The Stables Independent School

Lockdown Procedure

Policy Lead: Headteacher / Health & Safety Manager
Designated Safeguarding Lead: Sarah Porter
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Gary Spackman & James Beddow
Date implemented: November 2026
Review date: November 2027, or following any activation, drill or significant change to the premises.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide a clear and proportionate response where there is a threat or potential threat to pupils, staff or visitors at The Stables Independent School.

Lockdown is intended to secure pupils, staff and visitors within safe areas of the school and restrict movement into, out of, or around the premises while a threat is assessed or managed.

The overriding priority during any lockdown is the preservation of life and the safeguarding of pupils.

2. When Lockdown May Be Required

A lockdown may be initiated where there is a potential or immediate threat, including:

- an unauthorised or threatening person attempting to enter the school;
- an intruder on the school site;
- a person believed to be carrying a weapon;
- serious violence or a credible threat of serious violence;
- a dangerous animal on or close to the school grounds;
- police activity or a serious incident in the immediate locality;
- a hazardous environmental incident where remaining securely indoors is considered safer;
- a credible security or terrorism-related threat;
- any other situation where senior staff determine that securing pupils and staff inside is the safest available response.

Staff do not need to wait for police instruction where there is an immediate and credible risk to life.

3. Levels of Lockdown

Partial / Precautionary Lockdown

A partial lockdown may be used where there is a concern outside the school or a potential threat that has not entered the premises.

Examples include police activity locally, a suspicious individual near the site or a potentially aggressive visitor outside the building.

During a partial lockdown:

- all pupils and staff should return inside;
- external doors, windows and gates should be secured where safe to do so;
- pupils should remain with their current staff;
- movement between buildings or outdoor areas should stop unless authorised;
- registers should be checked;
- staff should maintain normal, calm activities where appropriate;
- senior staff should monitor the situation and provide further instructions.

Full Lockdown

A full lockdown will be initiated where there is an immediate or serious threat to people on the school site.

During a full lockdown:

- staff and pupils should immediately move to the nearest suitable secure location;
- doors should be locked or secured where possible;
- windows should be closed and blinds/curtains closed where available;
- people should move away from doors and windows;
- lights should be switched off where appropriate;
- mobile phones and other devices should be placed on silent;
- staff should maintain silence where the nature of the threat requires it;
- nobody should leave the secured area until instructed to do so by authorised senior staff or the emergency services.

Staff should not move through the school unnecessarily in an attempt to reach their usual classroom or group.

4. Initiating a Lockdown

Authority to initiate a lockdown rests with:

1. Headteacher;
2. Deputy Headteacher / senior leader in charge;
3. DSL/DDSL;
4. Health & Safety Manager;
5. any member of staff who becomes aware of an immediate threat to life where delaying action could increase risk.

The lockdown signal will be: A clear message alerting of the lockdown, and what type of lockdown is to be initiated. This will be followed by a group call. Senior staff will go class to class to ensure everyone is aware.

Partial lockdown: [ALERT!!! SOFT LOCKDOWN!!!] Message to WhatsApp group, followed by phone call to all school phones.

Full lockdown: [ALERT!!! HARD LOCKDOWN!!!] Message to WhatsApp group, followed by phone call to all school phones.

Staff must be familiar with both signals and what actions to take.

Where the normal communication system cannot be used, direct verbal instruction or another agreed emergency communication method may be used.

5. Immediate Actions

On hearing the lockdown signal, staff should:

1. Remain calm and reassure pupils using simple, clear language.

2. Bring any pupils immediately under their supervision into the nearest appropriate secure room.
3. Check immediately outside the room only where this can be done without exposing themselves or others to danger.
4. Secure the door.
5. Close accessible windows.
6. Close blinds or curtains where available.
7. Move pupils away from windows and doors.
8. Reduce noise and visibility where required.
9. Silence mobile phones and electronic devices.
10. Account for every pupil, member of staff and visitor believed to be with the group.
11. Report missing or additional people to the designated incident lead when safe to do so.
12. Remain in the secure location until an authorised all-clear is given.

Staff should not place themselves at significant risk attempting to lock an external door, gate or window once a direct threat is present.

6. Pupils Outside the Main Building

If pupils or staff are outside when lockdown is initiated, staff must make a dynamic assessment of the safest available action.

Where it is safe to do so, they should enter the nearest secure building.

If returning to the school would move the group towards the threat, staff should move pupils away from the danger to a safe location.

Staff must not automatically return to the main school area if doing so would increase risk.

The incident lead and emergency services should be informed of the group's location as soon as it is safe to communicate.

7. Supporting Pupils with SEMH and Additional Needs

The Stables recognises that alarms, changes in routine, restricted movement and uncertainty may cause significant anxiety or dysregulation for some pupils.

Staff should:

- use familiar adults wherever possible;
- communicate using brief and concrete instructions;
- avoid unnecessarily alarming language;
- use individual regulation strategies where these can be implemented safely;
- take sensory and communication needs into account;
- maintain appropriate staffing levels within the secure area;
- use distraction or familiar regulating activities during prolonged precautionary lockdowns where appropriate;

- prioritise immediate physical safety where normal behaviour support strategies cannot safely be followed.

Individual pupil risk assessments should identify any pupil-specific considerations relevant to emergency lockdown.

Where a pupil attempts to leave a secure area during an immediate threat, staff should use the school's existing safeguarding, behaviour and positive handling framework to manage the immediate risk, using the least restrictive safe intervention available.

8. Staff Responsibilities

Incident Lead

The most senior appropriate member of staff available will assume the role of Incident Lead.

The Incident Lead should, where possible:

- determine whether partial or full lockdown is required;
- ensure the lockdown signal is activated;
- contact 999 where appropriate;
- maintain communication with emergency services;
- identify the location and nature of the threat where this information is safely available;
- coordinate communication with staff;
- establish whether pupils, staff or visitors are unaccounted for;
- determine whether lockdown arrangements need to change;
- authorise the all-clear unless control has passed to the emergency services.

Administrative / Designated Staff

Where safe and practicable:

- secure the main entrance;
- prevent visitors entering the premises;
- take or access pupil, staff and visitor attendance information;
- make emergency contact information available;
- support communication with emergency services.

No member of staff should expose themselves to danger simply to complete these tasks.

Teaching and Support Staff

Staff responsible for pupils must:

- secure and supervise their group;
- account for pupils;
- maintain an appropriately calm environment;
- follow instructions issued by the Incident Lead or emergency services;

- communicate significant information where it is safe to do so.

9. Visitors and Contractors

All visitors and contractors on site must follow staff instructions during a lockdown.

The member of staff responsible for or nearest to a visitor should include that person within their lockdown arrangements.

The visitor signing-in system should allow senior staff to identify who is believed to be on site.

10. Calling the Emergency Services

Where there is an immediate threat, **999** should be called as soon as it is safe to do so.

Information provided should include, where known:

- school name and full address;
- nature of the incident;
- location of the threat;
- number and description of people involved;
- whether weapons have been seen or reported;
- injuries;
- direction of travel;
- access information for emergency services;
- caller's name, location and contact details.

Staff should not delay contacting the emergency services simply because all information is not yet known.

11. Fire During a Lockdown

Lockdown arrangements must not prevent staff responding to an immediate fire or other threat to life.

If a fire is discovered during lockdown, or there is clear evidence of fire, staff must dynamically assess which threat presents the greatest immediate danger.

The normal fire evacuation route should not automatically be followed if it would move pupils towards a known attacker or other serious external threat.

Instructions from the emergency services must take priority where available.

12. Communication During Lockdown

During an incident, communication should be limited to information necessary to protect pupils and staff.

Staff should not post information, images or commentary regarding the incident on social media.

Communication with parents/carers will be coordinated by the Headteacher or nominated senior leader.

Parents/carers should be advised not to travel to the school during an active lockdown unless instructed to do so, as doing so may place themselves or others at additional risk and could obstruct emergency services.

13. Ending Lockdown

A lockdown must not be ended simply because the situation appears quiet.

The all-clear should only be given by:

- the Incident Lead, where they are satisfied that the threat has passed; or
- the police/emergency services where they have assumed control of the incident.

The agreed all-clear message will be:

[NO THREAT _ NO LOCKDOWN_NORMAL ACTIVITIES CONTINUED]

Staff should verify unexpected instructions before opening secured doors where there is uncertainty about their authenticity.

14. Following the All-Clear

Following a lockdown:

- pupils, staff and visitors must be accounted for;
- first aid should be provided where necessary;
- safeguarding concerns should be identified and recorded;
- parents/carers and relevant professionals should be informed as appropriate;
- pupils should receive reassurance and appropriate emotional support;
- staff should participate in a structured debrief;
- consideration should be given to whether external psychological or therapeutic support is required;
- the incident and actions taken should be recorded;
- the lockdown procedure and related risk assessments should be reviewed.

Significant safeguarding concerns must be managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

15. Lockdown Drills

Lockdown arrangements will be tested periodically.

Drills must be proportionate to the needs and vulnerabilities of the pupils attending The Stables.

Before a planned drill:

- staff should be briefed;
- consideration should be given to individual pupils who may find the drill distressing;

- pupils should receive an age and developmentally appropriate explanation;
- the drill must not attempt to simulate violence or unnecessarily frighten pupils.

Following the drill, staff should record:

- how quickly the procedure was initiated;
- whether the lockdown signal was heard/received throughout the premises;
- whether rooms could be secured;
- accountability of pupils, staff and visitors;
- communication issues;
- pupil responses;
- any physical security concerns;
- actions required.

16. Training

All staff will receive information and instruction regarding:

- lockdown signals;
- the difference between partial and full lockdown;
- their responsibilities;
- secure locations;
- communication arrangements;
- pupils requiring additional support;
- arrangements for visitors;
- the relationship between lockdown, evacuation and fire procedures.

New staff should receive this information as part of their induction.

17. Review and Monitoring

This procedure will be reviewed:

- at least annually;
- following every lockdown drill;
- following any actual lockdown;
- following significant changes to the school site;
- following changes to pupil need that materially affect the procedure;
- following relevant changes to national guidance.

Actions identified following a drill or incident should be recorded and allocated to a responsible person for completion.

LOCKDOWN – STAFF QUICK ACTION CARD

PARTIAL LOCKDOWN

Get everyone inside → secure external doors/windows → account for pupils → stop outdoor movement → await instructions.

Remain calm and continue appropriate activities unless instructed otherwise.

FULL LOCKDOWN

LOCK – HIDE – QUIET – ACCOUNT – COMMUNICATE

- Move to nearest secure room.
- Lock/secure the door.
- Close windows and blinds.
- Move away from doors/windows.
- Silence phones/devices.
- Keep pupils calm and quiet.
- Account for everyone with you.
- Do not leave until an authorised all-clear is given.
- Call **999** if you have important information and it is safe to do so.

Do not put yourself at risk attempting to secure another area.

Do not respond to the fire alarm automatically during a known security incident – assess the immediate threat and follow emergency-service instructions where available.

ALL-CLEAR: [NO THREAT _ NO LOCKDOWN_NORMAL ACTIVITIES CONTINUED]