockdown occur, developments will be communicated to parents / guardians as soon as is practicable and in some cases in agreement with the emergency services and the most senior member of staff overseeing the incident. Parents will naturally be concerned; anxious and all accurate information releases will assist to alleviate undue anxiety.

The school's main priority is the safety and welfare of its pupils and dealing with the immediate situation. However, we will endeavour to ensure that parents / guardians are given enough information to enable them to understand the potential outcome and when possible, time frames so that they:

- Are reassured that the school / emergency services understand their concern for their child's welfare, and that everything possible is being completed to ensure their safety
- Refrain from directly calling the school's office. Calling the school will tie up telephone lines that will be required to be used by the responsible person and the emergency services. **DO NOT** attend the school. This may interfere with the emergency provider's access / investigation and may put themselves and others in danger.
- Wait patiently until a safe and satisfactory outcome has been achieved and agreed by all parties, where a designated safe area will be identified for the safe handing over of the pupils to their parents / guardians.

During the initial "breaking news" of the incident it is vital that all parents are reassured that the welfare and safety to their children is paramount and that the matter is being dealt with by the emergency services and the school jointly to resolve the matter as soon as possible with little impact to the pupils and the wider community.

However, it must also be stressed that at this time "the school is in a full lockdown procedure. During this period the office and entrances will be un-manned, external doors will be locked and no person is allowed in or out of the premises until further notice."

The plan below sets out what steps we will take at St Swithun's Primary Academy to ensure that children and staff are kept as safe as possible.

Lockdown Procedure

In the event of an armed or aggressive intruder either entering school grounds or being discovered on site or nearby:

1. **DO NOT** approach the intruder.
2. Raise the alarm by contacting the office so that the relevant authorities can be contacted immediately. At St Swithun's CofE Primary Academy we will have 3 long rings of the school bell to indicate an emergency.
3. If possible & safe to do so, lock or secure all external entry doors & class doors to prevent access. If possible, move to a room with no windows and solid internal walls.
4. Close all windows and blinds to prevent entry and obscure the intruder's visibility.
5. Where possible get everyone to lie flat on the floor or get as low to the floor as possible. If possible, this should be under tables/chairs.
6. Please try to reassure all those with you and maintain silence where possible as to not alert the intruder of your location until help arrives.
7. If you have a means of communication (mobile phone), please try and update the relevant people of your location, status and the intruder's whereabouts but only if it's safe to do so.

IMPORTANT

Decisions would need to be taken very quickly by teaching staff dependent on the nature and proximity of the threat. It is unlikely that there would be time to confer. The best course of action may not be to lockdown in a classroom, it may be to direct children to an exit at the opposite end of the school to the aggressor and tell them to run to a nominated place or other safety outside the school grounds. The pattern for an armed aggressor appears to be the intention to cause maximum damage to others and then to themselves. Children hiding in a classroom are as much a potential target as children escaping across a playground.

Police advice is:

"Due to the chaotic nature of active aggressors who intend entering an educational establishment in order to kill or severely injure people, there has to be a simple and common-sense approach. It is therefore essential to keep things simple to increase survivability. Use the acronym ADD:

- **Avoid** the aggressor, if at all possible, get out of the building and don't stop until you are sure you are safe. If you are forced to stay in the building, enter a room.
- **Deny** the aggressor access. Take everything inside the room and barricade yourself in and prepare to ...
- **Defend** – in every room there are improvised weapons that could be used to defend yourself. You may need to fight for your life and those around you"