



# **George Mitchell School**

## **School 'Lockdown' Policy and Procedures**

### **September 2024**

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## Lockdown Policy

Full Lockdown and Partial 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, pupils and visitors in the school. Procedures should aim to minimise 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:

1. A reported incident/civil disturbance in the local community (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils in the school);
2. An intruder on the school site (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils);
3. A warning being received regarding a risk locally, of air pollution (smoke plume, gas cloud etc.);
4. A major fire in the vicinity of the school;
5. The close proximity of a dangerous dog or animal roaming loose.

This policy will detail –

Access to the school bell controls to raise an alarm in an emergency; Other means of internal communications - two-way radios, mobile phone.

### Lockdown Arrangements

#### Full Lockdown

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

This signifies an immediate threat to the school. Signalled by a long continuous power tool sounding siren. The siren sound is different from the sound used for a fire alarm.

##### **Procedures:**

1. **During break or lunch time:** At the given signal staff will usher pupils into the school building and into their form rooms. Staff responsible for a form class must go directly to their form room. Staff will ensure the windows and doors are closed/locked and screened where possible and children are positioned away from possible sightlines from external windows/doors. Blinds are down and lights, Smart boards to be turned off.
2. **During lesson time:** At the given signal the pupils remain in the room they are in and the staff will ensure the windows and doors are closed/locked and screened where possible and children are positioned away from possible sightlines from external windows/doors. Blinds are down and lights, Smart boards to be turned off. If students are in an outside PE lesson outside then they must proceed to the nearest occupied classroom and remain with that class and class teacher.
3. Children or staff not in class for any reason will proceed to the nearest occupied classroom and remain with that class and class teacher e.g. children using toilets when the bells go.
4. If practicable staff should notify the primary office (if based at primary) and/or the attendance lead (if based at secondary) and SLG of any missing students.

**NO ONE SHOULD MOVE ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

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5. Staff to support children in keeping calm and quiet.
6. Staff to remain in lockdown positions until the end of lockdown signal has been heard.
7. The end of Lockdown will be signalled by the long continuous siren being turned off.

**INDIVIDUAL STAFF CANNOT SIGN OUT OR LEAVE THE PREMISES DURING  
LOCKDOWN WITHOUT PRIOR AGREEMENT OF THE HEADTEACHER BEFORE  
LEAVING**

**Staff Roles:**

1. Head teacher makes decision to lockdown the school and calls the police
2. Premises Manager/Premises staff set off lockdown alarm which can be located:
  - Secondary site: Front office, School house Media hub
  - Primary site: SSO office, Front office
3. Premises Manager/Premises staff locks the school's front doors and close fire doors also check exit doors in Hall (if based at primary).
  4. Individual teachers/TAs lock/close classroom door(s) and windows.
  5. Front office staff ensure that their office(s) are locked.
  6. Catering Staff to lock back door to kitchen and turn off all lights.

**Discreet communication channels which might be used:**

- Members of SLG and site team will use radios to communicate where appropriate
  - Members of SLG may also communicate via mobile phone where appropriate
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## 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. This would be where students needed to stay in their classroom and not wander around the school site. It may also be as a result of a major incident occurring in the school which it may not be appropriate for students to witness, for example a first aid emergency, or may be a warning received regarding the risk of air pollution, etc.

### Alert to staff: 'Partial lockdown'

'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 and need to revert to a full lockdown. Signalled by two short blasts of a siren. The siren sound is different from the sound used for a fire alarm.

### Procedures:

1. **During break or lunch time:** At the given signal staff will usher pupils into the school building and into their form rooms. Staff responsible for a form class must go directly to their form room. External windows are locked.
2. **During lesson time:** At the given signal the pupils remain in the room. External windows are locked.
3. All staff and students remain in building and external doors locked
4. Movement may be permitted within the school buildings dependent upon circumstances but this will be communicated by the Headteacher or Deputy Head teachers via email or in person via assembly.
5. All situations are different, once all staff and students are safely inside, senior staff will conduct an on-going risk assessment based on the information available and advice given from the Emergency Services or other outside agencies. This can then be communicated to staff via email and students.
6. During the lockdown, staff will keep agreed lines of communication open, via phones, mobiles and computer email, but will not make unnecessary calls to the main office as this could delay more important communication.
7. The end of partial lockdown will be communicated by SLG to staff and students via email, visiting each classroom or assembly.

### Staff Roles:

1. Headteacher makes decision to partially lockdown the school
2. Premises Manager/Premises staff set off partial lockdown alarm which can be located:

- Secondary site: main reception foyer -

Primary site: main reception foyer

3. Premises Manager/Premises staff locks the school's front doors and close fire doors also check exit doors in Hall (if based at primary).
4. Individual teachers/TAs lock windows.

### **Discreet communication channels which might be used:**

- Members of SLG and site team will use radios to communicate where appropriate
- Members of SLG may also communicate via mobile phone where appropriate

### **Communication between parents and the school**

School lockdown procedures, especially arrangements for communicating with parents, will be routinely shared with parents either by newsletter or via the school website. All communication with the police, other external services and parents will be carried out by the Headteacher.

In the event of an actual full or partial lockdown, development is communicated to parents as soon as is practicable by the head teacher or DHTs in their absence. It is obvious that parents will be concerned but regular communication of accurate information will help to alleviate undue anxiety.

Parents will 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.
- If necessary, parents will be notified via the school's established communication network – ClassDojo/website/email/telephone/texting service. "George Mitchell School is in a full/partial lockdown situation. During this period the phones, office and entrances will be un-manned, external doors locked. Please wait for further instructions and information."
- Do not need to contact the school. Calling the school could tie up telephone lines that are needed for contacting emergency providers.
- Do not come to the school. They could interfere with emergency provider's 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 and collect their children, and where this will be from.

A letter to parents will be sent home as the nearest possible day following any serious incident to inform parents of context of lockdown and to encourage parents to reinforce with their children the importance of following procedures in these very rare circumstances.

### **Bomb threats: Procedures for handling bomb threats**

Most bomb threats are made over the phone and the overwhelming majority are hoaxes, made with the intent of causing alarm and disruption. Any hoax is a crime and, no matter how ridiculous or unconvincing, must be reported to the police.

Be alert, but not alarmed!

On receipt of a "bomb threat" - Dial 999 and police will respond. You should always consider their advice before a decision is taken to close or evacuate.

If the site requires full evacuation, staff and children from school will promptly leave the site and go to the Cricket Ground where they will be held until either returning to the school building or be dismissed to parents.

### **Additional information**

#### **Guidance on receipt of a bomb threat**

<http://www.cpni.gov.uk/securityplanning/businesscontinuity-plan/bomb-threats/>

#### **Bomb threat checklist**

<http://www.cpni.gov.uk/documents/posters%20and%20checklists/bombthreat-checklist.pdf?epslanguage=en-gb>