



**THE BRIDGE SCHOOL**

## **LOCKDOWN POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Date reviewed: September 2025

Next review: September 2026

## INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

All of our pupils have complex and multiple needs. Pupils may be Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD), Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD) or a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Some children have additional needs including visual impairment and hearing impairment and behavioural difficulties. It is therefore essential that this policy is implemented consistently to support all pupils and maintain physical, social and emotional development and ensure a safe environment.

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 any 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)
- A major fire in the vicinity of the school

**This policy has been written in conjunction with the Business Continuity Plan and Educational Visits Policy.**

<b>Signals</b>	
Signal for lockdown:	Communication by hand bell and by verbal communication
Signal for all-clear:	Verbally from designated person via class telephones or verbal communication

<b>Lockdown</b>	
Rooms most suitable for lockdown	All classes to remain in their own classrooms
Entrance points (e.g. doors, windows) which should be secured	External doors Fire Doors Internal doors All windows
Communication arrangements	Classroom telephones and verbal communication
Notes	If someone is taken hostage on the premises, the school should seek to evacuate the rest of the site.

<b>Initial response checklist - lockdown (e.g. in response to an intruder in the school grounds)</b>		Tick / sign / time
L1	Ensure all pupils are inside the school building. Alternatively, ask pupils to hide or disperse if this will improve their safety by staff member with them. Pupils to take cover under furniture, where possible.	
L2	Lock / secure entrance points (e.g. doors, windows) to prevent the intruder entering the building	
L3	Dial 999. Dial once for each emergency service that you require	
L4	Ensure people take action to increase protection from attack: Block access points (e.g. move furniture to obstruct doorways) Sit on the floor, under tables or against a wall Keep out of sight - Draw curtains / blinds - Turn off lights Stay away from windows and doors <i>Teachers will be responsible for the class they are teaching when a lockdown is announced.</i>	
L5	Ensure that pupils, staff and visitors are aware of an exit point in case an intruder does manage to gain access to the building	
L6	If possible, check for missing / injured pupils, staff and visitors.	
L7	Remain inside until an all-clear has been given or unless told to evacuate by the emergency services.	

Staff will be alerted to the activation of the plan through the classroom telephones and verbal instruction and a hand bell.

Pupils who are outside of the school buildings are brought inside as quickly as possible, unless this endangers them and others. If pupils remain outside, they should hide with staff as instructed.

Those inside the school should remain in their classrooms.

- All external doors and, as necessary, windows are locked (depending on the circumstances). Internal classroom doors may also need to be blocked.
- Once in lockdown mode, staff should notify the senior member of staff, to instigate an immediate search for anyone who is missing.
- Staff should encourage pupils to keep calm.
- As appropriate, the school office or Senior Leadership Team will establish communication with the Emergency Services and notify Trust's CEO.
- Parents will be notified as soon as it is practicable to do so via text messaging or phone call.
- Pupils will not be released to parents during a lockdown.
- If it is necessary to evacuate the building, the fire alarm will be sounded and a verbal message to evacuate will be sent via class telephones.
- It is of vital importance that the school's lockdown procedures are familiar to all members of the school staff.
- To achieve this, a lockdown drill should be undertaken at least once a year. Depending on their cognitive ability, pupils should also be aware of the plan.

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

Immediate action:

- All outside activity to cease immediately, pupils and staff return to building. Staff will be alerted via a hand bell (located in reception office and Headteacher office).

- All staff and pupils will remain in the building and external doors and windows will be locked.
- Movement may be permitted within the building dependent upon circumstances but this must be supervised by a member of staff.

All situations are different. Once all staff and pupils are safely inside, senior staff will conduct an on-going and dynamic risk assessment based on advice from the Emergency Services. This can then be communicated to staff and pupils.

'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 should 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**

### **Alert to staff: 'Full lockdown'**

This signifies an immediate threat to the school and may be an escalation of a partial lockdown.

Immediate action:

- All pupils return to a classroom.
- External doors are locked. Classroom doors are blocked.
- Windows are locked, blinds drawn and pupils sit quietly out of sight (eg under desks).
- Register taken/head count - the school office will contact each class in turn for an attendance report via classroom telephones.
- Staff and pupils will remain in lockdown until it has been lifted by a senior member of staff or the Emergency Services.
- At any point during the lockdown, the fire alarm may sound and a verbal message sent via classroom telephones, where possible, to evacuate the building.
- During the lockdown staff will keep agreed lines of communication open, via classroom telephones, but will not make unnecessary calls to the school office as this could delay more important communication.

School lockdown arrangements for communicating with parents, will be routinely shared with parents either by the school newsletter.

In the event of an actual lockdown, any incident or development will be communicated to parents as soon as is practicable.

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 needed for contacting the Emergency Services.
- do not come to the school. This could interfere with Emergency Services' 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 for them to come to get their children, and where this will be from.

### **Parents will be told**

'...the school is in a full lockdown situation. During this period the school office and entrances will be un-manned, external doors locked and nobody will be 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 on the severity of the incident that has triggered the lockdown.

Emergency Services will support the decisions of the Head Teacher regarding the timing of any communication to parents.

### **Lockdown Situations when Away From School**

It will always be necessary to carry out a risk assessment prior to an off-site educational visit and it is important to consider what would happen if an emergency situation arose that was out of the control of the staff who are supervising the pupils on the trip. This will be documented on the trip specific risk assessment.

It is almost impossible to predict the circumstances where an emergency situation might arise in a way that specific planning can be undertaken. As a minimum all staff will be shown the emergency meeting point if the party was to separated and remind them to follow instructions from the Emergency Services.

### **Debriefing**

A debriefing should occur in all situations following a lockdown. The nature and severity of the incident will dictate who should be included in the debriefing.