



Lockdown Procedures in Katherines Academy

October 2025

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Rationale

Safeguarding pupils is at the top of our agenda in NET Academies. Schools in the UK normally remain a safe haven for children; but as tragic events both overseas and at home have shown, they can become involved in an emergency at any time.

The Department for Education recommends that schools create and maintain an emergency plan in the event of a situation where pupils and staff are placed in a situation where they may be endangered by the threat of deliberate harm. In emergency planning terms this situation is called 'lockdown.'

Such an incident may be as the result of any of the following:

- A reported incident/civil disturbance in the local community with a potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils in the school.
- A threat received by the school e.g. on social media, in person by an intruder.
- A warning being received regarding the risk of air pollution. In the event of air pollution, air vents/windows 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.

This document is designed to help us:

- Develop and review a lockdown plan,
- Provide information to all staff who could become involved in an incident
- Help staff to educate and inform the pupils about what to do in a lockdown situation,
- Detail actions and procedures not only for use during such an incident but also for testing our readiness for such an incident.

The advice from the Department for Education and Cabinet Office reminds us that 'planning for emergencies can save lives. It can prevent an incident getting worse.'

What is lockdown?

The purpose of a lockdown is to prevent an intruder or other threat outside of school from causing harm to pupils and staff. It means the entrances of the school must be secured in an effort to prevent any threat entering and staff and pupils must find a suitable place to protect themselves.

In the case of a fire or similar emergency the children and staff are taught how to leave the building quietly and safely. In a lockdown they need to learn almost the opposite, to actually get inside the building as quickly and safely as possible and to stay there until the threat is removed.

At NET our lockdown procedures depend heavily on the size and layout of our individual schools. Any procedures our schools establish must be realistic and achievable. It is very unlikely that our schools will ever need to implement the real lockdown but it is important to have arrangements in place to help us deal with such a situation.

A suitable signal for lockdown

The signal for a lockdown should be suitably distinguishable to that of an evacuation (fire drill). Any confusion may result in staff and pupils congregating at an assembly point, thus potentially making them more vulnerable.

NET academies will each use an air horn that are distributed in each building. During a lockdown staff will communicate by using the air horn. Communication between staff/ building will be maintained by mobile phone.

Potentially any member of staff could be the first to raise the alarm for a lockdown so it is important that all employees are aware of the plan and instructions are available in every room.

Once the signal has been initiated the office staff and Head of School will be responsible for raising the alarm.

Teachers - detain pupils in the classroom, keeping them secure by closing windows and doors. The attendance log for the day will be located on ARBOR.

Support staff - direct pupils inside the classrooms and assist teachers as appropriate.

Office staff will be trained to report an emergency incident.

The method of initiating lockdown will be displayed at fixed points around the school.

All staff - not allow anyone in or out of the classroom until being given the signal that it is safe to do so.

Once inside a secure area, staff and children should;

- Stay away from doors and windows; turn off lights; close blinds;
- Beware of sight lines if there is a window in the classroom door
- Consider covering window;
- Take cover if available (get behind something solid);
- Remain absolutely quiet
- Teachers to take attendance;
- No mobile phone use unless necessary to communicate regarding the incident.
- Mobile phones should be shut off or put on vibrate.

Open areas, including hallways and other open areas are the most vulnerable, making them the most likely location for a threat, and the most difficult areas to quickly and effectively secure.

It is very important everyone understands what to do and where to go in the event a lockdown is called when they are in an open area. In the event that the first choice option of entering the building is not available staff will have a second option.

Terminating a lockdown

Plans to conclude a lockdown will vary by location. It may include a general announcement or it may be a room to room visit from police/school personnel so that occupants know it's safe to leave the room. Staff will be told the authentic signal. In all cases where police have responded, the decision to end lockdown can only be made after approval of the police on scene.

Lockdown Practice Drills

It is important that the pupils know what action to take if a lockdown happens at school. Becoming familiar with lockdown drills will improve the likelihood of these procedures being implemented swiftly and effectively. Lockdown will be practised on an annual basis.

Pupils are introduced to lockdown through an assembly that is used to explain the procedure and drill. Our primary aim is not to alarm the children. When practising for lockdown they will be given a scenario such as 'wild horses on the school field', a stray dog or a 'swarm of bees'- something other than an intruder alert.

Bomb Threat

Upon receiving a message that a bomb has been planted in the school.

Immediate Action:

- Office staff are likely to be the first point of call. They should ask questions such as where is the bomb located, when will the bomb go off and who is calling. The caller may not answer any of these questions but if they do it will be of great help to Emergency Services when they arrive.
- Staff should listen closely to caller's voice and speech patterns and to noises in the background.
- Notify the Head of School immediately who will then make the decision to contact Emergency Services and ECC.
- Head of School will order evacuation of all persons inside the buildings.

Evacuation Procedures: Staff will at no time use the term 'Bomb Threat' to staff or pupils

- Head of School will evacuate all staff and pupils to a safe distance outside of the school.
- Staff will take a register after evacuation.
- No one may re-enter the building until the entire building is declared safe by the police or fire service.
- Head of School will notify staff and students of termination of emergency.