

Lockdown Policy

Holland Park School | 2025-26

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Reviewed by	Billy Egleton Vice Principal			
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We aim to:

- prioritise the safety of all adults and students in and on the school site at all times;
- ensure that senior staff and other named staff, understand their role in the case of a fast moving incident, for example, a firearms or weapons attack – either directly at the site or in the vicinity;
- ensure that IT systems support the safety and accountability of all in the case of an emergency;
- ensure that all named staff have received the appropriate training to enable them to effectively carry out their designated role;
- ensure that in the event of a lockdown students, staff and visitors are prevented from moving into danger areas;
- ensure that attackers are prevented from accessing the site, or at the very least are delayed;
- ensure that the Royal Borough and emergency services understand the school's plan and intended actions during an evacuation or lockdown;
- ensure that the students are familiar with evacuation and lockdown routines by carrying out a full practice once a year;
- ensure that parents are familiar with these procedures to avoid unnecessary anxiety and distress.

Lockdown – What is it?

Lockdown is a term, referring to the procedure for keeping students safe by quickly restricting access to the site and keeping them indoors in their classrooms or other safe locations. The term invacuation is also frequently used. Examples of when such action might be necessary include, a serious threat from an intruder (e.g. a gunman) on the school premises or within the vicinity of the school.

In the case of an intruder on site, especially if armed, the current guidance is to try and RUN, HIDE and TELL (in that order). If this is at all possible staff should assist to evacuate students as quickly as possible to a place of safety.

If the situation is such that an evacuation poses a greater threat to life than to remain then staff must be familiar with the lockdown procedure which forms part of the HIDE guidance. It could also be used if the intruder is within the school building, however it must be considered whether it is safer to keep students within their classrooms or to evacuate and disperse.

It is of vital importance that the school's lockdown procedures are familiar to members of the Leadership Team, Support Staff and Teaching Staff. To achieve this, a lockdown practice should be undertaken at least once a year. Students should also be aware of the plan. Parents too should know that the school has a lockdown plan, and a copy should be placed on the school's website.

It is considered good practice to:

- conduct a number of table top exercises with the Leadership Team to test the procedures against various scenarios;
- rehearse lockdown arrangements with all staff and students;
- include lockdown information in every classroom alongside information relating to fire evacuation.

Lockdown Arrangements

Partial Lockdown

Alert to staff: 'Partial lockdown'

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 students in the school. It may also be as a result of a warning being received regarding the risk of air pollution, etc.

Immediate action:

1. All outside activity to cease immediately, students and staff return to building.
2. All staff and students remain in building and external doors and windows locked.
3. Free movement may be permitted within the building dependent upon circumstances.

4. All situations are different. Once all staff and students are safely inside, the Leadership Team will initiate the appropriate action as prescribed in the Critical Incident Plan.
5. '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.
6. In the event of an air pollution issue, air vents must be closed as an additional precaution. Emergency Services will advise as to the best course of action in respect of the prevailing threat.

Full Lockdown

Alert to staff: 'Full lockdown'

This signifies an immediate threat to the school and may or may not be an escalation of a partial lockdown.

Immediate action:

1. All students must remain in the space in which they are being taught. In the case of a breaktime they must move to their 'next' lesson.
2. In the case of students and adults outside, dependent on the nature of the threat, the Strategy Team will decide whether they may or may not enter the building.
3. All external doors will be locked. Classroom doors must be closed and locked. Windows must be locked and the blinds drawn. Students must sit quietly and out of sight (e.g. under desk).
4. Staff must take a class register - the Registrar's Office will contact each class in turn by phone for an attendance report.
5. Staff and students will remain in lock down until it has been lifted by a member of the Leadership Team or emergency services. At any point during the lockdown, the fire alarm may sound which is a cue to evacuate the building in the normal manner.
6. During the lockdown, staff will keep agreed lines of communication open but not make unnecessary calls as this could delay more important communication.
7. Under no circumstances should a member of staff, or student, open the classroom door to assess the situation for themselves.

Communication between parents and the school

School lockdown procedures, especially arrangements for communicating with parents, should be routinely shared with parents either by newsletter or via the school website.

In the event of an actual lockdown, parents will be advised 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:

1. 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.
2. Do not need to contact the school. Calling the school could tie up telephone lines that are needed for contacting emergency providers.

3. Do not come to the school. They could interfere with emergency provider's access to the school and may put themselves and others in danger.
4. Wait for the school to contact them about when it is safe for them to come and (if necessary) collect their child, and where this will be from.

The communication with parents 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 their children's safety will be done. However, **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...'**

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 the Emergency Services depending on the severity of the incident that has triggered the Lockdown. Emergency Services will support the decision of the Head / Vice Principal regarding the timing of communication to parents.

In the event of a prolonged lockdown or more severe scenario, the Local Authority has the capacity to provide humanitarian assistance by establishing a Reception Centre for friends and family outside the cordoned area.

Stay Safe

'Stay Safe' principles (Run Hide Tell) give some simple actions to consider during an incident and the information that armed officers may need in the event of a firearms or weapons attack.

Run

- Escape if you can.
- Consider the safest options.
- Is there a safe route? RUN if not HIDE.
- Can you get there without exposing yourself to greater danger?
- Insist others leave with you.
- Leave belongings behind.

Hide

- If you can't RUN, HIDE.
- Find cover from gunfire.
- If you can see the attacker, they may be able to see you.
- Cover from view does not mean you are safe, bullets go through glass, brick, wood and metal.

- Find cover from gunfire e.g. substantial brickwork / heavy reinforced walls.
- Be aware of your exits.
- Try not to get trapped.
- Be quiet, silence your phone.
- Lock / barricade yourself in.
- Move away from the door.

Tell

- Call 999- what do the police need to know?
- Location - where are the suspects?
- Direction - where did you last see the suspects?
- Descriptions - describe the attacker, numbers, features, clothing, weapons etc.
- Further information - casualties, type of injury, building information, entrances, exits, hostages etc.
- Stop other people entering the building if it is safe to do so.